INDIA MIGRATION REPORT 2024

INDIANS IN CANADA

Edited by
S Irudaya Rajan

"The *India Migration Report 2024* is a timely addition into multiple facets of migration from India to Canada. It comes at a time when Canada has become one of the primary destinations for Indian migrants and India has become a major source of migrants for Canada. With its inter-disciplinary discourses surrounding migration, including costs and benefits of economic migration, cultural and political dimensions that affect both Canada and India, and a granular approach highlighting implications for student migrants and gendered aspects of migratory flows, this book will be a vital addition to migration research and policy making. It is a valuable compendium of essays for young researchers, civil society as well as policy practitioners"

Dilip Ratha
The Founder, KNOMAD (Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development), World Bank, Washington

"The *India Migration Report 2024* provides critical scholarly analysis of important issues related to migration dynamics in India and around the world. The latest edition on Indians in Canada provides a much needed overview of the many different facets of Indian migration to Canada and its demographic, social, economic, and political dynamics. This book is a valuable companion for students and researchers interested in the topics while it may also be useful for lay citizens of both countries"

Professor Anna Triandafyllidou
Canada Excellence Research Chair in Migration and Integration Toronto Metropolitan University, Toronto, Canada

"The *India Migration Report 2024: Indians in Canada* skilfully delves into the multifaceted experiences of Indian immigrants in Canada, providing deep insights into their challenges and achievements. Covering many topics, including economic and social assimilation, student migration, the dilemmas faced by immigrants, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, it greatly enhances our understanding of this diaspora. The meticulously researched essays illuminate the complex tapestry of Indian immigration and are an indispensable resource for anyone wishing to gain a comprehensive understanding of the Indian diaspora and its formation in Canada."

Professor Hisaya Oda
College of Policy Science, Ritsumeikan University, Osaka, Japan

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India Migration Report 2024

India Migration Report 2024: Indians in Canada is one of the first volumes to comprehensively examine and analyse the different facets of Indian migration to Canada.

This volume:

- Examines the comprehensive history of Indian migration to Canada, including the story of social, cultural, economic, and political integration; analysis of socio-economic characteristics; and evolving political scenarios surrounding student migration and diasporas.
- Presents an overview of migration and post-migration experiences of Indian immigrant and Indo-Canadian women and the rising trend of high-skilled Indian female migration to Canada.
- Discusses the influence of Canadian immigration policy and its effects on the changing immigration patterns of Indians to Canada.
- Examines the challenges faced by Indian immigrants and Indo-Canadians due to deeply entrenched Eurocentric and Ethnocentric biases and the impact of COVID-19 on the community.
- Explores the effect of adult children's migration on the health and suffering from disability of the elderly left behind in the migration process.

The book also discusses leveraging migration for international development. The book will be of interest to scholars, students, researchers, or anyone interested in migration and diasporic studies, development studies, the politics of migration, immigration policy, social anthropology, economics, and sociology.

S Irudaya Rajan is Chair of the International Institute of Migration and Development, India, and also chair of the World Bank KNOMAD working group on internal migration and urbanization. He is the editor of two Routledge Series – India Migration Report (since 2010) and South Asia Migration Report (since 2017) – and founding Editor-in-Chief, Migration and Development (Sage). Rajan has published extensively in national and international journals on demographic, social, economic, political, and psychological implications of international migration and coordinated nine large-scale migration surveys in Kerala since 1998 (with K C Zachariah), Goa (2008), Punjab (2009), and Tamil Nadu (2015) and instrumental for Gujarat (2011), Jharkhand (2023) and Odisha (2023). As a principal investigator, Rajan is currently coordinating the Kerala Migration Survey 2023 with the financial support of the Department of Non-Resident Keralite Affairs, Government of Kerala through Gulati Institute of Finance and Taxation, Kerala.

India Migration Report
Editor: S Irudaya Rajan
International Institute of Migration and Development (IIMAD), India

This annual series strives to bring together international networks of migration scholars and policymakers to document and discuss research on various facets of migration. It encourages interdisciplinary commentaries on diverse aspects of the migration experience and continues to focus on the economic, social, cultural, ethical, security, and policy ramifications of international movements of people.

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India Migration Report 2024

Indians in Canada

Edited by S Irudaya Rajan

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Preface

It is with immense pleasure that I write this preface to the 15th edition of the India Migration Report (IMR), which focuses on the different facets of Indian migration and Indians in Canada. This report comes at a time when Canada has emerged as one of the top destinations for Indians migrating abroad. This volume presents a collection of chapters that aim to provide a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of Indian migration to Canada and their lived and immigration experience. It covers various aspects of this topic, such as the integration of the Punjabi community, the largest and oldest Indian group in Canada, and the emergence of other Indian communities. It also examines how the Indo-Canadian bilateral relationship affects the migration experiences of Indian migrants. Furthermore, it explores the migration experiences of Indo-Canadian women, their challenges and opportunities, and the role of Indo-Canadians in Canadian politics. Additionally, it analyses the economic and social impact of Indian migrants, especially in non-metropolitan areas of Canada, and the inter-cultural interactions between different migrant groups and natives. The book also discusses the migration of healthcare professionals from India to Canada and the potential of migration for international development.

Before I introduce the chapters of *India Migration Report 2024*, let us briefly examine the previous versions of the IMR. The first edition of the India Migration Report 2010 discussed the four broad areas of migration, remittances, gender, and policy issues. The first half of the book focuses on the effects of migration on the nation, while the second part of the study covers the government's engagement in the migration processes. The book also discusses recruiting agencies' abusive tactics and examines these problems from a gendered perspective.

India Migration Report 2011, set amidst the 2011 Census and proposals for a National Population Register, focuses on identity, violence, and conflict in the context of internal migration within India. The report discusses the implication of internal migration on livelihood strategies, recruitment processes, development, and policy formulation.

India Migration Report 2012 examines the economic and social impact of the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) on governance, emigration, remittances,

return migration, and re-integration, based on extensive surveys in Kerala, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka, as well as site visits to the UAE, Kuwait, Qatar, and Malaysia. The report also examines the linkages between emigration and remittances using data from the World Bank, the International Labour Organization, the International Organization of Migration, and the United Nations.

India Migration Report 2013 examines the social, psychological, and human costs of migration for migrants and their families, especially children, women, and the elderly left behind in the migration process, by utilizing qualitative and quantitative research findings. It also covers nurses' migration, skilled mobility, informal labour market mobility, women workers' mobility, global financial crisis, return migration, remittance management, and bilateral mobility agreements. India Migration Report 2014 focuses on the Indian diaspora and its contributions to the country in the form of remittances and diaspora philanthropy. The book also examines how diasporic financial and human resources can be used for economic growth and sustainable development, offers insights into transnational philanthropic networks, and includes case studies of Indian migrants in the GCC countries.

India Migration Report 2015 examines migration and its linkages with gender, focusing on irregular, marriage, and domestic labour migration. It highlights the interconnections between migration, gender, and caste, the economic relationship, and the first-hand experiences of migrants across India. The central theme of India Migration Report 2016 is Gulf Migration. It looks at gender concerns in migration to Gulf nations, analyses modern labour recruiting and policy in India and the GCC nations, and compiles the most recent field data on migrants across Indian states.

India Migration Report 2017 focuses on forced migration and displacement due to climate change, political conflicts, natural and artificial disasters, and large development projects. The report presents the different aspects of development-induced displacement and the subsequent forced migration and discusses the marginalization of the already marginalized communities and social groups. India Migration Report 2018 looks at the prospects, challenges, and lived experiences of Indian migration to Europe. The book looks at a number of issues, such as the impact of Brexit, agreements signed between India and the EU, the plight of unskilled workers, and how they have been exploited in various parts of Europe.

India Migration Report 2019 uses key informant interviews, ethnography, and in-depth case studies to examine the Indian diaspora in Europe. The report looks at the historical trends of Indian migration to Europe, the transnational network of skilled Indian migrants in Europe, and how they have transformed host societies while contributing to the development of their homeland. India Migration Report 2020 uses insights and data from the Kerala Migration Surveys to throw light on how migration surveys operate and how the data from such surveys can illuminate the socio-economic conditions of migrants and the general population alike. The report includes

chapters on remittances, return migration, gender, migration policies, and others.

India Migration Report 2021, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, discusses the health of migrants. The report examines access to healthcare, safety hazards at workplaces, gendered access and gender-based violence at workplaces, vulnerabilities faced by internal migrants in India due to COVID-19, and the role of decentralization and local self-governments in addressing health problems of migrants. India Migration Report 2022 focuses on the migration of health professionals from India. It looks at the migration history of Indian health professionals, especially nurses, and focuses on the social and economic factors driving this phenomenon. It also examines the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 on health professionals and the influence of remittances on the local economy.

The India Migration Report 2023 looks at the challenges faced by Indian and international students in Canada, including health access, family dynamics, and the COVID-19 pandemic. It highlights the complex policy environment faced by skilled Indian migrants and the role of agencies in recruitment. The report also discusses the economic and social issues faced by Indian international students in Canada, the impact of remittances on household spending, lockdowns on migrant workers, and the socio-economic effects of Gulf migrants returning to India.

India Migration Report 2024 is the 15th edition of the long successful line of India Migration Reports and is outlined into 21 chapters, each looking at different aspects and themes of Indian migration to Canada.

Satwinder Kaur Bains examines the history of Indian migration to Canada in the introductory chapter. The Punjabi diaspora offers a powerful example of successful integration and adherence to traditional values. The author finds that the Punjabis have set up social, cultural, political, and religious institutions characteristic of similar organizations of their ancestral land and carried with them the predefined social identity, religious beliefs, food habits, and even language.

In the second chapter, Rupa Banerjee investigates the evolution of Indian immigrants in Canada by examining their brief history, profiles focusing on demographic and socio-economic characteristics, and the dynamics of Indian immigration to Canada in order to comprehend the factors that have contributed to the dramatic growth of Indian immigrants in Canada. In addition, she attributes this growth to a combination of push and pull factors, including the limitations of the Indian educational system and the pull of a higher-quality educational setup in Canada with expedited entry processes, such as the Student Direct Stream (SDS), a relatively easy route to Permanent Residence (PR) status, high educational and English language proficiency of Indian Immigrants.

Ryan M. Touhey elucidates a historical understanding of India-Canada relations in the third chapter. From the independence of India to the present day, the author describes the bilateral ties and diplomatic relations between

India and Canada. The study observes that trade, people-to-people linkages, and a more diverse Indo-Canadian diaspora have made the relationship more robust.

Usha George studies the experiences of Indian immigrant women and Indo-Canadian women in the fourth chapter. The chapter navigates a short history of Indo-Canadian women's immigration to Canada, post-migration experiences, and the evolving intra-familial relationships. Family conflicts are also studied at a micro level with respect to child maltreatment, intimate partner violence, and elder abuse. Finally, the chapter looks at the interactions of Indian families with social institutions such as schools, ethnic communities, and religion.

Tania Das Gupta and Sugandha Nagpal discuss young Punjabis's pre- and post-migration narratives around employment expectations and experiences in the fifth chapter. Using qualitative interviews conducted with young Punjabis in Punjab, India, and Toronto, the authors explore how two groups of migrants (skilled permanent residents and two-step international student migrants) display continuity in their employment expectations and experiences based on their migration pathway and stage of migration. The chapter also looks into the agentive manoeuvring of young Punjabis around structural obstacles by drawing on the framework of "transnational navigation."

Masud Chand examines the role of Indo-Canadians in Canadian politics in Chapter 6. Chand finds that Indo-Canadian politicians are prominent at all levels of the Canadian government and traces this to Canada's policy of multiculturalism, which makes Indo-Canadians feel at home and more involved in the political process. The highly educated nature of the Indo-Canadian community, high regional and linguistic solidarity, and the similar parliamentary system that has existed in India are some possible reasons for the success of Indo-Canadians in politics.

Chapter 7 by Melissa Kelly and Jessica D Jung sheds light on the Indian migration to non-metropolitan destinations by considering the case of Thunder Bay, a region that has experienced a significant uptick in Indian migration. The chapter describes the lived experiences of Indian migrants in Thunder Bay by relying on semi-structured interviews with key informants in the region. The increase in migration has brought about an increase in the number of Indian-focused companies, organizations, and events catering to the interests and requirements of the rising Indian diaspora; however, the author notes that the lack of long-term career opportunities might cause the migrants to circle out of Thunder Bay causing the city to become a "mobile diaspora."

Stein Monteiro documents Indians' economic integration in Canada by measuring within-cohort wage growth compared to Canadian-born, Chinese immigrants, and other South Asian immigrants in the eighth chapter. He discovers that Indian immigrants' total economic assimilation is low and that market integration rates are comparable to other immigrant groups. Although Indian women immigrants do not catch up to Canadian women, they outperform comparable Indian men. The author holds that earlier

Indian immigrant cohorts were of better quality than those arriving after the late 1990s.

In the ninth chapter, Belinda Leach, Urmi Nanda Biswas, Parisha Jijina, and Ashika Niraula review the increasing trend of skilled female migration to Canada in order to enable and embrace their independence and educational credentials, in contrast to their position in India. The chapter also explores the different social, racial, and gender norms, making the movement more difficult and complicated in the case of skilled female migrants. It also highlights the resilience and resourcefulness of these women in navigating these challenges and achieving success in their new homes.

Srimanta Mohanty elucidates the challenges faced by the Indian community in Brampton, Canada, due to COVID-19 in the tenth chapter. The article examines the reasons and the impact of the community's overexposure, thereby identifying the underlying structural reasons for the dangers presented by COVID-19. The article also proposes recommendations to address the cause and impact of COVID-19 on the Indian community.

Sony Jalarajan Raj and Adith K. Suresh document the experiences and challenges faced by Indians in Canada in the 11th chapter. They argue that Canada's immigration policies and programs attract aspiring workers and students. The Eurocentric and ethnocentric biases affect the way immigrants are treated and accepted in Canada, and the discrimination against Indian immigrants in Canada occurs on multiple levels. They recommend that to improve the immigration process, more affirmative actions that focus on identity politics and cultural practices need to be implemented.

In the 12th chapter, Harshita Yalamarty discusses the intercultural conflicts that arise when transnational migration is explored in the context of model minorities and marriage migration in the case of Indians in Canada. The narratives of skilled Indian migrant women in Canada, particularly their decisions to choose Canada as their destination and their experiences within the Canadian labour market, the role of gender, class, race, and caste-based structures and hierarchies that shape these experiences, are studied.

Mandeep Kaur Mucina explores the pivotal role that "Izzat" holds in the life, journey, and social structure of second-generation Punjabi women in the 13th chapter. The themes and consequences that Izzat embodies are investigated. The persisting hetero-patriarchal practices, which have been a primary contributor to female trauma, are studied through existing literature and interactions. The study also follows the subsequent redefinition of Izzat into a positive reinforcement for young Punjabi women.

In Chapter 14, Uma A. Segal reviews the process of migration and integration with the help of existing literature. Various push and pull factors of migration are discussed throughout the chapter, with emphasis on labour market needs and declining birth rates in developed countries, talent migration (brain drain and brain gain), and integration of migrants into the host country. The chapter concludes with an insight into the future of international migration and potential migration corridors.

In the 15th chapter, Kamala Elizebath Nayar examines Punjabi migration to north-western British Colombia to understand the relationship between migration patterns and employment using over one hundred semi-structured interviews conducted with Punjabi men and women and their adult children. The author also explains how settlement in the small remote towns of Skeena resulted in complex intercultural dynamics between various immigrant groups (like the Punjabi ones) and Indigenous peoples, a topic that has, by and large, been overlooked by academics and policymakers.

Sandeep K. Dhillon examines the historical trajectory of immigration in Canada, particularly with regard to its impact on the Punjabi community and the integration of the Punjabi community into Canadian society. The chapter also discusses the historical context of immigration policies in Canada, highlighting the shift from European to multi-cultural immigration. The author also studies the challenges and resilience of older Punjabi immigrants in Canada.

In the 17th chapter, Michael Nijhawan explores the collective narratives of memory in the transnational migration of Indians to Canada and its subsequent reflection on the current socio-economic conditions. The continued importance of memory or historical recognition of the migration narrative and historical analysis of different chapters of Canada's restrictive migration policies is explored to provide a comprehensive perspective to future generations.

Ayona Bhattacharjee, Banantika Datta, and Rupa Chanda discuss the importance of mobility and training of healthcare professionals in the global and Canadian contexts in Chapter 18. The authors argue that the acute shortage of medical professionals in the context of COVID-19 can be bridged through cooperative international ties. The authors argue that India and Canada should explore the possibility of stronger bilateral diplomatic ties, including a bilateral mobility agreement with Canada, which can prove highly beneficial for both countries, with India being a major supplier of medical professionals globally.

Sajaudeen Chapparban critically examines multiculturalism's origins and its effects on Canadian immigration laws, focusing on the Indian diaspora in Chapter 19. The author points out that Indian immigration to Canada began in the middle of the 19th century when the British Empire promised Indians equal rights. They were nevertheless excluded from traditional white Canadian society as a result of racial injustices and discriminatory practices. The author also examined racial attitudes and political leadership's role in the discrimination of coloured Canadians in post-multicultural Canada.

Madhumita Sarkar, Manoj Paul, Sourav Mandal, and Nuruzzaman Kasemi utilize data from the Tamil Nādu Migration Survey (2015) to study the effect of adult children's migration on the health and suffering from disability of the elderly left behind in Chapter 20. The study finds that even though the elderly left behind have better subjective health compared to the elderly with no migrant children, they have suffered in terms of mobility, self-care, and communication. The authors highlight the importance of family ties and relationships in increasing the well-being of the elderly population.

In Chapter 21, Balraj S. Kahlon proposes how international migrants can be made the cornerstone of international development and proposes a novel policy plan for India to leverage international migrants for its domestic development. The author proposes a public policy developmental model where international migrants are encouraged to develop skills and generate wealth instead of aspiring for permanent settlement, thereby resolving the labour shortages in host countries and strengthening the human capital of India.

The next two India Migration Reports 2025 and 2026 will focus on Indians and Diaspora in the United States of America.

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1 A Century of Indian Migration to Canada

A Choreography of Challenges and Changes

Satwinder Kaur Bains

In the early 1900s when the first male Punjabi immigrants from India (under British Raj at the time) started to arrive on the shores of Canada to the Pacific Rim province of British Columbia (BC) (est.1903), they brought with them hopes for economic prosperity, cultural acceptance, and personal fulfilment. However, before embarking on their journey, they were not keenly aware that they would have to face intense racialized animosity, discrimination, and labour prejudice (Sacuta et al., 2022; Basran & Bolaria, 2003; Buchignani et al., 1985). For these new immigrants, the rupture from the homeland did not bring the expected rapture of acceptance, settlement, and adaptation. Almost from the very beginning of their migration journey in 1904, Sikh immigrants faced a barrage of racial discrimination from previously arrived dominant European origin immigrants who wanted to preserve the land for a White population, “in a White country with White standards of living and morality” (Vancouver Sun, 1913; Jensen, 1988; Ward, 2002). For the Indian immigrants (Sikh, Hindu, Muslim), Canada was considered a daughter colony, albeit foreign land, but its vexatious politics and peoples, no access to culturally appropriate foods of choice, prejudices towards identity related to clothing and food (smells and aromas), full-on legal racial discrimination quickly played a role in strengthening (among other things) their own cultural conservatism (Bains et al., 2022; Mehta, 2012; Dalessio, 2012). Perhaps for the first time, for the mostly Sikh Punjabi land-owning early immigrants, their sense of place was thus challenged, leaving them permanently displaced in a temporary existence – neither “here” nor “there.” While multi-layered confusions of postmodern and transnational identities abound acutely in the diaspora, there has also been a small but significant effect felt towards settlement and integration by Indian immigrants to BC in more recent times (Nayar, 2004). Their early years’ solitary commitment towards all modes of “survival” has seen clear shifts in contemporary times towards life for “pleasure” in the *long durée* trajectory of Indians in BC. However, their history has been fraught with difficulties with identity framing partly due to stresses that felt the impact of both internal and external ethnic boundaries (Barth, 1969).

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Kastoryano (2009) posits about the dynamic and fluid nature of culture and identity, stating that:

> Culture and identity are redefined and affirmed in action and interaction, and change with the cultural, social, and political environment. Communities differentiate themselves from the larger society by their language, their culture, their religion, or their history. They are also defined in opposition to other groups, and to the society.
>
> (p. 1)

In this manner, the early Indian immigrants were viewed by White colonial settlers to Canada as having fundamental and immutable characteristics; the rational and fluid aspects of their identity were ignored, in turn essentializing their very existence and purpose. It was within this milieu that early Sikh, Hindu, and Muslim Indian immigrants carved out an existence with courage and valour, without turning their backs on the origins of their destiny. They may not have been able in the first four decades of migration to Canada, to dismantle hegemonic cultural formations that eclipsed their existence, but they forcefully created an insularity that permitted a tight embrace with their own cultural norms. A sense of hybridity would come much later in their migration and settlement journey.

In the early 1900s, the need for cultural preservation was so strong against a tide of "difference" with such profound inequitable power relations that the intensity of freezing cultural frameworks became a source of permanent cleavage to the home country of India, their province of undivided Punjab, and the small villages they hailed from. All these sites were indelibly stamped on the imagination of these men, so much so that they undertook numerous many-month journeys on ships back to the homeland, to maintain the long-distance reference that fed the need for cultural preservation and the strength to continue resisting the dissolution of a loci of collective identity. These were early transnational immigrants, who had not yet fully transferred their loyalties to the country of migration, remaining invested in home both as an imagined community with which they had limited day-to-day interaction but as real as possible because they remained frequent transnational travellers (Anderson, 1991). Since assimilation to the "Anglo-Saxon conformity" (Kastoryano, 2009) of negating cultural pluralism in Canada as "antithetical master frames" (Berbrier, 2004) was almost impossible in terms of race, language, and culture, integration was a theory not yet theorized for early minority immigrant communities in Canada (Nayar, 2004). Berbrier (2004) writes "antithetical master-frames are those discursive genres that are regularly bundled, *paired and opposed* in discourse, both understood and presented in contrast to each other, across a variety of social movements" (p. 30). In the face of an inferior moral and intellectual racialization of each activity undertaken by the Punjabi (mostly Sikh) immigrants by other Canadians, these men adhered to their cultural mores with greater rigour than

might have been appropriate under other more inclusive typologies of political, social, cultural co-existence (Kastoryano, 2009). Most evident were important elements of negotiated community living: family structures, language maintenance, and traditional norms – this option of negotiation can *a priori* be a moderate solution if the conflict it is negotiating *is itself* moderate, which was not the case in this instance (Nayar, 2004).

Family as a complex cultural cornerstone of life has always been intimately intertwined with ethnic information, culture, lore, nostalgia, rites of passage, regional identities, memory-making and individual/group affiliations to ethnicity, etc., bell hooks suggests "ethnicity becomes spice, seasoning that can liven up the dull dish that is mainstream white culture" (hooks, 1998, p. 181). Punjabi Sikh immigrants reached back into their family structures by ensuring that their norms would be maintained against all odds, because abandoning these traditions would necessarily mean abandoning the social nature of community (*Gemeinschaft*), family (temporary as it was in the early years), food habits, and culture or religion. For example, Gabaccia (1998) suggests that "immigrants sought to maintain their familiar foodways because food initiated and maintained traditional relationships, expressed the extent of social distance between people, demonstrated status and prestige . . . and treated illness" (p. 51). In this instance, the Punjabi immigrants in their own words found solace in the company of other men in their temporary homes while they yearned for belonging and permanency in a new land, viscerally connecting themselves to the "emotional factor" of a free homeland (from British Raj). An idea whose time had not come yet and would not come until 1947, when India became independent and when they were granted the right to vote in Canada and make a difference in the development of their own independent destiny.

While the first immigrants were all men living in strictly enforced racially segregated bachelor societies in the early 1900s in BC, they quickly created a mutually agreeable hierarchical social setting. While they all lived together, many to a home, out of necessity the men took on all those tasks that traditionally had been the domain of women in the home country, away from the prying eyes, social mores, and patriarchal ideologies of their home communities. Since they had been habituated by the social status granting institutions and gatekeepers of society (*Gesellschaft*), culture, religion, kith, kin, caste, gender, status associated with socio-economic status in India, etc., they were suddenly faced with a personal pragmatic diffusion of these strictly enforced boundaries and sets of rules and laws governing social structures. They put aside their own inhibitions and resistance to this diffusion because they were facing so much outside external opposition (as the "other").

Buchignani et al. (1985) suggest that these men, who were mostly peasants, recognized the need to "manage" and "codify" their survival in new ways, and normative patriarchal norms took a sideline as gender roles took on new and immediate pragmatic meaning. The men collectively appointed a man from amongst them to be their cook whom they would all pay from

their own salaries, thus, not requiring him to look for work in the forestry or farming industries. The man (usually elder and thus perhaps not able to work as hard as the young strong men or earn as much) took on the role of a chief cook. The elder status allowed him to "care" for the younger men as an uncle in India might look after his nephews and cousins – the status of this elder was elevated to one of "family," allowing for a nurturing of familial closeness in an unfamiliar space. Thus, this respectful act, which was performed in various ways (a job which in India is low on the occupational and caste status stratification), elevated his status due to this accorded prestige and important domain.

The early immigrant men lived in simple log-hewn structures called "cook houses" or "bunk houses" that were built on the same or close by property as the sawmills in what Kastoryano (2004) calls "territories of identity that are areas where poverty and otherness are concentrated" (p. 6). In this instance, both elements were present and prevalent. The men worked long shifts and even double shifts – earning just enough money that met their singular purpose and need: that to financially support family back in India and to add to existing small land holdings in ancestral villages (Buchignani et al., 1985). Since these men were not allowed to bring their wives and children with them to Canada, in the early years (the first woman arrived in 1921), they lived five to eight in a room within a large dormitory-style cook house. Thirty to fifty men lived in these conditions for years on end, working at one sawmill, making enough money that they sent back home to their families each pay period. They had few expenses, for example, they paid $3.50 a month for rent and $6.00 to the cook each. Enough money was left over from their wage to assist in elevating their family positioning and land holdings in the village in India (Buchignani et al., 1985).

The temporariness of their stay in sawmill camps (no homes, homesteads, or city living) created unmitigated boredom and isolation, which in turn kept them insulated from the larger impacts of societal animosities as they rose through the 1910s to the 1940s. Any flaring of anger or frustration tended to be with each other and within the close confines of the cook houses, and to avoid this they created a necessitated comradery (they had nowhere to go) that might have been missing otherwise. Disagreements with men of other nationalities or ethnicities were rare, because cultural insularity due to language difficulties and food preferences kept them artificially separated. While internal boundaries were maintained by the Punjabi men towards the dominant groups or other minority immigrants, out of necessity, external boundaries were also created due to the stresses of negative public opinion, colonial powers, and fear of judicial or repercussions of public opinion (Johnston, 2013).

Punjabi elders living in sawmill camps manifested their ethnic affiliations and codified relationships as they managed the younger men by utilizing the embedded social and role hierarchy of uncle/nephew (*Taiyaji/bhathija*) or father/son (*Bapuji/beta*). As Alba (1990) explains the performative component

of identity formation by remaining connected to ethnic culture, he suggests that "no matter how strongly an individual identifies with an ethnic background, if this identity is not reflected in action and experience, it makes little contribution to sustaining ethnicity" (p. 75). For the men, close solidarity also gave consent to the underlying need for self-identification (Mehta, 2012) and codification as they were isolated from assimilating into the dominant society partially because of their own self-imposed isolation. This produced limited contact zones, and partially due to hard-to-meet dominant cultural expectations based on ethnic "otherness" their Canadian settlement was incomplete. However, today the Punjabi Sikh Canadian diaspora holds rich and robust stories of migration to different parts of British Columbia and beyond for various reasons at various periods of history. These stories explore emigration, processes of settlement, persistence of culture, the extent of assimilation or adaptation, and socioeconomic and political participation in the provinces:

- Early years: 1902–1918 – Racism, labour, social discrimination, bachelor society, legislated racism, discriminatory laws, media bias, loss of the right to vote, small settlements established all over BC, diaspora activism for independence from colonial rule – the British Raj with the Gadhar movement, establishment of social organizations, challenging racist laws in court, refusal of Komagata Maru landing.
- The Quiet years: 1919–1947 – Women were allowed to migrate, campaigns undertaken to undo racist legislations, immigration down to a trickle with attrition back to India, won the right to vote again in 1947 after World War II and Indian independence.
- Post-war era: 1947–1970 – In 1951, there were 2,148 South Asians in Canada – 1,937 in BC; start of quota system for migration; political engagement fuelled by independence of India, Pakistan, and Ceylon (now Sri Lanka).
- Multicultural Bulge: 1970–1990 – migration increases with family reunification, labour movements invigorated.
- Third wave of migration: 1990–present – arrival of educated classes, business classes, youth, and families; today for the first time there is the largest cohort of South Asian ancestry children born in Canada.

In 2024, one hundred and twenty one years after the first migrants arrived, there are five cohorts of Punjabi Sikhs in BC. The first is a relatively small group of those children and their families (fourth and fifth generation) who are descendants of the early 1900s settlers. This cohort is a well-integrated Canadian-born cohort that holds cultural ties albeit traditionally weak and fused into a Canadian sense of identity. The second cohort is made of members from the large immigration boom in the 1970s with the enactment of Multiculturalism as a Federal Policy in Canada and the liberalization of immigration. The third cohort is the children of the 1970s bulge, who are

Canadian born and for a large majority of whom India is only in their imagination. The fourth cohort is the constantly arriving immigrant as India is a #1 source country of immigrants for Canada. The fifth cohort is the uniquely positioned international Punjabi students who stay in legal limbo for many years before education, government policy, and structural systems grant permission for them to become permanent residents after a rigorous application of requirements.

Crucial to a critically important evolution of Punjabi Sikhs as a diasporic community in Canada has been their ability to adapt in an alien setting. Punjabis have set up social, cultural, political, and religious institutions that are characteristic of similar organizations of their ancestral land. The most important of these have been family; the rites of establishing family structures and the network of relationships resulting from it have been one of its core strengths. However, an important aspect of a social organization such as that of family, which has analytical and theoretical significance in the study of diaspora, is the generational difference (Nayar, 2004). The first generation of Punjabis as a Diasporic community is evidently different from the second and the subsequent ones. Canada now has entire generations of ancestrally Punjabi Sikhs born and brought up in this country (Sull, 2020). However, the past continues to inform the present and while the Punjabi Sikh community in Canada has always looked backwards to Punjab for many reasons; encroachment of Canadian values and experiences has affected change:

> Interracial marriage has not become that common among Punjabi communities, compared to other immigrant groups. The ethnic and religious population patterns of Punjabis indicate how immigration policies affect the formation of Diasporic communities. A brief review of the history of Punjabi migration to Canada illustrates how Canadian immigration policies have, over time, designed the pattern of Punjabi communities in Canada. Until 1961, 95.9% of Canada's annual acceptance of immigrants was of people from the UK, Europe and the US. The 1967 points system dramatically changed this, and the flow of immigration drew from Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Caribbean. When immigration rules softened, limited family immigration through the sponsorship program was allowed, and the Punjabi population slowly developed its composition as it is today.
>
> (Bhargava et al., 2008, p. 57)

The experiences of adult immigrants and that of their offspring in their new homes are significantly different. The second generation is spared the hardships endured by their immigrant parents, but they are expected to achieve greater success than their parents and to fully integrate into society while at the same time maintaining their ancestral country's values, ethos, culture, languages, and religion (Sull, 2020; Nayar, 2004). This large second generation is a demographic group that includes both children born in their parents' new

home and those who immigrated with their parents when they were children (often referred to as 1.5 generation). Members of the second generation see themselves and are seen by others as a cultural bridge between their parents' traditional way of living and a new way of living. They are agents of socio-cultural change, therefore, and a prime locus for understanding the complexities of a multi-cultural society (Kobayashi, 2014). These second-generation immigrant youth identify with the ethno-cultural group of their parents' country of origin, but they also identify strongly with their parents' adopted country and its people. They have a strong sense of belonging to the larger society, although it may be felt in varying degrees (Visser, 2020; Nayar, 2004).

Punjabi Sikhs are known for jealously preserving their cultural identity as they continue to cling to their norms and endogamy, marital stability and family solidarity, kin orientation, religion, and mother tongue (Faqia, 2022). Overseas, Punjabi Sikhs adhere to their traditional culture so ostensibly that at times it appears that they are more Indian in their cultural orientations and practices than resident Indians in India (who evolve naturally without the stress of external factors). For them culture is an abstract symbolic system but that which is composed of deep and abiding values, meanings, and beliefs. The rich cultural heritage, common language and a strong sense of being Punjabi binds Punjabis together. The transnational networks among Punjabis have become stronger with the development of media, internet, and television. The local 24-hour linguistically rich radio, print weekly newspapers, monthly and quarterly magazines, etc., play an important role in informing and connecting Indians abroad about their homeland (Faqia, 2022).

The Punjabi Sikh diaspora is not the mere physical movement of people over the last 120 years. They have carried with them the socio-cultural baggage, which among other things consists of predefined social identity, a set of religious beliefs and practices, a framework of norms and values governing family and kinship organizations, food habits, and language. Punjabis are not completely cut off from India; they retain mental and/or physical contact with their homeland, often characterized as "the myth of return." Their families or significant others may identify them as originating from and belonging to their homeland (Jayaram, 2004).

The Punjabi Sikh community is well entrenched in its ethnic, linguistic, religious, and socio-economic backgrounds and continues to foster the belief in the value of family, the preservation of sharply defined family roles, and the priority of family interests (Bhargava et al., 2008). The diaspora is globally strong and is spread over a hundred nations, where it exercises its influence in fields as diverse as business, technology, medicine, politics, literature, and cinema. This community is important not only in the many countries of the Americas, Europe, and Asia, where it has taken root but also in its traditional state of Punjab. In an increasingly global world, the Punjabi Diaspora offers a powerful example of successful integration coupled with adherence to traditional values, cultures, religions, and languages, sustained in our Canadian case for over a hundred years.

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2 Growing Together

The Evolution of Indian Immigrants in Canada

Rupa Banerjee

Introduction

Over the past 50 years, Canada has honed its immigration policy to target high-skilled workers. The universal points system, introduced in 1967, removed overtly discriminatory country-based quotas and instead emphasized education and occupational skills as the main determinants of entry. The evolution of Canada's immigration policy has dramatically altered the ethno-racial makeup of immigrants in Canada. Prior to the 1967 amendment, newcomers to Canada were almost exclusively from Europe. Once the points system was implemented, Asia quickly became the largest source continent of immigrants.

As of 2021, 62 percent of recent immigrants in Canada (arriving within the past five years) were from Asia. Within this group, India is now by far the most common source country, overtaking the Philippines and China (see Figure 2.1). According to the 2021 Census of Population, nearly one in five recent immigrants (18.6%) (arriving in Canada between 2016 and 2021) were born in India, the highest proportion from a single source country since 1971, when newcomers from the United Kingdom made up 20.9 percent of immigrants (Statistics Canada, 2022a).

The growth of immigration from India has led to a dramatic increase in the number of individuals living in Canada who identify as being of Indian origin. According to the 2021 Census, 1,858,755 individuals in Canada are of Indian origin, representing about 5.1 percent of the population (Statistics Canada, 2022c). In Canada, the term "South Asian" is commonly used to refer to individuals whose ethnic ancestry originates in the Indian subcontinent. Individuals of Indian origin are the largest within this group, but the group also includes those identifying as Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, Nepali, and Bhutanese (Tran et al., 2005). However, the term is often criticized for oversimplifying and homogenizing the experiences of a diverse group of people (see Ashutosh, 2014, for an analysis of the categorization of South Asians in Canada).

In this chapter, I therefore focus specifically on immigrants born in India and exclude those from other parts of South Asia. My aim is to examine the

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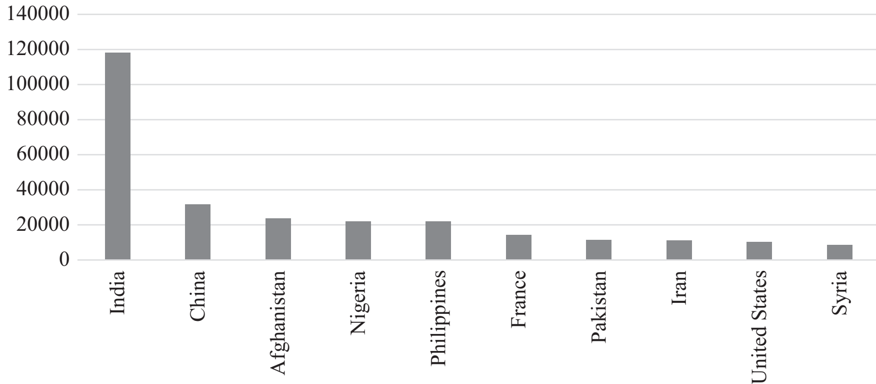

Figure 2.1 Source countries of immigrants arriving in 2022.

Note: Adapted from Monthly IRCC Updates – Permanent Residents by Country of Citizenship by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (2023). https://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/f7e5498e-0ad8-4417-85c9-9b8aff9b9eda/resource/d1c1f4f3-2d7f-4e02-9a79-7af98209c2f3?inner_span=True

dynamics of Indian immigration in the Canadian context in order to understand the factors contributing to their dramatic growth in the past decade. I begin with a brief history of Indian migration to Canada. Next, I present a profile of Indian newcomers and how these have changed over time, focusing on their demographic and socio-economic characteristics. I then explore the complex issues driving the growth in Indian immigration to Canada. Finally, I suggest areas of future research.

A Brief History of Indian Immigrants in Canada

The earliest Indian immigrants to settle in Canada landed in British Columbia around the turn of the 20th century. Nearly all of these early immigrants were Sikh men from the Punjab province, and most were former soldiers in the British Indian army. Canada was in the throes of establishing itself as a nation and manual labor was in great demand. Indians worked as laborers in the forestry, agriculture, and steel industries and settled primarily in rural and isolated communities (Bhargava et al., 2010). The work was precarious, often dangerous, and low paying. Wages usually matched those of the Chinese and Japanese workers in the area and were up to half as much as the wages paid to white workers (Asian Heritage Society of New Brunswick, n.d.).

Discrimination against Chinese and Japanese immigrants was already widespread in Canada and as the number of Indian immigrants grew, anti-Indian sentiment bubbled to the surface. Despite being British subjects, Indian immigrants were denied voting rights, were not permitted to hold public

office, and were barred from professions such as law, medicine, and finance (Sharma, 1997).

In 1908, the Canadian government passed legislation requiring all immigrants to arrive in Canada through a "continuous journey" – with no stopovers. In effect, this legislation excluded immigration from India since there were no direct shipping lines from India to Canada. (Bhargava et al., 2010). Despite these exclusionary policies, the steamship *Komagata Maru* arrived in Vancouver in May 1914 carrying 376 passengers from India. The Canadian authorities refused them entry, and the passengers were held for nearly two months under extremely harsh conditions, facing near-starvation. Finally, they were ordered to return to India. Tragically, upon their return to India, many of the passengers were either imprisoned or killed by the British Indian government (Panesar et al., 2017).

The legacy of Canada's exclusionary policies toward Indian immigrants (and non-European immigrants more generally) lasted into the early 1960s. In the post-World War II period, there was a notable increase in immigrants arriving from countries in southern Europe such as Italy, Greece, and Portugal. However, most of these new arrivals tended to be unskilled laborers. In the post-war economic boom, it became clear that Canada needed to expand and restructure its immigration program to compete globally. With the manufacturing, professional, and technical sectors growing in importance, the economy desperately needed skilled workers. In 1966, the Canadian government commissioned a white paper to review the immigration system. The white paper recommended revising the system to focus on human capital including educational qualifications, occupational skills, and English/French language ability. The report also laid the foundation for removing ethnicity-based quotas and restrictions. In 1967 the new regulations were put into law and the universal points-system was born (Kelley & Trebilcock, 2010).

The points system opened the door for large numbers of Indian immigrants to arrive and settle in Canada. Indo-Canadians grew from about 6,700 individuals in 1961 to nearly 68,000 in 1971, and the numbers have continued to increase steadily over the past five decades (Statistics Canada, 2017). Many Indian immigrants sponsored family members including spouses, dependent children, parents, and grandparents to join them. The Indo-Canadian community began forming thriving ethnic enclaves, particularly in the Greater Vancouver and Greater Toronto areas (Qadeer & Kumar, 2006).

The number of Indian entrants remained relatively stable, ranging from approximately 25,000 to 36,000 individuals, throughout the 1990s until 2012. However, since 2013, the number of Indians settling in Canada each year has more than tripled, reaching 118,095 in 2022 (Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada, 2023). Before exploring the factors contributing to this massive growth in Indian immigrants, I examine the characteristics of this group and how they have changed over time.

A Profile of Indian Immigrants in Canada

Agrawal and Lovell (2008) used Statistics Canada data sources to paint a picture of the socio-demographic and economic characteristics of Indian immigrants in Canada up to the early 2000s. In this section, I build on and update the analyses of Agrawal and Lovell (2008), using the 2021 Longitudinal Immigration Database (IMDB) and the Public Use Microdata Files (PUMFs) of the 2001 and 2016 Canadian Censuses. The IMDB includes landing records and annual tax information for immigrants who have arrived in Canada since 1980 and filed at least one tax return since 1982. Immigrant landing records contain characteristics at arrival, such as age, education, marital status, source country, language ability, and immigration category (e.g., skilled worker, family, or refugee). Tax records provide information on these individuals' annual wages and salaries as well as other income-related data over time. The most recently updated IMDB covers landing data up to 2021 and tax information up to 2020. All analyses using the IMDB in this section are restricted to immigrants who were born in India. To investigate how Indian immigrants have changed over time, the analyses are separated by entry cohort: the 1980s, 1990s, 2000s, and 2010s. The Census PUMFs contain data from 2.7 percent of the total population living in Canada in private dwellings. The target population includes Canadian-born individuals, immigrants, and non-permanent residents such as refugee claimants as well as work or study permit holders. Topics covered in the Census PUMF include demographic characteristics, education, ethnic diversity and immigration, labor market activities, and income. The income data relates to the year prior to the Census since it is gathered from tax records.

From the IMDB, it is clear that the pathways through which newcomers enter Canada have shifted as immigration policies have evolved. Although economic immigration became a priority in 1967, the Canadian government also maintained sizeable entry streams for family reunification and refugees well into the 1980s. Figure 2.2 shows the admission categories of immigrants

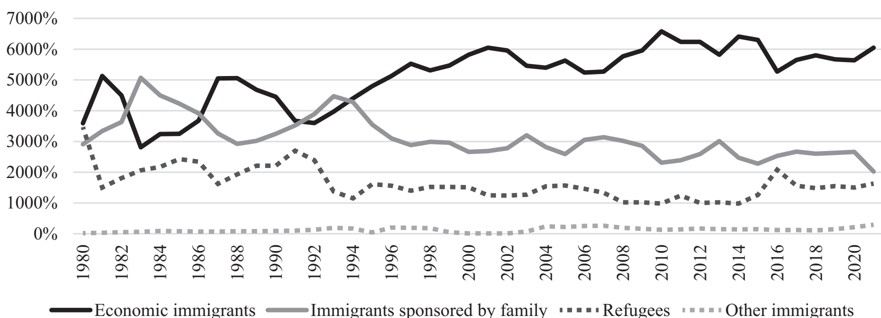

Figure 2.2 Admission categories of immigrants in Canada, 1980–2021.

Source: Longitudinal Immigration Database (IMDB) 2021

arriving in Canada from 1980 to 2021. The proportion of family-class immigrants began declining relative to economic immigrants in the early 1990s. The gap between the size of the family class and the economic class has only widened in the 21st century.

For Indian immigrants, the family class was the most common pathway in the 1980s. As shown in Figure 2.3, about 80 percent of Indian newcomers arriving in the 1980s were sponsored by a family member already living in Canada. Another 17 percent entered through the Federal Skilled Worker Program (FSWP), which was the economic stream for skilled workers. Only about 2 percent entered through other categories such as the refugee/humanitarian stream. By the 1990s, the FSWP stream had become more prevalent – nearly 30 percent of Indian newcomers entered through that stream, while the numbers entering through the family class, although still a majority, declined to about 66 percent.

The 2000s brought a major shift in Canadian immigration policy. It was becoming clear to policy makers that immigrants entering since the 1970s, and in particular those from non-European source countries, were not integrating into the labor market as well as previous cohorts of European immigrants (Aydemir & Skuterud, 2005). One of the main factors driving labor market disparities was the devaluation of foreign credentials and experience (Buzdugan & Halli, 2009). The Canadian government introduced a number of new economic programs during this period in an effort to ensure that immigrants had the necessary skills to contribute to the labor market and that their skills were being utilized. For example, in 1998 the Provincial Nominee

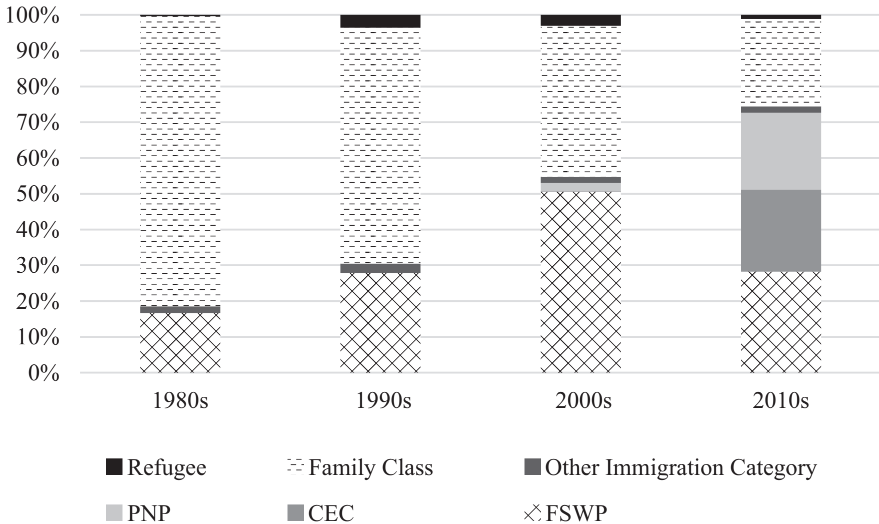

Figure 2.3 Admission categories of Indian immigrants by entry cohort.

Source: Longitudinal Immigration Database (IMDB) 2021

Program (PNP) was introduced, allowing provinces to nominate prospective immigrants based on specific regional needs (Baglay, 2012). In 2008 the Canadian Experience Class (CEC) was added, giving preference to highly skilled foreign workers or international students with at least one year of Canadian work experience (Alboim & Cohl, 2012).

About half of the Indian immigrants landing in the 2000s came through the FSWP, while 42 percent were sponsored by family. Other categories such as the PNP had much smaller numbers. But by the 2010s, the growth of the PNP and CEC categories became apparent, with nearly 21 percent of Indians arriving through the PNP and 22 percent arriving through the CEC. The numbers entering through the FSWP and the family class continued to decline during the 2010s.

The growth of the PNP and CEC programs ushered in the trend toward "two-step migration." In the two-step migration model, prospective immigrants first enter the country as temporary residents, typically either temporary foreign workers or international students, and then a select group of individuals from this pool makes a transition to permanent resident (PR) status (Crossman et al., 2020). About 5 percent of Indian immigrants entering between the 1980s and 2000s were temporary foreign workers prior to attaining PR status. By the 2010s, however, close to 14 percent of Indian newcomers had been working in Canada on temporary visas before becoming PRs (see Figure 2.4).

The number of Indians studying in Canada prior to immigration has grown even more dramatically in recent years. Figure 2.5 illustrates the proportion of Indian immigrants who held a study permit before attaining PR status each year from 1980 to 2020. This figure shows the pace at which the study-to-immigration pathway has expanded over the past decade. This pathway grew from just over 4 percent of all Indian immigrants in 2010 to over 31 percent by 2020.

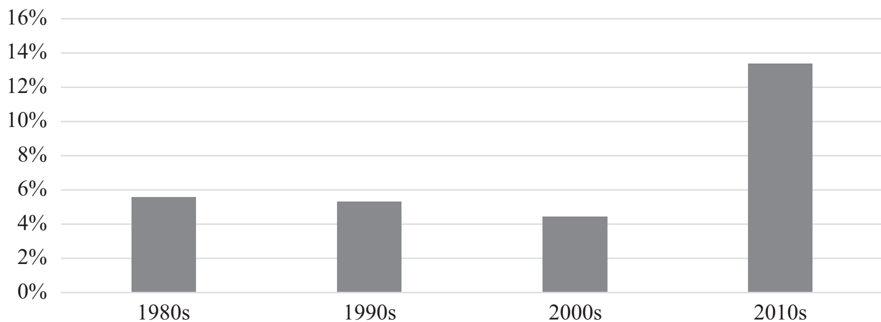

Figure 2.4 Indians with pre-migration temporary work visas by entry cohort.

Source: Longitudinal Immigration Database (IMDB) 2021

The evolution of immigration pathways has led to significant changes in the socio-demographic characteristics of Indian immigrants in Canada. As the proportion of economic immigrants increased, and the point system placed more weight on educational qualifications, Indian immigrants in Canada became increasingly educated. Figure 2.6 presents the highest level of education among Indian newcomers by period of migration. Over 70 percent of Indians who entered in the 1980s had a high school education or less, and only about 15 percent had an undergraduate degree. This is not surprising since a large majority of Indian immigrants in the 1980s were family-class entrants, who

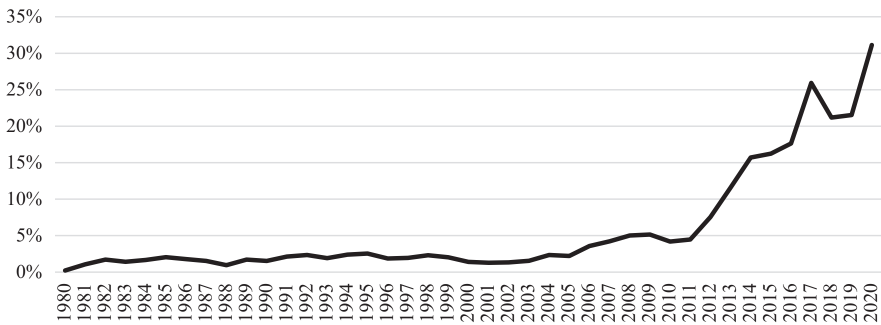

Figure 2.5 Indians with pre-migration study visas by entry year.

Source: Longitudinal Immigration Database (IMDB), 2021

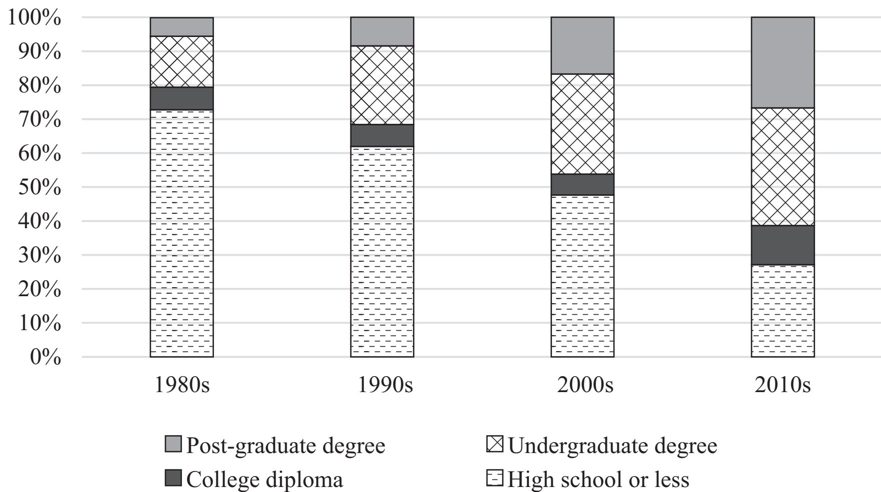

Figure 2.6 Level of education of Indian immigrants by entry cohort.

Source: Longitudinal Immigration Database (IMDB), 2021

were not evaluated for their qualifications. By the 1990s, about 23 percent of Indian newcomers had an undergraduate education and another 8 percent had post-graduate qualifications. The trend toward high levels of education accelerated in the 21st century. Nearly 30 percent of Indians landing in the 2000s had completed an undergraduate degree and another 17 percent had a post-graduate degree. For those entering in the 2010s, about 35 percent held an undergraduate degree and another 27 percent had completed a post-graduate degree. In contrast, about 30 percent of Canadian-born workers aged 25–54 had a university education or higher according to the 2021 Census (Young, 2022).

The dramatic shift toward highly educated and skilled Indian immigrants was also accompanied by a marked improvement in English language ability. In the 1980s, more than 65 percent of Indian immigrants reported that they spoke neither English nor French. By the 2010s only about 14 percent were in this category. Nearly 85 percent of Indian newcomers arriving in the 2010s reported that they were fluent in English (see Figure 2.7). It is notable that virtually no Indian immigrants in the IMDB reported French language ability.

The intended occupations of Indian immigrants have also changed over the decades. As shown in Figure 2.8, only a small fraction of Indian newcomers in the 1980s sought professional, managerial, or technical positions. About 25 percent were classified as "other workers," and through the sponsorship of parents and grandparents, a sizeable proportion (about 20 percent) were retirees. By the 2010s, however, professional, managerial, and skilled technical workers became much more prominent among Indian immigrants. As the family class became smaller, the average age of Indian newcomers dropped, and

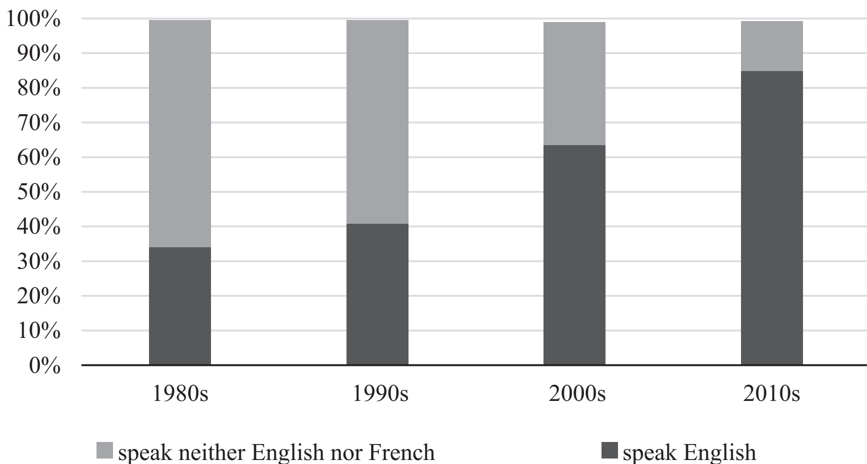

Figure 2.7 English/French language ability of Indian immigrants by entry cohort.
Source: Longitudinal Immigration Database (IMDB), 2021

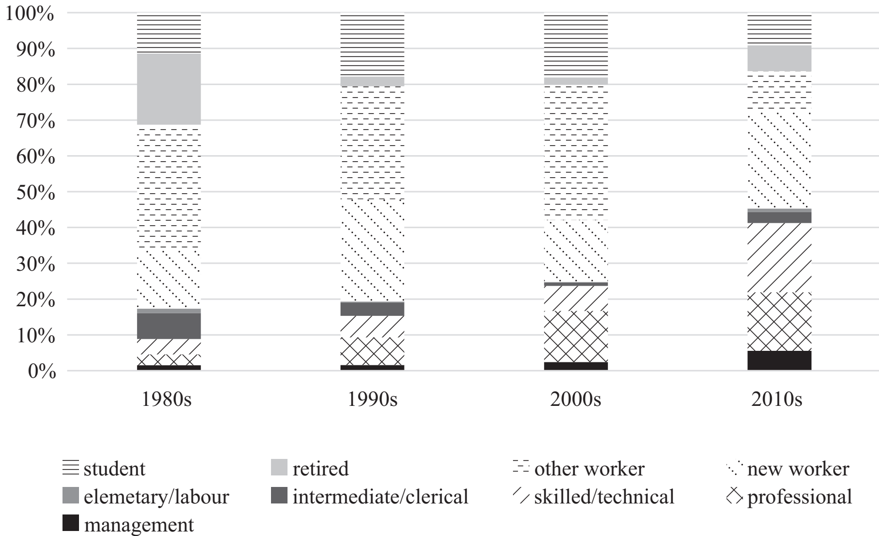

Figure 2.8 Intended occupation of Indian immigrants by entry cohort.

Source: Longitudinal Immigration Database (IMDB), 2021

retirees were reduced to a small minority. With the expansion of the study-to-immigration pathway, many Indian newcomers since the 2010s are classified as "new workers," since they have not yet finalized their career plans.

The places where Indian immigrants choose to settle have diversified with the expansion of the PNP. The PNP is meant to draw newcomers away from the traditional immigrant-receiving centers of Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver toward small- and medium-sized cities and towns. Figure 2.9 presents the location of initial settlement for Indian newcomers by entry cohort. While Toronto remains the most popular city, Vancouver has become less prevalent over the decades. In the 1980s, approximately 25 percent of Indian immigrants chose to settle in Vancouver, but by the 2010s, this figure had decreased to just 13 percent. Instead, an increasing proportion of Indians are settling in smaller, so-called second- and third-tier cities throughout Canada.

The characteristics of Indian immigrants have shaped their economic outcomes. The Public Use Microdata Files (PUMFs) of the 2001 and 2016 Canadian Censuses provide some useful insights on the relative economic position of Indian immigrants. In both years, the unemployment rate of Indian immigrants was marginally higher than that of the Canadian-born. In 2001, the unemployment rate was 5.1 percent for Canadian-born and 6 percent for Indian immigrants. In 2016, unemployment among Canadian-born workers was 5 percent, while Indian immigrants' unemployment rate was 5.5 percent. In both years, Indian immigrants were less likely to be out of the labor force altogether than Canadian-born individuals.

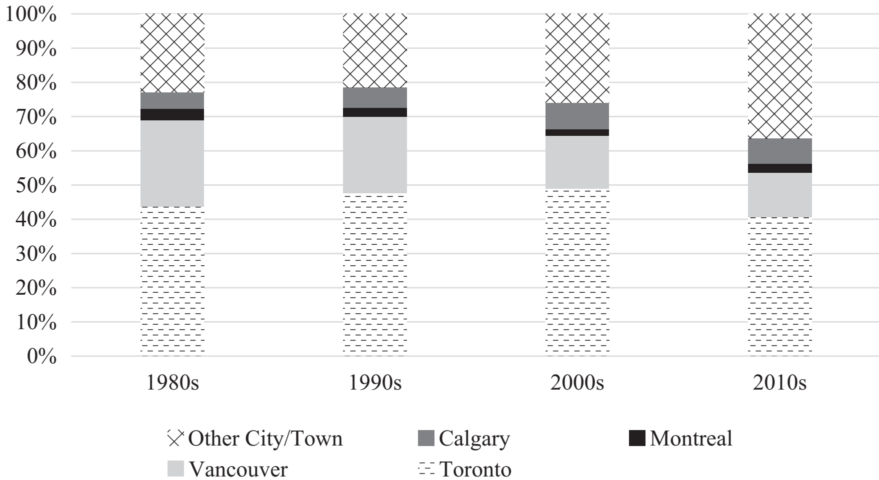

Figure 2.9 Location of settlement of Indian immigrants by entry cohort.

Source: Longitudinal Immigration Database (IMDB), 2021

Indian immigrants' earnings, however, were lower than their Canadian-born counterparts in both 2001 and 2016, despite having significantly higher levels of education. In 2001, Canadian-born workers earned about 8 percent more than Indian immigrants. By 2016, the wage gap grew to almost 16 percent. Due to their lower wages, Indian immigrants were more likely than other Canadians to be living under the "poverty line"[1] in both years. In 2001, approximately 15 percent of Canadian-born individuals lived below the poverty line, while 18 percent of Indian immigrants fell into this category. In 2016, the poverty rate declined for both groups; about 11 percent of native-born Canadians and 15 percent of Indian immigrants lived below the poverty line in that year. Agrawal and Lovell (2010) suggest that Indian immigrants can be categorized into two distinct groups: those who experience rapid economic integration and achieve prosperity, and those who become trapped in a cycle of disadvantage even after many years in Canada.

More recent evidence from the 2021 IMDB suggests that the economic integration of Indian immigrants in Canada has improved over time. Figure 2.10 presents the earnings trajectories of two cohorts of Indian immigrants using inflation-adjusted 2020 dollars: those who arrived in 1999 and those who arrived in 2009. Both cohorts of newcomers earned close to $26,000 on average one year after arrival. However, individuals in the 2009 cohort experienced faster earnings growth over time, such that by the end of the 11-year timeframe, their earnings were about 12 percent higher on average than those in the 1999 entry cohort.

In summary, the profile of Indian immigrants in Canada has transformed with shifts in immigration policy, such as the introduction and growth of

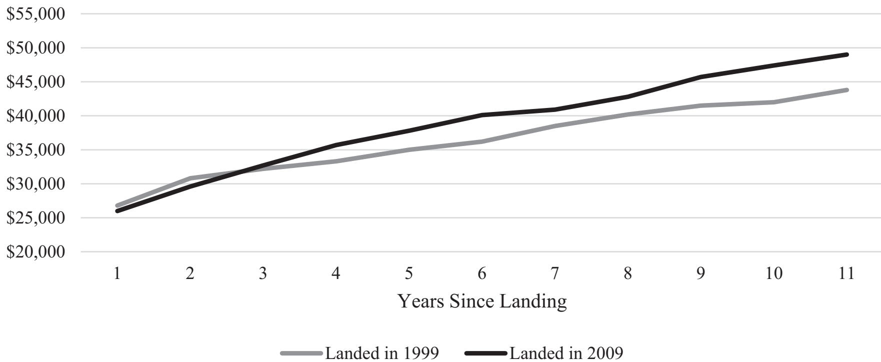

Figure 2.10 Earnings trajectories of Indian immigrants by entry cohort.

Source: Longitudinal Immigration Database (IMDB), 2021

the PNP and the CEC. Over time, Indian newcomers have become increasingly educated and skilled, fluent in English, and likely to have studied and/or worked in Canada prior to immigrating. Indians arriving in the past decade tend to seek employment in high-skilled occupations and although most settle in Toronto, a higher proportion choose to live in smaller cities and towns. Finally, recent data suggests that although relative earnings disparities remain, newer cohorts of Indian newcomers enjoy more favorable labor market outcomes than previous cohorts.

In the next section, we discuss the factors driving Indian immigration to Canada and explore the reasons for the dramatic growth in this population over the past decade.

The Dynamics of Indian Immigration to Canada

Indian migration to Canada is influenced by the contexts in both countries. In terms of demographics, India has overtaken China to become the most populous country in the world in 2023, with more than 1.4 billion people (Reuters, 2023). While China's population is now declining, India's young population is still growing, with more than 40 percent of Indians under the age of 25 (Silver et al., 2023). Canada, on the other hand, has an aging population and low fertility rate. As the baby boomers retire, skill gaps and labor shortages plague many sectors within the Canadian economy (Statistics Canada, 2022b). India's youthful populace presents an ideal pool to draw young workers to address labor shortages and contribute to Canada's tax-base.

The higher education system in India has expanded rapidly to accommodate its growing youth population. According to the *All-India Survey of Higher Education Report* (AISHE 2019–20), India has among the largest tertiary education systems globally, with 1,043 universities, 42,343 colleges, and 11,779 stand-alone private institutions. Over the past 20 years, the

number of such educational institutions has grown by more than 400 percent (Tobenkin, 2022). Although the proportion of eligible university-aged individuals enrolled in post-secondary studies in India is lower than in some other countries (about 27 percent of the eligible population was enrolled in 2019–2020, compared to 51 percent in China and 80 percent in North America), the sheer size of the population means that there is a massive cohort of university-educated young people in India (Tobenkin, 2022). Due to India's colonial legacy, linguistic diversity, and ongoing globalization, English is the main language of instruction in many higher education institutions, particularly in STEM disciplines (Altbach, 2014).[2] For many young people in India, English language ability is perceived as crucial for attaining higher education and achieving career success (Bhatia & Priya, 2018). In fact, English fluency is often the primary marker of social class in India (Bhatia, 2017).

The Indian economy has also evolved significantly in the past few decades. Before the 1990s, India maintained a protectionist stance, with some of the highest trade tariffs in the world (Chan, 2019). A currency crisis in the early 1990s prompted economic liberalization. The opening up of the economy increased foreign direct investment and enabled significant numbers of Indians to reach the middle class.[3] In the 1990s, about 30 million Indians were in the middle class, representing less than 1 percent of the population. By 2015, the middle class in India had grown to between 300 million and 600 million people (Roy, 2018). In short, the number of middle-class Indians now meets or exceeds the entire population of the United States.

Although the economic context in India has improved in recent years, and many families are financially better off than they were in the past, decades of uneven development, poor infrastructure, a heavy-handed regulatory environment, and corruption have resulted in limited career prospects for many young Indians (Castles, 2017). These challenges are only exacerbated by the extreme competition stemming from India's massive population size. Ghosh (2014) examined the migration choices of Indian immigrants in Canada and found that although motivations were usually mixed, a lack of suitable job opportunities, inadequate salary, and limited chances for career mobility in India were major factors driving the decision to leave.

Moreover, India's demographic profile, English-focused education system, and expanding middle class have created favorable conditions for Indians to be accepted through Canada's merit-based immigration program. One of the main pathways through which Indians have landed in the past decade is the study-to-immigration pathway. In 2022, Indians were by far the top source country of international students entering Canada. In fact, more than 41 percent of Canada's total international student population is now from India (Singer, 2023).

The increase in Indian international students in Canada can be attributed to a complex mix of push and pull factors. Despite its expansion, the Indian higher education system is riddled with a host of challenges and limitations, such as a lack of quality control, accountability, and transparency, leading

many college-aged Indians to explore studying abroad (Altbach, 2014). Canada has become a destination of choice due to its reputation for providing high-quality yet comparatively affordable education, an easy study permit application process, and the potential for attaining permanent resident status after graduation (Wadhwa, 2016). Since 2018, the Government of Canada has provided Indian applicants with a relatively straightforward and expedited process for obtaining study permits through the Student Direct Stream (SDS). The SDS is open to applicants from a limited number of countries who meet certain criteria such as evidence of language proficiency, proof of at least $10,000 in funds, and full payment of the first year of tuition at a designated post-secondary institution in Canada (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, 2021). The SDS has a higher approval rate than the normal process of applying for a study permit.

For their part, Canadian post-secondary institutions have put considerable energy and resources into attracting international students since the mid-2000s. Universities and colleges increasingly rely on international students to offset government funding shortfalls, given the substantially higher tuition fees international students pay relative to domestic students (Brunner, 2017). Over the past decade, higher education institutions across Canada have employed recruitment agents in sending countries and implemented sophisticated advertising campaigns to broaden their reach (James-MacEachern, 2018). In India, the international student recruitment industry has exploded with new private consulting firms and freelance agents entering this lucrative and unregulated market (Bascaramurty et al., 2021). Since Canada does not impose an annual limit on the number of study permits issued, the surge in international students from India is expected to continue into the foreseeable future.

Most Indian students view international studies as a route to immigration (Hawthorne, 2014) and actively look for destinations that enable or facilitate transition to permanent resident (PR) status (Bhati & Anderson, 2012). Canada has leveraged this by instituting several key policy changes in recent years. In 2008, the Post-Graduate Work Permit (PGWP) program was introduced, granting international students open work permits after graduation. The PGWP allows former international students to gain vital Canadian work experience, which in turn helps them qualify for PR through either the CEC or the PNP.

The introduction of Express Entry in 2015 brought with it several features that were particularly advantageous to Indian applicants. Express Entry, which now manages all federal economic immigration streams, moved Canada's selection system from a purely human capital-based model to a more demand-driven model, which can respond quickly to labor market needs (Zhang et al., 2023). Express Entry scores and ranks prospective applicants using a comprehensive ranking system (CRS) based on age, education, language skills, and other factors such as having Canadian education and work experience. Indian applicants tend to do very well on the CRS due to their

high levels of education, English language fluency, and likelihood of having pre-landing Canadian education and work experience.

The influx of Indian immigrants into Canada since 2013 is likely also related to the lack of opportunities to settle in the United States. Historically, the United States has been a popular destination for high-skill Indian immigrants. However, US immigration policies have become more restrictive in recent years, making it more difficult for Indian immigrants to obtain visas and green cards (equivalent to PR status). Bier (2020) reported that over one million H1-B (high-skill work visa) holders were waiting in queue for US green cards. The US government issues 140,000 employment-based green cards for high-skill applicants each year but places limitations on the numbers by source country. There is such a high demand for green cards from Indians that some Indian nationals may have to wait 80 years before they are accepted, meaning a large proportion will not reach the front of the queue within their lifetimes (Bier, 2020). After Donald Trump's election in 2015, a record number of H1-B visas were also denied. This, coupled with the threat of other restrictive policies and a divisive political environment, prompted many skilled Indians to choose to immigrate to Canada over the United States (Anderson, 2023).

Finally, social connections may play a role in Indians' decision to settle in Canada. Walton-Roberts (2003) suggested that historical patterns of immigration from the Punjab region have continued to influence migration flows due to the strong transnational ties of the earlier cohorts of immigrants. Similarly, Ghosh (2014) found that Canada's large Indian diaspora plays a key role in encouraging new applicants. Interviews with skilled Indian newcomers revealed that the aspiration to come to Canada was often driven by familial networks, including extended family, who are already settled in the country. The growth of the Indian diaspora and ethno-religious organizations and businesses has expanded support systems for newcomers, easing the acculturation process and paving the way for the next cohort of arrivals (Bhargava et al., 2010).

Conclusions and Recommendations for Future Research

It is likely that significant numbers of Indian immigrants will continue to arrive in Canada in the coming years. Canada has made it clear that immigration is the main pillar in its post-pandemic economic recovery plan (Government of Canada, 2022). By 2025, the annual intake of permanent immigrants is expected to reach 500,000. Because Canada does not place any restrictions or quotas on the number of foreign workers and international students it allows, these populations are also expected to rise as employers seek foreign workers to overcome labor shortages and post-secondary institutions continue to develop their internationalization strategies. Given the critical role that Indian newcomers now play in Canada's immigration system, it is vital to understand their experiences, including their challenges and successes. Going forward, research should examine how the large influx

of Indians affects ethnic entrepreneurship and enclave formation. Another important research question is whether Canadians' attitudes toward immigration will remain positive with the massive number of Indians dominating the system. Canada is unique among immigrant-receiving countries in that the public support for high levels of immigration has remained strong over the past few decades, even as immigration numbers have increased. Many Canadians view multiculturalism and diversity as main strengths of the system. It is an open question whether these attitudes will change as the profile of the immigrants evolves.

Notes

1 The poverty measure was calculated by comparing the total before tax income of an economic family or an unattached individual to Statistics Canada's low-income cut-offs (LICOs). These cut-offs are based on national family expenditure data and updated yearly by changes in the consumer price index.
2 Recently, there has been a push by the central government of India to replace English with Indian languages as the main medium of instruction. This remains controversial and faces opposition by several state governments (see Niazi, 2022). For now, English remains the main language of instruction in STEM fields.
3 We use the OECD definition of middle class adopted by Roy (2018) for developing countries: daily expenditures between USD10 and USD100 per person in terms of purchasing power parity.

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3 The Canada-India Relationship

A Historical Understanding of Political Discontent and Diaspora

Ryan M. Touhey

Few of Canada's historical diplomatic relationships can be described as operatic. India, however, is one of the rare exceptions to that rule. Much of the history of the bilateral relationship has been characterized with elements of hope, suspicion, mistrust, deceit, neglect, and allegations of political meddling. The latter element has tended to dovetail with diaspora relations that have produced periods of tension between the two nations. The hope, often fleeting, largely characterized the first decade of bilateral relations when both countries worked together on a range of international and bilateral matters. For instance, Ottawa worked closely with London to welcome a newly independent India into a transformed multiracial Commonwealth despite some misgivings of the traditional members, namely South Africa and Australia. During the Korean War, both countries worked frequently together at the United Nations to find a peaceful conclusion to that conflict. Prime Ministers Jawaharlal Nehru and Louis St. Laurent and their senior officials met frequently on bilateral visits or at the various Commonwealth Prime Ministers conferences and rated each other highly in a troubled Cold War world. Canada's first foray into development assistance occurred from the belief that India mattered, and Ottawa could provide specific forms of technical assistance and food to help New Delhi pursue its ambitious development goals. Overtime, India became the largest recipient of Canadian foreign aid as Ottawa offered not only food aid but also funds to develop hydroelectric infrastructure, railway infrastructure, and, most controversially, the exchange of atomic and nuclear energy capabilities through the construction of three reactors. By the 1960s, the British and American governments expressed concern that Canadian technology was helping India develop the ability to produce a nuclear weapon. For its part, Ottawa sought tougher safeguards on the final two reactors it exported to India with some success. The problem, though, was that the initial Canada-India reactor agreement, concluded in 1956, had less than robust language on its terms of use. That loophole came to matter as security conditions changed, not only on the subcontinent but as India's relations with nuclear China soured considerably. Ottawa could not persuade New Delhi to sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty either, adding to a sense in Ottawa that all was not well in the nuclear partnership.

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A mix of shock and outrage from the government of Pierre Trudeau, then, greeted the news in May 1974 that Indira Gandhi's government tested a "peaceful nuclear device," drawing from the Canada-India reactor. Ottawa reacted with the main tool it had at its disposal: freezing all but agricultural aid and nuclear cooperation. Political relations were put on ice as well. New Delhi was shocked as Ottawa dug in its heels. Over the course of two years, an agreement was gradually negotiated that would have resumed bilateral nuclear cooperation only for Trudeau's cabinet to veto a deal that gave Ottawa almost every guarantee it had sought from the Indians. That Ottawa walked away was not entirely surprising. The bilateral relationship had not come asunder solely because of nuclear issues. Rather, a range of factors relating to political personalities, diverging views of decolonization, India's pursuit of non-alignment, and friendly relations with Moscow had all worked to take the early lustre off of the relationship and negatively shaped the view of Canadian politicians and bureaucrats. Non-alignment created an unexpected rift that slowly took a toll, beginning in 1954 when both countries agreed to serve on the Indo-China Commissions (ICC) with Poland. The commissions were tasked with the headache of ensuring ceasefire agreements were followed in the former French colonies and most controversially in North and South Vietnam. Initially, Canadian politicians and diplomats thought India, a fellow commonwealth member with elite civil servants speaking polished English and educated at Oxbridge like their Canadian counterparts, would perceive events in Vietnam through a similar lens. This proved illusory and illuminated the extent to which Canada had little sense of Asian geopolitics and the role of decolonization, as New Delhi tended to sympathize with Hanoi more often than not during the lifetime of the ICC. Canadian officials were frequently befuddled and eventually scornful when Canadian and Indian views of the commission's work failed to align. If the ICC had wrapped up its work promptly then perhaps relations between Canada and India may have carried on with far fewer disturbances attributed to decolonization in the Cold War world. But that was not to be the case. The commissions meandered into the early 1970s ensuring that two generations of young Canadian diplomats cut their teeth into the ICC and disproportionately returned to Ottawa jaded towards Indian foreign policy and bristled at what they perceived as the so-called non-alignment. These young diplomats returned to the Department of External Affairs in Ottawa, where they rose through the ranks, many specifically as directors of various Asia Pacific desks, with the ability to woe the Canadian High Commissioner in New Delhi, who sought to promote flagging bilateral relations. As such, the differences that emerged on nuclear proliferation merely put the icing on the proverbial cake in 1974. Rare was the case that a meeting of minds existed between New Delhi and Ottawa on global matters after the mid-1950s.[1]

Simply put, India had long fallen off of Ottawa's mental map and official ties between the two countries were meagre as the 1970s concluded; India had few champions in Ottawa. China loomed large, but India lurked

in the shadows. No Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs (SSEA, as the foreign minister was known at the time) had visited India since 1955, and other ministerial visits were rare. Similarly, Indian ministerial visits to Canada were few and tended to be of the junior cabinet minister variety. Although India was the largest recipient of Canadian foreign aid even after the 1974 test, the aid program was slowly being cut. Bilateral trade between the two nations was tepid and immigration in the early 1980s was low. Not all Canadian officials had lost interest, however. John Hadwen, an ambitious and pragmatic Canadian High Commissioner with extensive experience in South Asia, set out to redevelop Canada's interests in India by focusing on developing private sector trade ties, cultural diplomacy (which Canada had long lagged in), and developing education connections. He worked feverishly to prove to Ottawa that India mattered and had potential. Hadwen met with some success in cultivating good relations with Indira Gandhi and her cabinet, meeting with the prime minister often. His efforts also paid off with the first visit of a Canadian SSEA in nearly 30 years when Allan MacEachen visited in 1983. However, Hadwen's time in New Delhi coincided with the rise of militant Sikh nationalism in the Punjab and its concomitant growth in Canada. The later development had raised concerns in Delhi and Hadwen was forced to acknowledge this as a potential problem in his despatches to Ottawa.[2] Indeed, by the time Hadwen departed India to return to Canada, Punjabi diaspora tensions were well on the front foot, jeopardizing much of his good work during his time in India. For example, Indian flags were frequently burned, funds were raised within Sikh Canadian communities to promote the Khalistan movement, and Indian diplomats threatened. Threats soon turned to violent action as pro-Khalistani supporters physically attacked an Indian diplomat attached to the Indian consulate in Vancouver while in Toronto. An armed gunman walked into the Consulate "fired some [gun] shots, and then slipped away unimpeded."[3] Hadwen's successor as high commissioner, Bill Warden, was summoned a record 18 times to the Indian Ministry of External Affairs to discuss the problem.[4] From the Indian perspective, Ottawa was not doing enough to rein in the growth of Sikh extremism in Canada – an issue that culminated in the Air India bombing of June 1985. Adding to Indian frustration, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police repeatedly bungled its investigations of the role Canadian Sikhs played in the death of over 300 Canadians, Indians, and international passengers on that flight. As the 1980s concluded, the government of India remained convinced, not without reason, that Canada had neglected – and continued to neglect – Sikh extremism within Canada.

The general sense of bilateral indifference began to change in the mid-1990s for three central reasons. First, the political distance created by India's decades-long predisposition to tilt towards Moscow was a diminished concern with the end of the Cold War. Second, the gradual implementation of what proved to be successful economic reforms by then-Finance Minister Manmohan Singh began to transform the Indian economy. Third, next to the

United States, no other part of the world received as much sustained attention from the Jean Chretien Liberal government as the Asia-Pacific region. Spurred by the Indian diaspora in the United States, the Clinton administration had taken a strong interest in India's economic changes and in renewing the relationship. In a similar vein, India's economic reforms served as a key driver for much of Ottawa's new found interest. As Chretien's foreign policy advisor, James Bartleman, noted, "Team Canada was the prime minister's chosen instrument to compensate for generations of political neglect."[5] Arguably the political neglect continued, as illustrated by the lack of resources devoted to Canada's presence in India and the paucity of new policy initiatives. Instead, India's economy had become a target of interest for Ottawa. Ultimately, the Chretien government emulated its predecessors at the political level; India was still peripheral to Ottawa's interest, and this would not change until late in the Chretien era.

Granted, the Chretien government was unusual for a Canadian government in that it placed a good deal of interest in Asia, especially China, at the economic level. The decision to do so was strongly supported in the cabinet, as then-Finance Minister Paul Martin emerged as an energetic advocate of the Asia Pacific economic cooperation forum. The Canada-India relationship of the period, therefore, was consistent with the broader brushstrokes of Canadian foreign policy with trade acting as the predominant driver in the relationship. And Chretien's trade minister, Roy MacLaren, began his tenure by declaring Asia to be a top priority. MacLaren led a trade mission to India in 1994 that was unprecedented in scale. The mission reflected a new sense among some in the Chretien cabinet, and in the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, that India was no longer a peripheral international player but "one of the most promising markets in the Asia-Pacific region" for Canada.[6] This was further illustrated in 1995 when the secretary of state, Raymond Chan, led another trade delegation to India. That same year, Canada's renamed Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) launched a trade-themed document entitled "Focus India: Building a Canadian-India Trade and Economic Strategy," based on consultations with the provinces and the private sector.

From this came the most ambitious Canadian overture to India in decades as Chretien led a sizeable "Team Canada" trade mission to India in January 1996 to raise Canada's long-neglected profile. The government regarded the mission as a success on the trade front, sparking a flurry of ministerial and private sector visits into 1997. But Bartleman observed that the visit did not lead to a "breakthrough in Canadian-Indian relations," citing the continued grievances that remained from the 1974 nuclear test.[7] This suggested that shared values only counted for so much when central interests were at stake.

Still, tension had eased sufficiently for Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy to travel to India in 1997, acting as head of a delegation of parliamentarians and business people. Axworthy acknowledged India's revitalized place in Canada's worldview during a speech in Calcutta. He exclaimed that India

"is emerging as one of the major world players of the 21st century. Canada recognizes this, and we want to give India the priority it deserves in our foreign relations."[8] But this tone quickly changed as improving official relations suffered a notable setback. Within the first six weeks of its election in March 1998, the nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) approved a series of underground nuclear tests at Pokhran. Pakistan reciprocated with its own round of tests, generating concerns about an arms race on the subcontinent, and, worse, a possible nuclear war between the two foes.

Reaction in Ottawa harkened back to 1974 as Ottawa sharply denounced the tests. The angry official response was accompanied by a series of targeted measures. Ottawa temporarily withdrew its high commissioner from New Delhi; Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) aid worth $54.5 million over five years was cancelled; trade expansion talks were suspended; all military exports to India, such as they were, were banned; Ottawa opposed non-humanitarian loans to India by the World Bank and announced that it opposed New Delhi's bid for a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council. Moreover, Ottawa sought to rally G8 and international support against the tests, warning that these represented a severe challenge to the non-proliferation regime and a threat to regional stability. Again, Ottawa's reaction was similar to that of Washington's as the Clinton administration imposed a series of nuclear-related sanctions, halting a trend towards improved ties.

The sanctions were, in the end, arguably more detrimental to Canada than India. Ottawa's strategy left little space for compromise. The Indian high commissioner to Ottawa asserted that India had the right to proceed with the tests based on a threat assessment to its national security. Ottawa's dedication to non-proliferation essentially demanded that India abandon its nuclear weapons program. As in the past, neither side would or could compromise. Canada's influence with India, already weak to begin with, was reduced even further in the absence of sustained political interest and a nascent economic relationship. Bilateral political relations entered into another period of calculated neglect, and this undermined the trade promotion efforts initiated earlier in the decade. It also meant that as India continued to transform rapidly, Canada was slow to mount the necessary foreign policy overhaul required to deal with these dramatic changes, in contrast to countries such as Australia, France, and the United States. The dynamic was a further illustration of the tendency of modern Canadian governments to shy away from pursuing a sustained effort towards India.

Following their election victory in 2006, the Conservative government of Prime Minister Stephen Harper set itself apart from the past 40-odd years of Canadian governments by deeming India to be a "key priority," particularly on the trade and economic front. The Conservatives consistently sent a number of high-profile cabinet ministers to India during their time in government with Harper making his first visit in November 2009. From these visits, a series of bilateral agreements ensued, pertaining to trade, science, and technology

cooperation, and closer education ties as Canadian post-secondary institutions looked to attract Indian students to Canada and develop partnerships with Indian universities and Institutes of Technology. Ottawa also expanded its diplomatic and commercial presence with a new trade office established in Gujarat. That decision partly reflected the increased diversity of the Indo-Canadian population in Canada, with the 1.2 million members reflecting the diversity of Indian immigration to Canada that had once been disproportionately Sikh based. Encouraging stronger trade ties with Gujarat became an important matter for groups such as the Canada India Business Council and the newish Canada India Foundation (CIF). The latter organization was a predominantly conservative-leaning, pro-business organization comprised of Hindu Canadians that asserted both countries shared democratic values and needed to be more closely aligned. Sympathetic to the then governor of Gujarat and the current Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the CIF successfully lobbied Ottawa to cultivate ties with Gujarat and Modi at a time when his international political reputation was tarnished, having been accused of ignoring violent pogroms towards Gujarati Muslims in 2002 while serving as the chief minister.

Expanding ties with Gujarat aside, Harper demonstrated both pragmatism and a willingness to move beyond decades of rancour on the nuclear issue making it clear to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh at a Commonwealth conference in 2010 that Ottawa was willing to re-engage with India on nuclear cooperation. This was undoubtedly a historic initiative on Canada's part marked by pragmatism that a burgeoning India faced growing energy needs, and Ottawa had uranium and technology it wished to sell. Building on this momentum, Harper visited India for nearly a week in November 2012. In February 2014 Ottawa upgraded its trade office in Bangalore to a Consulate, enhancing its presence in Southern India, whereas traditionally Canadian politicians had emphasized Canada's diaspora ties to the Punjab.[9] In a further historic positive move, Harper's visit was reciprocated in April 2015 when Modi travelled to Canada – the first visit by an Indian prime minister to Canada in 42 years. Arriving in Ottawa, the Indian prime minister was greeted with "full military honors and 19-gun salute."[10] Later that afternoon both Harper and Modi raced to Toronto, where the visit culminated with Modi addressing a huge gathering of the Indian diaspora, the largest such gathering between an Indian prime minister and Indo-Canadians. Further evidence that the two countries were moving beyond history was the announcement by both Harper and Modi that Canada would export "3,000 metric tonnes of uranium over a five year period" worth an estimated $280 million and making Canada the first western nation to export uranium to India.[11] Following decades of bilateral mistrust, government-to-government relations between Canada and India from 2006 to 2015 were undeniably at their best point since the mid-1950s. Part of this was due to an incremental but consistent and realistic policy approach on the part of the Canadian government showing that its interest in India was sincere and aimed at developing new –

and realistic – foundations that both countries agreed upon. At the same time, both capitals avoided drawing attention to the fact that on major international problems with Iran, Libya, and Syria, Ottawa and New Delhi were not aligned; old habits remained but were now compartmentalized. And perhaps Harper's modest and cautious personality resonated with the measured and austere personas of Manmohan Singh and Narendra Modi.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, therefore, inherited a solid bilateral relationship when he defeated Harper in the October 2015 federal election. Foreign policy, as per usual in national elections, was not widely discussed and Trudeau, the eldest son of Pierre, did not emphasize India the way Harper had, although suggesting it would remain a priority country for Canada. Instead, he seemed pleased to point to the diversity of his cabinet which had a number of Indo-Canadians in key positions of Hindu and Sikh background. Months after his election, he apologized in the House of Commons for the Komagata Maru incident in which a ship, comprised of mostly Sikhs, was prevented from disembarking in Vancouver in 1914.[12] That apology, however, was likely directed more at burnishing Liberal political fortunes with the Sikh community across Canada as opposed to improving bilateral ties with India. After all, Trudeau had once quipped he had more Sikhs in his cabinet than did Modi which apparently did not travel well when heard in New Delhi. The quip likely reinforced the sense that the young prime minister tended to speak off the cuff too easily without thinking. Perhaps the story was a harbinger of things to come as Trudeau's first – and to date only – state visit to India in February 2018 emerged to be spectacularly peculiar as the Canadian prime minister encountered political and media indifference, and during the visit made multiple unforced gaffes that led to tough questions. Indifference was on clear display when Trudeau arrived only to be greeted by the agriculture minister, leading commentators to assert that Modi had snubbed his Canadian counterpart.[13] Then the Chief Minister of the Punjab, Amarinder Singh, accused members of the Trudeau cabinet "of being connected to the Sikh separatist movement."[14] The issue of Sikh separatism in Canada had died down for years only to slowly bubble back to the surface, and tensions on the matter were rekindled during the state visit. The previous year the chief minister had taken the unusual step of publicly rebuking Canadian Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan, who was visiting India, of also having separatist sympathies. Indeed, Singh suggested that there were other Canadian politicians with similar pro-Khalistan sympathies.[15] Although nothing was offered in terms of actual evidence to substantiate these claims about the Canadian cabinet ministers, they created a political headache for Trudeau and his extensive entourage while in India and back in Canada. And the topic of lingering Sikh separatist support in Canada was raised by Modi in discussions with Trudeau.

The Canadians desperately sought to change the narrative by emphasizing the growth in bilateral trade and that the number of Indian students in Canada had tripled between 2014 and 2017 and reached 124,000.[16] Such

efforts were not helped by the fact that the Trudeau family made a number of staged tourists like visits for photo opportunities, clothed in elaborate Indian clothing that appeared far more about flash than of any real substance, leading to ridicule in traditional and social media. There had not been anything quite like this visit in the history between the two countries, and the trip descended into real farce when the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation revealed that one of the guests invited to a dinner hosted by the Canadian high commissioner was "a man [Jaspal Atwal] convicted of attempting to murder an Indian cabinet minister on Vancouver Island" in 1986. The invitation was quickly revoked but the damage was done as pictures emerged of a smiling Atwal with Trudeau's wife at a previous event in Mumbai.[17] That Atwal was invited not by a Canadian Liberal Member of Parliament (who had taken the initial blame) but by the Prime Minister's Office also added to a sense that vetting and organization was shambolic from Ottawa's end. Generally, the foreign travels of Canadian prime ministers abroad pass unnoticed, but this proved the exception to the rule as CNN declared that the visit had "gone from bad to worse" while MSNBC described it as a "slow motion train wreck."[18] The carnage ended when the official spokesman for India's Ministry of External Affairs lambasted a senior Canadian official for suggesting "there was Indian plotting to embarrass" Trudeau.[19] Ultimately, the trip was a lost opportunity for the two very different leaders to cultivate their personal relationship but to also build on the incremental growth and positive developments of the Harper era. The visit added a new negative layer to an official relationship that already had its fair share of those.

Problems did not just end with Trudeau's return to Ottawa. Weeks later, the newly chosen federal leader of the left-wing New Democratic Party, Jagmeet Singh, was profiled and quoted by Canada's national newspaper *The Globe and Mail* as "unapologetic for attending rallies featuring Sikh extremists" while belatedly agreeing that he now accepted that it was Canadian-based Sikhs responsible for the destruction and deaths of the 1985 Air India bombing.[20]

So, is the bilateral relationship back to the 1970s, 1980s, or even the 1990s in terms of mutual distrust and neglect at the government-to-government level? Undoubtedly, there has been a decline in high-level ministerial visits. Trudeau has not returned to India while Modi has not returned to Canada since 2015. And internationally both countries have conflicting attitudes towards the war in Ukraine with India illustrating that its old ties with Russia, and oil needs from that country, still matter whereas Canada has been firm in its support for Ukraine politically, economically, and militarily. Once again, in other words, neither country has aligned with the other on a pressing global crisis. This fact should make proponents of the tired line that both countries are democracies and as such share similar values on the world stage take pause – as the historical pattern remains that each country has distinct interests that often set them apart. The recent example of Ukraine illustrates that this historical tendency remains. With that said, the bilateral

relationship is far better today than in the past due to an engaged and more diverse Indo-Canadian diaspora that has prompted municipal and provincial governments, along with Ottawa, to take notice of India as an economic opportunity to be courted. And although bilateral trade is modest, it has slowly but consistently grown since the new century began. Injecting further energy into people-to-people ties, tens of thousands of Indian immigrants arrive annually in Canada seeking a better life. India has been one of the top five sources of immigrants to Canada since the 1990s and is frequently the primary nation for immigrants to Canada. In a similar vein, Indian students now come to Canada annually seeking higher education in unprecedented numbers. While many will return to India with hopefully fond memories of their time in Canada, others also remain contributing to their new home, with Prem Wastsa, CEO of Fairfax, being a shining example of that demographic. Meanwhile, groups such as the Canada India Business Council and the Indo-Canadian Chamber of Commerce continually strive to nurture trade and people-to-people linkages while the long-standing Shastri Indo-Canada Institute has nurtured bilateral academic exchanges for decades. Robust bilateral ties, in other words, no longer depend on the success of high-level government relations that characterized the first 50+ years of the Indo-Canadian relationship, and that is worth emphasizing and celebrating.

Notes

1 For the rise and fall of the Canada-India relationship based on Canadian and India archival sources, see Ryan Touhey, *Conflicting Visions: Canada and India in the Cold War World 1946–1976* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2015).
2 See Ryan Touhey, "A Journey without Maps: John Hadwen in India, 1979–83," in *People, Politics, and Purpose: Biography and Canadian Political History*, ed. Greg Donaghy and Whitney Lackenbauer (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2023).
3 Bill Warden, *Diplomat, Dissident, Spook: A Canadian Diplomat's Chronicles through the Cold War and Beyond* (Victoria, British Columbia: Tellwell Publishers, 2017), 249.
4 Ibid.
5 James Bartleman, *Rollercoaster: My Hectic Years as Jean Chretien's Diplomatic Advisor 7994–1998* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2005), 208.
6 See news release 197/94, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Ottawa, 1994.
7 Bartleman, *Rollercoaster*, 226.
8 See Lloyd Axworthy, Statements 97/1, Global Affairs Canada (known as Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade during time of statement), Ottawa, 1997.
9 See www.southasianpost.com/article/5689-canada-open-consulate-general-bangalore.html
10 Jack Detsch, "India and Canada: A Match Made in Heaven?," *The Diplomat*, 17 April 2015, https://thediplomat.com/2015/04/india-and-canada-a-match-made-in-heaven/
11 Ankit Panda, "India Secures Uranium Supply Deal with Canada," *The Diplomat*, 17 April 2015, https://thediplomat.com/2015/04/india-secures-uranium-supply-deal-with-canada/

12 Daniel LeBlanc and Laura Stone, "Trudeau's Komagata Maru Apology Praised," *The Globe and Mail*, 19 May 2016, p. A15.
13 Gary Mason, "Could Trudeau's Trip to India Get Any Worse? It Just Did," *The Globe and Mail*, 23 February 2018, p. A13.
14 Mia Rabson, "The Canadian Press, Ottawa Seeks to Allay Indian Accusations," *The Globe and Mail*, 19 February 2018, p. A3.
15 Ibid.
16 Ibid.
17 Gary Mason, "Could Trudeau's Trip to India Get Any Worse? It Just Did," *The Globe and Mail*, 23 February 2018, p. A13.
18 See Huizhong Wu, *CNN*, 23 February 2018, www.cnn.com/2018/02/22/asia/extremist-scandal-trudeau-india-visit-intl/index.html; Mason, *The Globe and Mail*, 23 February 2018, p. A13.
19 Campbell Clark, "Trudeau Won't Be Back in India Any Time Soon," *The Globe and Mail*, 1 March 2018, p. A4.
20 Robert Fife and Steven Chase, "Singh Defends Sikh Rally Attendance," *The Globe and Mail*, 16 March 2018, p. A1.

4 Indian Women in Canada

Usha George

Introduction

This chapter examines the profile and experiences of women from or with origins from India, referred to throughout as Indian immigrant women or Indo-Canadian women. The first part of the chapter presents critical conceptual frameworks that provide explanatory power to the processes we examine. The second section provides a short history of Indo-Canadian women's immigration to Canada. Indo-Canadian women's post-migration experiences and the evolving intra-familial relationships within the lifespan are the focus of the next section. This section is followed by a brief review of the three primary forms of family conflicts directly impacting women's lives: child maltreatment, domestic violence, and elder abuse. The final section of the chapter explores Indian families' interactions with social institutions such as schools, ethnic communities, and religion.

It is essential to state that studies investigating the experiences of Indo-Canadian women are few; most of the available literature examines the broader category of South Asia (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka). While the present chapter attempts to investigate the experience of Indo-Canadian women, we draw on literature that explores the experiences of all South Asian women. There is great diversity among immigrant women. Terms such as women of colour, visible minority women, and racialized women are used not to "homogenize" categories but to identify non-white immigrant women. India, for example, has many ethnicities, languages, and religions, and it is virtually impossible to capture many commonalities among these groups. Nonetheless, it is argued that the shared history of colonialism, life in the same geographic region, and cultural similarities outweigh their differences and provide a common basis for understanding their experiences in Canada (Das Gupta, 1994).

Conceptual Frameworks

Several conceptual frameworks provide insights into the post-immigration experiences of individuals and families. The first framework used is that of

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acculturation. Acculturation is the ever-evolving human activity in response to the new socio-cultural environment and socializes individuals to the host country's culture. Chuang (2019, p. 437) observes: "As individuals and families immigrate to a new country, they need to re-establish and re-organize their lives. The nature and severity of the adjustment impact all aspects of the individual's life, including developmental trajectory and interpersonal and familial relationships." Berry's (2003) widely used model offers four acculturation strategies: assimilation (adopting the host society's culture at the expense of one's own cultural identity), integration (maintaining some aspects of one's culture of origin and adopting elements of the host society's culture), separation (keeping all aspects of one's culture and rejecting host society's culture), and marginalization (leaving the cultures of both home and host societies). While it is acknowledged that integration is distinct from assimilation, there is not enough consensus on using the term.

In a review of the literature, George (2006) observes that terms such as integration, acculturation, and adaptation (immigrant's capacity to engage with host society's institutions successfully) are often used interchangeably. Integration is treated as a process and an outcome, an individual and a group phenomenon, and a holistic or differential (George, 2006). In recent conceptualizations, integration is a two-way process where immigrants and the host society change. Various studies have highlighted the dimensions or components that makeup integration. One common approach is to organize integration into structural (i.e., economic, political, and legal), and socio-cultural (i.e., social, cultural, emotional, and religious) forms (Dekker & Siegel, 2013; Erdal & Oeppen, 2013). By contrast, Penninx and Garcés-Mascareñas (2016) discuss three dimensions of integration: legal-political, socioeconomic, and cultural-religious. While various frameworks have been developed to study integration in its parts, scholars suggest that there are significant relationships between these components, and they should be studied together to gain a holistic understanding of integration (Biles et al., 2008; Kyeremeh et al., 2021; Wilkinson, 2013). As such, the components will be examined together to understand the integration nuances.

Another essential guiding framework through this chapter is that of intersectionality, which facilitates a comprehensive understanding of the structural nature of marginalization (Ferrer, 2018). Critical race feminists highlight the absence or simplification of race and gender as mutually reinforcing processes in feminist and anti-racist scholarship (Crenshaw, 1987 in Ferrer, 2018). Critical race and critical race feminist theory examine the multiple and interlocking systems of domination that shape people's lives through the interaction between categories of difference, such as age, race, class, and sexual orientation, with broader systems of power, such as colonialism, patriarchy, racism, and capitalism (Ferrer, 2018). Further, intersectionality allows us to examine the intersections at play that include factors such as socioeconomic status and class, participation in the labour market, caregiving responsibilities, levels of education, and immigration status and how they are situated

within larger systems of oppression (Ferrer, 2018). At an analytical level, this involves an examination of subjective (micro) experiences with social structures (macro) contrasting the privileged systems and the marginalized oppressed (Hulko, 2016 in Ferrer, 2018). As Ralston (1991) argues, being a South Asian woman is a social construction of social characteristics, dependent on the historical and ongoing social practices of relationships in specific economic, political, and social contexts. In noting this, Ralston (1991) highlights the dynamic nature of a racialized woman's identity: her race, gender, religion, age, migratory status, social location, and socioeconomic status.

Additionally, we explore the role of social capital in the settlement and integration of newcomers. Seminal scholars like Bourdieu examined social capital within the context of social order, privilege, and domination (Westphaln et al., 2020). Social capital resources are derived via social memberships, connections, and interactions among people, thus benefiting those with existing networks and power (Westphaln et al., 2020). Bourdieu viewed social capital as a disadvantage for marginalized populations and a reinforcement of existing power relations, noting the structural dimension of social capital (Westphaln et al., 2020). When examining social capital under a culture of whiteness, white individuals are positioned to have access to and leverage their resources to continue reproducing existing power structures positioned to benefit them (Milne & Aurini, 2015). In the case of South Asians, we examine how social capital in Canada – which operates under a culture of whiteness – impacts these women.

In the Canadian context, exploring multiculturalism as a policy and practice is necessary. As a federal policy, multiculturalism is rooted in cultural pluralism and is said to foster social cohesion and equity (Government of Canada, 1988). In practice, however, scholars critical of the Canadian multiculturalism policy argue that it has been used to entrench racist and sexist structural inequities further (Ali & Bagley, 2015; James, 2019; Ralston, 1998). In Canada, the history of colonialism shapes how bodies are defined through the lens of whiteness, patriarchy, and class, among other intersections (Ali & Bagley, 2015). Ralston (1998) argues that multicultural policies and programs focused on cultural differences and activities distract attention from structural inequalities and access to resources, and do little to combat ethnocentrism, racism, classism, or sexism. Canada's settler-colonial history and institutional practices that guide everyday life are rooted in whiteness through multiculturalism narratives that obscure deeply entrenched racial hierarchies (Ali & Bagley, 2015; James, 2019). These policies, intended to promote different cultures, instead help enforce and reinforce gender inequity and further cement it within a racist class structure wherein racialized immigrant women remain alienated and excluded from dominant spaces (Ralston, 1998). Promoting these colourblind practices downplays the history of racial exclusion and attempts to hide racial tensions rather than recognize that – given the contextual history – race matters (Ray, 2019).

Lastly, transnationalism offers a lens that acknowledges and highlights the underpinning current in migrants' lives, as migration is not a linear or single experience (Vertovec, 2004). Instead, following migration, an immigrant might continue to engage in economic, political, social, cultural, or personal practices across borders (Yang, 2019). Transnationalism then highlights the reality of migrants living in the here-and-there, with a dual orientation in their new countries and their home countries, shaping their lives after arriving in Canada (Vertovec, 2004). The role of family and friends in the pre-migration and post-migration processes shapes the ethnic and cultural identity and sense of responsibility experienced by migrants (Merry et al., 2017). Transnational values:

> have a substantial impact on individual and family life courses and strategies, individuals' sense of self and collective belonging, the ordering of personal and group memories, patterns of consumption, collective socio-cultural practices, approaches to child-rearing, and other modes of cultural reproduction.
>
> (Vertovec, 2004, p. 977)

Brief History of Immigration and Demographic Profile

South Asian women were not legally allowed to enter Canada until 1919, although Indian men from Punjab started migrating to Vancouver as early as 1904 (Jamal, 1998). As migration numbers began to rise – from 45 in 1904 to over 2,000 in 1907 – protests began against South Asian presence in Canada (Jamal, 1998). In response, government officials began imposing discriminatory measures to quell migration numbers, such as requiring South Asian arrivals to have $200 and introducing the continuous journey requirement (Jamal, 1998). Large numbers began in the 1960s, as South Asians arrived searching for perceived labour and educational opportunities (Merali, 2008).

South Asians comprise Canada's largest and fastest-growing racialized group (Mirza et al., 2022; Statistics Canada, 2022, 2023). According to the most recent Canadian census, between 2016 and 2021, 2.6 million people identified as South Asian (Statistics Canada, 2022). Between 2016 and 2021, 21.4% of South Asians living in Canada immigrated and comprised the largest racialized group in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2022). The mother tongue of most Indo-Canadians is Punjabi, followed by Urdu, Hindi, Gujarati, and Bengali (Statistics Canada, 2022).

It should be noted, however, that though the "South Asian" is widely used in research and the Canadian census, this broad label does not adequately explore the vast and complex ethnocultural, religious, socioeconomic, and migratory history between the countries of South Asia (George & Chaze, 2009; Patel, 2006). Research on Indians and Indian women is often subsumed under the larger South Asian category. However, Indian Canadians comprise

the most significant portion of the South Asian community in Canada at 44.3% (1.3 million) (Statistics Canada, 2022). Despite the differences among South Asians, many commonalities render existing research pertinent when examining the experiences of Indian women in Canada.

Since the mid-1990s, Canadian immigration policy has ensured that those arriving under the economic stream – even those entering as spousal dependents – are of working age, have university degrees and related work experience, and can speak English (Ghosh, 2020). These indicators are reflected in the South Asian community. The 2021 Canadian census indicates that 64.8% of first-generation South Asians have a postsecondary diploma or degree (Statistics Canada, 2022). Additionally, India is Canada's second top source country of international students (Canadian Bureau of International Education [CBIE], 2018).

Settlement Experiences: Structural Barriers

Migration involves three sets of complex transitions: changes in personal ties and reconstruction of social networks, a transition from one socioeconomic system to another, and the move from one cultural system to another (Kirmayer et al., 2011). Although there are no formal definitions, the term "settlement" denotes the first few (generally five) years of newcomers' life in the host country. Notwithstanding the differences between various immigrant classes and groups, several studies have all found that the basic settlement needs of newcomers are general orientation to Canadian life, establishing community connections, housing, employment, language training and information on available services (George & Chaze, 2009). Identifying immediate needs depends on individual circumstances, pre-migratory experiences, and available community resources. All newcomer needs must be addressed with the cultural and linguistic sensitivity required to make newcomers feel welcome, especially those not fluent in Canada's official languages (George, 2002).

Settlement for Indian women, like other South Asian women, is further complicated by gender. The Gender Inequality Index (GII) measures gender inequality levels in each country, considering factors like reproductive health, income inequality, employment, education, political representation, and so forth (Lebenbaum et al., 2021). India has a high GII, and studies have found a negative association between greater source country gender inequality and female immigrant experiences in Canada (Lebenbaum et al., 2021). Research has found that South Asian immigrants, particularly those who enter the country under the family class, have higher vulnerability rates and a greater need for assistance surrounding employment, housing, and social networks (George & Chaze, 2009; Kteily-Hawa et al., 2019). In their study, Kteily-Hawa et al. (2019) found that immigration reinforces gender inequalities, enabling largely male-dominated spaces and beliefs. Most Indian women in Canada accompany their husbands, who arrive in the economic or family

class. Despite the trend in "feminization of migration," Indian women rarely come as sole applicants, though recent trends indicate an increasing number of female international students from India.

South Asian women, even those arriving under the family class, are more likely to be educated and able to speak English at the time they arrive in Canada (George & Chaze, 2009; Ghosh, 2020). Some studies have found that, despite this advantage, South Asian women struggle to secure work and often face irregular employment or underemployment (George & Chaze, 2009; Kteily-Hawa et al., 2019). Research surrounding South Asian women and jobs in Canada (George & Chaze, 2009; Ghosh, 2020; Kteily-Hawa et al., 2019; Maitra, 2015) has found that these women often expressed being seen as different or inferior in the workplace. Maitra (2015) found that South Asian women must negotiate their identity in the workplace, ascribing to certain Western ideals by changing their clothes, working on their accents, and practising their communication in English while remaining critical of certain demands made of them in the workplace. This form of cultural adaptation and negotiation can prove strenuous for South Asian women as they are constantly vigilant of their behaviour to match what is considered "appropriate" Canadian workplace culture (Maitra, 2015).

Despite acquiring citizenship, immigrants' integration is often delayed due to various factors, including employment challenges (Akbar & Preston, 2020). Systemically embedded racism often prevents immigrants from finding employment that aligns with their credentials. Practices such as failure to recognize international credentials, work experience, and employer discrimination factor into immigrants' ability to adapt and ultimately integrate (Akbar & Preston, 2020). In a study by Ghosh (2020) focused on Indian women specifically, women shared that they could experience financial freedom in both India and Canada; however, experiences in the Canadian context tended to be more harmful. Indian women highlighted de-professionalization and underemployment as negative experiences, noting that, while they could work in Canada, they often ended up in jobs that underpaid and underutilized their existing skills (Ghosh, 2020). Overall, Indian women experience higher rates of unemployment when compared to the general population and Indian men (Agrawal & Matsa, 2013).

Other studies have indicated a type of resiliency among South Asian women more generally. In a study of social capital and employment among South Asian newcomer women, it was found that the participants accessed existing social networks to secure employment and established new social networks where none existed. This "pre-existing and self-created" social capital is in keeping with literature on bonding and bridging social capital (George & Chaze, 2009). These women, who were highly educated and fluent in English, exercised their social networks to find employment. Although limited in generalizability, these findings provide insights into South Asian women's agency in the settlement process.

Acculturation and the Evolving Intra-Familial Relationships

Studies have explored the experience of South Asian women in Canada and their family relations (George & Chaze, 2009; Kteily-Hawa et al., 2019; Merali, 2008; Patel, 2019). Family support has been identified as a critical element in the settlement experiences of immigrants, as family support provides economic, social, and cultural factors needed for successful integration (George & Chaze, 2009). Research has found that, often, South Asians living in Western nations must negotiate between preserving izzat[1] and a strong sense of obligation towards getting married and starting a family (Patel, 2019). The concepts of Karma (destiny) and Dharma (duty), which are fundamental to Hinduism, is essential to understanding South Asian Indian families. The family system's core is reverence and respect for elders (Choudhry, 2001; Merali, 2008). The distinction between individually oriented and duty-based moral codes parallels the difference between individualistic and collectivistic cultures (George, 1998). Studies specifically looking at Indian women found that they traditionally grow up in multigenerational households, as Indian culture promotes interdependence rather than individualism, as is common in North America (Choudhry, 2001; Daniel et al., 2021).

In her work on Asian families in Britain, Elliot (1996) proposes that contradictory tendencies of continuity and change characterize British South Asian family life. Traditional kinship structures are disrupted, gender roles are renegotiated, and intergenerational relations, especially parent-child relationships, are reworked in the post-migration context (Elliot, 1996). While migration has disrupted conventional family structures and kinship networks, there is evidence of the formation of multigenerational households and new kinship structures. Inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic variations are found in gender roles, particularly in women's labour market participation. Elliot (1996) also argues that the young South Asians and their parents negotiate the conflicts between South Asian values of cooperation and familial loyalty, and the Anglo-Saxon emphasis on individualism and self-determination by creating compromises that enable the young to move between parallel cultural worlds.

The above observations resonate with Indo-Canadian families. The intersections of multiple identities of South Asian women define and moderate their roles at home and outside (George, 1998). Migration simultaneously challenges and reinforces conventional gender roles and inequalities (George & Chaze, 2009). Kteily-Hawa et al. (2019) found that South Asian women often struggle to secure gainful employment and become tasked with child-rearing and domestic activities. Even if women can secure employment, they are often expected to take on part-time rather than full-time work to accommodate familial needs and obligations (Kteily-Hawa et al., 2019).

The expectation of women to act as caregivers and be responsible for domestic work likely stems from the fact that India is mainly patriarchal and has set expectations of women and is rooted in the view of women as

dutiful (Choudhry, 2001). Without social support or hired domestic help, women are tasked with child-rearing and caring for elderly household members (Mustafa et al., 2020). According to Daniel et al. (2021), Indian women retain a solid commitment to their families and traditionally are expected to put their families first. Ghosh (2020) found that professional women in India could circumvent gendered expectations of domestic labour. In Canada, barriers such as de-professionalization and lack of affordable domestic help meant that women were expected to take on domestic and caring work they had not had in India (Ghosh, 2020). Similarly, Mustafa et al. (2020) found that Indian women described being entirely responsible within households for caring responsibilities – cooking, cleaning, washing, and running errands – mainly "feminine" work. Given that many Indian women arrive with credentials and work experience, they are expected to undertake the dual role of homemaker and wage earner (Ghosh, 2020; Mustafa et al., 2020).

As it applies specifically to women's role in raising children, the process and practices of mothering' provide insights into human nature, enculturation, socialization, and individual agency, as they are negotiated within specific socio-cultural contexts (Barlow & Chapin, 2010). Byrne (2006) argues that the activities involved in being mothers and bringing up children can be understood in the context of race, class, and gender and that mothering reinforces classed and raced discourses. The context of migration, however, complicates these processes. In her study of mothering among South Asian immigrant mothers in Canada, Chaze (2017) sheds light on the complexity of "settlement" for South Asian immigrant women, who have to navigate complex processes at home, children's school and their employment, and subordinating their values and priorities concerning raising children, to the more dominant set of values driven by global neoliberal influences.

The additional dual role of the income earner and homemaker has been found to take a physical toll on women's bodies and long-term mental health issues such as increased stress (George & Chaze, 2009; Mustafa et al., 2020). Several studies indicate that Indian women have expressed that losing family and friend support following migration has negatively impacted their mental health and well-being and increased their family responsibilities (Ghosh, 2020; Mustafa et al., 2020). In a study of recently immigrated South Asian women in Toronto, Canada, mental health emerged as an overarching health concern. Many participants agreed that mental health issues were part of their post-migration experiences. The stress-inducing factors identified by participants included loss of social support, economic uncertainties, downward social mobility, mechanistic lifestyle, barriers to accessing health services, and climatic and food changes (Ahmad et al., 2004). South Asian women are disadvantaged in their resettlement and integration process due to intergenerational conflict at home and discrimination in the place of employment, resulting in mental health issues such as depression (Samuel, 2009).

Parents and in-laws can immigrate to Canada, under the family reunification program, and, in most cases, they offer valuable support in caring for

young children. Not much is known about the quality of life of these caregivers. In a qualitative study of South Asian older women in Toronto, Alvi and Zaidi (2017) found that the participants struggled with familial and systemic obstacles in their daily lives. The time of arrival in Canada was a critical factor in determining these women's quality of life and health.

Indo-Canadian women/parents adapt their parenting styles to the realities of their new surroundings. Ochocka et al. (2001) found that newcomer parents changed their parenting styles towards more tolerance, freedom, independence, and modification of discipline. They also spent more time with children. Due to the children's fast acculturation pace, the roles of parents and children shifted, causing significant challenges to immigrant parents' child-rearing practices.

Given the trend of increasing migration beginning in the 1960s, there are numerous generations of South Asians now living and growing in Canada. One study found that South Asian Canadian youth and young adults born and growing up in Canada reported the highest maintenance of their cultural identity and value system compared to other ethnic groups (Merali, 2008). Elliot (1996) identifies four significant changes in the family values of young Asians: active involvement in family decision-making, a questioning of the importance of extra-familial kinships, more autonomous decision-making in marriages, and increased perusal of higher education and careers. While younger family members acculturated into Canadian society may express individual choices and challenge parental authority; generally, their integration process was marked by the retention of cultural traditions, such as marriage customs and in selecting a partner (Merali, 2008). Research evidence to the contrary challenges the prevailing images of South Asian women as victims of their culture. Presenting the findings from her study of second-generation Christian immigrants from Kerala, Samuel (2013) argues that women play an active part in challenging the patriarchal practices of arranged marriages and dowry to structure their lives.

As Patel (2006) posits, discussions of South Asians in Canada must explore the transnational context as this plays a significant role in South Asian Canadians' lives. In addition to maintaining strong ties to their homelands, South Asians have been found to develop and maintain strong bonds globally, as friends and family have often settled in other countries (Patel, 2006). These transnational linkages are critical to understanding familial and cultural relations among and between South Asian communities; often, these transnational ties are part of and reinforce traditional family values related to obligation and family honour (Kteily-Hawa et al., 2019). For example, one notable practice in South Asian culture is that of international arranged marriages in which, to preserve South Asian values and heritage, South Asian families arrange for international marriages that enable a later sponsorship process that allows the Canadian partner, usually male, to sponsor their spouse (Merali, 2008). The said practice highlights transnational links that enable and ensure ongoing connections between the sponsored and their

family back home. Here again, there are emerging trends that challenge and change traditional practices. Dating websites have introduced a great deal of freedom for young women in choosing their partners, enabling them to identify partners worldwide. Interreligious and intercommunity marriages are also becoming very common.

Transnational family arrangements, transnational parenting, transnational care for elderly parents, international marriage and global adoption all impact how women form their networks in Canada (Yang, 2019). Unlike the Chinese community, which engages in various forms of transnational family and child-rearing arrangements, Indian women's transnationalism is limited for the most part to transnational social relationships and family support. One of the primary motivations for Indian women's immigration to Canada is to take advantage of the high-quality education and career opportunities available in Canada for their children – even when they are aware of the challenges of settlement in Canada. However, some evidence indicates that Indo-Canadian parents send their children to parents in India – mainly because of their inability to earn enough income to support the children in Canada. More recently, an emerging trend involves fathers returning to pre-migration employment (mainly in the Middle East) due to the difficulties associated with entry into the Canadian labour market.

Indo-Canadian women maintain contact with their parents and extended family regularly, either in person, long distance, or both. Some women extend financial support to their families in India. Indo-Canadian women's identities are tied to their home country origins. Even after they obtain Canadian citizenship, they express their identity in hybrid terms.

Family Conflicts: Child Maltreatment, Intimate Partner Violence, and Elder Abuse

Child maltreatment can present a complication to some immigrant family dynamics. Identifying child maltreatment among immigrant communities in Canada has become increasingly challenging, given the growing need to consider the cultural context (Maiter et al., 2004). However, as Maiter et al. (2004) argue, disciplinary and parenting practices should not be accepted simply because of cultural relativism. As such, workers are responsible for responding to contextual issues that might impact parenting while identifying instances where intervention is needed (Maiter et al., 2004). Their results showed that South Asian families self-reported that they were not likely to overlook incidences of child maltreatment and largely ascribed to similar standards of appropriate parenting practices as per North American standards (Maiter et al., 2004). Despite this, parents were unlikely to seek institutional help, instead seeking support from religious or community leaders. Hesitancy stemmed from fear of professionals, concerns that their needs would not be met, fear of stigmatization, or lack of institutional understanding (Maiter et al., 2004).

Intimate partner violence (IPV) is another factor that might impact South Asian migrant families. The World Health Organization defines IPV as "any behaviour of an intimate partner that causes physical, psychological or sexual harm to those in the relationship" (Ahmad et al., 2013, p. 1057). Research indicates that racialized immigrant women are more likely to experience IPV due to factors such as low economic status or complete economic dependence on their abuser, employment discrimination, social isolation, language barriers, and lack of knowledge of institutions (George et al., 2022; Okeke-Ihejirika et al., 2020). Further, George et al. (2022) identified that a lack of institutional coordination could make the process more onerous and burdensome, as information can be lost, a decision may fall between two systems, and lawyers can be overworked and overloaded, particularly when the addition of immigration status is involved in cases of violence.

Ahmad et al. (2013) argue that South Asian women are in triple jeopardy, as they live in a new country where they often encounter economic challenges, are away from their social support, and live in a context with strong patriarchal norms. Culture may also contribute to abuse; family honour, which emphasizes unity, means that, in some cases, families might normalize or ignore abuse to protect themselves and their family from stigma should the abuse be uncovered (Chaze et al., 2020). Contrary to other studies, Ahmad et al. (2013) found that women relied heavily on their social networks for support. They theorize that this may be different as the women interviewed were already survivors and had been able to overcome the stigma they feared might result from their disclosure. The study also noted that women depended healthily on social services to help them establish the foundation they needed to leave (i.e., housing and employment) and provide a network to whom they could disclose (e.g., English language teachers).

While social services might facilitate reporting, numerous barriers have been identified that perpetuate and exacerbate the existing power dynamics. Institutions like the child welfare and judicial system have been identified as systemically racist (George et al., 2022). Fears surrounding institutions with a history of oppressing racialized individuals can make it so that partners fear reporting at the risk of losing their child or being mistreated or not believed by police (George et al., 2022). Despite remaining largely ineffective, Canada continues to ascribe to a "rescue and prosecute strategy," which relies on institutions like police and shelters (Okeke-Ihejirika et al., 2020). Instead, about 70% of victims of IPV seek community or religious-based support (Okeke-Ihejirika et al., 2020).

In addition to child maltreatment and IPV, studies have identified an issue of elder abuse. Transnational care for older adults is a growing phenomenon, with increasing life expectancy in the context of globalization (Yang, 2019). Different forms of transnational care can be identified: migrant family members travelling back to their home country to provide care, care users travelling to the migrant families' host country to receive care and care providers travelling across to deliver care. Under the Canadian family reunification

program, many immigrants sponsor their elderly parents to move to Canada to live with them (Choudhry, 2001). Choudhry (2001) found that, although Indian families retain many of their values relating to respect for elders, when elderly parents move to Canada, they noted a decline in adherence to cultural practices. Elderly Indian parents are also usually physically and emotionally dependent on their children. While Choudhry (2001) found that elderly parents contributed just as equally to the family dynamics (e.g., childcare), their economic dependence on their children and waning veneration of elders increased their vulnerability to illness, abuse, and neglect. The absence of daily social interactions outside their family and constraints on adhering to their children's household rules made them more vulnerable to emotional distress and possible mistreatment (Choudhry, 2001).

Interactions With Social Institutions

Although the existence of numerous newcomer services is available in Canada in cities like Toronto, South Asian newcomers tend to look for help in their ethnocultural networks (George & Chaze, 2009). Informal networks provide more accessible and culturally relevant support modes and are considered more trustworthy, given they come recommended from trusted sources (Hernández-Plaza et al., 2006). Geographical places are significant to the adaption of immigrant Indian women in new spaces (Ghosh, 2020). Community-based non-profit organizations provide settlement support for new immigrants, and many agencies offer services to newcomer women, mainly information about employment, housing, health, and available services. Language training classes provide language training and orientation to Canadian life. The settlement sector employs many immigrant women, and judging from the sheer number of Indian immigrants, Indian women are well-represented in this sector.

Canada's official policy of multiculturalism guarantees the right to practise one's culture, language and religion and as Wilkinson (2005) points out, "Canadian identity is intended as a hybridization of affiliations to the country, and to ethnic and religious groups, the combination of which depends on the individual" (p. 74). Religion is an integral part of everyday immigrant life in the host country and a key identity marker. Literature on diasporic communities has underscored the relationship between ethnicity and religion (Rai & Sankaran, 2011). The South Asian community in Canada comprises mainly Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs (Merali, 2008). Immigrants from India come primarily from a Hindu background and tradition, which has roots in the theory of duties of life stages (dharma-ashrama) (Acharya & Northcott, 2007). These collective life stages form the basis of everyday life in Indian culture, including:

"Grhasta" or, "householder," engagement in familial, household, and community affairs; "Dharma," the duty to perform well within life and accept challenges; "Artha," undertaking worldly affairs of an economic nature;

"Karma," making choices to deal with one's situation and future life; and "Sanny ¯asin," the stage of the renouncer, meaning distancing oneself from worldly affairs or "samsara" (Acharya & Northcott, 2007, p. 616).

While some authors argue that these premises are used to control women, Acharya & Northcott (2007) argue that gendered household practices help Indian women sustain social support networks and contribute to a strong sense of identity, particularly in the community. Their study found that elderly Indian women living in Alberta used their faith in God as a coping resource to prevent negative mental health issues (Acharya & Northcott, 2007).

It is also essential to recognize that almost all religious traditions in India are present among the diasporic community in Canada. The followers practise their faith by organizing themselves into worshipping communities and establishing places of worship – all with perpetual reference to the practices in the home county. While "leading and officiating" are men's prerogatives, women take on significant supportive roles in running the organizations. Women also develop social support networks within these worshipping communities.

Though there are variations in religious backgrounds, Merali (2008) argues that the fundamental value systems in South Asian cultures remain primarily similar, characterized by a strong family orientation. More than a physical institution that families interact with, religion is rooted firmly in the centre of cultural values, guiding and preserving the value systems. Studies have found that despite younger generations being raised in an individualistic society such as Canada, young South Asian family members tended to protect cultural values and customs (Merali, 2008).

As mentioned earlier, the first and foremost motivation for immigration to Canada is pursuing a better future for the children. The school system in Canada promotes parental involvement in the education of children. Interaction of Indian women with the school system is uneven due to several factors, such as English language proficiency, women's level of comfort in interacting with teachers and the sheer availability of time for many working mothers.

There is little scholarship on Indian/South Asian women's engagement with the broader ethnic or/and Canadian community. In addition to the gender gap, there is an under-representation of Indian women in politics, although many exercise their voting rights. In an ongoing study on the experience of citizenship among South Asian women (George, 2002) acquiring citizenship is for more instrumental purposes such as having a Canadian Passport for travel purposes.

Conclusion

It is safe to state that the old and the new co-exist in the lives of Indian women in Canada. Despite the many structural barriers that prevent the realization of their full potential, most Indian women navigate the complex realities

of their multiple roles with courage, sacrifice, and determination and make significant contributions to Canada's economic, social, and cultural milieu. Factors such as English or French language proficiency, education and skills, access to health, social networks, family gender roles, religion and culture, and discrimination facilitate or impede the integration of Indo-Canadian women into Canadian society. Employment offers them opportunities for expanding their horizons and building social networks outside their home and ethnic community. As Elliot (1996) observes in her work on immigrant families in Britain, migration involves dislocation, disruption, and change. Still, images of change and disruption are processes of continuity concerning one's culture and traditions, as can be observed in kinship patterns, gender relations, and parent-child relations. Indo-Canadian women and all immigrants enjoy the safety and security offered by Canada. They proudly acknowledge their hyphenated identities (Indo-Canadian) and a sense of belonging to Canada. Despite the experience of racism, discrimination and multiple and intersecting oppressions, for the majority of Indian women, immigration to Canada is/was a successful experiment.

Note

1 In South Asian culture, izzat is the family's honour, within the dualism of honour and shame (Patel, 2019).

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5 "We Know We Have to Work Like a 'Donkey' in Canada"

Employment Expectations and Experiences of Young Punjabis Migrating to Canada

Tania Das Gupta and Sugandha Nagpal

Introduction

Much of the scholarship on immigrant employment in Canada has adopted a political economy approach to critique state policies, institutional barriers, and structural constraints that reiterate the racialization of immigrant workers (Teelucksingh & Galabuzi, 2007; Sakamoto et al., 2010; Block & Galabuzi, 2018) and the intersectional nature of race, gender, and class (Ng, 1998; Arat-Koc, 2001; Zaman, 2006; Vosko, 2006; Choudry et al., 2009; Banerjee et al., 2018; Walton-Roberts, 2021; Abu-Laban et al., 2022) in the Canadian labour market. An alternative strand of work examines immigrant "employment success" as an important metric of integration (Frank, 2013; Reitz, 2001, 2007a, 2007b), identity, and belonging (Das Gupta, 2021). Although these works have been key to our understanding of immigrant experiences, most of them pay little attention to individual negotiations by migrants as they engage in paid work. In this chapter, we build on scholarship that is focused on the individual-level negotiations of immigrants around employment (e.g., see Zaman, 2006; Choudry et al., 2009; Dlamini et al., 2012; Das Gupta et al., 2014) while also considering their structural limitations. In trying to expand the focus of scholarship on immigrant employment, this chapter adopts a transnational approach, which allows for an understanding of how migrant and immigrant experiences of employment are a transnational process including expectation setting, preparation, and navigation. Moreover, a focus on the individual allows us to centralize their agency and negotiations around employment, while still attending to their social positioning and the structural context they are operating in, in both the pre- and post-migration phases.

This chapter will contrast themes that emerged in the pre-migration and post-migration phases as young Punjabis articulate their expectations of work in their planned destination of Canada along with their actual post-migration employment experiences in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. In both these phases, two groups of migrants arriving through different pathways – international students and skilled permanent residents – were

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interviewed. International students pursue permanent residence through a two-step migration pathway, initially arriving in Canada as temporary students and then applying for permanent residence (PR) in the post-graduation period. Skilled professional immigrants arrive as permanent residents through a direct route based on their cultural and financial capital. We are interested in interrogating how migrants following different pathways set employment expectations and navigate employment in the immigrant context, given the pre-migration context of information asymmetry and immigration agents (including fraudulent ones) and post-migration structural context of racism, sexism, and other forms of discrimination; devaluation of qualifications; and uncertain pathways to class mobility. We argue that the migrant's migration pathway and transnational social networks shape their employment expectations and navigations. In addition, in the pre-migration phase, the stage of journey prospective migrants are in, that is, planning to migrate, in the process of filing the visa application or having received the visa, plays an important role. Across both sites, migrants use the idea of temporariness to contain and cope with the precarious working conditions they expect to face or are facing in the immediate aftermath of migration.

While these navigations are strategic and enable migrants to ensure better preparedness and adaptation to precarious employment conditions, they do not question the basis for this precarity and leave the structural context intact. In fact, the acquiescence to precarious working conditions in the pre-migration stage points to an early normalization of low-paying and devalued work in the post-migration context. While Tungohan (2021) has discussed the role of pre-migration orientation sessions in inculcating gendered and colonial gratitude towards the receiving state, in the case of Punjabi migrants that we interviewed, there were no such pre-departure programs. Scholars such as Chatterjee (2019) and Walton-Roberts (2021) have pointed to the formation of migrant subjectivity through policy pathways, which often results in migrants differentiating themselves from each other rather than building solidarity. In the pre-migration stage, there is a distinct difference in the expectations of student and skilled migrants wherein student migrants are more amenable to low-paid and precarious employment. In contrast, those migrating under the skilled worker category try to distinguish themselves from the students who are seemingly willing to take on precarious work and migrate "at any cost." Similarly, in the post-migration period, students and skilled migrants depict different navigations. Skilled migrants are actively selecting employment opportunities that further their class mobility and/or allow them better working conditions. Students are navigating long working hours alongside their educational commitments so the actual job status or working conditions become less important. Having a job is key to their survival, alongside working towards attaining permanent residency. They are often seeking jobs that are temporally flexible and include flex time, shift work, and part-time work.[1]

In exploring the employment expectations and experiences of these two groups of migrants and emphasizing their agentive manoeuvring, we seek to

expand the scholarship on migrant employment. In this chapter, we draw on qualitative data gathered through online Zoom interviews with young Punjabis across the contexts of Punjab and Toronto. We aim to develop a transnational understanding of how migrants are preparing for and navigating the institutional structures and employment opportunities across the contexts of Punjab and Canada. The first section will lay out the structural contexts within which prospective migrants plan their mobility in India and later find themselves working and living in Canada. The second section will construct a theoretical framework, which we call "transnational navigations" with which migrant agency and mobility are analysed. The third section will describe the methods used in our research in Punjab and Canada. The fourth section will present our findings in the pre-migration period and show continuities and ruptures in the post-migration period. This will be followed by a discussion of the research findings and conclusions.

Structural Contexts of Transnational Navigation

India

India is the largest source country of immigrants to Canada. In 2021, one-third of Canadian immigrants were of Indian origin (El-Assal, 2022). In 2022, Canada received 807,750 international students, of which 40% were from India (Canadian Bureau for International Education, 2022). The number of Indians who became permanent residents in Canada rose from 32,828 in 2013 to 118,095 in 2022 (Government of Canada, 2022b). In 2021, 10,000 Indians moved to Canada under the Temporary Foreign Worker Program[2] and 130,000 received work permits under the International Mobility Program[3]. India is a logical source country due to its expanding middle-class population with high levels of English fluency. Prospective migrants in India often cite their interest in migrating to Canada due to its accessible pathway to permanent status (El-Assal, 2022).

There are several programs implemented by the Canadian government to attract immigrants including the Express Entry program, which was implemented in 2015 to attract highly skilled workers from abroad or international students currently working under a temporary status. In 2018, Immigration, Refugees, Citizenship Canada (IRCC) launched the Student Direct Stream to allow eligible international students from designated countries to fast-track their application for post-secondary studies in Canada. In addition, the Post-Graduation Work Permit (PGWP) allows international students, who have graduated from postsecondary education, to gain Canadian work experience (El-Assal, 2022).

Among Indian immigrants, Punjabis are a strong majority with 763,785 Canadians reporting Punjabi as their mother tongue,[4] approximately 2% of the Canadian population. In the Toronto area, where our study is based, 20.3% of immigrants cite India as their place of birth and among Indian

immigrants, Punjabi and Gujarati are the most spoken Indian mother tongues (Statistics Canada, 2022a, 2022b). The Punjabis are a transnational community with strong linkages to Canada and Punjab, and the Doaba region of Punjab, where the current study is located in India, has the highest rate of out-migration from Punjab. There are various estimates on the rate of out-migration from Punjab. According to the Ministry of External Affairs, India, between 2016 and February 2021, 984,000 people migrated from Punjab and Chandigarh, which include 379,000 students and 600,000 workers. Based on these numbers 1 in 33 Punjabis moved abroad in the last five years. Thirty-eight per cent of those who immigrated did so on student visas (Rampal & Agarwal, 2022). According to the Punjab International Migration Survey (PIMS), which was conducted across 10,000 households in Punjab, 11% of households in Punjab reported one international out-migrant (Nanda et al., 2022). These estimates along with the preponderance of International English Language Testing System (IELTS) centres and commercialization of immigration services relay a sense of the importance of migration in Punjab, wherein it is seen as an important route of social and economic mobility.

For young Punjabis, migration is an important aspiration and allows them to forge class mobility and claim proximity to urban modernity (Nagpal, 2022). But the fulfilment of the aspiration often entails parents selling their land or taking out loans to send their children abroad to study and gain permanent residency status (One Voice Canada, 2021). The desire to out-migrate has been actively harnessed by the Canadian government, agents of Canadian colleges and universities who are said to earn $3,000–4,000 per student, as well as immigration recruitment agents in Punjab. In the pre-migration context, prospective migrants are subject to an immigration industry that exploits their lack of information for their own gain, often ushering students towards community colleges as opposed to universities (Das Gupta & Su, 2023). This has class implications as colleges are by and large geared to applied and occupationally specific courses that demand lower levels of English fluency, whereas universities provide avenues to a larger array of upper-level managerial, supervisory, and professional jobs demanding higher English fluency. Moreover, students are also encouraged into programs of study by agents based on the agent's "arrangement" with Canadian colleges, which may have nothing to do with the student's previous education or professional experience. According to PIMS, 20% of households in Punjab report the agent services amounted to cheating or deceiving. Despite the potential for exploitation and fraud, 62% of households report using the services of agents for assistance in migration. The propensity to seek immigration consultants or agents to migrate is heightened among those with poor networks and support systems abroad and a lack of family history of migration. Households in Doaba, urban areas, and those with large landholding reported less dependence on the immigration industry (Nanda et al., 2022). This points to the importance of social networks in mediating the process of migration, from its very inception.

Canada

Immigration has always been part of the settler colonial project of the Canadian state. Local Indigenous Peoples were marginalized, segregated, and subject to various forms of violence, cultural genocide, and in other ways cast out of the nation (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015; Coulthard, 2014). On the other hand, immigrants/settlers were brought in to provide the labour power that was needed to establish a settler colonial capitalist economy. This system of labour migration and immigration/settlement continues today through a range of state policies and programs (Abu-Laban et al., 2022; Simmons, 2010). While different groups of white and non-white migrants have been brought in to fulfil labour market needs, they have not all been privy to the same level of benefits and services. The varying treatment of different groups of migrants, immigrants, and asylum seekers brought to a country under different migrant categories and pathways is linked to different access to social rights – services and benefits – described as "differential inclusion" by Schlee (2021). The differential inclusions arise out of a continuum of exclusions and conditional inclusions.

Although blatant racial and sexual exclusions were removed in the post-1967 period, the advent of the Points System of immigration meant the removal of "race" as a criterion of admissibility and enfranchisement. But the principle of maintaining pockets of temporary labour devoid of most rights remained. Moreover, the bodies associated with temporariness continued to be those of poor and racialized people, who are still considered undesirable as permanent residents and citizens. In fact, Sharma (2006) has pointed out that soon after the Points System was brought in purportedly marking the end of a racially exclusive immigration policy, another policy was ushered in 1973 called the Non-Immigrant Employment Authorization Program (NIEAP), which ensured the preservation of temporary migrant labour flows into Canada. The immigrants who are brought in through these programmes work under work permits, some of which are tied to a particular employer who manages their housing and working conditions, and others which are open permits, giving them more options provided they can find employment. But they are limited in other ways such as hours of work. Over the past four decades, the proportion of temporary migrants in relation to permanent immigrants has been increasing albeit stratified in terms of the ease with which they can apply for permanent residency, for example, those arriving under the Caregivers Program compared to those coming under the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program (SAWP). Through sustained organizing and advocacy, live-in migrant caregivers gained the right to apply for permanent residency status after fulfilling a prescribed period of temporary work in Canada, however, more recently the numbers allowed to do so remain controlled (Abu-Laban et al., 2022, p. 159). Today, temporary migrant workers are found in almost all sectors of the economy.

Although many Indian immigrants, including Punjabis, are in Canada as permanent residents, one group of temporary residents that is growing in numbers are international students. Indian nationals have received more study permits than other groups; 319,130 Indian international students were enrolled on 31 December 2022, at a Canadian post-secondary institution accounting for 37% of all international students to Canada (Olsen, 2023). Even though international students are touted to be primarily here to acquire post-secondary education, they are also migrant workers, not only because they need the earnings to pay for their tuition which is exponentially higher than the domestic rate but additionally to pay for their living expenses. Moreover, they need to perform 1,560 hours of full-time work following their graduation in order to be eligible for permanent residency in Canada. As mentioned earlier, they are on a two-step migration pathway in which the first step of entering Canada as international students is followed upon graduation by a second step of applying for permanent residency during a transitional period when they are allowed to work full-time on a PGWP. The length of the PGWP can vary anywhere between eight months to three years depending on the length of the academic program they complete. It also makes the spouse of the PGWP holder eligible for an open work permit (Sidhu, 2021).

Scott et al. (2015) state that international students are key components of the government's *Economic Action Plan* as they are viewed by the Canadian state as "ideal" immigrants, given their Canadian work experience, language fluency, and acculturation. However, students experience labour market discrimination from employers due to their status as international students and the employer's aversion to do required paperwork that it entails, for example, Labour Market Impact Assessments (LMIA),[5] as well as racism and sexism. Moreover, unforeseen contextual changes such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the shutting down of many establishments, such as food and accommodation services (Statistics Canada, 2021), which employed about a quarter of international students, gave rise to job losses and economic precarity. On the other hand, during the pandemic recovery period, LMIAs, work permits, and permanent residency applications were expedited for those employed in essential occupations such as healthcare (Government of Canada, 2022c), and flexibility was exercised by the government regarding the eligibility for PGWP (Sidhu, 2021). Taken together, the structural contexts both pre-migration and post-migration present a number of challenges starting with locating a reliable agent to facilitate migration and, finding employment compatible with studying as a student and pre-migration qualifications for a skilled migrant in the context of increasing economic precarity. To understand how immigrants navigate structural contexts of migration in both Punjab and Canada, we draw on the concepts of transnationalism and navigation.

Transnational Navigations

There is now extensive literature to demonstrate that migrants do not neatly move from one society to another, leaving behind everything that they had

embodied before including past relationships, networks, and identities. Rather, they remain connected to their points of origin through a variety of kin relations, friendships, institutional relationships, and social networks. As Levitt and Glick-Schiller (2004) state, there are "ways of being" and "ways of becoming" that illustrate the practices by which they remain connected and the ways in which they express their old, new, and hybrid identities. "Transnational spaces" and "transnational fields" are allied concepts that denote relationships, connections, and affiliations that continue across borders with the help of communication technologies, and the back-and-forth movement of migrants, marked by power inequalities. One conduit for understanding the formation and operation of transnational relations is social networks.

Previous research has demonstrated the importance of social networks in facilitating migration, settlement, and building of diasporas (e.g., see Banerjee, 1983; Dekker et al., 2018; Haug, 2008). In our study, we find that social networks are important in defining the employment preferences and decision-making of migrants as well as for finding jobs and promotions. Ideas about work and employment circulate transnationally through villages, neighbourhoods, school networks, social media, migrants who have travelled previously, and those who are prospective travellers as well as those who stay put. Prospective immigrants rely on these social networks to prepare for the labour market scenarios post-migration and new immigrants use their social networks to access employment opportunities. In addition, as migrants engage in the process of migration and seeking employment, they interact with various transnational ideas, structures, and processes including social norms about "respectable" work, aspirations for class mobility, immigration policies, employment opportunities, and restrictions in the post-migration context. To understand the movement of migrants through employment structures and ideas across transnational spaces, it is useful to draw on the construct of "navigation."

The concept of navigation places emphasis on the ways in which migrants agentively manoeuvre the transnational field, which is seen as socially, politically, and temporally defined. Given that the structural context vis-à-vis migration policies and their implementation is constantly evolving, it is a fluid and dynamic navigation. Defining the preference for migration comes first, followed by stages of planning and preparation, and, finally, the actual spatial movement. The navigation is continually reworked in line with the demands of the situation, but as it emerges in our data, it is defined by migration pathway (student vs. skilled migrant), stage of migration (planning to migrate vs. applied to migrate) and social positioning of migrants in terms of class and gender (Triandafyllidou, 2019). As migrants navigate the structural context in the pre- and post-migration phases, their employment expectations and experiences reveal a process of agentive manoeuvring. Agency is defined as exerting some degree of control over the social relations in which one is enmeshed, which in turn means the ability to manoeuvre around these social relations to some degree (Berntsen, 2016; Sewell, 1992 p. 20).

This form of navigation is not oriented towards transforming the existing structures of domination but rather improving one's position in the existing system (Berntsen, 2016; Paret & Gleeson, 2016; Triandafyllidou, 2019, Das Gupta et al., 2014). Das Gupta et al. (2014) show how a group of professional Indian and Chinese women navigate the Canadian labour market by relying on psychological and emotional capital, reflecting what Pierre Bourdieu conceptualized as class habitus. Managing their middle-class career expectations, they look for "respectable" work by developing short and long-term goals and using their social capital to avoid falling into financial precarity.

Temporary migrants are typically more tolerant towards substandard employment conditions due to their "dual frame of reference" (Paret & Gleeson, 2016; Waldinger & Lichter, 2003) where they compare employment terms in the destination country with job opportunities in the sending country. For example, pre-migration narratives of migrants reveal their willingness to "make do" with subpar employment opportunities for the short-term due to long-term plans for a better life and/or the opportunity for skill development and cultural learning offered by post-migration employment. In the post-migration context, migrants engage in a process of "reworking" where they use informal and incremental steps to claim a better position in the existing employment relations (Berntsen, 2016). As we will discuss later, this reworking can entail an active process of selecting jobs and working conditions that are acceptable to them and using the idea of temporality.

Our focus on agency and navigation does not mean that migrants, including temporary migrants, do not engage in collective resistance. Zaman (2006), for instance, discusses the role of the Philippine Women Centre in British Columbia, which engages in activism at local, national, and global levels to fight for the rights of Philippino women, many of whom arrive in Canada as temporary caregivers under the Caregivers Program, formerly the Live-in Caregiver Program (LICP). Similarly, Choudry et al. (2009) describe the organizing activities of PINAY in Quebec, Canada, which is an organization of Philippino migrant/immigrant women. Many case studies of collective organizing and advocacy are seen predominantly among Mexican farmworkers who are employed in Canada under the SAWP, which involves alliances with Canadian unions and community organizations in Ontario, as farmworkers are not permitted to unionize in that province (Goldring & Krishnamurti, 2007). On the other hand, where unionization is allowed for migrant workers, such as in British Columbia, Vosko (2019) describes how farmworkers participated in a union drive, certification, getting a collective agreement, and a bargaining unit. Choudry et al. (2009) suggest that there is tension between adapting to precarious conditions and resisting them. The Punjabi migrants we encountered at the specific moment of the pre-migration and post-migration interviews did not articulate any interest in collective organizing or resistance. They were more oriented towards individual trajectories of mobility. This does not preclude the possibility of resistance at later

stages of their migration journey, but it points to the importance of temporality in understanding transnational processes of agentive manoeuvring.

Questions of time and temporality have been important concepts in understanding migration and transmigration (Cwerner, 2001; Griffiths, 2014; Fuhse, 2022) even though it remains under-theorized. Griffiths (2014) and Fuhse (2022) state that time is a resource which can be used to control migrants. Immigration officials and other bureaucrats can enforce an elongated period of waiting on migrants and disempower them into a total state of uncertainty and limbo, particularly for asylum seekers and undocumented people. They can require migrants, for instance, to be patient and wait for their turn indefinitely or to "do time" before they advance to the next step as in the case of the two-step migration that international students undertake. "Doing time" can also entail underemployment of skilled permanent residents while gathering Canadian experience in the labour market as in Das Gupta et al. (2014) study. In these latter cases, as Griffiths points out, "waiting is not always a negative or empty experience" (Griffiths, 2014, p. 1996), especially if there is a glimmer of hope for a better future. In our research, we find that while temporality is being enacted in a top-down manner by immigration policies and their implementation, immigrants also draw on ideas of temporality to navigate employment. Ideas about the temporary nature of precarious work were actively used by respondents in the pre- and post-migration stages to cope with subpar employment conditions.

Methods

The basis of this chapter is a Social Science and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) funded one-year exploratory study conducted in 2021 in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic as mentioned earlier. Using a transnational framework, qualitative interviews were conducted on Zoom platform with Punjabi migrants – one set with prospective migrants in Punjab, India, preparing to migrate to Canada and another set with those already residing in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). These interviews were corroborated with key informant interviews. In Punjab, key informant interviews were carried out with non-governmental organization workers, immigration lawyers, and IELTS centre teachers/owners. In Canada, key informants were counsellors and settlement and community workers. In Punjab, 13 respondents (4 women, 9 men) between the ages of 22 and 31 who were planning to or in the process of migrating as students or skilled migrants were accessed through the snowball sampling method. The networks of the community resource person (immigration lawyer) and research assistant were used to access young Punjabis in different stages of their migration journey: planning to migrate, preparing for IELTS, in the process of filing the visa application or having received their visa. The respondents were mostly from cities (5 respondents from rural areas) such as Kapurthala, Chandigarh, Phagwara, and Jalandhar in the Doaba region of Punjab. All had completed their undergraduate degree, and six

had or were in the process of finishing their postgraduate education. These respondents were mostly upper-caste Hindus or Sikhs, except for one Muslim and five Dalit respondents. The average monthly income of the respondents was INR 44,000, and they belonged to India's "new middle-class."[6] We conducted two to three in-depth Zoom interviews with each respondent. In the second and third interviews, respondents were asked to share videos or photos depicting their thoughts on migration aspirations, expectations, and gender and migration.

Similarly, in the GTA, researchers worked in partnership with a long-standing community health centre called Punjabi Community Health Services (PCHS) in Peel region where 18 in-depth interviews were conducted with immigrant settlement workers who work predominantly within the Punjabi community in the GTA's western region of Peel, which has a concentration of Punjabi-Canadian residential and business areas. Referrals by PCHS staff as well as outreach conducted by research assistants led to in-depth Zoom interviews with 14 Punjabi newcomers (9 women and 5 men) between the ages of 18 and 40 who had arrived either as skilled immigrants or as international students. Twelve were randomly selected out of a larger sample of 30 obtained through a snowball sampling method. Two additional respondents were added in a more purposive manner. Out of the 14 thus selected, 10 had arrived as international students (6 women and 4 men) out of whom 7 had gained their permanent residency at the time of the interview and 3 were in transition having completed their post-secondary program and were working full-time on post-graduate permits. All were Sikhs. All the international students had completed their programs in community colleges. Four respondents (3 women and 1 man) had arrived in Canada as permanent residents under the Federal Skilled Worker program. In the next section, we draw from these interviews to illustrate their aspirations and orientations to employment.

Pre-Migration Navigation

Anticipating Precarity

In the pre-migration context, the narratives of prospective migrants regarding employment diverged depending upon what stage of migration they were in and their migration pathway. Those migrating as students, especially young men, expressed their expectations and preparedness to take up precarious employment in Canada. They expressed that this struggle is important to set up oneself for the future. They had a fair sense of the precarity involved in working long hours and studying alongside it, as they were in constant contact with their friends who had migrated earlier. This preparedness for hardships following immigration was tied into the idea of an "ideal" male migrant, who can "rough it out" to provide security and stability to his family or in the case of unmarried men become marriageable.

Balwinder is a 26-year-old who recently got married and applied to migrate to Canada under a student visa. He resided in a village near Phagwara city and had completed his BTech from the local Ramgarhia College. At the time of our interaction, he had applied for a visa to study project management at a Canadian college and, by the end of our study his visa had come through and he was preparing for his journey. His plan was to migrate first and take six months to settle down, then call his wife who was trained and working as a nurse in Apollo Hospital in Ludhiana (a city 50km from Phagwara). In speaking about his expectations of the post-migration life, Balwinder says,

> I think that's the thing there that you remain in this race and it is a donkey's life and you keep doing that and you carry on with the load on your shoulders and it depends on your capabilities that's how you deal with it. . . . If you look at it from a long-term point of view, yes, it's the life of a donkey but for a limited time and after that, you can live happily because of the taxes you have paid.

This definition of the initial migration experience as entailing significant hurdles that one deals with temporarily for a guaranteed payoff is contrasted with life in India, where one deals with hardships like low pay without any guaranteed payoffs. This difference is attributed to the absence of a responsive state in the Indian context. This dual frame of reference allows the immigrant to justify and accept hardships in the post-migration period.

Moreover, this expectation of hardship is accompanied by a long-term vision of wealth and autonomy. Balwinder, like other young men planning to migrate, often talked about his long-term plan to set up his own business. He describes his plan to get into the construction business with his friends,

> I am doing project management (*the course Balwinder is planning to pursue in Canada*), he has done architecture and the other friend is into estimation like construction estimation, so, all in all, we can do that (*construction business*) if we get an opportunity in the future because it's quite flourishing there in Canada because the government is already trying to settle down many immigrants and they have less area and fewer homes so the construction business is not going to stop, hence we think it's a right plan for us.

Thus, the expectation of low wages and precarious employment were temporal, in that it was meant to characterize the immediate post-migration experience, but the long-term goal was to attain economic autonomy.

Career Versus "Survival Job"

In contrast, those migrating as skilled migrants were less willing to engage in low-wage survival jobs, even for a brief period. Rita is 26 years old and at the

time of the interview was pursuing her MA at O.P. Jindal Global University near Delhi, India. She had no immediate plans for migration but was looking to migrate at a later stage. She recounted the experience of her cousin, who despite pursuing his accounting education in Australia did not get a job in his field and is currently doing odd jobs with his wife. She distinguishes her preference from his and says, "So I do want to move there. But I always told my parents that I don't want to work in a wage-based job. I want proper health insurance and like, a salary package." In contrast to Balwinder, who was from rural Punjab and did not have access to high-quality educational institutions where he could attain English fluency and other urban mannerisms, Rita was raised in the cosmopolitan environment of Chandigarh. Her desire to migrate hinged on her finding employment commensurate with her career trajectory and education in the post-migration context. Also, unlike male migrants, young women did not seem to romanticize the idea of enduring hardships in the post-migration context. Thus, the mentality of not migrating and doing low-skilled jobs was heightened among those who were from urban areas, better educated, and occupied well-paying jobs in India. Moreover, as was the case with Balwinder, Rita and others preparing to migrate, actively drew on learnings from their social networks to make their migration strategies and plans.

In contrast to Rita, who has not actively started her preparation for migration and thinks about migration more as a long-term goal, Pradeep is preparing for his second migration to Canada as a skilled worker. Pradeep, a 31-year-old, had previously migrated to the UK under a student visa and completed his MA in Marketing at London South Bank University. Thereafter, he applied to go to the UK under a business visa but faced refusal twice. He also filed a case in court to challenge the visa officer's decision, but the court decided in favour of the UK High Commission. Currently, he is applying as a skilled migrant to Canada. Since he had already worked in the UK in a marketing position at Zara, he was optimistic about the so-called merit-based system in foreign countries, where they are interested in your experience and skills rather than just formal qualifications.

In talking about how prospective migrants should prepare themselves Pradeep says,

> If you want to go somewhere and do something, for example, if you're going to Canada, it's important to study about how things work there and which are the places where you would be eligible to work. . . . Because once you're there you have to work at Tim Hortons (fast food). You have to work as a waiter or a waitress at a restaurant. Even filling up the fuel in trucks and vehicles. Here this kind of work is looked down upon, but you have to work for survival. So one should know that they would've to work there and the life there would not be the same as the life here.

He is cognizant of the importance of doing jobs for survival and looks down upon his friend who sat at home for a year and did not even "allow" his wife to work as he waited for a job of his level. Pradeep describes his employment in the UK not as devalued and low paying but rather as one that facilitated his skill development. He describes the working environment in London as,

> The best' whereas in India . . . it is equal to being zero. There we have weekly sessions with the manager, or their managers, who are working in the top of the stores. Weekly, every Saturday evening, you have interactions. We have one-on-one interactions about what are the negative and the positive feelings we have about the sales.

Thus, unlike Rita, who also plans to migrate as a skilled worker but thinks about migration as a long-term objective, one she is not immediately planning for, Pradeep has already filed his application to migrate to Canada. Given his proximity to the act of migration, he confronts the reality of post-migration. He talks about the struggles one must endure in the initial stages of migration matter-of-factly and as something one should be aware of when planning their migration. In addition, he constructs his own experience doing low-paying work likely as a salesperson in Zara (he is ambiguous about his exact position) as meaningful due to its contribution to his skill development and UK's positive merit-based work culture. His tendency to distinguish his own experience from that of "others" is likely heightened due to his social positioning as the only son of a well-established and rich business family from Shimla. This distanced way of communicating the hardships entailed in seeking suitable employment post-migration while also pointing out the usability and, thereby, difference in the work he has done allows Pradeep to construct himself as both the heroic migrant who is willing to rough it out and the middle-class migrant who is able to use employment opportunities to garner skills and useful experiences.

Thus, the navigations around migration as pointed out by Triandafyllidou (2019) start in the pre-migration phase as prospective migrants interact with their social networks, define migration preferences, and make migration strategies and plans. This process of navigation is shaped by both their migration pathway and their stage of migration. Those who had not yet begun their visa application and were merely thinking about migration such as Rita were also more likely to express more defined preferences around not taking on low-skilled jobs. Also, male migrants reiterated the myth of the hardworking migrant more than women. Similarly, in the post-migration context, discussed next, a number of these patterns reverberate, as skilled migrants and students depict different navigations around employment.

Post-Migration Navigations

Re-Working Career Goals

There are continuities of the discourses heard from prospective migrants' narratives and those heard in the post-migration stage in the GTA in Canada. Those who arrived in Canada as permanent residents under the skilled categories expressed a certain selectivity about the types of jobs that would be acceptable to them. They often reworked their employment goals in line with family expectations and strategies for class mobility. Sargun, a 29-year-old man from Mohali, Punjab, who arrived in Canada as a permanent resident along with his wife at the height of the pandemic in the winter of 2021, was working as a stockbroker in India. After he completed his MA in Finance in the UK, Canada was only his second migration destination. He explained in a very detailed way how he was managing not only his own expectations but also his parent's hopes, while at the same time navigating the structural obstacles in the Canadian labour market. He intimated that his family is quite judgemental about the kinds of jobs he engages in since he had been a manager prior to coming abroad. If he did a "labour job," they would be frustrated and would ask him to come back to India. So, to manage these competing expectations, he re-worked his goals and decided to settle for a customer care job, which he thought was a "decent" job. It paid well and was an "office job." He also felt that it helped him to integrate into the financial market and to learn about credit cards, which were new to him. In this way, he said he maintained "a balance between my family back in India and the jobs here." As in the pre-migration stage, we find that Sargun's strategies benefit from his observations of the experiences of other relatives who are settled in Canada. For instance, he allied himself with a relative who did "a proper job" according to him rather than "odd jobs." He added that the former relative had pursued education and also "grew as a human being."

Gathering "Canadian Experience"

Sargun acknowledged that he may have to struggle and pursue more education, which he was already doing. With the objective of joining the Toronto Stock Exchange, Sargun was taking the Canadian Securities course after work to prepare himself for that future goal. Sargun's wife, Reena, was a graduate student completing her master's degree at the time of our interview. She had planned to complete her PhD and eventually become a university professor as that was her career in India prior to migrating to Canada. Accumulating cultural capital in the form of additional certifications and degrees is indicative of their middle-class trajectory and very much in keeping with their parental ambitions and proclivities which they have carried with them transnationally and receive regular reminders of.

Twenty-six-year-old Rajdeep came as a newlywed "co-PR" sponsored by her husband, who has been a permanent resident in Canada for nine years, from Kandola, Punjab. She had been the head of operations in an immigration agency in India. After a two-month job search in Toronto, she found her first job but decided to switch jobs after two weeks because she did not like the contractual nature of the job and the expectation of having to work on the weekend. The job she settled for was related to her position in India in that she worked in an immigration agency that was an intermediary between prospective immigrants and employers here in Canada.

Rajdeep shared with us that she did not plan to stay at this job for more than six or seven months before finding a better job. When asked if she felt her current job was a "step down," she did not think so. Nevertheless, she saw her job as good for gathering Canadian experience only, and that she would eventually change it for something better. We can see Rajdeep's temporal strategy of gathering the required Canadian experience in a less desirable job and moving towards her real goal. Her real goal was to become a business analyst and towards that end, she was taking an entry certificate in Business Analyst, which would position her to shift into that field.

"Dual Frame of Reference"

During our conversation with Sargun, he compared office cultures in India and Canada and informed us the poor office culture in India as one of the main reasons why he wanted to immigrate to Canada. In his Indian job, he felt that tensions between colleagues because of political affiliations contributed to time wastage, hampering the completion of work. He identified himself as "neutral" in terms of his politics and felt unwilling to ally with his boss just to have his support. He felt that in Canada, everybody minded their own business and did not interfere in other people's business This suited him well.

Those who arrived in Canada as international students, on the other hand, were much less choosy about the types of jobs they were prepared to do, reminiscent of their openness to doing "survival jobs" in the pre-migration phase. This openness to doing any job with a limited range of options was largely constructed by the restrictions on international students and related obligations to study and eventually graduate. But, above all, their primary goal was to attain permanent residence (PR) in Canada, with pursuing their desired careers coming only second.

"Any Job Will Do"

Twenty-seven-year-old Reet had completed a two-year Computer Science degree program from an engineering college in Ludhiana, Punjab. Pushed by her agent to apply for a community college program, because it would be faster than a university degree program (depicting a preference for a shorter waiting time), Reet decided to study computer networking after landing in

the GTA as an international student. The classes were scheduled throughout the weekdays with time gaps in between so that it was very difficult or virtually impossible to fit paid work in between. These temporal constraints compelled Reet to seek employment on the weekends as a security guard. In addition, this job allowed her to complete her assignments during quiet times as she explains: "It was good for me because sometimes I found that the workload for the courses were a lot, so it helped me to complete my stuff on the job."

Although she described her security job as being rather quiet, thus providing time to catch up with assignments from college, other security guard contexts are quite the opposite. Reet told us about international students working on nightshifts and then joining their class at 8 am in the morning. Twenty-seven-year-old Kulveer from Sangrur district was an example of that. He was an international student in a human resources program and worked as a security guard at a nightclub downtown (night shift ending at 3 am) where there was always a possibility for physical violence and threat to one's life. Nonetheless, security guard work seems to be a common job availed by international students, given its availability and its part-time and shift work nature, which makes it easier to fit into the 20-hour limitation. In the context of COVID-19, international students did not have too many choices when fast food joints were closed and shopping malls were largely "locked down." Kulveer initially started out working in fast food outlets but lost his job during the lockdown.

Upon graduation, Reet was hired full-time as a Product Technical Support in a restaurant. This allowed her to fulfil the employment requirements for permanent residency in Canada. At the time of our interview, she expressed the intention to pursue a university education. Kulveer, on the other hand, had a very different trajectory. Like Reet, he was persuaded by an agent to enrol in human resources in a community college despite or because of a low level of English fluency. He was also told that there was not much difference between colleges and universities and that the "rest depends on you." As mentioned earlier, he worked as a security guard at night and in a fast-food place on weekends as a full-time student until the pandemic ended his weekend job. He went back to working full-time in the same fast-food franchise after graduation at minimum wages fulfilling the employment requirements for his PR. Like his brother and cousins who were already PRs, Kulveer really wanted to become a truck driver because of the high earning potential in that occupation. To that end, he had spent $6,000 on a three-month training program. Indeed, recent studies show that international graduates continue to be underemployed in relation to their educational qualifications because they are often unable to find full-time jobs in their fields quickly enough to count towards their PR requirements as in Kulveer's case (Sidhu, 2021). Given that predicament, post-graduate work permit holders took up any job which would provide full-time hours for a year. Security guard jobs and jobs in such fast-food franchises as McDonalds and Tim Hortons are

beneficiaries of the labour of international students, who keep referring each other to such jobs.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we discussed how two groups of migrants (skilled permanent residents and two-step international student migrants) display continuity in their employment expectations and experiences based on their migration pathway and stage of migration. Those migrating as skilled migrants are more concerned about doing "respectable" work wherein even when there is acknowledgement of the difficult working conditions post-migration, as is the case with Pradeep, there is a tendency to construct one's experiences as conducive to skill development. Moreover, the idea of migration as a hardship that one must endure was tied in more closely with ideas of masculinity and male imaginaries of migration. Those male migrants who were in the process of migrating as skilled workers and, thereby, more proximate to the act of migration were more likely to acknowledge the likelihood of an initial period of hardship. Those migrating as students, regardless of gender and migration stage, are more embracing of the idea that they will have to do low-paying jobs for some time. However, they view this as a temporary phase, as they believe Canada can facilitate their economic autonomy in the long term.

Similarly, in the post-migration period, skilled migrants, such as Sargun and Rajdeep, navigate different employment opportunities based on family expectations and aspirations for class mobility. Some of the ways in which they engage in these processes of navigation were by re-working their jobs and employment goals, by "making do" even with precarious jobs, by viewing temporariness as a resource with which to gather "Canadian experience" and by using a dual frame of reference. Student migrants prioritized acquiring permanent status over building a career, at least in the short run. Across both contexts but especially in the post-migration context, the temporary nature of devalued work came across as an important way of managing the gulf between real employment opportunities and aspirations.

An important aspect of creating and navigating employment opportunities was the social networks that migrants had access to. Expectations and meaning-making tied to employment circulated both in the pre-migration phase and as in the post-migration phase through transnational family/kin, friendship, school, and online networks. Every migrant spoke of how their thoughts had been influenced by observing others who had migrated before them, sometimes their own experiences of migration to other locations before coming to Canada or by stories shared through their networks. They relied on these networks also to find jobs and for support in moving ahead either with their PR applications or with their careers.

The ways in which migrants set expectations and navigate employment opportunities speak to their ability to exercise agency, wherein despite structural constraints they mobilize their social networks to prepare for and access

employment opportunities that enable their social and economic mobility in Canada over the long term. This form of agency is oriented towards enhancing their position in the current system. It does not question the structural basis of the precarious employment new immigrants have to negotiate. In fact, the pre-migration acquiescence to low wages and precarious work, especially for student migrants and the post-migration management around limited employment opportunities, points to how hegemonic ideas of immigration as accompanied by economic hardship are deeply internalized. The immigrants are well prepared and reconciled to adapt around devalued work for long-term gains, which they believe is better assured in Canada than India. The structural reasons for why they are in this position in a new country that relies on their labour are not something they seem to be concerned with.

In fact, the glimmer of resistance that emerges in Pradeep's narrative is when he was denied a business visa by the UK government twice, he decided to file a case against the government. Thus, it appears that while devalued labour may be more acceptable, often due to the dual frame of reference, being denied access to a country despite meeting requirements may be a riper issue for resistance. Indeed, as we were concluding this chapter, a petition campaign (MWAC, 2023) was organized by the International Youth Student Organization (IYSO) and Migrant Workers Alliance for Change (MWAC), both based in Toronto, Canada, to stop the deportation of international students who had been defrauded by an immigration agent who had provided fake college admission letters at the point of entry into Canada several years back. The post-graduate permit holders have been ordered deported only now that they have applied for permanent residency. In addition, as pointed out earlier, the temporal point at which these Punjabi migrants accessed resistance was likely more feasible for them. Earlier in time, they were primarily concerned with either trying to migrate or as new migrants trying to find their footing. Both these positions are not conducive to resisting employment conditions. The dynamics of immigrant agency and resistance across different spaces and sectors merit further investigation.

Notes

1 The restricted work hours were lifted temporarily in October 2022 and will last until December 2023 to fill "labour shortages" in the pandemic recovery period (Government of Canada, 2022a).
2 The temporary foreign worker program allows Canadian employers to hire foreign workers to fill temporary positions when they can demonstrate that qualified Canadians are not available to do this work.
3 Under the International Mobility Program (IMP), immigrants are exempt from the labour market impact assessment.
4 Punjabi is also a language spoken by those from Pakistan; therefore, not everyone speaking Punjabi is from India but a large majority are.
5 LMIA has to be completed by any employer seeking to employ a non-Canadian who is in Canada as a temporary foreign worker. Only those employing migrants through the International Mobility Program are exempted from this requirement.

6 The "new middle class" refers to the middle-class identity that is accessible to upwardly mobile populations that belong to previously marginalized groups such as the poor or lower castes. This concept of a middle-class identity is more diverse and fluid than the upper caste-oriented middle-class identity that prevailed at the time of Indian independence. While this new middle-class identity is more inclusive and does not exclude people on the basis of their birth, it has a stronger focus on consumption rather than on the criteria of occupation, revenue, and education that has historically been used to define the middle class (Baviskar & Ray, 2011; Fernandes, 2006).

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6 Indo-Canadians in Canadian Politics

Masud Chand

Introduction

Canada hosts one of the largest Indian diasporas worldwide. According to the Canadian Census of 2021, Indo-Canadians number around 1.8 million, about 5% of the total population. They form the largest segment of Canada's most numerous visible minorities: South Asians, who total about 2.6 million, representing over 7% of the population. (Statistics Canada, 2022a). Indo-Canadians are a large and rapidly growing diaspora, and their increasing economic and political prominence makes them an important research topic. The role of diasporas in facilitating trade, investment, and ties between their countries of origin (COO) and countries of residence (COR) is widely recognized and includes investing in their COOs (Buckley et al., 2007), providing transnational social networks that facilitate trade and investment (Khanna, 2007), enabling institutional and human capital development in the COO (Saxenian, 2006), introducing the culture of the COO in the COR (Chand & Tung, 2014), sending remittances to the COO (Vaaler, 2011), and facilitating technology transfer and capacity development in the COO (Lin, 2010). The globalization of the world economy (despite recent protectionist sentiments in some countries), the declining costs of travel and communication, and changing laws and regulations in different countries have made it easier for members of an ethnic diaspora to establish a dual presence in both their COO and COR and to take advantage of economic opportunities in both the countries (Chand & Tung, 2011; 2019; Chand, 2022). The rising number of Indo-Canadian politicians is a relatively recent phenomenon and deserves further study.

Indo-Canadians in Canadian Politics

Indo-Canadian politicians are prominent at all levels of the Canadian government. In 1997, Herb Dhaliwal made history as the first Indo-Canadian member of the federal cabinet as Minister for Revenue (Singh, 2015). Indo-Canadian ministers currently form about 12% of the federal cabinet and include Minister of National Defence Anita Anand, Minister of Seniors Kamal

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Khera, Minister of International Development Harjit Sajjan, and Minister of Natural Resources Amarjeet Sohi (Todd, 2022). They have also served as Leader of the House of Commons (Bardish Chagger) and Minister of Innovation (Navdeep Bains) since 2015. Seventeen Indo-Canadians were elected to the House of Commons in the 2021 parliamentary elections (India Today, 2021). They included candidates from all three major national parties: the Liberals, the Conservatives, and the New Democrats. It should also be noted that the current leader of the New Democrats, Jagmeet Singh, is Indo-Canadian (Bhalla, 2021). In 2015, when Justin Trudeau's Liberals first came to power, he named a "cabinet that looks like Canada," with seven out of 28 ministers being members of a minority group; four of those seven were Indo-Canadian. This is in line with the proportion of Indo-Canadians elected in the Liberal party; with more than half of all immigrant MPs elected into the Liberal caucus coming from Indian backgrounds (Singh, 2015).

Indo-Canadian politicians are also prominent at provincial levels. For example, six Indo-Canadians were elected to the Ontario provincial legislature in 2022 (Times of India, 2022). Currently, two serve in the Ontario cabinet including Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria as President of the Treasury Board and Parm Gill as Minister of Multiculturalism and Citizenship (Bhattacharyya, 2022). Five Indo-Canadians serve as ministers in the British Columbia cabinet – Niki Sharma, Attorney General, Ravi Kahlon, Minister for Housing & Government House Leader, Rachana Singh, Minister of Education, Harry Bains, Labor Minister, and Jagrup Brar, Minister for Trade (The Economic Times, 2022). In addition, Raj Chouhan serves as Speaker of the British Columbia Legislative Assembly (Nuttal, 2020). It should be noted that Ujjal Dosanjh served as Premier of British Columbia from 2000 to 2001, the first Indo-Canadian to serve as premier in Canada. He later served as a member of the federal parliament as well as the federal Minister of Health (Singh, 2015)

Given the success of Indo-Canadian politicians at different levels, an important question to consider is what makes them so successful in Canadian politics. Are there any particular features of the Indo-Canadian community that contribute to this?

The Indo-Canadian Community

Indo-Canadians tend to be highly educated. Over 50% had bachelor's degrees, compared to about 30% of White Canadians. The proportion of bachelor's degree holders rose to over 60% for Indo-Canadian women (Todd, 2022). They are also much more likely to own their homes compared to the average Canadian. A survey of 3,500 South Asian adults highlighted the importance of home ownership within the community and found that they are four times more likely to buy a home compared to the average Canadian (Todd, 2021). High homeownership rates could translate into being more invested in their neighbourhoods and communities, and thus fuel more political participation.

The Indo-Canadian community is highly concentrated in certain areas. Nearly 55% of the Indo-Canadian population resides in the province of Ontario. About a fourth resides in British Columbia. Alberta and Quebec also have growing Indo-Canadian populations. About half the entire population lives in the Greater Toronto area and another 20% in the Greater Vancouver area, pointing to its high concentration in major urban areas (Statistics Canada, 2019). While people with origins in all regions of India are present in Canada, there is a great deal of regional concentration. Nearly a million people have knowledge of the Punjabi language, pointing to heritage in Punjab (Statistics Canada, 2022b). For example, all six Indo-Canadians currently serving in the Ontario legislature have Punjabi heritage (Times of India, 2022). The high geographic concentration of Indo-Canadians in major urban areas could help promote a feeling of being at home and facilitate community engagement. It should however be noted that there is great religious diversity among Indo-Canadians – 34% identify as Sikh, 27% as Hindu, 17% as Muslim, and 16% as Christian (Statistics Canada, 2007).

There has been rapid growth in recent years in Indian immigration to Canada. Since 2016, India has been Canada's highest source country of immigrants, accounting for almost 30% of all new immigrants. In 2021, 128,000 immigrants from India moved to Canada, compared to just 39,000 in 2015. Indian students, many of whom later immigrate, are the largest source of foreign students in Canada, comprising nearly 30% of all foreign students (Todd, 2022).

Canada's policy of multiculturalism may partially explain Indo-Canadians feeling at home in Canada. According to Chand (2014), the policy of multiculturalism in Canada, the diaspora's concentration in the two major cities of Toronto and Vancouver, and more immigration from a single state (Punjab) meant that Indo-Canadians are likely to be living in locations with large Indo-Canadian populations, contributing greatly to a feeling of being at "home." This could also partly explain their willingness to be more involved in the political process.

Possible Reasons for the Success of Indo-Canadians in Politics

The highly educated nature of the Indo-Canadian community, its high rates of home ownership (reflecting possibly a deeper commitment to their neighbourhoods and accompanying issues), its concentration in urban areas (especially in the Greater Toronto and Greater Vancouver areas), high regional and linguistic solidarity (with majority having ties to Punjab), growing recent immigration from India, and the feeling of being at home in Canada (partly due to Canada's policy of multiculturalism) can all be contributing factors to the success of Indo-Canadians in politics. However, while these factors facilitate the success of Indo-Canadian politicians, they by themselves do not explain it fully.

Part of the reason for Indo-Canadian political success can also lie with the familiarity that Indian immigrants often have with a similar parliamentary system that has existed in India since independence in 1947. It should be noted that the Indo-Canadian community has been very active politically since the early 1900s when they first settled in Canada. Early Indo-Canadian political causes included challenging race-based immigration policies, the right to vote, and the right to run for office. The current generation of Indo-Canadians is often active in non-profit community-based interest groups and organizations, such as the Seva Food Bank in the Peel Region, VIBC in the Greater Vancouver Region, and the Edmonton-based Indo-Canadian Women's Association (Singh, 2015). Overall, this has helped in promoting active civic engagement and creating a community that is both active and comfortable in Canadian political and social environments.

Some Issues for the Future

The success of Indo-Canadian politicians raises some interesting issues for the Indian diaspora in Canada. As immigration flows rise and as the community grows in size, political influence, and economic stature, a key question would be how this affects their relationship with both their COO and COR. For example, India, which does not allow dual citizenship, might need to reconsider its stance on the issue (the Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI), despite the name, is not a citizenship but similar to permanent residence allowing OCIs to own property in India, enter and exit freely, and practice most professions, though not allowing political rights such as voting or holding high government positions). The question of dual citizenship could become even more important as more generations grow up in the COR and want to increase their engagement with the COO (Chand, 2022).

The rising flow of Indian immigrants to Canada could also be affected by events across the border in the United States. For example, US immigration rules for the H-1B immigrant visa, the most common route for immigration, state that no more than 7% of recipients annually can be from a single country. This has made it more difficult for Indians to immigrate to the United States, and, paradoxically, made it more likely that they will choose Canada as an immigrant destination (Todd, 2022). The more restrictive immigration policies under the Trump administration and the difficulty of obtaining green cards may also have contributed to this since 2016 (Anderson, 2020). While some of these policies have been modified under the Biden administration, the 7% single-country cap continues to be a major barrier to skilled Indian immigration to the United States.

Another important issue is how the rising numbers and prominence of Indo-Canadian politicians could affect ties between India and Canada. This would be especially important, given the rising flow of trade and investments between the two countries as well as their close and growing political ties. As Indian immigration to Canada continues to rise, and as the Indo-Canadian

community acquires growing economic and political influence, this could be a major driver of ties between the two countries.

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7 The Growing Indian Diaspora in Ontario's North

Melissa Kelly and Jessica D Jung

Introduction

According to 2021 census data, South Asians are the largest visible minority group in Canada at 2.6 million people (Statistics Canada, 2022). In recent years, the number of Indian immigrants has gone up with approximately one in five recent immigrants (those who arrived in the last census period) citing India as their country of birth. This makes India, by far, the largest source country for immigrants to Canada. There are also estimated to be over 220,000 international students from India in Canada (Kelly & Niraula, 2023).

Like most other immigrant categories, Indian immigrants show a strong preference for settling in one of Canada's largest cities: Toronto, Vancouver, or Montreal (Ojo & Shizha, 2018; Statistics Canada, 2022). Regionalization policies, which encourage immigrants to move to less populated areas, as well as the aggressive recruitment of international students to smaller post-secondary institutions in non-traditional immigrant destinations, however, have led to a new trend: Indian-born individuals are increasingly finding themselves in small- and mid-sized cities, sometimes in rural and remote areas (Statistics Canada, 2022).

The population change resulting in smaller communities as a result of these policy shifts has been underexplored. In North America, large cities tend to be associated with high levels of immigration and cultural diversity, while the same cannot usually be said for smaller cities, where populations tend to have been established over several generations and hence may be more homogenous and tight knit. While several studies have considered the challenges and opportunities of creating welcoming environments for immigrants in these contexts (Sanchez-Flores, 2018; Gibson et al., 2017), these studies tend to foreground the receiving community perspective rather than the immigrant perspective. Moreover, as Zhuang (2023) notes, little research has considered how specific diasporic communities have experienced life and actively worked to establish themselves in such destinations.

This study explores the settlement of Indian-born individuals in new, non-metropolitan destinations, with a specific focus on northern Ontario. The

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chapter considers how and why northern Ontario has become a destination for Indian immigrants and international students in recent years, as well as how they have established themselves economically, socially, and culturally in the region.

Methodology

Canada is a vast country with a great deal of geographical, economic, and social diversity. We therefore thought it would be helpful to focus on changing immigration and demographic patterns in one specific region, to give due attention to relevant contextual factors in our analysis. Northern Ontario was selected because it has expressed an interest in growing its population which has significantly increased immigration to the region. Moreover, it is relatively proximate to the large city of Toronto (which serves as a useful point of comparison when considering the settlement patterns of Indian-born individuals).

The research is based on a two-step design. In the first step, we used Canadian census data from 2016 and 2021 to determine the key migration patterns of incoming Indian immigrants and international students and how they have changed over time. The analysis we conducted was descriptive and helped to infer the potential reasons for changing patterns of migration. For both the 2016 and 2021 census years, we chose to review and collect data on the following: total population, population change, Indian ethnic or cultural origin, recent immigrants from India, visible minorities, places of birth for the recent immigrant population, and the number of non-permanent residents. To help evaluate the changes, all categories from 2016 to 2021 were compared. This allowed us to understand the current situation in Canada and more specifically, in northern Ontario with respect to Indian newcomers.

In the second step, we moved beyond a focus on wider trends to examine the lived experiences of Indian immigrants and international students in northern Ontario. We took a more qualitative approach, zooming in to consider how Indian-born people in Thunder Bay, a mid-sized city that has experienced a large increase in its Indian population in recent years, have established themselves in their new environment. We conducted qualitative interviews with five recognized leaders in the city, all of whom held leadership roles in cultural, religious, or immigrant-focused-related organizations. The interviews lasted between 30 and 60 minutes and were conducted either virtually via Zoom or by telephone. The interviews were audio recorded and transcribed using an online transcription service. We then analysed the interview material manually, taking a thematic coding approach (Saldaña, 2021). The goal of the qualitative portion of the study was not to generalize but rather to gain insights into the significance and meaning of the identified changing population patterns from the perspective of Indian immigrants and international students themselves.

The History of Indian Migration to Canada

In order to understand the evolution of Indian settlement patterns in Canada, it is useful to have some historical context. The history of Indian migration to Canada dates back to the 1800s (Ghosh, 2013). At this time, however, Canadian immigration policy prioritized European migrants (George, 2017). In an attempt to control the ethnic composition of Canada, policy makers in the early twentieth century restricted immigration by country of origin, particularly limiting migrants from non-European countries (George, 2017). Asian and Black immigration was constrained, and something called the Continuous Passage Act was introduced to discourage immigration from India (Isajiw, 1999). The act disallowed the arrival of any individual from Asia if they did not arrive in Canada by direct passage or if they stopped at any point along the way (Mann, 2020). In May 1914 a ship carrying mostly Sikh Indians was prevented from docking in Vancouver on the grounds that it had violated the act. It was eventually forced to return to India. Upon reaching India, the majority of the passengers were either killed or imprisoned because they were believed to be supporters of an Indian independence movement (George, 2017; Johnston, 2014; Mann, 2020). In May 2016, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau formally apologized on behalf of Canada in the House of Commons for what is now known as the *Komagata Maru* tragedy (George, 2017); however, the impact of this event and the policies that prohibited Asian and East Indian immigration could be discerned by the number of Indian immigrants to Canada after the *Komagata Maru* incident. According to Ninette Kelley and Michael Trebilcock (2010a), "Between 1914 and 1920, only one East Indian immigrant was admitted. Over the next twenty-five years, fewer than 650 settled in Canada" (p. 154).

A policy change in 1967 paved the way for non-white, non-European immigration by utilizing a points system that helped determine one's suitability apart from their ethnic origin (George, 2017). Based on merit rather than one's ethnicity, immigration policy reforms that incorporated the Points System ensured greater diversification of immigrants (Kelley & Trebilcock, 2010b), creating the possibility for people of Indian origin to settle in Canada in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries (Ghosh, 2013; Walton-Roberts, 2003). Multiculturalism, as an official policy in 1971, further paved the way for visible minority populations to immigrate to Canada (Good, 2009). As a result of these policy shifts, many professionals and their family members came to Canada from India. Many settled in Canada's largest cities, especially the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), which includes Toronto and its surrounding suburbs (Ghosh, 2014; Somerville, 2015). In particular, Peel (which includes the Town of Caledon, the City of Brampton, and the City of Mississauga) became a significant destination for South Asian immigrants (Dean et al., 2018). Here one can find hundreds of Indian-focused shops, restaurants, and institutions that cater to the diverse religious and cultural needs of subsets of the Indian diaspora including Gujaratis, Punjabis, South Indians, and others.

The GTA, along with other major centres such as Vancouver, has continued to see high levels of immigration from India. However, Indian-born individuals are increasingly finding themselves in other towns and cities as well, some of which are located in more rural and remote locations. This is partly in response to policies that encourage a more balanced distribution of immigrants throughout the country (Esses & Adegbembo, 2022). These policies, commonly called "regionalization" policies, have tried to encourage immigrants to settle in non-metropolitan areas since the late 1990s (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2001; Kelly & Nguyen, 2023). The ongoing belief that immigrants may help to solve Canada's growing labour shortages and help to offset the population decline occurring in parts of the country has, however, led to a new emphasis on regionalization in recent years. Most relevant to this paper, was the federal government's introduction of the Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot (RNIP) in 2019. The pilot specifically aims to settle immigrants permanently in 11 cities in rural and remote parts of Canada, five of which are located in northern Ontario. This program has attracted a number of Indian-born individuals and families.

Another trend that has led Indian-born individuals to settle in non-traditional destinations is the great expansion of temporary migration programs in Canada and, in particular, international student programs (Akbar, 2022). Non-Permanent Residents (NPRs) are defined as:

> persons from another country with a usual place of residence in Canada and who have a work or study permit or who have claimed refugee status (asylum claimants). Family members living with work or study permit holders are also included, unless these family members are already Canadian citizens, landed immigrants or permanent residents.
>
> (Statistics Canada, 2023b)

In a report by Statistics Canada published in June 2023 based on the 2021 Census, the NPR population accounts for 2.5% of the national population or 924,850 residents. Among the NPRs, 21.9% have a study permit, and 14.2% have both work and study permits, accounting for 36.1% of all NPRs who are international students (Tuey & Bastien, 2023). The report also notes that many NPRs eventually apply for and receive permanent residence. Authors Tuey and Bastien (2023) note that this "two-step" immigration "improves the integration and income of immigrants" (p. 2). However, several studies suggest that a two-step form of immigration can lead to greater precarity for the migrant rather than improve integration and earning capabilities (Akbar, 2022; Ellermann & Gorokhovskaia, 2020; Lamb & Banerjee, 2022).

India is the primary source country for international students in Canada, and many Indian international students also hold a work permit. Unlike in the past, many international students are going to non-traditional destinations, such as smaller cities and rural areas. These are locations that

previously had very few immigrants, including immigrants from India, meaning that new arrivals generally do not have a large and well-established diasporic community with which they can connect. Their experience is therefore likely quite different from those settling in larger centres in previous waves of migration. There is a great need to learn more about their motivations for moving to these "new" destinations, and how they have established themselves there.

Indian Migration to Northern Ontario

One of the regions that has seen an uptick in migration from India is northern Ontario. Northern Ontario, the region of focus in this chapter, has been experiencing population decline due to low birth rates, ageing, and outmigration (Lamothe, 2022; Siddiq & Babins, 2013). While the region's economy has traditionally focused on natural resources such as mining and forestry, cities in the region are now actively trying to reinvent themselves through a process of economic diversification. Immigration is seen as important to the new economies that are emerging and is important for population growth.

The five biggest cities in northern Ontario (known as "the big five") are Sudbury (at 166,004), Thunder Bay (at 108,843), Sault Ste. Marie (at 72,051), North Bay (at 52,662), and Timmins (at 41,145). All five of these cities have experienced modest or even negative population growth in the last period. Between 2011 and 2016, during the previous census, the five cities generally experienced a population decline, apart from a slight increase in Sudbury (0.80%). In the latest census from 2016 to 2021, the population grew in Sudbury, Thunder Bay, and North Bay, while the population decline was still present but improved in Sault Ste. Marie and Timmins. Based on the census data, we see that the population in all five cities has generally increased (Figure 7.1).

Despite overall low population growth, the Indian population in all five cities has grown over time. Data from the 2021 Census revealed that India is among the top three source countries of new immigrants (Table 7.1) (Statistics Canada, 2023b).

Of course, India is not the only source country of immigrants coming into these cities. It is therefore also interesting to note how the growth of the Indian community has compared to the overall percentage of the immigrant population.

In the case of Thunder Bay, for example, recent immigrants from India in 2016 accounted for 9.30% of the total recent immigrant population; in 2021, recent immigrants from India to Thunder Bay comprised 19.35% of the total recent immigrant population during that census year. The chart below displays the changes from 2016 to 2021. Overall, an increase in recent immigrants to Thunder Bay is present, and, correspondingly, an increase in recent immigrants from India is also visible (Figure 7.2).

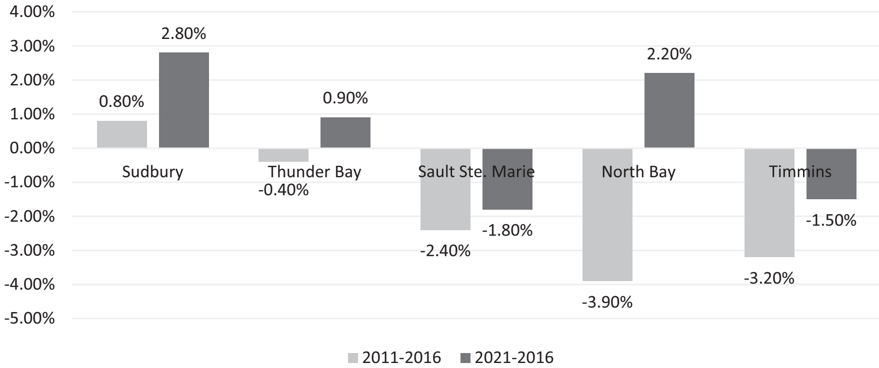

Figure 7.1 Population change in northern Ontario cities 2011–2021.

Source: (Statistics Canada, 2021) Census of Population; (Statistics Canada, 2016) Census of Population

Table 7.1 Indian population (total numbers)

City	*Total population (2021)*	*Indian ethnic origin population (2021)*	*Per cent increase previous census (2011-2016)*	*Per cent increase in latest census (2016-2021)*
Sudbury	166,004	1,935	61.38%	65.38%
Thunder Bay	108,843	1,815	34.88%	212.93%
Sault Ste. Marie	72,051	830	10.29%	121.33%
North Bay	52,662	430	–1.37%	19.44%
Timmins	41,145	410	–57.89%	241.67%

Source: (Statistics Canada, 2021) Census of Population; (Statistics Canada, 2016) Census of Population

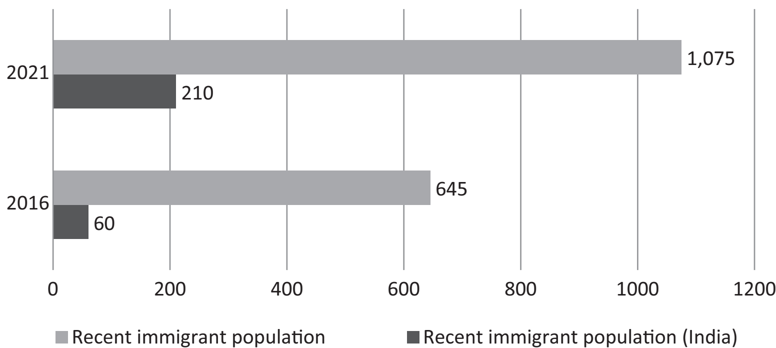

Figure 7.2 Total recent immigrants and recent immigrants from India in Thunder Bay.

Source: (Statistics Canada, 2021) Census of Population; (Statistics Canada, 2016) Census of Population

Based on Statistics Canada data, we can see that the proportion of recent immigrants from India has increased in Canada, Ontario, Toronto, but also Thunder Bay, Sudbury, and Timmins, while it has declined in Sault Ste. Marie and North Bay (despite an overall increase) (Figure 7.3).

It is important to point out, however, that these figures do not capture the full story of Indian migration to northern Ontario. While Canada admitted 437,180 permanent immigrants in 2022, it also admitted 607,782 non-permanent residents (Statistics Canada, 2023a). Some of these individuals moved from India to northern Ontario.

The province of Ontario had the highest percentage of NPRs with only a study permit at 37.6% and both a work and study permit at 44.6% (Tuey & Bastien, 2023). In regard to the ethnic origin of NPRs, India and China accounted for the top places of birth for these residents, with India being the top place of birth among those with both a work and study permit (43.1%) (Tuey & Bastien, 2023). Of the total NPR population, India was the top place of birth, comprising 28.5% (Tuey & Bastien, 2023).

The Lived Experiences of Diasporic Indians in Thunder Bay

The dramatic increase in the number of immigrants and international students moving to northern Ontario has raised questions regarding the lived experiences of Indian-born individuals who have moved to the region. In this second part of the chapter, we focus on how Indian migrants have established themselves in Thunder Bay, a city with one of the largest overall increases in Indian-born individuals in the northern Ontario region. Please note that in this section, we frequently use the term "migrant" to refer to all newcomers from India, regardless of their official immigration status or their official reason (i.e. work, study, etc.) for moving to Canada.

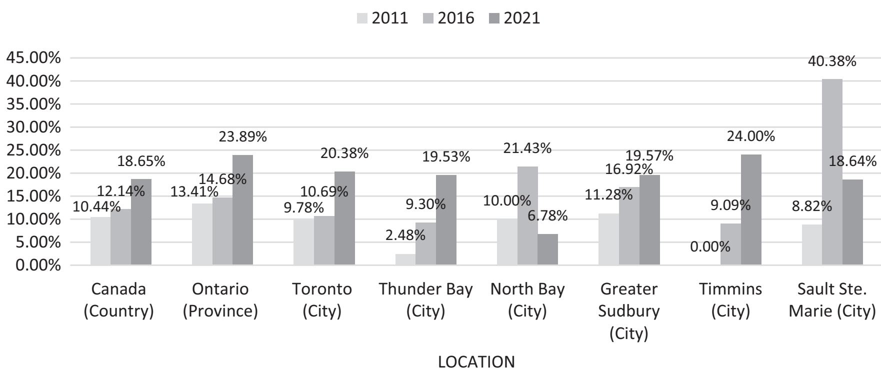

Figure 7.3 Proportion of recent immigrants from India 2011–2021.

Source: (Statistics Canada, 2021) Census of Population; (Statistics Canada, 2016) Census of Population; (Statistics Canada, 2011) NHS.

Navigating the Local Labour Market

Prior to the large uptick in Indian migration to Thunder Bay in recent years, only a small number of Indian migrants came to the city to work in its resource-based economy. There were also some professional migrants who came to the city to seize opportunities in academia, medicine, and business.

According to the participants interviewed for this study, the growth of the Indian population in Thunder Bay can be related primarily to the introduction of international student programs at Lakehead University and Confederation College. The estimated number of international students from India currently living in the city exceeds 2,000 individuals. Many international students did not know Thunder Bay existed until they were recruited (usually by an education consultant in India) to attend one of these two institutions in the city. Thunder Bay's selection to be part of the RNIP program also increased its popularity as it offered a new pathway for Indian migrants to gain access to permanent residency in Canada.

Although most people arriving in Thunder Bay from India today are coming as international students, according to the study participants, they have a need to work in order to pay their expenses, including hefty international student fees. From the community's perspective, the labour of these students is essential, given that the local population is shrinking. According to the study participants, there is currently a reliance on international migrants to do low-paid jobs in the hospitality and retail sectors. Since the majority of international students in Thunder Bay are from India, the impact has been visible. As one key informant engaged more generally in the settlement of immigrants in the area commented:

> *I noticed all the grocery stores have immigrants. It doesn't mean that they are all Indian, but I would say more than 50% are Indians. 60% to 70% are Indians.*

Although these are generally not the jobs that Indian international students want to retain long-term, their over-representation in frontline work has helped them to develop a positive reputation in the community. According to the study participants, trust between locals and incoming Indian migrants has been growing, and employers are increasingly eager to hire Indian immigrants and international students. One participant, who worked within the immigrant settlement sector, noted that this trust is important, as hiring tends to happen informally in smaller communities:

> *I think small centers are known for the networking. . . . A lot of hiring happens that way through networking and informal events and not through structured, through an Indeed or LinkedIn or whichever other way.*

While the trust that has been cultivated has been a positive development, there are still barriers to Indian immigrants and international students achieving full labour market integration in Thunder Bay. Employers' preference to hire those with Canadian credentials and experience, for example, continues to limit some people's access to opportunities. Perhaps, most importantly, however, is that the Thunder Bay labour market is still very limited; while the city would like to diversify its economy, the reality is that there are not very many highly skilled jobs in the city. As one participant put it:

> *Only jobs you get are restaurant jobs and grocery stores. And some people get job in hospital. Not many jobs. All I can say considering the students, the number of students we have, there's not that many jobs.*

After graduation, many international students would like to pursue opportunities that are more aligned with what they have studied, but this is often not possible in Thunder Bay, causing them to move out. As one participant put it:

> *Lot of students stay in Thunder Bay and every intake more students are coming right now in Thunder Bay. But compared to if you are specifically in the technological or maybe computer science or something field, they don't have much opportunity in Thunder Bay. So, anyways, they have to move out from Thunder Bay. They eventually goes to maybe Toronto or Hamilton or somewhere else.*

Local leaders, therefore, emphasized the importance of removing any remaining barriers to better integrating Indian migrants into the labour market and argued that in order to retain immigrants and international students longer-term, it will be necessary to create more job opportunities in Thunder Bay.

Building a Diasporic Community

The relatively small size of Thunder Bay, its isolated location in the North, and its overall lack of multiculturalism make arriving in the city quite different from arriving in a larger city like Toronto. In particular, the participants commented on how the lack of Indian-focused organizations and businesses may lead Indian immigrants and international students to feel more "cultural shock" when arriving in Thunder Bay compared to Toronto. As one participant put it:

> *In terms of landing in a city like Toronto and Vancouver, maybe they experience cultural shock like 5, 10, 15 years before, but not anymore. Just in terms of the sheer population that has settled in from India, the number of services that are available to them, the fact that there's a temple or there's some sort of other religious cultural center.*

Another participant concurred:

> *I think over there [in the GTA] are more families living together. Family means there are more family members living in GTA. Like one is living in Brampton or they have more relatives living there, and their friends circle is very strong. They have more friends there and they have access to everything which is available in Punjab. Almost everything is available at GTA. Even some things are better than Indian because it's export quality. They have that advantage to living in GTA.*

Things have started to change, however. With more and more Indian migrants settling in Thunder Bay, efforts have ramped up to help Indian migrants to Thunder Bay feel more at home, and to have at least some of their cultural needs met. Many of these changes have happened just during the last five years and have been initiated by the Indian diaspora itself. At least two new Indian-focused grocery shops have opened: Bombay One Stop and Land of Spices. According to the study participants, the owners of these businesses are former international students who saw a need and an opportunity to provide the growing number of Indian migrants to Thunder Bay with what they need.

What is commonly generalized and referred to as the "Indian diaspora" in Canada is in fact a very diverse social formation. It consists of many culturally diverse subgroups that trace their ancestry to India (Kelly & Niraula, 2023; Kelly, 2007). As Brown (2006) notes, religion, language, region, and even socio-economic status can further differentiate national diasporas. Unlike in larger centres like Toronto, where one may find a broad range of institutions serving specific subsets of the Indian population, there are only a few cultural and religious associations focused on Indian migrants in Thunder Bay.

The Thunder Bay Sikh Society caters primarily to its Sikh population, while the Vedic Cultural Centre primarily serves the city's Hindu population. These organizations serve as the main point of entry into diasporic life for many Indian immigrants and international students to northern Ontario, and a valuable source of information and support. They offer culturally and religiously appropriate opportunities to worship, socialize, and celebrate festivals. Both organizations have grown substantially in recent years. The Thunder Bay Sikh Society will soon have a new gurdwara, a designated place of worship for followers of the Sikh religion. The Vedic Cultural Centre, which was started in 2012 with just a small number of families, has grown significantly over time and is now run out of a 10,000-square-foot facility.

Running parallel to these efforts to promote Indian culture in the city are those made by the local university and college. Student associations such as the Indian Student Association at Lakehead University organize their own Indian-focused events. The Indian Student Association is one of the largest on the Lakehead campus in terms of membership and funds. It recently organized a multi-day Navratri event (which catered specifically to students

from the region of Gujarat) and had approximately 450 attendees per day. Other events attract even larger numbers of students.

Arriving in Thunder Bay may not offer Indian migrants the same level of institutional completeness (Breton, 1964) as the GTA. However, it is clear that as the number of Indian migrants to Thunder Bay has grown, so, too, have the institutions and associations catering to their preferences and needs. With time, there may be more and more specific organizations that serve these migrants. As one participant explained:

> *My way of eating, my way of staying, living is starkly different from someone who's from the south who's used to eating different kinds of meat, cooking in a different way, speaking a different language. Once when they started actually finding out that we can be with members of our own community and speak our own dialect, cook our own food, and there's definitely more of a cultural value alignment over there, that's what the first preferred step is.*

Even within these communities, there is a desire to have more specialized services. One participant, for example, commented on the need for a community centre for the Sikh community, where a broader range of activities could be carried out than is currently possible at the gurdwara.

If the Indian population of Thunder Bay continues to grow at its current rate, it will become increasingly possible to organize activities and events that cater to the full spectrum of needs and preferences within the Indian diasporic community. Through hard work and coordination, the Indian community in the area has already achieved a lot. It has demonstrated a willingness to work together to meet the diverse needs of the diasporic community, often in flexible, inclusive ways.

Becoming Part of the Broader Thunder Bay Community

The growing presence of the Indian community in Thunder Bay has led to an increased awareness of their needs and interests on the part of the city. One example of this was the re-creation of a park into a cricket pitch, to make Indian (and other South Asian) migrants feel more welcome and at home.

As one participant explained:

> *A lot of Indian students ended up missing cricket, because cricket is a sport which is similar to what hockey is for Canada. What they did together was they were able to approach the City of Thunder Bay, they were able to keep a park aside and then able to create a cricket pitch basically where students can come together and play.*

The number of individuals playing cricket in Thunder Bay has grown steadily over time, and this has been acknowledged and given the space to thrive.

The study participants appreciated gestures such as these on the part of the city but nevertheless expressed how one of the more challenging aspects of living in a smaller community is that, in general, the established community has not had as much exposure to other cultures as the populations of larger cities have. While the participants overall agreed that blatant acts of racism were not a common occurrence in Thunder Bay, they hoped that the local population would come to better understand and appreciate Indian culture.

Multicultural events such as the city's annual Folklore Festival have presented opportunities for Indian migrants to promote and share their cultural traditions with a broad community audience. In addition, some subsets of the Indian community have taken the initiative to reach out to the wider community on their own terms. The Sikh community, for example, devised a program called "Turban Up" which they use to introduce more long-term residents to the Sikh culture and religion in an interactive way. As one representative of the Sikh community explained it:

> *Before COVID, we have turban up program in Marina Park here. That was summer we did the program. Just voluntarily, just we even know because Thunder Bay people are a little isolated. They don't know much about Sikhs. So yes, for that purpose we did the turban up program with the help of university students. We got together* [for the event] *and just on Canada day, we give turbans to people, just tied turbans, colorful turbans. They were so happy.*

It would appear that such initiatives have been met with enthusiasm on the part of the local population. The Folklore Festival noted previously had 16,000 individuals in attendance this year. The Festival of India has also had an increasingly large turnout in recent years, suggesting that local Thunder Bay residents are curious and want to learn more about the cultural traditions of Indian immigrants and international students living in their community. As the leader of the festival emphasized:

> *Our festivals are all inclusive. As I said, we get 9,000 people for festival every year in July. There is not 9,000 people, not from India staying in Thunder Bay, you can't count everybody. There might be about 2000 people. So the rest seven, 8,000 people are local people.*

The Indian population of Thunder Bay increased dramatically around the time of the COVID-19 pandemic. During this time, opportunities for new and more established residents of Thunder Bay to meet and come together were reduced due to social distancing requirements and the cancellation of in-person events. Nevertheless, it also presented opportunities to get more involved in the community. Some Indian-focused organizations joined other community organizations to help with the COVID-19 response. For example, the Vedic Cultural Centre worked closely with the local food bank to support

those who had difficulty paying for groceries due to economic hardship during the economic lockdowns. According to the study participants, some of the younger members of the community also volunteered to deliver groceries and other essentials to people in need.

As society returns to pre-pandemic levels of social activity, many members of the Indian community are eager to further volunteer and connect with the community. As one interviewee put it:

> *We have plans. We will collaborate with the Red Cross. . . . We might ask them to organize a blood donation camp because we have lot of youth here like student. They are willing to give blood donation if they need, the Red Cross. It is always needed everywhere. So we are thinking about those kind of activities, then it will raise little awareness to local community.*

Indian migrants in Thunder Bay are already forging a place for themselves. They have been proactive about educating local residents on who they are and finding ways to get involved in the broader society. With time, an acknowledgement of the significance and impact of Indian migration to Thunder Bay will likely become an important part of the city's history and self-understanding.

Conclusion

Demographics in many smaller communities in Canada are quickly changing. Population ageing, out-migration, and other economic challenges have been met with a desire to attract and retain international migrants and international students to offset emerging labour shortages. This is especially the case in rural and remote regions of the country.

Immigration from India to Canada has a long history and continues to be a noteworthy trend. India remains, by far, the number one source country for immigrants and international students to Canada. It is therefore perhaps not that surprising that many Indian-born people are among those finding their way to more rural and remote locations within Canada in large numbers. In this chapter, we have focused specifically on Indian migration to northern Ontario, a region that is particularly eager to attract and retain new residents and has received government support to do so. As we have outlined, over the last five years, Indian migration to the region has increased (in some cases exponentially). Incoming immigrants and international students are contributing to local economies in the region but are also bringing increased diversity and opportunities for cultural exchange.

The chapter zoomed in to consider the lived experiences of Indian migrants who are currently living in Thunder Bay, a mid-sized city that has received a particularly large influx of Indian immigrants and international students in recent years. Unlike larger cities such as the Greater Toronto Area, which have received ongoing flows of migrants from India over time, Thunder Bay

is a relatively new destination for Indian immigrants and international students. It is, however, quickly building a critical mass and a growing number of Indian-focused businesses, associations, and events cater to the interests and needs of the diverse Indian diaspora that is developing.

It has often been argued that having a large diasporic community that one can rely on positively contributes to immigrant retention in smaller centres (Zhuang, 2023). It is still to be determined whether this comes to be the case in Thunder Bay. While the community is developing culturally and socially, the lack of longer-term career opportunities in the region relative to the ambitions of those migrating may cause the city to become a mobile diaspora, with future waves of migrants circling in but also circling out of the city as they look for the best opportunities to utilize their skills and education.

It is clear that more research is needed on the demographic, social, cultural, and economic changes that are occurring in communities as a result of Canada's shifting migration policies. We hope that this study serves as a useful starting point for discussing why immigrants and international students from specific places of origin may choose to move to smaller centres, and how they establish themselves there over time.

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8 Economic Assimilation of Indians in Canada

Stein Monteiro

Introduction

Indian immigrants are a fast-growing minority group in Canada. Recent Indian immigrants (those that arrived in the last five years) in the 2001 census represented 9.51% of all recent immigrants, 11.63% in the 2006 census, 10.44% in 2011, 12.14% in 2016, and 18.60% in 2021. Indian immigrants in Canada have grown considerably influential in the past two decades in the labour market and political landscape. Currently, 17 Members of Parliament are of Indian origin, including leaders such as Jagmeet Singh (leader of a major opposition party), Harjit Sajjan (former Minister of National Defence and current Minister of International Development), and Navdeep Bains (former Minister of Innovation, Science, and Industry). Furthermore, amongst the wealthiest people in Canada, several entrepreneurs were identified to be of Indian origin (Agrawal & Lovell, 2010).

However, despite the successes of this particular ethnic group, the question of whether Indian immigrants, in general, achieve wage parity with native-born Canadians has not been fully considered (Lamb et. al, 2022). Accurately estimating the wage gap between immigrants and native-born Canadians is of growing importance to policy makers in high-immigration countries such as Canada, the United States, and Australia. The growing presence of immigrants in these countries immensely increases the need for policy makers to understand their socioeconomic circumstances and what can be done to facilitate a smooth transition into the host country.

In particular, the fact that not every ethnic group has the same labour market experience increases the need for a closer understanding of the specific experiences of ethnic groups, such as Indians in Canada. In fact, even Indians as an ethnic group hide various linguistic and ethno-religious diversity that has yet to be explored in more detail.

Furthermore, as has been observed in prior studies (Agrawal, 2013; Agrawal & Lovell, 2010), Indian men and women in Canada and the United States (Tiagi, 2013) tend to follow different integration paths in the host country, but women tend to do better than men. That being said, men and women tend to perform worse than their Canadian-born counterparts.

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This chapter will attempt to estimate the wage growth of different arrival cohorts of Indian immigrants in Canada over the late 1990s, the 2000s, and more recently. I will also provide a comparison with other immigrant groups, particularly Chinese and Other South Asian immigrants, both of whom are closely comparable to Indian immigrants in their experiences as racialized minorities living in Canada. Finally, this chapter will also provide a gender-based comparison of these labour market experiences.

Literature Review

Several papers on the labour market outcomes of immigrants have focused on treating all immigrants as a homogenous group (Grant, 1999; Frenette & Morissette, 2005; Aydemir & Skuterud, 2005; Green & Worswick, 2011). This is problematic because averaging across source country groups can hide the varying labour market experiences of particularly disadvantaged groups. For instance, while both Indian and Chinese immigrants are a large and growing share of the immigrant population, Chinese immigrants have slightly better outcomes than their Indian-born counterparts across the income distribution (Agrawal, 2013; Agrawal & Lovell, 2010). Similarly, Filipino immigrants fare much better than Indians across various socio-economic characteristics and even across arrival cohorts (Agrawal, 2013).

Moreover, it is particularly interesting to note that Indian immigrants, while they eventually arrive at parity with native-born Canadians, experience smaller gains from their own co-ethnic economy compared to Chinese immigrants (Agrawal & Lovell, 2010), and also smaller returns to local and foreign education than Filipino immigrants (Agrawal, 2013). This is probably due to network quality differences that remain unaccounted for.

In the US context, Tiagi (2013) uses synthetic-cohort methods (Borjas, 1985, 1994) to show that Indian immigrants achieve earnings parity with native-born non-Hispanic Americans after 20 years of working in the United States. There is no comparable estimate for Indian immigrants in Canada, and this chapter seeks to close that gap.

Past research has studied the integration of immigrants into the host country from various perspectives: sociopolitical, economic, and geographical. This chapter studies the economic integration of Indian immigrants in Canada. The results of this chapter are qualitatively similar to the outcomes estimated by Bloom et al. (1995) during the 1970s and 1980s. However, Bloom et al. (1995) combined Asians, Africans, and Latin Americans as a single group in the analysis. They found that this group has low entry earnings and would take 30+ years to attain earnings parity with their Canadian-born counterparts.

Post-1981 assimilation of Asians, Africans, and Latin Americans into the Canadian labor market has been slow or non-existent. They attribute the poor performance of immigrants to the inability of local labour markets to absorb the new immigrants. Since European and American immigrants also faced similar declining assimilation rates post-1981, discrimination against visible

minorities in local labour markets can be ruled out. However, evidence suggests a steep discounting in earnings of South Asians living in Canada (Pendakur & Pendakur, 2011; Raza & Erfani, 2015; Lightman & Gingrich, 2018). The 1982–1991 arrivals of South Asian men earned 32.1% less than white males, and post-1991 arrivals of South Asians earned 22% less than white males. In contrast, South Asian women are less discriminated against than men in local labour markets. South Asian women arrivals 1982–1991 earned 13% less than their white counterparts, and the post-1991 earned 23.2% more than white females (Raza & Erfani, 2015). More importantly, discrimination cannot be ruled out as a part of declining cohort quality as Bloom et al. (1995) had suggested, and I suppose this would be true for most South Asians as well.

Previous research has identified several factors that can be used to understand the economic outcomes of immigrants living in a host country including assimilation factors, structural factors, human capital factors, time effects, and cohort effects. There are certainly other variables that will affect Indian immigrant wages, such as macroeconomic conditions, the political environment, and discrimination, but the estimation results, relative to another dominant group (such as native-born or other immigrant groups), can account for some of the major factors that affect all individuals in the population.

Assimilation factors are the effects on immigrant wages that are due to an immigrants' length of stay in the host country. That is, an immigrant who chooses to stay in the host country for a longer period of time will earn social capital and adapt to labour market conditions. Similarly, the age at which an immigrant begins living in the host country will also affect their wage earnings. Assimilation effects have been a growing concern among researchers and studied more intently than the other factors.

Structural factors are those effects that the immigrant faces due to his/her location, occupation, gender, and employment. In a sense, structural factors are those effects that are not within the control of the immigrant and are more of a condition of the immigrant's surroundings. An immigrants' wage will depend on the going wage rate in a particular locality, within a particular occupation, the level of sex discrimination, and the amount of unemployment they must face.

Human capital factors are those effects that an immigrant does have control over. These are the factors that also affect immigrants' earnings and their employability. Education level and knowledge of the official language are human capital factors.

Cohort effects are those factors that affect immigrant earnings based on their year of arrival. For instance, recent arrivals into the host country may have a larger skill set than earlier arrivals or already possess English/French speaking skills, thus making assimilation smoother. Cohort effects are a decomposition of assimilation effects based on the year of arrival.

Finally, *time effects* are introduced for technical purposes; they account for factors specific to the particular census in question (the time effect is eliminated when observing *relative* wages).

This chapter studies labour market outcomes and the relative performance of Indian immigrants living in Canada. The estimation and specification follow the synthetic-cohort (or quasi-panel) methods employed in Chiswick (1978) and Borjas (1985), and further adopted by LaLonde and Toppel (1992), Baker and Benjamin (1994), Chen (1998), and Tiagi (2013) to quantify the wage gap.

The next section details the data and methodology used in studying Indian immigrants living in Canada, followed by the results of the empirical model, a discussion of the results, and finally the conclusion.

Data and Methodology

The data used in this study is drawn from the Public Use Microdata Files (PUMF) of the Canadian Census of Population for the 2001, 2006, 2011, 2016, and 2021 census years. I used the census instead of other data sources such as the Longitudinal Immigration Database (IMDB) because it allows for comparisons with native-born Canadians, which best identifies the degree of labour market integration. The census also has the advantage of several variables for post-arrival human capital accumulation and context-specific factors such as the language used most often at home and at work, visible minority status, and location of the highest level of education.

The samples from all three years of the census consist of individuals between the ages of 25 and 64 years and employed at the time of the survey, excluding self-employed individuals but including those self-employed incorporated or unincorporated persons who might be working as independent contractors without any paid employees.[1] Since this study is interested in labour market success, wages and salaries are used as an indicator for labour market performance. Specifically, weekly wage is the dependent variable of interest and is calculated by total annual wages and salaries divided by the number of weeks worked in the previous year.

Furthermore, the sample consists of Indian immigrants, Chinese immigrants, native-born Canadians, and Other South Asian immigrants. I further subset the native-born Canadian sample to those between 25- and 35-year-olds because this age group is most likely to represent new graduates and early-career labour market entrants, which is most similar to the experience of new immigrants in the Canadian labour market (Green & Worswick, 2011).

Similarly, the current study only looks at immigrants who were at least 25 years old at the time of immigration. That is, the present study is interested in immigrants with foreign educational credentials and little-to-none invested in the Canadian education system (Picot & Hou, 2023). Thus, I assume that individuals 25 years and older make no further educational investments after they arrive in Canada, which avoids the issue of lower entry wages being attributed to the initial years being devoted to attaining a Canadian educational credential (Green & Worswick, 2011; Duleep & Regets, 1997). However, if those immigrants aged 25 years or older at the time of immigration did invest in the Canadian educational system, their

labour market performance relative to native-born Canadians will be over-estimated in this study.

For robustness, to ensure that the sample of immigrants in this study did not invest in Canadian education, I ran a separate set of regressions that excluded immigrants that attained their highest level of education in Canada in the 2006, 2011, 2016, and 2021 census years. The 2001 census did not include a variable for the location where they completed their highest level of education. Due to space constraints, these results are not provided here but can be requested from the author upon request. I find no qualitative difference in the estimates by excluding those who received their highest level of education in Canada. This indicates that restricting the sample of immigrants to those who arrived when they were at least 25 years old accurately limits the sample of immigrants to those who do not invest in a Canadian education.

The five census years (i.e., 2001, 2006, 2011, 2016, and 2021) are pooled for the remainder of the analysis, and I constructed six arrival cohorts: before 1995, 1996–2000, 2001–2005, 2006–2010, 2011–2015, and 2016–2020. Furthermore, PUMF frequency weights are used throughout, unless indicated otherwise.

The model that I use to estimate relative wage growth follows closely the prior literature with an adjustment to extract the within- and across-cohort effects within a single regression model, as follows:

$$ln(Y) = X\beta + Cohort_j\,\delta_j + t\delta_t + (Cohort_j \times t)\,\delta_{j,t} + u_j + \epsilon_{j,t} \qquad (8.1)$$

where the subscript j refers to arrival cohorts before 1990, 1991–1995, 1996–2000, 2001–2005, 2006–2010, 2011–2015, 2016–2020. The subscript t refers to census years 2001, 2006, 2011, 2016, and 2021. The dependent variable $ln(Y)$ is logged weekly wages, $Cohort_j$ is a vector of dummy variables for the immigrant's year of arrival (reference group = native-born Canadians) in period j. The error term includes unobservable factors such as innate ability differences between immigrants, and u_j captures cohort quality. Lastly, X is a set of observable controls for human capital and structural factors.

Logged weekly wages are adjusted for inflation to 2021 constant prices using the Consumer Price Index for all items in Canada.

The human capital factors available in the census are the highest level of education obtained (less than a high school diploma, high school diploma, some university education, a bachelor's degree or equivalent, and some post-graduate certificate or degree, with high school degree as the base category), married or living common law, visible minority status, province of residence, knowledge of English, and five-year age groups.

Structural factors are controlled for by including dummy variables for place of residence in the Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs). I also included a dummy variable for working in a job where the language most often spoken is neither English nor French. This is expected to control for working in an ethnic business.

Cross-sectional assimilation within census years is fully controlled for in the model by including a variable for years since migration. This allows the measurement of pure within-cohort effects. That is, the coefficients attached to the interaction terms of cohort and census year only capture the wage growth effect attributed to belonging to a specific cohort.

However, there is still an attrition bias associated with Indians who might have left Canada between census years. The Canadian census is collected more frequently in Canada (every five years) than in the United States (every ten years). This is a particular advantage within the Canadian context when estimating within-cohort wage growth because it minimizes attrition bias between census years. The estimates should be viewed as an upper bound of within-cohort wage growth.

The model is estimated in three sub-samples where Indian immigrants are included in all three sub-samples, but the base categories are (1) native-born Canadians, (2) Chinese immigrants, or (3) Other South Asian immigrants. Furthermore, separate estimates for men and women are provided.

The within-cohort effects are extracted from the regression model by differentiating the regression model in terms of t, while the across-cohort effects are obtained by differentiating in terms of $Cohort_j$ as follows:

$$\frac{\partial ln(Y)}{\partial t} = \delta_t + \delta_{j,t} \times Cohort_j \quad \text{(within-cohort effects)}$$

$$\frac{\partial ln(Y)}{\partial Cohort_j} = \delta_j + \delta_{j,t} \times t \quad \text{(across-cohort effects)}$$

The across-cohort effects capture the expected relative wage growth between cohorts within a census year. This is equivalent to a cross-sectional estimate of the relative wage growth. In other words, the average newly arrived immigrant cohort observes others in the same census year and formulates expectations about their own wage growth by observing more established immigrants from prior cohorts. This estimate of wage growth is biased because it does not account for observed cohort quality differences. Each arrival cohort cannot expect to attain wage growth rates of prior cohorts because of significant unobserved and observed differences in cohort quality.

Considering that there are substantial differences in cohort quality between new arrivals in the 1980s and 1990s (Bloom et al., 1995; Borjas, 1985), I expect that cohort quality differences to be persistent into the 1990s and 2000s among Indian immigrants. For this reason, across-cohort effects are unlikely to estimate unbiased wage growth. Instead, the analysis will follow specific cohorts across subsequent censuses to trace these within-cohort estimates.

Results

Table 8.1 describes the socio-economic characteristics of the pooled subsample used in this analysis by source country group. The majority of Indian, Chinese, and Other South Asian Immigrants arrived in the late

Table 8.1 Summary statistics for the pooled subsample, by source country.

Statistic	Indians			Chinese			Other South Asians			Canadian-born		
	N	Mean	St. Dev.	N	Mean	St. Dev.	N	Mean	St. Dev.	N	Mean	St. Dev.
Cohort: 2017-2021	25,069	0.12	0.325	22,142	0.042	0.199	11,550	0.034	0.182	-	-	-
Cohort: 2011-2016	25,069	0.142	0.349	22,142	0.084	0.277	11,550	0.09	0.287	-	-	-
Cohort: 2006-2010	25,069	0.132	0.339	22,142	0.128	0.334	11,550	0.121	0.326	-	-	-
Cohort: 2001-2005	25,069	0.172	0.378	22,142	0.255	0.436	11,550	0.21	0.407	-	-	-
Cohort: 1996-2000	25,069	0.139	0.346	22,142	0.24	0.427	11,550	0.23	0.421	-	-	-
Cohort: Before 1995	25,069	0.173	0.379	22,142	0.188	0.391	11,550	0.278	0.448	-	-	-
Visible minority	25,813	0.997	0.053	22,918	0.998	0.042	11,862	0.997	0.05	3,15,200	0.073	0.261
2 years since migration	25,069	0.071	0.256	22,142	0.059	0.236	11,550	0.047	0.212	-	-	-
5 years since migration	25,069	0.263	0.44	22,142	0.194	0.395	11,550	0.18	0.384	-	-	-
10 years since migration	25,069	0.493	0.5	22,142	0.428	0.495	11,550	0.412	0.492	-	-	-
More than 10 years since migration	25,069	0.384	0.486	22,142	0.506	0.5	11,550	0.551	0.497	-	-	-
Knowledge of official language: English	25,987	0.95	0.218	22,926	0.824	0.381	11,896	0.981	0.136	3,16,471	0.904	0.294
Married	26,020	0.856	0.351	23,000	0.818	0.386	11,901	0.909	0.288	3,16,551	0.511	0.5
Language of work: Non-official language	26,020	0.093	0.29	23,000	0.269	0.444	11,901	0.038	0.192	3,16,551	0.005	0.068
CMA: Montreal	26,020	0.032	0.176	23,000	0.072	0.258	11,901	0.069	0.254	3,16,551	0.121	0.327
CMA: Toronto	26,020	0.494	0.5	23,000	0.431	0.495	11,901	0.684	0.465	3,16,551	0.129	0.336
CMA: Vancouver	26,020	0.147	0.354	23,000	0.243	0.429	11,901	0.04	0.196	3,16,551	0.059	0.235

(Continued)

Table 8.1 (Continued)

	Indians			*Chinese*			*Other South Asians*			*Canadian-born*		
Statistic	*N*	*Mean*	*St. Dev.*	*N*	*Mean*	*St. Dev.*	*N*	*Mean*	*St. Dev.*	*N*	*Mean*	*St. Dev.*
Province: Newfoundland & Labrador	26,020	0.001	0.034	23,000	0.002	0.04	11,901	0.001	0.027	3,16,551	0.013	0.113
Province: Prince Edward Island	26,020	0.001	0.034	23,000	0.002	0.047	11,901	0	0	3,16,551	0.004	0.06
Province: Nova Scotia	26,020	0.007	0.085	23,000	0.005	0.073	11,901	0.003	0.051	3,16,551	0.024	0.154
Province: New Brunswick	26,020	0.002	0.045	23,000	0.002	0.044	11,901	0.0003	0.018	3,16,551	0.021	0.142
Province: Quebec	26,020	0.033	0.178	23,000	0.077	0.267	11,901	0.07	0.255	3,16,551	0.261	0.439
Province: Ontario	26,020	0.595	0.491	23,000	0.527	0.499	11,901	0.767	0.423	3,16,551	0.355	0.478
Province: Manitoba	26,020	0.031	0.173	23,000	0.016	0.125	11,901	0.011	0.105	3,16,551	0.037	0.188
Province: Saskatchewan	26,020	0.016	0.126	23,000	0.011	0.106	11,901	0.018	0.131	3,16,551	0.034	0.182
Province: Alberta	26,020	0.122	0.328	23,000	0.1	0.301	11,901	0.089	0.284	3,16,551	0.131	0.337
Province: British Columbia	26,020	0.191	0.393	23,000	0.258	0.437	11,901	0.042	0.2	3,16,551	0.117	0.322
Yukon Territory, Northwest Territories & Nunavut	26,020	0.0003	0.016	23,000	0.0002	0.013	11,901	0.0001	0.009	3,16,551	0.004	0.06
Education: None	25,723	0.088	0.283	22,763	0.107	0.31	11,802	0.109	0.311	3,15,362	0.08	0.271
Education: High school	25,723	0.131	0.337	22,763	0.124	0.329	11,802	0.184	0.388	3,15,362	0.196	0.397
Education: Other trades certificate or diploma	25,723	0.016	0.124	22,763	0.01	0.098	11,802	0.02	0.139	3,15,362	0.063	0.243

Education: Registered apprenticeship certificate	25,723	0.008	0.089	22,763	0.007	0.086	11,802	0.011	0.102	3,15,362	0.047	0.211
Education: College, a program of 3 months to less than 1 year	25,723	0.009	0.093	22,763	0.008	0.089	11,802	0.023	0.15	3,15,362	0.038	0.191
Education: College, a program of 1 year to 2 years	25,723	0.034	0.182	22,763	0.028	0.166	11,802	0.044	0.204	3,15,362	0.115	0.319
Education: College, a program of more than 2 years	25,723	0.037	0.189	22,763	0.05	0.217	11,802	0.058	0.234	3,15,362	0.113	0.317
Education: University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	25,723	0.059	0.236	22,763	0.072	0.258	11,802	0.063	0.244	3,15,362	0.045	0.208
Education: Bachelor's degree	25,723	0.321	0.467	22,763	0.314	0.464	11,802	0.226	0.418	3,15,362	0.23	0.421
Education: University certificate or diploma above bachelor level	25,723	0.046	0.209	22,763	0.024	0.152	11,802	0.03	0.172	3,15,362	0.023	0.149
Education: Degree in medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine or optometry	25,723	0.009	0.095	22,763	0.006	0.076	11,802	0.013	0.115	3,15,362	0.005	0.069

(*Continued*)

Table 8.1 (Continued)

	Indians			*Chinese*			*Other South Asians*			*Canadian-born*		
Statistic	*N*	*Mean*	*St. Dev.*	*N*	*Mean*	*St. Dev.*	*N*	*Mean*	*St. Dev.*	*N*	*Mean*	*St. Dev.*
Education: Master's degree	25,723	0.225	0.418	22,763	0.2	0.4	11,802	0.202	0.401	3,15,362	0.044	0.204
Education: Earned doctorate degree	25,723	0.017	0.131	22,763	0.05	0.219	11,802	0.017	0.129	3,15,362	0.003	0.057
Education: Missing	26,020	0.011	0.106	23,000	0.01	0.101	11,901	0.008	0.091	3,16,551	0.004	0.061
Age: 25-29 years	26,020	0.125	0.331	23,000	0.071	0.257	11,901	0.037	0.189	3,16,551	0.497	0.5
Age: 30-34 years	26,020	0.18	0.384	23,000	0.115	0.319	11,901	0.103	0.304	3,16,551	0.503	0.5
Age: 35-39 years	26,020	0.171	0.377	23,000	0.152	0.359	11,901	0.148	0.355	-	-	-
Age: 40-44 years	26,020	0.144	0.351	23,000	0.176	0.381	11,901	0.182	0.386	-	-	-
Age: 45-49 years	26,020	0.127	0.333	23,000	0.177	0.382	11,901	0.182	0.386	-	-	-
Age: 50-54 years	26,020	0.103	0.304	23,000	0.156	0.363	11,901	0.163	0.37	-	-	-
Age: 55-59 years	26,020	0.086	0.281	23,000	0.102	0.302	11,901	0.122	0.328	-	-	-
Age: 60-64 years	26,020	0.064	0.245	23,000	0.051	0.22	11,901	0.063	0.243	-	-	-
Age at immigration: Native-born	25,493	0.12	0.325	22,568	0.062	0.242	11,724	0.035	0.184	3,16,538	1	0.012
Age at immigration: 25-29 years	25,493	0.362	0.481	22,568	0.294	0.456	11,724	0.306	0.461	-	-	-
Age at immigration: 30-34 years	25,493	0.233	0.423	22,568	0.279	0.448	11,724	0.285	0.452	-	-	-
Age at immigration: 35-39 years	25,493	0.128	0.335	22,568	0.2	0.4	11,724	0.191	0.393	-	-	-
Age at immigration: 40-44 years	25,493	0.075	0.264	22,568	0.101	0.301	11,724	0.107	0.309	-	-	-
Age at immigration: 45-49 years	25,493	0.043	0.204	22,568	0.041	0.199	11,724	0.052	0.223	-	-	-

Age at immigration: 50-54 years	25,493	0.025	0.155	22,568	0.016	0.125	11,724	0.017	0.13	-	-	-
Age at immigration: 55-59 years	25,493	0.011	0.105	22,568	0.007	0.08	11,724	0.005	0.072	-	-	-
Age at immigration: 60+ years	25,493	0.002	0.05	22,568	0.001	0.03	11,724	0.001	0.029	-	-	-
Age at immigration: Missing	26,020	0.02	0.141	23,000	0.019	0.136	11,901	0.015	0.121	-	-	-
Census year: 2001	26,020	0.09	0.285	23,000	0.116	0.32	11,901	0.131	0.337	3,16,551	0.18	0.385
Census year: 2006	26,020	0.132	0.338	23,000	0.171	0.377	11,901	0.184	0.388	3,16,551	0.2	0.4
Census year: 2011	26,020	0.175	0.38	23,000	0.219	0.414	11,901	0.226	0.418	3,16,551	0.205	0.404
Census year: 2016	26,020	0.213	0.41	23,000	0.237	0.425	11,901	0.215	0.411	3,16,551	0.208	0.406
Census year: 2021	26,020	0.391	0.488	23,000	0.256	0.437	11,901	0.244	0.43	3,16,551	0.206	0.404
Gender: Female	26,020	0.376	0.484	23,000	0.485	0.5	11,901	0.305	0.461	3,16,551	0.453	0.498
Gender: Male	26,020	0.624	0.484	23,000	0.515	0.5	11,901	0.695	0.461	3,16,551	0.547	0.498

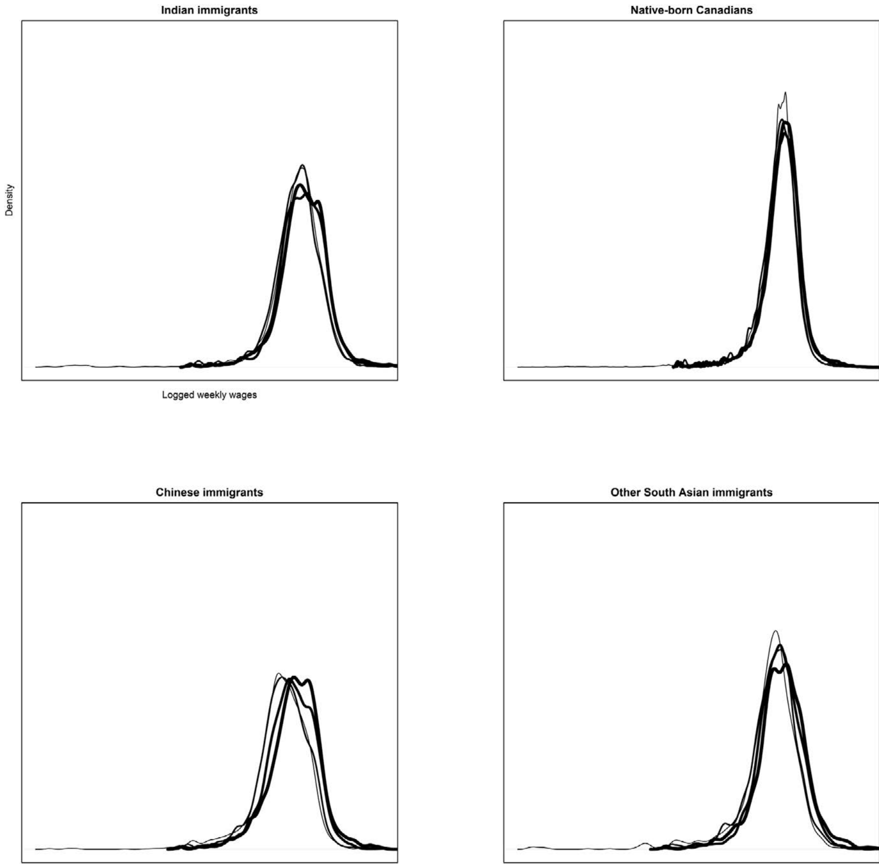

Figure 8.1 Earnings distribution of source country groups across census years. Earnings are measured by logged weekly wages (2021 constant prices) on the horizontal axis and the vertical axis is the probability density.

1990s and 2000s. A large percentage of all three groups of immigrants spoke English, but Chinese immigrants were more concentrated in jobs where a non-official language was spoken. As expected, almost all of the three groups of immigrants reported being a visible minority. All three groups were mainly living in Toronto, more so among Other South Asians, followed by Indians and all three groups of immigrants were highly educated. Among Bachelor's degree holders, the three groups were comparable to native-born Canadians. But among Master's and Doctorate degree holders, the three immigrant groups far surpassed native-born Canadians. Since we excluded native-born Canadians aged 35+ years old for comparability with the immigrant group, there is no data for the other age groups. The age distribution between the three immigrant groups is very

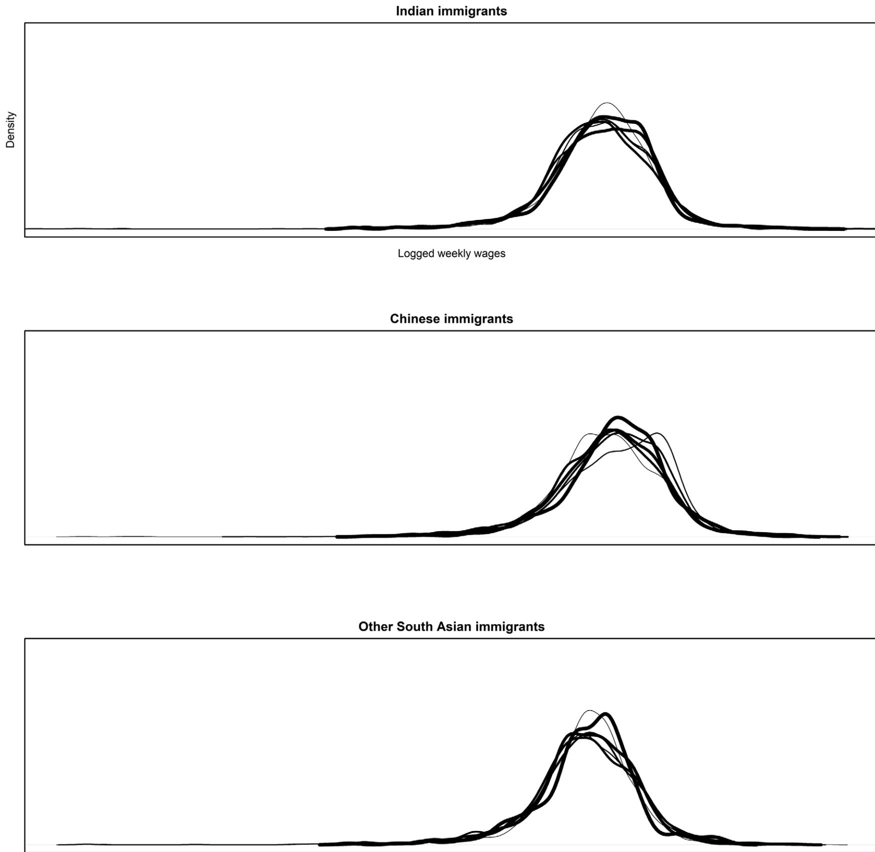

Figure 8.2 Earnings distribution of source country groups across cohorts. Earnings are measured by logged weekly wages (2021 constant prices) on the horizontal axis and the vertical axis is the probability density.

similar. Finally, there are a lot more Indian and Other South Asian men than women but no comparable gender gap between Chinese immigrants and native-born Canadians.

In the regression analysis of the following section, I use a synthetic cohort-based approach and specifically measure wage growth using the within-cohort effects. The main reasons for doing so are illustrated by the following two figures. First, the earnings distribution across census years by source country group is provided in Figure 8.1. The lightest coloured line is the 2001 census, and the darker lines are the more recent years. Second, Figure 8.2 depicts the earnings distribution across cohorts but across census years. In this case, the lightest coloured line is those that arrived before 1990, and the darker lines are more recent arrivals.

Table 8.2 OLS estimate of within-cohort earnings growth.

	Dependent variable: Logged weekly wages and salaries					
	Indian, Canadian-born Men	*Chinese, Canadian-born Men*	*Other South Asian, Canadian-born Men*	*Indian, Canadian-born Women*	*Chinese, Canadian-born Women*	*Other South Asian, Canadian-born Women*
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Cohort: 1996-2000	0.096	-0.109	-0.146	-0.187**	-0.044	-0.520***
	(0.064)	(0.069)	(0.105)	(0.093)	(0.069)	(0.142)
Cohort: 2001-2005	0.134***	0.039	0.115**	-0.071	0.120***	-0.392***
	(0.045)	(0.046)	(0.058)	(0.046)	(0.043)	(0.086)
Cohort: 2006-2010	-0.060	-0.097*	0.045	-0.112**	-0.008	-0.421***
	(0.042)	(0.057)	(0.063)	(0.046)	(0.047)	(0.080)
Cohort: 2011-2016	0.053	-0.100*	-0.034	-0.102*	0.003	-0.392***
	(0.045)	(0.056)	(0.064)	(0.056)	(0.053)	(0.091)
Cohort: 2017-2021	0.146**	0.156**	-0.036	-0.075	0.132*	-0.339**
	(0.058)	(0.073)	(0.096)	(0.075)	(0.068)	(0.144)
Cohort: Before 1995	0.068	0.041	-0.030	-0.085*	0.094*	-0.265***
	(0.042)	(0.049)	(0.063)	(0.051)	(0.053)	(0.083)
Cohort: 1996-2000 * Census year: 2006	-0.065	0.045	0.129	0.076	0.071	0.105
	(0.060)	(0.062)	(0.098)	(0.088)	(0.063)	(0.128)
Cohort: 2001-2005 * Census year: 2006	-0.211***	-0.330***	-0.333***	-0.301***	-0.298***	-0.254**
	(0.067)	(0.064)	(0.089)	(0.077)	(0.066)	(0.130)

Cohort: Before 1995 * Census year: 2006	0.070	0.055	0.142**	-0.001	0.056	0.066
	(0.049)	(0.049)	(0.063)	(0.055)	(0.053)	(0.074)
Cohort: 1996-2000 * Census year: 2011	-0.014	0.226***	0.219*	0.123	0.199***	0.329**
	(0.076)	(0.073)	(0.112)	(0.098)	(0.072)	(0.142)
Cohort: 2001-2005 * Census year: 2011	-0.050	-0.048	-0.108	-0.045	-0.097*	0.056
	(0.057)	(0.050)	(0.069)	(0.061)	(0.051)	(0.102)
Cohort: 2006-2010 * Census year: 2011	0.101*	0.125	-0.202**	-0.086	0.042	0.146
	(0.067)	(0.080)	(0.103)	(0.079)	(0.078)	(0.130)
Cohort: Before 1995 * Census year: 2011	0.065	0.042	0.157**	0.074	0.128**	0.084
	(0.052)	(0.052)	(0.066)	(0.064)	(0.060)	(0.087)
Cohort: 1996-2000 * Census year: 2016	0.093	0.227***	0.234**	0.124	0.240***	0.015
	(0.076)	(0.074)	(0.116)	(0.097)	(0.073)	(0.148)
Cohort: 2001-2005 * Census year: 2016	-0.107	0.022	-0.036	-0.002	-0.086**	-0.025
	(0.052)	(0.042)	(0.057)	(0.046)	(0.042)	(0.079)
Cohort: 2006-2010 * Census year: 2016	0.065	-0.041	-0.036	-0.017	-0.005	0.065
	(0.057)	(0.066)	(0.075)	(0.059)	(0.060)	(0.086)
Cohort: 2011-2016 * Census year: 2016	-0.018	0.031	-0.137*	-0.046	0.066	-0.019
	(0.046)	(0.066)	(0.075)	(0.061)	(0.063)	(0.113)
Cohort: Before 1995 * Census year: 2016	0.013	-0.029	0.094	0.067	0.056	0.062
	(0.060)	(0.065)	(0.068)	(0.058)	(0.063)	(0.082)

(*Continued*)

Table 8.2 (Continued)

	Dependent variable: Logged weekly wages and salaries					
	Indian, Canadian-born Men	*Chinese, Canadian-born Men*	*Other South Asian, Canadian-born Men*	*Indian, Canadian-born Women*	*Chinese, Canadian-born Women*	*Other South Asian, Canadian-born Women*
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Cohort: 1996-2000 * Census year: 2021	-0.022	0.309***	0.297**	0.215**	0.316***	0.201
	(0.081)	(0.077)	(0.120)	(0.105)	(0.078)	(0.149)
Cohort: Before 1995 * Census year: 2021	-0.092	0.069	0.078	0.135**	0.122*	-0.007
	(0.068)	(0.089)	(0.085)	(0.068)	(0.073)	(0.088)
Census year: 2006	0.053***	0.052***	0.052***	0.077***	0.074***	0.075***
	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.006)
Census year: 2011	0.096***	0.094***	0.096***	0.128***	0.124***	0.126***
	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.007)
Census year: 2016	0.152***	0.150***	0.152***	0.163***	0.156***	0.161***
	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.006)
Census year: 2021	0.217***	0.225***	0.227***	0.205***	0.207***	0.212***
	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.007)
Observations	175,839	171,912	169,047	142,757	143,702	137,379
R2	0.119	0.128	0.118	0.137	0.148	0.141
Adjusted R2	0.119	0.127	0.118	0.137	0.147	0.141

Note: $^{*}p<0.1$; $^{**}p<0.05$; $^{***}p<0.0^{1}$

Robust standard errors in parentheses. Includes employed men aged 25–64 years. Native-born Canadians are subset of those aged 25–35 years. Immigrants under the age of 25 upon arrival and/or have completed their highest level of education in Canada are excluded.

Figure 8.1 depicts that all four groups experienced a rightward shift in the earnings distribution over census years by pooling all cohorts of immigrants together. Chinese immigrants experienced the most prominent rightward shift in the earnings distribution between 2001 and 2021, which was also found by Agrawal (2013) and Agrawal and Lovell (2010).

There is a less prominent rightward shift in the earnings distribution among Indian and Other South Asian immigrants, while the tails of the distribution are slightly wider. Among native-born Canadians, the earnings distribution remains rather consistent across all census years.

These findings suggest that the earnings of Indians, Chinese, and Other South Asians are improving over census years; there appears to be increasing earnings inequality among Indian and Other South Asian immigrants.

Similarly, Figure 8.2 depicts that more recent arrival cohorts of Indian and Other South Asian immigrants experienced no significant change in their earnings distribution, while Chinese immigrant cohorts have experienced rightward shifts. Moreover, there is a widening of the earnings distribution at the tails which suggests that earnings inequality across cohorts may be becoming more prominent.

Admittedly, this is only a crude estimate of earnings distribution shifts across cohorts because more recent cohorts would have fewer years since migration to learn about the local labour market, gain skills, and experience some job mobility.

The next section will address some of these issues by estimating a regression model by controlling for a range of socio-economic factors and identifying the within-cohort earnings growth effects.

Within-Cohort and Across-Cohort Analysis

This section provides OLS estimates for the coefficients of equation (8.1). The results of the estimation are provided in Table 8.2 for men and women separately. The first three columns of the table include the coefficient estimates for the subsample of Indian, Chinese, and Other South Asian immigrant men relative to their Canadian-born counterparts. Similarly, the last three columns include the coefficient estimates for the subsample of Indian, Chinese, and Other South Asian immigrant women relative to their Canadian-born counterparts.

The results of the coefficient estimates depict mixed results. Among recent arrivals in the 2006 census year (i.e., arrival cohort 2001–2005), there is a significant negative earnings gap relative to native-born Canadians across all immigrant groups and gender. Indian immigrants appear to do better than comparable Chinese and Other South Asian immigrants.

The recent arrival cohort in the 2011 census year (i.e., arrival cohort 2006–2010) saw a significant positive effect in Indian men's earnings relative to comparable native-born Canadians, while Other South Asian men appear to have significantly lower earnings.

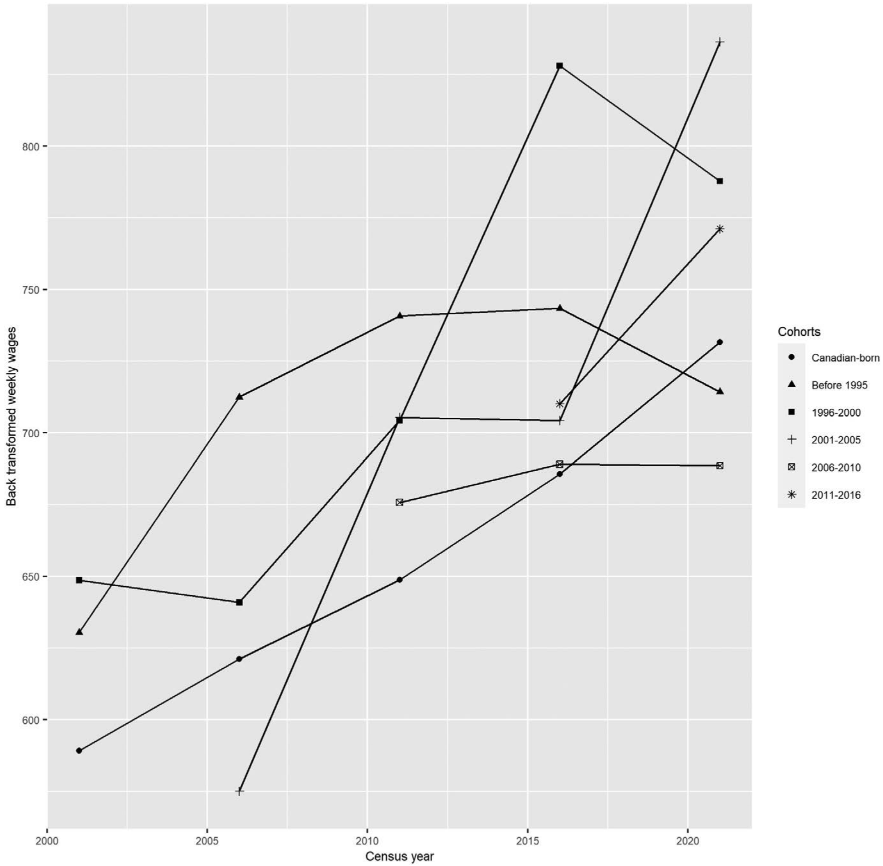

Figure 8.3 Within-cohort earnings growth across census years for different cohorts of Indian immigrant men and 25–34-year-old native-born Canadian men. The vertical axis is the predicted weekly wages (back transformed from the regression with log-weekly wages as the dependent variable), and the horizontal axis is the census year.

The opposite effect is observed for the recent arrival cohort in the 2016 census year (i.e., arrival cohort 2011–2016) saw a negative effect (although the estimate is insignificant) in Indian men's earnings relative to comparable native-born Canadians, while Other South Asian men appear to continue to experience significantly lower earnings.

There is insufficient data to draw any conclusions about the recent arrival cohort in the 2021 census (i.e., arrival cohort 2017–2021). These findings suggest that earlier recent arrival cohorts such as those that came to Canada in 2001–2005 and 2006–2010 appear to have higher entry earnings relative to comparable native-born Canadians than the more recent newly arrived

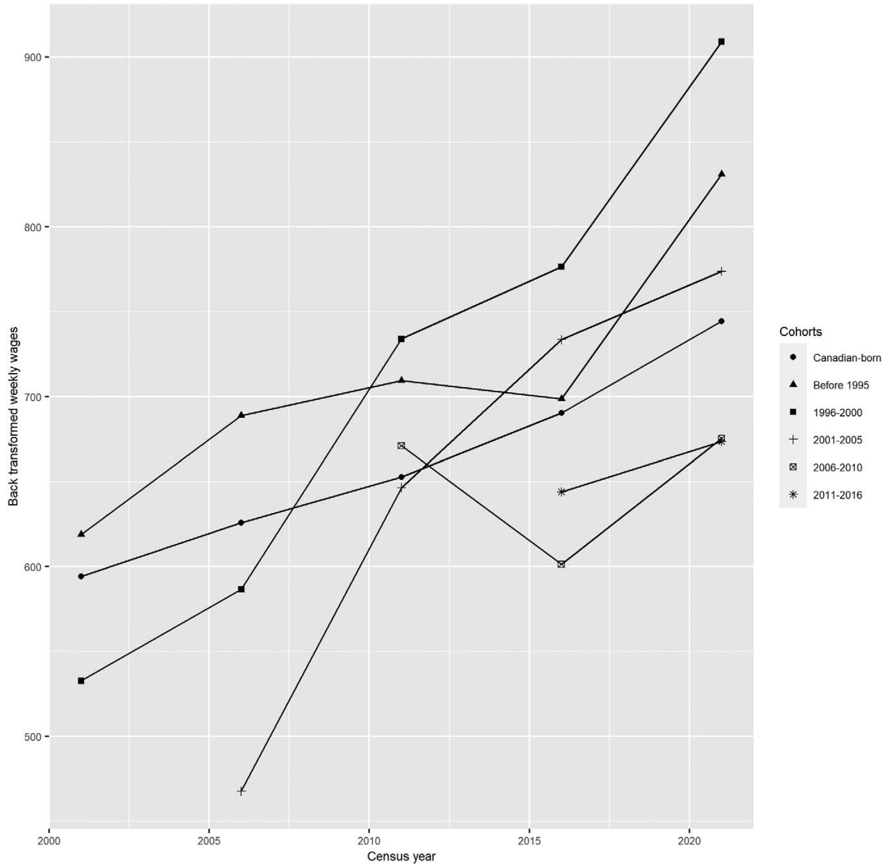

Figure 8.4 Within-cohort earnings growth across census years for different cohorts of Chinese immigrant men and 25–34-year-old native-born Canadian men. The vertical axis is the predicted weekly wages (back transformed from the regression with log-weekly wages as the dependent variable), and the horizontal axis is the census year.

cohorts of Indian immigrant men. This finding suggests decreasing entry earnings over newer arrival cohorts.

Moreover, among Chinese and Other South Asian immigrant men that have become more established in Canada (i.e., those that arrived before 1995 and during 1996–2000) there is evidence of significant earnings growth and earn more than comparable native-born Canadians. However, I find no similar evidence of such earnings growth among Indian immigrant men in these arrival cohorts, similar to the findings in Agrawal and Lovell (2010).

Among Indian immigrant women, the evidence appears similar to those of men except for those that arrived before 1995 and during 1996–2000 and

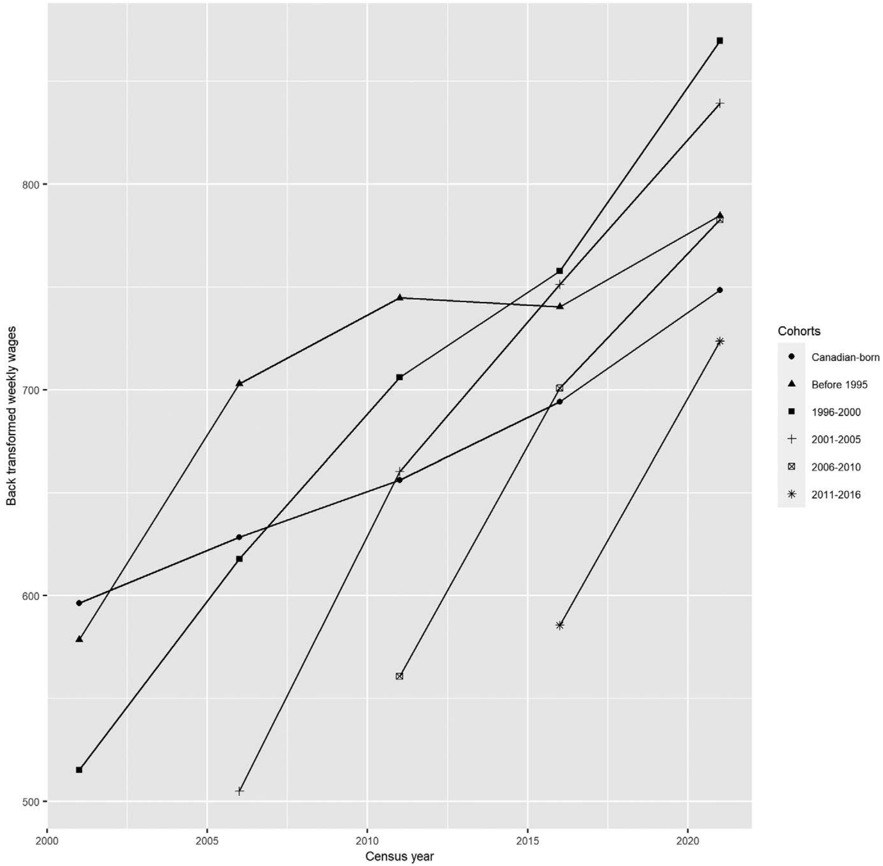

Figure 8.5 Within-cohort earnings growth across census years for different cohorts of Other South Asian immigrant men and 25–34-year-old native-born Canadian men. The vertical axis is the predicted weekly wages (back transformed from the regression with log-weekly wages as the dependent variable), and the horizontal axis is the census year.

recorded in census year 2021. These Indian women appear to outperform their Canadian-born counterparts, and are similar to Chinese women from the same arrival cohort.

In addition to the within-cohort earnings growth effects estimated by the OLS regression, I have also provided the predicted earnings with respect to the census year and for particular cohorts (i.e., before 1995, 1996–2000, 2001–2005, 2006–2010, 2011–2016) separately in Figures 8.3–8.5 for men and Figures 8.6–8.8 for women.

The within-cohort earnings growth depicted for Indian men and women in Figures 8.3 and 8.6 shows that while older arrival cohorts had higher entry

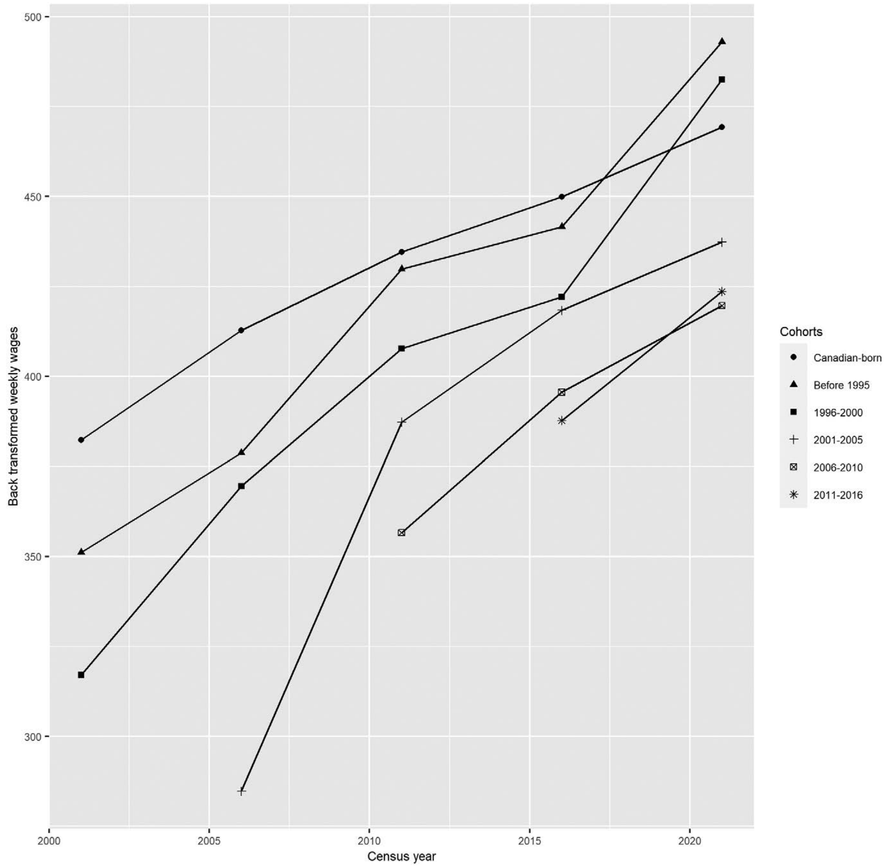

Figure 8.6 Within-cohort earnings growth across census years for different cohorts of Indian immigrant women and 25–34-year-old native-born Canadian women. The vertical axis is the predicted weekly wages (back transformed from the regression with log-weekly wages as the dependent variable), and the horizontal axis is the census year.

earnings, their wage growth rates were lower relative to native-born Canadians. Indian women in the older arrival cohort had more steady growth rates across census years and consistently outperformed their native-born counterparts. More recent arrival cohorts appear to have lower relative earnings among both Indian men and women.

Other South Asian men have consistently low entry earnings but appear to have very high growth rates across census years (see Figures 8.5), although this is not replicated among Other South Asian women (see Figure 8.8). Chinese men and women tend to have low entry earnings but have high

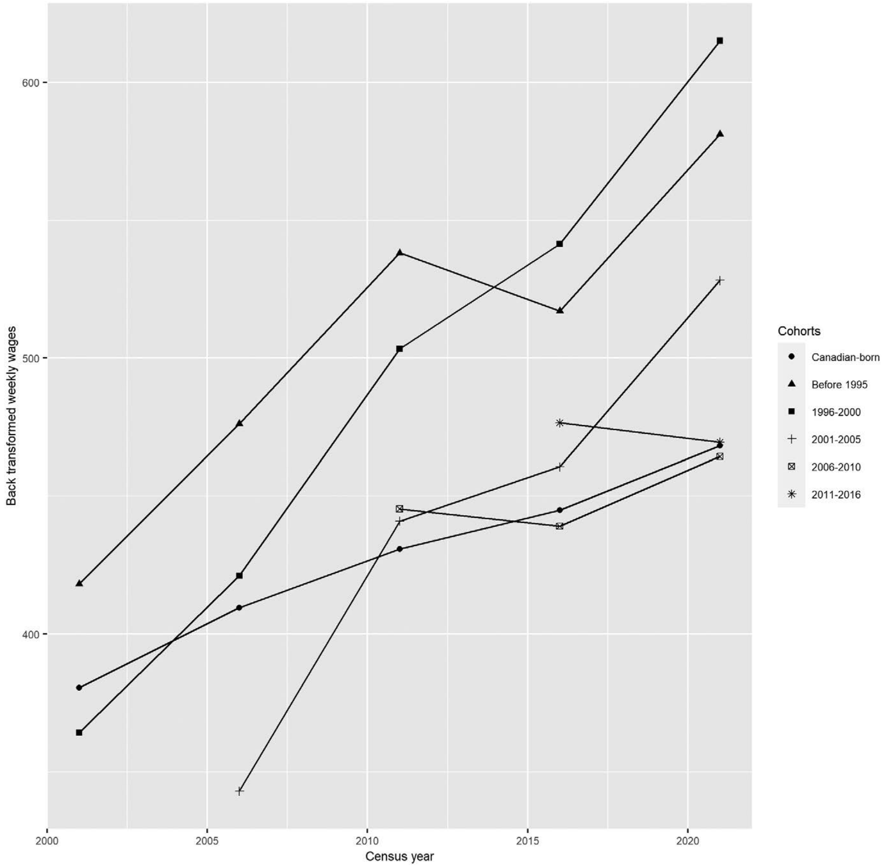

Figure 8.7 Within-cohort earnings growth across census years for different cohorts of Chinese immigrant women and 25–34-year-old native-born Canadian women. The vertical axis is the predicted weekly wages (back transformed from the regression with log-weekly wages as the dependent variable), and the horizontal axis is the census year.

earnings growth relative to their native-born counterparts (see Figures 8.4 and 8.7).

Discussion and Conclusion

I find that economic assimilation of Indian immigrants relative to native-born Canadians tends to be stronger among earlier cohorts of Indian men because their entry earnings were already quite high. Their earnings have also grown overtime. But earlier arrivals of Indian women who had lower

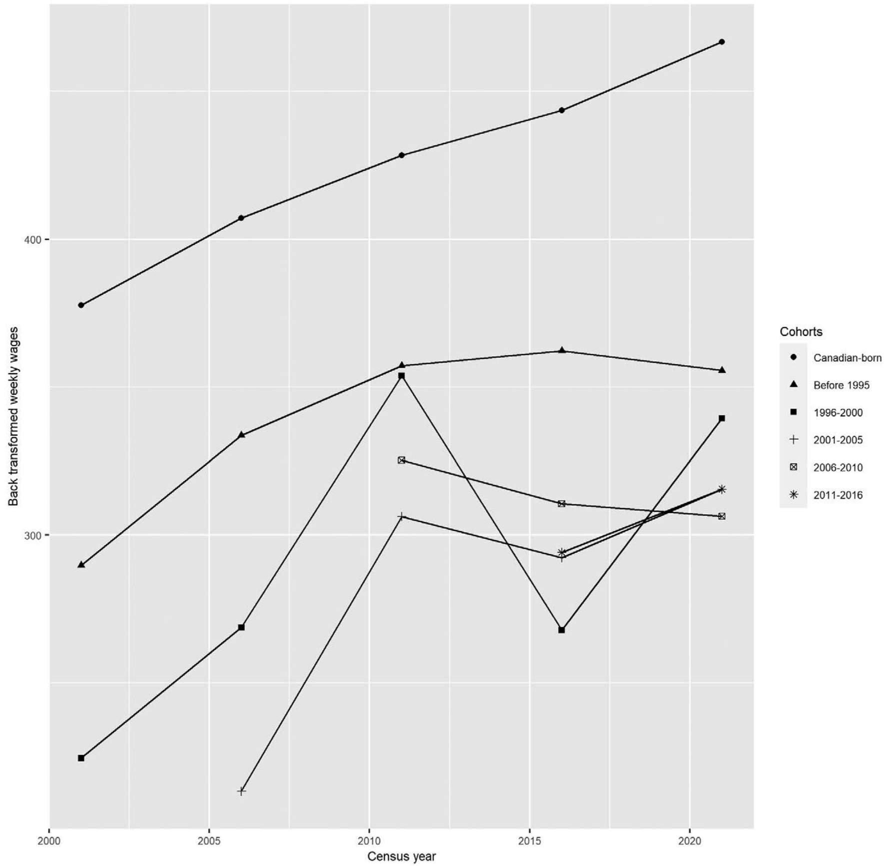

Figure 8.8 Within-cohort earnings growth across census years for different cohorts of Other South Asian immigrant women and 25–34-year-old native-born Canadian women. The vertical axis is the predicted weekly wages (back transformed from the regression with log-weekly wages as the dependent variable), and the horizontal axis is the census year.

entry earnings have shown very consistent and steep earnings growth across census years.

Entry wages among Indian men have decreased somewhat relative to native-born Canadians and their earnings growth across census years has not been as steep compared to Indian women as well as compared to Other South Asian and Chinese men.

Similar to findings in previous studies (Aydemir & Skuterud, 2005), I find that earlier cohorts of Indian immigrants might have been of higher quality compared to those that arrived later. And that Indian women tend to outperform men in terms of consistency in earnings growth overtime.

Note

1 In the 2001 PUMF, unpaid family workers were included as paid workers. However, unpaid family members have historically been a small number of workers, predominantly on farms and in the family business.

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9 Navigating Uncharted Trajectories

Skilled Indian Women Migrating to Canada

Belinda Leach, Urmi Nanda Biswas, Parisha Jijina, and Ashika Niraula

Introduction

India has made significant economic progress in recent decades (see Chapman & Mishra, 2019), facilitating economic growth that has been accompanied by falling fertility rates and higher educational attainment among women. Yet contrary to commonly held expectations that such conditions would facilitate women's increased economic participation, there has instead been a steady decrease in women's labour force participation rates across all income categories. The female labour force participation rate (FLFPR) in India is one of the lowest among emerging economies. The FLFPR fell from 31.2% in 2011 to 23.3% in 2017–2018 (EPW, 2019). India ranks 135th in the world ranking and the gender gap score is 0.629 in 2022. With a population of approximately 662 million women and a complex social rubric, the attainment level depends heavily on regional rankings. India has recovered its growth significantly, and there is a positive change to its performance on economic participation and opportunity, although the labour force participation shrunk for both men (–9.5 percentage points) and women (–3 percentage points) since 2021. In all other indicators of the gender gap, India has gained in parity. The share of women in professional jobs, legislators, managers, and similar other positions has increased from 14.6% to 17.6%, and in technical jobs has increased from 29.2% to 32.9%. The Educational Attainment and Health and Survival sub-indexes report a small but not very significant increase (World Economic Forum (WEF), 2022).

Concurrent with this trend, there is evidence that skilled Indian women are seeking routes to Canada in record numbers, as students and independent economic immigrants, both categories requiring or explicitly advancing skills (Joshi, 2019; Walton-Roberts, 2020). Most striking is the number of women applying and being accepted as the primary immigrant, that is not as a dependent of a husband. It is notable that India is now the number one source of immigrants to Canada, with the vast majority of those having (or seeking as students) higher levels of education (Sivakumar, 2023; The Economic Times, 2023).

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The aim of this chapter is to provide a deeper understanding by contextualizing these two trends and to consider the ways in which they may be connected. It proposes that while improved education levels among women in India have led to stronger aspirations for independence, for many these desires are stymied by persistent forms of discrimination in the labour market. Skilled women may then seek new environments where they can put their education and skills to work and where they hope their educational and career aspirations will be supported by enabling and anti-discrimination policies. Canada appears to match these requirements, as both "open" to migrants and providing a women-friendly policy framework. In this chapter we are trying to join the missing dots to understand why highly skilled Indian women are moving as independent migrants across international borders to Canada, what factors drive this phenomenon, and how skilled Indian women use their own agency in decision-making as they adapt to the host country's culture and pursue their dreams.

In the 1990s the World Bank carried out extensive research that concluded that discrimination on the basis of gender led to lower rates of economic growth and less poverty reduction. Gender disparities, such as lack of access to education and health, were thus linked to economic inefficiency, and reducing gender inequality was promoted by the World Bank as "smart economics" (World Bank, 2006). Specifically, women's engagement in paid work was seen as a primary pathway through which more equal gender systems could affect economic growth. Furthermore, putting economic resources into the hands of women was determined to have more benefits than when those resources were under men's control. Feminist scholars of development focused on power within gender relations, while also proposing a more holistic understanding of women's and men's roles and dynamics within their societies, to account for social as well as economic factors in gender inequality (Parpart et al., 2000). Despite these analytical shifts and the mounting evidence to the contrary, the correlation between economic growth and gender equality has persisted in much literature and in development practice, with continued expectations that women's status will rise with labour force participation. More recently, this has been contested as a wholly inadequate way to fight entrenched and resilient patriarchy. Critical scholars have turned their attention to cultural factors, including religion, as key to understanding how gender norms, such as those related to sexuality, mobility, and employment, play out in specific communities (Bradshaw & Linneker, 2010; Bradshaw et al., 2017).

In the second section, we present a brief context for the structural environment in which skilled Indian women carry out their lives and look at the changing demographics of women in India to demonstrate significant changes that affect women's independence, socially and economically. This includes attention to education levels, labour market participation rates, and marriage rates. The third section considers the social, cultural, and economic

factors that underlie the demographic data and affect women's independence in their lives in India, including the intersecting issues of class and region. These factors are relevant to driving the emigration of skilled women from India into countries such as Canada. In the fourth section, we present a picture of Indian immigration to Canada in recent years to demonstrate the growing number of immigrants and student migrants from India to Canada as well as the shift within that population towards more independent women applicants.

In the fifth section, we consider the available information about skilled women immigrants and international students from India alongside the literature that has analysed the experiences of skilled Indian women immigrants to Canada in the pre-pandemic years. While a broad range of structural factors, social and economic, undoubtedly shape skilled Indian women's lives, recent scholarship has turned to examining women's agency and decision-making capacity to determine the large and small ways in which they resist patriarchal constraints. We take agency to be "the capacity of actors to critically shape their own responsiveness to problematic situations" (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998, p. 971) and follow scholars who argue that different forms of agency can allow women to transform the constraints of existing patriarchal and economic systems (Kandiyoti, 1988). This led us to carry out a study that examined skilled Indian women immigrants' (SIWI's) experiences and decision-making processes as actual or aspiring immigrants to Canada, as they navigated the COVID-19 environment in 2020. We explored the strategies women engaged in as they confronted the uncertain COVID-19 conditions while attempting to sustain and support their migration journey. That study uses the concept of everyday agency (Payne, 2012) to understand the resilience and strategies of the SIWIs already in Canada as well as skilled Indian women who aspire to migrate to Canada, linking the pre-and post-migration experiences of aspiring and actual immigrants, to provide a better understanding of how COVID-19 impacted their lives.

To support our arguments in this chapter, in the fifth section we provide a brief glimpse into the findings of that research as well as studies carried out by Mehta and Biswas (2023) that examined the motivations and challenges of Indian students studying overseas. The findings from the research reported here fit very well with the framework proposed by de Haas (2021), which conceptualizes migration as a function of aspirations and capabilities to migrate. This promotes the vision in which being able to move and stay in the host country seems to be a complementary manifestation of migratory agency where human mobility is understood as people's capability to choose where to live and stay rather than just the act of moving or migrating. The perceived geographical opportunity structure in Canada based on the long history of migration to Canada and the socio-political support received helps to make sense of why Indian highly skilled educated women preferred their migration destination as Canada more than any other country.

Women in India – Changing Demographics

The Press Information Bureau of India (2023), based on Finance Ministry of India data, reports that there has been a decline in urban and educated female labour force participation (FLFP), whereas there is a slight increase in rural FLFP. The survey also highlights that the share of self-employed has increased and that of workers who are salaried declined in 2020–2021 compared to 2019–2020, which was the pandemic period at large. This has been further clarified by Dhamija and Chawla (2023), who say that the LFPR saw small dips for rural women, women from Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe, and Other Backward Caste women, whereas among urban women with undergraduate or higher level education, LFPR has improved marginally (World Economic Forum (WEF), 2022). Bansal and Mahajan (2021), investigating the links between pandemic income shocks and FLFPR, reported that the probability of women's employment increased in households that experienced sharp negative income shocks induced by the pandemic-related lockdown in India. This transitory increase started to decline once the economic situation of the households improved. They noted that women's labour often acts as insurance during low-income periods of poorer households. Cultural factors, traditional gender roles, limited access to education and skill development, and inadequate employment opportunities have contributed to this trend.

Das Sharma (2023) quotes World Economic Forum's (2022) Global Gender Gap Report to highlight the fact that in India the educational attainment by men and women is nearly equal, but the divide widens when it comes to economic participation. WEF's Global Gender Gap Report considers the parity between women and men in educational attainment. Indian women scored 0.961, but when it came to parity in economic participation and opportunity, it sharply fell to 0.350 (WEF, 2022). Since the 1990s, the Indian economy has grown more than 10-fold, but female education and its labour force participation outcomes are complex and not directly correlated with economic growth. The FLFP was at 25% in 1990, which sharply declined to 20.5% in 2019 despite economic growth and women's rising education. The participation of women in higher education increased from 33% in 1990 to 49% in 2019. However, what is shocking is that while in 2017 India was one of the fastest growing economies by consistently maintaining growth rates above 7%, the same year India's FLFP fell to 20.3%, the lowest of record since independence (Khanna, 2022). Desai and Joshi (2019) report that amidst India's economic growth, "job deficit" is to be blamed for a decline in FLFP. Many women from this population who have completed their college education and aspire to white-collar jobs are disappointed. White-collar jobs have declined and not increased in proportion to the working-age population, which increased from 11% to 21% by 2019. These women tend to compete in a small pool of formal sector jobs. Desai and Joshi (2019) state that there is an absence of suitable jobs rather than a withdrawal of educated women from the labour force. The occupational and sectoral segregation by

gender has confined women to search for work in particular sectors, which prevails in line with sectoral norms. Prominent Indian corporate houses, such as Accenture with a 300,000 strong workforce, assert that they are determined to achieve their goal of 50% women's representation in their workforce by 2025, by providing flexible work options, supporting women to resume work after maternity leave or off ramping, redesigning parental leaves, providing comprehensive medical insurance coverage, and enabling caregivers through structured training (Das Sharma, 2023). In support of this, Das Sharma (2023) notes that younger women are emerging as more aspirational than their predecessors, contributing to a changed workforce profile of the Millennials and GenZ. Most of the women from this generation are digitally savvy and have emerged through the habit-altering pandemic, which has opened new ways of working, including migrating to other countries for better opportunities and working in the gig economy, which has become very popular, particularly among educated women in the post-pandemic world. Furthermore, government reports show a rise in the proportion of unmarried Indian youths (15 to 29 years) from 17.2% in 2011 to 23% in 2019. In the case of female Indian youths, the proportion increased from 13.5% in 2011 to 19.9% in 2019 (The Economic Times, 2022; Mishra, 2022).

Against the backdrop of these statistics for Millennial women in India, the immigration of highly skilled educated women to countries like Canada seems justified. Aspirations for white-collar jobs in their desired sectors, equality at the workplace, as well as having more independence and power to make choices about their own life, have been instrumental in the increased level of migration.

Driving Emigration: Factors and Conditions for Women in India

Many critical indicators situate India as a "modern" country (e.g., 9th-largest industrial economy in the world, urbanization, expanded access to and quality of education and reduced illiteracy, increase in average lifespan, access to basic health care, democratic political system), yet there are areas of social and economic life that resist change from historically established ideologies and practices. Given the size and diversity of India, it is not surprising that social change is taken up more quickly among some populations and in some areas than others. For example, urban areas have embraced societal changes more rapidly than rural ones, and there are also distinct and measurable differences between states. The mix of traditional and modern is in many ways a source of India's strength and stability, but it also results in stubbornly persistent inequalities, including those between men and women. Broad surveys reveal that male dominance in both domestic and public spheres persists and is accepted by a majority of men and women, even when findings are analysed for the state, religion, age, education, and regional differences (Evans et al., 2022). Anti-discrimination law reform was taken up by the Indian state starting in the 1950s (Haq, 2013, p. 173), but for many the enduring features

of a patriarchal and collectivist society affect the conditions of women's lives and their capacity for engaging in paid work and for eventual economic independence, and restrict their social freedoms. Recent literature is remarkably consistent in identifying women's primary role as wives and mothers and "subordinate partners in domestic life" (cited in Haq, 2013, p. 173).

Joshi et al. (2020) note that a major factor contributing to the rising numbers and levels of women's education evident in the demographic profile above is that families view education as enhancing a woman's prospects for marriage to an economically stable husband. Marriage is seen as a source of dignity and security for women, but many families have little intention that women will pursue a career afterwards, despite educational credentials. Women's better education has then contributed to the rising age at marriage, but neither of those shifts pays a "dividend" that lasts into motherhood. Indeed, the interval between marriage and first birth is declining (Joshi et al., 2020, p. 3), and there is pressure on women to prove their fertility as quickly as possible.

Once married, where patrilocal exogamy (moving to the family/community of the husband) and the joint family structure (extended and living together) persist, these give the husband's family considerable power over decisions about a woman's employment, her access to health care and contraception, and constraints on her mobility and agency (Joshi et al., 2020). Joshi et al. are careful to note that while education has the most significant impact on the timing of marriage, caste, and religion are next in importance in shaping subsequent life decisions.

Growing numbers of Indian married couples live in nuclear families away from their extended families, though major responsibilities to those families may remain even across long distances. Barhate et al. (2021), in a study of women who have college degrees, argue that while a husband may support his wife's career aspirations, family pressure may make it difficult for him to do so publicly. And often men are not supportive and place constraints, such as curfews and accompanied travel, on their wives, making work lives more difficult to manage. Gender norms put immense pressure on men as well. For those who are better off, a working wife may be seen as a sign of their failure to provide for their family. In some cases, women may in fact be working in family businesses but without their name being formally linked to it. As men's incomes rise, it is less imperative for women to work. Barhate et al. (2021, p. 411) describe this as a disempowering effect of wealth on more affluent women. Moreover, in recent economic times, there has been weak growth in men's work opportunities, presenting women as competitors for scarce jobs (Li, 2022, p. 9). Gender ideologies also produce barriers for women workers relating to their travel and safety, as well as access to capital for women entrepreneurs. Haq sums up the situation: "For women in India, marriage is inevitable and motherhood is expected, beyond this they also have to fulfil their responsibilities to their family, their in-laws' family as well as extended families on both sides" (Haq, 2013, p. 180).

Women who do wish to work outside the home generally lack successful and acceptable role models, mentoring, and supportive employment practices. Organizational practices and structures continue to be largely masculinist and patriarchal, assuming that people will work long hours and rewarding assertive behaviour in the workplace. This conflicts with domestic needs and gendered practices at home (Barhate et al., 2021, p. 412; Haq, 2013, p. 180). Women identify feeling guilty when they work rather than prioritizing the raising of children, yet also feel alone to raise their children with little help or flexibility from their husbands and families. This is combined with an absence of state services and legal provisions, such as maternity leave, childcare, and time off for family needs. The women's movement in India has a long history of organization, activism, and advocacy to address the ways deep-rooted gender inequalities disempower women, set out with possible solutions in various reports of the Committee on the Status of Women (e.g., Government of India, 1974; High Level Committee on the Status on Women, 2015). But Dhar (2018) notes that the political will to make the necessary transformation in gender relations and inequalities has so far been absent. Despite some progress, there is still no comprehensive anti-discrimination law that is able to address all the various intersectional factors that lead to women's inequality.

The irony of the entrenched gender roles and caste constraints restrict women's choices in the marriage market. Educated women can benefit because they may marry into higher-income families (Khanna, 2022). The high-income households and husband's education reduce female labour force participation (Lei et al., 2019), as higher economic status discourages women from joining the workforce. Nagpal and Viswanath (2023) report findings from interviews done with 6,600 women from 16 cities of India, highlighting the importance of views of family members which constrain women's ability to work outside the home, and push women to work from home or engage in small businesses to be able to allocate more time to household responsibilities. In interviews, 59% of women preferred jobs in the formal sector over entrepreneurship. What is more surprising is that less than 1% of working mothers use paid childcare facilities; 89% reported they are unwilling to do so as they do not trust the quality of care and not because of affordability. This implies that a trustworthy support system for relaxing the caregiving duties of educated women is crucial to allow them to participate in workforce development.

The new age-educated women are trying to navigate the demands of their aspirations about their work and life in general, like marriage and family. Young, educated women are looking ahead and getting attracted to social structures that provide them greater flexibility and systemic support for their caregiver duties after marriage and childbirth (Das Sharma, 2023). Inevitably, some of these are looking outside India for independent lives and a supportive social structure for a safe and conducive work environment. These women view Canada as offering greater equality and opportunity.

Indian Migration to Canada

India is now one of the main source countries for many traditionally immigrant-receiving countries (Li & Lo, 2009). In Canada, the Indian diaspora has a long and complex history with the first wave of 30 Indian men coming to Vancouver to work on Canadian infrastructure projects in 1904 (Sahoo & Sangha, 2010). During the early twentieth century, Indian migrants along with those from other Asian countries suffered years of racism and systemic discrimination.[1] In 1962, the introduction of an objective point system[2] for determining immigration eligibility laid the groundwork for open immigration policies embracing multiculturalism and ending the immigration quota scheme by country/race.

In both the 2016 and 2021 Census data, the top place of birth among immigrants[3] was India, with 8.9% and 10.7% of immigrants in 2016 and 2021, respectively (Statistics Canada, 2022b). Interestingly, in the "recent immigrant" category (those who obtained permanent resident status up to five years prior to a given census year), the number of Indians has significantly increased, from 12.1% in 2016 to 18.6% in 2021 (Statistics Canada, 2022b).

The data in Table 9.1 shows that skilled Indian women have been migrating to Canada in increasing numbers in recent years, drawn to Canada's strong economy, high standard of living, and diverse and inclusive society. Additionally, Canada has implemented various immigration policies and programs to attract skilled workers to fill labour shortages in key sectors. The pattern of skilled Indian women's immigration to Canada has been driven by several factors, including the demand for their skills in the Canadian labour market and their desire for better opportunities and quality of life. Many skilled Indian women have been able to secure work permits or permanent residency through programs such as the Express Entry system, Provincial Nominee Programs, and the Global Talent Stream. Some of the most popular sectors for skilled Indian women in Canada include healthcare, technology, and education. These sectors offer job opportunities with good salaries, benefits, and growth potential, making them attractive to women seeking to advance their careers and achieve financial independence.

Table 9.1 Gender of Indian immigrants and recent immigrants, 2016 and 2021 Census

Categories	*Gender category*	*2016*	*2021*[4]
Immigrants	Female	334,540	446,930
	Male	334,030	451,120
	Total	668,570	898,050
Recent immigrants	Female	72,045	118,790
	Male	75,145	128,205
	Total	147,190	246,995

Source: (Statistics Canada, 2022c)

According to Canadian government data, the number of Indian women immigrating to Canada under the Express Entry system has been steadily increasing over the past few years. The Express Entry system allows skilled workers, including women, to apply for permanent residency in Canada based on their age, education, work experience, and language proficiency. In 2020, India was the top source country of permanent residents admitted under the Express Entry system, accounting for 25.4% of the total. Among them, women constituted a significant proportion, although there are no specific statistics available for high-skilled Indian women (Kably, 2021). However, according to a report by the Canadian government, in 2019 women accounted for 44% of principal applicants who received invitations to apply for permanent residency under the Express Entry system. This suggests that a significant number of high-skilled Indian women are among those who are successfully immigrating to Canada through this program (MBR_FACT_EE_MAIN as of 11 January 2022). Additionally, provincial nominee programs are designed to attract skilled workers to address labour shortages in their respective regions. For example, the largest of these, the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program, issued more than 1,100 nominations to female applicants in 2020, out of a total of 4,600 nominations. This further highlights the growing trend of high-skilled women immigrating to Canada, including Indian nationals (Thevenot, 2021, 2023).

Many Indian women who have immigrated to Canada have also taken advantage of the country's family reunification programs, which allow them to sponsor their spouses and children to join them in Canada. This has helped to make the immigration process more attractive for women looking to build a new life in Canada while maintaining close ties with their families. Aside from family unification pathways to permanent residence, temporary work permits, and student visa pathways to Canada all require that people already possess skills. The flow of Indian nationals under the work permit schemes has significantly increased, from 98,780 in 2019 to 167,560 in 2022 (Government of Canada, 2023). Similarly, Canada has been a major destination for Indian international students. There has been a 31% increase in international students in Canada from 2021 to 2022.[5] India was the top origin country of study permit holders, with a total of 319,130 students in 2022, followed by China (100,010) and the Philippines (32,425) (CBIE, 2022). In 2019, 218,640 Indian nationals obtained study permits to study in Canada (Icef Monitor, 2022). However, there is no gender-specific data available for Indian nationals under the temporary work permit and study permit categories.

The aforementioned statistics show that Indians choose Canada as a preferred immigration destination, particularly for tertiary education, and Canada reciprocates the interest through its welcoming approach to Indian immigrants.

Skilled Indian Women's Migration to Canada

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, several studies considered the challenges faced in Canada by Indian/South Asian women immigrants. A qualitative

inquiry by Samuel (2009) explores the post-migratory acculturative adjustment and resettlement experiences of South Asian women. The findings reported issues like intergenerational conflict, discrimination, depression, and coping as sources of stress for immigrant South Asian women. The study suggested that multi-ethnic and context-specific mental health promotion approaches and guidelines are essential for resettlement and wellbeing of immigrant South Asian women. However, as we illustrate in this chapter, the Indian diaspora in general and the number of high-skilled Indian women immigrants in specific have increased exponentially in these 15 years, and the acculturative stress of SIWI has reduced to a large extent because of immigrants' use of day-to-day agency as well as the strong socio-cultural presence of the Indian community. Anderson (2020) presents comparative data reporting a 105% increase in Indian immigrants to Canada between 2016 and 2019, asserting how Indian nationals are ideally suited to Canada's points-based selection system. This system places a high value on youth, post-secondary education, and high-skilled foreign and (especially Canadian) work experience. The increasing population of educated Indian women does use this opportunity to migrate to Canada on student visa, which is much easier as compared to any other country to realize their aspirations for an independent and dignified life.

Studies highlight the challenges faced by women in terms of balancing work and family responsibilities. Nardon et al. (2022) drew on 50 in-depth questionnaires with skilled immigrant women to elaborate on their work experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic and reported the challenges they faced in their career trajectories. They report that the pandemic pushed skilled immigrant women towards unemployment and lower-skilled or less stable employment, where most of them had their career trajectory delayed, and interrupted, which is true for Indian skilled women immigrants in Canada as well. The pandemic's gendered nature and the reliance on work-from-home arrangements heightened the challenges due to limited social support and lack of social integration opportunities.

Another study by Kõu and Bailey (2017) explored the experiences of highly skilled Indian women who migrated to other countries. They report that migration gives Indian women the opportunity to escape from patriarchal norms. However, they seek a compromise between these cultural constraints and their personal aspirations and use their agency to strike a balance between both. In contrast to the Western context where traditions and modernity are generally seen as being in opposition to each other, in the Indian context, educated and highly skilled women may continue to adhere to the normative age at marriage and starting a family, while also pursuing a professional career and employment (Kõu & Bailey, 2017). Thus, in some senses, migration to other countries may permit highly educated and skilled Indian women immigrants to get relief from the normative duty of balancing traditional family roles and their professional careers. The study highlighted the importance of networking and mentorship in helping these

women navigate these challenges and achieve career success. These studies suggest that Indian women who migrate to Canada face a range of challenges related to their gender, race, and professional status.

The present authors' research project[6] explores the multifaceted challenges faced by Skilled Indian Women Immigrants (SIWIs) to Canada and the strategies they engaged in as they navigated the uncertain COVID-19 conditions while attempting to sustain and support their migration journey. The study uses the concept of everyday agency to understand the resilience and strategies of the SIWIs already in Canada as well as skilled Indian women who aspire to migrate to Canada. Using interview and survey data we link the pre- and post-migration experiences of aspiring and actual female immigrants to provide a better understanding of the complete picture of how COVID-19 impacted their lives. We provide a brief glimpse into the findings of the research survey here to support the arguments of this chapter.

A total of 104 SIWIs undertook the research survey and included women from India who had migrated to Canada before the pandemic and were in the age group of 18–35 years. All participants were asked what kind of visa they had applied for to move to Canada; 90.3% of immigrants and aspirants said they had applied for a student visa, 4.8% had applied for a Permanent Residency visa and 4.8% had applied for a work visa.

As seen in Figure 9.1, a majority of the survey participants (77.8%) were in the age group of 18–25 years, which shows the trend of younger Indian women migrating to Canada. Most of the participants belonged to nuclear families (69.23%), the rest belonging to joint families (30.76%), which is consistent with the declining trend of joint families in India, especially in the

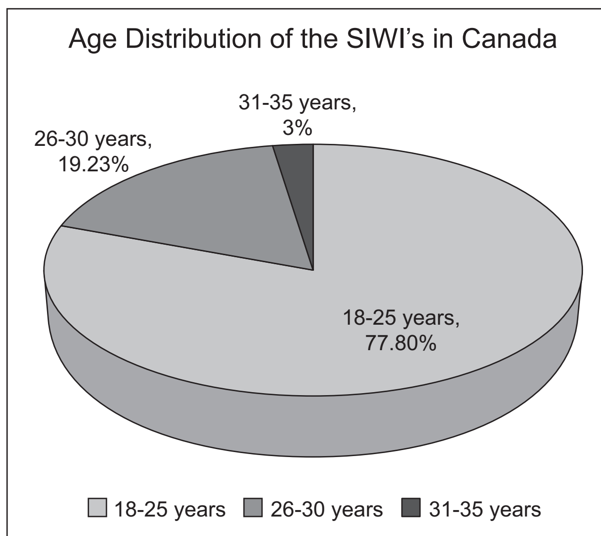

Figure 9.1 Age distribution of the SIWIs in Canada.

cities. Out of the 104 participants, 85.58% were unmarried and only two female participants reported having children. A majority of the participants belonged to the Hindu religion.

International students can be regarded as high-skilled migrants since they contribute to their host nation's priority educational and professional skills. A recent OECD publication on highly skilled migration included a chapter on international students (OECD, 2022). Canada has recently introduced fast pathways to permanent residence for international students, in order to capitalize on the skills and experience they have already achieved. A similar study by Hercog and van de Laar (2016) examined the reasons why young educated Indian women were leaving the country and found that they were primarily motivated by the desire for better educational and career opportunities, as well as a more gender-equal society. The study also highlighted the challenges faced by these women in terms of cultural adaptation and social integration in their new countries. The study highlighted the potential impact of this brain drain on India's economy and development. The education SIWIs had completed before immigrating to Canada is shown in Figure 9.2. The data illustrates that a majority (47.1%) had already completed their graduation degree before immigrating to Canada and as Figure 9.3 shows, a very large majority of the participants were pursuing further education in Canada or had completed their studies in Canada (97.1%). Most of our participants were pursuing or had completed a diploma from Canada.

A related study by Mehta and Biswas (2023) to identify the motivational factors and challenges faced by Indian student migrants also supports the aims of this chapter. The data was collected using a survey questionnaire with

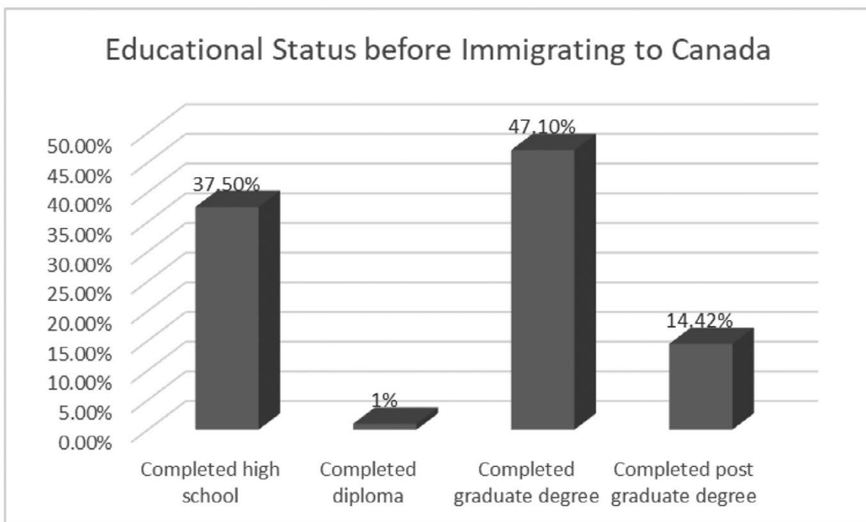

Figure 9.2 Education status of SIWIs before migrating to Canada.

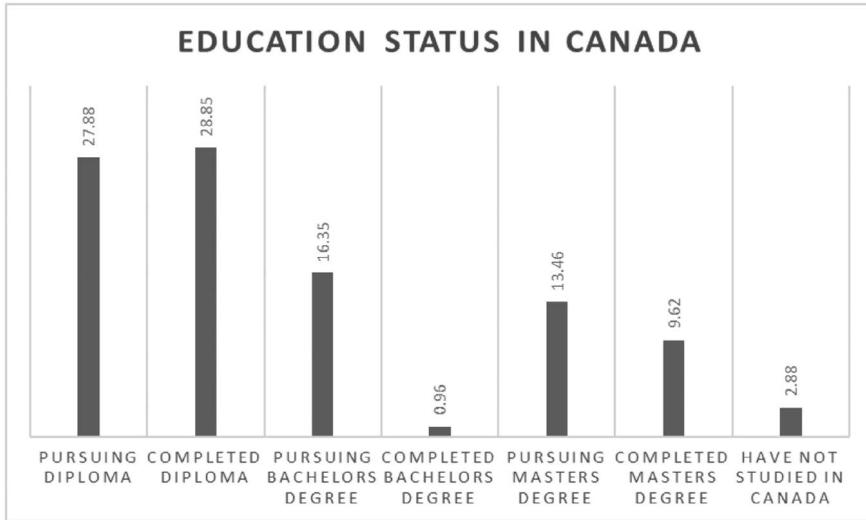

Figure 9.3 Education status of SIWIs in Canada.

100 students and in-depth interviews with 10% of participants to understand their perspectives in detail. Thirty-five of the 100 student migrants who participated in the research were from Canada. The total sample comprising 55 male and 45 female participants was asked about major motivational factors for their immigration to another country. The results show that 76% of them moved to another country for better financial prospects, career, and growth opportunities, whereas 64% said that the quality of education was a motivator. Independence was also seen as important for more than 80% of the student immigrants. Analysis of the data showed very intriguing trends. These findings imply that factors linked with the enhancement of societal status, like getting good life partners, enhancing family status, or entering a culturally diverse society to get acknowledgement for merit and performance were perceived as more important motivators by male students. Women students rated individual growth and independence as important push factors for migrating to a foreign country. There were not different patterns between men and women in assessing the importance of the standard of living, career, or exposure as push factors for immigrating to foreign countries. In in-depth interviews carried out with selective participants, researchers asked what the limitations are that they find in Indian education. Students identified three most important factors: competition, limited number of seats for cherished educational training, and less financial return.

Mehta and Biswas (2023) further report that acculturative stress (Sam & Berry, 2010; de Haas, 2021) among Indian students in Canada, the United States, the UK, New Zealand, and Australia is low, and they are well adapted to the host country's culture. Acculturation stress is the negative psychological

and emotional experiences that immigrants encounter in their host country as they adjust to the new culture. It may manifest in homesickness, feelings of anxiety, depression, feelings of being discriminated against, and other such negative experiences. One of the reasons for this is that most Indian students migrate to a particular place or educational institution along with their friends or where they know somebody from their social or kinship network is already studying or has completed studies. The existing network of Indian students and community at the place of migration helps these students to adapt to the cultural demands and they get acculturated fast. The findings from the research reported here fit very well with the aspirations-capabilities framework proposed by de Haas (2021).

In our SIWI study, only 38.46% of participants had work experience in India before migrating to Canada. This is unsurprising since they were likely to have been studying immediately prior to entering Canada. The average work experience of the participants in India was 21.8 months. The work status of the women already in Canada is shown in Figure 9.4. The data implies that 77% of the SIWIs in Canada were employed either full-time or part-time despite the pandemic conditions. Most participants reported jobs working in customer service positions in food establishments or in sales positions.

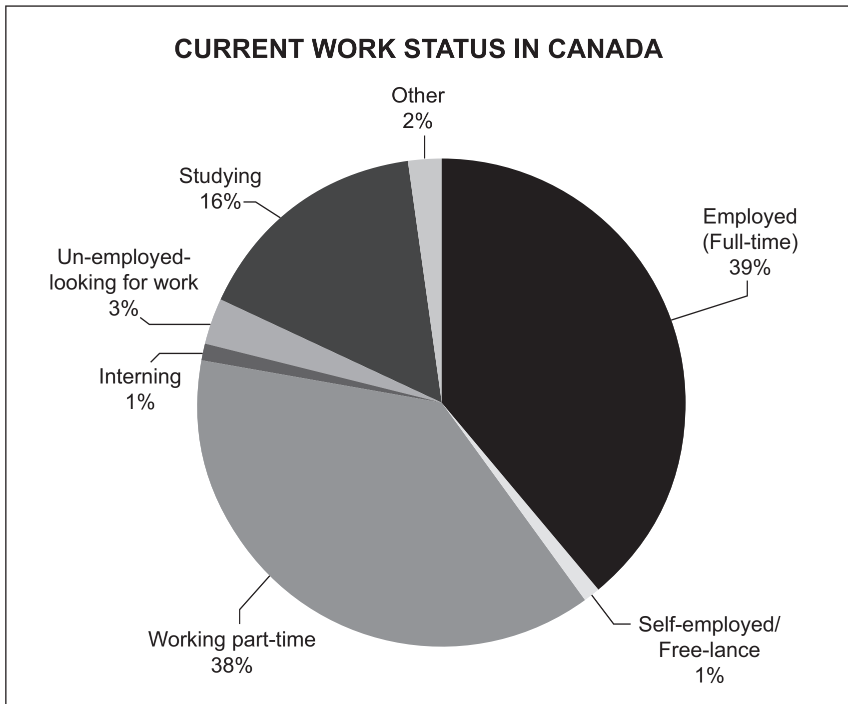

Figure 9.4 Current work status in Canada.

Interestingly, 75.96% of the participants reported that they had applied for the visa through a visa consulting agency, and only 24% had applied without assistance. Thus, the data shows that despite being educated, a majority of the SIWIs depend on visa consultancies to guide them on their future prospects. While more than 70% of them reported satisfaction with the services of the visa consultancies, our interviews revealed that many of the SIWIs expressed doubts about the competence of the visa consultants to match their exact interests for future studies with appropriate educational institutions or courses.

As part of this larger project, we conducted in-depth interviews with 29 skilled Indian women immigrants from the 104 who participated. These women expressed their vulnerabilities during COVID-19 as fear of losing a job, uncertainty, difficulties in networking with family and friends, persisting concern about family members left behind in India, and loneliness and isolation. At the same time, they demonstrated their everyday agency by upgrading their skills, seeking counselling for anxiety and depression, maintaining a healthy routine and disciplined life, connecting with family through virtual networking, reaching out to government agencies for emergency benefits, and taking advantage of their workplaces' employee assistance programmes. These findings imply that the Indian women who independently moved to Canada on study permits or as permanent residents used everyday agency to counter the vulnerabilities and the challenges faced during the global pandemic and to sustain themselves in the host country, synchronizing their aspirations and goals with the socio-structural requirements and expectations of immigrants (Biswas et al., 2023).

Discussion and Conclusion

The aim of this chapter has been to bring together available data and scholarship to shed light on the growing numbers of highly skilled women who decide to leave India and move to Canada. The chapter has provided demographic information on women's educational achievement and labour force participation rates in India, showing that while overall the former has risen, the latter has declined, stimulating considerable scholarly explanation and debate. It has explored conditions for women's lives in India that are identified in the literature as constraining women's opportunities for work outside the home and for overall independence. These factors reasonably contribute to women's desires to leave India and seek opportunities elsewhere. To demonstrate the significance of Indian migration to Canada, the chapter has provided available statistics on Indian immigration, particularly student migration to Canada. It then investigated the experiences of skilled women migrants through studies reported in the literature and carried out by the present authors. Given that detailed disaggregated statistical data pertaining to skilled women immigrants from India are not readily available, there are gaps in some of the evidence that could support

our arguments, but it is clear that skilled immigration from India to Canada has been steadily increasing.

Rising levels of education for Indian women, especially among the middle class, together with the persistence of traditional ideas about work, family, and gender that in both familial and societal contexts are largely unfriendly and unsupportive to women working in formal employment, make working life for skilled Indian women challenging. Educational credentials, however, present opportunities for economic independence, and with that the growing freedom to make autonomous decisions. These include choosing not to marry and seeking career advancement or different economic prospects in places reputed to have fewer restrictions on women's social and economic lives.

The challenges women face in India translate into the everyday agency that educated women employ to negotiate for increased autonomy within the Indian cultural context, without upsetting the social structure. Once everyday negotiations become a measure to build on, gender equality becomes reconstrued in terms of the roles of men and women as the emerging social reality. Recent scholarship about gender equality in a fast-growing economy like India is about women's evolving negotiation capacity and choices and how they are driven by the aspirations and influences of a globalized world. Nagpal and Viswanath (2023) note that in order to make it possible for Indian women to participate in the formal labour force without challenging the existing family structure or social order, the government and society at large have to be more cooperative to support them through institutional and interpersonal responses. Based on the analysis of face-to-face survey data collected through the India Human Development Survey (IHDS) carried out on 41,554 households, Vikram (2023) demonstrates that higher education in India, particularly college education, enables women to exercise agency in their lives' consequential decisions. College-educated women tend to marry at later ages, have higher autonomy in their choice of spouse, and have a greater opportunity to evaluate a potential spouse's suitability in arranged marriages. Identifying the trends accompanying higher educational attainment of women, Vikram (2023) argues that this indicates a significant cultural change in the family lives of Indian women, giving way to more egalitarian spousal relationships and greater bargaining power. However, a recent article in Mishra (2022), trying to understand if young Indians are giving up on marriage, highlights a report by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation which says that the age at marriage seems to have increased over time. Additionally, this report reveals that the percentage of both men and women in the "never getting married category" has been increasing.

Once skilled women arrive as migrants in another country, everyday agency may resemble the gender negotiation noted earlier for those who do not move, serving to support the traditional gender order rather than subvert it. Manohar (2019) examines how skilled middle-class Tamil Brahmin women employ gendered strategies as they negotiate immigration and

settlement in the United States. These women, 80% of whom had immigrated to the United States as dependent wives, use what she calls "strident embedded agency," engaging in gender non-normative actions and performing normative actions in reconstituted ways. She concludes that these women continue to value the traditional gender order, and achieve their professional goals alongside familial expectations, with some power to assert their subjectivity in the new unfamiliar context but ultimately reproducing Tamil Brahmin relations of subordination in immigration.

Canada's emphasis on economic immigration with its underlying premises on welcoming skilled immigrants including students, taken together with India's rapidly growing economy and burgeoning highly educated middle-class, has made India one of the largest source countries for many traditionally immigrant-receiving countries, including Canada, in recent years (Li & Lo, 2009). Multicultural Canada has made itself very attractive for educated and skilled women migrants, projecting a vision of Canada as diverse and inclusive of women and racialized people, and presenting both social and economic opportunities that are lacking elsewhere. Canada's gender results framework (Government of Canada, 2022), which represents the Canadian government's vision for gender equality, highlights education and skills development as well as women's economic participation. Canada's multiple and often rapid pathways to permanent residence for skilled immigrants and international students may contrast with less accessible routes in other immigrant-receiving countries.

Deciding to leave India demonstrates women's agency in activating their skills and improving life opportunities. The aspiring immigrants in India awaiting visas reported to us the many ways they attempted to take some control over the immigration process. One of these was checking the Government of Canada website frequently for updates or changes to the process. Another was the common use of visa consultants even among educated applicants. Our in-depth interviews with visa consultants also shed light on the agency of prospective immigrants as they planned their strategy for moving to another country. The consultants reported that compared to earlier days, people from all economic strata and all kinds of educational levels are applying for student visas. The ambition to go abroad, now affordable with the help of loans, has increased exponentially. However, because of the increased demand for Canadian education, admission into the preferred institutions is increasingly restricted. The consultants reported that the rejection rate increased due to the surge of visa applications, another factor driving potential immigrants to use consultants, despite their cost and sometimes unethical practices.[7]

Immigrant women and student migrants also exert their agency by migrating to places where they have established social ties, such as family members, friends, or acquaintances, who can provide them with information, resources, and support during the migration process (Massey et al., 1993; de Haas, 2021). Research shows that migrant networks often facilitate

immigrant social, political, and economic adaptation in the receiving context. Information sharing through these networks is another form of agency that prospective immigrants use in their decision-making. The aspiring migrants we interviewed reported sustained contact with friends and families already in Canada. Empirical studies have found that newcomers with ties to experienced migrants are more likely to locate jobs, secure higher earnings, establish a business, attempt to legalize their status, and politically mobilize in the host destination (Garip & Asad, 2015).

Yet despite this, when skilled women do leave India for Canada, their experience of work and life after immigration raises many challenges. In our research, the highly skilled women immigrants who moved to Canada before and during the global pandemic faced unemployment, discrimination, and loneliness, exacerbated by the lockdown restrictions that affected local and international travel and face-to-face social interaction (Biswas et al., 2023). While most had found jobs before COVID-19, these were frequently not commensurate with their qualifications. These skilled Indian women's narratives demonstrate how they used everyday agency to navigate through these challenges and constraints.

Overall, primary research done by the present authors as well as the existing studies suggest that Indian women who migrate to Canada face a range of challenges related to their gender, race, and professional status, but they also highlight the resilience and resourcefulness of these women in navigating these challenges and achieving success in their new home.

Notes

1 For example, in 1908, the Canadian government passed a "Continuous Passage" rule that prohibited the immigration of persons who did not travel on a continuous journey to Canada. Furthermore, the federal government imposed a $200 cash tax upon arrival for all Asian immigrants, while European citizens needed to pay only $25 (Johnston, 2014).

2 The point-based immigration system, renamed Express Entry in 2015, evaluates a potential immigrant's selection based on education level, language, professional background, and age. The Express Entry manages the applications for permanent residence under federal economic immigration programs, including the Federal Skilled Worker Program, Federal Skilled Trades Program, Canadian Experience Class, and Provincial Nominee Programs.

3 Statistics Canada (2022d) defines immigrant as a person who is, or who has ever been, a landed immigrant or permanent resident, including those who have obtained Canadian citizenship by naturalization. In the 2021 population census, almost one in four people (23.0%) were permanent residents in Canada, the largest proportion among G7 countries (Statistics Canada, 2022a).

4 Since the 2021 census, Statistics Canada included non-binary persons in the definition of male and female immigrants.

5 In 2022, 807,750 study permits were issued to international students to study in Canada. Out of the total number of international students, 373,599 international students were enrolled only in tertiary education, which included 195,357 male students, 175,449 female students, and 2,793 are of unknown gender (erudera.com, 2023).

6 *Understanding the vulnerabilities of Indian female migrants during COVID 19 pandemic*. Funded by Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute Collaborative Research Initiative.
7 In a recent case, a student from India is fighting deportation after his visa application was found to include fraudulent documents. He claims that the visa consultant he used included these documents without his knowledge (www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/lovepreet-singh-deportation-1.6874863 accessed 14 June 2023).

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10 COVID-19 Challenges, Health, and Wellness of the Little India Community in Canada

Srimanta Mohanty

Introduction

Brampton is a Canadian city in Ontario's Greater Toronto Area. It is called the Little India Community in Canada. Of the 250 different ethnic origins reported, Indian was the most frequent, accounting for 27.7% of Brampton's population. Nearly 40% of Brampton is South Asian, with Sikhs making up almost 20% of the population. Punjabi speakers make up 19% of the town, Urdu 3.1%, Gujarati 2.3%, and Hindi 2.3%. According to the COVID-19 prevalence data and the Ontario Marginalization Index, ten high-priority communities in the Central Region of Ontario were identified: six in Peel including Brampton, two in York, and two in Toronto.

The purpose of this article is to examine the challenges, health, and wellness of the South Asian community in Brampton during the COVID-19 pandemic. The review aims to consulate and analyze existing literature to gain a comprehensive understanding of the impact of the pandemic on this specific community. This article identifies key themes related to the prevalence of COVID-19 in the South Asian community and the lasting impacts of COVID-19 on the South Asian community. It will explore topics such as a lack of healthcare resources, precarious employment, financial challenges, cultural influences, mental health, racism, and the unique impact on youth. This article will contribute to the existing literature, inform policy and intervention development, and highlight areas for future research to better support the South Asian community in Brampton in navigating the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Objectives

- Identify and describe the impacts COVID-19 had on the Indian (South Asian) community in Brampton.
- Identify the reasons for the Indian community's overexposure to COVID-19.
- Propose recommendations tailored to the community to address the specific impacts they faced from COVID-19.

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Social Policy Relevance of the Project

- Valuing diversity (equity, access, etc.)
- Developing socially inclusive communities
- Building healthy communities
- Building community capacity

Methods

This article is based on secondary data sources. The literature reviews were selected based on their relevance to COVID-19 challenges, health, and wellness in the Brampton South Asian community. A comprehensive search using Statistics Canada, Google Scholar, and other databases was conducted, focusing on studies published between 2020 and 2023. Data was also retrieved from the Community Data Program – Target group profile of the visible minority population, Census, 2021. These sources include empirical research, community reports, and academic publications. The literature reviews cover topics such as vulnerability to COVID-19, healthcare disparities, mental health impacts, cultural influences, and socioeconomic factors.

Framework

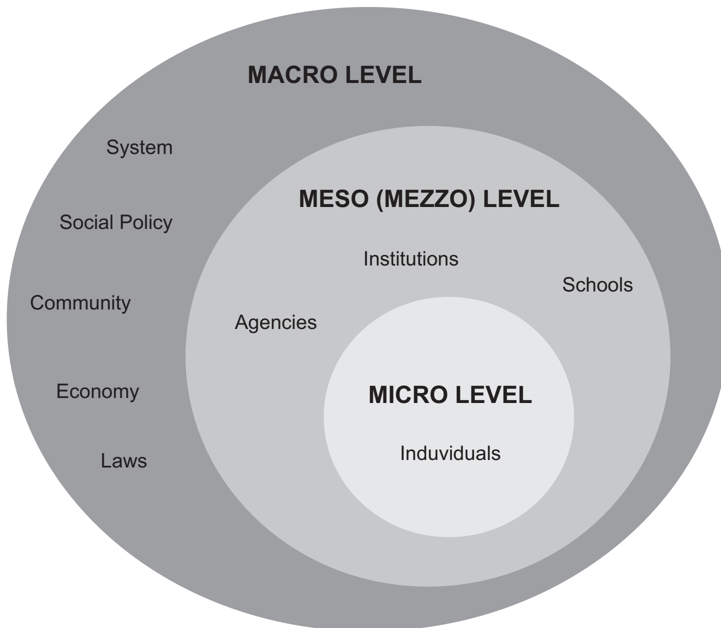

Figure 10.1 Framework.

Source: www.induscs.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Sept.20_Invited-Forgotten_Intl-Students-Report-2021_Final.pdf (Page 9)

Findings and Discussion

Quantitative Analysis

The South Asian Immigrant Population by Place of Birth

- In 2021, the single largest South Asian population group identified within Brampton was individuals originating from India (74.9%) (Table 10.1).

The Racialized (Visible Minority) Population

- In 2021, 52.4% of Brampton population was comprised of South Asian individuals (340,815 individuals), in comparison to only 37.4% of Peel (Table 10.2).

The South Asian Population by Mother Tongue

- In 2016, the top five mother tongue languages for the South Asian population in Brampton were Punjabi (Panjabi) (141,005, 21.7%), Gujarati (22,000, 3.4%), Urdu (21,945, 3.4%), Hindi (19,645, 3.0%), and Tamil (14,030, 2.2%) (Table 10.3).

Prevalence of Low Income

- In 2020, Peel Region had a lower percentage of South Asian persons identified as falling within the low-income categorization, in comparison to the populations of Ontario and Canada (7.1% vs. 9.1% & 8.8%).

Table 10.1 The South Asian immigrant population by place of birth: City of Brampton, 2021

Selected places of birth for the South Asian immigrant population in private households	*#*	*% of the South Asian immigrants*
India	158,050	74.9
Pakistan	20,125	9.5
Sri Lanka	12,205	5.8
Guyana	4,060	1.9
Bangladesh	2,530	1.2
Trinidad and Tobago	1,500	0.7
United Kingdom	1,465	0.7
United States	1,435	0.7
Afghanistan	335	0.2
Italy	195	0.1
Other places birth	9,005	4.3
Total	210,905	100.0

Source: Statistics Canada (2023a), Target group profile of the visible minority population, 2021 Census of Population (Date released: June 28, 2023).

Table 10.2 The racialized (visible minority) population: City of Brampton & Peel Region, 2021

	Brampton, City (CY) [Census subdivision], Ontario		*Peel, regional municipality (RM) [Census division], Ontario*	
Total – Visible minority for the population in private households – 25% sample data	**650,165**	100.0%	**1,439,075**	100.0%
Total visible minority population	**523,850**	80.6%	**990,345**	68.8%
South Asians	340,815	52.4%	537,930	37.4%
Chinese	**7,135**	1.1%	**59,985**	4.2%
Black	**85,310**	13.1%	**137,295**	9.5%
Filipino	**21,055**	3.2%	**60,125**	4.2%
Arab	**6,675**	1%	**49,970**	3.5%
Latin Americans	**13,490**	2.1%	**32,120**	2.2%
Southeast Asians	**9,100**	1.4%	**26,635**	1.9%
West Asians	**7,040**	1.1%	**16,110**	1.1%
Korean	**470**	0.1%	**6,435**	0.4%
Japanese	**395**	0.1%	**2,585**	0.2%
Visible minority, n.i.e.	**20,555**	3.2%	**32,320**	2.2%
Multiple visible minorities	**11,815**	1.8%	**28,840**	2%
Not a visible minority	**126,315**	19.4%	**448,730**	31.2%

Source: Statistics Canada (2023b), 2021 Census of Population (Date released: November 15, 2023).

- Of the three municipalities, Mississauga had the highest percentage of South Asian persons categorized as low-income, in comparison to that of Brampton and Caledon in 2020 (9.3% vs. 6.1% & 3.8%).
- 7.3% of South Asian individuals aged 17 and under residing in Brampton were identified as being of low-income status (with reference to the LIM-AT, 2020) (Table 10.4).

Unemployment Rate (%)

- Peel Region was found to have a higher unemployment rate to represent the South Asian population (aged 15 +) than that of Ontario and Canada (14% vs. 13% & 12%).
- Of the three municipalities in Peel Region, Mississauga had the highest unemployment rate to represent the residing South Asian population (aged 15+) in comparison to Brampton and Caledon (14% vs. 13% & 12%) (Figure 10.2).

Table 10.3 The South Asian population by mother tongue: City of Brampton, 2021

	Brampton, City (CY) [Census subdivision], Ontario	
Total – Mother tongue for the total population excluding institutional residents – 100% data	650,820	100.0%
Multiple responses	55,890	8.6%
Single responses	594,935	91.4%
Official languages	283,225	43.5%
English	279,415	42.9%
French	3,810	0.6%
Non-official languages	311,710	47.9%
Punjabi (Panjabi)	141,005	21.7%
Gujarati	22,000	3.4%
Urdu	21,945	3.4%
Hindi	19,645	3.0%
Tamil	14,030	2.2%
Spanish	10,185	1.6%
Tagalog (Pilipino, Filipino)	9,905	1.5%
Portuguese	8,640	1.3%
Italian	5,430	0.8%
Vietnamese	4,230	0.6%
Other mother tongue languages	54695	8.4%

Source: Statistics Canada (2023a), Target group profile of the visible minority population, 2021 Census of Population (Date released: June 28, 2023).

Table 10.4 South Asians by prevalence of low income: Canada, Ontario, Peel Region & Peel's Municipalities, 2021

	Canada	*Ontario*	*Peel*	*Brampton*	*Mississauga*	*Caledon*
Prevalence of low income based on the low-income measure, after tax (LIM-AT) (%)	9.1	8.8	7.1	6.1	9.3	3.8
0 to 17 years (%)	10.5	10.2	8.8	7.3	12.1	5.6

Source: Statistics Canada (2023a), Target group profile of the visible minority population, 2021 Census Population (Date released: June 28, 2023).

Note: LIM-AT is the low-income measure, after tax; in other words, a low income is less than 50% of the median income for a particular household size after subtracting taxes and making an adjustment to recognize that there are smaller increases in the total needs of a home as more household members pool their resources.

Qualitative Analysis

Finding #1: Disproportionate Exposure to COVID-19 Due to Community Members Working in Essential Jobs as a Result of Systemic Barriers

The Indian community in Brampton had a disproportionate exposure to COVID-19 because many community members work in jobs that were

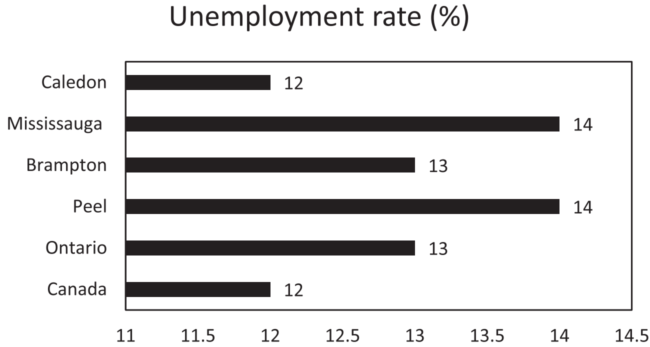

Figure 10.2 Unemployment rate (%): Canada, Ontario, Peel Region & Peel's Municipalities, 2021.

Source: Statistics Canada (2023a), Target group profile of the visible minority population, 2021 Census Population Profile (Date released: June 28, 2023).

deemed essential during the pandemic. The "most frequently reported occupations among positive cases were healthcare, trade, transport and equipment operators and manufacturing and utilities, all defined as 'essential'" (Das Gupta & Nagpal, 2022, p. 116). Many jobs in these professions are precarious and have "poverty-level wages, employment insecurity [and] lack . . . sick days" (Das Gupta & Nagpal, 2022, p. 105). Such work also carries higher exposure risks with women, immigrants, and visible minorities being dominant in these jobs (St-Denis, 2020). These demographics reflect Brampton's Indian community thereby providing further proof of the community's disproportionate exposure to the virus through their work. Moyser (2020) found that "South Asian participants were most likely to report COVID-19 related financial insecurity (43.8%)" (p. 6). Given that Indians in Brampton work in precarious jobs that only provide poverty-level wages, it was essential for many community members to continue working even if they were sick in order to provide a living for their families. This is exacerbated due to the economic hardships that occurred as a result of the pandemic shutting businesses down. The pandemic has also worsened South Asian mental health with Moyser (2020) finding that "South Asian participants had poorer mental health outcomes than participants belonging to other visible-minority groups" (p. 5). They were the group to report more likely to report fair/poor mental health and somewhat/much worse mental health since physical distancing began (Moyser, 2020).

The overlooking of these socio-economic factors has led to Brampton's Indian community being blamed for their overexposure to the virus as a result of their cultural practices. Politicians and the media have emphasized to the larger society that the community's cultural practices are the driving force for their overexposure (Das Gupta & Nagpal, 2022). This reasoning has produced public sentiment that the Indian community in Brampton needs to

control themselves in order to help the larger society manage the crisis. Their concentration in precarious essential services is ignored in favor of a more simplistic explanation that stigmatizes the community as one that cannot follow public health rules for the sake of public safety. The simplistic explanation also tends to overfocus on the cultural practice of multi-generational households and traveling to South Asian countries as the reason for the community's high rates of transmission (Nasser, 2020). This further antagonizes cultural practices and attitudes as a hindrance to public health measures. The oversimplification also enables employers to be excused from protecting workers and controlling transmission in their workplaces (Das Gupta & Nagpal, 2022). Individual responsibility is emphasized for public safety, which contradicts the Indian community's collectivist nature.

Finding #2: Lack of Systemic Responses Tailored Toward the Community to Help Them Deal With COVID-19

Research also indicates that there was a lack of systemic responses that were specifically tailored to Brampton's Indian community to help them deal with the different issues brought about by the pandemic. First, the city of Brampton has less healthcare funding per capita than other cities in the province. Brampton receives approximately $1,000 in healthcare funding per capita while other Ontario cities receive $1,800 per capita, which indicates that the $1,000 difference per capita impacts the city's capacity to handle public health crises like this one (Nasser, 2020). Martel et al. (2021) found that Peel Region residents feel that health is over-medicalized and that a holistic approach to health would better serve families and communities. Public health measures taking the individualistic approach do not suit the Indian community, which operates according to more collectivist ideals. Health ideals are being communicated without the consideration of social, cultural, and environmental contexts (Martel et al., 2021). If it continues, it imposes unrealistic expectations, limits access, and contributes "to the stigmatization of certain bodies and health behaviors" (Martel et al., 2021, p. 448). Therefore, current measures can be seen as ineffective in helping the community deal with COVID-19.

Finding #3: Prevalence of COVID-19 in the South Asian Community

The South Asian community in Brampton has experienced a disproportionate level of COVID-19 infections, as evidenced by numerous studies. These findings highlight a higher rate of infection among South Asians compared to other ethnic groups, indicating a greater vulnerability to the virus. In Ontario, Peel Region had the highest COVID-19 cases per 100,000 people, Brampton specifically accounted for 58% of those cases with an infection rate of 711 per 100,000 people (Nasser, 2020). The Region of Peel released a database reporting on COVID-19 and respiratory illness; the following chart

displays the disproportionate number of South Asians who were impacted by COVID-19 (Figure 10.3).

Brampton Mayor, Patrick Brown, in a 2020 interview on CBC Metro Morning Monday, identified several contributing factors to the increase in cases, including the trucking sector, Pearson International Airport employees, international travelers, and multigenerational housing (Nasser, 2020). However, it is crucial to move beyond surface-level explanations and recognize that the rise in COVID-19 infections among South Asians in Brampton is rooted in deeper systemic issues. "The media have created a distorted image that this population has these high rates of COVID-19 because of failure to follow the established protocol; this is far from reality." (Thobani & Butt, 2022) Rather than attributing the increase solely to individual behavior, this review delves into the systemic issues that shape the community's experiences. Specifically, it examines the impact of a lack of healthcare resources, precarious employment, and cultural influences on the increased vulnerability and transmission rates among South Asians. By analyzing the existing literature, this review seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of these factors and their implications.

Finding #4: Lack of Healthcare Resources

In Canada, the City of Brampton experienced a lack of healthcare resources, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. The healthcare system in Brampton was struggling to keep up with the increasing number of COVID-19 cases. It was more difficult for racialized communities in Brampton to access healthcare services and get tested for the virus (CBC Radio, 2021). Crowded housing circumstances are common with the close proximity which these individuals live in due to cultural factors. COVID-19 is more easily spread through these vulnerable families, which without the required testing can lead to further illness (Van Ingen et al., 2022). Many of these South Asians have jobs that are considered essential, which is even more challenging because they often lack job insurance and protections such as sick leaves (CBC Radio, 2021). The lack of resources in Brampton shows broader systemic issues, including disparities in access to healthcare and systemic inequities that disproportionately impact marginalized communities. There is a need to address the challenges that Brampton residents must overcome, including poor access to healthcare resources and testing, to better support the wellbeing of these communities (Vohra-Miller et al., 2020).

Finding #5: Precarious Employment

A study was conducted in 2021 in which they analyzed and addressed initiatives relating toward precarious employment and its effects on workers' health and well-being. This study found that precarious employment is not evenly distributed in a population but rather tends to be concentrated along

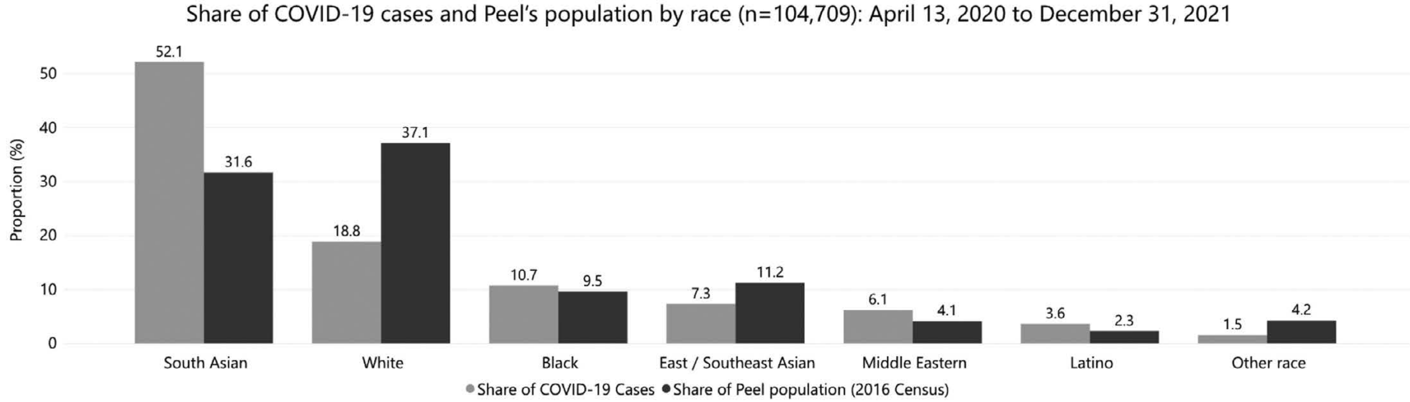

Figure 10.3 Share of COVID-19 cases and Peel's population by race (n = 104,709): April 13, 2020, to December 31, 2021.

Source: Adopted from Region of Peel

lines of the intersecting categories of socially created disadvantage that may exist in any society, such as race, gender, age, education, income, class, citizenship, immigration status, and disability (Gunn et al., 2021). In a study conducted by Manjeet Dhiman, it was found that the South Asian community overall has experienced high rates of unemployment, with the highest (nearly 18%) among racialized groups in July 2020. As the pandemic has immensely impacted South Asian communities, the concern and stress surrounding caring for family members has spiraled (*Dhiman*, *2021)*.

Finding #6: Cultural Influences

The South Asian community in Brampton is rich in cultural diversity and practices, which have played a role in shaping the experiences and responses during the COVID-19 pandemic. Cultural influences permeate various aspects of life, including social interactions, communication patterns, and beliefs, all of which have implications for health outcomes and responses to public health crises. Dr. Priya Shah, a physician at North York General Hospital was quoted saying "We know that with COVID-19 there are specific ethno-cultural factors that are driving transmission, whether that's language, or multi-generational households, being an essential worker. There's just so many factors across all communities" *(CBC News*, *2020)*. Multigenerational housing, a common practice among South Asian families, has resulted in increased household density and limited opportunities for social distancing and increases the challenge of isolating effectively when living in a multi-generational home *(CBC News*, *2020)*. Additionally, language barriers can hinder effective communication of health guidelines, making it harder for individuals within the community to access and comprehend critical information about the virus and preventive measures. "This does not simply mean communicating public health guidance in a different language, but rather understanding how cultural and contextual factors affect the ability of this community to practice social distancing" (Thobani & Butt, 2022). Cultural beliefs and practices, such as large cultural festivities, communal gatherings, and religious events, which are valued and celebrated within the South Asian community, can inadvertently contribute to the spread of the virus if not adapted to ensure adherence to public health guidelines. But "The media have placed a spotlight on this community as being non-compliant with public health guidelines and has blamed South Asians for being culprits in transmitting the virus because of 'cultural practices', such as large cultural festivities" (Thobani & Butt, 2022).

Finding #7: The Lasting Impacts of COVID-19 on the South Asian Community (Racism)

While acknowledging the cultural influences that contribute to the spread of COVID-19 within the South Asian community, it is crucial to recognize

the dangers of perpetuating racist narratives. By singling out specific racial groups, emphasizing their travel patterns and day-to-day lifestyles as problematic, we risk fueling conflicts and promoting racism. Dr. Ripudaman Minhas, a developmental physician at St. Michael's Hospital, stated concern in a CBC News article by saying "The focus really needs to be on solutions that work for higher-risk communities, taking into account their health behaviors and their lived reality" (Nasser, 2020). Dr. Ripudaman Minhas suggests we should be developing solutions that address the unique needs and health behaviors of higher-risk communities, without stigmatizing or scapegoating them. Unfortunately, the media has played a role in magnifying these stereotypes, particularly targeting the South Asian community as non-compliant with public health guidelines and attributing blame to their cultural practices, such as large cultural festivities. However, as highlighted by Tijhiana Rose Thobani and Zahid Ahmad Butt, this portrayal is distorted and does not reflect the reality on the ground. Blaming South Asians for high rates of COVID-19 due to supposed failures in following established protocols not only is inaccurate but also perpetuates harmful stereotypes (Thobani & Butt, 2022). Southeast Asian participants detailed the occurrence of the pandemic with elevated levels of racism and stigmatization, which was described as having a considerable psychic and emotional burden for many people (MHCC, 2022).

Finding #8: Impact on Mental Health

One of the challenges brought forward as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic is a significant impact on the mental health of Canadians. This is especially true for the South Asian community in Brampton, which has faced unique stressors throughout the pandemic. Studies have indicated that there has been a rise in mental health issues among South Asians in Brampton, including elevated levels of stress, anxiety, depression, and social isolation. In 2020 Statistics Canada released the following chart displaying those South Asian participants had poorer mental health outcomes than participants belonging to other visible-minority groups. South Asian participants were more likely to report fair/poor self-rated mental health and somewhat/much worse mental health since physical distancing began. South Asian participants were also more likely than participants in other visible-minority groups – with the exception of Filipino participants to report symptoms consistent with moderate/severe generalized anxiety disorder (Figure 10.4).

As stated earlier, the South Asian community in Brampton is rich in cultural diversity and practices, which have played a role in shaping the experiences and responses during the COVID-19 pandemic. South Asians face unique mental health struggles stemming from issues such as cultural expectations or familial obligations. In March 2022, the Wellesley Institute and Mental Health Commission of Canada partnered to create

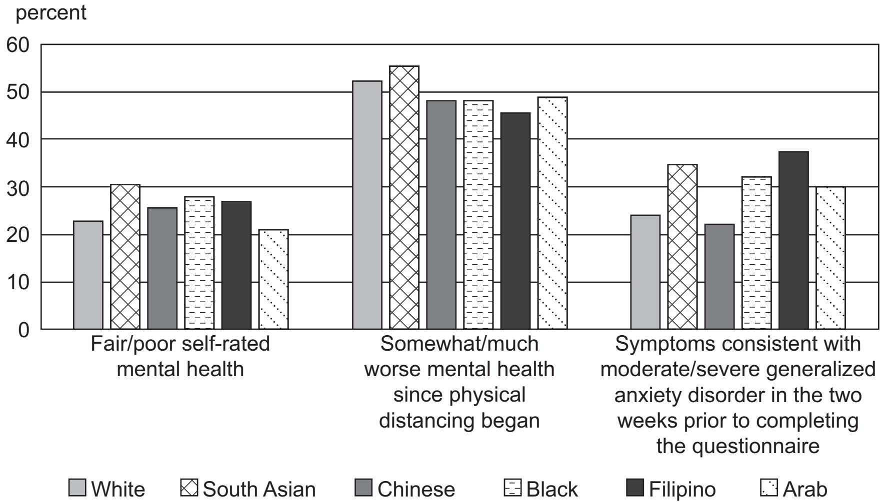

Figure 10.4 Proportion of participants by mental health outcomes and specific population groups designated as visible minorities.

Source: Adopted from Region of Peel

a report on The Impact of COVID-19 on Mental Health and Well-Being: A Focus on Racialized Communities in the GTA, which gained unique insight through interviews with many South Asians. Due to the number of South Asians working in precarious employment, it became common for their employment to be a cause of additional mental health concerns. "One young South Asian woman expressed anxiety over potentially acquiring the virus through interactions with large numbers of people and difficulty in maintaining safe social distance in the workplace" (MHCC, 2022).

Despite the heightened need for mental health services as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, there is still a massive need for culturally competent service providers.

> One South Asian participant highlighted the importance of service providers who understand family dynamics across various ethno-cultural communities. For this participant in her 20s, co-residing with her parents after completing university was a norm, and differed from what she understood as that of the dominant culture. She highlighted the need for culturally appropriate mental health services.
>
> (MHCC, 2022)

"Mental health services provided in the GTA were largely seen as having 'a very Eurocentric type of focus,' and 'models are not designed for South Asian communities'" (MHCC, 2022).

Finding #9: Impact on Employment/Finances

The disproportionate toll of COVID-19 on racialized communities is more evident than ever before. The pandemic has put emphasis on pre-existing structural disparities, specifically surrounding racial lines and has highlighted the need for multifaceted solutions, including paid sick days, meaningful engagement, and funding multi-generational mental health supports. Research has shown that the South Asian community overall has experienced high rates of unemployment, with the highest among racialized groups in July 2020. During the pandemic, it was stated that many South Asians had loved ones living with them at home, and due to the essential workers, it caused individuals to put themselves at risk of contracting the virus and bringing it home to their families as well. Children living in these households have also witnessed their families struggle with financial uncertainty and the responsibilities that come with "essential work." Another key finding was that the 18–24-year-old age group highlighted that some South Asian girls as well as women felt an increased pressure to seek employment and help contribute to expenses, such as tuition. This was due to the struggles their parents were currently facing with employment, specifically essential work. The pandemic also put delays in finding and securing internships within their field of study, delaying opportunities for them. South Asian girls experienced struggles of finding employment and also transitioning to a new place of employment during the pandemic. Those aged 25+ also faced challenges as they were initially laid off and experienced a reduction in shifts; however, some also had a difficult time returning back to work. Many others also stated that the cost of living in Canada is difficult to afford along with their tuition and further puts a strain on their financial situation and ability to make ends meet.

Finding #10: Impact on Health

COVID-19 has disproportionately impacted South Asians in the City of Brampton. The lack of healthcare resources, along with socio-economic factors such as unstable employment and crowded living conditions, has contributed to higher rates of COVID-119 cases. As stated earlier, the challenges faced by South Asians include accessing healthcare services, testing, and receiving timely medical attention. The systemic issues and barriers faced by this community have resulted in poorer health outcomes and an increased spread of COVID-19 (CBC Radio, 2021).

Recovering from these impacts is more difficult with the health consequences in the already vulnerable family members. As hospitals and healthcare settings experience a backlog, longer wait times are expected, which delay progress further. This also causes individuals who newly immigrated to Canada to face challenges in acquiring healthcare benefits (Hamilton et al., 2022). Language barriers continue to present an issue as South Asians in Brampton struggle to comprehend the COVID-19 data and available

resources (Bhalla et al., 2022). There is a strong emphasis on the need for targeted interventions and culturally appropriate healthcare services to address current and potential health disparities experienced by South Asians in Brampton (Cornwell, 2021).

Finding #11: Impact on Youth

Research indicates that South Asian youth, particularly international students in Peel, are likely to be more impacted by the lasting effects of the COVID-19 pandemic due to many factors. One factor is their role as essential workers in food service and essential services jobs. The mental health and wellbeing of youth, including South Asian youth, has also significantly impacted the mental health and wellbeing of the population. For newcomer youth, the impacts of the pandemic are more pronounced when it comes to isolation due to arrival in a new environment at a time when there was a limited capacity to connect with other people. This lack of connection can intensify mental health and anxiety of those who already lived with these issues due to the unpredictability and constant changes implemented during the pandemic. Studies show that the shift to virtual learning posed significant challenges for youth with varying learning needs. The loss of employment opportunities during the pandemic also challenged racialized groups like newcomer South Asian youth due to limiting the ability to earn the required income to be self-sufficient and adequately provide for their needs.

Conclusion and Recommendations

It is evident that systemic barriers have forced the Indian community in Brampton to seek work with higher exposure risks. These jobs were deemed essential during the pandemic but were precarious in nature due to their non-livable wages and the lack of support for the workers to effectively handle the virus. Despite this, the general public overlooks such circumstances and blames the community's cultural practices as the leading cause for increasing cases. A recommendation to address this issue is to have employment support in place that specifically deals with COVID-19 for these essential workers. Having payment support for workers who are affected by the virus would encourage them to adhere to public health protocols for contraction. Having protection supports will help workers ensure their work environment is safer from transmission.

Current health measures take an individualized over-medical approach which goes against the community's collectivist nature. As a result, public health measures should be conducted from a holistic perspective where collective action is emphasized. Appealing to the community's collective nature will encourage the community to follow public health measures.

Social, cultural, and environmental contexts should be considered when creating these measures as they can guide officials in determining the best way to convey the sense of urgency. Including these contexts would allow

the community to be active participants in creating these measures thereby making them more effective. Active community participation can also ensure these measures are communicated in different languages with more relatable goals being emphasized.

Micro-Level Issues and Interventions

When looking at the mental health outcomes during and after the pandemic, it was clear that individuals from visible-minority groups have poorer mental health outcomes as opposed to white individuals. Throughout the pandemic, it was reported that similar proportions of visible-minority and white individuals experienced their mental health worsening since physical distancing began; however, a larger portion of the visible-minority groups reported their mental health to be "fair" or "poor." Therefore, the pandemic has had a moderate to major impact on South Asians' ability to meet their financial obligations or essential needs. This has put a strain on financial security for South Asians and also caused much more financial insecurity. Requiring adequate sick days, meaningful community engagement, and funding multi-generational mental health supports.

Mezzo-Level Issues and Interventions

Issues highlighted within the South Asian community mainly stemmed from mental health and the process of it getting progressively worse after the pandemic hit. Mental health services were still accessible for those who needed them throughout the pandemic; however, it becomes more difficult to take advantage of those services when the services do not understand the South Asian perspective. Therefore, cultural competence in healthcare was seen as one of the main issues after the pandemic. The pandemic brought on many opportunities as well as challenges, especially for healthcare providers. A culturally competent healthcare system can help improve health outcomes and quality of care and can contribute to the elimination of racial and ethnic health disparities. Language and communication barriers can affect the amount and quality of healthcare received. Language and communication problems may also lead to patient dissatisfaction, poor comprehension and adherence, and lower quality of care. Therefore, the type of interpretation service provided to patients is an important factor in the level of satisfaction (Health Policy Institute). Incorporating culture-specific attitudes and values into health promotion tools as well as providing training to increase cultural awareness, knowledge, and skills would be considered a big step in the right direction and would improve cultural competency.

Macro-level Issues and Interventions

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted the South Asian community, which not only affected their individual health but also brought up larger, more complex

challenges. It has highlighted disparities in healthcare access and employment opportunities, including unstable work. The lack of access to healthcare and reduced job protections have led to increased rates of COVID-19 cases. There is a need to address systemic issues and ensure equitable access to healthcare, which prevents discrimination in the workplace. Culturally sensitive practices, including language-appropriate information and training, are also significant for improving the health and community wellbeing of the South Asians in Brampton. Moreover, there is also a need for policies that support racialized families in breaking disabling cycles that are fed by systems that marginalize and stigmatize. By addressing this challenge on the macro-level, current and future generations of South Asians, especially as immigration is increasing, will have more stable and positive living conditions.

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11 Diaspora Dilemmas and Deadlocks

The Indian Immigration Flux and Struggled Survival in Canada

Sony Jalarajan Raj and Adith K. Suresh

Introduction

A variety of immigrants and refugees from different parts of the world find Canada as a safe destination, where they can find the possibility of survival and quality of life (Labonte´ et al., 2015). In the past few decades, the country has become one of the most popular destinations for Indian immigrants. As of 2016, approximately 1.6 million people of Indian origin found Canada a good option for living (Statistics Canada, 2017). In 2021, one in five recent immigrants is of Indian origin, which is 18.6% of the Canadian population (Statistics Canada, 2022a). Along with the US, the UK, Australia, and New Zealand, students who go abroad for higher studies choose Canada as a critical English-speaking world (Mani, 2011, p. 314). During the 1996–2001 period, the number of people of East Indian origin increased by 30% while the overall population rose by only 4% (Statistics Canada, 2007). The community of Indian immigrants in Canada is one of the largest non-European ethnic groups in the country and one of the fastest-growing immigrant communities in the world.

The Indian diaspora in Canada is characterized by diversity as its chief quality, with people from different regions and communities, speaking different languages and practicing different customs and religions. The differences in size, composition, regionality, linguistic uniqueness, and cultural expressions affect how immigration patterns are shaped over time. Since heterogeneity defines the Indian diaspora, multiple factors need to be considered for understanding the conditions and characteristics with which Indians establish their presence and existence in a foreign country. This chapter explores the experiences of Indians in Canada, especially focusing on the challenges they face while living the "Canadian life." The recent dramatic increase in the rate of Indian immigration to Canada resulted in the emergence of problems such as discrimination, identity crisis, and religious conflicts to newer extremes.

To understand the status of Indians in Canada, it is required to comprehend how domains such as education, employment, family, religion, healthcare, business, and mainstream politics treat immigrants. The nature of the recent Indian immigration influx presents a complicated picture of Indians

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in Canada, where the struggle for survival is more intense and competitive. The reality of Indian life in Canada restructures the concept of transnational Indianness and diasporic existence, and the discourse of immigration plays a significant role in the construction of popular beliefs, which are often misconceptions based on falsehood.

New Dreams and Realities: Indian Immigration in the 21st Century

The preference for Canada as a destination differs for different people and such preferences are often outcomes of comparisons with other similar countries that offer more or likely the same opportunities and conditions to aspiring individuals. The very existence of Canada is the result of immigration from other lands (Canada. SOS. Canadian Citizenship Branch, 1947, p. 33). Canada's first official government document on citizenship, *How to Become a Canadian Citizen,* states that "[Canada's] people, drawn from every racial group, are welded into a mighty democratic force through their love of freedom, hatred of oppression, and the steadfast determination that the powers of government shall be exercised by and through the people for the common benefit of all" (Canada. SOS. Canadian Citizenship Branch, 1947, p. 33). Immigration has been identified as an important contributor to the population growth in Canada, which is almost twice the rate of other G7 countries during 2016 to 2021 (Statistic Canada, 2022b). In 2021, the country welcomed 405,303 new immigrants, surpassing its target to allow 401,000 immigrants to boost Canada's post-pandemic economic recovery (El-Assal & Thevenot, 2022). Canada's immigration plans are based on the fact that immigrants contribute greatly to the country's requirement to increase its population rate, labor force, and economic growth (Canadavisa, 2023). The country prefers immigrants who have an age structure younger than the general population to effectively solve problems of labor shortages in different sectors and regions (Statistic Canada, 2022c). The large workforce of immigrants helps to sustain Canada's economic growth, support its aging population, and increase cultural diversity and social exchanges (Amarasingam et al., 2016; Choudry & Henaway, 2012; Salami & Nelson, 2014; Shan & Walter, 2015).

Canada's immigration policies and programs attract aspiring workers and students to the country's diversified and inclusive social structure. Statistics show that immigrants prefer Canada to be a destination because people can go to the country temporarily on work or study permits or as asylum claimants and then get admitted as permanent residents[1] (Statistic Canada, 2022c). Canada's care economy[2] includes programs such as low-fee childcare, which has increased women's employment, and such effects are the same for both immigrants and native-born Canadians, as well as low-income and high-income households (Gu, 2022).

The number of Indians immigrating to Canada has dramatically increased in the past decade. Stuart Anderson (2023) of *Forbes* observes that this immigration influx resembles that of a refugee situation rather than the result of

a gradual increase in the number of international students and skilled workers. He points out that the anti-immigration sentiments of the United States, especially during the Trump administration, played a significant role in this trend of more Indians choosing Canada for immigration:

> *Under Trump, the United States and Canada adopted opposite approaches to the immigration of foreign-born scientists and engineers. The team Trump brought into the White House and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) viewed highly skilled foreign-born individuals as an economic threat, a stand at odds with virtually every economist in America. H-1B denial rates soared, delays mounted and threats of further action escalated, culminating in a ban on the entry of high-skilled visa holders and employment-based immigrants in 2020.*
> (Anderson, 2023)

The anti-immigration policies painted a negative picture of the United States among students and workers, whose anxieties about the foreign land affected their selection process. In this situation, people from India who want to become permanent residents in the United States through employment may have to wait for years due to the limited number of employment-based immigrant visas available and the limitations on the number of individuals allowed from a country. Canada benefitted from this and attracted more students between 2016 and 2019 than the United States by a large margin (National Foundation for American Policy, 2022). Canada helps individuals to come to the country as students and allows them to transition to work after graduation. This is one of the best strategies for candidates to get permanent residence in the country. Canada's points system for immigration is effective, largely due to its adaptability to the demands of employers (Anderson, 2020). It is also significant to note that India's large and growing middle-class population has the skills and funds required for Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) to sanction a visa through new economic-class immigration programs such as the Express Entry (introduced in 2015) (El-Assal, 2022).

Statistics show that Canada has become the new Gulf for Indians (The Times of India, 2019). Similar to the Gulf Boom in the 1970s where a large number of migrant workers from smaller Indian states like Kerala had migrated to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, the new trend of migrating to the Western world shows that Canada is a preferable option (Kamalakaran, 2023; The Indian Express, 2022). New expectations and changing conditions made Keralites lose interest in the Gulf region, and they started to consider other alternatives (Castelier, 2019). Canada has been targeted as a favorite destination for the emerging middle class in Kerala as they believe that the country can provide opportunities for younger generations to financially establish their careers with more stability than the Gulf countries. Since migration to richer countries has been identified as an effective way to escape poor economic conditions (Ratha & Plaza, 2014), many Malayali

parents in Kerala encourage their children to go abroad for higher studies with part-time jobs. They would sell their properties or apply for bank loans to create the funds needed for their children to get student visas. The student diaspora in Canada is an exclusive community whose existence is defined by the hard work and struggles required to pay the debts of immigration. The economic aspirations of the student immigrants depend on the part-time odd jobs they do to make the extra money needed for not only living in a first-world country but also supporting their struggling families in their home country. The student diaspora's struggle for survival in Canada reflects the struggles that describe India's image as a developing country.

India Is Not Good Enough: The Third-World Discourse of Immigration

Young people choose to go abroad for several reasons including better career opportunities, quality education, international exposure, and a higher standard of living. In a globalized world connected by the internet and media, immigration has become a relatively easy process as people can get real-life knowledge and information about the places they want to immigrate to. New trends in immigration are created by the influence of media-framed narratives that can present specific pictures of societies one lives in and one wants to live in. An important aspect of the Indian migration to Canada is the way young Indians are convinced of India's status as a poor and incompetent third-world country. The term "poverty porn" is often associated with India and its projected international image that reduces the country to a category of people who cannot escape the socio-economic conditions that define them.

The genre of "poverty porn" explicitly narrates tragedies and miseries of marginalized groups from developing countries as a means to divert popular attention to the romanticized images of tragedy. It paints a generalized picture of geographical regions as less progressive to a global media audience. In this context, regions like India, which are still defined by the vestiges of a colonial past, become subjects of the Western gaze that operates as an ideological tool for the dissemination of poverty porn discourses to the mainstream. Here, media representation of poverty porn specifically includes the overfocusing on tragedies and miseries of marginalized groups in a manner that highlights India as a representation of the "Third World." The use of poverty porn images in media helps the privileged to distinguish the idea of progress by the strategic exclusion and exposition of certain problems. In India, the notion of poverty porn is part of the popular culture, and news agencies, social media, political parties, religious organizations, film, and television take part in a collective discourse of sensationalizing "weakness" using advertisements and public relations where information is manipulated through emotional rhetoric. The field of Diaspora studies has revealed that immigrants from Third World countries, who now reside in the First World such as the United States or Europe, often develop their cultural identities as citizens of their new home

country, but they are also compelled to maintain their culture of origin by their continuous association with stereotypical images (Bhabha, 1994).

The hegemony of Western media is reflected in representations of foreign issues. The ideology of the Western perspective is often characterized by an urge to stereotype and romanticize Eastern countries and spaces outside the West as the normalized "Other" (Said, 1978). The impact of cultural imperialism, global capitalism, and Western modernity has contributed to the new world-making of immigrants through certain archetypes that refuse to see things from the actual contexts in which an authentic view is possible. The many stereotypes that are sensationalized in news media reporting and broadcasting are reflected in other entertainment platforms as well, especially entertainment media forms such as popular films, reality television, comedy shows, and video games (Ross, 2019). Critically acclaimed films like *Gandhi* (Attenborough, 1982), *The Constant Gardner* (Meirelles, 2005), *Blood Diamond* (Zwick, 2006), and *Slumdog Millionaire* (Boyle, 2008) are examples of cinema using "Third World" struggles to create "an extensive repertoire of images about the South which has considerable bearing on how Northern audiences view the South and, arguably, on how Southern elites see their own subalterns" (Sengupta, 2010, p. 601). The portrayal of India in films produced in the West celebrates the idea of an uncivilized, pre-modern, socially backward, savage, and traditional land (Ramasubramanian, 2007). Poverty porn identifies "suffering" as a universal phenomenon that uniformly affects human populations of all cultures and social systems. It uses this commonality to find an opportunity in the most diversified cultures such as India to create an emotional mass market for profit. In other words, poverty porn achieves its goals through the cultural homogenization of suffering.

The feeling of worthlessness in one's own country is a reason why the young Indian generation is fleeing the country. Economic disparity, lack of job opportunities, societal pressures, and political crises are some of the various factors that make India inhospitable for the new generation whose standards are always elevated by the capitalist ideology. Individuals who are caught up in a reality that does not offer great opportunities feel a sense of un-belonging in their own country where their talents are unrecognized and undervalued. Sanjay Baru (2020) notes that "there is now an emerging category of Indians migrating out and opting to stay out of India because they feel their motherland no longer wants them. This sense of alienation, especially among minorities, is a disturbing trend." The "not-returning" Indians are contributing their talent and workforce to foreign countries because even the new schemes such as "Atmanirbhar Bharat"[3] (Self-reliant India) are not attracting the young generation.

The Façade of the Plastic Smile: Diasporic Challenges of Integration

The Indian diaspora in Canada is a heterogeneous community with significant regional and linguistic diversity. People of Indian origin in Canada come

from different parts of India, including Punjab, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Karnataka. The majority of the Indian population identifies as Hindus, Sikhs, and Muslims. Integration and harmony are crucial for the survival of diaspora populations as they help immigrants adapt to the cultural syncretism of a foreign country. This is one of the difficult challenges Indian immigrants face in Canada as their identity and existence are already in a state of exclusion which they tried to escape from their own country. They are viewed not only as outsiders in Canada but as people who chose to leave one country for another. At this point, a notion of betrayal is attributed to the identity of the immigrant as they are identified as someone privileged enough to compromise their original nationality for material good. Realities of language barriers, cultural differences, racist experiences, prejudices, and discrimination accentuate the notion that immigrants are people who exist in an in-between state. This state of existence is in a liminal space, which is defined by the immigrant's departure from the Indian cultural land and their arrival in the Indian diaspora in Canada. However, the point of departure and the point of arrival are incomplete in the case of the immigrants because they can never fully depart or fully arrive. This identity crisis puts Indian immigrants in a position where they are not encouraged to accept Canada as a second home.

The discrimination against Indian immigrants in Canada occurs on multiple levels, primarily based on their skin color, accent, religious affiliation, and cultural background. Recent attacks on immigrants involve premeditated violence and religion-based hatred (BBC, 2021; Muzaffar, 2023; News18, 2022). New immigrants and refugees in Canada show high vulnerability to intimate partner violence (IPV), which poses high risks to women, children, family dynamics, and social relationships (Okeke-Ihejirika et al., 2020). Other reports show that hate crimes against Indians have increased in the form of racial slurs, harassment, and vandalism where the perpetrators demanded that the victims should "go back to India" (Firstpost, 2022). Edith Samuel found that Indian immigrant women's post-migratory experiences are defined by acculturative stress reflected in the form of "intergenerational conflict, discrimination, depression, and coping" (2009, p. 16).

The prejudices and stereotypes with which the immigrant population is undermined in Canada's mainstream social structure are reflected in the form of discrimination in accessing employment, housing, and education. Social isolation and cultural alienation are explicit between neighboring communities whose societal participation, community engagement, and cultural harmony are minimal. Here, the process of acculturation does not occur as a natural result of migration but as a strategic tool to give preference to certain cultural minorities that happen to dominate the immigration flux. For example, even though the Indian diaspora in Canada is multicultural, it is mostly addressed as Sikh for the cultural significance of the Sikh community, which makes other Indian identities such as Bengali, Malayali, Tamil, and Gujarati to be socially and culturally invisible. The Sikhs' migration to Canada is

historically significant in the context of political persecution in India. In the 1980s, Sikhs were massacred in India after Indira Gandhi's assassination, and many escaped violence by seeking asylum in Canada (Jakobsh & Walton-Roberts, 2016). From 1981 to 1984, more than 2,800 Sikhs applied for asylum in Canada under the 1976 Immigration Act (Tatla, 1999, p. 60). Ever since the Sikh community became a part of Canada's status as a safe haven for refugees, they have fought for their inclusion in the Canadian society. Diasporic identities have different historical and cultural significance and therefore they compete with each other to assert their cultural presence in a multicultural system that operates on the basis of power hierarchies.

In order to adapt to the new cultural contexts, immigrants have to adopt certain acculturation strategies for survival. "Assimilation," "integration," "separation," and "marginalization" are identified as the four common strategies of acculturation (Bhatia, 2008). Berry and Sam explain each term by referring to how individuals deal with their "home" cultural identity and with the cultural identity of the dominant group in the foreign country (1997). "Assimilation" involves the strategy of not maintaining one's cultural identity while interacting with the dominant group. In "separation," individuals refuse to contact with the dominant group and continue to hold on to their original culture. "Marginalization" makes individuals lose cultural and psychological contact with both their ethnic cultural roots and the mainstream cultural system (Berry, 1998, p. 119). Those who use the "integration" strategy actively participate with the dominant group without losing their cultural ties with their homeland. Out of these, integration is the most ideal acculturation strategy for immigrants as it results in more positive outcomes than the other alternative strategies (Berry & Sam, 1997, p. 318). Indian immigrants find ways to balance their traditional cultural values with Canadian societal norms, such as adapting to Canadian culture while still maintaining their cultural traditions. For example, they may celebrate traditional festivals and holidays while also participating in Canadian cultural events.

The Politics of Integration and the Diasporic Public Sphere

The integration approach in acculturation maintains universality as a sign of inclusivity. Even if there are "substantial variations in the life circumstances of the cultural groups that experience acculturation, the psychological processes that operate during acculturation are essentially same for all the groups; that is we adopt a *universalist perspective* on acculturation" (original emphasis, Berry & Sam, 1997, p. 296). Diaspora existence is negotiated around this universal solidarity that facilitates a shared connection between individuals of the diaspora. Sunil Bhatia observes that:

> Diasporas distinctly attempt to maintain (real and/or imagined) connections and commitments to their homeland and recognise themselves and act as a collective community . . . [and] non-European/non-white diasporic

> communities bring into sharp relief the sense of constantly negotiating between here and there, past and present, homeland and hostland, self and other.
>
> (2008, p. 23)

Migrant communities of Indian descent have demonstrated remarkable resilience in integrating with their host societies while preserving important elements of their Indian cultural heritage (Jain, 2011, p. 50). Ravindra K. Jain cites some of the consequences of integration in the Indian diaspora:

> *a) further deterritorialization of some communities, particularly those prone to internal migration historically, for example, Marwari traders, and Parsi professionals and minorities following the Jain religion;*
> *b) the mitigation of communalism: thus Hindu/Muslim/Christian marriages across religious communities are common, for example, in Trinidad;*
> *c) increased scope of entrepreneurial activity among "successful" castes, for example, Chettiars from South India and Khatri traders from Punjab and Delhi;*
> *d) ethnopreunership, for example, Sindhi, Gujarati, and Sikh businessmen forming exclusive networks both vertically with their South Asian base and horizontally with community cohorts transnationally; and*
> *e) utilization of a good command of the English language in enabling global entrepreneurship and communications.*
>
> (2011, p. 54)

The notion of the public sphere in diaspora communities has become influenced by the internet and the new media (Parham, 2005). The mediated diasporic public spheres are characterized by transnational communicative strategies and discourses that restructure the socio-cultural fabric of the diaspora to negotiate elements of identity, race, power, and political narratives. German sociologist and philosopher Jürgen Habermas (1991) theorized the public sphere as a domain separate from the state and the economy, where members of the public can engage in discourses. The public sphere is "made up of private people gathered together as a public and articulating the needs of society with the state" (p. 176). For Habermas, the public sphere's success depended on critical and rational discourse, where everyone could participate equally. The barriers based on race, religion, and gender were lowered in an ideal public sphere, however, new barriers such as payment for access, and the growth of private interest began to emerge.

In the Indian public sphere, which is defined by the caste system, there is a "structural disjuncture" between caste and non-caste worlds, which, in the diaspora, is characterized by political reconfigurations and the decline of the caste system (Jain, 2011, p. 54). Jennifer Elrick's analysis shows that "individual-level assessments of traits like 'merit' were not designed to be 'race free' but emerged as a way of managing race, at the intersection of

class and status" (2022, p. 110). Habermas argues that in modern society, the public sphere has become "refeudalized," which means it has become dominated by powerful interests and institutions that limit the free and open exchange of ideas in a rational manner. He suggests that this refeudalization is due to the increasing influence of mass media, which has turned the public sphere into a space where only certain voices and perspectives are heard. In Habermas's view, the refeudalization of the public sphere is a threat to democracy, as it undermines the ability of citizens to engage in rational-critical debate and to make informed decisions about issues that affect their lives. He calls for a revitalization of the public sphere, one that is more inclusive, democratic, and participatory, and that allows for a greater diversity of voices and perspectives to be heard.

Similarly, the Indian diasporic public sphere in Canada is *refeudalized* in the sense that public and private discourses are affected by problems of immigration and their impact on the larger mainstream power politics of Canada. Adam Chapnick, studying the historical evolution of Canada's citizenship guides, observed that the "relative narrowness of the Canada's political spectrum" shows that there exist very little differences between the Liberals and the Conservatives (2011, p. 32). According to Alexandra Dobrowolsky, the illusory binary that emerged in the context of Canadian immigration and citizenship divides the country into a conservative "Bad Canada" and a liberal "Big Canada," where "contrary to popular imaginaries, past and present, the Canadian state contributes to growing global inequalities and greater social, economic, and political precarity (2017, pp. 198–199). This includes class preferences, implicit racialization, and invisibilization of women (Dobrowolsky, 2007, 2008).

Immigrants strategically take advantage of the host nation's policies and laws to organize in groups to propagate their ideologies and belief systems to the mainstream public sphere. The way countries sanction religious freedom and autonomy to immigrants resulted in the burgeoning of new conflicts related to the perception, practice, and creation of diasporic identities in their original form. Indian immigrants who build religious shrines, conduct cultural events, and organize programs in a host country open a new space for public engagement through discourses that are relevant to only the immigrant's home culture and experiences. In the context of India in the Modi-era, where there is a revitalization of Hinduism, its power dynamic, and popular politics reaching a maximized cultural validity, the Hindu diaspora gained universal solidarity through the tactical integration of cultural nationalism and religious devotion (Mathew, 2022). The Canadian Hindu therefore not only is an identity within the larger category of the Indian diaspora but functions as an identity that can represent the Indian diaspora on global platforms. The popularity of digital public spheres allows individuals to express their "authentic self" (identity based on origin) in a way that undermines their "adapted self" (immigrated/settled identity). Diasporic identities find their host country as an opportunity to accentuate their cultural identity as a means to increase its appeal in a multicultural and globalized world.

Conclusion: Future Directions

The way immigration has become normalized as a natural process in the modern world indicates the permeability of borders that define nation-states and their inhabitants. Canada's attitude toward immigration emphasizes the significant role the immigrant workforce plays in sustaining the country's economic development and cultural diversity. However, the consequences of immigration, both short-term and long-term, suggest that it is not an innocent process. Multiple aspects of Indian immigration to Canada show that the problems of identity crisis, acculturation, public engagement, discrimination, and racism define the diasporic community and its existence within the host nation. The diasporic existence has a universality that helps to maintain a sense of shared cultural bonding between different cultural sub-groups with regional differences. This is realized through the universalized notion of "Indianness" culturally appropriated to invoke nationalist sentiments. Indians adopt integration as a strategy of acculturation to survive in Canada, which offers better economic conditions and quality of life than what one is offered in India.

The ongoing Indian immigration to Canada results in an increase in the diasporic population in which different identities compete for dominance and cultural validation. The historical significance of certain migrations such as that of Sikhs are examples of how not all diasporic communities are equal in their historic position and cultural recognition. This ultimately leads to the collapse of multiculturalism as an idea that fails due to the internal contradictions between diasporic identities leading to the marginalization of those identities that do not have political significance in the mainstream political discourses. Canada's pro-immigration policies are often created to support the populist strategies of the government. The Eurocentric and ethnocentric biases affect the way immigrants are treated and accepted in Canada. Therefore, to improve the immigration process, more affirmative actions that focus on a rational discourse of identity politics and cultural practices need to be implemented. This includes future interventions in the selection of immigrants based on professional qualifications and skills rather than ethnicity and minority status. New policies need to be developed to mitigate the refugee crisis and minority problem through collective action at an international level.

Notes

1 Since 2016, 36.6% of the recent immigrants came to Canada on a temporary visa before being admitted as permanent residents.
2 The care economy refers to paid or unpaid work associated with caring people who are in need of physical, psychological, and emotional assistance. It generally includes caring children under the age of 15 and care-dependent adults with long-term conditions and disabilities.
3 "Atmanirbhar Bharat," a term introduced by the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, emphasizes the need to "make in India" to reach self-reliance as a primary goal. It encompasses policies and initiatives that are in support of local businesses and start-ups as a means to reduce the country's dependence on outsiders.

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12 Model Minorities and Marriage Migration

Experiences of Indian Migrant Women in Canada

Harshita Yalamarty

Introduction

In a YouTube video titled "Journey to Mrs. International: Mrs. Canada International 2018,"[1] the contestant Parita Vadodariya wears an elaborate lehenga and her crown, while her sash proclaims her to be "Mrs. Canada International" is draped in the background. She tells the viewer about her origins in a small town in Gujarat, India. She met and fell in love with her now husband while in college, but because they belonged to different castes, she was "abandoned, abused and socially isolated for two long years" – presumably by her family and her community. She and her husband then decided to marry and migrate to Canada together for a fresh start. Eventually, she says, her family reconciled with them, even coming to visit the couple in their home in Alberta.[2] Vadodariya then talks about the struggles she and her husband faced as new immigrants worked "survival jobs" at Walmart and Tim Horton's, and studied hard to gain skills and employment in the Canadian workplace. She frames her professional career as a physical therapist as a "service" to her new home and society. Finally, we see Vadodariya and her husband performing a Hindu *pooja* to enter their new house as she says, "And now we are proud Canadian citizens."

In three and a half minutes, using family photographs and stock images, Vadodariya sketches out the story of a modern Indian woman who stands firm with her choice of husband against the structures of tradition and family in India, and then finds a new beginning, freedom, and eventual success as an immigrant in Canada. While she represents Canada in an international beauty pageant, there is no evident tension between her Indian and Canadian identities; her liberal Canadian values are displayed in her dedication to an "active and healthy lifestyle" as a Canadian attribute (Alexander, 2017) and her commitment to her education, her profession, and her extensive charity and volunteer work involving Indian arts in keeping with the Canadian liberal script of a good immigrant (Farrales, 2019, p. 47). The marriage migrant woman, a part of the model minority in a multicultural society, emerges as one who performs her Indian traditions and culture, while also establishing herself as a good Canadian subject. She has successfully integrated into the

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Canadian economy and society, while embodying the liberal values of Canadian multiculturalism, and her gratitude to her adopted country positions her as a success story, belonging to a "model minority." She represents the ideal economic immigrant who is provided with a fast track to permanence in Canada; she also functions as a gendered symbol of the upward socio-economic mobility of the Indian diasporic community in Canada.

Drawing from in-depth life history interviews with 24 Indian marriage migrant women in Canada in 2018–2020, this chapter discusses the women's migration decision-making processes as well as their professional experiences within Canadian workplaces. I analyse these experiences of marriage migration through the lens of understanding racialized "model minority" within multicultural societies, while attending to structures of gender, class, caste, and race within the Canadian immigration system and labour market. This chapter forms a part of my doctoral dissertation, which argues that the horizontal culturalization of racism within Canadian multiculturalism allows for a particular privileged configuration of Indian economic immigrants to assume the "model minority" mantle.

Multiculturalism and Migration in Canada

A settler-colonial state, Canada is built on unceded land and land under treaty agreements with Indigenous nations, which are routinely violated.[3] It presents itself as a nation composed and built by immigrants, and migration forms a positive component of the national self-narrative (Daigle, 2016). In the 19th century, the ideal immigrant sought by Canada was "white, particularly British-origin, Protestant" (Abu-Laban & Gabriel, 2002, p. 37; Dua, 2000). Migration of non-white male labourers was controlled and restricted by acts such as the Continuous Journey Act of 1908, which restricted immigration from South Asia and the Chinese Immigration Act of 1885, which levied a head tax on every Chinese immigrant seeking entry (Government of Canada, 2020; Mongia, 2018).

Migration was also governed on gendered lines. In the early 1900s, South Asian women, being seen as creators of ethnic communities, were discouraged by the Canadian state from migrating as a policy of avoiding permanent settlements by South Asian labourers (Das Gupta, 1994). Following concerns of interracial mixing between Indian men and white Canadian women, women from India were allowed to migrate to Canada only as wives as a way to keep races separate (Dua, 2000). Similarly, after the anti-Asian riots in Vancouver in 1908, Japanese male immigrants were limited, but the number of Japanese women arriving as "picture brides" to join their husbands increased (Chazan et al., 2011; Ayukawa, 1995). Racialized women also migrated as labourers to Canada, especially under specific care labour programmes such as the West Indian Domestic Scheme (1955–1967), "cases of exceptional merit" for nurses from the Caribbean (1950s), and the Live-in Caregiver Program (1992–2014).

In 1971, multiculturalism was adopted as a national policy in Canada, committing the country to the protection and promotion of a diverse society. Unlike in the United States, multiculturalism in Canada is a state-imposed project from above and not a demand that arose from grassroots politics. It was intended to resolve the tensions between French and English Canada within a "bicultural" framework, and only later did multiculturalism expand to encompass immigrants and Indigenous nations (Bannerji, 2020, p. 328). Chazan et al. (2011) suggest that the meaning of multiculturalism in Canada has always been subject to change, or as they put it, "unsettled." In times of strife and tension like the aftermath of 9/11 and the attacks against Muslim immigrants, multiculturalism has been deployed as the language of "tolerance."

Under the rubric of multiculturalism, Canadian immigration policies moved away from explicitly favouring migrants based on race, place, and labour towards a system based ostensibly only on labour and skills (Annisette & Trivedi, 2013, p. 10). However, even within such a system, structural and systemic disadvantages have persisted for migrants based on class, gender, and race (Das Gupta & Iacovetta, 2000; Thobani, 1999). Even as the Canadian state relied on racialized immigrants to fulfil the labour shortages in its economy, Bannerji argues that multiculturalism as a state policy translated issues like racism, discrimination at the workplace, social and economic injustice into issues of "culture," diversity, and inclusion (2020, p. 354). In this manner, multicultural discourses take a "managerial approach" to decontextualized cultures, erasing certain kinds of difference while recognizing and replicating other kinds of differences to showcase "a Canadian national identity imagined to be predicated on inclusion" (Ameeriar, 2017, p. 112). This national identity is then put into service of the Canadian narrative as a "nation of immigrants," attracting immigrants and racialized workers to shore up the Canadian economy, who are promised inclusion into the nation as their reward.

Marriage Migration and Designer Immigrants

According to the 2016 Census, India was the second largest "source country" for recent immigrants (2011–2016) to Canada, making up 12.1% of all newcomers (Government of Canada, Statistics Canada, 2017). Within the group of Indian immigrants, secondary applicants/accompanying dependents and family reunification migrants represented the majority. Most family members sponsored to come to Canada by Canadian citizens or permanent residents have been spouses, with a higher number (58%) being wives (Ministry of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, 2016).

In 2011–2013, the then-Conservative Canadian government's "anti-marriage fraud campaign" alleged that unscrupulous immigrants were entering into "marriages of convenience" in order to gain permanent residency in Canada and put a freeze on spousal reunification marriages. This campaign was based on a normative idea of conjugal relationships as long-term

romantic arrangements and enabled the government to claim to protect the conjugal family unit and the institution of marriage (Gaucher, 2018, p. 144). Though particular Indian diasporic communities in North America are held up as "model minorities" placed in opposition to, and in competition with, Black and Indigenous communities (Upadhyay, 2019), the same communities were subject to suspicions of defrauding the Canadian migration system. The practice of arranged marriage through long-distance matchmaking came under increased scrutiny as these marriages did not exhibit sufficient evidence of "conjugality" as defined by evidence of a romantic relationship (or at the very least, contact prior to marriage). This meant assessing the legitimacy of the conjugal relationship through text messages, call logs, photographs of marriages, and court marriage registration documents. As Gaucher points out, such sponsored spouses were disadvantaged "by their geographical location and then further scrutinized to determine whether their relationships are consistent with the Canadian relationship narrative for arranged marriage" (Gaucher, 2018, p. 151).

The normative marriage migrant was thus being shaped by immigration officials who held the power to decide and evaluate what counts as a "valid" legitimate marriage eligible for citizenship and/or residency. Sheel (2008) analyses how Canadian multicultural policies have enabled a certain display of ethnic identity and solidified community boundaries, both of which are conducted through marriage practices and ceremonies. In such a scenario, she deduces that there is a homogenization of wedding ceremonies, not only among the Indian community but also in the eyes of the Canadian state as proof of marriage and viability to immigrate:

> Lavish and ostentatious display is considered so much a part of the Indian wedding scene that Canadian immigration officials in New Delhi are known to reject applications for an immigration visa for a spouse on the grounds that the applicant has not been able to demonstrate the grandiose marriage ceremony that they considered to be the local norm.
> (Sheel, 2008, p. 224)

Satzewich (2014) found that visa officials in India constructed criteria for relationships to be classified as "real" or "fake" largely based on local cultures and norms: "one [official] explained that conformity to certain rituals is important in Punjabi culture, and implied that it would be irresponsible for a visa officer to overlook nonconformity" (p. 14) – leading to the aforementioned homogenization. The Canadian state thus comes to play a part in the practices and performances of rituals of Indians who aspire to migrate.

In 2016, the Liberal government in Canada resumed immigration through spousal sponsorship; however, family reunification policies continued to be deemphasized in favour of economic immigration. The family formed through reunification and spousal sponsorship policies was designated "a unit of privatized interdependency" (Gaucher, 2018, p. 17), which may

become a burden on taxpayers. The economic justification of immigration became "the admission of highly educated and 'self-reliant' immigrants who would make Canada economically competitive whilst at the same time remaining 'self-supporting' during periods of economic upheaval" (Ellermann, 2020, p. 2527). Further, what constitutes the "desirable" migrant in the current global knowledge economy has shifted towards attracting the highly skilled, and "best and brightest," particularly international graduate students (Ellermann, 2020). For Canada, this has taken the shape of encouraging international student migration, which has trebled according to figures available from 1995 to 2015 (Kim & Kwak, 2019, p. 5), which has come to play a part in marriage migration.

Model Minorities

The construct of the "model minority" in the United States was popularized in the 1960s, focusing on the educational and professional successes of Asian American communities in order to position them as more desirable and compliant, as opposed to the Black African American community. According to Jasbir Puar and Amit Rai, "this model minority construct is predominantly a reference to economic exceptionalism, upward class mobility, and educational excellence, but [has] its specific gendered, racialized, and national components of difference" (2004, p. 78). With heightened securitization in post 9/11 US and the racist association of South Asian Muslims and Sikhs with "terrorism," they argue that the "model minority" construct allowed for South Asians has narrowed and contributed to a growing polarization, and right-wing Hindu movement among diasporic communities. Thus, the "model minority" Hindu South Asian community in North America is dependent on an erasure of Muslim and to a lesser extent, Sikh groups, contributing to the dominance of a hegemonic Hindu-Indian immigrant, and the rise of right-wing Hindutva conservatism in the diaspora. Further, they point out that Sikhs and Muslims "tend to be a larger percentage of working class South Asian populations (as consolidated through family reunification immigration policies that eventually shifted focus from labor to kinship)" (Puar & Rai, 2004, p. 82). Thus, they assert that the "model minority" norm is constructed around elevated worker status, as well as middle-class immigrant families – which bear out conservative religious and gendered norms.

Kamala Visweswaran argues that the positioning of Indian diasporic communities in the West, relative to other Asian American and racialized communities, needs to be understood in the context of British colonial rule in India – what she terms as "[t]he crucial role of empire in establishing the Indian diaspora as "middleman minorities" in some parts of the world, and labor diasporas in others" (1997, p. 13). With her use of "middleman" in the case of Indians, she refers to the role of English-language education in the creation of a "colonial middle class," where Indians were incorporated into colonial British bureaucracy in a position of subordination. This accustomed upper-caste

and middle-class Indian men to a role of mediation between white-dominated power structures and marginalized groups – and enables high-skilled Indian workers' incorporation into the American racial system as "model minorities" (Visweswaran, 1997, p. 17).

Chakravorty et al. (2017), for instance, argue that the relative economic prosperity of Indians in the United States is not due to any particular exceptionalism or personal characteristic, but rather a combination of selection criteria. They make this argument in combination with Devesh Kapur's findings through database searches and caste-name coding that upper castes dominate the Asian Indian American population (Kapur, 2010, pp. 78–81).

> The first two selections took place in India, where the social system created a small pool of persons to receive higher education, who were urban, educated, and from high/dominant castes; and also where there was an examination system that selected individuals . . . to receive higher education in technical fields. This doubly selected pool of individuals then became eligible for selection by an U.S. immigration system that favored individuals with specific skills. . . . In essence, Indian Americans have been selected to be outliers – they have been selected for success.
> (Chakravorty et al., 2017, p. 28)

Carrying forward this analysis, Rita Dhamoon discusses the conditions under which the model minority construct in Canada can potentially stretch to include groups: "when the minority conforms to hegemonic gendered, heterogenous, class-based, ableist and racialized norms simultaneously, she is deemed to be the model Other" (2010, p. 136). Dhamoon further argues that the construction of the Muslim model minority worker in Canada takes place in contrast to Indigenous and Black women; in this comparison, Muslim women are understood as "positive" for being "pliable, obedient," desirous of education and heterosexual family norms (2010, p. 137).

In her study of twice-migrant Indian and Pakistani skilled workers in Canada, Tania Das Gupta demonstrates how South Asian immigrants are also constructed as desirable within the Canadian immigration system. Das Gupta highlights how marriage migrants further add to the identification of these communities as model minorities in the Canadian context.

> There is a continuous source of educated, skilled, culturally and linguistically fluent, and flexible migrants from South Asia who are ready to work and respond to a diverse marketplace. The educational costs of training them have been borne by source countries, in this case Pakistan and India, therefore it is rather cost-efficient. . . . This is exactly the kind of labour power that is desired by policy makers, politicians, and capitalists. Since they migrate as (heterosexual) families and households, they are assumed to be stable, reliable, and

> indispensable as workers, consumers, and taxpayers. In addition, sponsored spouses provide educated and skilled labour power to fill precarious jobs.
>
> (Das Gupta, 2021, p. 170)

Methodology

As part of my doctoral research, I interviewed 24 Indian marriage migrant women in and around Toronto, Canada, from 2018 to 2020, whom I accessed through snowball sampling by attending diasporic Indian community events, through social media groups and my personal networks. I undertook in-depth life history interviews that elicited stories of women's lives before marriage, their decision-making processes around marriage and migration, and their changed employment and domestic contexts once they arrived in Canada (Hesse-Biber, 2007). Each interview, conducted in English as well as Telugu and/or Hindi, lasted between 60 and 90 minutes, with some respondents consenting to follow-up interviews as well. I transcribed and manually coded the data, and followed an inductive, grounded theory approach to data analysis (Charmaz, 2006) to centre the narratives and categories used by my respondents in describing their experiences.

My respondents were largely Hindu and belonged to upper or dominant caste groups; they were predominantly over 30 years of age, and all held bachelor's degrees or above. Over half of the respondents spoke Telugu. A majority of my interviewees (75%) arrived in Canada within the last ten years under different categories. Women who had come on spousal visas (42%) were largely wives of IT workers who resided in the United States with their husbands before moving to Canada; they were largely housewives who had qualitatively different experiences from other migrants. Where the couple qualified to apply for permanent residency (PR), the primary applicant was decided based on whoever had more extensive or applicable work experience or higher scores on IELTS; 37% of the women among my interviewees were the primary applicant. Seventeen per cent arrived as international students and their husbands with the open work permit available to spouses. As a result of this high threshold of educational and/or professional qualifications required for immigration, all my respondents belonged to the middle or upper classes in India. In total, 55% of the women interviewed led their migration process, whether as permanent residents or students.

While the couples seemed to have taken this in stride, in that this was a strategy to help the couple achieve the larger goal of migration, the decision or the perception of the woman actively leading or participating in the drive to migrate caused conflicts within their families and in some cases, between the spouses and within women's minds as well.

Indian Marriage Migrants in Canada

Among 24 respondents, there were three main routes and strategies to arrive in Canada:

1 37% of the women among my interviewees were the *primary applicant* for permanent residency.
2 27% arrived as *international students* and brought along their husbands with the open work permit available to spouses.
3 The remaining 46% arrived as *spouses* to permanent resident husbands who were already living in Canada or were the dependents for the permanent residency application led by their husbands.

A majority of the women I interviewed led the migration process, whether as permanent residents or students. This was not always because of the woman's higher qualification or suitability for immigration as compared to her husband; rather, it was a strategic negotiation to maximize chances to migrate. This strategization was based on the points-based criteria for permanent residency applications.

In 1967 – a few years prior to the introduction of the Canadian Multiculturalism policy in 1971 – the Canadian state established a new standard of evaluating potential immigrants to the country. Replacing the previously followed "national preference" policy which favoured immigrants from white-dominated European countries, the points system was introduced which focused on "human capital" – namely, educational qualifications, language proficiency, and professional experience – and moved away from race-based preference. This allowed for wider recruitment of economic immigration and enabled a wave of significant migration from India and South Asia. Immigrants could also become landed immigrants, later renamed as permanent residents – who could then apply to become Canadian citizens.

The points system has endured, albeit with shifts over the years with points being increased for applicants who belonged to "preferred occupations," decided based on labour shortages in the Canadian market. Economic immigration to Canada has also proceeded along a parallel line of Temporary Foreign Worker Programs that have brought in seasonal and "unskilled" workers into the country with no guarantees of permanence or stability, locking them into what Walia terms as "transient servitude" (Walia, 2010).[4]

On the CIC website, the information for qualifying for permanent residency through the Federal Skilled Worker Program – which was accessed by most of my respondents – lays out the criteria as follows:

- *Language skills points* – adjudicated on the basis of standardized English and French language tests. Most of my respondents took the International English Language Testing Service (IELTS) exam, which measures English language proficiency under writing, speaking, reading, and listening.

- *Education points* – awarded on the basis of highest educational qualification, with extra points for degrees earned in Canada.
- *Work experience points* – work experience is measured in full-time paid work and needs to conform to particular skill types in the National Occupation Classification. It is through this mechanism that particular occupations can be given higher preference at different points in time, on the basis of labour market shortages.
- *Age points* – the maximum number of points is awarded to applicants from ages 18 to 35, decreasing one point per year for every year after.
- *Arranged employment in Canada points* – holding a job offer of at least one year from a Canadian employer significantly increases an applicant's points, as it demonstrates a need for the applicant's skills in the economy.
- *Adaptability points* – these points are described on the CIC page as awarded to the applicant and the applicant's spouse. This means that an applicant gains points for their spouse's language skills, educational levels, and if the applicant or their spouse has relatives in Canada who may help them 'adapt' to the country.

As Robertson and Runganaikaloo argue, the points system is a biopolitical project: "The points system facilitates this 'optimization' through the construction of 'desirable' migrant characteristics including skills and qualifications, but also language ability, cultural adaptability and biological factors such as age and health" (2014, p. 209). Similarly, in the context of Canada, Simmons (2010) argues that the points system, with its orientation towards highly educated and highly skilled workers, produces a demand for "designer migrants" who meet the specificities of a "neo-liberal nation intent on productivity, cost recovery, and immigrant self-settlement" (Simmons, 2010, p. 85). This is evident in the "adaptability" criteria, wherein the role of spouses in increasing the applicant's points total is prominent – the spouse's language ability, work experience, and potential relatives in Canada are all taken as factors that increase an applicant's adaptability to Canada. In the case of my respondents, this was the criteria within which they found the means to strategize and maximize their chances to qualify for permanent residency. For instance, in the calculation of points, multiple respondents shared that they were the primary applicant primarily because they had more extensive or applicable work experience that garnered higher points in the national occupational classification, or, even more commonly, because they had a higher score on the IELTS exam than their husbands.

Once applicants clear the points threshold, they need to fulfil requirements like health checks and background security certifications. Upon arrival in Canada, they must present "proof of funds" that are sufficient for the applicant and their family to settle in Canada. These funds could not be borrowed from banks. As of July 2021, a two-member family is expected to demonstrate CAD $16,449 (roughly equivalent to INR 970,000). These requirements present an immediate class barrier for hopeful applicants from India. My

respondents reported drawing on their savings; selling their jewellery, houses, or other assets; and borrowing money from family members or other familiar sources to fund their journeys (Zachariah & Rajan, 2010).

Application for study permits presents different and fewer challenges. The number of international students in Canada has been on the rise, and the increase in international students from India has been astronomical since there is infrastructure in India to support pathways for international students (Bascaramurty & Rana, 2021; Trilokekar & Masri, 2019). However, the threshold for proof of funds is much lower for students, and thus the overall cost of application is lower too. Unlike permanent residents, students can take out loans to fund their educations and their migration and living costs. Among my respondents, the main attraction for a study permit in Canada was that it allowed women to pursue their ambitions of higher education, and it came with a work permit for themselves and an open-work permit for their spouses. Thus, respondents with a study permit were able to work to support themselves, at times in their chosen industry, as they worked towards gaining Canadian educational credentials and work experience, which could then help the application for permanent residency. The open-work permit for their spouses allowed for study permits to be an attractive avenue for marriage migration.

With English language proficiency becoming a stringent requirement for migration to countries like the UK and Canada and high scores on proficiency tests boosting visa prospects, these indicators have made their way into newspaper and online marriage advertisements. Varghese and Rajan (2015) have noted that in regional newspapers in Punjab, benchmarks of International English Language Testing System (IELTS) scores were featured alongside preferred caste, region, age, and other desirable attributes in matrimonial advertisements (p. 185) – making the orientation towards migration explicit. The inversion of the patrilocal norm is also evident in Punjab, for "the boys, who are unable to crack IELTS but are crazy to go to Canada" who opt to marry women with high IELTS scores, reasoning that "once a girl reaches Canada, then within three to six months, she can call her spouse easily no matter what his qualification level or IELTS bands are" (Kaur, 2019).

Women who came as secondary applicants on the permanent residency application did not report feeling any qualitative difference between the opportunities available to the primary applicants, and their husbands. Despite the anti-"marriage fraud" campaigns, none of my respondents spoke to any difficulties they faced from immigration officers in evaluating their application, except one who was asked to provide additional documentation and proof of conjugality in the form of text messages and call logs between herself and her husband (Gaucher, 2018). In 2012, the Canadian government introduced the conditional permanent residency requirement for spouses of economic migrants and spouses who migrated through family-reunification policies, as a response to the fears of "marriage fraud" (Bhuyan et al., 2018; Bhuyan & Ramsundarsingh, 2017). It required spouses to remain wed to their sponsors

for two years to be able to become full permanent residents. Community activists, refugee and immigrant advocates, and women's groups argued that this requirement heightened women's vulnerabilities, in terms of being unable to leave their sponsors if they faced abuse or violence, for fear of losing status and being deported (OCASI, 2011), and the conditional permanent residence was abolished in 2017. Among my sample, nine respondents entered Canada between 2012 and 2017 (inclusive), and only three entered as spouses of permanent residents. None of them reported any impacts from the conditional permanent residency requirement.

India is also among the top 25 countries of citizenship from which asylum claims are made to Canada, and the number of asylum claimants has steadily increased from 2015 to 2020, taking a sharp dip in 2021 (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, 2024). Refugee claims from India are made on various bases including gendered violence against women; the treatment of sexual minorities; the treatment of political activists and religious minorities such as Muslims and Sikhs, as well as the treatment of lower-caste communities, and the dangers faced by inter-caste and inter-religious couples.[5] There have also been media reports of fraudulent schemes in India involving refugee applications for Punjabi farmers in exchange for large sums of money (Stevenson, 2021). I was not able to include any respondents who had come as refugees to Canada in my sample.

Desiring Canada

Out of 24, 8 of my respondents had migrated to Canada from the United States, and nearly all had considered the United States as a destination in their migration decision-making process. For my respondents who were Telugu, this was a particularly loaded comparison. Whereas in a state like Punjab, there exists a culture of migration within which Canada looms large, the United States occupies a similar place in the imaginary in Andhra Pradesh, especially among certain dominant-caste communities such as the Kammas. The trope of the "America Abbayi, Andhra Ammayi" (American boy, Andhra girl) has pervaded Telugu romance and family drama movies going back to the 1990s, firmly establishing the aspirational quality of an American-based husband for Telugu women in the popular imagination (Reddy, 2020).

"'America and Canada are not the same, we (referring to Canadian Telugus) are looked down upon by the Americans, no matter how much money we have'. 'America' thus has a valourised image in the Telugu imagination" (Roohi, 2017, p. 2762). This hierarchy between migratory destinations is based on the stories of Indians as "model minority" skilled workers (Subramanian, 2019) and featured in the stories of respondents for whom Canada was a second choice once they realized that they would not qualify for visas to the United States for various reasons, or in one case, due to the 2008 economic recession.

Ramani,[6] a middle-class dominant-caste Hindu Telugu-speaking woman in her 40s, had been impacted by the norm of migration to North America among the Kamma community, and was bitter about how it had driven their migratory journey:

> I didn't even want to come here. . . . I would have been fine staying in India. But [my husband] was just so set on coming here. All his friends had migrated to the US, no one was in Canada back then. But we didn't qualify for the US and since my husband was in the healthcare field someone told him Canada was good for that too.
>
> (Ramani, Scarborough, February 2019, Telugu-English)

The then US President Trump figured in the narratives and reasons why respondents and their husbands chose to move out of the United States and why Canada was becoming a more desirable destination. During his campaign, Trump promised reforms to the H1-B visa program, which is accessed by high-skilled professional workers, especially in the information technology (IT) and software industry. Indians, especially software engineers, are a majority of the applicants (Pierce & Gelatt, 2018). However, the reforms actually took a restrictive approach, as applications for H1-B visas began receiving increased scrutiny and the denial rate doubled between 2016 and 2019 (Pierce, 2020).

Further, reports of racist and anti-immigrant hate crimes against Indian engineers, especially Telugu men, sent shockwaves through the community (Thakur, 2018), and reverberated in my respondents' reasoning around avoiding migration to the United States:

> We couldn't even try for the US [because of lack of qualification], then we thought it's for the better . . . we have all seen what Trump *thatha* [old man] has done!
>
> (Surabhi, August 2019, Telugu)

> US was better back then and felt warm and welcoming, not like now. But we didn't like it. We had the opportunity to do the H1 – green card [conversion to permanent residency], his company offered us the opportunity multiple times. But we were never wanted to settle there. People talk very roughly there. . . . Crime rate has gone up. When Trump came in the situation went from bad to worse – people were openly abusing others on the street.
>
> (Roja, July 2019, Telugu)

When asked for more details about these changes post-Trump, Roja was not able to give examples of what she referred to as "open abusing on the street." However, she claimed that young women and their parents back in Andhra had called off weddings to NRI men from the United States. Media reports

corroborate that demand for NRI marriage with men from the United States went down during Trump's rule, attributing this to the rise of hate crimes against Indian engineers. Restrictions on spousal visas for the H1-B tech visas, as well as the freeze on H1-B visas that came later, further took the shine off of American-residing software engineers as potential marriage partners (Chennapragada, 2017; ET Online, 2018).[7] The loss of perceived "model minority" status and its attendant protection from racist violence in the United States, played a big role in influencing my respondents' decisions to come to Canada.

Gargi – a middle-class dominant upper-caste Hindu Tamil woman in her 30s – confessed that she chose to migrate to Canada "because here's a Prime Minister Trudeau who is openly saying he is a feminist!"[8] Her point of comparison to Trudeau, however, was not just the US President Trump but also the 2014 BJP right-wing Indian government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. As a feminist activist and scholar, it was important to her to be able to live and raise her child in a political environment supportive of feminism and women's rights. She later shared how visa considerations for wives had played a big part in her marriage and migration decisions, as she was aware of the rules that restricted or prevented H4 holders (spouses of H1-B visa holders) from seeking employment.

> I'd been very clear initially that I was not looking at guys settled in US because I don't know if I would get a job there. . . . I wanted to be with someone where I would get a job, like I don't want to give up my job. . . . Even in India, you see many women working there now because you can't have a single-family income anymore.
>
> (Gargi, July 2019, English-Hindi)

The turning point for nearly all the US-based respondents was either visas not being renewed or their husbands' work contracts coming to an end. As their chances of achieving long-term stability and further employment opportunities declined with the increasing restrictions on the H1-B program (Sahay, 2019), respondents and their husbands found Canada to be a better option to continue living in North America.

> I just never felt connected to the US, I never felt settled. It was because my husband's job was so project-based and we moved so many times . . . whenever the project finished, even if it was in the middle of the school term, we just had to pack up and move. As my son got older I just didn't like it. It never felt stable . . . when we got PR for Canada, it was such a relief.
>
> (Samira, September 2019, Telugu)

> So many people I knew in the US couldn't stay on, they had to go back home because their H1-B did not get renewed. . . . In fact my husband

> and I helped one couple do their migration application to Canada! Even in my neighbourhood right now, I know there are multiple Telugu and non-Telugu families who moved to Canada because of the lack of H1-B.
> (Roja, July 2019, Telugu)

Mythili and Samira, among others, claimed that the Telugu community in the past few years had grown exponentially, attributing this growth to the increasing restrictions on IT workers in the United States and the simultaneous high demand for IT workers in Canada. This trend is being recognized with some alarm in the United States (PTI, 2021). While some, like Prabha applied for Canadian permanent residency while still in the US for "security," others went back to India and were only able to come to Canada after a year or more.

The Canadian permanent residency afforded a measure of stability and security that the H1-B visas, with their time limit and no guarantee of renewal, could not provide. Mythili told me of couples who are primarily based and work in the United States but have a Canadian PR as well. The family, including children, migrate back and forth and spend months at a time in Canada in order to meet the minimum residence criteria to maintain PR[9]; when they leave for the United States, they rent out their Canadian apartments on limited leases. I was not able to interview any respondents who had such a transnational family arrangement. However, what Mythili described resonated with the concept of "flexible citizenship" as described by Aihwa Ong (1999), wherein transnational global elites maintain citizenship and passports in different countries, which facilitates their mobility and provides security in the face of political and economic instability. Other respondents had preferred Canada to destination countries like Australia, Qatar, and the UAE, based on factors like the job market for their professions as well as the comparatively easier and faster process to obtain citizenship and stability. In each of the cases, respondents strategized their migration decisions based on their own and their husbands' desires and professional ambitions while also navigating their wider family and community's requirements.

However, for some women, migration to Canada represented a different kind of navigation around family, community, and marital challenges. For Vibha, a middle-class dominant-caste Hindu Punjabi woman in her late 30s, the desire to migrate was a strategic decision to leave her abusive and violent marriage in a way that reduced the social stigma and censure she and her family in Gujarat would face. As long as she and her family could claim that Vibha and her husband had migrated to Canada, any transnational family arrangements which separated the two spouses could be explained away. In this scenario, the express entry program to Canada came as a panacea.

> In 2014, I came to know both Canada and early childhood category opening up for the first time. I could get settled and find a job also. So I

> tried my luck over there because my experience and qualifications and all were quite relevant, yeah, and within 3 months I got PR.
>
> (Vibha, August 2019, English-Hindi)

At this time, the plan had been for Vibha to migrate with her husband and her daughter to Canada; once she found a job, she planned to divorce her husband and expected that he would return to India. However, around the same time as the PR, she received an excellent job offer from a UAE-based school that offered an excellent salary. She strategized around acquiring the Canadian PR and then moving to Dubai with her daughter to work and rebuild her savings:

> The moment I was going to leave India, I had a job offer from Dubai. So the dynamics changed for me, it was like go get the PR, when the process is done, leave him there and move to Dubai for my work. And live in Dubai for maybe 2 years, keep coming and going [to Canada] so that PR stayed active, and then settle back here. My daughter would have been with me and he [her husband] could do whatever he liked as long as he stayed away from us.
>
> (Vibha)

Vibha hoped for a transnational family arrangement that would keep her away from her husband but was unable to achieve it due to gendered visa restrictions, where two women unaccompanied by male members of the family could not work in the UAE. As a result, Vibha had to pursue divorce proceedings in Canada, and, eventually, her husband was deported.

Model Minorities in Multiracial Workplaces

Nishant Upadhyay argues that "[a]lthough racially excluded in state processes of nation-building, racialized immigrants seek inclusion in the state through labored citizenship" (Upadhyay, 2019, p. 156). This was evident among my respondents' accounts of their work experiences in Canada, where they cited their qualifications as well as their Indian identities as an advantage, particularly in the stories of the two men, Chiru and Navjit, who had accompanied their partners while I interviewed them. Both Chiru and Navjit had previously worked with multinational corporations in India and in Chiru's case, had studied abroad in Australia. While outlining their qualifications and preparation for life in Canada and attributing their professional stability to their own hard work, both men also claimed that white colleagues were easier to work with as they recognized "merit" and the ethic of hard work in Indians. The attribution of race-blindness within meritocracy to white colleagues was remarkable; as Jodhka and Newman (2007) argue, meritocracy for private-sector corporate employers in India implied that merit was based on "family background" and a "casteless" identity that

was nevertheless undergirded by class-based practices of education and professionalization. What underlay Navjit and Chiru's notions of meritocracy was their own class and caste-based privilege, not to mention the privilege of being cis-heterosexual men who had female partners to share if not carry out domestic responsibilities.

One of my respondents, Sirisha, shared her experience as a research assistant working for a white academic:

> She [her boss] has been helpful to me. What I like is that she doesn't hold back praise, she tells me when I have done good work. That's not like what we see back home, right? She even acknowledges that people coming from India are always good and qualified! Sometimes when I take some food or sweets from home to her, she knows the names and all . . . she always tells me that she has had good experiences with Indians. She is supportive, and keeps assuring me that my contract will get extended, and she'll take care of me.
>
> (Sirisha, May 2019, Telugu)

In a similar vein, other respondents like Meena and Frida also talked about good relationships with white co-workers and supervisors at their workplace, whom they considered friendly and easy to relate to, as they had a level of "exposure" to Indian culture, borne of the multicultural nature of life in Toronto. Coming from urban backgrounds in India and being fluent in English, with access to English-language media, also helped respondents like Meena and Frida socialize with their co-workers. Roja, who did not have this ease of communication, shared that she strived to have a cordial equation with everyone at her workplace, but by being "extra nice" to her white co-workers, she hoped her temporary administrative work contract at a multinational corporation might become a regularized job.

Prabha, who worked as a recruiter focused on IT and other engineers, confirmed this preferred status for Indian technical workers within the Canadian job market. Indian technical workers had an "edge" over other migrant workers due to their relatively better communication skills, and Canadian workplaces' familiarity with Indian culture; however, Prabha pointed out that Indian workers tended to have low retention rates as they tended to falsify their resumes.

In some cases, speaking about their multiracial workplaces, respondents shared their dismay that their husbands were not sufficiently valued or respected, and only a few disclosed experiences of racist discrimination in their own life. Talking about her coworkers in a factory, one of my respondents outlined a ranking of the "desirability" of racialized groups of workers: from "lazy" to "hardworking," and from "dominating" to "cooperative." Within this schema, she did not further disaggregate South Asians on the basis of nationality or religion. She was partial to white workers and managers as she said, "at least they recognize Indians are good workers," and appeared

to have learned some of these stereotypes from her white managers as well as based on her own observation and her own "learnings on the job." She rejected a discussion of any larger social context to understand why these stereotypes exist.

As Rita Dhamoon argues, "the model minority is one who can most closely replicate the ideal white male worker" (2010, p. 136). Within a multicultural society and its institutions, dominated by white groups and structured by white supremacy, the ascendancy to "model minority" available to Indians is through emulating whiteness and propagating a racial hierarchy that positions South Asians/Indians as superior to other racial groups at the workplace. Tania Das Gupta, for instance, argues that aspiring to the "white space" of Canada, associated with the promise of a more "civilized" and meritocratic society, is one of the major reasons why Indians choose to migrate to Canada (2021, p. 27). My respondent's adoption of a similar hierarchical ranking of productivity of workers needs to thus be located within the model minoritization strategy of managing difference within multicultural societies, which deems certain kinds of difference as acceptable or unacceptable and establishes this hierarchy of difference through pitting racialized groups against each other (Park, 2011; Snelgrove et al., 2014).

At the same time, this uncritical adoption of "model minority" status and the replication of its logic of managing difference is inflected by my respondents' experiences and knowledge shaped by a striated society and economy such as India's, where caste, class, and regional identities structure labour markets and labour value. Not only does there continue to be a high degree of discrimination in the urban public and private sector against subordinate caste workers (Madheswaran & Singhari, 2016), as well as persistent workplace bullying of Dalit workers (Noronha, 2021), but the very *choice* of occupations are at times structured around traditional caste occupations or associations: "It is in the *allocation* of workers to jobs that discrimination is most likely to be practised. An employer would have no aversion to employing an untouchable provided that he worked in an *untouchable's job*" (p. 301, emphasis mine), which resulted in lower-caste workers being disproportionately channelled into unskilled jobs. They further argue that as the recruitment process for jobs takes place through contacts and established caste networks, past discrimination was likely to carry over into the present as well (Banerjee & Knight, 1985).

The question of caste-based discrimination in the North American diaspora has been garnering significant attention over the last two years. In a landmark for the recognition of caste discrimination in the United States, a Dalit engineer filed a case against two upper-caste managers of Indian origin at the tech firm Cisco in California, alleging that they "outed" his lower-caste identity, and he faced caste-based harassment and discrimination at the workplace, including bullying and name-calling. Subsequently, the state of California filed a lawsuit against Cisco for caste-based discrimination, opening up the possibility for caste to be recognized as a category of discrimination

in the United States; this possibility has been met with ferocious opposition from Hindu organizations in the United States, like the Hindu American Foundation (HAF) that seek to deny the existence of caste as a hierarchy and its presence in the diaspora (Chakravartty & Subramanian, 2021). Similar efforts to enshrine protections from caste-based discrimination have been ongoing in universities and cities in the United States and Canada. In April 2023, following concerted efforts by anti-caste and Dalit organizations and community members, the Toronto District School Board passed a resolution to recognize caste as a protected category from discrimination, and in May 2023, the municipality of Brampton (which has a high percentage of South Asian diasporic community) passed a motion to work with the Ontario Human Rights Commission against caste-based discrimination (Frisque & Puri, 2023). These are important developments to address the heterogeneity and inequalities within the Indian diasporic community in Canada.

Modelling Migrant Gratitude

When asked about how they overcame the challenges of a new society and new workplaces, including experiences of discrimination, multiple respondents used metaphors casting themselves as "guests" who did not have the "right to complain," positioning themselves as eternally grateful to their white hosts and unwilling to challenge any mistreatment or discrimination:

> We are new to this country so obviously we don't know everything . . . that's important to remember. When we see something that is strange, or not something I would do, I just remember that this is not my society, these are not my rules. Here you have to obey their rules because it is their country.
>
> (Frida, April 2019, English)

This attitude echoed across migrants who had been in Canada for various lengths of time and displayed a conception of Canada as a "white country." A similar attitude was evident in response to the notion that immigrants from India might complain about racist treatment or should speak out against discrimination.

> I don't see the point of saying racism or anything. In our country, don't we give preference to our people? Canada is a white people's country, so obviously they will give preference to each other and not to immigrants . . . we just have to work harder. That's how it is. As soon as new immigrants accept that, life will be easier.
>
> (Pravallika, July 2019, Telugu-English)

In the quote just cited, Pravallika justified an uncomplaining attitude on the part of Indian immigrants by comparing the dominance of white people in

Canadian society and economy to the dominance of what she terms "our people" in India. Her use of "our people" here is illuminating – speaking in Telugu to me, it was idiomatically clear that she did not mean *all* Indians but rather members of particular groups that she and/or I belonged to – our linguistic community (Telugu), our religion (Hindu) or caste (she belonged to the dominant Kamma caste in Andhra Pradesh). Her reference to "preference for our people" refers to the prevalence of kinship- and caste-based networks of social and cultural capital that allow dominant caste and religious groups to maintain their hold on positions of power, whether it is in politics or the economy, and exclude members of caste and religious marginalized groups. Pravallika assumed that a similar network of dominance amongst white groups operated in Canadian politics and economy, which new immigrants were naturally excluded from.

The self-positioning as "guests" in a white host country only engendered the expectation that Indian immigrants would need to work harder to achieve the coveted model minority status and closed off discussions of injustice or discriminatory practices on the part of Canada or white groups.[10] To mitigate their inbuilt disadvantages, new Indian immigrants hoped to access resources and established networks among the diasporic community in Canada, especially through caste- and language-based associations, conform to similar values of gratitude and compliance to gain success and acceptance.

> There are no ideal situations in life. Always there are advantages and disadvantages. We have come to this country for good opportunities and a better life for the kids, that's what any parent wants, and by god's grace we have settled down . . . so any new immigrants should just accept the problems and try to overcome them, not waste their time in complaining too much.
>
> (Ila, June 2019, Telugu)

Ensuring their children's future in the supposedly civilized and meritocratic society of Canada was thus also a reason for migrants to maintain a grateful and uncomplaining attitude, rather than considering the idea that their children would also be subject to a divided and discriminatory society. As Das Gupta argues, while such ideas showcase an internalization of the superiority of a white-dominant society, it is also "a pragmatic acknowledgment of a Western (white) supremacist world with which they have to conform in order to succeed" (2021, p. 161). These pragmatic statements by my respondents nevertheless demonstrate the confluence of migrant gratitude with a buy-in to the process of model minoritization that hinged upon emulating ideals represented by whiteness, as a way to ensure their "immigrant success." Reaching the pinnacle of this success required this negotiation with white Canadian structures, and in most cases, this included adopting exclusionary ideas embedded within it.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored the narratives of Indian migrant women in Canada, in particular around their decisions to choose Canada as their destination and their experiences within the Canadian labour market, highlighting the role of gender, class, race, and caste-based structures and hierarchies that shape these experiences. Women strategized with their husbands between migrating as professionals, students, or spouses to maximize their chances to migrate to Canada as a couple, within a system that favours highly skilled Indian marriage migrants with its focus on economic "designer-migrants." In turn, my respondents chose Canada as a destination based on considerations of job opportunities, stability, and citizenship. As opposed to the United States, Canada also offered "model minority" status, where Indian migrants are preferred workers within a multicultural and multiracial workplace and society and are relatively protected from racist violence and discrimination. Adopting this understanding of model minorities, Indian migrants appeared to understand themselves as superior workers as compared to other racialized migrant workers. They also seemed to accept the existence of discriminatory and exclusionary practices within Canadian society as a pragmatic measure to navigate Canadian institutions and structures in a bid to achieve immigrant success.

Notes

1 "Journey to Mrs. International: Mrs. Canada International 2018." (TheOfficialMrsMissMissTeenInternationalPageants, 2018)
2 Vadodariya's story echoes the central conflict in the popular Bollywood film *Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham* (Johar, 2001). *K3G*, as it is widely known and remembered, bears the distinction of being an NRI-themed film – that is, focusing on and marketed to members of the Indian diaspora, and enjoyed widespread success (Punathambekar, 2005).
3 At the time of writing, traditional fishing rights belonging to Mi'kmaq lobster fisherman were being violated by non-Indigenous fishermen (Forester et al., 2020).
4 See more: (Choudry & Smith, 2016; Faraday, 2012). Much of the activism around migrant workers' rights during the COVID-19 pandemic has demanded permanent status for temporary workers, as well as the right to unionize and claim benefits (Faraday, 2021).
5 IND106276.E India: Situation of inter-religious and inter-caste couples, including treatment by society and authorities; situation of children from such marriages (2017-May 2019) Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa. IND200260.E India: Application of the caste system outside of Hinduism; treatment of lower castes by society and the authorities; availability of state protection for lower castes; ability of lower castes to relocate and access housing, employment, education, and healthcare in Mumbai, Delhi, and Bangalore (2015-June 2020).
6 All respondent names have been anonymized.
7 The Economic Times article outlines the shift in marriage trends with this example: "Last year in July [2017], an ET report showed how the crisis in Indian IT industry was impacting marriage prospects of techies. Matrimonial advertisements

reflected this change in preference. An ad placed by the parents of a prospective Tamil bride in a matrimonial column ended thus: '(Seeks) IAS/IPS, doctor, businessman. Software engineers kindly do not call.'" (ET Online, 2018).

8 When he was instated as the Prime Minister of Canada in 2015, Justin Trudeau presented an ethnically diverse and gender-equal cabinet; upon being asked why a gender-equal cabinet was a priority to him in a press conference, he responded by saying "Because it is 2015" (Murphy, 2015). At the time, this response went viral on social media, as it was no doubt intended to, and was received very warmly on Indian social media in particular.

9 According to the Canadian immigration website: "To keep your permanent resident status, you must have been in Canada for at least 730 days during the last five years. These 730 days don't need to be continuous. Some of your time abroad may count towards the 730 days" (Immigration, 2019).

10 My respondents' self-positioning as "guests" in Canadian society is in stark contrast with Indigenous (Mohawk) scholar Ruth Koleszar-Green's (2018) conceptualization of a "guest" – as opposed to a "settler" – as one who has responsibilities to learn and challenge colonial histories and act in solidarity with Indigenous communities.

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13 A Short History of Izzat Among the Punjabi Diaspora

Mandeep Kaur Mucina

Introduction

In this chapter, I draw on literature from two research projects that focused on the concept of izzat or honour as South Asian women in the Canadian diaspora understood, resisted, and reclaimed this cultural construct in their everyday lives. For my MA thesis, I interviewed second-generation, Punjabi women living in Canada about their understanding of intergenerational trauma of the 1947 partition of India. A profound finding in this work is how izzat or honour has shaped the women's family story, as well as their own navigation in their family and in the Punjabi community. As I moved on to my PhD research, I focused specifically on izzat or honour and how this construct connected to honour-related violence in the lives of South Asian women in Canada. For this chapter, I draw on literature and personal stories that emerged from these two projects, mapping how izzat can become a tool of hetero-patriarchy and violence by following the construct of izzat through language, historical and religious texts, and its most recent transpiring during the 1947 partition of India.

Daughters of Izzat – Redefining Izzat From the Diaspora

There is a Punjabi phrase that I grew up hearing throughout my life. *Ghar di izzat khuri da nar raandhi hai*; translated into English this phrase means: the honour of the household sits with the daughter of that household. Each time I heard this phrase, I would think hard and fast about what I was doing, who was watching, where I was going, and how my actions would affect my family. Each time I have shared this phrase with other women of my community and generation (Punjabi women, Sikh women, or South Asian women of the Canadian Diaspora), there was no need to translate, as a common understanding was shared. The word izzat or honour carries many meanings for my family and many people in South Asian communities. As the eldest daughter of my household, I recall moments when I took pride in my actions knowing that they reflected on my family and, more importantly, on my father. Other times I struggled with my choices, haunted by these words every

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time I transgressed a boundary carved out for me by my family, my community, and even by wider society. The word "izzat" or honour came to be tattooed on my body, and I wore the burden and privilege of izzat every day.

At a pivotal time in my life when I was searching for an explanation for how my family and community perceived my actions as transgressing the boundaries of acceptability, I came across the haunting words of a woman who survived the brutal trauma and violence during the 1947 partition of India.

> Puttar, aurat da ki ai, au tan varti jaandi ai hamesha, bhanve apne hon, bhanve paraye. (My child, what of a woman? It's her lot to be used, either by her own men or by others).
>
> (Menon & Bhasin, 1998, p. 45)

This quote was taken from the work of Ritu Menon and Kamala Bhasin (1998) in their book *Borders and Boundaries*, and it triggered my core experience with izzat. This quote reminded me so much of the above phrase that I had heard so many times from my mother, grandmother, and even father. This phrase reminded me of the many ways in which my izzat becomes more about my family's reputation and less about our dignity or pride.

Menon and Bhasin's ground-breaking research focuses on South Asian women whose bodies became the battleground for the war that transpired after Indian independence from the British raj. At that time the izzat or honour of the women of each religious community (Hindu, Sikh, and Muslim) that resided in Northern India became the primary target or site of violence during the communal war after Independence. Thousands of women were brutally raped, displaced, sold to brothels, forcibly married, and martyred during this time (Menon & Bhasin, 1998, Butalia, 1998). Upon interviewing the survivors, Menon and Bhasin, as well as Urvashi Butalia (1998) in her book *The Other Side of Silence*, spoke to many men and women in the Sikh Punjabi community who shared stories of "martyring" or murdering their daughters, wives, and even elderly women to save the izzat or honour of the family. These pre-emptive murders charged with the fear of their women being raped and violated stirred anger in me as I was going through my own experiences of being forsaken to preserve my family's honour, I found myself asking deeper questions about izzat and the partition. How could killing one's sisters, mothers, and grandmothers be considered martyrdom? Why did my community have so much invested in preserving the family's izzat? Why are the women seen as martyrs not victims of this tragedy? Is this happening to women in my community today?

Stories of preserving honour in the face of our community are a prevalent part of my childhood living in the Canadian diaspora. I recalled lessons passed down from a very early age in my life that my body could tarnish or uplift the reputation of my family and, more specifically, my father because the responsibility of maintaining izzat had been placed on my body. The lessons

imparted by the women who survived the partition of India are similar. Wars of various kinds were played out on the bodies of women in the name of family and national honour; wars that use the body of the woman as a site to tarnish the honour and reputation of a family, community, religion, and nation (Banerjee et al., 2004, Butalia, 1998, Menon & Bhasin, 1998).

As a second-generation Punjabi woman living in the South Asian Diaspora, izzat is a cultural knowledge I respect and uphold, yet it is also a dangerous social construct in its current manifestation; I am merely an incubator for the izzat of my family. My father exiled me from my home, my family, and my community because I chose to marry someone who is an outsider to the Punjabi Sikh community; I transgressed a boundary in my family and community. Through my act of marriage, I had tarnished our family izzat.

My journey away from my family led me to pursue a life in another city, which is when I started working with immigrant Muslim, South Asian, and Middle Eastern families in Toronto. During that time, Aqsa Parvez, a young South Asian Muslim girl, was killed by her father and brother in what the media called "Toronto's first honour killing." I was fuelled with rage at the racist and Islamophobic turns the media took to build a narrative about immigrants, Muslims, second-generation girls, and their fathers who were often termed as "barbaric." Aqsa's story, as well as the story of Jassi Sidhu[1] and Amandeep Atwal,[2] led me to my PhD research where I began to investigate how dominant Western discourses uplift the West while contributing to racist, colonial discourses over South Asian women's bodies. I was tired of seeing the stories of young women who demonstrate resistance and continue to fight, even in the face of honour violence throughout their lives as victims of their culture rather than powerful warriors resisting patriarchy and racism. As bell hooks (1994) eloquently states, "I came to theory because I was hurting. . . . I came to theory desperate, wanting to comprehend – to grasp what was happening around and within me" (p. 59). I too came to this research from a place of pain and desperation to comprehend the dynamic oppressive structures that circulate among South Asian women in the diaspora.

Understanding what contributes to izzat being used as a tool of violence is an important part of my research work. There are many versions of this history. As in all histories the storyteller and the listener each speak and hear the story in their way; some parts of the story are heightened while others are subdued, almost hidden or omitted. Who tells the story of izzat and how are some voices forgotten through time? Is there a purpose and order to this exclusion? In this chapter, I provide a short history of izzat or honour told from the perspective of a second-generation diasporic Punjabi woman, from a critical feminist perspective following izzat through my family story and connections in Northern India.

The exercise of unpacking the story of izzat is about understanding how the values and events of our present experiences have been established historically and practically (Pillow, 2003). Coming to terms with what a historical genealogy looks like and connecting it to a feminist lens, I turn to

the work of Wanda Pillow (2003), who conducts a feminist genealogy on the bodies of teen mothers. Pillow begins with a Foucauldian analysis for "decentering what we think we know and for tracing how we come to know it" (p. 149). A decentring of knowledge production that Pillow suggests allows for one to have a beginning into a venture that has an endless beginning.

In this section, I will be deconstructing izzat by focusing on three distinct elements of izzat that can be found throughout the history of Northern India. First, I discuss the concept of Jauhar and connect this historical practice to the partition of India and contemporary "honour" violence in the diaspora. From there I move on to discuss the word "izzat itself and how discourses.

Martyr Killings From Jauhar to Partition

Making connections from the 1947 Partition of India to my experiences of honour-related exile from my family and community, I set out to dig deeper into the historical manifestations of izzat throughout the partition and the history of northern India. In my search, I came across the writing of European anthropologists researching the practice of Jauhar, which is defined in Platt's Dictionary of Urdu, Classical Hindi, and English as:

> Taking one's own life, committing suicide; – fighting desperately to the death: – juhar (or jauhar) karna, to kill oneself together with wife and children. (When Rajputs are attacked by an overwhelming force, they sometimes slaughter or burn their wives and children, and then sell their lives dearly on the field of battle.)
>
> (p. 399)

Reading the work of Urvashi Butalia alongside the historical renderings of Jauhar, there is a common practice that occurred during the partition that is possibly drawing from the historical practices of Jauhar, the martyr killing of women and children, which I unpack further.

Partition affected everyone in one way or another. However, the way women were affected was indicative of the national decisions made by colonial and dominant powers. As soon as decisions were made to separate, violence all around Northern India erupted. Within three months, a million people were left dead and at least 75,000 women were raped and abandoned (Kabir, 2005; Menon & Bhasin, 1998). Often during times of war, a woman's body becomes the battlefield and site of violence. A common belief held by colonizing or conquering males is that by raping and possessing a community's women, the man is extinguishing the existence of that culture and the regeneration of that person, and the ability of a woman to regenerate her people.

Equally, during the Partition, a woman's body became the place where "Hindu, Sikh and Muslim men sought to humiliate and annihilate the "other" while imprinting their own identity on the bearer of future generations" (Kabir, 2005, p. 207). The decision to separate created such strong divisions

amongst Muslims, Hindus, and Sikhs that the most effective way to hurt the "other" on personal and communal levels was through the women of each community. With nation-building, the politics of partitioning the land and even the nation exemplified its honour through the bodies of women. As a result, women's bodies were being mutilated, raped, and converted to the other religion, by men who days before were their neighbours, community members, and peers. By doing so the honour of the men in each subsequent community was being attacked.

Consequently, families and communities began to resist and find ways to counter this attack on "their" women by the "other." One way in which the men of the Sikh, Punjabi communities resisted was to kill, or as it is termed in our community, "martyr" the daughters and young women of their family or community. The following narrative from Urvashi Butalia (2002) describes the decisions that led up to the martyring of hundreds of young women. This account is given by Bir Bahadur Singh who, at the time, witnessed the martyring of his sister (Maan Kaur) in the name of the family honour and describes the horrors of that moment:

> In Gulab Singh's haveli, twenty-six girls had been put aside. First of all my father, Sant Raja Singh, when he brought his daughter, he brought her into the courtyard to kill her; first of all he prayed, he did ardaas, saying sachche padshah, we have not allowed your sikhi to get stained, and in order to save it we are going to sacrifice our daughters, make them martyrs. Please forgive us . . . my sister came and sat in front of my father and I stood there, right next to him, clinging on to his kurta as children do. I was clinging to him . . . but when my father swung the kirpan, perhaps some doubt or fear came into his mind, or perhaps the kirpan got stuck in her dupatta . . . no one can say. It was such a frightening, such a terrible scene. Then my sister, with her own hand, she removed her plait and pulled it forward . . . and my father with his own hands moved her dupatta aside and then he swung the kirpan and her head rolled off and fell . . . there . . . far away. I crept downstairs, weeping, sobbing, and all the while I could hear the regular swing and hit of kirpans.
>
> (p. 148)

In her article, Butalia explores with Bir Bahadur Singh what the decision to kill his sister meant for him and his family and discovers that the women, including Maan Kaur, are remembered as martyrs rather than victims of a tragic fate. Because the women were seen to have "offered" their lives to save the honour of their family, community, and religion, they were crystallized into a hero status (Butalia, 2004). As Butalia questions in her article, we do not have the opportunity to hear the voices of those women who were seen as "offering" their lives in the name of honour openly and knowingly. Even though these women, who may have been as young as 16 years of (as

was Maan Kaur), lined up to have their heads severed, or to jump in a well, "could she [or they] really have believed that the cause of making a new nation would be better served by her death?" (Butalia, 2004, p. 160). Was this really a choice, did they really have much of a voice in this decision? Yet there is a very strong collective memory of these women as martyrs who understood the importance of their family and community's honour and "offered" themselves for the killing.

The women of the Sikh community, who were grieved as "martyrs," have been silenced even in their death. As Judith Butler (2004) describes, "if a life is not grievable, it is not quite a life; it does not qualify as a life and is not worth a note. It is already the unburied, if not the unburiable" (p. 34). For the women during the partition, even the grieving process has been controlled and silenced and, only in the past two decades have scholars such as Butalia, Menon, and Bhasin begun the process of uncovering the silence and presenting the layers of truth. The memory we have as a collective community is strongly embedded in a grief that is not spoken of, or one that is valorized in heroic status. A heroic death memorialized in a way that suggests that their deaths were justified and necessary for the sake of family, community, and national honour.

Now, going back to the concept of Jauhar, we see similar discourses of honour and death appear in the definition of Jauhar. However, many scholars have historically connected Jauhar and Sati, particularly because there is an emphasis on the wives dying for their husband's honour. However, Veena Oldenburg effectively creates a distinction between Jauhar and Sati in her article, *The Continuing Invention of the Sati Tradition* (1994):

> Jauhar was committed for the sake of the defence of territory (and therefore economic interests) and for the purity of royal lineage, not for the chastity and wifely devotion implied in sati. Like polygyny, Jauhar was a royal or noble prerogative: queens whose husbands were slain in battle had the prerogative to opt for collective suicide. . . . Jauhar was committed by the queens of defeated Rajput kings on a chita or pyre with the husband's corpse nowhere in sight. Sometimes the fate of the husband was unknown to these wives; only their own capture was certain. Women's resistance to rape, torture, and other ignominies inspired these very rare self-immolations.
>
> (p. 165)

Oldenburg goes on to suggest that during the Brahminical period, the practice of Jauhar and Sati reinforced each other and when British colonists began to study or exoticize the practice, these two concepts merged. Confusion and melding of the two concepts contributed to the colonial gaze on Sati, as a glorified act that takes place in great numbers by the masses of India, whereas both practices were rarely part of the daily life of most everyday people. In fact, both practices mainly occurred in noble homes, generally amongst

the upper-class elites. Oldenburg's arguments are compelling and give us an alternative perspective on both practices of Jauhar and Sati, yet Oldenburg asserts that Jauhar is no longer practised nor has been practised in India since the 16th century.

When I began uncovering some of the discourses in history that are connected to the concept of izzat and came across the practice of Jauhar, I immediately thought of the partition and the mass "suicide," "murder, "martyrdom" that occurred in response to the potential rape and violence that women may experience at the hands of the "other" men. As I continued my search for this connection, which seemed obvious to me, I was surprised to find that there was no research or chapters written about mass suicide during the partition being linked to the practice and concept of Jauhar. Yet if we look at the ideology that spawned both historical instances of Jauhar and the death of Sikh women during the partition, there is connective tissue. The need to preserve the izzat that is in the bodies of women, and the potential rape they may experience at the hands of the "other," is embedded in the fear of subsequent procreation that results from rape and violence. Thakur (1963) speaks to how the mass suicides of Jauhar were committed to avoid the dishonour that comes from rape and sexual assaults, as well as to preserve royal blood. Furthermore, the way acts of Jauhar are memorialized is very similar to how the deaths of Sikh women have become symbols of martyrdom, which Bhugra (2004) eloquently articulates in the following statement:

> A funeral pyre was lit within the great subterranean retreat in chambers impervious to the light of the day and several thousands of women committed Jauhar . . . the sites of these acts are worshipped even today. . . . Suffice to say that the religious orthodoxy still pays lip service to these acts and people flock to such sites to worship and seek blessings.
> (pp. 91–92)

The memory of these acts continues to uphold the discourse of "good women," who escaped dishonouring their family and husbands' names, by pre-emptively killing themselves. Both Jauhar memorials and partition memorials continue the same discourse and memory of the victims of these deaths.

In both instances, we see izzat functioning in the bodies of women for the sake of men's power and honour. In both situations, we see society suggesting that women were active participants in the decisions surrounding these deaths, not once questioning whether there was a choice in these very public and communal acts. Bhugra (2004) asks a very pertinent question in his analysis of Jauhar, "the argument here is that the family honour or impending dishonour plays a more important role than individual survival . . . why should a woman have to sacrifice themselves because their males' honour depends on it?" (p. 92). Embedded in Bhugra's inquiry is the questioning of

choice and coercion. When the overwhelming response from society suggests that a "good woman" is one that sacrifices herself in the name of honour, one begins to think of choice in a very different way. I cannot imagine how much fear, collective guilt, and shame these women felt, not to mention the collective thinking that allowed these deaths to transpire the way they did.

Yet, there are always moments of resistance, which we tend to hear less of and the ideologies that serve the purpose of perpetuating heteropatriarchy exclude the voices of women who chose to not take part in these collective "suicides" or "murders." The most recent evidence of this resistance has been recorded post-partition. Butalia (1998) and Menon and Bhasin (1998) describe stories of women who chose not to jump into the wells or chose to run away from their families when these killings were going on or chose to defend themselves in the migration to the new and "independent" India, regardless of what came in their paths. The stigma they lived with or received from the community was just as difficult as the decision to walk away from the coercion placed on them by their families and community. An example of this story can be found in the movie *Khamosh Pani: Silent Waters* (2003) by Sabiha Sumar and Paromita Vohra. This film speaks to the martyred women during the Partition from the perspective of one Sikh Punjabi woman who resisted the idea of martyrdom and ran away, rather than being killed by the men in her community. As a result, she was abducted by a Muslim man and ended up marrying him and bearing his son, all the time keeping her true identity of being Sikh a secret from her son for fear of losing the new life she had been forced to carve for herself.

These stories began to ring a similar tone for me in the diasporic context. Stories of women of my generation, who had the potential to dishonour their family through the choices they were making with their own bodies, have been excommunicated from their family's lives, almost severing them as if they did not exist. We see parallel ideas in our community of women sacrificing their choices for the sake of their family honour. How is it possible that even today we are asking our daughters to martyr themselves, whether in literal or symbolic ways, for the honour of their family? "Leave him or else we will disown you." "You cannot leave the home from this day forward." "You are dishonouring our family if you pursue this decision." These words and phrases ring true even in my own life story. Is it possible that others are hearing the same statements and if so, is this a memory of our history from the days of Jauhar to the partition of India?

When we speak about Jauhar historically, many scholars have emphasized that this practice was only apparent during times of war and the threat of pillage by the "other." When we look at the time of partition, the same mentality was intact. Communities saw themselves at war with their neighbours, a war against religion and identity based on religion. A war brought on after decades of colonial imposition on the minds and lives of native Indians, who are told their worth is determined by what the white body had given them. Colonizers defined and carved out divisions within villages and communities

that lived amongst each other for generations. What goes through the mind of people when they are going to be potentially attacked by defined "enemies"? When I look at narratives of women and men after the Partition that speak to the martyr killings that occurred, it is evident that there was a sense of urgency and vulnerability that led to these horrific killings/suicides. When I think of how honour-related violence occurs today, I wonder if families feel like they are at war in the Canadian context, that violence is their only option. Is there a collective memory that emerges in our community that speaks to the urgency to think of honour first and an individual life last, if at all?

These questions leave me with a sense of unease, and at a loss for words. This unease is very much connected to the blatant examples of women who continue to be hurt by their family and community in the name of honour in a similar manner to what has happened historically. This leads me to the final question of this chapter, what do we do with this knowledge? How do we make sure we do not continue to repeat history? And how is history repeating itself in contemporary violence against South Asian women in the Diaspora? In the final piece of this chapter, I touch on one more example of izzat manifestations.

Historical Manifestations of Izzat – The Dupatta as an Example

If we look at current discourses in the West that speak about HRV and concepts of izzat, the primary definitions that are provided are connected to a community or family honour embedded in the actions of women. Yet, as we follow the word through the different language shifts in the northern parts of India, we can see that this was not always the primary definition of the word. During a conference preceding, a colleague commented on a very tangible definition of izzat that she had grown up hearing in Karachi, Pakistan, where she was born and raised. She stated that a woman's dupatta or chunni was normally called her izzat. This was a significant moment for me as I began to see the symbolism that a chunni represents for Punjabi women. The dupatta is worn by most women to cover their breasts, neck, and hair if necessary and, during my grandmother's and for a short time during my mother's generation, was used to cover one's face if a woman was expecting to be in the presence of older men of her family or community, or men who were strangers to her. This practice was called chuund[3] and has also been referred to as purdah by Western anthropologists and historians researching this practice (which has its own implications). One of my earliest memories is of seeing my mother covering her face with her dupatta in the presence of the elders in our community and family in India. I was about seven years old, and it is one of my strongest memories because there was something so familiar to what my mother was doing, yet also so strange. The familiarity was connected to a collective understanding, just like the word and practice of izzat; there were no words to describe how I knew that this practice was important for everyone who was in my mother's presence that day. The only other time I had

witnessed this was in pictures of my mother's wedding day. In every picture taken of her, you cannot see her face, just a chunni covering any recognition of the woman she was that day.

The dupatta as a symbol and actual translation of the word "izzat" is an effective demonstration of "language-in-action" (Gee, 2005), the translation of language into everyday workings of discourses and ideologies. As Gee (2005) articulates in his discussion on language:

> We continually and actively build and rebuild our world not just through language but through the language used in tandem with actions, interactions, non-linguistic symbol systems, objects, tools, technologies, and distinctive ways of thinking, valuing, feeling, and believing. Sometimes what we build is quite like what we have built before; sometimes it is not. But language-in-action is always and everywhere an active building process.
>
> (p. 11)

Each time izzat has shifted in its definition to encompass a symbol or meaning of what the community values and believed at that time, we are seeing the workings of language-in-action. Nevertheless, there are actions that stimulated this turn of izzat shifting from representing battle and war to a meaning connected to the bodies of women and honour.

Unfortunately, in our contemporary context, the dupatta as a head scarf or "cover" in a post-9/11 world has come to symbolize oppression and is most associated with religious practices. Anything that resembles a headscarf has come to symbolize oppression and Islam regardless of its origins (Abu-Lughod, 2013). Young women like Aqsa Parvez become symbols of what happens when a woman does not wear a hijab, according to media headlines that suggest that she was killed because she refused to wear the headscarf to school. Lila Abu-Lughod (2002) talks about the colonial discourse that symbolizes the head covering as an imposition on brown women. The very imposition of this dominant dualistic discourse on the lives of young South Asian women reminds us of how binaries like these create oppressed silenced bodies, especially since the practice of covering the head has such diverse meanings for each community and individual that partakes in it. As Lila Abu-Lughod (2013) demonstrates so effectively in her work on cultural relativism, historically the burqa and many of its variations symbolized women's modesty or respectability and the symbolic separation of men's and women's spheres (Abu-Lughod, 2002) As Abu-Lughod quotes the work of Hanna Papanek, the burqa can be reframed as a form of "portable seclusion" and understood as a "liberating invention because it enabled women to move out of segregated living spaces while still observing the basic moral requirements of separating and protecting women from unrelated men" (p. 785). Abu-Lughod's reframing and challenge to the dominant discourses that suggest any head covering is a symbol of violence and oppression, allows for voices

of young women who have diverse relationships with the head scarf to speak, and highlights the complex relationships we have with this practice.

I asked my mother about practising chuund when she did it and why. I recall her saying that she normally practised it in front of elders in the community as a form of respect and in front of strangers whom she was not sure about. Abu-Lughod (2002) recalls a similar meaning for Bedouin women of Egypt and recognizes that there is a sense of agency in not only the act of covering the face with the head cloth but also the moral decision to perform this action in contexts determined by the women themselves.

There are many ways in which I interpret the implications of this alternative narrative of the dupatta or head scarf. One of the first questions that come to mind is: how did protection and seclusion come to be moral requirements for women? Is this due to the danger that women continued to face from men outside their families and community? Or is it something that has been imposed on them throughout history? And does this contribute to men seeing the women in their lives as property? Are these not the basic elements of hetero-patriarchy that we see in the global understanding and definitions? I sit in these complex questions and recognize that to ask them in a public context continues to fuel the fires of dominant, culturally racist, colonial discourses that situate the "to cover or not to cover" discourse in a polarization of what type of feminist you are. The doubts created in my mind about the practice of covering may have humble beginnings that were first created by women for themselves and later possessed by hetero-patriarchy to become tools of violence. I also challenge myself not to glorify history, which is why it is essential that the focus turns to how practices such as chuund and izzat came to be used as tools to control and demonstrate power over women, rather than strong bases of agency that women possessed within themselves.

I have a collective memory and identification with izzat that is embedded in agency and power, yet those moments are overshadowed by patriarchal power over my body, as well as racist discourses that attempt to regulate my engagement with my culture and identity as a South Asian Punjabi woman. It is through the structuring of society that we begin to see the workings of izzat translating into a tool of hetero-patriarchy and power over women. It is in this discourse that we see how izzat turns into action. Essentially, violence is attached to notions of honour, as izzat becomes attached to the bodies of women.

Concluding Thoughts

There are key lessons that we can learn from the analysis, arguments, and literature that I have gathered here. Women representing the "honour" of a household is embedded in the creation of heteropatriarchy, which is invested in creating a norm or ideal, all of which contributes to control, power, and the regulation of the masses. We see a similar history when we trace themes of izzat in northern India. The shifts in society and women's role in it are embedded in creating the ideal community/society/man through the control

of a “good” wife/mother/woman. Much of the pain that women have experienced because of heteropatriarchy is connected to the image that a society imagines of itself. Much of the cost is at the expense of women’s bodies and the use of women’s bodies as the site for enacting this image. Whether it is how we define beauty and bodies, or how the definitions of chastity and “honour” are defined as self-sacrifice as we see in the story of Sita, or how self-immolation was practised to save the “honour” of a family/community in desperate moments of war and struggle. Each of these instances has shaped women historically and lingers in painful and violent ways in a contemporary global society.

There are teachings of collectiveness that come from izzat for Punjabi women that may be empowering and renewing, particularly in a racist, sexist context like Canada. To capture these many layers of izzat and how second-generation Punjabi women are negotiating, resisting, and reclaiming izzat in their lives, the following question was asked: Are second-generation Punjabi South Asian women regenerating a new definition of izzat and, if so, what does it look like? How do they reclaim izzat for themselves? In the process of probing these questions, I was able to venture into deep engaging stories with South Asian women in the diaspora who have experienced the pain and violence of izzat but also demonstrated incredible resistance, reclamation and revival of izzat as a source of collective wisdom and strength. I talk about their stories in various other publications (see Mucina, 2018; 2021; Mucina & Jamal, 2021).

Why do we look back? What compels us to reflect on our actions as individuals and as communities? In the previous chapter, I asked you to come with me on a reflective journey through history. A historical analysis of izzat and “honour” has allowed us to connect themes of heteropatriarchy and power across time, while providing us with a window into how a society perceives a woman’s role in the family, community, and society. History is a way to create linkages, understand power, and scrutinize the present, but most importantly history inspires us to act (Finn & Jacobsen, 2008).

Notes

1 Jassi Sidhu was murdered in what has been termed an honour killing, by her mother and her uncle. Jassi was born in India and migrated to British Columbia with her family at a young age. Jassi secretly married a man whom her family condemned during a trip back to India, subsequently running away to live with her husband. Jassi’s mother and uncle hired people to kill both Jassi and her husband, Mithu. Mithu survived the attack, but Jassi died on June 8, 2000.

2 Amandeep Atwal was murdered by her father, who was upset with her decision to move away and with her white boyfriend. Amandeep’s father stabbed her multiple times while she was seatbelted in a moving vehicle.

3 In the work of anthropologist David Mandelbaum, *Women’s seclusion and men’s honour: Sex roles in North India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan* (1988), the author refers to this practice as “purdah” or “veiling,” in which he describes, “A woman quickly covers her head at the approach of an older man of her husband’s family, using either the end of her sari or the separate head scarf, *dupatta* in Hindi, to do so. She draws the edge of the cloth across her face so that only her eyes are uncovered or pulls the headcloth forward in a cowl from which she can peer out”

(p. 4). The author suggests that this conduct reflects a Hindu or Muslim women's modesty and subservience to the men of her family. Yet, not once does the author speak about the origins of these codes and how they are embedded in patriarchal practices of the family and community. Furthermore, there is an anthropological authority from the author suggesting that this is almost an innate characteristic of the woman, rather than a code of conduct that is expected of her through societal arrangements.

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14 Migration and Integration

Changing Realities and Evolving Perceptions

Uma A. Segal

Introduction

The 21st century, with its globalization, increasing opportunities, greater international access to information, and generally improved transportation, has led to significant human movement across borders and across continents. Coupled with these are the dramatic variations in the impetus for movement, including increased conflict, both within and across borders, disturbing global climate change, and heightened economic instability. Well-established patterns of migration, relatively effective immigration policies, and immigrant integration efforts have changed in the past few decades and perceptions of entrants, the advantages of their presence, and access to resources accorded them continue to evolve.

Numerous theories, both complex and simple, aim to explain this phenomenon of human movement. It has occurred since time immemorial, and both migrant and nomadic communities have ancient roots, with changing habitats reflecting a myriad of reasons from the search for opportunity, avoidance of dangers, or a desire for adventure, all with a hope for an improved quality of life. With nation states having established national boundaries, and with the development of immigration laws, the free movement of people has altered.

As migrants leave their homelands, they have a significant effect on both sending and receiving nations, and if they transit through additional countries between their origins and destinations, they also have an impact on places. Although the focus of this chapter is not specifically on individuals, families, groups, and communities of Indian origin, the reader may find substantive and substantial relevance to the Indian *Diaspora* in general and to this population in Canada. Singh's (2022) recent summary of the Indian origins of the world's largest migrant population provides a brief, but thorough, historical, and current overview of this group's worldwide destinations and economic impact beginning in the early 19th century.

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Migration Movements in the 21st Century

In the 21st century, the percentage of the world's population that is outside its country of origin has generally ranged from 3% to 4% (Batalova, 2022). Although the absolute number continues to increase, and in 2020 it was approximately 281 million (Batalova, 2022), despite fears that the world is being overrun by international migrants, it is important to note that the percentage is, in reality, quite small. The majority of the world's population actually remains in its homeland. Nevertheless, the migrant population has caused a great deal of social, political, cultural, and economic angst in recent years, and in recent years, much of this has been fueled by disinformation ["false information that is deliberately created and disseminated" (IOM, 2022, p. 219)]. Yet attitudes toward migrants have always been mixed, and neither the embrace of diversity nor the xenophobia of the 21st century is unique. Overall, the natives of most nations prefer that both immigration into, and emigration out of, their countries should be curtailed (Connor & Krogstad, 2018; Igarashi & Ono, 2021).

General patterns of migration have traditionally been from the Global South to the Global North,[1] as most voluntary migrants select high-income countries for more economic opportunities and social and political stability (Batalova, 2022). A significant number of migrants are also attracted to the oil-producing nations of the Middle East (Batalova, 2022). Unlike earlier migration movements, however, in large part because of globalization and the interconnectedness of the world through technology and transportation, emigrants can maintain strong and close contacts with their home country, remit monies to the homeland to support family, social, and cultural programs in the nation of origin and play a significant part in the economic and political landscape of the native land. International remittances burgeoned from 128 billion USD in 2000 to 702 billion USD in 2022 (IOM, 2022), suggesting both the economic success of migrants and their place in the functioning of the economy of their place of birth.

Those who are forcibly displaced because of political persecution, climate change, natural disasters, gang violence, or other internal strife, frequently cross neighboring borders.[2] Within-region migration is high (IOM, 2022) as many migration movements, particularly of people with limited financial resources, consist of people moving to other countries in the same geographic area of the world. This holds true for both voluntary migration and forced displacements (United Nations, 2019). At the end of 2021, of the world's 27.1 million refugees and 4.6 million asylum seekers, 83% were hosted by low- and middle-income countries, and 72% were hosted by countries sharing their borders (UNHCR, 2021).

Labor Market Needs and Declining Birth Rates in Developed Countries

The aspiration to move may be fueled by many factors in the home country, but the "pull" (Lee, 1966) of a destination country emanates from economic

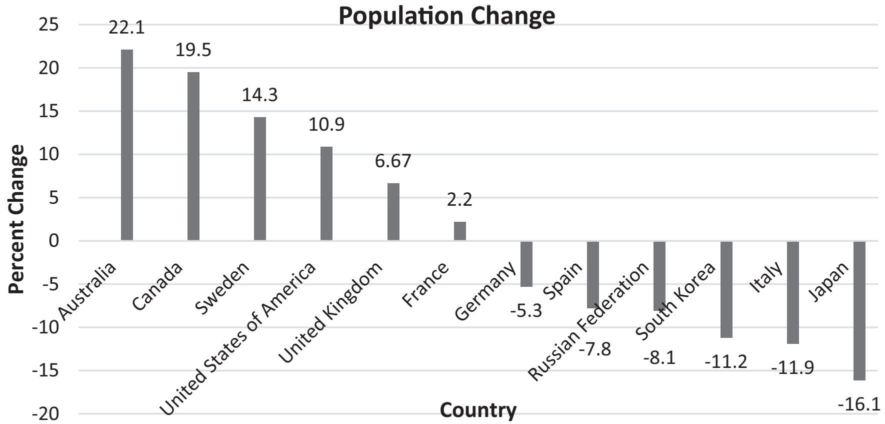

Figure 14.1 Projected population change in some developed countries (2022–2050).
Source: Pison et al. (2022)

prospects evidenced by its labor force needs. These may be for professional and highly skilled workers, for low-skilled wage laborers, or for both, but the available opportunities are believed by the immigrant to surpass those in the homeland. Population projections to the year 2050 (see Figure 14.1), and beyond, consistently indicate that declining birthrates and aging populations in developed countries (Cilluffo & Ruiz, 2019) are leading to worker shortages, which are expected to severely affect labor in the future. Countries with growing populations are those that are receptive to migration, even though they evidence declining birthrates and a larger number of those who have aged out of the workforce. The size of the working-age population in the developing world, on the other hand, is predicted to continue to increase (IOM, 2022; Kochhar, 2014), suggesting that the likelihood of international migration from the Global South to the Global North is inevitable, and necessary, for the economic well-being of the latter. In fact, the most practical and effective resolution to worker shortages in both the Global North and mentorship in the Global South is through increased and targeted immigration (Segal, 2016).

People voluntarily move to enhance their opportunities, but a large segment of international migrants leave their homelands because staying back may be unbearable. Conflict is a significant stimulus for out-migration or emigration, and O'Malley (2018) asserts that, in fact,

> *conflict and migration (are) inextricably intertwined . . . conflict (occurs) over resources to survive . . . (and) for control of territory*
>
> (p. 1)

forcing people out of their homes. Although studies of forced migration tend to distinguish between conflict-induced and climate-induced migration,

the distinction becomes blurred when climate change affects natural resources, and with expected water shortages, climate-related deprivations will lead to additional conflicts and migration (World Resources Institute, 2020; Zein, 2020). While political and social conflict provides visible markers for fear and migration, climate change has also been found to be linked to conflict, and migration and the conflict-migration nexus are highly complex (Segal, 2021a).

Talent Migration

The movement of high-skilled workers, particularly in large numbers, to a country with more attractive opportunities has been called the "brain drain" by many; the tandem term is "brain gain" when the receiving country benefits from this migration. Immigration policies in developed nations particularly target the recruitment of high-skilled workers such as physicians, engineers, and high-tech professionals by offering incentives such as credential transfer, points-based systems, lowered taxes, and access to permanent residency status (Adovar et al., 2021).

This transfer of human capital from one nation to another has significant implications for both the destination and the sending countries. Even as receiving nations benefit from the "gain" of this intellectual workforce, the homeland loses the talent in which it has invested educational and financial resources, leaving its own shortages unmet (Walton-Roberts & Rajan, 2020). Furthermore, with the "drain" comes the loss of potential mentors and educators for the next generation, depriving the sending nation for years into the future (Adeyemi et al., 2018; Segal, 2016, 2018). Transit nations, likewise, may either benefit from the limited stay of these transients, depending on their human capital and the length of time they reside in the intermediate destination, or they may find their own resources stretched if these migrants are moving involuntarily or clandestinely or with inadequate human and social capital.

A more recent phenomenon, particularly in the 21st century, is the prevalence of brain "waste" (Banerjee et al., 2019). Several nations, including Australia and Canada, admit immigrants through a point system that is used to recruit skilled workers, business and labor participants, and/or labor demand-driven employer selection of migrants (Koslowski, 2013). The point system recruitment of highly skilled workers, those with a tertiary degree, is a "supply driven" migration (Koslowski, 2013) that does not necessarily consider the specific skills needed in the destination country. When talent is recruited, but no jobs are available that are commensurate with training, migrants find employment in occupations requiring less education/skill, but that, nevertheless, pay more than the migrant would receive in the homeland (Aydede & Dar, 2016). However, wasted are the resources poured by the home country into training their high-skilled emigrants who are then employed in lower-skilled jobs in the host nation.

With the increase of globalization, there is also a rise in transnationalism (Waldinger & Fitzgerald, 2004), which is the growing interconnectedness between the migrant and the home country, such that movement, business, and other activities are highly fluid between the destination, the home, and perhaps additional, countries (Tedeschi et al., 2022). Likewise, "circular" migration occurs when migrants move between nations, establishing long-term, semi-permanent migration patterns remaining in each nation for several years or decades, before returning home (Srivastava, 2020). Following a lengthy stay in the homeland, they may re-migrate to the nation to which they had originally moved. This may, or may not, be coupled with the phenomenon of "return" migration, and the expectation of a permanent movement back to the native country (Segal, 2016); such returns are frequently correlated with non-economic motivations (Constant, 2020).

Thus, in the 21st century and beyond, we will continue to see a variety of forms of migration made possible by globalization, changing immigration policies, evolving levels of acceptance and integration into the destination country, and perceived benefits of migration by both the immigrant and the host nation. Migrants under the age of 50 are more than likely to migrate more than once, and while these migration patterns are yet unclear, some literature suggests that more educated migrants evidence "onward" migration, but those with less education are likely to be "circular" migrants (Bernard, 2022). The unidirectional and major permanent move of migrants in the 19th and 20th centuries has been replaced by a number of alternative migration plans as migrants assess the benefits of mobility and the range of entry visas offered by host countries allow varying levels of permanency.

Integration Into the Host Country

Integration into an alien country and culture is a complex and lifelong process for the immigrant (Segal, 2021a, 2021b). No one model can truly capture the diversity of the experiences and circumstances that lead to healthy integration. While we now shy away from Park's early concept of assimilation and the belief that individuals from one racial or ethnic group can completely blend into the culture, society, and economy of another by relinquishing the norms, values, and patterns of their own ancestry (Park, 1914), there still are no clear indicators that capture whether an individual is "integrated."

Further, in addition to little agreement regarding indicators of "integration," it is unclear how integrated migrants should be for successful and peaceful coexistence between these individuals and host country citizens. It is clear, nevertheless, that the process of integration is ongoing, requiring mutual adaptation between these two groups who must each develop a holistic perspective on exiting the familiarity of a home environment for another that can offer much but is, itself, alien to the migrant (Segal & Davenport, 2022). While some nations evidence innovation in approaches to integration, others expect that immigrants are primarily responsible for their own adaptation (Segal, 2022).

The Migration Policy Institute [MPI (2022)] defines integration as

> *the process of economic mobility and social inclusion for newcomers and their children. As such, integration touches upon the institutions and mechanisms that promote development and growth within society, including early childhood care; elementary, postsecondary, and adult education systems; workforce development; health care; provision of government services to communities with linguistic diversity; and more. Successful integration builds communities that are stronger economically and more inclusive socially and culturally.*

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) lists a number of indicators of integration (www.oecd.org/els/mig/indicatorsofimmigrantintegration.htm), and the International Organization for Migration [IOM (2020)] emphasizes the complex and essential nature of integration for social cohesion (IOM, 2017).

> *(It) cuts across different policies and various aspects of migrants' lives . . . including whether migrants are integrating into the economic, social, cultural, and political spheres of society, the discrimination they face, how policies affect migrants' inclusion, and how the public perceives migrants and immigration.*

"Integration" is not only a complex phenomenon that reflects the interplay between the host country and the immigrant but also the perceptions each has of the other. The destination country selectively admits individuals based on a number of factors associated with its economic needs, but admission criteria also include both individual migrants' human capital, as well as their origins. These are the nation's immigration policies that determine who can be admitted and under what circumstances, who should be denied entry, and the process for excluding them or preventing their entry. Immigrant policies, on the other hand, are those that determine what resources immigrants can access; these resources may be specifically for migrants to help them acclimatize themselves to the host, or they may be resources that are designed for the native-born population, but as legal entrants, immigrants are allowed access to them reflecting the nation's receptiveness to these newcomers (Segal, 2019).

Those who migrate have, at some level, already committed to "integrating" and becoming a part of the receiving country as they leave behind in their homelands all that is familiar in the pursuit of economic well-being or political and social safety and stability. But while immigrant and immigration policies reflect a society's view of migrants at the macro level, the native-born population, itself, may feel somewhat differently about accommodating or including these newcomers. Thus, it is the host nation's policies and its citizens' openness that interact with migrant hopes and human capital to effect adaptation and integration (Segal, 2021a).

Host country attitudes toward immigrants are based on two general perceptions, namely (1) workforce needs, and (2) general views of immigrants or toward those who are dissimilar to themselves. With the flow of diverse migrants, particularly from the Global South to the Global North, native responses have fallen into two general areas. One recognizes the need for more workers and embraces diversity; the other believes that foreign workers are stealing jobs and contaminating society. Figure 14.2 speaks to these perceptions that, then, either enhance integration or marginalize migrants.

It was long considered the responsibility of immigrants to adapt to the host country and its norms, and, in recent times, the pendulum has swung in the opposite direction, expecting the destination country to accommodate all ethnic, social, and cultural differences. It is not the exclusive responsibility of the migrant or the host to adjust to the other. This is an ongoing and dynamic exchange between the two that evolves over time and space (Segal, 2021a).

Host country responses vary based on the level to which the nation "needs" and/or "wants" immigrants. Extensive social and cultural differences between the host and the immigrant may be reflected in the attitudes of those in the host country when they realize that they "need" migrants but do not really "want" them. Figure 14.3 categorizes needs and wants along two continua: (1) economic considerations and (2) social and political implications of migration. In Quadrant I are migrants who are wanted by

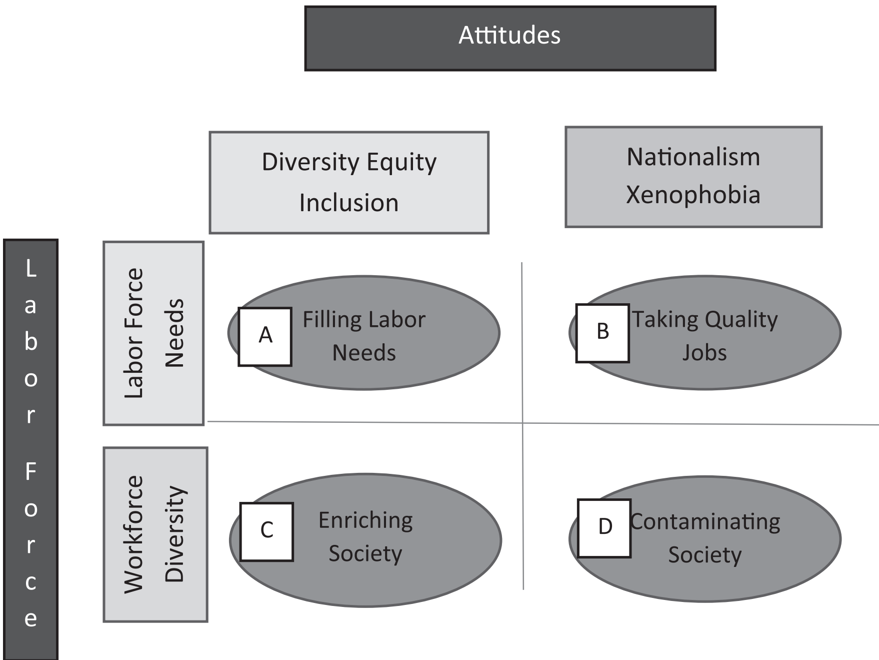

Figure 14.2 Host country attitudes toward immigrants in the labor force.

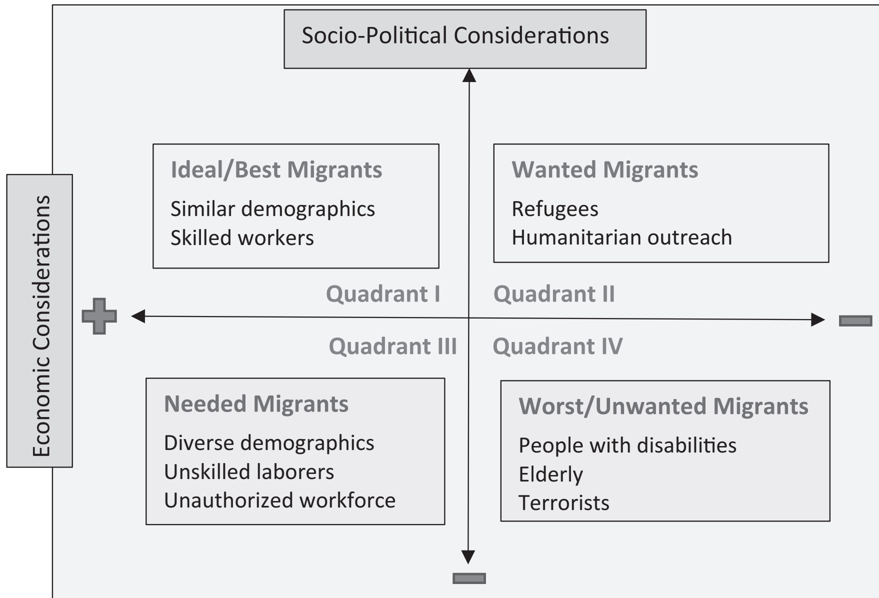

Figure 14.3 General attitudes toward immigrants.

the host country. These are individuals with the human, social, and financial capital to contribute to the workforce and who are also sufficiently like the host population in phenotype, culture, and political persuasion. In Quadrant II are migrants who are wanted by the host because, although they initially drain societal resources, they are expected to contribute in the future; more importantly, humanitarian assistance to these migrants (namely refugees and asylum seekers) both allows the expression of compassion and enhances the host nation's standing on the world stage. In Quadrant III are those individuals that the society needs, but who are socially and culturally different from the host. They may be high-skilled, low-skilled, or even unauthorized workers, but they are an essential part of the workforce. They are not "wanted," but they fill workforce needs and are necessary for the functioning of the economy. Relegated to Quadrant IV are those who are neither wanted nor needed. These may be individuals who have disabilities, they may be elderly, they may be perceived as criminals or terrorists, and they are seen as a burden or threat to society and its resources.

Attitudes toward immigrants and refugees continue to vacillate and depend much on the socio-economic and political climate of the world. In recent years, with natural disasters and climate change, rising conflicts across and within borders, and changes in political perspectives, the value of ethnic and cultural diversity brought by migrants is being questioned around the world, particularly in the Global North. Such questioning may well have led to the closing of borders, and it is evident that the increased entry of ethnic,

phenotypic, and cultural diversity was evident in the success of the BREXIT vote that led to the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union in 2020.

Opportunities for social and economic success draw migrants to wealthier and more stable countries. These may be individual and family migrations. However, with conflicts and political oppression comes the mass exodus of people seeking refuge, either legally or without authorization, and the welcome that has been extended to refugees since the middle of the 20th century is now strained. Many nations express "compassion fatigue" (Hayes-Raitt, 2016), others evidence suspicion of refugees (Boccagni & Guidici, 2021; Haid, 2017), and yet others evidence differential acceptance and compassion for refugees from different origin countries (Buruma, 2022).

With increasing global diversity, integration is more about adaptation than assimilation or relinquishing one's own roots. This changed perspective at a national level, however, may also exacerbate xenophobia at local levels when communities must accept those who are dissimilar to them. Despite varying perceptions about newcomers, in general, the focus is now on social and economic integration and commitment to the host country in the following areas (Ray, 2002):

Linguistic Integration: host country language competency
Labor Market Integration: education level, labor force participation
Civic/Political Integration: engaging with neighborhood associations, voting
Educational Integration: school performance, interaction with students/teachers
Residential Integration: home ownership, residential concentration/segregation

These five areas of integration reflect migrants' willingness to understand the host country, to participate in its norms and functioning, and to put down roots and establish permanency.

However, the ease of integration is affected by immigrants' human and social capital but also by the newcomers' ethnicity and the destination's residents' recognition and accommodation of different social and cultural norms. While receiving nations welcome immigrant contributions to their societies, they are also often greatly apprehensive about changing phenotype, diverse ethnicities, and intermarriage that can alter their country's demography and challenge its traditions, norms, and *Weltanschauung* (Segal, 2019).

The Ongoing Phenomenon of Integration

As migrants enter the new land, the host country's response, whether positive or not, is to concern itself with assessing the newcomers' ability to adapt and adjust. In the process of focusing on the migrants' present, there may be a tendency to lose sight of their past and the conditions that led to the migration, the status and context of individual migrants in the home country, and

the nature of the migration from the perspective of the migrants themselves. Life for migrants does not begin with their entry into the receiving nation and ease of adaptation reflects both the acceptance by the host country and the human, social, and financial capital of individual migrants. Integration must be viewed within a larger framework of origins, destinations, resources, and acceptance (Segal, 2002).

While many issues facing migrants are associated with migration and adaptation, concerns that are universal cannot be overlooked. Thus, integration is affected by three general areas affecting immigrants: (1) universal needs of economic security, safe housing, adequate health, sufficient education, and overall welfare; (2) migration-related needs for language proficiency, family stability, cultural continuity, and integration; and (3) the extent, if any, of human rights violations during the migration process (Segal, 2014). Programs and services for immigrants and refugees focus on ensuring their successful adaptation into their home country; however, this process of adjustment is ongoing. Early years of adjustment can be very different from adjustment several years or decades later. Young single adults may find that when they start their families, social and cultural expectations challenge their notions of "fitting in." The second generation often raises numerous issues as it straddles the cultures of the parental immigrant generation and the culture of its peers in the host country. Portes and Zhou (1993) presented a unique perspective, suggesting that for the second generation, segmented assimilation, or "assimilation" in some areas of their lives while adhering to origin cultural norms in other areas was the best predictor of emotion and social stability. This may also hold true for the immigrant generation that may integrate completely into the professional and economic sphere while segregating itself from the majority society in its social and private life.

Likewise, integration needs may change over the lifespan of the immigrant. Integration for a child will be substantially different when the child becomes a young adult and enters the workforce. Challenges and competition may take on different hues. Through working and procreating years, the migrant may find varying levels of acceptance both for self and for family. And, since major and steady migration as we know it now is still a relatively new phenomenon, most receiving nations have paid little heed to the aging immigrant population which may experience end-of-life issues very differently than does the host community (Segal & Davenport, 2022).

This ongoing and lifelong process for migrants raises challenges for them and the host community. Even as they become denizens of a nation, their home country cultures continue to impact their adjustment at different stages in their lifespan. Despite feeling they are integrated and very much a part of their new lands, they may face host country questions that remind them that, regardless of the length of time they have been in the receiving nation, they are seen as the "other" because of phenotype or accent. As countries celebrate their diversity and embrace newcomers, they are challenged by

the social and cultural impact of these new arrivals. Xenophobia toward and by immigrants is a frequent barrier to integration.

Conclusion

What emerges from this chapter are the realities that international migration will continue to increase as the global economy becomes further connected and the ease of communication and travel opens more routes around the world. It is anticipated that migration flows will continue to be greater from the Global South to the Global North. With decreases in the working-age population in the latter because of lowered birth rates and increasing longevity, the Global North will continue to rely on migration to fill its workforce needs. Nations will experience a level of demographic diversity not yet seen, and, at the same time, entrants will be more prepared to adapt and adjust because of the increased flow of knowledge through a variety of global, news, and social media. It waits to be seen if the celebration of diversity overrides xenophobia.

As the Global North opened up its borders in the 20th century to attract both professional and lower-skilled workers and found that it had to contend with unfamiliar norms and patterns of behavior, Swiss novelist, Max Frisch, famously stated, "We wanted workers. We got people instead." Migration, whether temporary, permanent, transnational, or circular, is inevitable, and nations that are willing to recognize and accept its benefits to their economy and society are more likely to encourage integration and ensure that migrants make a strong and positive commitment to their newfound homelands.

Notes

1 https://worldmigrationreport.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbdl1691/files/documents/Chapter-2%2520Figure%25202.jpg
2 Country to country corridors: https://worldmigrationreport.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbdl1691/files/documents/Chapter-2%2520Figure%25203.jpg

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15 Punjabi Migration to Northwestern British Columbia

Labour and the First Nations

Kamala Elizabeth Nayar

Introduction

Apart from its Indigenous peoples, Canada has largely been, and continues to be, built on the migration and settlement of people from diverse ethnic, cultural, religious, and national backgrounds, most of them seeking greater economic opportunity. While Canada's diversity is built on centuries of immigration, the country has not always welcomed or celebrated ethnic and cultural diversity. In fact, in the late nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, Canada was Nativist and really only permitted non-European ethnic groups into Canada to fill the country's manual labour needs. Of course, Canada's colonial ties with the British Empire played a role in the initial migration of people from India. While "East Indians" – the term used by British colonizers and later by the Canadian government – managed to enter Canada to work, they were, however, not welcomed as citizens and lived largely as a segregated labour group.[1]

The initial wave of "East Indian" immigrants was primarily young Punjabi men who mainly sought work to earn money to send back home. The predominantly Punjabi Sikh – but also Punjabi Hindu and Punjabi Muslim – immigrants initially migrated to British Columbia when the dominion needed manual labour for its growing natural resources industries. At the same time, Canada became known in India as an attractive place for economic advancement. With limited English-language and occupational skills, Punjabis found jobs in logging camps and sawmills, in railway construction, on cattle farms, and in fruit orchards, by and large, the manual labour that non-immigrants did not want to do.[2]

Punjabis typically found employment at sawmills in Greater Vancouver (such as Alberta Lumber Company on False Creek and Fraser Mills in Burquitlam) and on Vancouver Island (like Mayo Company Mill in Paldi and Hillcrest Lumber Company near Duncan). But, by the 1950s, many of these sawmills either had reached a saturation point or were in decline because of changes in British Columbia's forestry industry.[3] As a consequence, Punjabi immigrants were forced to move to more remote areas in the interior or northern regions of the province in order to find work. Even though

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migrating to the remote Skeena region in northwestern British Columbia provided Punjabis employment opportunities,[4] it also led to inevitable interactions with the First Nations, since the region's population largely consisted then, as it does now, of Indigenous peoples. Much to the Punjabis' surprise, they encountered anti-immigrant sentiment from various Indigenous people. However, this resentment seems to have been more the by-product of the First Nations' long-standing conflict with colonial settlers and the Canadian government.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine how Punjabis migrated to, and settled in, small towns of the Skeena region, such as Prince Rupert, Port Edward, and Terrace.[5] More specifically, this chapter delineates the relationship between migration patterns and employment and demonstrates how settlement in small remote towns of the Skeena resulted in complex intercultural dynamics, including various immigrant groups (like the Punjabi one) and Indigenous peoples – a topic that has by and large been overlooked by academics and policymakers.[6] In doing so, the chapter significantly underscores the socio-historical significance of the Punjabi-Indigenous dynamic, since it reveals how Canada's policies created double standards, by giving immigrants greater privilege than what the government had intended for the First Nations.

This study about the Punjabi migration experience in the Skeena region is an extension of a major study of Punjabis in British Columbia, which was carried out between 2006 and 2012.[7] The Punjabi immigrants surveyed for this chapter predominantly migrated from Punjab to northwestern British Columbia during the 1960s up to the 1990s. The research involved over one hundred semi-structured interviews conducted with Punjabi men and women and their adult children. Participants volunteered to be interviewed to discuss the social, economic, cultural, and political issues that they found pertinent to their experiences of the Skeena region. During the interview process, certain trends were observed regarding Punjabis migrating to, and integrating into, the Skeena region. Interviews were also conducted with other members of society. For instance, Indigenous people were interviewed in order to gather corroborative data, especially with regard to their perspectives on intercultural relations apropos the local fishery industries.

This chapter consists of three parts. The first examines Punjabi migration to the remote towns of northwestern British Columbia in search of manual labour in British Columbia's resource industries; the second analyses the specific intercultural dynamic between Punjabis and Indigenous peoples; and the third explores the double standards created by the Canadian government policies intended for immigrants and Indigenous peoples.

In Search of Employment and Working in the Skeena

Since the first wave of Punjabi immigrants arrived in British Columbia in the early 1900s, Punjabis have been associated with lumber labour in the

province.[8] And, like the early Punjabi settlers, the initial migration of Punjabis to Prince Rupert also primarily consisted of "single" men in search of employment so that they could support their families.[9] As aforementioned, by the 1950s, the sawmills in Greater Vancouver and Vancouver Island either had reached a saturation point or were in decline due to both technological advancement and the decrease in logging Douglas fir. Hence, many Punjabi immigrants were forced to move to more isolated areas in the central interior (like Quesnel and Williams Lake) and northern interior (such as Prince George and Mackenzie) of the province to find work. Accordingly, many Punjabis were willing to traverse through the unfamiliar terrain of interior and northern regions under challenging conditions in the hope of finding employment, especially since they had travelled much farther from their homeland in the pursuit of greater economic opportunities.[10] In this spirit, Punjabi men began to settle in the Skeena region during the 1960s, when the region was experiencing steady growth as a result of the booming forestry and fishery industries.

Forestry

Upon their arrival in British Columbia, Punjabi immigrants immediately looked for work at mills either in Greater Vancouver or on Vancouver Island, depending on the whereabouts of members of their family, clan or village. If in Vancouver during the late 1950s and early 1960s, Punjabi immigrants would typically seek employment at the Punjabi-owned and operated Yukon Lumber Co., often to no avail. Notwithstanding, Punjabis would hear by word of mouth how Sohen Singh Gill (owner of Yukon Lumber Co.) also owned Prince Rupert Sawmills Ltd, which – in contrast to the Vancouver mills – needed labourers.[11] The establishment of a Punjabi-owned sawmill in Prince Rupert (est. 1958) certainly served as the catalyst for the initial migration of Punjabis to the Skeena region.

The initial cohort of Punjabi immigrants hired at Prince Rupert Sawmills arrived in 1960 when the mill began its operations. The men lived at the bunkhouse located on the actual sawmill site. In fact, during the 1960s, the bunkhouse served as the centre of the Punjabi community, with only a handful of families living in rented basement suites in the Prince Rupert community. When the Prince Rupert sawmill ran two shifts at its peak of operations, there were about 75 men living in the bunkhouse. By the early 1970s, however, only about ten men lived in the bunkhouse, as production slowed down and most men moved to the town to establish their families. Even when the sawmill slowed down and permanently shut down in 1975, Punjabis continued to live in the Skeena region, because there were several other sawmills in Terrace with work also becoming available at the Columbia Cellulose pulp and paper mill on Watson Island (est. 1951), only 8 kilometres from Prince Rupert.[12]

Punjabi immigrants were pleased to transfer to the wood room – where logs are debarked and processed into wood chips to feed the mill – on Watson

Island because the work was less physically demanding and the wages were higher. Nevertheless, there was a wage gap between the labour in the wood room and the skilled trade work in the actual pulp and paper mill. Although the work in the former was similar to Prince Rupert Sawmill (albeit with more advanced machinery), the latter required trade certification. While most Punjabis began by working in the wood room, those with secondary education and/or technical training could progress into more skilled labour positions in the actual pulp and paper mill, because they could take advantage of the training programs offered by their employer or the local community college in Prince Rupert and Terrace.[13]

Since the earlier Punjabi migrants mainly came through the family sponsorship program and most arrived with minimal education and English skills, they were usually confined to manual or semi-skilled work in the mills because they lacked the opportunity to upgrade their skills. However, following Canada's institution of the point system (est. 1967) – when the country began to accept independent immigrants with skills and experience – Punjabi immigrants increasingly arrived with higher levels of education and English skills, which gave them better opportunities to work in the trades, acquire a profession, or even venture into business.[14] While opportunities to upgrade did exist, Punjabi men did not always have the time to take advantage of them, since the men were often under tremendous pressure to earn money in order to survive and support their families.

Whether engaged in manual, semi-skilled, or trades work, Punjabi immigrants experienced many economic and social challenges. In attempting to overcome these challenges, Punjabis relied on their cultural heritage as a source of adaptive strength. Coming from an agricultural society, many Punjabis brought with them their strong kinship networks and their value of landownership, both of which proved to be very valuable in fostering resilience in their adaptation and integration into Canadian society. First, Punjabis established a chain of kinship migration to the Skeena region through marriages or by encouraging family members in Punjab to join them. Second, they tended to save and pool resources to buy homes and survive economic hardships. Even when a house had been paid off, Punjabis often expanded their landholdings by purchasing investment properties. For instance, early Punjabi immigrants in Skeena even bought real estate in Greater Vancouver. These investment properties would later be used by their children when in pursuit of their post-secondary education. Not only did this practice help the children, but it also created a buffer during the economic downturn born of the decline in the resource industries in the early 2000s.

Canneries

As Punjabi men settled in the region throughout the 1960s and 1970s, they were gradually joined by their fiancées or wives. Upon their arrival, Punjabi women – out of economic necessity – also began to participate in the paid

workforce. In contrast to Punjabi men, however, Punjabi women mainly found work in the thriving fisheries. Following the pattern of many Indigenous and other immigrant women, Punjabi women began working in the canneries. (Indeed, Indigenous women worked throughout the history of British Columbia's salmon canning industry,[15] while immigrant women from various ethnic backgrounds later followed this work pattern. This was the case especially after the Second World War when there was a boom in both immigration and the resource industries.) Similar to the experiences of some Punjabi men, educated Punjabi women also had to settle for manual or semi-skilled labour in the canneries, since their credentials acquired in India were not transferable or recognized in Canada. Notwithstanding, once educated Punjabi women became more fluent in conversational English, some of them managed to venture into other types of employment (such as running daycares or working as bank tellers).

Punjabi women primarily did seasonal work in the salmon canneries. More specifically, Punjabi women worked throughout the fishing season, during the spring and summer months (from May to early September), and accumulated enough hours so that they could collect employment insurance (EI) throughout the remaining months of the year. During the fishing season, Punjabi women also took advantage of any opportunities to work overtime, as it enabled them to make extra money and accumulate additional hours for EI. In spite of the economic opportunity, it was difficult for Punjabi women to leave their children with an "outsider" (i.e., a babysitter) when working outside the home. Leaving children with a "stranger" was a practice completely foreign to them.

The cannery not only provided Punjabi women the opportunity to earn money and experience economic independence; it also provided them a platform for social networking, which was especially beneficial during the 1960s and 1970s when a consolidated Punjabi community did not exist.[16] While Punjabi women acquired economic and social benefits in entering the workforce, they also had to contend with anti-immigrant sentiment while working on the canning lines.

The First Nations and Anti-Immigrant Sentiment

The local experience of Punjabi immigrants in the Skeena region has certainly been a dynamic one. Since the region's population largely consists of Indigenous peoples, interaction with them was inevitable. In contrast to Punjabi immigrants living in Greater Vancouver, Punjabis residing in the Skeena region found themselves on a regular basis interacting with Indigenous peoples, a population Punjabis knew very little about. In fact, many Punjabi immigrants merely and unassumingly thought of Indigenous peoples as tribal (*jungalee*). Ironically, it was common for Punjabis to be mistaken for Indigenous.

While British colonial settlers categorized people from India as "East Indian" in order to distinguish them from the "Native Indian," when talking

among themselves Punjabis preferred referring to Indigenous peoples as *taike*. The Punjabi word *taike* literally means "[family] from my father's eldest brother (*taia*)." Based on the Punjabi family structure, the term is an expression of respect for those who came first. Given the history of the First Nations, *taike* is an appropriate term because it is both respectful and relational. However, Punjabis, from the 1960s through to the early 1990s, used the word in a derogatory manner by attaching negative stereotypes of Indigenous peoples to the word. Since Punjabis had limited knowledge of the First Nations, they learned many of these stereotypes at the workplace.

Indeed, upon joining the Skeena region's workforce, Punjabis found that their Anglo-Canadian supervisors attributed to them the same negative stereotypes that the supervisors held about Indigenous peoples. One of those common stereotypes was that Indigenous peoples were "lazy" and "unreliable."[17] Subsequently, Punjabis found themselves having to contend with these prejudices and often felt compelled to show their supervisors that – in contrast to Indigenous workers – they were in fact "hardworking," "dependable," and willing to work overtime. In their efforts to prove that they were immigrants that company managers could count on, Punjabi immigrants inadvertently reinforced the negative stereotypes often used against Indigenous peoples.

While Punjabis recognized that they shared with Indigenous people similar physical features (like brown skin colour, and dark eyes and hair) and cultural values (such as a collective orientation and religious worldview), they did not completely know the First Nations' experience of land dispossession and cultural devastation. More specifically, they did not understand the exact nature of what had happened to Indigenous peoples, including the abuses endured in the Indian residential school system.[18] Hence, Punjabis were perplexed when they experienced anti-immigrant sentiment from Indigenous peoples, especially since Punjabis belong to a visible minority group that had experienced colonization under the British Crown. In fact, a Punjabi man remembered bringing up this matter with an Indigenous man: "I went to a beer parlour with two other Punjabis. A Native Indian man wanted to fight us. I told him, 'Why don't you fight the white people? It was the white man who took your land.' He didn't say anything. He did not know how to answer the question. He just took off."[19]

Simultaneously, Indigenous peoples felt insecure and threatened by the Punjabis they saw arriving in the Skeena region because Punjabis were seemingly taking their jobs and purchasing homes on First Nations ancestral and unceded territory. There are many Punjabi accounts of Indigenous people shouting "Hey, you . . . Hindoo, get off our land" or "Hey, you . . . Hindoo, go back to your country."[20] The term "Hindoo" – regardless of whether one is Hindu, Sikh, or Muslim – was used by Anglo-Canadians to refer to "East Indian" in a derogatory manner in British Columbia at that time, which some Indigenous people also attached to Punjabis. This anti-immigrant sentiment was often in the form of overt verbal, and sometimes physical, aggression from some of the Indigenous people at the workplace or in the town.

It is important to mention here that Punjabis were actually not the first immigrants to experience such resentment. Rather, throughout the decades, Indigenous peoples feared that various foreigners were coming to steal their jobs in the canneries and purchase property on their ancestral territory. A woman of the Ts'msyen Nation explained the long-standing threat that Indigenous people felt about foreigners:

> When there are newcomers, we [First Nations] see them as 'strangers.' We feared they were coming to take our jobs. When the Chinese came to build the railways, there was tension. When the Japanese came to fish, there was tension. When the Portuguese came to work in the canneries, we didn't like it. [First Nations] women feared the Punjabis [would take] their jobs and overtime work, especially when they saw how they brought in their relatives to work.[21]

This response to newcomers is understandable, given the long-standing conflict between the First Nations and colonial settlers over cultural devastation, unresolved land claims, and regulation over resource extraction. Indeed, colonial settlers forced Indigenous peoples to live on reserves and regulated their lives, while the settlers profited from natural resource industries and individual land ownership.[22]

Because there were few Indigenous workers in the sawmills, and pulp and paper mills, it was more common for Punjabi men to experience anti-immigrant attitudes in the towns. On the contrary, Punjabi women experienced more anti-immigrant sentiment in the canneries when they began participating in the fishery industry in the 1970s. This sentiment undoubtedly stemmed from Indigenous peoples wanting to protect their place in the industry, especially since coastal Indigenous peoples took great pride in their cultural knowledge and skills of harvesting the sea. Moreover, while Indigenous fishermen and cannery workers were familiar with foreigners arriving and working in the industry, the timing of the arrival of Punjabis coincided with unionization, which resulted in higher wages and better working conditions.[23] Indigenous peoples also felt more dispensable due to the decreasing demand for their traditional knowledge and skills as a result of cannery technological advancement.[24]

In the face of the anti-immigrant sentiment in the canneries, Punjabi immigrant workers began turning to unions for support. While union representatives mostly listened to Punjabi complaints about anti-immigrant sentiment, three concrete intercultural-labour issues emerged in the fisheries, which the United Fishermen and Allied Workers' Union (UFAWU) representatives could effectively mediate[25]: (1) Punjabi women not being promoted to better types of cannery work as per seniority; (2) the lack of Punjabi representation at the level of floor supervision; and (3) a petition against Punjabis speaking in their mother tongue on the Prince Rupert – Port Edward bus as well as in the lunchrooms.[26] Indeed, some Punjabi women took to the union their complaints

about how they were kept at the lower job of washing the fish or not promoted to floor supervisor, despite their seniority. As these issues fit within the framework of labour management relations, the union could address them by assessing the informal work-based networks that were responsible for hiring, job assignment, and promotion.[27]

Along with the fear of Punjabi immigrants advancing in various cannery positions, Indigenous peoples largely voiced dismay at Punjabis' tendency to speak among themselves in their own language, especially when in the presence of non-Punjabi workers. Punjabi immigrants speaking in their own language struck many Indigenous peoples as both disrespectful and unfair – disrespectful because it evoked in non-Punjabi workers insecure feelings of being mocked, and unfair due to First Nations' experience of cultural devastation in general and, more specifically, of Indigenous peoples being punished for speaking their traditional language in the Indian residential schools.[28]

As mentioned previously, in the late 1970s some Indigenous fishery workers circulated a petition requesting that no one on the Prince Rupert-Port Edward bus or in cannery lunchrooms should be allowed to speak "East Indian." After the union determined that the petition could pass if it presented an English-only policy, the Indigenous petitioners dropped their request, since it would have had to be applied to everyone, including themselves. In addressing these issues, the union unintentionally emerged as an "intercultural mediator" for Punjabis in the workplace.[29] That said, not all Punjabi women felt comfortable approaching the union or management with their concerns. Their reluctance can be explained by the women lacking conversational English skills, experiencing cultural barriers (e.g., asserting themselves with their supervisors), and feeling insecure as new immigrants often do in a new milieu.

When Punjabi men encountered Indigenous verbal and physical aggression, they responded by sticking up for themselves and creating cultural, religious, and social space for their community. In contrast, Punjabi women varied in their responses: from "speaking up" to "sucking it in." Significantly, some Punjabi women, who were more fluent in conversational English and therefore more easily able to overcome communication and cultural barriers, had friendly interactions with Indigenous peoples.[30] In fact, all the Punjabis interviewed were initially very reluctant to speak in retrospect of the resentment that they had experienced from Indigenous people. This hesitancy to talk about that resentment was directly related to the fact that these experiences had been something of the past, with the Punjabis having since developed a sense of camaraderie with the people in the Skeena region, as well as their now being much more cognizant of the plight of the First Nations in Canada.

From a First Nations perspective, Indigenous peoples generally felt insecure in the workplace and towns of the Skeena region, especially if they had pronounced Indigenous physical features. This feeling of insecurity was easily evoked in Indigenous peoples because they were treated – in their own words – as "third-class

citizens." Being called "dirty Indians" by Anglo-Canadians was a common occurrence. A woman from the Haida Nation explained her Indigenous perspective on the intercultural dynamic in the Skeena:

> First Nations with darker skin experienced a lot of racism. If in a store, the storeowners would watch them for stealing. In the Chinese restaurant, they would serve the Chinese people or anyone else before the First Nations. You don't notice too much when you are young; you just take what is there. The darker Indians experienced a lot of racism from the whites. . . . So many years ago, Europeans came to take their life, their kids. We were to be made "more human" and our land was taken away. The people who came used up the resources; we did not waste. First Nations were and have been wary of people coming, including the East Indians. First Nations did not know who were the East Indians and did not trust them. We interacted with each other but we did not know each other's history. There was no understanding because we did not know the histories.[31]

Indeed, the limited understanding and acknowledgement of the "Other's" story became a source of intercultural tension. Over time, Punjabis began to realize the differences in their colonial experiences, especially with regard to the cultural devastation of the First Nations communities (such as the latter's loss of language and its broken family system as a result of the Indian residential school system).

The Punjabi-Indigenous dynamic that emerged in the Skeena region is very significant as it reflects both the tension that existed between the "third-class" Indigenous peoples and the "second-class" Punjabis, and the mutual feelings of insecurity in an environment where both Indigenous peoples and Punjabis were perceived as inferior by the Anglo establishment in the Skeena region.

The Paradox of Canada's Multiculturalism Policy

The tension that emerged between "second-class" Punjabi and "third-class" Indigenous peoples in the Skeena region also significantly underscores the double standards created by Canadian government policies meant for immigrants and Indigenous peoples. The initial period of Punjabi migration to the Skeena region significantly occurred when Canada was instituting the immigration point system and Canada's practice of multiculturalism was in its early stages. In need of semi-skilled labour and professionals, Canada began to shift away from the quota system[32] and move towards the points system, which widened the doors for "East Indian" migration.[33] With the introduction of the point system (est. 1967), "East Indians," increasingly arrived equipped with some educational and language skills, which enabled them to upgrade their credentials in Canada so that they could move to a more skilled job.[34]

Besides the changes to Canadian immigration law, the country's introduction of its Multiculturalism Policy in 1971 provided better opportunities for "East Indian" immigrants to maintain their cultural and religious traditions. This multicultural orientation was in contrast to the earlier practice of assimilation, during which immigrants felt immense pressure to assimilate into Canada's dominant Anglo society.[35] While the government attempted to effect change through its Multiculturalism Policy, many visible ethnic minority groups still encountered a great deal of hostility, prejudice, and racial stereotyping. In its interest to advance social equality, Canada adopted the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (est. 1982), the *Employment Equity Act* (est. 1986), and the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* (est. 1988).

As the Canadian government was widening its doors to the immigration of non-European ethnic groups (est. 1967) and establishing the Multiculturalism Policy (est. 1971) to both accommodate immigrants and promote a more positive attitude towards ethnic and cultural diversity, these initiatives were instituted when the government was paradoxically also pushing for the assimilation of Indigenous peoples. More specifically, in 1969 the Liberal government – under the leadership of Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau and his Minister of Indian Affairs, Jean Chrétien – issued a white paper on Indian policy that proposed to abolish the *Indian Act* in order to eliminate special status for Canada's Indigenous peoples and to press forward instead a policy of cultural assimilation.[36] Did the Canadian government not foresee or envision Indigenous peoples interacting with immigrants during the era of the Multiculturalism Policy?

By granting immigrants – whether naturalized or not – greater privileges than it intended to give to Indigenous peoples, the Liberal government created double standards with its policy of multiculturalism. These double standards were a sensitive and, at times, a contentious issue. As aforementioned, the fact that immigrants were allowed to speak their own language and keep their culture struck many Indigenous peoples as both unfair and disrespectful.

Although the *Indian Act* (est. 1876) led to Indigenous peoples being viewed and rendered as separate from Canadian society, they had not existed as if in a "silo." Throughout the twentieth century, and especially after the Second World War, the separation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous spaces (including those inhabited by colonial settlers and twentieth-century immigrants) was undermined. As a result of the growth and concentration of the Skeena region's resource industries, Indigenous peoples often migrated from their ancestral villages or reserves to the region's multiethnic towns, such as Prince Rupert. While the industrialization of British Columbia provided Indigenous peoples with wage-labour in the resource industries, it was largely made possible through earlier government initiatives that devastated the First Nations' traditional way of life. For example, the federal government enforced conservation laws and regulations aimed to acquire control over land and water, imposed the policy of "civilization and assimilation" on Indigenous peoples, and criminalized the potlatch.[37]

When Punjabis began migrating in the 1960s and 1970s to the Skeena region and were in the process of establishing themselves and their community, Indigenous peoples had their own struggle; it was one embedded in a long-standing history of colonial oppression and trauma that, at that time, Canadian society remained oblivious to or even deliberately overlooked. Indeed, Indigenous peoples had their own issues, such as seeking acknowledgement and reparations for the harms caused by the government and striving for self-determination.[38] While the Punjabi-Indigenous dynamic reflects the insecurity both groups felt in the Skeena resource towns, it also significantly sheds light on the paradox of Multiculturalism Policy as the policy relates to the double standards felt by Indigenous peoples, providing them with yet another reason to mistrust government policy.[39]

Epilogue

During the mid-1990s, a steady decline in the resource industries in the Skeena region resulted in employment uncertainty and loss. The eventual bust in the lumber industry (2000–2003) and fisheries (2010–2015) forced many Punjabis to either look for other employment or leave the region and resettle in larger urban centres or other provinces. In the case of the Punjabi men who chose to remain in the Skeena, they tended to find jobs in retail, as longshoremen at the expanding Prince Rupert port, as taxi drivers, or as small business owners. Punjabi women, on the other hand, typically found jobs in retail or the hospitality industry, while others received training to work in other sectors like health or education. Ironically, the gradual decline and bust in the resource industries created comradeship and solidarity among the workers, irrespective of ethnicity, religion, or culture.

In an increasingly globalizing world since the 2000s, Canada has been adapting to global economic forces that have had an inevitable impact on immigration policy. For instance, due to the saturation of Canada's metropolises, there have been government initiatives encouraging immigrants to settle in the smaller urban centres or towns, including bringing professionals (such as educators, health care professionals, accountants, chefs) to work in the Skeena region where housing and the cost of living tend to be less than in the metropolises. More recently, there has been a rapid increase in South Asians immigrating through the international student program and foreign workers' program. In fact, more than 200 international students have arrived in Prince Rupert over the last several years (since 2020). This newer wave of South Asians is arriving at a time when the Punjabi community is well-established and Punjabis are known to be active contributors to the Skeena communities even as intercultural relations have been and continue to be, evolving with Indigenous peoples. For example, Indigenous and new immigrant youth are collaborating on creating a "multicultural" garden, with which they are learning to work and feast together on common ground.[40]

Over the past several decades, individual efforts and community-building initiatives (like the annual Sea Festival or seasonal sporting events) have certainly enhanced intercultural relations in the Skeena region.[41] In addition, better recognition of, and initiatives for, Indigenous peoples, along with acknowledgement of the trauma inflicted on the First Nations through government programs like the Indian Residential School System – especially since the release of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada report in 2015[42] – have also been critical contributing factors in improving intercultural relations in the Skeena region.

As for the newer immigrants, they are more effectively learning about Indigenous peoples, in comparison to what was available back in the 1960s up to the early 1990s. And, while Punjabis continue to refer to Indigenous peoples as *taike*, they are for the most part using the term as an expression of respect for those who came first. Even so, while initial steps have been taken to help Indigenous families and communities both heal and reclaim their culture and language, there is still much more collaborative and concerted effort that needs to be done.

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Notes

1 Kamala Elizabeth Nayar, "Religion, Resiliency and Citizenship: The Journey of a Vancouver Sikh Pioneer," in *Sikh Diaspora: Theory, Agency, and Experience* (Numen Book Series, vol. 144), ed. Michael Hawley (Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 2013), 105; Hugh Johnston, "Group Identity in an Emigrant Worker Community: The Example of Sikhs in Early Twentieth Century British Columbia," *BC Studies* 148 (Winter 2005/06): 3–23.

2 Nayar, "Religion, Resiliency and Citizenship," 105–113; Kamala Elizabeth Nayar, *Punjabis in British Columbia: Location, Labour, First Nations and Multiculturalism* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2012), 26; Kamala Elizabeth Nayar, *The Sikh Diaspora in Vancouver: Three Generations amid Tradition, Modernity, and Multiculturalism* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 16; James Gaylord Chadney, "The Formation of Ethnic Communities, Lessons from Vancouver Sikhs," in *Sikh History and Religion in the 20th Century*, ed. Joseph T. O'Connell, Milton Israel and Willard Oxtoby (Toronto: Centre for South Asian Studies, University of Toronto, 1988), 185–199; Peter W. Ward, *White Canada Forever: Popular Attitudes and Public Policy toward Orientals in British Columbia* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), 80–81; Paramjit S. Judge, *Punjabis in Canada: A Study of Formation of an Ethnic Community* (Delhi: Chanakya Publications, 1994), 1–17.

3 Nayar, *Punjabis in British Columbia*, 26–27.

4 The Skeena region comprises the area surrounding the Skeena River, which is the second-longest river in British Columbia. The Skeena River has been a critical transportation route for the Coast Ts'msyen, who migrated to the lower region of the Skeena. Ts'msyen ("inside the Skeena River") is a broad category of people of the Pacific North Coast linked by language and culture: (1) the Coast Ts'msyen; (2) the Southern Ts'msyen, who live on the coast and islands to the south of

the Skeena River; (3) the Nisga'a, who live on the Nass River; and (4) the Gitxsan, who live on the upper Skeena beyond the canyon and Kitselas. See Marjorie M. Halpin and Margaret Seguin, "Tsimshian Peoples: Southern Tsimshian, Coast Tsimshian, Nishga, and Gitksan," in *Handbook of North American Indians*, vol. 7, ed. Wayne Suttles (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institute, 1990), 267–269, 267–285, 282.

5 While the small towns of the Skeena region are located on traditional Ts'msyen territory, there are Indigenous peoples from other surrounding nations, including the Nisga'a, Haida, Haisla, and Gitxsan. Apart from the local Indigenous peoples, many waves of ethnic migration arrived in the region during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The early migrants to the Skeena region were primarily British, arriving either directly from the United Kingdom or from eastern Canada, southern British Columbia, or the United States. The region also drew people from other parts of the world, including northern Europe (Norway), Eastern Europe (Poland, Ukraine, the old Yugoslavia), southern Europe (Italy, Portugal), and Asia (China, Japan). Nayar, *The Punjabis in British Columbia*, 179; Dr. Richard Geddes Large, *Prince Rupert: A Gateway to Alaska and the Pacific*, vol. 2 (Vancouver: Mitchell Press, 1983), 35.

6 Even the literature on decolonizing urban spaces focus on the relations between Indigenous and colonial settlers. For instance, see Sarah de Leeuw and Sarah Hunt, "Unsettling Decolonizing Geographies," *Geography Compass* 12, no. 7 (2018): e12376-n/a. That said, some work has been done on intercultural relations between urban Indigenous peoples and newcomers as they live side-by-side in the inner city, such as John Gyepi-Garbrah, Ryab Walker and Joseph Garcea, "Indigeneity, Immigrant Newcomers and Interculturalism in Winnipeg, Canada," *Urban Studies* 51, no. 9 (2014): 1795–1811; Parvin Ghorayshi, "Diversity and Interculturalism: Learning from Winnipeg's Inner City," *Canadian Journal of Urban Research* 19, no. 1 (2010): 89–104.

7 Nayar, *The Punjabis in British Columbia*.

8 Nayar, "Religion, Resiliency and Citizenship," 103–113; Johnston, "Group Identity in an Emigrant Worker Community," 3–23; Archana B. Verma, *The Making of Little Punjab in Canada* (New Delhi: Sage, 2002).

9 Some of the Punjabi male immigrants were, in fact, married but lived like non-family men. However, in contrast to the early 1900s when Punjabi men were unable to bring over their wives and children, in the 1960s Punjabis would sponsor family members once they could afford to. Nayar, "Religion, Resiliency and Citizenship," 105; Johnston, "Group Identity in an Emigrant Worker Community," 3–4.

10 For instance, Punjabi Male 1.12, interview, 18 May 2006, Prince Rupert, BC; Punjabi Male 1.27, interview, 3 August 2009, Surrey, BC. See also, Nayar, *Punjabis in British Columbia*, 36–38.

11 Sohen Singh Gill (1911–1971) was born in the Punjab and arrived in Canada in 1931 at the age of 21. He had no formal education and began working at a wood-fuel company called Dryland Fuels. After one and a half years, Sohen Gill decided to quit working for Dryland Fuels and start his own family fuel trucking business under the firm name of Sohen Brothers Co. From 1931 to 1940, the company gradually acquired more contracts and eventually increased its operation by adding a fleet of trucks to the business. The company was profitable and was regarded as the largest dry wood-fuel company in Vancouver. Later, Sohen Gill ventured into the forestry industry with the building a sawmill in 1946, under the firm name of Yukon Lumber Co. Following his success with Yukon Lumber Co., Sohen Gill decided to pursue only the sawmill business by establishing two more sawmills in British Columbia. That is, he built a second sawmill called Pine Lake Lumber (est. 1954) in Spuzzum and a third sawmill called Prince Rupert Sawmills (est. 1958) in Prince Rupert. Nayar, *Punjabis in British Columbia*, 31–32.

12 Nayar, *Punjabis of British Columbia*, 38–45.
13 Ibid., 43–45.
14 Ravi Pendakur, *Immigrants and the Labour Force: Policy, Regulation, and Impact* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000), 78–82.
15 The first cannery on the Skeena River was built in 1877 and the first one on the Nass River began operations in 1881. During the 1870s, Indigenous peoples had to adjust to the colonial imposed capitalist economy, when the fish-canning industry was established in British Columbia. As a consequence, the Indigenous peoples lost control over their traditional livelihood of fishing. That is, the dominion set aside a small portion of fisheries for the First Nations while it opened up the resource to large-scale production and an increasingly complex distribution system for Anglo-Canadians. Rolf Knight, *Indians at Work: An Informal History of Native Indian Labour in British Columbia 1858–1930* (Vancouver: New Star Books, 1978), 179–184, 20; Douglas C. Harris, *Landing Native Fisheries: Indian Reserves and Fishing Rights in British Columbia 1849–1925* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2008), 189; Diane Newell, *Tangled Webs of History: Indians and the Law in Canada's Pacific Coast Fisheries* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 46–65.
16 Nayar, *Punjabis of British Columbia*, 93–108.
17 For a critical analysis of the various negative stereotypes that Anglo-Canadians have held about Indigenous peoples, see John S. Lutz, *Makuk: A New History of Aboriginal-White Relations* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2008).
18 Indian residential school system (IRSS) refers to the many Christian missionary operated schools that the Canadian government administered as part of its larger aim to assimilate Indigenous peoples into Canadian society. Indigenous children were forcibly removed from families and often endured physical, mental, psychological, and sexual abuses while attending the schools. While no single date marks the institution of the system (though such schools existed prior to Confederation), Native education policy was backed by the *Indian Act* (est. 1887) and its assimilationist policies. For more information on the IRRS, see James R. Miller, *Shingwaulk's Vision: A History of Native Residential Schools* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996).
19 Punjabi Male 1.21, interview, 16 January 2009, Surrey, BC. Cited in Nayar, *Punjabis in British Columbia*, 154.
20 For example, Punjabi Male 1.12, interview, 18 May 2006, Prince Rupert, BC; Punjabi Male 1.22, interview, 9 May 2009, Surrey, BC; Punjabi Male 2.8, interview, 15 August 2009, Surrey BC; Punjabi Female 1.8, interview, 14 September 2009, Surrey, BC; Punjabi Female 1.3, interview, 6 September 2008, Langley, BC.
21 Ts'msyen 3, interview, 12 June 2009, Prince Rupert, BC. Cited in Nayar, *Punjabis in British Columbia*, 152.
22 Brenna Bhandar, *Colonial Lives of Property: Law, Land, and Racial Regimes of Ownership* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2018), 60.
23 It was only in 1956 when Indigenous peoples as workers were extended equal treatment in the fisheries and allowed to join the labour union. Alicja Muszynski, *Cheap Wage Labour: Race and Gender in the Fisheries of British Columbia* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996), 202–207.
24 Nayar, *Punjabis in British Columbia*, 154.
25 The United Fishermen Allied Workers' Union (UFAWU) was established in 1945 and has been the main labour organization in the fisheries. In contrast to the early part of the twentieth century, when unions excluded visible minorities joining their ranks, UFAWU allowed women and Chinese labourers to sign up. In fact, following the Second World War, unions in general had come to realize that they needed both female and ethnic support in order to build their bargaining

power. Muszynski, *Cheap Wage Labour*, 180–182; Stuart Jamieson and Percy Gladstone, “Unionism in the Fishing Industry of British Columbia,” *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science* 16, no. 1 (1950): 9–11.

26 Organized Labour 2, interview, 29 May 2007, Prince Rupert, BC. Nayar, *Punjabis in British Columbia*, 169.

27 Nayar, *Punjabis in British Columbia*, 168–170.

28 Kamala Elizabeth Nayar and ‘Liyaa’mlaxha, “The Journey of a Ts’msyen Residential School Survivor: Resiliency and Healing in Multi-Ethnic Milieus,” *BC Studies*, no. 183 (Autumn 2014): 87.

29 See Nayar, *Punjabis in British Columbia*, 171.

30 For instance, Punjabi Female 1.14, interview, 23 January 2009, Delta, BC; Punjabi Female 1.16, interview, 27 February 2009, Surrey, BC. See Nayar, *Punjabis in British Columbia*, 187–188.

31 Haida 1, interview, 30 May 2009, Prince Rupert, BC. Cited in Nayar, *Punjabis in British Columbia*, 189.

32 With the federal government’s institution of the *Canadian Citizenship Act* on 1 January 1947, all legal residents became recognized as Canadian citizens (i.e., there was no legal recognition of Canadian citizens prior to the *Canadian Citizenship Act of 1947*). With the introduction of the family sponsorship system in 1951, immediate family members were also permitted to migrate to Canada. For “East Indians,” there was a quota of merely 50 “East Indian” immigrants a year; in 1957 the quota was increased to three hundred, which remained in force until 1962.

33 Ravi Pendakur, *Immigrants and the Labour Force: Policy, Regulation, and Impact* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2000), 78–82.

34 While “East Indians” benefited from the point system, transferability of their credentials, which gave Punjabis points to migrate, emerged as a contentious; that is, an education and/or employment experience from a developing country (such as India) did not translate to Canadian employment in their chosen field. Pendakur, *Immigrants and the Labour Force*, 67, 156; Nayar, *Punjabis in British Columbia*, 97–99.

35 In the 1950s, “East Indian” immigrants still felt pressure to adopt the Western lifestyle if they wished to be accepted as members of mainstream Canadian society. Assimilation, with the resulting disconnectedness from their heritage, was a great challenge for many “East Indian” immigrants and their children. Such children of immigrants often experienced confusion and anxiety in the face of having to reject or deny their background in order to “fit in” or to be accepted, even as they encountered racial and cultural discrimination.

36 Weaver provides an excellent analysis of the development of the White Paper. Sally M. Weaver, *Making Canadian Indian Policy: The Hidden Agenda, 1968–70* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981). Currently, Indigenous peoples hold different views on whether or not to dismantle the *Indian Act*. For a critical analysis of the *Indian Act*’s impact on Indigenous peoples, see Mary-Ellen Kelm and Keith D. Smith, *Talking Back to the Indian Act: Critical Reading in Settler Colonial Histories* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2018).

37 The potlatch is a gift-giving feast practice by Indigenous peoples of the Pacific Northwest. The practice gave authority to names and positions through public declaration and conferred upon the house chief the authority to govern resource use, succession, alliances, marriages, and other important matters that affected the power and prestige of the house. For an in-depth analysis of the spiritual and social significance of receiving an immortal name, see Christopher F. Roth, *Becoming Tsimshian: The Social Life of Names* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008).

38 It was only in 1951, after the federal government lifted the ban on soliciting funds for First Nations legal land claims, when Indigenous peoples could legally

mobilize and lobby to achieve self-determination through land claims and self-governance. Subsequently, since the 1960s various First Nation groups have been working towards self-determination. For instance, the Nisga'a people of the Nass Valley have mobilized for land claims and self-governance. See Terry Fenge and Jim Aldridge, *Keeping Promises: The Royal Proclamation of 1763, Aboriginal Rights and Treaties in Canada* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2015); Daniel Raunet, *Without Surrender, without Consent: A History of the Nishga Land Claims* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1984).

39 Nayar and 'Liyaa'mlaxha, "The Journey of a Ts'msyen Residential School Survivor," 87.

40 Kimberley Millar, "New Immigrants and Indigenous Youth Plant Garden of Flavor and Commonality," *Prince Rupert Northern View*, Thursday, 25 August 2022, p. A5.

41 For instance, see Nayar, *Punjabis in British Columbia*.

42 See Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), *The Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*, 6 vols. (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2015).

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16 Canadian Punjabi Diaspora

Sandeep K. Dhillon

Immigration in Canada

Canada is acknowledged as a nation primarily comprised of immigrants and the descendants of immigrants (Edmonston, 2016; Guo & Wong, 2018; Troper, 2003). Since the 18th century, Canada has had a long and complex immigration history that has contributed to dispossessing Indigenous people of their ancestral lands. Despite this, immigration has been principally viewed as an economic strategy for nation-building, making it home to over 17 million immigrants (Edmonston, 2016; Guo & Wong, 2018). The percentage of immigrants living in Canada is only expected to increase substantially by 2031, compromising 31% of the total Canadian population (Edmonston, 2016; Statistics Canada, 2016). With the increasing diversity of immigrants, Canada has been acknowledged as a post-national, multicultural society (Guo & Wong, 2018). However, Canada's history of immigration has not always been inclusive in becoming an ethnoculturally diverse nation.

Before the Confederation in 1867, Canada had a free-entry period for migrants. In fact, no formal Canadian immigration policy was established until the late 1890s (Guo & Wong, 2018; Simmons, 2010; Walker, 2008). The settlement and establishment of the French Regime (approximately from the 1500s to 1700s) was the initial impact Indigenous communities experienced regarding immigration and colonialism, followed by the British Regime (through the 1700s to the mid-1900s) and their sovereignty since the time of Confederation. Yet, it was not until 30 years after Confederation that the first immigration policy was created, recognized as the Immigration Act of 1896. This resulted in Canada promoting an immigration society to help build a nation (Guo & Wong, 2018; Simmons, 2010; Walker, 2008). Some of the primary principles of an immigration society include the following: (a) use an ethical framework to regulate admission, (b) develop programs to aid immigrants' integration and settlement, (c) grant immigrants all rights, including the right to permanent residency and citizenship, and (d) view immigration and immigrants as society-building patrons and fundamental to the nation's identity (Guo & Wong, 2018).

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Despite the inclusivity in the principles of an immigration society, Canada had a White immigrant promotion policy, particularly those from Eastern Europe (Russia, Poland, and Ukraine), Western Europe, and Scandinavia. In contrast, racialized immigrants from Japan, India, China, and African Americans were strongly discouraged from migrating to Canada due to ethnocentrism and racist ideological assumptions (Guo & Wong, 2018; Simmons, 2010; Walker, 2008). The ideological perception of non-European immigrants being incapable of integrating into Canadian society resulted in them being viewed as undesirable. Questions concerning their sociability, industriousness, education, and labour skills were among the factors that prohibited racialized immigrants from entering Canada. This also included speculations on whether non-European immigrants would adjust to Canada's weather or if their customs and habits would affect their ability to integrate into Canadian society (Guo & Wong, 2018; Simmons, 2010). These ideological assumptions caused a preference for countries, including the United States of America (USA) and various European countries. Hence, there was no immigration from racialized countries throughout Africa, Asia, and South America until post-World War II (Guo & Wong, 2018; Simmons, 2010).

As central Canada experienced significant economic growth post-World War II, specifically during the 1950s and 1960s, the overtly ethnocentric and racist immigration policy was disbarred (Edmonston, 2016; Guo & Wong, 2018). There was substantial international pressure for countries like Canada to alter their immigration policies to reduce racism. The Nazi holocaust and discrimination in World War II prompted the United Nations to educate Western countries that race is a social construct rather than a biological reality (Edmonston, 2016; Guo & Wong, 2018). Therefore, racist immigration policies were abolished, allowing non-European immigrants to enter Canada by 1967 through the basis of three classes of immigrants: (1) family class, (2) independent (now referred to as economic) class, and (3) refugee class (Guo & Wong, 2018; Koehn et al., 2010). The liberalization of the revised immigration policies significantly accelerated the diversity of immigrants. There are now over 250 various ethnic origins in Canada and an increasing number of non-white immigrants from Asia, Africa, and South and Central America. The growth of these ethnic immigrants in 1981 resulted in the Canadian Census to begin counting Canada's visible minority population (Guo & Wong, 2018).

Moreover, patterns of immigration drastically altered when the Points System was introduced in 1967 (Creatore et al., 2012; Peng & Cassie, 2015; Guo & Wong, 2018; Statistics Canada, 2016). The eligibility for immigration under the Point System included analysing an individual's educational credentials, job skills, occupation, age, and knowledge of an official language rather than viewing their country of origin. Successful applicants had to achieve a minimum score of 67 out of 100 to be determined eligible for immigration (Creatore et al., 2012; Guo & Wong, 2018). Despite introducing the Point System 50 years ago to overcome discriminatory immigration policies,

some scholars find the modifications of the required points to perpetuate racist microaggressions and ethnocentrism. For instance, Stephen Harper introduced requirements for having intermediate language skills in either English or French during his tenure as prime minister. Whereas previously, there were no minimum language requirement skills. Some scholars argue that this requirement is a type of cultural fundamentalism and racism (Guo & Wong, 2018). Nevertheless, Canada's universalistic immigration policy has undoubtedly increased the diversity of racial and ethnic minority immigrants since 1981, granted that Canada aims to receive approximately one million immigrants and refugees between 2017 and 2020 (Chowdhury et al., 2021).

Statistics Canada (2017) reports that approximately 20% of the Canadian population belongs to a visible minority group, with a greater concentration in metropolitan cities like Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal. The visible minority population includes individuals from diverse backgrounds with varying linguistic characteristics and religious affiliations. However, the Chinese and South Asian immigrant communities constitute the two largest groups (Statistics Canada, 2011), and their numbers are expected to increase. South Asians, in particular, are projected to become the largest minority group, increasing from 1.3 million in 2006 to 3.6 million in 2031 (Edmonston, 2016). Notably, South Asian women constitute the largest visible minority group among immigrant women, comprising 28% of this population (Statistics Canada, 2017).

The South Asian region consists of countries like Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. Although South Asians are regarded as one of the largest visible minority groups in Canada, they are also among the most diverse minority groups, with a wide variety of ethnic, religious, and linguistic groups represented in the South Asian community. Some members of this community identify with the Southern part of Asia. In contrast, others consider themselves part of the South Asian visible minority group and include people of Bangladeshi, Bengali, Goan, Gujarati, Hindu, Ismaili, Kashmiri, Nepali, Pakistani, Punjabi, Sinhalese, Sri Lankan, and Tamil ancestry. Despite the variety of ethnic cultures and backgrounds among South Asian immigrants, they have remained one of the most unified cultural groups. This is evident in their efforts to maintain their sociocultural identity by preserving their values, family interaction, social networks within their cultural groups, and ethnic customs, traditions, and heritage languages. As a result, South Asians have successfully maintained their sociocultural traditions and religions in Canada. Nonetheless, it is essential to recognize the heterogeneity within the South Asian population.

The Punjabi subgroup (the majority residing in Punjab, India) is the largest ethnocultural community among South Asians and is Canada's third most-spoken language (Johnston, 2005; Srinivasan, 2018; Statistics Canada, 2016). Among this, the majority of immigrants over the age of 55 are recognized as Indo-Canadians (Bains, 2009). The long-standing history of Punjabis in

Canada has resulted in a demand for research to further investigate the Canadian Punjabi diaspora to comprehend their unique healthcare needs.

Canadian Punjabi Diaspora

Since the 19th century, the Canadian Punjabi diaspora has been shaped by globalization, led by Punjabi Sikh men (Johnston, 2005). Initially, around 5,000 Punjabi Sikhs migrated to Canada for employment opportunities. However, it is important to note that their intention was not to settle in Canada permanently. These migrants planned to work for up to five years in Canada and then return to their rural villages in Punjab, India, with their savings (Johnston, 2005). The arrival of Punjabi men in Canada represented the farthest point of migration for Punjabis, as many Punjabi men had previously migrated to British Malaya, Singapore, Hong Kong, Shanghai, the Philippines, and even Australia in search of work opportunities (Johnston, 2005).

In addition to colonizing India, the British Empire prompted many Punjabi men to seek employment opportunities in British-ruled countries like Canada, where there was a demand for outdoor work in industries such as lumber, railways, and agriculture in British Columbia (Bains, 2009; Johnston, 2005). However, despite the need for migrant workers, these men faced discrimination and hostility from local Canadians, who perceived them as taking away jobs from the general public. Punjabi immigrants were considered second-class citizens from 1908 to 1947, denied their right to vote, and restricted from reuniting with their families except for wives and children of men already in Canada (Johnston, 2005). Additionally, Canada maintained a small quota for immigrants from India and imposed racially restrictive policies, requiring "Asiatic" immigrants to have a minimum of $200 to enter Canada (Johnston, 2005). The Komagata Maru incident is a significant event in the history of Indo-Canadians, reminding us of the prejudice experienced by Punjabi men during this time (Buchignani et al., 1985; Johnston, 2005).

In 1914, a group of 376 immigrants, mostly men of Punjabi Sikh origin, boarded a Japanese steamship named Komagata Maru to resettle and find job opportunities in Canada. However, their arrival in Vancouver, British Columbia, was met with hostility from the local population, who held racist and exclusionary beliefs (Buchignani et al., 1985; Johnston, 2005). As a result, the ship was not allowed to dock, and the passengers were stranded on board for several weeks, unable to communicate with the Punjabi community onshore (Buchignani et al., 1985; Johnston, 2005). The local Punjabi community tried to prevent the passengers' deportation but was unsuccessful. As conditions onboard the ship deteriorated, the community onshore rallied to support the passengers by providing food and water and raising money to hire a lawyer to challenge Canada's discriminatory immigration laws (Buchignani et al., 1985; Johnston, 2005). Despite their efforts, the case was lost in court, and a gunboat eventually deported passengers out of Canadian waters.

The Komagata Maru incident was a significant event for the Punjabi community in Canada as it represented their first struggle for equal treatment from Canadian-born citizens (Buchignani et al., 1985; Johnston, 2005). The incident is widely recognized in Canadian history and public discourse. It holds a special value for the Punjabi diaspora due to relaxed immigration laws that allowed for their rapid growth. The historical trajectory of Punjabi Sikh men's immigration to Canada is closely linked to their search for economic opportunities and escape from anti-Sikh state violence in the 1980s (Johnston, 2005). During this time, many Punjabi Sikh men were labelled as terrorists and targeted explicitly by Indian authorities. As a result, families sent their sole breadwinners abroad to avoid arrest and provide for their families, leading to increased migration to Canada and other Western countries (Johnston, 2005; Mooney, 2011). However, the Canadian Punjabi diaspora is currently motivated by family sponsorship programs, allowing family members to be reunited to keep the family institution intact (Bains, 2009; Koehn et al., 2010). Approximately 82% of older newcomers are sponsored by a family member (Guruge et al., 2015).

With the increasing number of older Punjabi immigrants in Canada, the Punjabi population, mainly from the Northern Indian state of Punjab, speak Punjabi as their mother tongue and practice the monotheistic Sikh religion (Chilana, 2005; Labun & Emblen, 2007). Founded by Guru Nanak Dev Ji and his nine disciples between the late 14th and 17th centuries, Sikhi is recognized as one of the youngest major religions and the world's fifth-largest organized religion. The core beliefs of this religion focus on having strong faith and meditation and engaging in acts of *seva* (selfless service to others) (Chilana, 2005; Singh, 2011). In particular, there is a strong emphasis on humbleness, compassion, and social commitment to others. These teachings, found in the holy book, *Guru Granth Sahib*, are kept in all Gurdwaras and are used to guide the Sikh community (Chilana, 2005; Singh, 2011).

The meaningful teachings in the Guru Granth Sahib ask followers to *Naam Japo*, *Kirat Karo*, and *Vand Chaako*, insinuating meditate on the Guru's name, lead an honest and dedicated life, and share what they eat (Chilana, 2005; Singh, 2011). Through these three core pillars of Sikhi, Gurdwaras prioritize humanitarianism and provide service to people in need. Regardless of religion, caste, gender, socioeconomic status, or ethnicity, any person entering a Gurdwara is served a free meal (Jakobsh, 2006; Singh, 2011). Food is prepared through seva and consumed as a community while sitting on the ground as equals. In this context, Gurdwaras are considered a community establishment for any person because of the practice of langar (Singh). The National Historic Site Canada acknowledges the Gur Sikh Temple (founded in 1911) in Abbotsford, BC, as the oldest Sikh temple in North America (Canadian Sikh Heritage, 2020).

The long-standing history of Punjabis has demonstrated selective acculturation, maintaining links to their traditional cultural values and religious beliefs while selectively accepting and rejecting mainstream Canadian practices. For

many Punjabi immigrants, the goal is to "modernize" rather than "westernize" (Ames & Inglis, 2010). The transnational diaspora of Punjabis reveals the importance of retaining social norms, like family structures. For instance, because many Punjabis originate from Indian societies that are collectivistic in nature, sponsoring their ageing family members becomes highly valued as the maintenance of familial and community relationships is promoted (Jarvis et al., 2011; Lamb, 2009). In this sense, many multigenerational households revolve around agency, the intersecting identities of age and gender, and hierarchical power structures (Chadda & Deb, 2013). These traditional joint families in India, and now in Canada, even at the cost of individuality, are considered resilient, influential, and close.

Unlike Canadian society, which encourages individualism, the collectivistic Punjabi culture puts the impetus on interdependence and cooperation with the respective family forming the focal point of this social structure (Chadda & Deb, 2013). Because many eastern immigrants originate from collectivist cultures and are perceived generally as family-oriented compared to European immigrants and Canadian-born older adults (McDonald, 2011), cultural and structural factors influence family roles and relationships throughout their life span (Clark et al., 2009). Seniors' homes, for instance, are stigmatized in South Asian culture since they are viewed as a Western way of living that has eroded the family structure (Koehn, 1993).

The hundred-year history of Punjabi immigrants residing in Canada demonstrates their strong resilience, cultural insulation, and cohesiveness while living in a European-dominated Canadian culture (Bains, 2009). In particular, an individual's age, cultural background, language, and country of origin can affect their adjustment to living in Western society, potentially impacting their mental health and well-being internally and externally. The process is even more complicated when the older ethnic minority originates from a traditional and economically underdeveloped society, whereas the host country is modern and developed (Nayar, 2004). As a result, for older Punjabi immigrants (including those who immigrated as young adults and those who immigrated in old age), preserving their internal cultural values and traditions are vital aspects that can help them adapt and selectively acculturate to living in a non-South Asian culture (Bains, 2009; Jacobsen & Kumar, 2018).

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17 How Memory and Generation Shape South Asian Migration

Michael Nijhawan

Introduction

By considering memory and generation as intertwined sociological perspectives, this chapter sets out to examine three different scenarios that help us shed some light on South Asian migration and identity formation in Canada. My first focus will be on the mnemonic activities surrounding the Komagata Maru incident in the early 20th century; I then examine the memory activism of a younger, transnational second generation, followed by perspectives on intergenerational transmission as a process through which imaginaries of kinship and religion are glued together.[1] The three case studies are thematically related in stipulating memory as a social and political praxis to tackle state violence, racial discrimination, and systemic injustice. For my discussion, I shall draw upon contemporary scholarship on memory and migration in addition to my own research expertise in the said field. Moreover, as each case is embedded within a historically specific period of state ideology and policy that regulate cultural diversity and immigration, each speaking to political economies of migrant labor, and each evoking the changing contours of public memory in the Canadian context, I shall be able to discern memory and generation as *political* categories of migration. In other words, rather than viewing memory as an exclusively cultural process of coming to terms with the past, and generation as a soft group category, I discuss how memory and generation combine to manifest as political subjectivity.[2]

Since Maurice Halbwachs (1992 [1925]) introduced the concept of collective memory, there have been considerable debates over memory as an identity-forming process. Scholars have raised a range of epistemological and methodological issues that have preoccupied the nascent field of memory studies until recently (e.g., Assmann, 2014; Feindt et al., 2014; Gutman et al., 2010; Misztal, 2010; Olick, 2003, 2007; Radstone, 2011; Rothberg, 2011). These ongoing debates include questions regarding political agency, social change, the relationship between individual and collective memory, official memories and counter memories, and the dispersed grassroots practices of local and diasporic communities (e.g., Al-Rustom, 2013; Gutman, 2017; Wüstenberg, 2017).[3] It can hardly be overlooked how during the past two

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decades, with the increasing salience of global migrations, transcultural exchange (Erll, 2011a), and political polarization in the age of social media, the public and scholarly interests in memories of migration and traveling memories have surged (de Cesari & Rigney, 2014; Erll, 2011b; Rothberg, 2014). Indeed, memory has crystallized as a focal point to study the social imaginaries of next generations in migration. Julia Creet (2011), for example, argues that memories circulate between "times, generations, and media, from individuals to communities and vice versa" (ibid., 9), whereas Astrid Erll (2011b) portrays memory practices ranging from "everyday interaction among different social groups to transnational media reception and from trade, migration and diaspora to war and colonialism" (ibid., 11). The emerging interest in memories of/in migration has dislodged statist approaches and centered migrants as political subjects and memory activists (Gutman & Wüstenberg, 2023). Not only are migrants taken more seriously in their creative capacity to challenge official memory discourse, but scholars have also reassessed how migrant memories are mobilized, framed, and positioned within the contested fields of social and transnational citizenship (e.g., Amine & Beschea-Fache, 2012; Nijhawan, 2016; Rothberg & Yildiz, 2011; Winland, 2007).

Memory has long been considered instrumental in understanding cultural transfers and social reproduction. Across different transnational communities, researchers have observed rapidly changing forms of memory activism and mobilization, the emergence of new forms of solidarity, as well as the selective transnational brokerage based on differences in social and cultural capital (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2013). Shifting historical constellations and political contestations over what belongs to public memory necessarily entails a critical evaluation of the use of pan-ethnic, nationalist, and ethno-religious identity markers that must be contextualized within the geopolitical spaces of nation(s) and diaspora(s). With new generations of migrants contributing to community forums and political activities, with new citizens from across the world functioning as cultural brokers and key actors in civil society institutions, the relationship between political memory and generation has accordingly evolved. Social solidarities are not naturally bound to established identity constellations at the local level or that of the nation-state, and this affects the work of memory.

The focus on memory and generation opens the door wide to perspectives on generational change and modes of intergenerational transmission (Mannheim, 1952).[4] Earlier theories in this field were mainly concerned with how to frame memory along categorical generational axes, and more recent scholarship has juxtaposed theories of (segmented) assimilation (Portes & Zhou, 1993) with those on cultural hybridity and lives in translation. Considering the ruptures and discontinuities within and across cultural communities from an intersectional perspective, generation as political subjectivity and potential for mobilization is also heterogeneous. First immigrants and those born to parents of South Asian origin each bring unique perspectives and personal memories that are mediated by differences in socioeconomic location,

varying social and cultural capital, and the degree to which discourses on race, security, and religion have superimposed markers of identification and otherness. Therefore, the social and political boundaries regarding location and structural position among and between generation locations are neither absolute nor static but need to be interpreted as fluid and contextual (Edmunds & Turner, 2002; Pilcher, 1994).

From an intersectional lens, class, caste, and gendered identities of racial and religious difference continue to matter for transnational social arenas that have become more polarized in recent times due to strategic essentialism, resurgent nationalism, and new forms of social action. Boundaries not only are the manifestation of political ideology and social inequality but require what Luc Boltanski and Laurent Thévenot (1999) call "evaluative grammars," through which social actors constitute themselves as moral and political subjects in relation to others with whom they form relations. This insight is key when studying the memory activism of transnational second generations. Boundary work (Lamont & Molnár, 2002) as an aspect of memory activism can act in concert with regressive politics as can be observed for right-wing trends among the Indian diaspora, or result in counterhegemonic framing, a process directed precisely against such antidemocratic trends. As earlier shown by Pendakis (2018) in her study of diasporic formations of the Greek left in Toronto, evaluative frames give shape to political memories of/in migration. By focusing on the contested character of memory claims, the public role of memory making, and the emerging role of memory activists, I hope to shed light on similar processes for the South Asian migratory context in Canada.

Strategic Remembering Beyond the Politics of Redress

Negotiations over public memory in Canada have never been contained, for there are profound regional and linguistic differences and multifold existing claims to sovereignty that entail imaginaries of cultural history and political past, especially concerning the stolen land and lost rights of First Nations, Metis, and Inuit communities across Turtle Island. It is nonetheless possible to identify fault lines in public memory discourse for anglophone Canada that have direct implications for the three examined case studies here. These fault lines are characterized by a shift from the containment strategies of Canadian multiculturalism in the 1980s and 1990s (Bannerji, 2000; Mackey, 2002) to the politics of redress (Henderson & Wakeham, 2013; James, 2015) in the first decade of the new millennium, and an emerging trend of decolonizing Canadian institutions characterized by Audra Simpson as a "politics of refusal" (Simpson, 2014, see also Coulthard, 2014). In the new millennium, federal governments in Canada have been engaged in official state apologies that symbolically recognize past injustices such as the Residential School system (Henderson & Wakeham, 2013), the Chinese Exclusion Act (Cho, 2018), Japanese Internment (McAllister, 2010), and the Continuous

Journey regulation that racially discriminated the then-predominantly Punjabi labor migrants and members of the Gadar party in British Columbia (e.g., Chakraborty, 2022; Johnston, 2010; Mongia, 1999; Roy & Sahoo, 2016). The official apologies can be perceived as a response to community demands at a time when in electoral politics and society writ large diasporic communities have become key actors. Apologies are also part of the state's ideological strategy to contain collective memory. In fact, as Löfström (2011, p. 105) observes, official apologies can have the effect of reinstating established cultural hierarchies of belonging and hegemonic discourses on the past that assert a linear trajectory of the evolving nation (see Nijhawan et al., 2018). The apology for the Continuous Journey regulation and the story of the Komagata Maru that is directly associated with it, have gained more attention and visibility during these past two decades of official recognition politics and thus serve as an ideal starting point for our discussion.

The Komagata Maru event occurred during an early period of South Asian migration to Canada, at a time when racist immigration laws defined official state policies, some of which were introduced as a direct response to South Asian migrants claiming their rights as subjects of the Raj. The Komagata Maru was a chartered Japanese ship with 376 Indian immigrants on board that (except for 22 of its passengers) were denied entry by Canada. Immigration authorities disputed the passengers' rights of entry as subjects of the Raj and employed overtly racist tactics, escorting the immigrants out again after a two-month struggle entailing a legal battle and deplorable conditions experienced by the passengers held on the ship. As discussed in the literature (Johnston, 2010; Kazimi, 2012; Mongia, 1999), the significance of this event was not alone due to the specific circumstances of denying Indian immigrants their rights of entry. The Komagata Maru brought to light a much broader issue: the existence of white supremacist ideologies (Kazimi, 2012) and the unfolding colonial policies that at once aimed at assimilating indigenous peoples and maintaining a "colonial rule of difference" (Mongia, 1999). This system racialized and denigrated immigrants to a place of non-desirability, consequently excluding them from accessing inclusive citizenship rights. Much has been written on how Asian labor migration was then regulated through a politics of containment and contagion (Shah, 2001) that simultaneously fueled pervasive anti-Asian sentiments among white settler societies (Mawani, 2009).

It took Canada close to a century to recognize the injustices, which are framed as a 'dark chapter' in Canada's history and as a source of 'atonement' to paraphrase often-used idioms. Meanwhile, this has led to two official apologies by federal parties, first by PM Stephen Harper before a local assembly in 2008 and then an apology by PM Justin Trudeau before the Canadian parliament in 2016, as well as apologies at the provincial and municipal levels in 2020 and 2021. British Columbia has introduced a Remembrance Day proclamation for May 23 to commemorate the history of the Komagata Maru, whereas the Canadian Museum for Human Rights has included the story in

its institutional framework of commemoration.[5] Predictably, acts of official commemoration have tended to emphasize the discontinuities between injustices of the past and the model minority discourse of honoring the Punjabi community as fully integrated Canadians. There is great ambivalence around such attributions, which I will address in the next section. In contrast to the official politics of recognition with its focus on atonement, empathy, and redress, community organizations were more prone to remember the personal stories of the family descendants of the Komagata Maru in conjunction with efforts to (re)write the social history of early Punjabi immigration, especially in British Columbia (Nayar, 2004). Often these forms of commemoration were organized around ideas of cultural heritage, exemplified by the "Lions of the Sea" exhibit hosted by the Sikh Heritage Museum. At the same time, it was local community organizers and activists of both older and younger generations, working together with university-based researchers and archival projects (Panesar et al., 2017), that narrate a more nuanced and complex history to directly address the need to constantly rethink what and how we remember.[6]

What has surfaced in these community-centered events is the still uneasy relationship between generations of Punjabi immigrants and the Canadian state, for the impact of state-regulated acts on disowning and devaluing claims to citizenship along continuities of past and present. At different points in time, Punjabi Sikhs have faced assimilation pressures, Punjabi immigrant labor in the context of local industries and agriculture hardly found public acknowledgment in history books, heritage learning that supported the transgenerational memory work of first, second, and third immigrant families was left to communities to handle, while in areas of significant demographic concentration of Punjabi immigrants, cultural stereotypes about "enclaves" and "gangs" cast a negative picture that has harmed communities socially and culturally. Many of these sentiments came to the fore in community and artistic programs. We can see how positionality and locality in commemorative spaces matter. Stories such as the Komagata Maru can also exhibit cleavages with already politicized migrant communities over hegemonic positions and frames of representation, depending on what national, transnational, or diasporic frame is chosen (Roy & Sahoo, 2016). In each frame, social actors evoke conflicting paradigms over recognition and claims to justice, as the juxtaposed ideas of model minority discourse and ethnic enclave politics in the Canadian multicultural landscape would suggest.

Remembering the Komagata Maru has also opened the horizon for a politics of memory that could be characterized as transversal and intersectional in its discursive and affective orientation. Phinder Dulai's hybrid poetry and archival project *dream/arteries* discussed by B.K. Singh (2021) is one example of an "affective counterpoint" to the official politics of remembrance. Another is Ali Kazimi's award-winning film *Continuous Journey* (2004) alongside his subsequent book *Undesirables* (2012). Projects of critical and affective commemoration like these have been instrumental in unmasking colonial archives

and unveiling injustices in the light of ongoing practices of discrimination and oppression. In the case of *Continuous Journey*, it is the unique production of archival footage accompanied by historians' and community activists' voices that turn this documentary into a genre of memory-making. It situates the personal and historical within a contested landscape of public memories amid diasporic formations today. Kazimi's narrative strategy produces a history of continuities: of personal experiences with the immigration system, of discrimination against people of color, of 'moral panics' about 'immigrant waves' and 'boat people washing ashore', and of discourses of white supremacy and anti-Asian hate.

Such strategies in poetry and visual media have resonated with the next generations of South Asians and informed some of the diasporic youth's memory activism that I will discuss in the next section. In this section, I have argued that Canada's redress culture and memory politics are not passively endorsed or "simply the product of official edicts alone," as Matt James (2015, p. 45) rightly observed. Instead, memory constitutes a space and ensemble of practices created by social and political actors who are often removed from the center of political power (Bhat, 2018; Jakobsh & Walton-Roberts, 2016). With the example of commemorations of the Komagata Maru, we can appreciate the role of alternative narrative repertoires that open public archives to new social imaginaries, engendering new forms of social solidarity within and beyond official discourses of remembering.

Memory Activism as an Affective Politics of Refusal

With the story of remembering the Komagata Maru, we could explore how community organizations and artistic projects challenge the state's official politics of redress. Here I want to turn to the narrower concept of 'memory activism' to ask how it informs our discussion of memory and generation. As Yifat Gutman and Jenny Wüstenberg (2023, p. 5) suggest, memory activism refers to practices of strategic commemoration by which individuals and groups at the grassroots level, often in conjunction with social movements, aim to change (or defend against change) the way we remember and what we remember. The reference is to actors in civil society that "can thus both have a disruptive or reproductive role in struggles over how the past is remembered, and it is employed across the political spectrum" (ibid., 6).[7]

By considering youth-led social movements of the South Asian diaspora in the Greater Toronto Area, I want to ask what happens when such movements periodically center on memory as the locus of organized action. The negotiation of Canada's colonial legacy, which entails contestations over public memory from tearing down statues to the renaming of institutions, has been a key aspect of movements from Black Life Matters, to Idle-No-More, to the campaign for missing and murdered indigenous women and girls, and to other transcultural alliances that have pushed Canadian institutions to decolonize. South Asian groups especially in the Punjabi-speaking strongholds of

Malton and Brampton, but also the 'hyper-diverse' city of Scarborough, have been actively engaged in these broader political alliances and social movements. They have formed or joined coalitions around global justice struggles and those shaping transnational social fields, most recently the Indian farmers' protests in India. Not only is the struggle over memory a key component of each of these movements, but we can also observe how these new struggles echo earlier contentions.

Here I discuss a scenario in the Toronto region during the early 2010s, at a time when debates around decolonization and anti-Black racism had already informed public debates but were not yet as visible as they are today in memory activism. My example refers to the commemorations of 1984 by Sikhs from a younger generation, who as witnesses at a spatial and temporal remove were entangled in private and public negotiations over the consequence of these past events in the present. Memory activism has been pursued by various international Sikh organizations that in the past were mainly formed by political refugees and those engaged in the resistance struggle who faced state repression. By contrast, contemporary 1984 memory activism can be seen as a process of re-claiming and re-routing 1984 to a distinctively local idiom of migrant subjectivity.

It is of course not uncommon for transnational second generations to engage in political activism on social justice issues related to genocides and political violence that occurred in the past. What animates such participation varies, but the silencing of these histories in official memory and the lack of justice being served for communities targeted by such violence are key factors. We see such examples of memory activism in the recent campaigns on the past genocides in Armenia and Ukraine (Kaya, 2018; Tölölyan, 2010). Some forms of memory activism are endorsed more readily by the Canadian state insofar as their evaluative grammars fit seamlessly with dominant frames of recognition. Yet, the story of 1984 is politically ambivalent, therefore positioning young Sikh memory activists in a context of strong ideological polarization and moral dilemmas. In fact, we could argue that 1984 memory activism has been informed by pre-existing public images that, while undergoing change, require reflexive reworking of the activists' strategies of commemoration.

Two gendered images of deviant youth have played a decisive role in producing this form of political ambivalence (Nijhawan, 2014). One portrays them as potential supporters of Sikh militancy which is directly linked to how 1984 is discursively framed in Canada, the other as delinquent suburbanites. Since the Khalistan movement that demanded a separate state for Sikhs in Punjab has played a major role in Canadian politics, especially in the context of the Air India inquiry, the image of 'religious fundamentalism' has been often mobilized during election campaigns, in response to Sikh Vaisakhi parades (Buffam, 2019), or during parliamentary debates on religious accommodation. The juvenile delinquency issue has formed a standard repertoire in the Vancouver metropolitan area, and more recently, the Greater Toronto

Area, in debates over drugs and gun violence (Sumartojo 2012).[8] The image of the terrorist body is almost exclusively tied to the public appearance of bearded, turban-wearing, young Sikh men whose loyalty to the Canadian state is called into question when they are seen rallying around political issues pertaining to the situation in Punjab. The delinquent youth image pictures a deviant political subjectivity of young Punjabi males, now devoid of the religious identity markers that animate the terrorist frame. Women were often indirectly evoked in their roles of social and cultural reproduction by stipulation of completely heteronormative and culturalist ideas. Thus, both these registers build on cultural racism that links Sikh youth masculinity to violence, and femininity to domesticity and reproduction.

Sociologists regard the contradictory frames of portraying youth as both role-conforming and subversive to be quite common (Wyn, 2010). The 'deviant immigrant youth' image has repeatedly surfaced in the social imaginations of crisis moments in national public spheres and has been cited whenever a toughening of legislation and criminalization of youth-led movements was at stake. Jean Comaroff and John Comaroff (2006) argue that this split genealogy racializes migrant youth as a seamless mass of othered bodies and invites the regulatory powers of the state. The cartographies of social delinquency and public safety threats that stipulate such interventions have identifiable roots in the early phase of industrial modernity and in colonialism. For Sikh youth in Canada, to be perpetually marked as different or in need of explanation requires the unmarking from accusations of 'terrorism' and 'enclave politics.' Young Sikh memory activists have responded with various strategies, from reframing their claims with the universal language of global social justice, to highlighting a non-ethnic, modern Sikh ethos that debunks certain practices attributed to 'Punjabi culture,' to a refusal of complying with the politics of recognition.

In all of this, the war-on-terror frame has perhaps been the most salient, as illustrated by the difficult memory of Air India flight 182.[9] In the wake of the Air India investigation and its decades-long trial proceedings, the public discourse and commemoration cast a generalized suspicion onto groups that were (seen as) sympathizers of the Khalistan movement.[10] As Angela Failler (2012) argues, strategic remembering in this context distracted the public from the state's implication in the tragedy and shifted the attention away from the political processes leading to the tragedy in favor of portraying a dangerous and aspiring terrorist mentality in the "turban-wearing Sikh terrorist" (ibid., 260). As is well known, the events of 9/11 have further complicated this image and made turban-wearing Sikhs the immediate target of hate crimes (Puar & Rai, 2002).[11]

Taking these tropes of official remembrance and the post-9/11 frame of 'mistaken identity' into consideration helps us see some specific aspects of the memory activism by the transnational second generation. Specifically, the affective disposition toward the pervasive war-on-terror frame in conjunction with the felt alienation from mainstream Canadian politics focusing

on celebrating multiculturalism and ethnic consumerism, might explain why reclaiming memories of 1984 not only became persuasive to segments of the younger generation but also provided access to social citizenship. Roughly between 2008 and 2018, Sikh youth participated in the organization of annual commemorative events on '1984', in which they filled community spaces and banquet halls for artistic programs, photo exhibitions, video shows, and political speeches. Alongside these events, they found thousands of followers through various Facebook groups that promoted social justice issues affecting Sikh and other migrant communities in Canada. The widespread appeal of these groups was also due to the specific demographics of the suburban cultural dynamics in the Greater Toronto Area and the mobilizing role of youth-led organizations such as the Sikh Activist Network.[12] Despite the vibrant cultural life and many Sikh gurdwaras in the area, cultural organizers observed a conspicuous absence of opportunities for youth to organize except for a few clubs and community spaces where emerging musical subcultures could grow. The 1984 memory activists further met a growing desire among youth to congregate and organize outside of the religious community spaces, in which older generations have had the say and which were often divided along various ideological and caste affiliations. The online presence and social media campaigns of 1984 memory activism fully resonated with the younger generation's new communication patterns while also reflecting new trends in social networking and mobilizing across borders and outside of the dominant institutions.

There is clearly no intention here to pigeonhole memory activists, who as grassroots organizers have remained internally heterogenous, even as the Sikh-centered topic of 1984 set boundaries of belonging. Many of the activists and artists of the Sikh youth are first-generation college and university graduates who have become equipped with progressive social justice and critical human rights vocabularies. Memory activists would speak about class differences, different religious affiliations within the Sikh community, and regional differences within their constituencies in Malton, Brampton, as well as East- and West-Toronto. It seems, however, that their memory activism had the potential to transcend those differences, at least temporarily, when rallying substantive parts of the Sikh community behind their call for justice. In doing so, they also took issue with official discourses of both the Indian and Canadian governments, and the failure of institutions to educate and communicate the full dimensions of the tragedy in its impact in Punjab and abroad.

If compared to Greek political activists, who for example were already marked by a political genealogy of belonging with the security apparatus of the dictatorship playing a key role (Pendakis, 2018), for the most part, 1984 memory activism helped to politicize diasporic youth in a context in which 'being political' was seen to be the sole prerogative of the first generation of gurdwara organizers and established Sikh political parties. There were certainly continuities between older and new forms of protest, including the

appeal to international human rights and political street rallies, but we can also observe a new trend of innovative cultural forms and assertive languages of non-compliance with official recognition politics. These innovations created a new space for youth alienated from politics to become politicized.

It is beyond the scope of this chapter to discuss the diasporic facets of 1984 memory discourse (Axel, 2001; Shani, 2010; Nijhawan, 2016) and Sikh youth memory activism, but a few observations shall help facilitate our conversation on memory and generation. I specifically draw on qualitative interviews with second-generation Sikh youth and ethnographic observations of commemorative events that I have described at length elsewhere (Arora & Nijhawan, 2013; Nijhawan, 2016). First, and at the risk of caricaturing, many of the young activists would relate to 1984 through family narratives that entailed the loss of family members and dramatic stories of parents fleeing scenes of violence and carnage in Delhi and Punjab in the 1980s. The general sentiment that came to the fore was a strong affective presence of the story of 1984 that to the interviewed youth also felt discursively contained for various reasons, such as parents deciding to shield them when coming of age in Canada, the thematic over-saturation of community spaces with Sikh martyr images and political speeches on 1984 that felt alienating, and sentiments of racial melancholy in everyday struggles against chronicity and survival marking the immigrant lives of global labor diasporas.[13]

Accordingly, when asked what motivates their participation in memory activism, their answers varied, while a shared consensus around the aforementioned affective dispositions crystallized. Their views on politics differed, but they would unanimously reject being labeled as 'fundamentalist' or 'separatist' when rallying for the 1984 justice campaign. In fact, they had a highly reflexive use of what nationalism, transnationalism, and critical cosmopolitanism would entail as a mode of resisting state politics within recognition frameworks. Thus, these affective dispositions provided some memory activists with the means to articulate an alternative politics of a Sikh transnation, and others a perspective to expose the underlying chronicity of violence and systematic repression that infiltrate the space of locality, community, and nation. For example, many of the young memory activists took a deliberate stance to support socialist, feminist, and queer solidarities, as well as anti-caste and anti-colonial positions, even if that meant a confrontation with established hierarchies and normative positions in their communities.

Young Sikh memory activists were engaged in practices of political resignification, of presenting racialized and classed experiences as they encountered them first-hand, and of connecting these to the kinds of exceptional violence that transcend the place-specific forms of racial discrimination and socioeconomic scarcity. In art events and public performances, the eventfulness of the everyday was juxtaposed with the extraordinary events of racial violence, a juxtaposition that engendered an uncanny sense of resonance between 1984 and structural violence in the present tense. Hence, it was in the pressing moments of perceived 'crises' and felt chronicity, the socially intimate world of

personal memories translated into a modality of forming a political generation. For the period addressed here, memory activism thus necessitated complex forms of emotional labor and representational strategies that rendered post-1984 migration both personally and politically meaningful.

Postmemory Work and Religious Genealogies of Migration

In this final section, I discuss how narratives of violence become embedded within everyday memory discourses that circulate among the extended kinship networks of a tightly knit, transnational religious community, the *Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat* (hence AMJ), where a younger generation of Canadian Ahmadis encounter traveling stories of persecution at a generational remove. Alison Landsberg (2004) has suggested the term 'prosthetic memory' to capture how in our media-saturated publics today, memory is formed by collectives who by and large have no first-hand account of the referenced events of the past. Marianne Hirsch introduced the concept of 'postmemory' to delineate the structures of feeling that shape such mediated experiences, especially for the post-survivor generation in families marked by genocidal violence. According to Hirsch, postmemory delineates "the relationship of the second generation to powerful, often traumatic, experiences that preceded their births but that are nevertheless transmitted to them so deeply as to seem to constitute memories in their own right" (Hirsch, 2008, p. 103; see also Hirsch, 2012; Anastasiadis, 2012). While not being identical to survivor memories, in its belatedness the postmemory work of the next generation still "approximates memory in its affective force," argues Hirsch (ibid. 109). It would be tempting to discount this relationship as a form of prosthetic suffering (Landsberg, 2004, see also Boltanski, 1999), but here we acknowledge the memory work of the next generation as a tangible social process that implicates the complex transfers of intimacy, materiality and affect.[14]

In most societies, we can observe a productive tension between public memory discourses with their focus on commemorative rituals and widely recognized genres of oral testimony, and the social spaces of the everyday in which personal memories are entrenched within social interactions among and between the generations. How these embedded practices in turn shape the future contours of public memory in contexts of migrant hyperdiversity and emerging projects for social justice in Canada is a speculative question. Intrigued by how memories of violence shape diasporic practices (Nijhawan, 2016; Soni, 2020), I have inquired into what happens when the relationship between public memory and postmemory becomes complicated by stories of migration. The following observations summarize some of my findings based on in-depth qualitative interviews with second-generation Ahmadi women in the Greater Toronto Area, who were in their early to mid-twenties at the time (2010–2013) and actively engaged in citizenship practices through their community networks and other professional spheres.[15] They also participated actively in transnational social arenas in which stories of Ahmadi persecution

would commonly circulate via mosque-based peer groups and organized religious congregations. By seeing themselves as members of a religious organization and part of a transnational network of Ahmadi families, their postmemory work assumes a specific tone, resonating with religious imaginaries, specifically the prophetic discourse flowing from the speeches and teachings of their spiritual leader, the *khalif*.

Since religious language intersects with political processes associated with both the law-making violence sanctioning Ahmadi practice in Pakistan and the regulatory framework of skilled immigration and refugee adjudication in Canada and elsewhere (Nijhawan, 2019), postmemory work must be assessed, like other forms of memory-making, as multidirectional (Rothberg, 2011). In this case, we can observe how second-generation Ahmadis link narratives of persecution to an authorizing discourse of spiritual truth and supremacy. Their personalized stories of belonging to a 'persecuted sect' co-constitute their own family memories of migration. Parents' and grandparents' accounts of forced migration and of coming to terms with events that occurred in the 1970s and 1980s in Pakistan were told with attention to graphic details about the dire circumstances of violence and migration. Such accounts included stories about political mobilizations against Ahmadis in the context of the blasphemy laws of 1984 and other details that now form part of a narrative repertoire of religious persecution that also structures the discourses of mosque-based organizations and annual gatherings.

In our interviews, the normative allegiance between migration story and spiritual inheritance was mediated by narrative strategies that forge proximity between social self, religious organization, and spiritual charisma. Some of the respondents recounted their grandparents' role, for example, designing the layout for the Ahmadiyya banner or as close companions of the religious founder, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. Others recounted family narratives dating back to the 1970s and 1980s by couching moments of loss within the larger story of anti-Ahmadiyya hate, pictured as a succession of waves that affects the community in repeated cycles. In most instances, these young women would have a detailed account of what happened to grandparents, uncles, aunts, and other relatives they either lost or who fled their home country under difficult circumstances to find refuge in Canada.

Interviewees also expressed a sense of feeling overpowered by the weight of what is perceived as cyclical time of religious persecution. To illustrate the structure of feeling that pervades such generational accounts in the light of Hirsch's notes on postmemory, let me recount the story of Khayal, who since she came with her parents to Canada at the age of four, would formally belong to the 1.5 generation.[16] Khayal mentioned a long genealogy of violent losses, starting with her maternal grandfather and great-grandfather who were both killed during targeted mob violence directed against Ahmadis. When asked how she learned about the family tragedy, Khayal pointed out how her grandmother kept these stories "hidden in a closet," while affectively alluding to a sense of preparedness and anticipation of being potential

targets. Khayal described the relationship with her grandmother in Pakistan as intimate and socially proximate since she continued to communicate with her daily. Despite this social proximity across spatial divides, Khayal's source for reconstructing familial memories were archival sources of the Ahmadiyya headquarters where she located, among other things, the picture of her grandfather as a revered martyr. The normative expectations of being the post-survivor generation were anchored in the discursive structures of the religious organization, yet since belonging to Ahmadiyyat implies an expanded sense of (spiritual) kinship, there were also occasions where social interactions with her grandmother convey normative expectations of "carrying yourself well in society," as a form of moral obligation flowing from a social status earned through ancestors' sacrifices.

When compared to the memory activists discussed in the previous section, these second-generation Ahmadi migrants were far more constrained and doctrinally shaped in their memory work, even as there was a citationality that should not be fully equated with their more nuanced personal accounts. Nonetheless, constructions of their social bonds and lives in migration were mediated by memories handed down from one generation to the next. Through content and affect these were cited as the moral yardstick and normative expectation requiring their personal dedication to the pillars of Islamic piety (i.e., prayer, modesty, engagement in community service). On the one hand, this seems to affirm Hirsch's insight that postmemory cannot be understood in isolation from affiliative structures of memory work. To reiterate what Hirsch postulated in this context: postmemory is always "the result of contemporaneity and generational connection with the literal second generation combined with structures of mediation that would be broadly appropriable, available, and indeed, compelling enough to encompass a larger collective in an organic web of transmission" (Hirsch, 2008, p. 115).[17] On the other hand, the temporality of religious discourse complicates distinctions between what constitutes affiliative memory and what is to be considered postmemory. Second-generation family stories among Ahmadis in Canada, and the social bonds affirmed through such stories, were clearly framed within a prophetic narrative of the religion's *messianic future*, experienced as the "fate" of belonging to a "sect that is hated." Such powerful narratives bear significantly on the processes by which selective pasts are mobilized, as well as on how existential doubts, uncertainties, and fears animate the second generation's reorientations along messianic concepts of time and forms of spiritual practice.

We shouldn't be surprised by such findings. Whether we conceive the second-generation Ahmadi migrants as the next generation or as a generation of postmemory, in either way their memory discourse is discursively embedded within prevailing relations of power and is further imprinted with the speech genres issued by either elites or minorities that come to be identified as specific generation (Lepsius, 2005, p. 51). Susan McDaniel (2002, p. 91) points out that "generation in its sociological potentiality" is always also a

gendered product, something that comes clearly to the fore in the mentioned accounts above. The social field of intergenerational transmission is never neutral. It is a field that can also be "managed by the hegemonic generation" such as the mid-life generation (ibid., 91). We can find a similar interest in the work of Hirsch, who examines the gendered aspects of postmemory work in the context of prevailing political discourses.

While I do not mean to suggest that young Ahmadi women in the diaspora have a uniform and submissive attitude, it is undeniable that their memory discourse is couched within heteronormative frames and religious hierarchies with peculiar prophetic dimensions. As this prophetic discourse lies at the very heart of Ahmadi spiritual concepts and given that it has also instigated fierce controversies throughout the group's political history (Khan, 2015), we thus need to think carefully about its implications for how memories are formed and how the belatedness of postmemory is to be understood in such a context of transnational religious organizations as they are an integral part to South Asian migration. Moreover, the young women's roles as active community members, professionals, and organizers of youth forums must also be considered as a counterpoint to the attributed passivity to second-generation women of South Asian descent.[18]

Conclusion

Contemporary scholarship in memory and migration asserts the inherently contested landscape of memory that is increasingly challenged in its hegemonic and Eurocentric connotations by civil society actors that coordinate their efforts within grassroots activism and transnational social fields. In this chapter, I have examined the multidirectional dimensions of memory *and* generation as intertwined sociological concepts. South Asian Canadians of different regional, linguistic, ethnic, and religious backgrounds have been actively engaged in a multitude of social practices to commemorate key events of migration and community formation in Canada through struggling over citizenship rights and belonging, through coming to terms with collective loss as the result of political violence in South Asia, and by creatively forming alliances to other communities and actors in the context of reconciliation and decolonization. With these three scenarios discussed earlier, I could only offer a glimpse into the complex and shifting terrain of memory and postmemory work involving multiple actors. Each scenario has offered an opportunity to highlight a different dynamic of the conjunct work of memory and generation without suggesting any false binaries.

Thus, with the example of the Komagata Maru, we could observe how regional histories and local sites of commemoration profoundly matter in telling the story of the South Asian settlement on Turtle Island. This is also a case where we can observe how intergenerational memory work and the work of community members, activists, artists, and scholars of different generations have conjunctly led efforts to read early South Asian diaspora

formation from a variety of political angles. Their contested nature offers important insights into the ongoing colonial legacy of the Canadian state. The memory activism of transnational second generations offers yet another window to explore the political dimension of memory and generation. In the form of youth-led social movements, social justice memory activism has played a formative role in shaping a subject horizon for the 1984 postgeneration, in relation to the discriminatory practices of immigration and the fights for justice in response to state and communal violence in South Asia. Each of these two examples illustrates the potential of memories to be mobilized for inclusive (vs. exclusive) or transversal forms of solidarity. It is in the context of mobilizations around 1984, however, that the cleavages between political genealogies of migration and generation are most clearly visible, something that also shows in the framing of Tamil migrants' political activism in Canada (Krishnamurty, 2013). Memory activism in this context is both a response and an intervention into hegemonic state discourses on violence, security, and politico-religious boundaries. Claiming the 'Punjab crisis' as their own struggle situates young migrants as memory activists in a risky space marked by identification versus misidentification, translation versus mistranslation, and enclave politics versus global struggles for social justice.

It is important in this context not to take temporal belatedness (postmemory) and geographical distance (distant or prosthetic suffering) at face value, even as these structural positionings unmistakably shape subject positions. Once analyzed as social practices and as emergent work of forming social imaginaries of migration that are never fixed or stable, there is reason to examine the work of the transnational second generation as important in its own right. Young memory activists today perform multiple roles when reworking public memory, roles that are incommensurable with prevalent ideas of passively absorbing stories handed down to them. Memory activism unfolds at a historical moment when the younger generation evaluates the globally interlinked condition as ripe in unresolved conflicts and continued forms of settler-colonial privilege. Memory activism is creatively used in an attempt to expose and unmake these structural inequalities that connect place to state and identity to a transnational field of belonging. Not always are such efforts manifested in the form of visible social movements, however. As discussed in the third section, the embedded activities by which a postgeneration reworks memories of violence and human rights abuses can also be contained within networks of kinship, where they intersect with heteronormative institutions and orthodox languages of religion. Rather than discounting these practices from a secularist point of view, I have tried to articulate how memory and generation are political processes for young Ahmadis in Canada too.

Memory and generation remain important lenses for unpacking what is entailed in the political processes of migration. Their intertwined dynamics can be observed in each of the discussed scenarios and matter for future constellations as we have entered the event horizon of climate dystopias that together with resurgent nationalisms raise the specter of livable futures

for people in South Asia and elsewhere. With the scaling-up of refugeeism and hardening political borders predicted for the near future, we can expect memory and postmemory work to be of continued significance as perspectives to comprehend the precarious conditions of people on the move. For future scholarly work, this would entail a move away from the even-centered perspective that has informed the examples and analysis I offered in this chapter. Instead, it shall be important to attend to what some memory scholars, leaning on Rob Nixon's (2013) work on slow violence, have started to term 'slow memory'.[19] Whatever the terminology, there is the need to reimagine memory work when grappling with the long-durée of colonial and capitalist transformations of the planet as opposed to the short-term media-saturated crisis frame that incapacitates us in our ability to grief, remember, and actively reimagine our futures.

Notes

1 The term "transnational second generation" is used heuristically in this chapter. It describes the joint activities and social practices of a generation of young people born to first immigrant parents, that in their collective organizing and social imaginaries can also comprise those belonging to a 1.5 generation. For a deeper discussion, see Fouron and Glick-Schiller (2002) and Levitt (2001)

2 I concur with Kate Pendakis (2018), who studies political genealogies of Greek migration as "narrative frames that are made available by both the historical and cultural specificities of post-civil war Greece as well as experiences of transnational political mobilization" (ibid., 432). As Pendakis points out, "these frames provide structure to memory narratives; they reveal an ongoing struggle by actors to reconcile their previous political commitments and to position themselves as moral subjects" (ibid., 432).

3 Even though Halbwachs situates individual memories within the framework of group memory, individual difference and the reflexive capacity of the individual is acknowledged for example in the mobility of individuals between groups and the agency individuals exercise on group consciousness.

4 As Bude points out, Mannheim's concept of "generation location" comprises two elements. One is a reflexive stance regarding how specific potentialities for social and political action are realized. Another is the pre-reflexive layering of social memory contingent on non-discursive and affective identifications (Bude, 2005, p. 29). Edmunds and Turner (2002, p. 4) point out that there are at least three distinct meanings of "generation" in Mannheim's work, none of which is reducible to the meaning of cohort: "generational location as a cluster of opportunities of life chances . . ., 'generation as actuality' that shares a set of historical responses to its location . . ., [and] 'generational units' that which articulate . . . a consciousness that express their particular location."

5 The Komagata Maru Story housed at the Canadian Museum of Human Rights, can be found here: https://humanrights.ca/story/story-komagata-maru. For a critical analysis of the Canadian Museum of Human Rights, see Dhamoon (2016) and Failler (2018).

6 For the "Lions of the Sea" exhibit, consult http://shmc.ca/events-exhibitions/lions-of-the-sea. For an exhibition housed by the Sikh Heritage Museum in Abbotsford, BC titled "Komagata Maru: Discrimination Meets Determination", see http://canadiansikhheritage.ca/komagata-maru-2/

7 Gutman and Wüstenberg (2023, p. 6) write: "Memory activism is an effective modus operandi for grassroots actors working for reconciliation and democratic values *and* those seeking to build nationalist or exclusionary spaces alike. Memory activism, we contend, is a particular and historically grounded phenomenon: although the struggle over memory is present in all time periods and all social interactions, it is neither empirically warranted nor conceptually useful to regard all instances of negotiating the meaning of the past as memory activism if we want to advance our understanding."

8 The "Punjabi youth gang" has also acquired the status of a cultural icon. Consider here *Beeba Boys* (2015) directed by Deepa Mehta.

9 A detonated bomb midair led to the June 22, 1985, plane crash off the coast of Ireland that killed all 329 passengers of predominantly South Asian ancestry. The Air India commission's report that was made public in 2010 contains a litany of complaints about the inadequate and in instances unexplainable behavior of CSIS and the RCMP, who had the main suspects, members of Sikh militant groups, under observation but were unable to prevent the bombing devices being planted onto two Air India planes at Vancouver's airport. For the full report go to http://epe.lac-bac.gc.ca/100/206/301/pco-bcp/commissions/air_india/2010-07-23/www.majorcomm.ca/en/reports/finalreport/default.htm

10 According to Angela Failler (2012, p. 255), Canadian politics has approached the event through a "war on terror framing of remembrance that reiterates hegemonic neoliberal ideologies of national belonging, citizenship, terrorism and security."

11 This has been a particularly salient topic in the United States in the wake of the Wisconsin mass shooting. For a discussion, see Thobani (2012) and the 2012 special issue of *Sikh Formations* 8(3).

12 As a grassroots organization, this movement initially formed to protect the deportation of Laibar Singh, a case that made headlines in the early 2000s. Bonar Buffam (2013) for an analysis of the circumstances that led to the case and protests in the community against Singh's deportation.

13 Arguably, there is a contradiction with symbols of 1984 being pervasive in spaces of religious gathering and the idea expressed by many of the young people that 1984 was shrouded in complete silence. What they seem to express is the present absence of 1984 as embodied memory discourse. This might be the consequence of a passive tuning-out from gurdwara politics, willful ignorance at the part of a younger generation, or due to a semantic numbness that they experienced in the domestic sphere. Most respondents mentioned the role played by Sikh youth camps, social media, movies, and other educational formats that allowed them to (re)connect to1984 in the form of an affective politics of memory.

14 Hirsch makes distinguishes the "literal" second generation from what she calls the "postgeneration." A postgeneration is characterized by a pattern of participatory and intentional engagements to link private and public memory activism, based on moral dispositions. As Hirsch (2008) points out, "the frustrated need to know about a traumatic past" (ibid., 114) feeds into an active process "to *reactivate and reembody* more distant social/national and archival/cultural memorial structures by reinvesting them with resonant individual and familial forms of mediation and aesthetic expression" (ibid., 111).

15 Most interviews with young Ahmadi women were held by Duygu Gul Kaya, who was my research assistant at the time.

16 I use a pseudonym here for a young woman of South Asian origin who at the time of the interview as in her mid-twenties.

17 Hirsch's insistence that familial and affiliative postmemory are conjunct shows in the accounts of young Ahmadi women who employ metaphors of religious kinship as "accessible lingua franca" (ibid., 115).

18 In all three examples discussed here, memory activism is shaped by young people of all genders and sexual orientations, despite prevailing heteronormative, and at times homophobic practices in the social realm that curtail the visibility especially for LGBTQ people of South Asian descent in such roles.

19 See the ongoing work of the European working group on slow memory: www.slowmemory.eu

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18 Exploring the Canadian Market for Indian Health Workers

Ayona Bhattacharjee, Banantika Datta, and Rupa Chanda

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought to fore the malleability of cross-country health worker mobility barriers (Dempster & Smith, 2020). Some recent policy changes regarding health worker[1] migration as introduced by the OECD countries reflect the same. For instance, Canada facilitated the recognition of qualifications of foreign-trained doctors. In Ontario, international medical graduates (IMGs), who had graduated in the past two years were allowed to apply for 30-day Supervised Short Duration medical licenses, to support domestic health workers and meet the sudden surge in healthcare demand.[2] However, the issue of health worker shortage is neither just a result of the pandemic nor is it relevant only to particular countries. As per the WHO projections, the global demand for health workers under assumptions of no further health shocks is estimated to be 80.2 million by 2030, while the supply will be around 67.3 million, portending a significant shortage (WHO, 2016). Even though the supply of health workers is expected to increase by 55 per cent from 2013 to 2030, there will also be a significant increase in health worker shortage. Thus, as the pandemic recedes and countries get back to strengthening their healthcare systems, the importance of health worker mobility is likely to become more crucial than ever in the past.

Traditionally, health worker shortages have been addressed through an increase in the number of medical colleges, by adding to the pool of graduating students, or by increased reliance on the immigration of foreign-born/foreign-trained health professionals (Lafortune et al., 2019). For instance, around one-third of all foreign-born or foreign-trained doctors and nurses globally originate from within the OECD countries, while the remaining two-thirds are from non-OECD countries. It is worth noting that the United States reports the highest number of Indian doctors while the UK reports the highest number of Indian nurses. As of 2016, around 18 per cent of the foreign-trained nurses in Australia and more than 10 per cent in Canada were from India. In 2020, more than 20 per cent of the foreign-trained nurses in the UK and New Zealand were trained in India. Figure 18.1 shows the major source countries of physicians and nurses working in the OECD countries.

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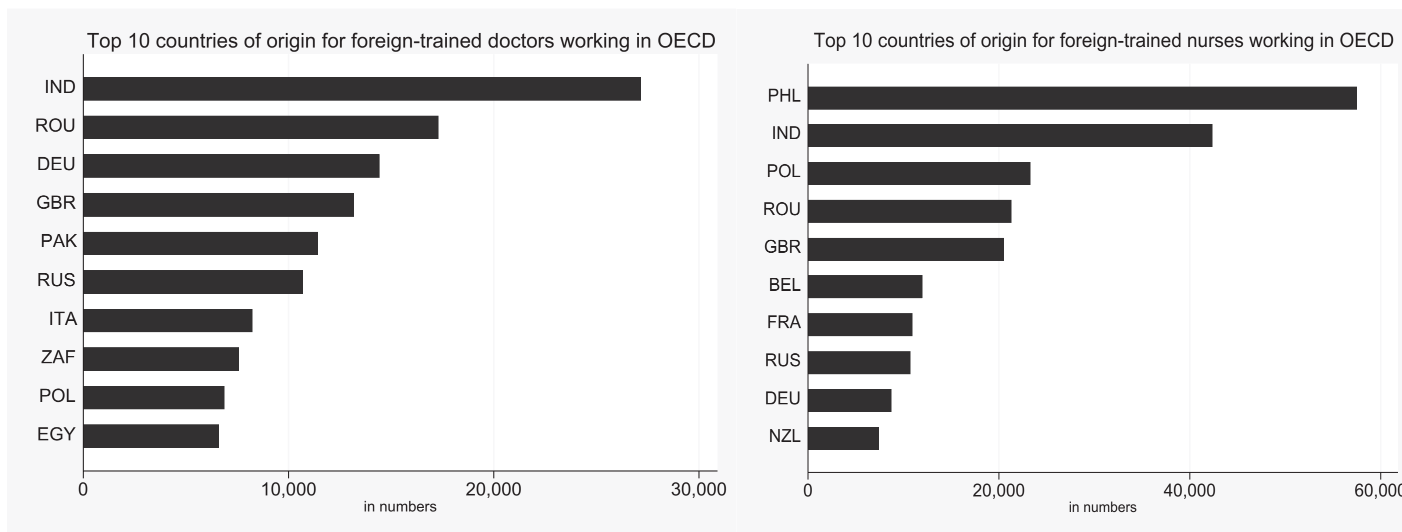

Figure 18.1 Foreign-trained doctors and nurses in OECD countries from 10 major countries of origin.

Source: OECD Health Statistics 2019

Note: It shows the number of foreign-trained doctors and nurses working in the OECD countries from top 10 origin countries where the country codes are – AUS: Australia, CAN: Canada, DEU: Germany, GBR: United Kingdom, IND: India, ITA: Italy, IRL: Ireland, NZL: New Zealand, USA: United States of America, PHL: Philippines, ROU: Romania, PAK: Pakistan, RUS: Russia, ZAF: South Africa, POL: Poland, EGY: Egypt, BEL: Belgium, FRA: France.

In the 1990s, India ranked sixth in terms of the number of nurses applying for the US nursing licenses, but since 2003, Indian nurses have been the second-largest applicants, next only to the Philippines. In Ireland and the UK, Indian nurses surpassed the number of Filipino nurses in 2005 (Matsuno, 2009). Thus, over time, India has emerged as one of the leading source countries for physicians and nurses. The major destination countries for Indian health workers have been the US, the UK, Australia, Canada, and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the global demand for Indian health workers increased even further.

The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) in India has identified 300,000 jobs in the healthcare sector – doctors, nurses, and allied health personnel in different countries (Kumar, 2021). Given the growing number of government initiatives as well as the push to boost India's health worker supplies, it is time to explore the potential destination markets. One such market identified by the MSDE is Canada, where around 40 per cent of doctors and 26 per cent of nurses are foreign-born but which is yet to be one of the top destinations for Indian health workers. Earlier, Dumont et al. (2008) highlighted that the composition of source countries for foreign health professionals in Canada has been changing with rising shares of physicians from South Africa and India, replacing the traditionally reported high shares from the UK and Ireland. On the demand side, the Canadian government has announced an investment of $90 million for projects under the Foreign Credential Recognition Program, to help internationally trained health workers to work in Canada.[3] These projects aim to improve the credential recognition processes of internationally educated health professionals (IEHP), provide mentoring and facilitate IEHP mobility within Canada. Supports such as wage subsidies, work placements, and mentoring to IEHP will help them integrate more easily into the Canadian labour market.

Based on mutual interests in services trade, India and Canada launched negotiations towards a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) in 2010. It is thus an opportune time to revisit the issue of mobility of health workers within the larger context of trade in services between the two countries.[4] This chapter contributes by focusing on this relatively untapped destination country of Indian health workers and how mobility from India to Canada for this group of service providers could be addressed through the CEPA and bilateral cooperation.

Migration of Health Workers to Canada

The Canadian Occupational Projection System (COPS) shows the future estimates for job openings and job seekers at different occupational levels in Canada. The projections show a steadily rising demand for different classes of health workers in Canada (see Table 18.1), part of which cannot be addressed by the rising domestic pool of health workers.

Table 18.1 Future projections of the employment opportunities in Canadian Health system

Occupation Name	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Managers in healthcare	34,900	35500	36100	36700	37400
Medical administrative assistants	79,700	80,800	81,800	82,900	84,100
Nursing co-ordinators and supervisors	41,800	43,000	44,200	45,500	46,700
Specialist physicians	59,700	61,500	63,200	65,000	66,800
General practitioners and family physicians	92,400	95,100	97,800	100,600	103,400
Dentists	29,100	29,500	29,900	30,300	30,700
Veterinarians	11,400	11,500	11,600	11,600	11,700
Optometrists, chiropractors and other health diagnosing and treating professionals	39,700	40,700	41,700	42,700	43,700
Pharmacists	46,200	46,600	47,000	47,400	47,800
Dietitians and nutritionists	14,400	14,700	14,900	15,200	15,600
Audiologists and speech-language pathologists	11,100	11,300	11,500	11,700	12,000
Physiotherapists	33,600	34,500	35,200	36,000	36,800
Occupational therapists & other professional occupations in therapy and assessment	31,500	32,300	33,100	33,900	34,800
Medical laboratory technologists & medical laboratory technicians and pathologists' assistants	54,200	55,000	55,800	56,600	57,500
Animal health technologists and veterinary technician	23,300	23,800	24,100	24,600	25,000
Respiratory therapists, clinical perfusionists and cardiopulmonary technologists; medical radiation technologists & medical sonographers	51,200	52,200	53,300	54,400	55,500
Cardiology technologists and electrophysiological diagnostic technologists, n.e.c. & Other medical technologists and technicians (except dental health)	63,100	64,000	64,800	65,700	66,600
Technical occupations in dental healthcare	38,300	38,800	39,200	39,700	40,100
Opticians	11,800	12,000	12,200	12,400	12,600

(*Continued*)

Table 18.1 (Continued)

Occupation Name	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Practitioners of natural healing; massage therapists & other technical occupations in therapy and assessment	71,100	72,200	73,100	73,800	74,500
Licensed practical nurses	88,000	89,400	90,800	92,200	93,700
Paramedical occupations	30,300	30,700	31,100	31,500	31,900
Dental assistants	34,500	35,000	35,500	36,000	36,600
Nurse aides, orderlies, and patient service associates, & other assisting occupations in support of health services	376,700	385,900	394,900	404,300	413,900
Psychologists	26,200	26,800	27,300	27,800	28,300
Registered nurses and registered psychiatric nurses	376,200	386,300	396,300	406,600	417,100
Health occupations	1,664,500	1,701,500	1,737,300	1,774,400	1,812,400

Source: Canadian Occupational Projection System (COPS) – 2019 to 2028 projections (https://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/e80851b8-de68-43bd-a85c-c72e1b3a3890), accessed on 25th July 2022.

The rising share of foreign-trained health professionals attracted by the rising opportunities for health-related job opportunities in Canada re-emphasizes the need to analyse labour mobility clauses in its free trade agreements. Canada has implemented the WHO Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel. The Government of Canada's departments, Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) and Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) facilitate fair treatment of foreign-trained workers in Canada, including appropriate wage payments. Also, temporary foreign workers in Canada have the same rights to workplace protection as Canadians and permanent residents, making it even more conducive for the migrant personnel to adjust. These make the Canadian market a desirable destination for skilled professionals. In September 2022, the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship announced changes to provide physicians with access to Canada's economic permanent residence programs. Thus, the ease of obtaining Permanent Residence in Canada has in recent years made it a much sought-after destination country for many Indian skilled workers, including health workers.

The dependence of the Canadian healthcare system on migrant health workers is evident from the consistently high share of foreign-trained health workers in its healthcare system. The share of foreign-trained physicians has steadily increased while the share of foreign-trained nurses has fluctuated

with a slight increase in recent years. As of 2017, data shows that around 25 per cent of the total number of physicians in Canada was foreign-trained. The number of Internationally Educated Nurses (IENs) in Canada's nursing workforce has increased from 6.9 per cent (23,764) in 2007 to 9 per cent (37,370) in 2019. Post-2002, around 11 per cent of the IENs in Canada have been from India (Covell et al., 2017). In addition, the growth of IENs in Canada from India has been higher than that from the Philippines and is rapidly growing in all nursing cadres (Harun & Walton-Roberts, 2022).

There are two distinct ways in which foreign health professionals can enter the Canadian healthcare market – either as a student or a professional. The first is a two-step migration model as the migrants can convert from study to work visas (Hou et al., 2020). In the nursing profession, while the students are enrolled in nursing programmes, the provincial nursing regulatory agencies can process their applications so that when required, they can complete the entry-to-practice tests or other specific tests (Hillmann, 2005). Evidence shows that the number of study permit holders in Canada has doubled during the last decade. From 2009 to 2020, most international students registered in health sciences in Canada were reported to be from India (Canada Statistics, 2019).

Despite variations across territorial requirements, the usual entry eligibility criteria for IMGs in Canada include the requirement of a medical degree from medical schools recognized by the World Directory of Medical Schools or from a Canadian/U.S. medical school accredited by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education/the Committee on Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools. This is to be followed by certain entrance examinations. Candidates may achieve full licensure only if they have a recognized medical degree and are a Licentiate of the Medical Council of Canada (LMCC). The latter is granted by the Medical Council of Canada (MCC) to medical graduates who (i) pass the Medical Council of Canada Qualifying Examination (MCCQE) Part I and Part II (or an acceptable clinical assessment deemed comparable to the MCCQE Part II) (ii) have satisfactorily completed at least 12 months of acceptable postgraduate training or an acceptable equivalent. Each Canadian province/territory has a medical regulatory authority that is responsible for setting the licensing criteria for that province. The regulatory bodies in each province are responsible for overseeing the actions of their members.[5] IMGs who have completed specialty training from specified institutions in approved jurisdictions of Australia/New Zealand, Hong Kong, Singapore, South Africa, Switzerland, or the UK are allowed to apply directly for training assessments.[6]

Despite the advantages of health workers migrating to Canada, skill underutilization of immigrant health workers is a commonly reported concern. The complexity of the process of credential recognition is usually attributed as a factor for such underutilization of migrant health workforce. While several steps such as the "Fair Access to Regulated Professions" Act (Government of Ontario, 2006) have been adopted to streamline processes, some regulatory bodies are still in favour of prior Canadian work experience (Walton-Roberts, 2022).

Indian Health Workers in Canada

Canada follows a specific classification for health workers, of which data is available for 30 categories. When considering the flow of health professionals from India to Canada, we find that the share of India-trained physicians and nurses migrating to Canada has been rising sharply, though there are wide variations across the provinces. Data shows that Newfoundland and Labrador have the highest share of India-trained family physicians while Manitoba reports the highest share of India-trained specialists. Among the provinces, New Brunswick reports the highest share of physicians trained in India (see Figure 18.2). Newfoundland and Labrador have been focusing on Indian nurses while Saskatchewan is looking to hire from the Philippines.[7]

The share of India-trained nurses has been steadily increasing over time, with a significant increase in the share of licensed practical nurses (LPNs). The major source countries for foreign-trained nurses in Canada have been the Philippines, India, the UK, and the United States (see Figure 18.3). However, nurses trained in India had a lower pass rate in the first attempt compared to nurses trained in the Philippines, Jamaica, the UK, and Australia. While 72.7 per cent of the Filipino nurses and 63.6 per cent of the nurses trained in Jamaica cleared the NCLEX-RN test (required for nursing graduates to successfully pass to be licensed as a Registered Nurse) in the first attempt, only 47.5 per cent of the Indian nurses could clear it in the first attempt in 2017 (Lafortune et al., 2019). The Government of Canada has launched a mission to recruit more internationally educated registered nurses from India, who can fill vacancies in Newfoundland and Labrador. A team of Provincial Government officials from India is likely to set up a recruitment desk in Bengaluru and a team from the College of Registered Nurses of Newfoundland

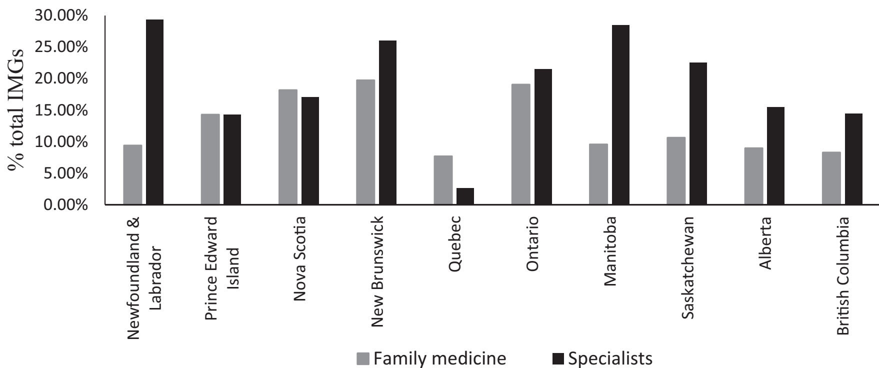

Figure 18.2 Canadian province-wise share of India-trained physicians.

Source: Supply, Distribution and Migration of Physicians in Canada, Canadian Institute for Health Information (source: www.cihi.ca/sites/default/files/document/supply-distribution-migration-of-physicians-in-canada-2020-meth-notes-en.pdf). Note: Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut are not represented, since zero India-trained physicians were reported in those provinces in 2018

and Labrador is supposed to oversee the licensure. This collaboration is likely to help in identifying high-potential candidates.[8]

Canada added 16 new skilled occupations like nurse aides, long-term care aides, and hospital attendants to their 'skilled-based draw system' for Express Entry (EE).[9] The announcement has brought a large number of inquiries from interested candidates in Punjab, especially in education and healthcare. Under the 'skilled-based system' one can get eligible even with low scores in the Comprehensive Ranking System (CRS).[10] The Federal Skilled Worker Program (FSWP), managed by EE, is a paperless system and is the most popular among Indian doctors to apply for jobs in Canada. There is no requirement of having previously worked in Canada under this route. FSWP only requires a one-year full-time experience, minimum language requirements, and a minimum score of 67 points (out of 100) on the FSWP selection criteria (based on six factors).[11] To be eligible for FSWP, Indian doctors must get their credentials verified by the MCC, obtain a passing score on MCCQE Parts I and II to get an LMCC, and pass a one-year post-graduate program in the province in which they wish to apply.[12] The Atlantic Immigration Pilot is a similar program designed for entry into the Atlantic Provinces like Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Newfoundland and Labrador. However, this requires a full-time job offer from a designated employer.

Apart from the migration of physicians and nurses from India to Canada, as discussed in Bhattacharjee (2022), several other categories of health workers trained in India also hold significant shares in the Canadian health workforce. For instance, Figure 18.4 shows India's position in the employment of physiotherapists in direct care in Canada. The figure shows that among the source countries of graduation, India's share has been steadily rising from around 20 per cent to 40 per cent during 2011 to 2017, surpassing the contributions of the UK

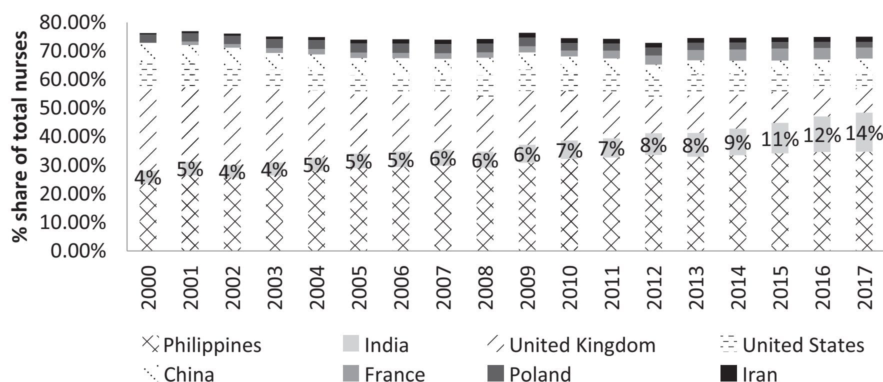

Figure 18.3 Share of India-trained nurses employed in Canada.

Source: OECDSTAT, accessed on 25 June 2020. Only eight major source countries of IENs are reported, which are – China, France, India, Iran, Philippines, Poland, the UK, and the United States

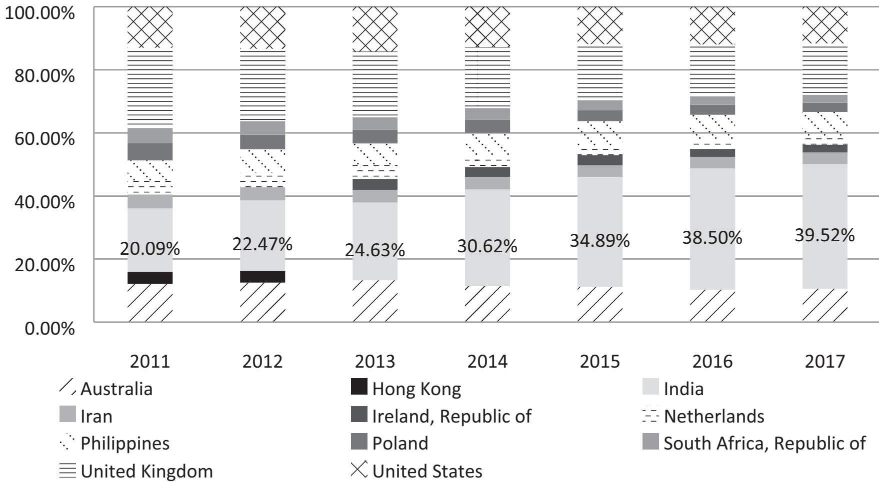

Figure 18.4 Share of India-trained physiotherapists employed in Canada.

Source: Health Workforce Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information (www.cihi.ca/en/health-workforce-database-metadata)

and the United States. Currently, the share of physiotherapists trained in India is the highest among all other source countries of graduation.

Figure 18.5 shows the occupational therapist workforce employed in direct care, by top countries of graduation, provinces/territories. It shows that India's share has been stable at around 12 per cent while the major shares have been held by the United States and the UK.

Foreign-trained pharmacists as a share of the total supply are reported to have increased from 30.9 per cent in 2010 to 49.7 per cent in 2019 (Walton-Roberts, 2022). Figure 18.6 shows the growing role of pharmacists employed in Canada with graduation degrees obtained from India. The shares have been steadily rising. The highest share in this segment has been mostly held by those trained in Egypt. However, the share of pharmacists trained in India has nearly doubled over the past decade.

The existing literature also suggests rising demand for positions in elderly care in Canada. Entry into the unregulated personal support worker (PSW) positions for elderly care in Canada has been emerging as a potential route for entering the Canadian health sector (Williams et al., 2015; Walton-Roberts, 2019). Apart from opportunities for physicians, nurses, and physiotherapists, there is a growing demand for nurse aides, orderlies, and patient service associates who assist nurses, hospital staff, and physicians in Canada.[13] They mostly work in nursing, residential care facilities, and in hospitals or facilities providing individual and family services and other healthcare establishments. In 2016, more than a third of the 245,500 people employed as nurse aides, orderlies, and patient service associates in Canada were foreign professionals

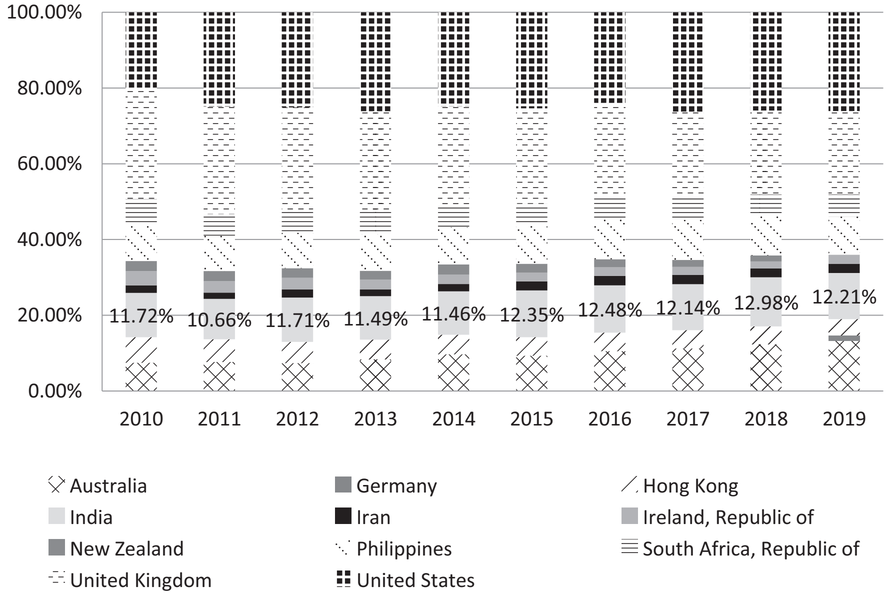

Figure 18.5 Share of India-trained occupational therapists employed in Canada.

Source: Health Workforce Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information (www.cihi.ca/en/access-data-and-reports)

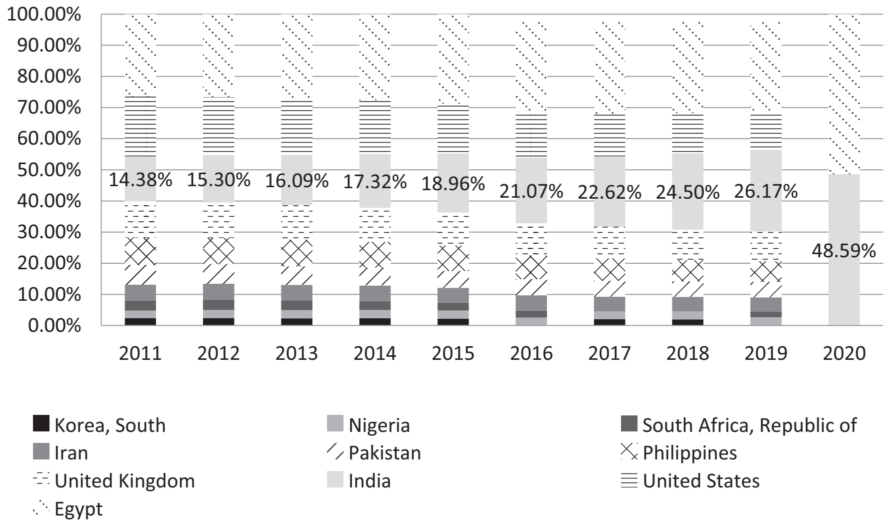

Figure 18.6 Share of India-trained pharmacists employed in Canada.

Source: Health Workforce Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information (www.cihi.ca/en/health-workforce)

(Turcotte & Savage, 2020). This share was higher than the share of foreign professionals in all other occupations in Canada and was also growing faster than the share of foreign professionals in any other occupation. For instance, between 1996 and 2016, the proportion of immigrants as nurse aides or orderly and patient service associates increased from 22 per cent to 36 per cent, while the foreign-trained shares in other occupations increased from 19 per cent to 24 per cent, relatively less than that in the healthcare domain. The major source countries for these positions are held by Southeast Asia, the Caribbean and Bermuda, and sub-Saharan Africa. Prospects in this field also necessitate analysis of how professionals trained in India could be a source of geriatric workers, nurse's aides, and so on. Thus, the critical part of linking the Indian and Canadian health markets through health worker mobility has implications not only for the highly skilled health professionals but also for the relatively lesser skilled health workers.

Canada's Trade Agreements and Health Worker Mobility

Many of the recent agreements between Canada and partner countries try to address health worker mobility in different capacities. The rising need for healthcare, more so after the pandemic in countries such as Canada, has implications for the entry of medical students and foreign-trained health workers. Canada is a party to several international trade agreements and forums such as the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS); the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA, in partnership with the United States and Mexico); the Canada-European Union Trade and Investment Enhancement Agreement; the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation; and several other bilateral agreements, reflecting its interest in negotiating trade liberalization in services. It has undertaken several commitments under the GATS except for health, public education, social services, and cultural services sectors. However, it is a party to some bilateral and regional agreements for the international recruitment and migration of health workers. The agreement between Canada, the United States, Australia, Ireland, and the UK promotes circular migration of doctors by recognizing their training and certificates.

The *NAFTA*, superseded by the Canada – United States – Mexico Agreement (CUSMA) in 2020, allows citizens of a member country to qualify for temporary entry into another member country as a professional. Over 60 occupations (including healthcare services) are considered for entry, provided the candidates meet the minimum education requirements. As per the agreement, professionals are not subject to any Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) but require work permits to practice in Canada. There are specific educational requirements for the entry of health professionals. Temporary workers authorized to enter Canada under the NAFTA are allowed to temporarily work but are not allowed to indefinitely remain in Canada.[14]

Canada is a member of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (*CPTPP*) with Australia, Japan, Mexico, New

Zealand, Singapore, and Vietnam, since 2018. The agreement allows temporary entry of several categories of business visitors, professionals, and technicians to enter each member country without being subject to quotas or economic needs tests except for a few professions like healthcare.[15]

The Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (*CETA*) between the European Union and Canada came into force in 2017.[16] It provides a framework that can allow Canada to recognize professional qualifications that are earned in the EU, and vice versa. Other requirements, such as rules limiting the number of service suppliers, the total number of service operations, or the total quantity of service output, are prohibited. Canada-*Chile* (CCFTA) in force since July 1997 is similar to the basic clauses of NAFTA. Changes were made to the minimum educational requirements and alternative credentials were introduced for dieticians, nutritionists, physicians, occupational therapists, registered nurses, physiotherapists, and veterinarians.[17]

Canada-*Colombia* FTA signed in 2008, effective since 2011, allows the grant of temporary entry and work permits or relevant authorization to businesspersons seeking to engage in business activities. The agreement does not cover managers in certain sectors including health, physicians, dentists, optometrists, chiropractors, other health professions, pharmacists, dieticians, nutritionists, therapy and assessment professionals, nurse supervisors, and registered nurses.[18] Another FTA with Peru, effective since 2009, states that for temporary entry of professionals, prior approval procedures, labour certification tests, or other procedures of similar effect are exempted. However, the agreement does not cover professionals related to health, and specific health-related professionals such as **m**anagers in health, education, social and community services; physicians, dentists, optometrists, chiropractors, other health professions; pharmacists, dieticians, and nutritionists; therapy and assessment professionals; and nurse supervisors, and registered nurses.[19]

An agreement between Canada and *Honduras does* not allow automatic recognition of professional degrees. *Service exclusions by major service categories* **include m**edical and health studies and veterinary/animal care services (including livestock services) and *health and social services*.[20] Canada – *Panama* FTA, signed in 2010, effective since 2013, allows temporary entry provisions in this agreement. However, only the provisions for business visitors and professionals are currently in force. The agreement lists professionals who are exempted from LMIA but does not include medical personnel in this.[21] The agreement with Korea has been effective since 2015 and uses a positive listing of professionals. While the agreement establishes preferential access to the respective markets by facilitating greater transparency and predictability for the movement of businesspersons. It excludes public services such as health and public education. However, the governments remain free to enact policies and programs as and when necessary.[22]

Canada has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with certain countries, which has direct implications for health professional mobility into Canada. For instance, in 2008, *France* and Quebec signed an understanding

on the mutual recognition of professional qualifications to facilitate access to regulated professions. Negotiations between the respective authorities for each profession involve signing MRAs and amendment of legislative, regulatory, and administrative standards. There are 80 such arrangements benefitting many nurses, lawyers, engineers, doctors, etc. as their skills have been recognized in France or Quebec. The Ordre Professionnel de la physiothérapie du Québec (OPPQ)'s regulation, an outcome of the Agreement on the Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications between Quebec and France, has facilitated French massage-physiotherapists to practice in Quebec as physiotherapists or physical rehabilitation therapists.[23] Nova Scotia has launched a Physician Stream for attracting doctors to work for provincial health services. The Nova Scotia Health Authority (NSHA) and the Izaak Walton Killam Health Centre (IWK) encourage foreign-trained general practitioners, family physicians, and specialist physicians to apply for positions.[24] Provinces such as Alberta*, Saskatchewan, and British Columbia have MoUs with the Philippines to facilitate the flow of skilled workers into these provinces*. **Specifically, t**he Alberta-Philippines MoU allows the province to deliver education programs in the Philippines as well as share labour market information. The Government of Saskatchewan signed an MoU with the Government of the Philippines to facilitate increased recruitment of Filipino workers under the Saskatchewan Immigrant Nominee Program (SINP).[25] Despite the rising number of international agreements concerning health worker mobility, no such agreement exists between Canada and India.

While Canada does not explicitly include health professional mobility in most of its trade agreements, it could be worth investigating this angle in its trade relations with India. Compared to the presence of medical students or health professionals from any other country, India's share in IMGs, IENs as well as some of the other health professions in Canada has been rising steadily. Thus, formal agreements in the form of FTAs or province-specific MoUs covering MRAs, and entry criteria for health professional mobility between the two countries can reduce the hurdles which are currently affecting the smooth flow of health workers between the two countries.

Conclusion

There is enough evidence that the number of health workers and their quality are correlated with positive health outcomes like infant and maternal mortality, immunization coverage, and even cardiovascular diseases (WHO, 2006). Healthcare is a labour-intensive sector, wherein the health workers serve as critical assets for shaping health systems, and, thus, efficient allocation of health workers not only within countries but also across countries is important. Furthermore, health worker density has been ranked as the most important criterion required for achieving Universal Health Coverage (Reid et al., 2020). The importance of health workers is evident from the high share of foreign-born doctors and nurses in countries like the UK, Australia, and

Canada, and its significance has been further highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic with countries facing acute shortages of health workers and taking steps to facilitate mobility of health workers. In this context, bilateral agreements have emerged as an important tool towards achieving this objective, by facilitating the mobility of health workers in a mutually beneficial manner between sending and receiving countries. Such agreements reduce uncertainty, by increasing transparency in recruitment procedures and by specifying qualification and language requirements and addressing issues of return, welfare, and working conditions, including institutional mechanisms for managing bilateral mobility.

India has been a major source country for doctors and nurses in the world and has signed several bilateral agreements and MoUs with different countries to facilitate the mobility of health workers. Additionally, the Government of India has undertaken several initiatives to increase the domestic production of health workers, which serves a dual objective of not only meeting India's domestic needs but also maintaining India's role as a major global supplier of health workers. While certain countries are recognized as major destination markets for Indian health workers, some markets, such as Canada remain untapped. Given the fact that Canada has signed bilateral agreements and province-specific MoUs with some countries to facilitate the recruitment of foreign-trained health workers but not yet with India despite India being a major source country globally and its growing importance as a source country for health workers in Canada, there is a strong case for the two countries to engage in a bilateral mobility agreement. Against the backdrop of the ongoing India-Canada Free Trade Agreement negotiations, such a bilateral mobility framework as well as broader collaboration in the health sector would be most timely to pursue. Stronger trade and mobility linkages between the two countries in the health sector can significantly contribute to the strengthening of their health systems. It will open opportunities for more Indian health workers to practice in Canada, with positive spillover effects for both countries.

Notes

1 We use health workers to signify individuals working in the healthcare delivery and health professionals to signify the relatively more skilled individuals working in this domain, such as physicians and nurses.

2 Source: www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/contribution-of-migrant-doctors-and-nurses-to-tackling-covid-19-crisis-in-oecd-countries-2f7bace2/, accessed 18 April 2022.

3 Source: https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/nri/work/canadas-90-million-plan-to-make-it-easier-for-internationally-educated-professionals-work-in-healthcare/articleshow/96019376.cms?from=mdr, accessed 29 December 2022. Also mentioned in a tweet by Sean Fraser, the Minister of Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship. Around 47% of the internationally trained health workers are unemployed or working in non-health sectors in Canada, and these programs will be helpful in such cases.

4 Source: https://commerce.gov.in/international-trade/trade-agreements/indias-current-engagements-in-rtas/india-canada-comprehensive-economic-partnership-agreement-cepa/, accessed 3 January 2023.
5 The regulatory authorities for Registered Nurses are British Columbia College of Nursing Professionals, College and Association of Registered Nurses of Alberta, Saskatchewan Registered Nurses Association, College of Registered Nurses of Manitoba, College of Nurses of Ontario, Ordre des infirmières et infirmiers du Québec, Nurses Association of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia College of Nursing, College of Registered Nurses of Newfoundland and Labrador, Registered Nurses Association of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut, Registered Nurses Association of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut, Yukon Registered Nurses Association.
6 Source: www.royalcollege.ca/rcsite/credentials-exams/assessment-international-medical-graduates-e#jur, accessed 4 January 2023.
7 Source: www.cbc.ca/news/health/canada-international-nurses-poorer-countries-worried-1.6655231, accessed 7 January 2023.
8 Source: www.gov.nl.ca/releases/2022/exec/1103n02/, accessed 29 December 2022.
9 Source: https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/express-entry-into-canada-heres-how-to-go-about-it-8288636/, accessed 7 January 2023.
10 Source: https://indianexpress.com/article/cities/chandigarh/canada-calls-skilled-workers-health-education-sectors-immigration-punjab-8346202/, accessed 7 January 2023.
11 Six factors include education, language skills, work experience, age, arranged employment and adaptability. Source: www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/express-entry/eligibility/federal-skilled-workers/six-selection-factors-federal-skilled-workers.html, accessed 7 January 2023.
12 Source: https://expressentrypr.com/immigration-for-indian-doctors-in-canada/, accessed 7 January 2023.
13 See Health Care Assistant in Canada, available at www.jobbank.gc.ca/marketreport/jobs/15778/ca, accessed 27 July 2022.
14 Source: www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/operational-bulletins-manuals/temporary-residents/foreign-workers/international-free-trade-agreements/north-american.html, accessed October 2022.
15 Source: www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/operational-bulletins-manuals/temporary-residents/foreign-workers/international-free-trade-agreements/trans-pacific/professionals.html#professionals, accessed October 2022.
16 Source: https://policy.trade.ec.europa.eu/eu-trade-relationships-country-and-region/countries-and-regions/canada/eu-canada-agreement_en, accessed October 2022.
17 Source: www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/operational-bulletins-manuals/temporary-residents/foreign-workers/international-free-trade-agreements/canada-chile.html, accessed October 2022.
18 Source: www.international.gc.ca/trade-commerce/trade-agreements-accords-commerciaux/agr-acc/colombia-colombie/fta-ale/12.aspx?lang=eng, accessed October 2022.
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20 Source: www.international.gc.ca/trade-commerce/trade-agreements-accords-commerciaux/agr-acc/honduras/fta-ale/14.aspx?lang=eng, accessed October 2022.
21 Source: www.international.gc.ca/trade-commerce/trade-agreements-accords-commerciaux/agr-acc/panama/fta-ale/13.aspx?lang=eng, accessed October 2022.

22 Source: www.international.gc.ca/trade-commerce/trade-agreements-accords-commerciaux/agr-acc/korea-coree/fta-ale/12.aspx?lang=eng, accessed October 2022.
23 Source: www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/country-files/canada/france-and-quebec/, accessed October 2022.
24 Source: www.immigration.ca/lmia-exemption-to-help-fill-shortage-of-quebec-doctors, accessed July 2022.
25 Source: www.cicnews.com/2008/10/alberta-joins-canadian-provinces-actively-recruiting-filipino-skilled-workers-10686.html#gs.jattj3; www.saskatchewan.ca/government/news-and-media/2006/december/18/government-signs-immigration-agreement-with-the-philippines-to-bring-more-skilled-workers-here, accessed July 2022.

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19 The Immigrant Policies of Canada and Racism

A Postcolonial Reading of the Indian Experience

Sajaudeen Chapparban

Introduction

Canada is one of the immigrants friendly and attractive countries and Indians in Canada are one of the fastest growing successful ideal minorities. But this decency of being immigrant-friendly is a modest colonial behaviour of the majoritarian white *immigrant Canadians who* strive to educate themselves and liberate the struggling non-whites *immigrant Canadians from* racist discrimination. I am using the phrase 'immigrant Canadians' to decentralize the dichotomy between Canadians and 'immigrants. Often, it is perceived and projected that 'immigrant' means coloured and Canadian means white. Moreover, the white immigrant Canadians did not recognize themselves as the 'immigrant' or descendant of immigrants because of their colonial attitude and historical fallout.

Canada, like America and Australia, became a country of immigrants, which had a sizable presence of natives, aboriginals, and autochthon populations before the arrival of the European colonial masters to these countries. Over a while, gradually, the immigrant population started increasing in these societies, and they came to be known as immigrant countries. Although the majority of the "citizens" (both black and white) of these countries do not consider themselves as 'migrants' or the descendants of migrants, in reality, they are the descendants of migrants if not direct migrants. Most of these colonizers settled in these prosperous countries along with the slaves and indentured labourers that they brought with them. The migrants since the colonial time have been enormously contributing not only to the demographic and social fabric of these countries but also to the other developmental projects of these nations. The colonial settlements and the post-colonial continuous flows of both skilled and unskilled labour requirements (mostly the coloured) led to a significant increase in the immigrant population of these countries which transcended the native population. But the problem in countries like Canada began with the very formulation of ideas like 'native', 'citizens', 'migrants', and coloured'. Those whites who claimed themselves as natives today were also migrants or descendent of migrants. The politics of framing the coloured as 'migrants' and white as 'natives' created the whole racial discourse in Canadian society.

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Although Canada encourages international migrants today they are mostly capitalist in its orientation. Under *Canada's Immigration Levels Plan 2023–2025* (CanadaVisa, 2023a), Canada is ready to "welcome over 460,000 new immigrants each year, which is the highest level in its history. Canada's immigration goals are to strengthen the economy, reunite families, and help refugees." Indians along with the Chinese have a sizable share of this immigrant quota. And this is because these countries are hugely populated and producers of qualified and skilled migrants. The multicultural environment, high wages, job opportunities, good living standards, facilities, security, and education often attracted Indian youngsters to set Canada as their destination. On the other hand, the low birth rate of this country, which resulted in the low rate of the population has created

> economic and fiscal pressures. Canada has a low rate of natural population growth which results in low rates of labour force and economic growth. Low economic growth makes it difficult for Canada to raise the taxes it needs to support social spending on services such as education, health care, and other important areas that provide high living standards in the country. As a result, Canada has been increasing its immigration levels since the late 1980s to increase its rate of population, labour force, and economic growth. Canada now depends on immigration for the majority of its population and labour force growth and a larger share of its economic growth.
>
> (Canada Visa, 2023a)

Although Canada follows the *Jus Soil* (citizenship at birthplace) policy of citizenship, every Canadian, since its independence from the British in 1913, is either an immigrant or a descendant of an immigrant or has an immigrant ancestral past. The conditions for being a Canadian citizen vary such as "be a permanent resident, have lived in Canada for three out of the last five years, have filed your taxes, if you need to, pass a test on your rights, responsibilities, and knowledge of Canada, prove your language skills, Depending on your situation, there may be additional requirements."[1] These citizens are categorized as "Non-immigrant," "Permanent residents," "Immigrants," "Non-permanent resident," "Recent immigrant," "Established immigrant," "Canadian-born," "Landed immigrants," and "Born in Canada." These immigrants are now citizens and immigrants are from diverse backgrounds from various parts of the world. They are diverse in terms of nationalities, races, ethnicities, religions, and languages. Most of them are European (52%), North American (22.9%), and "South Asians (2.6 million people; 7.1%), Chinese (1.7 million; 4.7%), and Black people (1.5 million; 4.3%)" (Monika, 2019), which means almost 70 per cent of the total population of Canada is "White"/the Europeans/Anglo-Saxon. The Census also confirms that in the year "2021, just over 25 million people reported being White . . . representing close to 70% of the total Canadian population" (Canadian

Census, 2022). The majority of white (European and North American immigrant backgrounds) which dominates today's Canadian spaces is a result of the racial immigrant policies of this country since colonial times.

Since colonial times, Canadian immigration policies have had the racial orientation and quota system based on nationality not just to discriminate and marginalize coloured people but also to control and curtail the migration of these communities. Nalini Kant Jha writes,

> While they perceived the Anglo Saxons as genetically superior and predisposed towards liberal democratic ideals, they assumed that others, most notably the Asiatic races, were suited to despotism and satisfied with meager material returns in life. Admitting these 'inferior' peoples, according to them, was therefore likely to destroy Canada itself. Anglo-Saxon White superiority was thus taken for granted. Those races genetically incapable of assimilation must be kept out; if any crept in, they must be kept apart and denied participation in the full range of Canadian institutions.
>
> (Jha, 2005, pp. 185–186)

More importantly, white Canadians from European and North American immigrant backgrounds never considered themselves as immigrants as in the case of the United States and Australia. The master and slave and superior and inferior dichotomy continues in Canada as well. The non-white immigrants who were mostly the colonized subjects remain as recipients of maters order and mercy. The policies that are devised for immigrants in Canada are biased, racist, and colonial instinct. Most policies were designed to encourage the whites and continue the mass migration from Europe, especially the British and French. The immigrants including the indigenous minorities were not considered while formulating the immigrant policies. Even while the formulation of the Union of Canada (the Confederation on 1 July 1867) through the various conferences that took place in various cities to discuss the Union of Canada in Charlottetown, Québec, and London, no person from other than the white race and the indigenous community was invited for discussion. Even though the Indigenous peoples "had established what they believed to be bilateral (nation-to-nation) relationships and commitments with the Crown through historic treaties. Paternalistic views about Indigenous peoples effectively left Canada's first peoples out of the formal discussions about unifying the nation" (Confederation, 1867 | the Canadian Encyclopedia, n.d.-b).

Indians in Canada

As discussed earlier, rich natural resources, economic opportunities, and social security are one of the prime pull factors for international immigrants to Canada. The high wages and job opportunities along with the legal protection

for diversities and multiculturalism are also one of the encouraging factors behind increasing migration to Canada.

> The enhancement and protection of diversity as a fundamental characteristic of Canadian society is codified in the Canadian Multiculturalism Act. Similarly, discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, disability, or conviction for an offense that has been pardoned is formally prohibited by the Canadian Human Rights Act. All Canadians have the right to equal opportunity and treatment, regardless of their personal characteristics.
>
> (Government of Canada, Statistics Canada, 2022)

Therefore, today, Canada is one of the most attractive destinations among youngsters and skilled professionals in the global south, especially for Indians.

As per the Canadian Census of 2021, "South Asians numbering 2,571,400 (2.5 million) make up 7.1% of the Canadian Population, and Indians are the largest chunk of the South Asian population." It comprises 1,858,755, which means 1.85 million or 18.58 Lakhs or "5.1% of the Canadian population."[2] These Indians are both People of Indian Origin (PIOs) and Non-Resident Indians (NRIs). Some of the Indians who joined the Indian community in Canada came from Fiji, East Africa, Burma, etc., when there were post-independence nationalist uprisings in these countries during the 1960–1970s. This was also a time for relaxing the stringent immigrant rules and inclusive approach towards refugees in the Canadian immigration policies, which resulted in the accommodation of the victim Indian diasporas to Canada. Around 25,000 Indo-Fijians settled in Vancouver during 1970–1980. Most of them were Ismaili Muslims from Uganda who moved to Ontario during the 1970s and around 70,000 Indo-Guyanese moved to Canada between the periods of 1966 and 1996.

The education and technological boom in India produced skilled migrants to the growing demand for new Canadian immigration policies. Therefore, from the 1980s onward engineers, doctors, nurses, and skilled labourers started migrating to Canada. Although Hindus are in the majority among the Indian Diaspora in the context of Canada "Sikhs – 35%" are one of the largest Indian communities "Hindus – 28%, Muslims – 17%, Christians – 16%."[3] Sikhs are densely settled in Vancouver, Surrey, and Abbotsford. Most Indians still preserve Indian languages in Canada through regional and linguistic associations. According to the Canadian Census of 2016, majority of the Indian Canadians speak English language (80%) and around 35% of them considered English as their mother tongue; the remaining people speak their respective Indian languages. Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi, Gujarati, and Tamil are the top 25 languages spoken in Canada along with a handsome number of Kannada, Marathi, and Telugu-speaking Indians. Indians are a well-established community in Canada. There are "17 parliamentarians and three cabinet ministers of Indian origin, including defense minister Anita Anand" (Jazeera, 2022)

One of the earliest communities of Indians to visit British Columbia were the Indian British soldiers along with the agricultural peasants mostly Sikhs followed by Hindus and Muslims from the colonial Punjab who worked in the lumber factories, development projects, and plantations. The earliest Indians also include the slaves and indentured labourers during the time of Slavery and Indentureship. In the postcolonial time, Indians started migrating to this country as students, skilled labourers, and professionals. Most of the Indians in Canada now are well off, settled, and established communities of politicians, businessmen, doctors, engineers, entrepreneurs, etc. This number increases day by day along with other immigrants. According to Statistics Canada, "Indian-Canadians are one of the fastest growing communities in Canada, making up the second largest non-European group after Chinese Canadians" (Firstpost, 2021). Forbes reports,

> The number of Indians who became permanent residents in Canada increased from 39,340 in 2016 to 80,685 in 2019, an increase of more than 105 percent. With such high numbers, it is no surprise that the community also has good representation politically. In 2019's federal elections, 23 Indo-Canadians were elected as MPs against the 21 elected in 2015, of which 18 had a Punjab connect.
>
> (Firstpost, 2021)

Canada's new scheme of Express Entry has doubled Indian migration to Canada in the recent past (2016–2017). According to the Canada Visa,

> Canada also offers many advantages, such as being a safe and politically stable country, a thriving economy, a highly developed healthcare system, and an internationally recognized education system. Well, over one million people of Indian descent have now made Canada their home, and this number continues to grow each year. Each year, some 120,000 Indian citizens are admitted as permanent residents to Canada. Most Indians come to Canada as skilled workers under the economic class. As Canada continues to increase its immigration levels year after year, the Indian diaspora in Canada is expected to grow even more from its current numbers.
>
> (CanadaVisa, 2023b)

Today the image of the Indian diaspora is not just one of the successful diaspora communities in Canada, but they are also one of the ideal diaspora communities for their professionalism, hardworking, spiritual, family-oriented, honest, respectful, law-abiding, taxpaying, and educated community.

Apart from this visible debate about Canadian multiculturalism and the Indian diaspora in Canada, I also tried to re-read the context of Canada's immigrant-encouraging intention and its Multicultural policies through the lens of capitalism in the later part of this article.

Immigrant Policies, Racism, and Indians in Canada

There were many legislations (The British Columbia legislation) that restrict Asians, including the Chinese, Japanese, Indian, and Arab, from economic participation; denying these legislations led to the racial riots in 1907 in Vancouver and Washington state. Jha notes, "A public meeting in Vancouver unanimously passed a resolution, which declared, 'The influx of Asians is detrimental and hurtful to the best interests of the Dominion, from the standpoint of citizenship, public morals, and labour conditions.'" What is interesting about these racist attacks and legislation against Asians and Indians is that they were also taking place in North America and some parts of Europe. It was also a time when racism was rampant in the US known as the "Red Summer," racial violence that occurred in "1919, an event that affected at least 26 cities across the United States" (Red Summer, n.d.).

Any Indian travelling to Europe/US/Canada/Australia needs to produce his/her bank statement or some handsome money to be eligible to enter these countries even today in the 21st century. This condition of holding a handsome amount (apart from travel safety and expenditure) is a continuation of a colonial racial legal provision to barred Indians and Asians from entering these countries. During the colonial time,

> the Canadian government introduced regulations that made it mandatory for Asian immigrants to possess a sum of $200, considered high enough to serve as a distinctive and to arrive in Canada only through a continuous journey from their country of origin. These regulations were first introduced as orders-in-council in 1908 and then incorporated into the new Immigration Act of 1910. As a result of these regulations, immigration from India into Canada declined drastically after 1908, from 2,500 during 1907–08, to only a few dozen per year.
>
> (Jha 187)

It was through the Indian soldiers that Indians came to know about British Columbia (Canada), the majority of them Sikhs from Punjab, who were stationed in Hong Kong and attending the parade celebration of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in London. These soldiers happened to visit British Columbia (BC) on their journey to England. After their return, they explain the possibilities of agriculture in the prosperous fields of BC and other job opportunities to their families and friends in Punjab. This led to the Sikhs of Punjab taking up migration to Canada as an opportunity first as compared to other Indians. Although the Indian migration was not in huge numbers, still there started anti-Asian and Anti-Indian sentiments because of the existing racial inequalities, discrimination, cultural nationalism, and economic rivalries. Indians and other coloured people were considered as cultural others in the Canadian Imaginaries along with economic rivalries. During 1903–1909 around 5,000 Punjabi men were working in the lumber mills in Canada. One of the

first racist groups that formulated against Asians and Indians was the "Asiatic Exclusion League" to pressurize the BC government to discourage Indians on various platforms. "With high unemployment and a recession in full swing, the Asiatic Exclusion League (AEL) was formed by the Vancouver Trades and Labour Council in August 1907, with the aim of 'keeping Oriental immigrants out of British Columbia'" and most importantly this kind of organizations and leagues were not new in the West. Therefore, one finds that whatever discriminatory riots and laws took place in Canada could also be found in countries like the United States and Australia during the same time. AEL was also founded in North America therefore we find similarities in the riots of Bellingham Washington in 1907 and Vancouver which took the lives of 40,000. The British Columbia Labour Heritage Centre (2021) documents, "On September 5, 1907, in Bellingham Washington, just 40 kilometres to the south, gangs of white thugs rounded up the city's East Indian mill workers and ordered them out of town." The AEL also protested against the landing of Indians arriving through a steamship named "*Athenian,* because it was carrying 150 'Hindus' from Hong Kong." They also flagged "A White Canada" in parades on the streets of Vancouver (Centre, B. L. H., 2021). It was also a time for Indians and Asians who were discriminated against for their basic rights such as the removal of federal voting rights, running public offices, ineligible for public services, and heavy taxes. After a pause, gradually AEL forced to implement the Chinese Immigration Act of 1923, which led to the end of Chinese migration.

> Only teachers, church personnel, and consular staff are allowed in. The impact of this was immediate: Asian workers made up 20 percent of the workforce in 1918, yet only 12 percent by 1925. Over the next twenty years, no more than 50 Chinese immigrants were able to make their way to Canada. It took until 1947 for The Chinese Exclusion Act to be repealed.
>
> (Centre, B. L. H., 2021)

The BC federal government wanted to reduce the migration of Asians from India, Japan, China, etc.; thus, it came up with various discouraging policies. One among those is the "Continuous Journey" rule on all immigrants which suspended all steamboats coming from Asia. One of the most notorious and remarkable cases of racism against the Indians traced back to the incident of the Komagata Maru.

Komagata Maru was a Japanese steamboat that was hired by the Sikh Businessman Gurdit Singh Sandhu in 1914, carrying 376 Punjabi Indians mostly Sikhs, Hindus, and Muslims. When the boat reached Canada, only 24 people were admitted remaining and were not allowed to get down into Canada. It was no less than a situation that the MENA refugees were facing during 2017–2019 in the European refugee crisis. They became the colonial boat people. They faced racial discrimination because they were not white or coming from Europe.

This incident was justified earlier as Anjali Roy and Ajaya K. Saho argue that:

> While the passengers perceived it as a violent instance of the suppression of the freedom and rights of the loyal subjects of the British Empire, the colonial administration justified its action alleging that seditious activities were being carried out on the chartered ship.
>
> (Roy & Sahoo, 2016, p. 85)

The judgment of the British Columbia Supreme Court in Munshi Singh's case (1914) highlights the actual racist reason behind the denial of entry. Roy quotes the judgment, it was in 2016 that Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau apologized for the racially exclusive immigration laws that led to the incident of the Komagata Maru in the House of Commons. The courage of Gurdeet Singh can also be read as one of the earliest attempts to revolt against the colonial regimes because despite knowing the colonial condition he attempted to enter the Canadian territory.

There have been ups and downs in the liberatory and stringent immigration laws in Canada. 1907–1947 was a crucial time for Asians and Indians. There were very few Asians who were admitted into Canada during this time. On the contrary to this, there was huge migration from Europe and North America to Canada. The stringent laws also forced Indians to leave Canada and move to America during this time. By 1918 there were only around 700 Sikhs in British Columbia. The Federal Government lifted the restrictions in 1919, which gave new hope for the Indians to think about migration to Canada. It also encouraged family reunions and migration with the children and wives. It was in 1947 that voting rights were re-granted to the East Indians.

The Immigration Act, of (1952) under the leadership of Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent

> was not a significant departure from prior legislation as it largely codified existing practices and established a legislative framework from which the government could enact additional orders and regulations. The primary effect of the new act was to reinforce the authority of the governor-in-council (i.e. federal cabinet) and invest the minister of citizenship and immigration with wide-ranging powers. As in previous legislation, the governor-in-council was authorized to make regulations prohibiting immigrants based on their nationality, ethnicity, occupation, peculiar customs, unsuitability to the Canadian climate, and probable inability to assimilate.
>
> (The Museum of Immigration, Canada at Pire 21)

If one looks at the American 'immigration and Nationality Act' of 1952, it was more or less the same in terms of earlier discriminatory acts (the Immigration Act of 1924), which emphasized the national quota system.

The 1960s was a time for the reformatory immigration policies in the West particularly in the USA (The Immigration and Nationality Act 1965), Australia (The Racial Discrimination Act 1975), and Canada. In Canada, the *White Paper on Immigration* 1966 and the *Green Papers on Immigration* 1976 are one of the earlier attempts to remove the unfair system of admitting immigrants based on nationalities but rather its emphasis on the quality of immigrants (skilled labourers). The green paper also suggests the reunification of the families of immigrants. These reformist immigration policies have given relaxation to certain discriminatory conditions based on race and nationalities. But what is important here is to understand that these policy equilibria are not merely humanitarian and justice-oriented, but these reformist policies had their capitalist interest to strengthen the economy. Nalini Jha observes,

> The Canadian government to relax its immigration policy, as the British who required India's wholehearted cooperation in its war against the Axis powers, urged the White Dominions to be more generous in receiving Indian immigrants, especially the wives and children of resident men. The issue was discussed at the Imperial War Conference, of 1917–18, and the Paris Peace Conference, of 1919. Canada agreed in principle of family reunification and drafted an order-in-council at the end of 1919, but the Canadian authorities implemented this order only five years after.
>
> (2005, p. 188)

These countries realized the significance of migrants and their contribution but at the same time, the powerful instinct of the majority always wanted to govern human mobility.

Under the dynamic leadership of the 15th President Pierre Trudeau (1968–1979 and 1980–1984), Canada adopted the national "Canadian Multicultural Policy" in 1971. His support for non-discriminatory policies and ideals later came to be known as the 'Trudeaumenia'. Multicultural policies were adopted to preserve and protect the diversity and cultural freedom of the district's immigrant groups. Culturally, this was a bold attempt to decentralize the white cultural supremacy in this society and an ideal attempt to redefine and reimagine the idea of Canadian culture and society.

In 1976 Canada came up with the "Immigration Act (1976)," which was an important attempt at reformist policies for immigrants. Under this act the new measures were set out to revive existing policies and include "family reunification, non-discrimination, concern for refugees and the promotion of Canada's economic, social and cultural goals" (The Museum of Immigration, Canada at Pire 21). The Canadian Multiculturalism Act of 1988

> provided a legislative framework to the existing policy of multiculturalism and expanded its focus. Revisions to the policy were deemed necessary to better reflect Canada's increasingly diverse racial and ethnic

> composition. The act sought to protect the cultural heritage of all Canadians, reduce discrimination and encourage the implementation of multicultural programs and initiatives within institutions and organizations. Canada was the first country to pass a national multiculturalism law.
> (*Canadian Immigration Acts and Legislation | Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21*, n.d.)

Despite such ideal and immigrant-friendly policies, there are several incidents of racist attacks on coloured people.

> In 2020, Canadian police reported 2,669 criminal incidents that were motivated by hate. This was the largest number recorded since comparable data became available in 2009. The first year of the pandemic saw the number of police-reported hate crimes increases by 37%, or 718 more incidents, compared with the previous year.
> (Government of Canada, Statistics Canada, 2022)

Indians do face racial discrimination in various places. There are also recent cases of racism and hate crimes against Indians in Canada including the defacing of the Komagata Maru memorial, the killing of Prabhjot Singh Katri in the Nova Scotia province, and attacks on students.

COVID-19 added a fresh pattern of racial discrimination against Asians and coloured. As Sajaudeen Chapparban quoted the UN Secretary-General António Guterres' statement "during the launch of a new policy brief on the impact of COVID-19 on 'People on the Move' said that the refugees are facing phobias during the crisis along with 'health crisis' and socio-economic crisis'. He says,

> More than 150 countries have imposed border restrictions to contain the spread of the virus. At least 99 states make no exception for people seeking asylum from persecution. At the same time, fear of COVID-19 has led to skyrocketing xenophobia, racism, and stigmatization' across the continents.
> (Chapparban, 2022, p. 808)

In the context of Canada also there has been an increase in racist cases.

> The Chinese Canadian National Council's Toronto chapter is calling on governments to take anti-Asian racism more seriously after it compiled the results of two surveys that tallied more than 1,000 occurrences of racism against Asian Canadians since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The executive director of the council Justin Kong says,

> What has changed with the pandemic is people feel like people that look like me are responsible for the pandemic. Our communities have

> been scapegoated as being responsible for this virus and the ones who started this virus and spread this virus, and so that is something that we carry with us every day.
>
> (Nicholson, 2021)

Quite recently there has been another issue that emerged for Indians in Canada due to growing Pro-Khalistan activities that are posing challenges to the unity among the Indian diaspora not only in Canada but also in countries like Australia.

To conclude, what is important about Canada and its immigration policies today is that, on the one hand, there is a constant increase in the anti-immigrant, xenophobic, Islamophobic, and anti-refugee environment across the globe and the Canadian community constantly striving to protect, preserve, and practice its diversity, multicultural, and just immigrant policies.

Notes

1 What Are the Requirements for Becoming a Canadian Citizen?, 2 May 2023, www.cic.gc.ca/english/helpcentre/answer.asp?qnum=355&top=5
2 Indian Population in Canada 2023 | Canada Indian Population, *Find Easy*, 2023, https://www.findeasy.in/indian-population-in-canada/
3 Ibid.

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20 Migration of Adult Children and Left-Behind Parent's Health and Disability

Evidence From Tamil Nadu Migration Survey 2015

Madhumita Sarkar, Manoj Paul, Sourav Mandal, and Nuruzzaman Kasemi

Introduction

Unemployment and livelihood issues in rural areas triggered millions of youth to migrate to cities in search of employment by leaving their families behind, which resulted in an increase of left-behind parents in India (Deshingkar & Akter, 2009; Samanta et al., 2015). According to the National Statistical Office (NSO) Elderly in India 2021 report, India's 60-plus population is projected to reach 194 million by 2031, up from 138 million in 2021 (Mishra et al., 2021). The propensity for nuclear families to grow and for parents to live alone or only with their spouse has grown over the years. Older adults living alone or with their spouse increased from approximately 22% in 2011 (Jadhav et al., 2013) to approximately 27% in 2017–2018 (IIPS & ICF, 2021). The changing traditional family structure due to out-migration of the children (being left behind) is challenging for the elderly population in terms of accessibility to health and caregiving as older adult suffers from multi-morbidity conditions (Centre for Policy on Ageing, 2014; Evandrou et al., 2017; Falkingham et al., 2017).

Evidence from prior literature demonstrates that migration can have both beneficial and adverse effects on the health of those left behind by family members (Antman, 2013; Wickramage et al., 2015, 2018). Receiving remittances facilitates the food consumption, security (Abadi et al., 2018; Mora-Rivera & van Gameren, 2021) and health (Lu, 2013), and nutrition (Thow et al., 2016) of migrants and their left-behind families (Gulati, 1993; Kuhn et al., 2011; Roy & Nangia, 2002; Yanovich, 2015) especially left-behind elderly. In South Africa, temporary internal migrants could improve the health of their family members, including elderly parents who remained behind, by raising their household income (Kahn et al., 2003). A study in Moldova finds the beneficial impact of the migration of adult children on the physical health of elderly family members who stay behind and finds no significant impact on their mental health or cognitive capacity (Böhme et al., 2015). In contrast, in both China and Mexico, the migration of adult children has been found to result in lower self-reported health status

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among elderly parents (Antman, 2010; AO et al., 2016). A study based in India shows a higher risk of lifestyle-related chronic disease among the left behind parents due to increased loneliness, isolation, and the stress caused by children's out-migration (Falkingham et al., 2017). Evidence shows that rising household income from remittances leads to higher consumption of energy, fats, salt, and sugar, which is associated with poor health conditions (Basu et al., 2014).

India has a long history of emigration, with the main source states being Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Andhra Pradesh (Rajan, 2014). In Tamil Nadu sectoral wage differentials, high employment opportunity at the destination leads to a massive outflow of youth within or out of countries (Amuthan, 2020), especially in Gulf countries (United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, and Oman, and south Asian countries (Singapore)). Tamil Nadu Migration Survey 2015 estimated about 2.2 million emigrants, which accounts for 40% of total migration, while the number of out-migration is about one million (19%). Generally, in India, there is a negative relation between high out-migration and high elderly population in the source region but in the case of Tamil Nadu shows a higher aging population with a significant number of out-migration. Separation of families due to adult-child migration might have severe implications on the left behind parents, but the possible health outcomes for the elderly left behind in Tamil Nadu remain under research. This study aims to look at how the elderly in Tamil Nadu who are left behind feel about their health and impairments as a result of their adult offspring leaving. The results of this study will serve to fill a gap in the literature and provide the knowledge required for campaigning and developing useful solutions for the elderly who are left behind.

Data and Methodology

This chapter uses data from the Tamil Nadu Migration Survey 2015 conducted by the Centre for Development Studies (CDS). The TMS 2015 survey interviewed 20,000 sample households. The number of sample households (HH) in 12 districts is distributed between the district's rural and urban strata in proportion to the number of households according to the 2011 Census. From each selected locality, one ward was selected at random and 50 households were selected from the wards by the systematic random sampling method. This study used the elderly (60+ population) schedule, which interviewed 8,518 samples to collect the data on social costs of migration, elderly left behind with several modules.

Outcome Variable

This study examines several aspects of the health status of elderly parents. These include self-rated health status and disability.

Self-Rated Health

Respondents in the survey were asked the rate their current status of health. The question had five response categories (excellent, very good, good, fair,

and poor). The authors categorized the response categories into two groups: "good," which included "excellent," "very good" and "good," and "poor," which included "fair" and "poor."

Suffering From Disability

Individuals were asked that "Do you suffer from any of these disabilities?" Items measuring symptoms of suffering from any disabilities experienced by elderly persons during the month preceding the survey were: (i) Vision, (ii) Hearing, (iii) Mobility, (iv) Cognition, (v) Self-care, and (vi) Communication. These variables are categorized into two groups: "yes," which is coded as 1, and "no," which is coded as 0. Further based on seven disability variables we created one composite variable "at least one disability," which coded 1, and "no disability" as 0.

Explanatory Variable

Status of Children Out-Migration

Respondents in the survey were asked, "How many children are staying with elderly parents," which was categorized into four groups: (i) with you, (ii) within Tamil Nadu, (iii) within India, and (iv) outside India. The authors categorized the response categories into two groups: "without migrant child," which coded as 0, and "at least 1 migrant child," which coded as 1.

Control Variable

Earlier studies have shown that demographic and socioeconomic variables have strong effects on the health status of the elderly. Hence, we needed to control for their effect to determine the independent effect of migration. Demographic variables included age (60–69 years, 70–79 years, and 80 years and above), sex (male and female), marital status (single, married, widow/widower/divorced/separated), old age pension (yes, no), main source of income (employment, pension, bank interest/rent/property, remittance, others), take care of household (himself/herself, spouse, son/daughter, son/daughter in law, others), currently residing with (with spouse only, with married sons, with married daughters, with unmarried children and others).

Statistical Analysis

Analysis for this study was confined to those who were aged 60 years or above and who had at least one child (n = 8,518). Univariate and bivariate analyses were used to analyse the data. Initially, univariate or descriptive analysis was used to describe the respondents' socio-demographic characteristics. Two binary logistic regressions were performed to examine the

association between adult-child migration and the health of the elderly. Model I explain the impact of adult-child migration on left-behind elderly parents' health after controlling for the socio-demographic variables. Logistic regression was run separately for each dependent variable. Models were fitted after controlling for age, sex, marital status, main source of income, old age pension, taken care of household, currently residing with, migration status elderly, and migration destination of children. Model II was used to determine the factors affecting self-rated health and at least one disability among the left-behind elderly.

Results

Socio-Demographic and Economic Characteristics of the Sample Population

More than half of the sampled respondents were aged 60–69, while about 6% were aged 80 or above. The proportion of male respondents was slightly higher than that of female respondents. Most of the respondents were married, and the large majority of respondents had no pension insurance. Most of the respondents' main source of income is employment. Nearly about 42% of the household taken care of by the respondent himself/herself and 40% by their son/daughter. Nearly about 50% of the respondents resided with married sons, and 25% of the respondents resided with spouses only. About 69 % of the elderly have migrated children. Out of them, 19% of the elderly were left behind (no children living with them), and 50% have at least one child living with them, and at least one migrated (Figure 20.1) (Table 20.1).

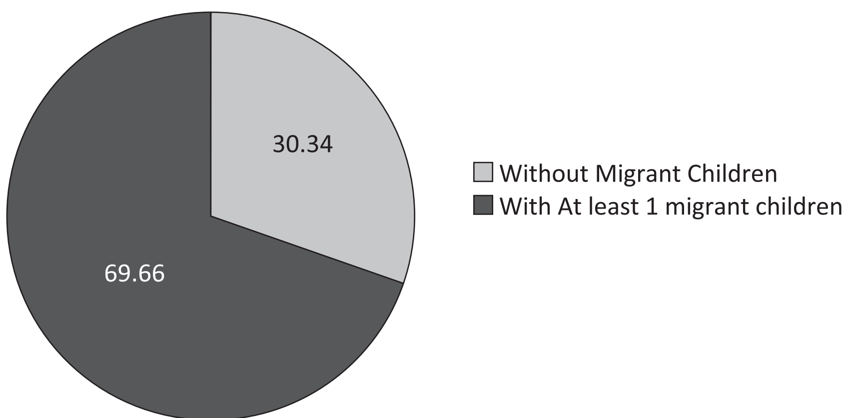

Figure 20.1 Children's migration status of elderly parents.

Table 20.1 Background characteristics of the elderly parents

	Percentage	*Frequency*
Age Group		
60–69	69.85	5,950
70–79	23.74	2,022
80+	6.41	546
Gender		
Male	55.55	4,732
Female	44.45	3,786
Marital Status		
Single	0.16	14
Married	65.66	5,593
Widow/Widower/Divorced/Separated	34.17	2,911
Old Age Pension		
No	78.14	6,656
Yes	21.04	1,792
Main Source Of Income		
Employment	37.92	3,230
Pension	17	1,457
Bank Interest/Rent/Property	6	513
Remittance	17	1,430
Others	16.82	1,433
Taken Care of Household		
Myself	41.93	3,572
Spouse	11.78	1,003
Son/Daughter	40.91	3,485
Son/Daughter-In-Law	3.84	327
Others	1.54	131
Currently Residing With		
With Spouse Only	24.67	2,101
With Married Sons	49.77	4,239
With Married Daughters	6.36	542
With Unmarried Children	13.35	1,137
Others	5.86	499
Total	**100 8,518**	

Health Status and Suffering From Disabilities

Table 20.2 shows that most (86.49%) of the respondents rated their health as good, and a higher proportion of respondents with migrant children (88.77%) rated good health compared with those without migrant children (82.94%). Furthermore, 29.46% of the respondents with at least one migrant child reported that they suffered from difficulties due to vision, and a slightly lower proportion of respondents without a migrant child (24.14%) reported suffering from difficulties in vision. On the other hand, 20.14% of the respondents with at least one migrant child had difficulties in mobility, whereas 14.12% of the respondents without a migrant child. Besides, 11.81%, 12.29%, and

Table 20.2 Prevalence (in percentage) of self-reported, and disabilities of elderly by migration status of their children

Health and disability	*Without migrant children*	*With at least one migrant children*	*Total*
Self-rated health*			
Poor	18.1	11.5	13.5
Good	81.9	88.5	86.5
Vision*			
No difficulty	75.3	71.5	72.6
Difficulty	24.7	28.5	27.4
Hearing			
No difficulty	86.1	85.6	85.8
Difficulties	13.9	14.4	14.2
Mobility*			
No difficulty	85.6	80.7	82.2
Difficulty	14.4	19.3	17.8
Cognition*			
No difficulty	92.4	88.7	89.8
Difficulty	7.6	11.3	10.2
Self-care*			
No difficulty	90.9	88.1	89
Difficulty	9.1	11.9	11
Communication*			
No difficulty	93	89.9	90.8
Difficulty	7	10.1	9.2
Total	100 (n = 2584)	100 (n = 5934)	100 (n = 8518)

*Pearson's chi-squared test significant at P < 0.001.

10.61% of the respondents with at least one migrant child had faced difficulties in cognition, self-care, and communication. Whereas respondents without migrant children were less like to suffer from difficulties in cognition, self-care, and communication.

Relationship Between Adult Child Migration With Self-Rated Health and Disabilities

Table 20.3 presents binary logistic regression analyses for the association among adult child migration with self-rated health and different disabilities (vision, hearing, mobility, cognition, self-care, and communication). In the regression models, the reference group of the dependent variable was "without adult migrant child." Adult Child migration was found to have a significant association with the health and physical disability of left behind older parents. The results show that the migration of adult children has a positive association with elderly self-rated health and adverse effect on disability in mobility, cognition, self-care, and communication, which means a comprehensive effect on their health status. Specifically, those parents who

Table 20.3 Odds ratio (OR) and 95% confidence interval (CI) for the effect of adult child's migration on self-rated health and disabilities of parents based on logistic regression

Dependent variable	*Without adult migrant child = reference category*		
	OR	*P value*	*CI*
Self-rated health (ref: Poor health)			
Good health	1.40	0.00	1.22–1.61
Suffer difficulty in vision (ref: No)			
Yes	1.43	0.00	1.28–1.59
Suffer difficulty in hearing (ref: No)			
Yes	1.13	0.06	0.99–1.29
Suffer difficulty in mobility (ref: No)			
Yes	1.57	0.00	1.39–1.78
Suffer difficulty in cognition (ref: No)			
Yes	1.67	0.00	1.42–1.96
Suffer difficulty in self-care (ref: No)			
Yes	1.46	0.00	1.25–1.70
Suffer difficulty in communication (ref: No)			
Yes	1.63	0.00	1.37–1.92

Notes: Logistic regression was run separately for each dependent variable. Models were fitted after controlling for age, sex, marital status, main source of income, old age pension, taken care of household, currently residing with, migration status elderly, migration destination of children

had migrant children were more likely to report difficulties in vision (OR = 1.43; 95% CI 1.28–1.59), mobility (OR = 1.57; 95% CI 1.39–1.78), cognition (OR = 1.67; 95% CI 1.42–1.96), self-care problem (OR = 1.46; 95% CI 1.25–1.70), and communication (OR = 1.63; 95% CI 1.37–1.92) than those who had no migrant child.

Model II; determine the socioeconomic factor effecting self-rated health and disabilities for left-behind parents (Table 20.4). The result shows that the odds of SRH increasing when the household matter is taken care of by the elderly himself/herself (OR = 2.47; 95% CI 1.95–3.14), or getting remittances (OR = 1.37; 95% CI 1.10–1.71). While the odds of SRH decrease with increasing age and living with a married daughter (OR = 0.44; 95% CI 0.31–0.64). Contrasting with SRH disabilities was increased with age, household matter decided by own or spouse, and residing with a married son and daughter. On the other hand, the odds of at least one disability among left-behind elderly reducing when household matters are decided by the daughter and receiving remittance.

Discussion

This study intended to investigate the impact of adult-child migration affected the health and disabilities of their left-behind older parents, in Tamil Nadu, where the elderly population growing rapidly due to demographic

Table 20.4 Odds ratio (OR) and 95% confidence interval (CI) for the determinants of self-rated health and disability among left-behind elderly based on logistic regression

	Self-rated health		*At least one disability*	
Variables	*Odd ratio*	*CI*	*Odd Ratio*	*CI*
Age Group (Ref: 60–69)				
70–79	0.36***	[0.30–0.44]	2.38***	[2.10–2.71]
80+	0.22***	[0.17–0.29]	4.56***	[3.60–5.76]
Sex (Ref: Male)				
Sex=2	0.83	[0.68–1.01]	1.12	[0.98–1.28]
Marital Status (Ref: Single/Ever married)				
Currently Married	0.96	[0.77–1.20]	0.81**	[0.69–0.94]
Take Care of Household Matters (Ref: Son)				
Myself	2.47***	[1.95–3.14]	1.16*	[1.00–1.35]
Spouse	1.16	[0.86–1.56]	1.63***	[1.33–2.00]
Daughter	1.89**	[1.23–2.90]	0.63**	[0.46–0.86]
Son-in-law	1.09	[0.53–2.24]	1.01	[0.55–1.85]
Daughter-in-law	1.06	[0.71–1.57]	1.48*	[1.09–2.02]
Brother/sister	0.66	[0.13–3.29]	0.73	[0.18–3.00]
Others	0.53*	[0.28–0.99]	2.20*	[1.20–4.02]
Residing With (Ref: With spouse only)				
With Married Son	1.15	[0.89–1.49]	1.39***	[1.18–1.63]
With Married Daughter	0.44***	[0.31–0.64]	2.25***	[1.69–3.00]
With Unmarried Children	1.3	[0.92–1.83]	0.95	[0.77–1.17]
With Other Relatives	0.81	[0.48–1.34]	2.07***	[1.43–2.99]
Others	1.39	[0.79–2.44]	1.04	[0.75–1.44]
Source of Income (Ref: others)				
Remittance	1.37**	[1.10–1.71]	0.61***	[0.52–0.71]

Note. Observations 5,934.
Exponentiated coefficients; 95% confidence intervals in brackets.

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

transition. The general trend is that adult children are taken care of elderly, but the results that 69% of older persons have at least one kid who migrated outside. Results indicate that the migration of adult children is both positive and adverse effects on left-behind parents' health status (Abas et al., 2009; Adhikari et al., 2011). However, the findings of the present study contrast with Adhikari et al.'s, (2011), which found that children's out-migration was associated with poor health status in parents.

Although the left-behind elderly, have good health status, they have suffered a lot in mobility, self-care, and communication, which was similar to the conclusion of other related studies (Gibson et al., 2011; GUO et al., 2009). It is probably because a child's migration reduces opportunities for face-to-face

communication between parents and child, which increases isolation and is challenging to address through formal care mechanisms such as hired help (Hadi, 1999; Liu et al., 2021), which is reflected clearly in this study of left-behind parents who suffer most from disability (Miltiades, 2002; Schoeni et al., 2015; Vullnetari & King, 2008).

Several socio-demographic factors including age, household decision-making, living arrangement, and source of income were significant predictors of self-rated health and suffering disability in old age. Age was found a significant determinant of self-rated health among left-behind elderly, and it shows that with increasing age, self-rated health will decrease and suffering from disabilities will increase. On the whole, the finding is consistent with and supports current well-being literature (Blanchflower, 2021; Hansen & Slagsvold, 2012; Neri2 et al., 2016)]. Findings also suggested that elder people who took care of household matters themselves had better health status than those living under a son or another household member headship (Srivastava et al., 2021). They may be able to control their own medical care and treatment for this reason. We also discovered that older people with remittances from their emigrated offspring had better self-rated health than those without remittances.

When analysing the results of this study, some limitations have been taken into account. First off, due to the cross-sectional design of the study, each element that was examined was quantified at a single point in time. As a result, this study is unable to determine whether the migration status of an adult child and the handicap of elder parents who are left behind are causally related. Only the statistical link between the two can be demonstrated by the analyses carried out for this study.

Conclusion

This study captures the connection between adult-child migration and the growing elderly population. The research demonstrates that adult children's out-migration is strongly connected with good health and the disabilities of older people left behind. Our results highlight that improvement in personal health (self-rated health) is determined by family structure while the elderly make household decisions. The elderly with migrant children have better subjective health than the elderly with no migrant children, although they have suffered a lot in terms of disability due to the absence of children. Therefore, family ties and relationships need to be strengthened in order to reduce the number of older people who suffer from impairments and to increase their well-being.

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21 A New Path Forward

Leveraging Migration for Development

Balraj S. Kahlon

Introduction

India faces many economic challenges. The foremost being the lack of employment opportunities for its growing working-age population while the industrialized world is dealing with significant labour shortages for the foreseeable future. One might believe the movement of labour from India to Western Countries would both address challenges and be mutually beneficial. However, this has not been the case.

Many Indians migrating abroad experience underemployment, labour and sexual exploitation, and poor mental health. Most disconcerting are the stories of families who have died trying to illegally cross borders, such as the Patel family who froze to death trying to cross the Canada-US border in 2022. Such migration problems will not be surmounted unless a new model is created. This chapter proposes a viable new course of action.

The chapter begins with a discussion of India's economic challenge on both the demand and supply side of the labour market. Later, it discusses the labour shortage problem in the G-7 countries. The following chapter highlights the vulnerable plight of Indian migrants across the world. This chapter also explores a new approach. This starts with considering the potential benefits of an active labour market program for migrants and how India can learn from the European Commission to cultivate a labour talent pool. This chapter considers policy innovations for India including directing inward remittance towards productive investments. Finally, the chapter recommends the next steps to develop this innovative model.

Economic Challenges Facing India

India has considerable economic growth potential in terms of its demographic dividend. However, reaping the benefits from a larger working-age population is not inevitable. India must appreciate the challenges that are hindering it from taking advantage of its working-age population; otherwise, its demographic dividend will come-and-go as a lost opportunity.

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The Economy Lacks Jobs

Many studies have examined unemployment in India. Mehrotra and Parida (2019) found total employment levels declined in 16 out of 22 states between 2011–2012 and 2017–2018 (Mehrotra & Parida, 2019). During this same period, the unemployment rate increased to an all-time high of 8.8% (Mehrotra & Parida, 2019). More concerning is that youth employment was significantly higher for those with post-secondary education. Youth unemployment was above 30% for those with post-secondary qualifications but below 25% for those without post-secondary education (Mehrotra & Parida, 2019). Sharma (2022) examined youth unemployment and found unemployment among graduates to be six times higher compared to the uneducated (Sharma, 2022). It is also important to track youth not in employment, education or training (NEET) because these individuals are at risk of social marginalization and economic hardships. This makes it concerning that India's Youth NEET population increased by almost 20 million between 2011–2012 and 2017–2018 (Mehrotra & Parida, 2019).

The gender disparity among the unemployed is also noteworthy. Sharma (2022) found a greater proportion of unemployed graduates were female (40% female vs. 34% men) and in NEET (50% female vs. 34% men). Despite this gender disparity, Mehrotra and Parida (2021) argue quality job opportunities can increase labour force participation (Mehrotra & Parida, 2021). This is because they found rising wage/earning levels increased labour force participation among both men and women.

The Workers Lack Skills

India's economic problems are not limited to inadequate job opportunities. Indian workers‟ skillset, or lack thereof, is also concerning. The Wheebox National Employability Test (WNET) is an annual evaluation of approximately 300,000 final-year students and post-graduates to assess the competencies and skills of new labour market entrants in India. The Wheebox 2023 Skills Report found only 50% of test takers were employable (Wheebox Corporate Office, 2023). This was an increase from 46% in the 2022 Skills Report (Wheebox Corporate Office, 2022). Notably, Women were more employable than men at 53% and 47%, respectively (Wheebox Corporate Office, 2023).

The inadequate skill set of Indian workers is affecting the industry. Manpower Group's Employment Outlook Survey measures employers' intention to increase or decrease their workforce and determines global labour market trends. The 2022 Survey found approximately 75% of Indian employers reported difficulty in finding talent for job vacancies (Manpower Group, 2022). This figure increased to 80% in 2023 (Manpower Group, 2023). This suggests the lack of skills among workers is hindering business development and economic growth in India.

The agriculture sector which employs the most people is vital to the Indian economy. But Indian agriculture is mired in low productivity, given its reliance on basic farming (Tongia, 2019). While it is critical to diversify the Indian economy towards more productive industries, there is also a need to increase productivity within agriculture. Raising farmers' skill levels should be among the chief policy initiatives to increase agricultural productivity. Gulati and Juneja (2021) identify four key requirements to raise land productivity, including capital investment, increase in non-agricultural job opportunities, skill formation, and diversification towards high-value agricultural activities. A challenge in increasing land productivity is that many older farmers lack the skills (i.e., literacy) to learn and implement new agricultural practices and innovations (FAO, 2017). Notably, the Agriculture Skill Council is focused on upgrading the skills of Indian farmers and other agricultural workers.

The Indian Brain Drain

India's lacklustre economy and lack of employment opportunities are contributing to a brain drain problem where a considerable proportion of India's talent is going abroad. India is the largest source of highly skilled immigrants for OECD countries (d'Aiglepierre et al., 2020). Over three million educated Indian origin migrants are in OECD countries, which are followed by China at two million (d'Aiglepierre et al., 2020). Although the cost of India's brain drain is difficult to measure, the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India estimates that Indian students studying abroad cost the economy approximately $17 billion annually (Mishra, 2013).

This skilled emigration is having concerning social consequences for the Indian people. In 2021, India had the highest number of domestically trained doctors emigrating to OECD countries at nearly 75,000 (Buchholz, 2023). This emigration is contributing to India's healthcare workforce shortage with only 3.3 qualified allopathic doctors and 3.1 nurses and midwives per 10,000 population (Rajan & Walton-Roberts, 2020). This is well below the WHO-recommended 28.5 per 10,000 population (Rajan & Walton-Roberts, 2020). Even more, Kaushik et al. (2008) found medical graduates from higher-quality institutions represent a disproportionately large share of physicians who emigrate (Kaushik et al., 2008). All this suggests unless there is policy intervention, there is the risk of India's great potential becoming a great problem.

Economic Challenges Facing the G-7

The International Group of Seven (G-7) consists of the seven most advanced economies in the world. These advanced economies all risk a declining GDP due to a shrinking work-age population and increasing labour shortage. This section describes the labour shortage challenges among some G-7 members.

Europe

The UN estimates Europe will have 95 million fewer working-age people in 2050 compared to 2015 (Kenny & Yang, 2021). To meet future labour demand European countries will have to increase their immigration levels while facing increased competition for immigrants among G-7 countries (Kenny & Yang, 2021). As recently as August 2021, the German federal employment agency reported 779,000 unfilled jobs (Spanjaart, 2021). Germany is also anticipated to have the most job openings in Europe with 20 million between 2021 and 2030, but also a shortage of 7 million workers by 2050 (Spanjaart, 2021).

A survey of approximately 9,500 U.K. businesses found 13% of the businesses face a worker shortage (Buchanan & Francis-Devine, 2023). The top number of vacancies by industry include health and social work (208,000), wholesale and retail trade (148,000), and accommodation and food service (146,000) (Buchanan & Francis-Devine, 2023). If labour shortages persist the Recruitment and Employment Confederation estimates, it will cost the U.K. economy £30 billion to £39 billion annually (REC, 2022).

North America

North America is also experiencing labour shortage problems. The US had over 11 million job openings at the end of 2022 (US Labour of Statistics, 2023). Accommodation and food service had the highest job open rate at 11.3%, with over 1.7 million job openings (U.S. Labour of Statistics, 2023). Health and social assistance had the largest number of job openings at 1.9 million (U.S. Labour of Statistics, 2023). Since the pandemic, US firms have had trouble recruiting and retaining workers for jobs that require in-person attendance and pay relatively lower wages (Ferguson, 2023). The US Chamber of Commerce found the largest labour shortage, where domestic labour supply cannot meet demand, is in durable goods manufacturing, wholesale and retail trade, and education and health services (Ferguson, 2023).

Canada had a record number of job openings in March 2022 at over one million (Fair et al., 2022). Moreover, almost 40% of businesses expect recruiting skilled labour as an ongoing challenge (Fair et al., 2022). Top industries facing a challenge to recruit workers include healthcare and social assistance, real estate and rental, and accommodation and food service (Fair et al., 2022). A Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC) survey of over 1,200 entrepreneurs found that 55% are struggling to hire workers for three months or longer (BDC, 2021).

Moreover, 45% reported difficulty hiring due to a lack of candidates and 44% due to a lack of skilled candidates (BDC, 2021). Almost two-thirds of businesses reported losing business opportunities due to their labour shortage (BDC, 2021).

Japan

Japan has a large ageing population, which is leading to a fast-declining working-age population and increasing labour shortage. In 2019, the country had a labour shortage of 600,000 workers (Duong, 2022). The Japanese workforce is anticipated to decrease by a further 20% by 2040 (Fleming, 2019).

The Plight of Indian Migrants

For years Indians have been immigrating to labour-seeking countries. Recognizing the plight of these migrants is vital to understand the need for policy interventions to change the status quo. This section discusses the plight of migrants going abroad as skilled migrants, labour migrants, and students. This section of the chapter discusses the plight of migrants in G-7 and Middle East countries. A particular focus is on migrants from India.

The Brain Waste Problem

Between 2010 and 2019, the US college-educated immigrant population grew by 42% (compared to 27% US born), and the number of immigrant college graduates increased faster than the national average in 25 states (Batalova & Fix, 2021). However, skilled immigrants are more likely to be underemployed. In most States, underemployment was 21% among high-skilled immigrants but 16% for US born (Batalova & Fix, 2021). Batalova and Fix (2021) estimate there are 2 million underemployed immigrants and up to 3.5 million if you include overqualified immigrant workers (Batalova & Fix, 2021).

In Canada, there is abundant research examining the socioeconomic position of immigrants. Crossman et al. (2021) compare the employment rate and weekly earnings of immigrants with Canadian-born workers from 2011 and 2019 (Crossman et al., 2021). The study considered three categories of immigrants: new immigrants (one to five years in Canada), recent immigrants (six to ten years in Canada), and long-term immigrants (over ten years in Canada). Crossman et al. (2021) found a negative earnings gap for all immigrant groups compared to Canadian-born citizens.

Hira-Friesen (2017) explored the likelihood of immigrants (recent and established) and Canadian-born to be employed in precarious work. The study found that African and South Asian men are twice as likely to be employed in involuntary part-time work. They also had the highest likelihood of being employed in temporary positions (Hira-Friesen, 2017). Further, immigrant men were over-represented in precarious work (Hira-Friesen, 2017).

Immigrants also have higher rates of poverty in Canada. Hou and Picot (2019) found the poverty rate of recent immigrants increased from 1.4 to 2.4 times higher compared to Canadian-born citizens. Research by Burnes et al. (2022) suggests the economic position of immigrants is leading

to negative health consequences. Burnes et al. (2022) examined how successfully immigrants and Canadian-born citizens age. His study found immigrants had a lower likelihood of successfully ageing compared to their Canadian-born counterparts (Burnes et al., 2022).

Exploitation of Labour

Labour exploitation is a common problem faced by Indian migrants. The Kerala-based Centre for Indian Migrant Studies surveyed over 6,000 migrant workers, which illuminates the exploitation of Indian labourers. The Centre found 12% of migrants were victims of wage theft, which totalled approximately US$16.5 million (US$21,338 per worker) (Devi, 2021). A majority of the victims (53%) were from Kerala (Devi, 2021).

Even more, the Indian Ministry of External Affairs reported almost 34,000 migrant workers died in Gulf countries between 2014 and 2019 (IMEA, 2019). The number of worker complaints during this same period was over 100,000 (IMEA, 2019).

The Human Rights Watch interviewed almost 100 women to understand the exploitation of domestic migrant workers in the United Arab Emirates (Begum, 2020). More than two dozen experienced physical or sexual abuse, and nearly all were forced to work very long hours (up to 21 hours per day) with no rest or days off (Begum, 2020). Some women even reported not receiving wages for over one year (Begum, 2020). Employers were also known to confiscate the worker's passports to exercise control over them (Begum, 2020). These domestic workers come under the Kafala system which is UAE's visa sponsorship program, which ties migrant workers to individual employers who are their visa sponsors (Begum, 2020). The Kafala system makes migrants beholden to their employers because the employer can revoke their sponsorship and must grant permission for a worker to change employers (Begum, 2020).

Italy hosts tens of thousands of Indian migrants (predominantly from Punjab) working in farm fields. These labourers pay thousands of dollars for an Italian work visa only to fall under the control of the Italian mafia who hire "capos" to manage farm labourers. These capos are responsible for creating slave-like conditions. The Italian Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry on Working Conditions describes the exploitation of Punjabis as comparable to slavery (Saikia, 2022). There are reports of Punjabi labourers experiencing physical violence and being forced to ingest performance-enhancing drugs (Williams, 2019). Most concerning is the plight of Punjabi female farm labourers in Capos, who are known to be sexually exploited when raising questions about fair wages and work contracts (Saikia, 2022). Workers who do not comply get paid less than one Euro an hour and are forced to work up to 14-hour shifts (Saikia, 2022).

Lost Potential

India is a top source country for students for many advanced economies. The dearth of research to understand this population group makes a study

by Punjabi University academics Rakshinder Kaur and Kamaljeet Singh vital. The study examined the socio-economic profile of study visa aspirants in Punjab and its findings include (Kaur & Singh, 2018):

- 67% of students are from farming families.
- 56% of the students' families owned five acres of land or less, and 80% owned 10 acres or less.
- 54% of the students' families will sell property or take a loan to fund their education.

This suggests a sizeable proportion of study visa aspirants from Punjab are rural working class (Kaur & Singh, 2018). These families of modest means, dissatisfied in Punjab, are willing to make a considerable financial sacrifice to move abroad. A survey conducted by the Centre for Studying Developing Societies found 78% of Punjab youth felt the quality of employment opportunities in Punjab was bad (Rampal, 2021). This was far above the national average of 41% making Punjab youth the most dissatisfied cohort in India (Rampal, 2021). Karnataka had the highest satisfaction with employment opportunities in their state, where only 6% considered job opportunities as bad (Rampal, 2021).

There is also ample evidence of the marginalization of international students studying in G-7 countries. The report "The Realities of International Students: Evidenced Challenges" discusses the systemic issues afflicting Indian students and their dire consequences in Canada. The report details how financial interests are leading to many ill-equipped Indian youths being made vulnerable and exploited (Kahlon, 2021). The exploitation starts in India where unscrupulous agents often deceive families when recruiting their children for Canadian schools. Further, public post-secondary schools charge international students exponentially higher tuition fees while provincial governments reduce their proportion of funding for higher education (Kahlon, 2021). Canada's international education model is essentially using migrants to generate wealth and privatize higher education. The report discusses how this has resulted in widespread social problems including labour exploitation, sexual exploitation, and mental health and suicide concerns among Indian international students (Kahlon, 2021).

Studies by Statistics Canada, Canada's national statistical office, have found international students have relatively worse economic outcomes in the country. A 2017 Statistics Canada study found on average, Canadian-educated immigrants had significantly lower earnings than their Canadian-born counterparts (Hou & Lu, 2017). Another 2021 Statistics Canada study found international student graduates have lower earned income than Canadian citizens for all fields of study (Choi et al., 2021). The largest earnings gap is in the field of Business and Public Administration, which is the most common field of study for international students (Choi et al., 2021).

Furthermore, a 2023 Statistics Canada report challenges the notion that international education is addressing labour shortages in Canada. The report

found for every quarter from 2016 to 2022, the number of unemployed individuals with a bachelor's degree or higher was greater than the number of job openings requiring at least a bachelor's degree (Morissette, 2023). In contrast, the number of unemployed individuals with a high school (grade 12) education or less was below the number of job openings requiring a high school education (Morissette, 2023). This suggests widespread labour shortages are more prevalent in low-skill occupations that do not require a post-secondary education. Canada recruiting post-secondary international students by the hundreds of thousands when there is a dearth of job opportunities should be a cause for concern.

The problems are not limited to Canada. An Australian study involving over 4,000 migrants explored the problem of wage theft and working conditions among international students, backpackers, and other temporary migrants (Berg & Farbenblum, 2017). The study found approximately 30% of participants earned only half the legal minimum wage, and 58% of Indian participants were being paid less than the minimum wage (Berg & Farbenblum, 2017). A Coroner's report identified 47 international student suicides between 2009 and 2019 in the State of Victoria (Coroners Court of Victoria, 2020). A common theme among the suicides were education and financial stress, isolation and homesickness, plus poor access to mental health support (Coroners Court of Victoria, 2020). A UK survey found 70 out of 124 students felt they were destitute or were becoming destitute (Migrants' Rights Network, 2020). Notably, 54% of the respondents were from India. In another UK survey exploring the mental health of post-secondary students, 36% of international students reported having suicidal thoughts (Atack, 2018).

A New Path Forward

India is struggling to provide opportunities for its job seekers, and industrialized nations are struggling to fill job shortages. Many Indian migrants going abroad for economic opportunities are struggling to achieve upward mobility and economic security. Is there a better approach than the status quo?

The next three sections propose a new path that can be mutually beneficial. The first section looks into how labour market programs can address labour shortages and build human capital among migrants. The second section explores how India can encourage and facilitate the return of skilled and experienced Indian migrants into the Indian labour market. Finally, the chapter explains how the hard-earned wealth of Indian migrants can be channelled into productive investments.

Activating Labour Market Programmes

Indians searching for economic opportunities will continue to move across the globe like an ocean current. And industrialized countries seem to believe

that this flow of migrants will fill labour shortages like water-filling crevices. But whether the G-7 nation's current immigration programs meet their labour shortages and provide economic prosperity for migrants is disputable.

To achieve desired outcomes governments should be more active in addressing labour shortages while also helping migrants build skills and wealth. The best conceptual example is Japan's Specified Skilled Worker (SSW) Program and imaginative Technical Intern Training (TIT) Program. The SSW program is meant to address Japan's severe labour shortages for 12 priority occupational fields (MOFA, 2023). The program accepts experienced foreign workers with specific expertise and skills, and they can work for up to five years (MOFA, 2023). Prospective employees must be able to work without additional training required and must pass a test conducted by the Japanese government (MOFA, 2023).

The TIT program was created to transfer skills and knowledge to emerging economies by accepting workers from overseas (JITCO, 2023). Ideally, this program would support international development by helping emerging economies build their human capital. A country must enter into a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) with Japan to enrol its workers in the TIT program. Once an MoC is established, migrant workers can work up to five years in over 80 job categories. To help ensure skills and knowledge transfer the program requires a training plan for each worker (JITCO, 2023).

The Government of Japan reported over 360,000 participants in the TIT program as of June 2019 (MOJ, n.d.). Participants from Vietnam represented 51% of all trainees and India only sent 148 (MOJ, n.d.).

However, the TIT program has not proven to meet the potential of its concept. The TIT program has devolved into a source of cheap foreign labour and migrant workers do not obtain skills and knowledge (IHRB, 2017). Even more concerning are the human rights concerns for the treatment of TIT program participants including wage theft, overwork, and violation of labour laws (IHRB, 2017). These problems have been attributed to a lack of effective oversight with infrequent and ineffective audits of participating employers. The failure of Japan's TIT program should not be seen as a failure of concept but instead a failure of implementation. Japan's experiment underlines how governments must take seriously their responsibility for ensuring the protection of migrant workers. Notably, in November 2022, Japan established a panel to review the program failures and provide recommendations for improvement by Fall 2023 (APF Canada, 2022).

Gevorkyan and Gevorkyan (2012) also recommend institutionalizing migrant worker recruitment with coordination between the home and host country. Their Diaspora Regulatory Mechanism proposes a state-managed recruitment agency in the home country to recruit qualified candidates while non-profits from the diaspora community can find employment opportunities and provide settlement services (Gevorkyan & Gevorkyan, 2012). A country's consulate in the host country would be responsible for providing necessary administrative and technical support (Gevorkyan & Gevorkyan, 2012).

Regarding active labour market programmes India and industrialized countries should develop the following:

- Bilateral labour agreements to ensure effective oversight and labour rights protection for Indian migrants
- Work orientation for aspiring Indian labour migrants on their human and labour rights and the health and safety risks when working in the host country.
- Develop labour market programs for migrant workers that address specific labour shortages in industrialized countries and support skills transfer

By increasing cooperation, governments can develop a comprehensive program that supports migrants on the continuum of their journey to obtain work and develop skills.

Cultivating an Indian Talent Pool

Systemic changes are required to ensure the Indian education system is equipping graduates with employable skills. However, India should look to better utilize its existing human capital (domestic and abroad) to address Indian industry's current challenge in recruiting talent. Otherwise, economic success will be hindered by the market failure of imperfect information. Job seekers with international education and experience may not know the value of their talent in the labour market and the breadth of opportunities. Similarly, many employers may not know the available workforce talent and capable candidates. Given the current lack of information, it is presumptuous to expect the flow of millions of job seekers will automatically fill the labour market needs of India.

This problem can be addressed by learning from the European Commission's promising model – the EU Talent Pool. The EU Talent Pool is a database and web-based portal that serves as a mechanism to match the skills of potential migrants with the labour market demands of EU member states. Migrants seeking jobs can publish their CV and access a job search portal listing job vacancies. The portal has over three million job vacancies from over 4,000 employers across Europe (European Commission, 2022). Similarly, employers can view the profiles of job seekers. The service includes advisers who can support job seekers and facilitate job matching.

Regarding cultivating a talent pool India should develop the following:

- An online database and web portal to facilitate job matching between job seekers and employers modelled after the EU Talent Pool.
- Marketing campaign to recruit employers and job seekers (expatriates, post-secondary students, skilled workers, etc.) to participate in the talent pool system.

Admittedly, the benefits of the Indian Talent Pool system would be limited to the educated class. However, the system could also help provide a more in-depth understanding of the labour market and educated workforce. Moreover, the Indian talent pool system can be included in the Digital India programme, which is focused on improving access to government services by improving ICT infrastructure and increasing internet connectivity.

Putting Remittances to Work

Remittance from foreign workers and diaspora communities is an untapped source of development funds for emerging markets. In 2022, India alone received US$100 billion in remittances (World Bank Group, 2022). But this money is not being channelled into investments that support economic and social development. The Reserve Bank of India found almost 60% of remittance is spent on household consumption, and less than 10% is invested (RBI, 2018). Moreover, the investments are primarily in land and stocks (RBI, 2018). India should develop mechanisms to channel remittance funds towards productive investments. In developing policy mechanisms policymakers can reference innovative practices and ideas

Playing Financial Instruments

Remittance money can provide more economic benefits if it were in the formal financial system. For example, Sri Lanka's Hatton National Bank created the Adhistana program to incentivize migrant workers to remit and save earnings. The program, created for the country's migrant worker population, provides a higher interest savings rate for remittance money (Abayasingha, 2022). The program also provides access to loans and account holders can request the bank to deliver cash to their homes (Abayasingha, 2022).

Bonds are another financial instrument to generate funds from expatriates. India and Israel have been successful in issuing diaspora bonds from their nationals living abroad. India raised over $10 billion in three separate issues of diaspora bonds in 1991, 1998, and 2000 (Gevorkyan, 2021). The Development Corporation of Israel has used diaspora bond sales to invest in agriculture, transportation, technology, and energy (Gevorkyan, 2021). A Development Impact Bond (DIB) is an innovation of bonds to finance development programmes. DIBs are performance-based bonds where the investor funds a development initiative and receives a return (principal plus interest) if the project is successful. The Quality Education India DIB showcases the potential of a well-designed DIB. The Quality Education India DIB aimed to improve learning outcomes for over 200,000 students in grades 1 to 8. The programme raised over US$11 million and outperformed all its expected targets. Participating students learned 2.5 times more than non-participating students; the price per outcome was lower than expected; and the investor received a return on its investment (Cox et al., 2019).

The potential of using bonds to finance development should not cloud the challenges. Working-class labourers need remittance to alleviate poverty and improve their family's living standards (Gevorkyan, 2021). This reduces their willingness to transfer money towards public good projects (Gevorkyan, 2021). Further, innovative DIBs provide no capital protection for the investor. Being a performance-based tool, the investor only gets a return if the program reaches its performance targets. Although this ensures greater scrutiny to ensure success, labour migrants are unlikely to undertake such a risk.

A Bank for Development

Innovations to channel remittance go beyond financial instruments. Gevorkyan and Gevorkyan (2012) presented the concept of a Migration Development Bank to be a bank for migrants and help stimulate development. This bank could provide a variety of financial services for migrants abroad (e.g., money transfer mechanism) and returning home (e.g., start-up capital) (Gevorkyan & Gevorkyan, 2012). The source of funding for the bank can range from unclaimed deposits, government transfers, operating in financial markets, and low-risk financial investments (Gevorkyan & Gevorkyan, 2012). The bank is also suitable to issue diaspora sovereign bonds for long-term investments (Gevorkyan & Gevorkyan, 2012). Thus, a migration development bank can channel remittance towards productive investments for development. Notably, in 2015, the Kerala Public Expenditure Review Committee recommended establishing a Migration Development Bank (Khaleej Times, 2015). The Committee advocated that this bank can help rehabilitate expats who return to Kerala and direct remittance into productive investments (Khaleej Times, 2015).

A state-level development bank is not uncommon. Rather, Subnational Development Banks (SDBs), which operate at a regional or state/provincial level, are considered vital for development. SDBs allow for a bottom-up approach to development that can complement the top-down approach from national or multilateral development banks, such as the World Bank or Asian Development Bank (FIC, 2021). The advantage of SDBs is that they can better understand local needs and be more effective in selecting investment opportunities (Bedeschi et al., 2020). This can help increase the welfare in economically neglected regions (Bedeschi et al., 2020).

Only 66 SDBs are operating in the world, and the majority of them are in two countries: Brazil and Vietnam (Bedeschi et al., 2020). They have varying mandates which include but are not limited to, providing long-term credit for investment projects and providing loans for SMEs (Bedeschi et al., 2020). Their primary funding source is financial transfers from their respective federal governments (i.e., national development banks). SDBs can also leverage financial support from multilateral institutions for specific initiatives such as sustainability. For example, Brazil's Development Bank of Minas Gerais

(BDMG) partnered with the European Investment Bank to finance a renewable energy project (Bedeschi et al., 2020).

Regarding utilizing remittance for productive investments Indian states should develop the following:

- An SDB based on Aleksandr V. Gevorkyan's migration development bank model. This can be further developed to have more diverse funding sources similar to other SDBs.
- Education services for migrant worker account holders to improve financial literacy.
- Diaspora bonds for diaspora communities interested in making long-term investments in their home community in India.
- An investment framework that ensures a high probability of success for Development Impact Bonds. This can help get capital protection for short-to-medium-term development projects.

Kerala remittance figures suggest a development bank could be a windfall for development. The Reserve Bank of India found Kerala represented 19% of total Indian remittance (RBI, 2018). In 2011, remittance accounted for approximately 30% of Kerala's GDP and was over six times greater than federal revenue transfers provided to Kerala (Khaleej Times, 2015).

Theory of Change

The Theory of Change diagram describes how the proposed policy programme can lead to development (Figure 21.1).

Recommended Next Steps

This chapter takes a broad approach to identify the different areas that require government intervention. A solution will require government commitment. But before implementation, these policy ideas must be further scrutinized and developed. To forge this new policy path, the chapter presents the next steps for researchers. The recommended next steps provide a more precise research focus for the respective topics.

1. **Active labour market program**
    - Develop a conceptual framework for an active labour market program(s) that address job shortages and support skills development and transfer by:
        - Identifying best practices for skills development and transfer.
        - Assessing the viability of getting the participation of the private sector in G-7 countries.

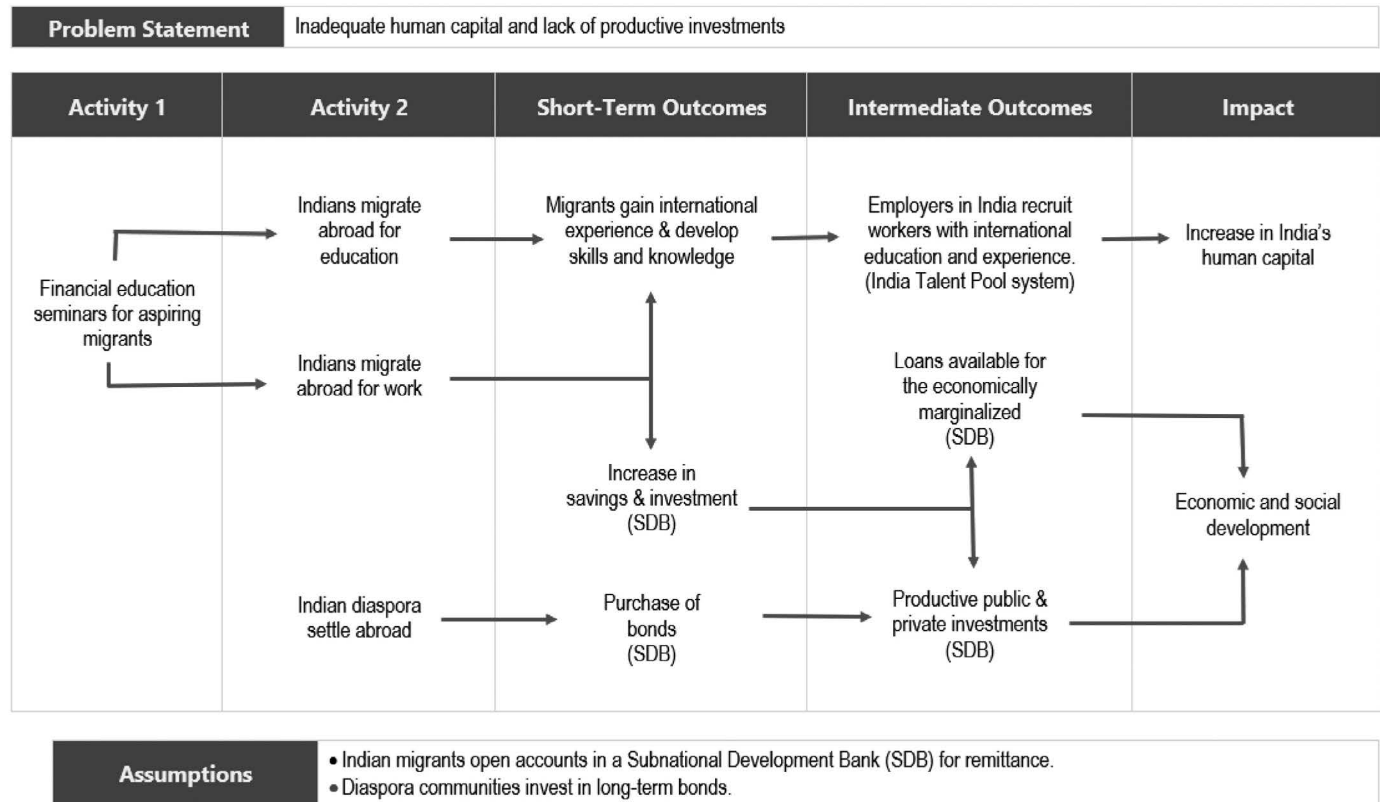

Figure 21.1 Theory of Change diagram describes how the proposed policy programme can lead to development.

2 Indian Talent Pool

- Assess the need and potential benefits of an Indian Talent Pool system modelled after the EU Talent Pool. As assessment should measure stakeholder interest in participating in the proposed system by surveying Indian industries and potential job seekers.

3 Putting remittance funds to work

- Survey diaspora communities to determine their willingness to invest in bonds to fund development in their home country
- Develop a theoretical governance model and institutional financial framework for a subnational development bank.
- Explore potential development initiatives suitable for a subnational development bank to fund.
- Assess the viability of providing principal protected Development Impact Bonds with a high probability of success.
  - Develop an investment criteria framework that can identify development projects with a high probability of success.
  - Research principal-protected bonds issued by the World Bank.

Concluding Remarks

The fact that many Indians are moving to the West and settling in low-skill careers is concerning. An IMF study found that less-educated workers were significantly more vulnerable to job loss in both the 2008 recession and the 2020 pandemic-induced recession (Shibata, 2020). Low-wage jobs with routine tasks are more susceptible to technological change (Aaronson & Phelan, 2019). Low and semi-skilled work has also been found to provide fewer career advancement opportunities (Wilhelm, 2017). Unfortunately, current immigration programs drive a large segment of migrants into a low-skill career path. These people face the dilemma of struggling in their home country or struggling in the West. They need a path to economic mobility.

This chapter proposes a new approach that treats precarious occupations as transitory used to build skills, experience, and wealth – not permanent careers. This more agile approach is warranted in an increasingly dynamic economy and labour market.

Admittedly, this approach will require greater international cooperation; however, there already exists a strong global interest to build stronger relations with India. The US has multiple military agreements. The UK is engaged in negotiations for a free trade agreement. Canada developed an Indo-Pacific strategy. Japan and Finland even entered into labour agreements to receive Indian workers. India should leverage this interest to encourage the industrialized world to develop programs that allow India to send its workforce and build its human capital. Further, this approach aligns with the World Bank's

efforts to increase private capital funding and their Human Development Project, which aims to enhance skill development.

Moreover, many Western countries are spending significant resources dealing with migration challenges. The UK will spend £500 million to stop migrant crossings across the English Channel (Grammaticas & Whannel, 2023). The US developed the Root Causes Strategy to address illegal migration (National Security Council, 2021). Alternatively, these countries can invite these migrants as a transitory population and support their skill development. As well as support SDBs to channel productive investments in countries that are the source of illegal migration. Hence, by applying the proposed innovations migrants can be the key for international development.

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