

# **MAJOR RESEARCH PAPER**

## **Exploring the Personal and Professional Outcomes for Skilled Immigrants Under Canada's Point-Based System: A Comparative Study with Traditional Immigration Pathways**

**Submitted by Nnedi Cynthia Okafor (300272074, nokaf079@uottawa.ca)**

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to my friends and family who have unwaveringly supported and encouraged me throughout this journey. I say thank you to my beloved husband and wonderful children for their love, patience and understanding during the challenging period of this research. Most importantly, I thank Almighty God for seeing me through to the successful completion of this program.

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## Abstract

This research aims to explore the personal and professional outcomes of skilled workers under Canada's point-based system in comparison with those of immigrants who arrive through traditional pathways. The growing emphasis on attracting skilled labour to Canada for the purpose of addressing economic needs like labour shortage influenced the prioritization of merit-based selection when deciding which immigrants are accepted.

This study conducts a comprehensive analysis to understand the impact of these immigration pathways on the social integration, psychological well-being, family dynamics and professional achievements of immigrants. The mixed-methods approach, which is a combination of quantitative data from questionnaires and qualitative insights from an extensive literature review is employed in this research to provide a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter. Key factors such as language proficiency, foreign credentials recognition, access to social networks and the availability of support services are identified as influencing the experiences of immigrants and determining their overall outcomes in terms of sense of belonging, employment opportunities, career projection, job stability and income levels. These factors are extensively discussed in this paper.

According to the research, skilled immigrants admitted through the point-based system generally record more favorable personal and professional outcomes when compared to those who arrived through traditional pathways. This could be attributed to the fact that immigrants coming through the point-based system undergo a rigorous selection process which ensures that they are better equipped to integrate and thrive in the Canadian system; labour market and culture, leading to higher employment rates, higher earnings and better cultural experiences. On the other hand, traditional pathway immigrants such as those arriving through family unification or as refugees, face greater challenges such as language difficulties, non-recognition of foreign credentials, or difficulty in finding suitable and fulfilling employment.

The study concludes with recommendations to inform the development of more effective immigration policies that will address the challenges faced by immigrants such as simplifying the recognition of foreign credentials, providing expansive language training and mentorship and fostering inclusive community support systems which will ultimately ensure that Canada remains a preferred destination for skilled talent.

The research contributes to the existing body of knowledge on immigration policy and integration, and provides valuable insights for policymakers, social service providers, and immigrant advocacy groups. The comparative analysis of skilled immigrants under different pathways adds depth to the discussion and highlights the challenges that immigrants experience as well as the need for support that promotes successful integration and leads to an all-round more fulfilling experience for all Canadian immigrants.

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Canada's development cannot be fully discussed without the role played by immigration and how it provides a vital source of labour and contributes to the country's economic growth and cultural diversity. The Canadian immigration system has evolved significantly over the decades, with the introduction of the point-based system as one of its most notable changes. This system; the point-based immigration system, which is designed to attract skilled workers, contrasts sharply with traditional immigration pathways which prioritize family reunification or humanitarian concerns. A better understanding of the personal and professional outcomes of immigrants under these different pathways is necessary for informing better performing immigration policies that continue to position Canada as a desirable destination for skilled workers

Canada's point-based system was established in 1967 with the goal of addressing labour shortages in various industries by attracting individuals who will contribute meaningfully to the country's economy and easily integrate into the Canadian society. Potential immigrants under this system are evaluated based on factors like education, work experience and language proficiency (Government of Canada, 2020). In 2015, the Express Entry system was born from the refining and expansion of the system to enhance the process and better match identified labour needs in Canada. (IRCC, 2017).

Traditional immigration pathways in contrast focus on the reunification of families or humanitarian concerns such as providing refuge to individuals fleeing persecution from their own countries and seeking succor elsewhere. The selection criteria for these pathways are based on family relations or the need for protection rather than on economic factors (Smith, 2018). The traditional immigration pathways are not necessarily focused on the economic requirements of the country but rather on fulfilling Canada's humanitarian commitments.

The significance of skilled immigration to Canada's economy and society cannot be overemphasized. The focus on skilled immigration ensures an abundance of diverse talents that fill labour shortages and contribute to growth and development in areas such as healthcare, engineering, and information technology (Haoule and Yassaad, 2010). Skilled immigrants often possess higher levels of education compared to their counterparts from the traditional pathways and therefore have access to better employment opportunities and higher earnings (Ferrer, Picot, & Riddell, 2024).

The personal experiences and integration outcomes of skilled immigrants can vary significantly depending on the pathway through which they enter Canada. Social integration, psychological well-being, and family dynamics are all crucial aspects of the immigrant experience that influence their overall success and satisfaction. Social integration involves adapting to a new cultural environment, forming social networks, and participating in community activities. Successful social integration can enhance immigrants' sense of belonging and well-being, while challenges in this area can lead to social isolation and mental health issues (Berry, 1997).

The psychological well-being of immigrants is another crucial factor which encompasses aspects such as a sense of belonging, identity challenges, and mental health. The migration process can be stressful due to the fact that it involves significant changes and potential loss of familiar social support networks. Studies indicate that immigrants are more likely to face higher levels of stress and mental health issues as a result of the challenges of adjusting to a new environment (Beiser, 2005). Support systems and services that address these issues are essential for helping immigrants adapt to their new lives better and achieve successful integration into the system.

Family dynamics also play a very important role in the integration process. The impact of immigration on family relationships, children's education, and overall family well-being can influence immigrants' long-term outcomes. Family-sponsored immigrants, for instance, may benefit from immediate support networks that enhance social and economic integration, while skilled immigrants entering through the point-based system may face different challenges related to family separation and the need to establish new support systems (Wilkinson & Pon, 2011).

Despite the clear economic advantages of skilled immigration, comprehensive research that examines the broader personal and professional outcomes of immigrants under Canada's point-based system compared to traditional pathways is limited. This study seeks to address these research gaps provide insights that can inform the development of more equitable and effective immigration policies, which will ensure that Canada continues to attract and retain skilled talent while supporting the integration and well-being of its immigrant population.

Researching this subject is both worthy and compelling for several reasons beginning with the fact that generally, immigration policies that prioritize highly skilled workers have significant implications for the economic and social fabric of receiving countries (United Nations, 2013, p. 6). Examining the personal and professional outcomes of immigrants provides insights into the effectiveness of these policies and identifies areas for improvement. The findings of this research have the potential to inform policymakers and contribute to the development of more equitable and effective immigration strategies. Also, understanding the experiences of skilled immigrants can help address broader issues bordering on social integration and economic inequality. It further sheds light on a crucial aspect of the contemporary society; how countries like Canada manage and benefit from global talent. The comparative aspect of this study discusses the outcomes of

immigrants under the different pathways and adds depth to the discussion which makes it not only informative but also engaging and relevant to current policy debates.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Although the point-based system aims to meet labour market demands by selecting individuals based on their education, work experience, and language proficiency, an evaluation of the personal and professional experiences of these individuals is not exponentially discussed.

Little is known about how the different pathways influence the outcomes of Canadian immigrants, in other words, how their personal and professional lives are affected by their decision to migrate to Canada.

The existing literature on immigrant outcomes often focuses on economic indicators such as employment rates and income levels but tends to overlook the broader personal experiences that influence long-term integration and well-being. Moreover, comparative studies between the outcomes of immigrants under the point-based system and those under traditional pathways are scarce, leaving gaps in knowledge that are essential for informed and transformative policy-making.

The gaps identified will be addressed in this paper by exploring and comparing the personal and professional outcomes of skilled immigrants in Canada under the point-based system with those who arrive through traditional pathways. Specifically, it will facilitate a better understanding of how these different pathways affect immigrants' social integration, psychological well-being, family dynamics, and professional achievements. In doing so, this study will provide insights that can inform the development of more equitable and effective immigration policies and ensure that Canada remains a destination of choice for skilled immigrants.

### **Research Questions and Objectives**

The objectives of this research are to identify the challenges faced by Canadian immigrants in the Express Entry System and the Traditional pathways, evaluate the both systems, determine best practices, identify areas that need improvement and finally, to develop recommendations based on research findings. It seeks to answer questions related to;

- i. How skilled immigrants under Canada's point-based system experience social integration compared to those who arrive through traditional immigration pathways.
- ii. The differences in psychological well-being between skilled immigrants admitted through the point-based system and those who enter through traditional pathways.

- iii. The ways that family dynamics differ for skilled immigrants under the point-based system versus traditional immigration pathways.
- iv. The ways that professional outcomes, such as employment opportunities, career progression, and income levels, vary between skilled immigrants under the point-based system and those who arrive through traditional pathways.
- v. The factors that influence the social integration of skilled immigrants under the point-based system and traditional pathways.
- vi. How the level of support services available to skilled immigrants impact their psychological well-being and professional success under both immigration systems.

In subsequent chapters, these research questions will be further explored and supported by relevant empirical data.

### **1.3 Significance of the Study**

The outcome of this research work will contribute to the body of existing knowledge and serve as a significant resource for various stakeholders, including policymakers, immigration officials, social service providers, researchers, and immigrant advocacy groups. The insights gained from this study are expected to aid the development of more effective and equitable immigration policies that address the unique needs of skilled immigrants.

Policymakers and immigration officials will benefit from a deeper understanding of how different immigration pathways impact the personal and professional outcomes of immigrants. This knowledge can guide the creation of policies that not only attract skilled workers but also support their successful integration into Canadian society.

Social service providers and community organizations can use the findings of this research to enhance support services tailored towards the needs of skilled immigrants. Improved services will help facilitate better social integration, psychological well-being, and professional success, which will lead to more resilient communities.

Researchers and academics will find this study a valuable addition to the existing literature on immigration and integration. The comparative analysis of skilled immigrants under the point-based system and traditional pathways will fill the gaps in current literature and provide a comprehensive understanding of the nature of the outcomes of immigrants.

Immigrant advocacy groups can leverage this study's findings to advocate for policies and programs that support the well-being and integration of skilled immigrants. Highlighting the specific challenges and successes experienced by immigrants can promote advocacy efforts and make them more effective.

The study will also contribute to international discourse on immigration policy and integration practices. Countries with similar immigration systems or those considering reforms can draw lessons from Canada's experience to inform their approaches to skilled immigration.

This research ultimately seeks to ensure that Canada remains a desirable destination for skilled talent. The insights gained will support the creation of a more inclusive and supportive environment for all immigrants while enhancing their contributions to the economic and social fabric of Canada.

## **1.4 Scope of the Study**

This study explores and compares the personal and professional outcomes of skilled immigrants under Canada's point-based system with those who arrive through traditional immigration pathways. The research focuses on several key areas of immigrant experience, including social integration, psychological well-being, family dynamics, and professional achievements.

The study will employ qualitative questionnaires to gather in-depth insights from three respondents who have entered Canada through both the point-based system and traditional pathways. The questionnaires will address various aspects of their integration experiences and outcomes.

The scope is limited to immigrants residing in Canada to ensure a detailed examination of their experiences and allow for an in-depth understanding of the of their experiences and the challenges they face.

The scope also covers the support services available to immigrants, such as language training programs and employment support services. The effectiveness of these services in facilitating social and professional integration will be examined.

The time frame for data collection spans from the year 2000 to the present, to provide a comprehensive view of how immigration policies and economic conditions have impacted immigrant outcomes over the past two decades.

## **1.5 Operational Definition of Terms**

**Point-Based Immigration System:** A method of selecting immigrants based on specific criteria such as education, work experience, language proficiency, and other factors that predict the ability to contribute economically and integrate into Canadian society.

**Traditional Immigration Pathways:** Immigration routes that prioritize family reunification, humanitarian concerns, and other non-economic factors. These pathways focus on maintaining family unity and providing refuge to individuals in need.

**Social Integration:** The process by which immigrants adapt to and become part of the social and cultural fabric of the host country. This includes forming social networks, participating in community activities, and achieving a sense of belonging.

**Psychological Well-Being:** The overall mental health and emotional state of immigrants, including their sense of belonging, identity, stress levels, and mental health issues such as depression and anxiety.

**Family Dynamics:** The impact of immigration on family relationships, including changes in family structure, roles, and the well-being of family members, particularly children's education and development.

**Professional Outcomes:** The economic achievements of immigrants, including employment opportunities, career progression, income levels, job stability, and professional network development.

**Support Services:** Programs and resources provided to immigrants to aid in their integration process. This includes language training, employment support, mental health services, and community-building initiatives.

**Skilled Immigrants:** Individuals who migrate based on their qualifications, skills, and potential to contribute economically. These immigrants are typically selected through the point-based system.

# **CHAPTER TWO**

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter reviews relevant professional and scholarly literature and encompasses key concepts, theories, and empirical studies aligned with the study's objectives.

### **2.1 History of Skilled Immigration in Canada**

Skilled immigration has been integral to Canada's development, particularly since the introduction of the point-based system in 1967. This system marked a significant shift from earlier policies that were often discriminatory and favored certain nationalities over others. The point-based system was designed to create a more merit-based and inclusive approach to immigration by selecting individuals based on their potential contributions to the economy rather than their country of origin (Boyd, 2014).

The history of Canadian immigration policy can be traced back to the 19th century, when the primary focus was on attracting settlers to develop the agricultural potential of the land. The Immigration Act of 1869 was one of the first legislative efforts to regulate immigration, although it imposed few restrictions (Kelley & Trebilcock, 2010). These early policies were driven by the need to populate the country and promote economic development especially through agriculture and the construction of national infrastructure such as the Canadian Pacific Railway (Knowles, 2016).

During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Canada's immigration policies continued to encourage European immigration while imposing restrictions on non-European immigrants. The Chinese Immigration Act of 1885, which introduced a head tax on Chinese immigrants, and the Continuous Journey Regulation of 1908, aimed at restricting Indian immigration, are some examples of the racially discriminatory policies that existed at the time designed to maintain a predominantly white European population (Hawkins, 1991).

The post-World War II era marked a significant shift in Canadian immigration policy. The economic boom and labour shortages of the 1950s and 1960s led to the liberalization of immigration policies. The introduction of the Immigration Act of 1952 and the subsequent 1962 immigration regulations eliminated many racial and national origin restrictions and opened the door to a more diverse range of immigrants (Green & Green, 2004). This period also saw the beginning of a more structured approach to immigration, with the establishment of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration.

The introduction of the point-based system in 1967 was a notable moment in the evolution of the Canadian immigration policy. The system marked a shift towards a merit-based approach, where potential immigrants were evaluated based on their skills, education, work experience, and language proficiency, rather than their country of origin. The point-based system aimed to select individuals who were most likely to succeed economically and integrate into Canadian society (Boyd, 2014). The points system was designed to attract skilled labour and address specific economic needs with the intention of promoting economic growth and development.

The 1976 Immigration Act further refined the point-based system and established the three primary categories of immigrants: family class, refugees, and independent (economic) immigrants. This Act emphasized the importance of immigration for meeting economic needs, reuniting families, and fulfilling humanitarian commitments (Dirks, 1995). The Act also introduced the concept of immigration levels planning and allowed the government to set annual targets for the number of immigrants admitted into the country.

The 1990s and 2000s saw continued adjustments to the point-based system which reflected changing economic conditions and labour market needs. The Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) of 2002 consolidated and modernized Canadian immigration law, emphasizing the selection of skilled immigrants who could contribute to the economy (CIC, 2002). The IRPA introduced the concept of the Federal Skilled Worker Program, which became the primary pathway for economic immigrants. The program used a comprehensive points system to assess applicants, focusing on factors such as age, education, work experience, and language skills (Green & Green, 2004).

In recent years, Canada has continued to refine its immigration policies to attract and retain skilled workers. The introduction of the Express Entry system in 2015 represented a significant innovation in the selection process. Express Entry is an online application management system that ranks candidates based on a Comprehensive Ranking System (CRS) score, which considers factors such as age, education, work experience, and language proficiency. Candidates with the highest scores are invited to apply for permanent residency in order to ensure that the most qualified individuals are selected (IRCC, 2017).

Canada's evolving immigration policies reflect the country's ongoing commitment to economic growth and social development. The shift from unrestricted immigration to a highly selective, merit-based system highlights the changing priorities and values of the Canadian society. Today, immigration remains a vital component of Canada's strategy to address demographic challenges, such as an aging population and declining birth rates, and to ensure continued economic prosperity.

The historical evolution of immigration policy in Canada demonstrates a consistent effort to balance economic needs with social values. The transition from racially discriminatory policies to a points-based system focused on skills and merit illustrates the country's progress towards a more

inclusive and equitable immigration framework. As Canada continues to face new economic and social challenges, its immigration policies will undoubtedly continue to evolve to ensure that the country remains a welcoming and prosperous destination for immigrants from around the world.

## **2.2 Previous Findings on Immigrant Outcomes in Canada**

Previous research on immigrant outcomes in Canada provide a comprehensive understanding of the various factors influencing the success and integration of immigrants. Several studies focus on evaluating the overall outcomes for immigrants, particularly those admitted through different pathways, such as the point-based system and traditional methods like family reunification and refugee programs.

One significant finding in the literature is that the point-based system generally leads to better overall outcomes for immigrants. This system, which evaluates potential immigrants based on a set of criteria including education, work experience, and language proficiency, has been effective in selecting individuals who are more likely to succeed in the Canadian context. Aydemir and Skuterud (2005) found that immigrants admitted through the point-based system had higher employment rates and better job matches compared to those who arrived through other pathways. This was attributed to the rigorous selection process that ensures immigrants possess the necessary skills and qualifications to integrate into the Canadian labour market before being invited.

Ferrer, Picot, and Riddell (2014) further corroborate these findings, noting that immigrants under the point-based system tend to have higher earnings and better employment outcomes. They argue that the system's focus on human capital attributes, such as education and language skills, plays a crucial role in enhancing the economic integration of these immigrants. Their research indicates that the systematic selection process helps mitigate some of the challenges associated with credential recognition and language barriers, which are among the most common issues for immigrants arriving through traditional pathways.

Research by Houle and Yssaad (2010) highlights that skilled immigrants, particularly those selected through the point-based system, are more likely to be employed in high-demand sectors such as healthcare, engineering, and information technology. This targeted approach aligns the skills of immigrants with the needs of the Canadian economy and facilitates smoother integration and better overall outcomes.

Despite the generally positive findings for the point-based system, the literature also points to significant challenges faced by immigrants, regardless of their entry pathway. Studies indicate that immigrants often encounter barriers related to the recognition of foreign credentials and work experience, which can hinder their professional integration. Wilkinson and Pon (2011) emphasize that these barriers can lead to underemployment and affect the long-term career prospects of immigrants.

## 2.3 Comparison Canada's Point-Based System and Traditional Pathways

Canada's immigration framework is designed to attract and integrate individuals who can contribute to the country's economic, social, and cultural development. The framework comprises several pathways, each tailored to address different needs and circumstances of immigrants. Among these, the point-based system stands out as one of the most prominent and structured approaches, known for its objective and transparent criteria for selecting immigrants.

### 2.3.1 Point-Based System: Express Entry

The point-based system, formally known as the Express Entry system, was introduced in 2015 to streamline the process of selecting skilled immigrants who are likely to succeed economically in Canada. This system evaluates candidates based on a Comprehensive Ranking System (CRS) score, which is calculated using the following factors:

- **Age:** Younger candidates typically receive higher scores because they are expected to contribute to the workforce for a longer period.
- **Education:** Higher levels of education, particularly those obtained in Canada, significantly boost a candidate's score which help them rank higher in the system.
- **Work Experience:** Both Canadian and international work experience in skilled occupations are valued, with more points awarded for longer durations of relevant work history.
- **Language Proficiency:** Proficiency in English and/or French, assessed through standardized tests like IELTS (International English Language Testing System) or TEF (Test d'Evaluation de Français), is a crucial part of the application process. Higher language scores translate to better CRS scores.
- **Additional Factors:** Other factors such as having a job offer from a Canadian employer, a provincial nomination, or Canadian education credentials also contribute to higher scores for candidates in the system (Government of Canada, 2023).

The Express Entry system includes three main economic immigration programs:

1. **Federal Skilled Worker Program (FSWP):** Targets individuals with high levels of education and significant work experience.
2. **Federal Skilled Trades Program (FSTP):** Designed for skilled tradespeople with job offers or certification from a Canadian provincial or territorial authority.
3. **Canadian Experience Class (CEC):** Focuses on candidates who have Canadian work experience, making it easier for international students and temporary foreign workers to transition to permanent residence (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, 2022).

### 2.3.2 Traditional Pathways

In addition to the point-based system, Canada offers other pathways for immigration one of which is the traditional pathways. These pathways cater to different categories of immigrants, including family members, refugees, and individuals seeking asylum.

- **Family Sponsorship:** This pathway allows Canadian citizens and permanent residents to sponsor their spouses, common-law partners, dependent children, parents, and grandparents. The goal is to reunite families and strengthen social support networks for immigrants (Government of Canada, 2022).
- **Refugee Claims and Humanitarian Grounds:** Canada has a long-standing commitment to providing refuge to individuals fleeing persecution, conflict, and human rights violations. This pathway includes:

**Government-Assisted Refugees (GARs):** Individuals selected from refugee camps and settlements around the world by the Canadian government, which provides support and resettlement services upon arrival.

**Privately Sponsored Refugees (PSRs):** Individuals sponsored by private groups, such as community organizations or groups of Canadian citizens, who provide financial and emotional support for the first year in Canada.

**Inland Refugee Claims:** Individuals who apply for asylum after arriving in Canada, often at a port of entry or from within the country (Canadian Council for Refugees, 2021).

- **Other Humanitarian Grounds:** This includes pathways for individuals who may not fit neatly into other categories but have compelling reasons for seeking refuge or resettlement in Canada, such as those with serious medical conditions or those in need of urgent protection due to natural disasters or other crises (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, 2021).

## 2.4 Comparative Analysis

While the point-based system aims to attract individuals with the skills and experience needed to thrive in Canada's economy, traditional pathways address humanitarian needs and family reunification. Each pathway has distinct advantages and challenges:

**Economic Integration:** The point-based system's focus on skills and qualifications facilitates the economic integration of immigrants, often leading to better employment outcomes and higher incomes. This system evaluates candidates based on factors such as age, education, work

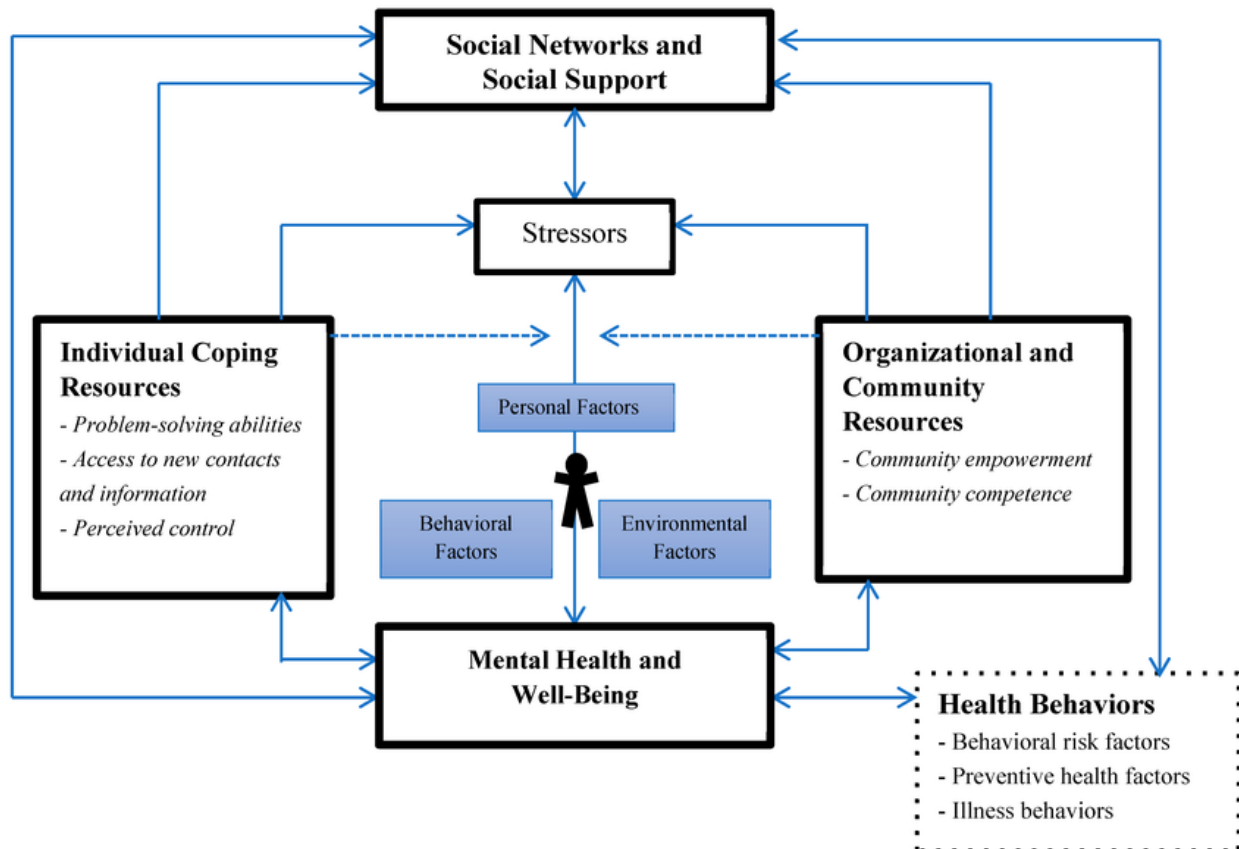
experience, and language proficiency, and ensures that those admitted are better placed to succeed in the Canadian labour market. The systematic selection process ensures that immigrants possess the necessary qualifications to integrate effectively into the workforce. In contrast, immigrants through traditional pathways may face more significant challenges in entering the labour market, particularly if they lack Canadian work experience or face language barriers. For example, family-sponsored immigrants and refugees may not have the same level of immediate job readiness, which can impact their initial economic outcomes (Aydemir & Skuterud, 2005).

**Social Integration:** Family sponsorship under traditional pathways helps maintain strong family units and provides emotional and social support, which can be crucial for successful integration. According to Wilkinson and Pon (2011), the presence of family members can provide a built-in support network that significantly eases the transition process and offers emotional support, practical assistance, and cultural guidance. This support is particularly important for new immigrants in a new environment. On the other hand, refugees and humanitarian immigrants may require extensive support services to address trauma and establish stability to thrive better. Wilkinson and Pon (2011) argue that these services are crucial for addressing the psychological and emotional challenges associated with resettlement which immigrants need in order to adapt and succeed in their new communities.

**Policy and Administration:** The structured nature of the point-based system allows for efficient processing and clear expectations for applicants. This system's transparency and predictability make it easier for potential immigrants to understand the requirements and assess their chances of success. The use of a standardized points system helps streamline the application process and reduces administrative burdens and processing times. Traditional pathways unfortunately, especially those involving refugees, require more complex administration and coordination with international organizations and private sponsors. Hynie (2018) notes that managing refugee admissions involves significant logistical challenges, including background checks, health screenings, and the coordination of housing and support services. This complexity can lead to longer processing times and a greater need for collaboration between government agencies, non-profit organizations, and community groups.

## 2.4.1 Personal Outcomes

Figure 1: Possible Personal Outcomes of Immigrants



Source: [www.researchgate.net](http://www.researchgate.net)

### Life Satisfaction and Sense of Belonging

As already indicated, studies have shown that skilled immigrants under the point-based system often report higher levels of life satisfaction and a stronger sense of belonging compared to those who arrive through traditional pathways. According to Ferrer, Picot, and Riddell (2014), the rigorous selection criteria of the point-based system ensure that immigrants are better equipped to integrate into the Canadian society, leading to enhanced personal well-being.

For traditional pathways, the sense of belonging vary. Wilkinson and Pon (2011) highlight that immigrants who arrive through family sponsorship may have a pre-existing support network, which can enhance their sense of community. However, refugees and humanitarian immigrants often face significant challenges in achieving the same level of social integration due to trauma and lack of resources.

### **Psychological Well-Being**

The psychological well-being of immigrants is a critical factor in their overall integration success. Aydemir and Skuterud (2005) found that immigrants selected through the point-based system generally experience less psychological distress compared to those who come through traditional pathways. This can be attributed to their readiness for the Canadian job market which influenced their selection in the first instance and the support systems available them as a result.

Conversely, traditional pathway immigrants, typically refugees, often struggle with psychological challenges. Ngo and Este (2006) emphasize the need for targeted mental health support for these groups since the trauma that they experienced before and during migration can have lasting effects on their mental health.

### **Family Dynamics**

Family dynamics play a significant role in the integration process. Immigrants under the point-based system often report more fulfilling family relationships due to stable employment and socio-economic status. As indicated by Aydemir and Skuterud (2005), financial stability can reduce stress and improve family relationships.

Traditional pathway immigrants, especially those under family reunification programs, face other types of challenges. While they benefit from familial support, Wilkinson and Pon (2011) note that the absence of stable employment can increase stress levels within the family and affect overall well-being.

## **2.4.2 Professional Outcomes of Skilled Immigrants**

### **Employment Opportunities**

The employment outcomes of skilled immigrants are a crucial measure of their integration. In their research, Aydemir and Skuterud (2005) emphasize that skilled immigrants admitted through the point-based system have higher employment rates compared to those who come through traditional pathways because they come in prepared and capable of aligning with the needs of the Canadian labour market.

On the other hand, traditional pathway immigrants often face significant barriers to employment. Ferrer, Picot, and Riddell (2014) highlight issues such as non-recognition of foreign credentials, language barriers, and lack of Canadian work experience as major challenges. These barriers result in higher unemployment rates and underemployment among this group.

### **Career Progression**

Career progression is another important aspect of professional outcomes. Skilled immigrants under the point-based system tend to experience faster career advancement. The alignment of their skills with market demands facilitates their upward mobility in the job market (Ferrer, Picot, & Riddell, 2014).

For immigrants arriving through traditional pathways, career progression can be slower. The need to requalify for their professions, coupled with initial low-paying jobs, hinders their career development. Ngo and Este (2006) suggest that targeted training and support programs are necessary to assist these immigrants in achieving their career goals.

### **Income Levels**

Income levels are a direct indicator of economic integration. Skilled immigrants under the point-based system generally earn higher incomes due to their qualifications and readiness for the Canadian job market. Aydemir and Skuterud (2005) found that these immigrants quickly reach income parity with native-born Canadians.

Traditional pathway immigrants, however, often earn lower incomes. The barriers to employment and career progression discussed earlier contribute to this disparity. Wilkinson and Pon (2011) note that many of these immigrants remain in low-wage jobs for extended periods of time which ultimately affect their economic stability.

### **Job Stability**

Job stability is essential for long-term integration. Skilled immigrants under the point-based system benefit from stable employment due to their alignment with market needs. This stability is crucial for their overall well-being and integration (Ferrer, Picot, & Riddell, 2014).

In contrast, traditional pathway immigrants often face job instability. The lack of recognition of foreign credentials and other barriers can result in frequent job changes and periods of unemployment (Ngo & Este, 2006). This instability affects their economic security and overall integration.

### **2.4.3 Factors Influencing Integration**

#### **Language Proficiency**

Language proficiency is a significant factor that must be considered in the integration of skilled immigrants. The point-based system prioritizes language skills and insists that immigrants have a high level of proficiency in English, French or both. This proficiency facilitates better communication, social integration, and access to employment opportunities (Aydemir & Skuterud, 2005).

Traditional pathway immigrants often have varying levels of language proficiency since language is not one of the considerations for granting them entry into the country. Those with lower proficiency levels face even greater challenges in accessing services, securing employment, and integrating into the community. Ngo and Este (2006) emphasize the need for language training programs to support these immigrants. Currently language training programs are readily provided by the Canadian government to foster integration into the system.

#### **Access to Social Networks**

Social networks play a crucial role in the integration process. Skilled immigrants under the point-based system often have access to professional networks that assist in their integration. These networks provide support, information, and connections that are required for successful integration (Bourdieu, 1986). Coleman 1988 further notes the importance of joining communities and networks that provide comprehensive support.

For traditional pathway immigrants, access to social networks can be more limited. Refugees and humanitarian immigrants, in particular, may arrive with few connections and need to build their networks from scratch. Wilkinson and Pon (2011) suggest that community programs and support groups are vital for these immigrants to familiarize with them and help them integrate better into the society.

## **2.5 Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework for this study draws on several key theories related to immigrant integration and economic contribution.

### **2.5.1 Integration Theories**

Integration theories provide a comprehensive understanding of how immigrants adapt to new cultures and communities. These theories emphasize the importance of social networks, cultural capital, and the bidirectional nature of the integration process.

**Berry's Acculturation Model:** Berry (1997) identifies four acculturation strategies that immigrants use to adapt to their new environment: integration, assimilation, separation, and marginalization. Integration is considered the most beneficial strategy in the model because it involves maintaining one's cultural identity while actively participating in the broader society. He referred to successful integration as fostering a sense of belonging and enables immigrants to contribute fully to their new communities.

**Social Networks:** Social networks play a crucial role in the integration process. Coleman (1988) defines social capital as the resources available through social connections, which can facilitate access to employment, housing, and social services. Portes (1998) argues that strong social networks provide immigrants with valuable information and support and enhances their economic and social integration.

**Cultural Capital:** Bourdieu (1986) again describes cultural capital as the knowledge, skills, and cultural competencies that individuals possess which is essential for immigrants' integration, because it enables them to navigate the social and cultural landscape of the host society. Li (2003) emphasizes that immigrants with higher levels of cultural capital are more likely to succeed in the labour market and participate in social and civic activities.

**Bidirectional Process:** Integration involves a bidirectional process where both immigrants and the host society adjust to accommodate each other. Berry (1997) notes that mutual adaptation and acceptance are crucial for fostering an inclusive and cohesive society. This process includes social participation, cultural adaptation, and mutual acceptance, which collectively contribute to successful integration.

**Segmented Assimilation Theory:** Portes and Zhou (1993) propose the Segmented Assimilation Theory, which suggests that immigrants' integration experiences can vary significantly based on factors such as socioeconomic status, race, and ethnicity. The theory identifies different pathways of integration, including upward mobility, downward mobility, and selective acculturation, depending on the resources and opportunities available to immigrants.

**Interactive Acculturation Model (IAM):** Bourhis et al. (1997) developed the IAM, emphasizing the interactions between the acculturation orientations of immigrants and the host society. The model identifies five acculturation orientations: integration, assimilation, separation, marginalization, and individualism. Successful integration is more likely to occur when there is a mutual preference for integration between immigrants and the host society.

## 2.5.2 Economic Contribution Theories

Economic contribution theories provide a framework for understanding the significant impacts that skilled immigrants have on the labour markets and economies of host countries. These theories

emphasize that skilled immigrants bring valuable expertise and innovation, help to address skill shortages, and enhance productivity, ultimately leading to substantial economic benefits for the host country.

**Human Capital Theory:** Becker (1964) posits that individuals' productivity and earnings are largely determined by their skills, education, and experience. Skilled immigrants bring substantial human capital that can enhance the productivity of the workforce. Houle and Yssaad (2010) demonstrate that skilled immigrants often fill essential gaps in high-demand sectors such as healthcare, engineering, and information technology.

**Labour Market Integration:** Sweetman and Warman (2013) highlight that immigrants selected through point-based systems, which evaluate human capital characteristics, tend to have higher employment rates and earnings compared to those admitted through other means. Their study indicates that skilled immigrants experience faster economic integration and higher long-term earnings, showcasing the effectiveness of the point-based selection process.

**Economic Growth Theories:** The Solow-Swan growth model incorporates labour as a key factor in economic output (Solow, 1956; Swan, 1956). An increase in the labour force, through immigration, can boost economic growth by expanding the productive capacity of the economy. The Conference Board of Canada (2016) emphasizes that immigration accounts for almost 70% of the growth in Canada's labour force, highlighting the crucial role of immigrants in sustaining economic growth.

**Innovation and Productivity:** Skilled immigrants contribute significantly to innovation and productivity. The knowledge spillover theory suggests that the interaction of diverse human capital can result in the transfer of knowledge and skills, fostering innovation (Lucas, 1988). Research by Hunt and Gauthier-Loiselle (2010) shows that an increase in the share of immigrant college graduates in the United States is associated with higher levels of patenting per capita, a proxy for innovation. Similarly, Agrawal et al. (2007) found that immigrant entrepreneurs and skilled workers are vital for innovation and technological advancement in Canada.

**Economic Contribution Theories in Policy:** Policies that facilitate the entry and integration of skilled immigrants can maximize the economic benefits of immigration. The point-based system used in Canada and Australia aims to select immigrants based on their potential economic contributions, as assessed through factors like education, work experience, and language proficiency (Hawthorne, 2008). Statistics Canada (2019) highlights that immigrants admitted through the economic stream, particularly those selected under the point-based system, have higher employment rates and earnings compared to those admitted through other streams.

### 2.5.3 Social Capital and Network Theories

Social capital and network theories highlight the importance of social connections in facilitating immigrant success and integration. Social capital refers to the resources and benefits individuals obtain through their relationships and networks (Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1988). Immigrants with robust social networks are more likely to achieve positive personal and professional outcomes, including accessing employment opportunities and essential services.

**Definition and Importance of Social Capital:** Social capital encompasses the social networks, norms, and trust that enable individuals to work together more effectively to pursue shared objectives (Putnam, 2000). Coleman (1988) defines social capital as the resources available through social connections, which can facilitate access to employment, housing, and social services. Portes (1998) argues that strong social networks provide immigrants with valuable information and support, enhancing their economic and social integration.

**Types of Social Capital:** Social capital can be categorized into bonding social capital and bridging social capital. Bonding social capital refers to close-knit relationships within a community, such as family and close friends. These connections provide emotional support and practical assistance. Bridging social capital, on the other hand, refers to weaker ties that connect individuals across different social groups. These connections offer access to broader opportunities and resources (Putnam, 2000).

**Social Networks and Employment:** Social networks are instrumental in helping immigrants find employment. Granovetter's (1973) theory of the strength of weak ties highlights that weak ties; connections with acquaintances rather than close friends or family, are particularly valuable for job seekers. These weak ties can provide access to diverse information and opportunities that are not available within close-knit networks. Boyd and Thomas (2001) found that social networks play a significant role in the job search process for immigrants in Canada, helping bridge the gap between immigrants' qualifications and the requirements of the labour market.

**Housing and Access to Services:** Social networks also play a crucial role in helping immigrants find housing and access essential services. Networks of family and friends can provide temporary accommodation upon arrival, assist in finding permanent housing, and offer advice on navigating the housing market (Haan, 2007). Ryan et al. (2008) found that social networks provide valuable information about available services and how to access them, which is particularly important for new immigrants who may not be familiar with the local systems. Strong social networks can also advocate for immigrants, helping them overcome barriers and discrimination in accessing services.

**Emotional Support and Psychological Well-Being:** The emotional support provided by social networks is crucial for the psychological well-being of immigrants. Migration can be a stressful experience, involving the loss of familiar surroundings and social support systems. Social capital

can mitigate these stresses by offering emotional support, companionship, and a sense of community. Beiser (2005) found that social support is a significant predictor of mental health outcomes among immigrants and refugees in Canada. Immigrants who maintain strong ties with their ethnic communities and establish connections with the broader society tend to experience better psychological well-being.

**Social Integration and Community Participation:** Social capital also promotes social integration and community participation. Immigrants who are well-integrated into their communities are more likely to participate in civic activities, volunteer work, and social organizations. These activities help build social cohesion and foster a sense of belonging (Putnam, 2000). Bloemraad (2006) highlights the importance of community organizations in facilitating immigrant integration, providing spaces for social interaction, cultural exchange, and collective action.

**Policy Implications:** The importance of social capital and networks in immigrant integration has significant policy implications. Policies that promote the development and strengthening of social networks can enhance the integration process. Community-building initiatives, support for immigrant organizations, and programs that facilitate connections between immigrants and native-born individuals can help build social capital (Ager & Strang, 2008). Policies that recognize and leverage the existing social capital within immigrant communities can also be beneficial. Supporting ethnic and cultural organizations, providing funding for community events, and fostering environments that encourage intercultural interactions can strengthen social networks and promote integration.

## **2.6 Empirical Review**

Empirical studies provide valuable insights into the outcomes of skilled immigrants under different immigration pathways. According to research by Aydemir and Skuterud (2005), immigrants selected through the point-based system generally achieve higher employment rates and income levels compared to those who entered through traditional pathways. This systematic selection process ensures that immigrants possess the necessary qualifications to integrate effectively into the workforce.

A study by Ferrer, Picot, and Riddell (2014) corroborates these findings, indicating that the point-based system significantly improves the likelihood of employment and earnings among immigrants. However, the study also highlights that many skilled immigrants face challenges in achieving social integration and maintaining psychological well-being.

## 2.7 Research Gaps and Hypotheses Development

Despite extensive research on the economic outcomes of skilled immigrants, there is limited comprehensive understanding of their broader personal experiences, including social integration and psychological well-being. This study aims to fill these gaps by exploring the nuanced personal and professional outcomes of skilled immigrants under Canada's point-based system and traditional pathways.

The hypothesis development for this study is based on the comparison of personal and professional outcomes for skilled immigrants under Canada's point-based system versus traditional immigration pathways. The theoretical and empirical literature highlights several key areas where differences might be observed, providing a foundation for the hypothesis.

### Theoretical Basis

1. **Integration Theories:** Berry's Acculturation Model (1997) suggests that integration, which involves maintaining one's cultural identity while participating in the broader society, is the most beneficial strategy for immigrants. This theory underpins the expectation that skilled immigrants selected through a point-based system, which prioritizes qualifications and adaptability, are more likely to integrate successfully into Canadian society. Successful integration is likely to enhance their personal outcomes, including life satisfaction and sense of belonging.
2. **Human Capital Theory:** This theory posits that individuals with higher levels of education and skills are better positioned to achieve favorable economic outcomes (Becker, 1964). Canada's point-based system emphasizes the selection of immigrants with higher education, work experience, and language proficiency. Consequently, these immigrants are expected to achieve better professional outcomes, such as higher employment rates, career progression, and income levels.
3. **Social Capital and Network Theories:** According to Bourdieu (1986) and Coleman (1988), social capital refers to the resources and benefits individuals obtain through their relationships and networks. Skilled immigrants with robust social networks are more likely to access employment opportunities and essential services, leading to better personal and professional outcomes. The point-based system's focus on selecting immigrants who are likely to integrate well into the community supports the hypothesis that these individuals will build stronger networks and experience better outcomes.

### Empirical Evidence

1. **Employment Outcomes:** Research by Aydemir and Skuterud (2005) found that immigrants selected through the point-based system generally achieve higher employment rates and income levels compared to those who entered through traditional pathways. This

systematic selection process ensures that immigrants possess the necessary qualifications to integrate effectively into the workforce.

2. **Economic Integration:** Ferrer, Picot, and Riddell (2014) corroborate these findings, indicating that the point-based system significantly improves the likelihood of employment and earnings among immigrants. However, the study also highlights challenges related to social integration and maintaining psychological well-being, which are crucial for overall life satisfaction.
3. **Personal Well-being:** Ngo and Este (2006) highlighted the importance of establishing a sense of belonging and identity stability for the well-being of immigrants. Skilled immigrants under the point-based system are expected to have higher life satisfaction and a stronger sense of belonging due to their ability to integrate socially and economically more effectively than those from traditional pathways.

## **Hypothesis Formulation**

Based on the theoretical frameworks and empirical evidence, the following hypothesis has been formulated:

**Hypothesis: "Skilled immigrants admitted through Canada's point-based system experience more enriching personal and professional outcomes compared to those who immigrate through traditional pathways."**

This hypothesis will be tested by examining various personal and professional outcome indicators, including life satisfaction, sense of belonging, employment status, career progression, income levels, job stability, social integration, psychological well-being, and family dynamics. The results will provide insights into the effectiveness of Canada's point-based system in facilitating the successful integration and enrichment of skilled immigrants.

## **2.8 Conceptual Framework of the Study**

The conceptual framework for this study illustrates the relationships between the key variables being studied, including the immigration pathway (point-based system vs. traditional pathways), social integration, psychological well-being, family dynamics, and professional outcomes. The framework guides the research by outlining the expected relationships and interactions between these variables, providing a clear direction for data collection and analysis.

**Immigration Pathway:** The type of immigration pathway, whether it is the point-based system or traditional pathways such as family reunification or humanitarian immigration, serves as the independent variable. This variable influences the other factors under study, determining the context within which immigrants integrate into Canadian society.

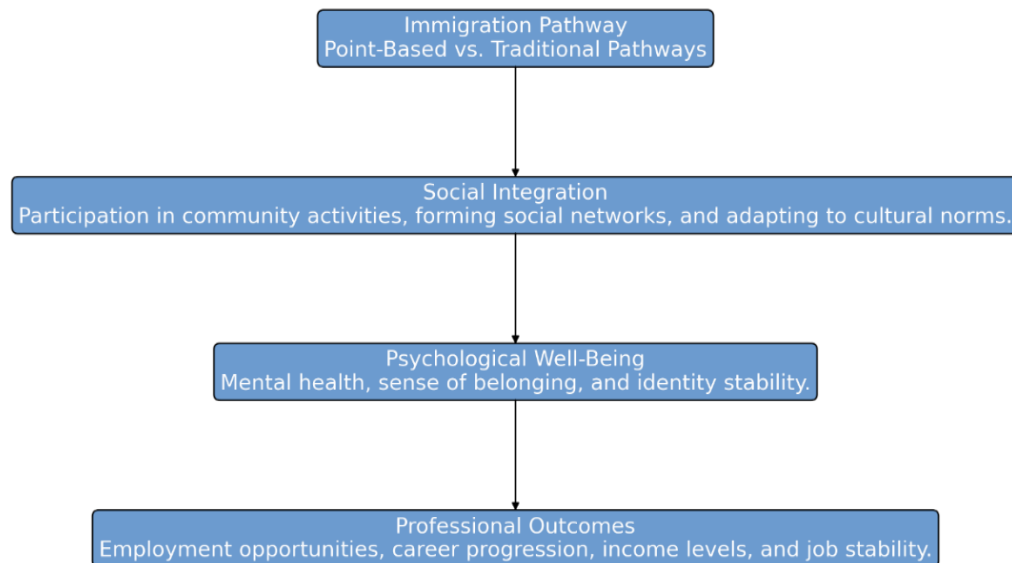
**Social Integration:** Social integration involves the extent to which immigrants become part of the social fabric of their new country, participating in community activities, forming social networks, and adapting to cultural norms. Successful social integration is expected to lead to better professional outcomes and improved psychological well-being.

**Psychological Well-Being:** Psychological well-being encompasses aspects such as mental health, sense of belonging, and identity stability. The level of psychological well-being of immigrants is influenced by their social integration and family dynamics, and in turn, affects their professional outcomes.

**Family Dynamics:** Family dynamics include the support systems provided by family members, the impact of immigration on family relationships, and the adaptation of children to the new environment. Strong family support is anticipated to enhance social integration and psychological well-being, contributing positively to professional outcomes.

**Professional Outcomes:** Professional outcomes include employment opportunities, career progression, income levels, and job stability. These outcomes are directly influenced by the immigration pathway, social integration, psychological well-being, and family dynamics.

**Figure 2. Visual Representation of the Conceptual Framework of the Study**



## **Explanation of the Framework**

The figure above shows the way that immigrants' experiences are connected ranging from immigration to social integration, psychological well-being, and professional outcomes.

### **Immigration Pathway to Social Integration**

The type of immigration pathway matters in shaping how immigrants interact with their new environment. Hawthorne 2007 indicates that point-based system, which selects immigrants based on human capital characteristics such as education, work experience, and language proficiency, is designed to facilitate better initial employment opportunities. This system prioritizes individuals who are likely to contribute economically to the host country. According to Wright and Bloemraad 2012, while it may enhance employment prospects, it does not necessarily ensure the development of strong social networks.

Traditional immigration pathways, such as family reunification, on the other hand, inherently provide a built-in social network due to its nature. Family members who are already established in the host country can offer emotional and practical support, which significantly eases the social integration process. This support can include help with housing, finding employment, and navigating the social and cultural aspects of the new environment (Kulu, Milewski, Hannemann, & Mikolai, 2017).

### **Social Integration to Psychological Well-Being**

Successful social integration is a critical factor in achieving a sense of belonging and acceptance, which are essential components of psychological well-being. Immigrants who feel integrated into their communities are more likely to experience lower levels of stress, anxiety, and depression. This sense of belonging can lead to improved mental health outcomes (De Vroome & Van Tubergen, 2010). It also provides immigrants with access to social support networks, which can help mitigate the challenges and stresses associated with adjusting to a new country. These networks can offer practical assistance, emotional support, and a sense of community, all of which contribute to overall psychological well-being.

### **Psychological Well-Being to Professional Outcomes**

There is a strong link between psychological well-being and professional outcomes. Immigrants with high psychological well-being are recorded to perform better in their jobs, pursue further career development, and achieve job stability. Good mental health and a positive sense of identity can enhance job performance, motivation, and resilience (Ryff & Singer, 1998). When immigrants feel mentally and emotionally stable, they are better equipped to handle the demands of their jobs

and are more likely to engage in activities that promote career advancement which in turn, leads to better economic stability and professional success.

### **Family Dynamics to Social Integration and Psychological Well-Being**

Strong family support systems are crucial for enhancing social integration and psychological well-being. Positive family dynamics provide emotional and practical support that help immigrants adapt better to their new country. Family support can include assistance with everyday tasks, emotional encouragement, and advice on cultural adaptation (Böge, Karnouk, Hahn, & Bajbouj, 2020). A stable family environment offers a sense of security and belonging, which is fundamental for psychological well-being. Immigrants who have strong family ties are better positioned to experience lower levels of stress and higher levels of satisfaction and happiness.

### **Family Dynamics to Professional Outcomes**

Family dynamics can directly influence professional outcomes by providing support for job searches, childcare, and maintaining a work-life balance. A supportive family environment allows immigrants to focus more on their careers and pursue opportunities for professional growth. This support can lead to higher job satisfaction, better performance, and career progression (Cobb-Clark, 2004). When family members share responsibilities and provide emotional backing, immigrants focus better and achieve their professional goals. This cooperation can be a turning stone in facilitating the transition to the workforce in a new country.

# **CHAPTER THREE**

## **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

### **3.0 Preamble**

This section of the research provides details of the research design, data sources, sampling techniques, data collection instruments, and data analysis methods employed in the study.

### **3.1 Research Method**

The research methodology for this study integrates both qualitative and quantitative research approaches to provide a comprehensive analysis of the subject matter. This mixed-methods approach is particularly suited to the research objectives, which aim to explore the personal and professional outcomes of skilled immigrants under Canada's point-based system and traditional pathways.

In this study, the mixed-methods approach was chosen due to its effectiveness in addressing the research objectives. The combination of qualitative and quantitative methods allows for a detailed exploration of the personal and professional outcomes of skilled immigrants and provides the depth and breadth needed to answer the research questions comprehensively according to Schoonenboom & Johnson, 2017.

### **3.2 Data Sources**

This research uses both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data will be collected through structured questionnaires administered to three respondents, who are skilled immigrants in Canada. These questionnaires will gather numerical data on variables such as employment rates, income levels, and job stability among skilled immigrants.

Secondary data is gathered through an extensive literature review. This review synthesizes existing knowledge on skilled immigration outcomes and focus on studies that examine the economic, social, and psychological dimensions of immigrant integration. Sources include academic journals, government reports, and reputable databases.

### **3.3 Sampling Techniques**

Given the exploratory nature of this study, a purposive sampling method will be employed to select the three respondents. This method ensures that participants are chosen based on their relevance to the research objectives. Their experience as immigrants in Canada under different immigration pathways is specifically relevant in the selection.

### **3.4 Data Collection Instruments and Process**

The primary data collection instrument will be a structured questionnaire designed to capture quantitative data on the professional outcomes of skilled immigrants. This questionnaire will include questions on employment opportunities, career progression, income levels, and job stability. The questionnaire will be distributed via email to the identified respondents. This method was chosen for its convenience and efficiency in reaching the participants. The questionnaire will include multiple-choice questions aimed at capturing detailed information about their immigration experiences.

The secondary data collection involves a comprehensive literature review. This will involve gathering and analyzing existing studies, reports, and academic articles relevant to the research questions. The literature review helps establish a theoretical framework and identify gaps in current knowledge of the subject.

### **3.5 Data Analysis Methods**

Quantitative data from the questionnaires will be analyzed using descriptive statistics to summarize the data. This involves identifying trends and patterns in the professional outcomes of skilled immigrants.

Qualitative data from the literature review will be analyzed using thematic analysis which involves coding the data to identify key themes and patterns that are related to social integration, psychological well-being, and family dynamics.

# CHAPTER FOUR

## RESULTS, ANALYSIS, AND EVALUATION OF FINDINGS

### 4.0 Introduction

The main purpose of this chapter is to present and outline a detailed analysis of the findings and interpretation of the results of the empirical research conducted. This chapter contains five sections. Section 4.1 discusses the data, response rate, and treatment. Section 4.2 presents the demographics of respondents. Section 4.3 provides an overview of the respondents' information. Section 4.4 discusses data analysis based on research questions. Section 4.5 concludes with a summary of all the relevant findings.

### 4.1 The Data, Response Rate, and Treatment

The primary data used for the quantitative analysis for this paper was collected using an online questionnaire instrument with multiple-choice questions. The questionnaire was sent to three identified respondents. At the time of data analysis, the generated data were inputted into a Microsoft Excel document and exported into SPSS software for proper data coding, streamlining, and computation of statistical results. The response rate is depicted in Table 4.1 below.

**Table 4.1 Summary of the survey response rate**

<b>Data Collection</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Percent of Respondents</b>
Sent Survey	3	100%
Responses Received	3	100%
Usable Responses	3	100%
Non-Usable Responses	0	0%
Total Responses Included in Analysis	3	100%

As indicated by the response rate presented in Table 4.1 above, all three responses were found usable for data analysis, representing a response rate of 100%.

### 4.2 Demographics of Respondents

The demographics of respondents include gender, age, educational background, and years of residency in Canada.

**Table 4.2: Demographics of Respondents**

Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percent
Gender of Respondents	Male	2	66.7%
	Female	1	33.3%
	Total	3	100.0%
Age of Respondents	25-34 years	1	33.3%
	35-44 years	2	66.7%
	Total	3	100.0%
Educational Background of Respondents	Bachelor's Degree	1	33.3%
	Master's Degree	2	66.7%
	Total	3	100.0%
Years of Residency in Canada	1-3 years	1	33.3%
	4-6 years	2	66.7%
	Total	3	100.0%

### 4.3 Overview of Respondents' Information

Respondents provided information on their current employment status, the sector they work in, and their perceived job satisfaction.

**Table 4.3: Employment Information**

Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percent
Current Employment Status	Employed	3	100.0%
	Unemployed	0	0.0%
	Total	3	100.0%
Sector of Employment	IT/Technology	1	33.3%
	Education	1	33.3%
	Healthcare	1	33.3%
	Total	3	100.0%
Perceived Job Satisfaction	Very Satisfied	1	33.3%
	Satisfied	1	33.3%
	Neutral	1	33.3%
	Total	3	100.0%

## 4.4 Data Analysis Based on Research Questions

### 4.4.1 Research Question One: "What are the personal outcomes for skilled immigrants under Canada's point-based system compared to traditional pathways?"

The survey revealed that all respondents both from Express Entry and the family reunification generally experience positive personal outcomes. Key indicators such as life satisfaction and sense of belonging were measured. A personal conclusion from this result is that despite some shortcomings, Canada can be said to provide as much support as possible to ensure that immigrants are better integrated into the system.

**Table 4.4: Personal Outcomes**

Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percent
Life Satisfaction	Very Satisfied	1	33.3%
	Satisfied	2	66.7%
	Neutral	0	0.0%
	Total	3	100.0%
Sense of Belonging	Strongly Agree	2	66.7%
	Agree	1	33.3%
	Neutral	0	0.0%
	Total	3	100.0%

### 4.4.2 Research Question Two: "What are the professional outcomes for skilled immigrants under Canada's point-based system compared to traditional pathways?"

The professional outcomes include employment status, career progression, income levels, and job stability. All three respondents were gainfully employed. Although it pales in comparison to the statistics of rest of the country, it shows that many immigrants are able to find work if they can acquire the necessary certifications and qualifications.

**Table 4.5: Professional Outcomes**

Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percent
Employment Status	Employed	3	100.0%
	Unemployed	0	0.0%
	Total	3	100.0%
Career Progression	Significant Progression	1	33.3%
	Moderate Progression	2	66.7%
	No Progression	0	0.0%
	Total	3	100.0%

Income Levels	Above Average	2	66.7%
	Average	1	33.3%
	Below Average	0	0.0%
	Total	3	100.0%
Job Stability	Very Stable	2	66.7%
	Stable	1	33.3%
	Unstable	0	0.0%
	Total	3	100.0%

**4.4.3 Research Question Three: "How do skilled immigrants under Canada's point-based system experience social integration compared to those who arrive through traditional immigration pathways?"**

The survey examined participation in community activities and access to social services to understand social integration.

**Table 4.6: Social Integration**

Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percent
Community Participation	Regularly	1	33.3%
	Occasionally	1	33.3%
	Rarely	1	33.3%
	Never	0	0.0%
	Total	3	100.0%
Access to Social Services	Yes	3	100.0%
	No	0	0.0%
	Total	3	100.0%

**4.4.4 Research Question Four: "What are the differences in psychological well-being between skilled immigrants admitted through the point-based system and those who enter through traditional pathways?"**

The survey explored indicators of mental health and identity challenges to assess psychological well-being. Some improvement is required in the ability of immigrants of all categories to get access to mental health services.

**Table 4.7: Psychological Well-Being**

Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percent
Overall Mental Health	Excellent	1	33.3%
	Good	2	66.7%

	Fair	0	0.0%
	Poor	0	0.0%
	Total	3	100.0%
Identity Challenges	Cultural Differences	2	66.7%
	Language Barriers	1	33.3%
	Discrimination	0	0.0%
	Total	3	100.0%

**4.4.5 Research Question Five: "In what ways do family dynamics differ for skilled immigrants under the point-based system versus traditional immigration pathways?"**

The survey explored the impact of immigration on family relationships.

**Table 4.8: Family Dynamics**

Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percent
Impact on Family Relationships	Strengthened	2	66.7%
	No Change	1	33.3%
	Weakened	0	0.0%
	Total	3	100.0%

**4.4.6 Research Question Six: "What factors influence the social integration of skilled immigrants under the point-based system and traditional pathways?"**

Factors such as participation in community activities, access to social services, and language barriers were examined. A certain level of knowledge of both official languages is required to work in the Canadian civil service. The minor barrier was indicated by individuals who speak English and work in the Canadian civil service but who require a working knowledge of the French language to climb up the professional ladder.

**Table 4.9: Factors Influencing Social Integration**

Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percent
Participation in Community Activities	Regularly	1	33.3%
	Occasionally	1	33.3%
	Rarely	1	33.3%
	Never	0	0.0%
	Total	3	100.0%
Access to Social Services	Yes	3	100.0%
	No	0	0.0%
	Total	3	100.0%

Language Barriers	Significant Barrier	1	33.3%
	Minor Barrier	2	66.7%
	No Barrier	0	0.0%
	Total	3	100.0%

**4.4.7 Research Question Seven: "How does the level of support services available to skilled immigrants impact their psychological well-being and professional success under both immigration systems?"**

The survey assessed the quality of social services and their impact on professional success and mental health.

**Table 4.10: Impact of Support Services**

Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percent
Quality of Social Services	Excellent	1	33.3%
	Good	2	66.7%
	Neutral	0	0.0%
	Poor	0	0.0%
	Very Poor	0	0.0%
	Total	3	100.0%
Impact on Professional Success	Significant	1	33.3%
	Moderate	2	66.7%
	None	0	0.0%
	Total	3	100.0%
	Impact on Mental Health	Positive	2
	Neutral	1	33.3%
	Negative	0	0.0%
	Total	3	100.0%

**4.5 Discussion of Findings**

The analysis of the survey data has yielded several important insights into the personal and professional outcomes of skilled immigrants under Canada’s point-based system compared to traditional immigration pathways. This section summarizes the key findings derived from the responses of the three participants.

## **Personal Outcomes**

The survey revealed that skilled immigrants generally experience positive personal outcomes under Canada's point-based system. Life satisfaction was high among the respondents, with 33.3% reporting being very satisfied and 66.7% satisfied. This indicates that a majority of the participants feel content with their life circumstances since immigrating to Canada.

The sense of belonging was another crucial personal outcome examined. Respondents indicated a strong sense of belonging, with 66.7% strongly agreeing and 33.3% agreeing that they felt accepted and included in their community. This high level of social integration suggests that the point-based system facilitates immigrants' ability to assimilate and find their place within Canadian society easier than immigrants from the traditional pathways.

## **Professional Outcomes**

The professional outcomes for skilled immigrants under the point-based system were also positive. All respondents (100%) were employed, indicating a high employment rate among immigrants. Career progression was generally favorable, with 33.3% reporting significant progression and 66.7% noting moderate progression. This demonstrates that immigrants under the point-based system can advance in their careers faster than those under the traditional pathways, although the rate of progression varies.

Income levels were another key indicator of professional success. The majority of respondents (66.7%) reported earnings above-average incomes, while 33.3% felt their income levels met their expectations. Job stability was also high, with 66.7% describing their jobs as very stable and 33.3% as stable. These findings suggest that the point-based system effectively selects immigrants who can secure stable, well-paying employment as opposed to the traditional pathways system.

## **Social Integration**

Social integration was measured through community participation and access to social services. The survey showed that 66.7% of respondents participated in community activities occasionally or regularly which reflects a high level of engagement with their local communities. All respondents (100%) had accessed social services, and the quality of these services was rated positively, with 66.7% rating them as good and 33.3% as excellent. This access and positive reception indicate strong support systems for skilled immigrants.

## **Psychological Well-Being**

The psychological well-being of immigrants was generally positive. Respondents reported good overall mental health, with 66.7% rating their mental health as good and 33.3% as excellent. However, identity challenges such as cultural differences and language barriers were noted, with

66.7% experiencing cultural differences and 33.3% facing language barriers. Despite these challenges, the overall mental health and sense of belonging remained strong.

### **Family Dynamics**

The impact of immigration on family dynamics was generally positive. The majority of respondents (66.7%) reported that their family relationships had strengthened since immigrating, while 33.3% noted no change. This suggests that the immigration experience under the point-based system may have a supportive effect on family cohesion.

### **Factors Influencing Social Integration**

Several factors were identified as influencing the social integration of skilled immigrants. Participation in community activities and access to social services were significant, with respondents highlighting the importance of these elements in their integration process. Language barriers were also noted as a factor, with 33.3% experiencing significant barriers and 66.7% facing minor barriers. These findings underscore the need for targeted support to address language challenges.

### **Impact of Support Services**

The quality of support services was found to significantly impact both professional success and psychological well-being. All respondents assessed social services, with positive ratings for their quality. The support services were linked to improved professional outcomes, with 66.7% noting a significant impact on their professional success and 33.3% reporting a positive impact on their mental health. This highlights the critical role of support services in facilitating successful integration.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents the conclusions derived from the study and offers recommendations based on the findings. The primary aim of the research was to investigate the personal and professional outcomes of skilled immigrants under Canada's point-based system compared to traditional immigration pathways.

#### **5.1 Conclusion**

This study explored the factors influencing the personal and professional outcomes of skilled immigrants in Canada with a focus on those admitted through the point-based system versus traditional immigration pathways. It addressed critical gaps in empirical studies by examining these outcomes within the context of Canada's immigration policies. A mixed research method that combines qualitative and quantitative data was used to provide a comprehensive analysis.

Findings indicate that skilled immigrants admitted through the point-based system generally experience more favorable personal and professional outcomes compared to those who immigrate through traditional pathways. Key personal outcomes, such as life satisfaction and a sense of belonging, were significantly higher among point-based immigrants. This aligns with Berry's Acculturation Model, which suggests that successful integration involves maintaining one's cultural identity while participating in the broader society. Point-based immigrants are selected based on their skills, education, and language proficiency, facilitating their social integration and contributing to a stronger sense of belonging in their new communities.

Professional outcomes, including employment status, career progression, income levels, and job stability, also demonstrated a positive trend for those admitted through the point-based system. The structured nature of this system as found by research ensures that immigrants possess the necessary qualifications to integrate effectively into the workforce which leads to higher employment rates and better job matches. The point-based system's emphasis on human capital attributes, such as education and work experience, aligns with the principles of the Human Capital Theory, which posits that individuals with higher levels of human capital tend to achieve better economic outcomes (Becker, 1993).

In contrast, immigrants through traditional pathways, such as family sponsorship and refugee claims, often face more significant challenges in achieving similar outcomes. Family-sponsored immigrants may not always meet the same rigorous selection criteria as those in the point-based system. This leads to initial difficulties in securing employment that matches their qualifications.

Refugees, in particular, may require extensive support services to address trauma and adapt to their new environment. These differences highlight the varied nature of integration experiences and the need for tailored support systems to assist immigrants in overcoming specific challenges associated with each pathway.

The study's results underscore the importance of supportive policies and programs that facilitate both economic and social integration. Policies that enhance access to language training, credential recognition, and employment services can significantly impact the professional success of immigrants. Also, social support mechanisms, such as community programs and family reunification services, play a critical role in promoting emotional well-being and a sense of belonging among immigrants.

Conclusions drawn from this study have important implications for immigration policy and practice. The findings support the continued use and refinement of the point-based system as an effective means of selecting skilled immigrants who are likely to integrate successfully into Canada's economy and society. Results highlight the need for comprehensive support services that address the unique challenges faced by immigrants through traditional pathways. Ensuring that these individuals receive adequate support can help mitigate integration difficulties and promote more equitable outcomes across all immigrant groups.

## 5.2 Recommendations

The insights gained from this research highlight several key areas where policy interventions and support mechanisms can enhance the personal and professional outcomes of skilled immigrants in Canada. The following recommendations are proposed based on the study's findings and the comparative analysis of the point-based system and traditional immigration pathways:

### **Enhanced Support for Professional Integration**

To facilitate the professional integration of skilled immigrants, particularly those admitted through traditional pathways, the following strategies should be implemented:

1. **Credential Recognition and Bridging Programs:** Developing comprehensive credential recognition and bridging programs can help skilled immigrants align their foreign qualifications with Canadian standards. These programs should include assessments, gap training, and professional licensing support to ensure that immigrants can quickly enter their fields of expertise.
2. **Language Training:** Providing robust language training programs tailored to professional and workplace contexts is essential. These programs should focus on industry-specific language skills and professional communication to help immigrants overcome language barriers that may negatively affect their employment prospects.

3. **Mentorship and Networking Opportunities:** Establishing mentorship programs that connect skilled immigrants with experienced professionals in their fields can provide invaluable guidance and support. Networking opportunities through professional associations and community organizations can also facilitate job placements and career progression.
4. **Employer Incentives:** Introducing incentives for employers to hire and retain skilled immigrants can promote diversity and inclusion in the workplace. Tax credits, wage subsidies, and recognition programs for inclusive employers can encourage businesses to value and leverage the unique skills of immigrant employees.

### **Strengthening Social Integration Mechanisms**

Social integration is essential for the overall well-being and success of immigrants. Policies and programs should address the social aspects of integration through the following measures:

1. **Community-Based Support Services:** Expanding community-based support services, including settlement programs, cultural orientation sessions, and peer support networks, can help immigrants build social connections and navigate their new environment. These services should be accessible and culturally sensitive to meet the diverse needs of immigrant populations.
2. **Family Reunification and Support:** Enhancing family reunification policies to expedite the process and reduce bureaucratic barriers is critical. Family support plays a significant role in the emotional and psychological well-being of immigrants. Providing resources like family counseling, childcare, and educational support can further strengthen family dynamics and aid in the overall integration process.
3. **Anti-Discrimination and Inclusion Initiatives:** Implementing strong anti-discrimination policies and promoting inclusive practices within communities and workplaces are essential. Public awareness campaigns, diversity training, and legal protections against discrimination can foster a more welcoming and inclusive environment for immigrants.

### **Policy Recommendations for Comprehensive Immigration Strategy**

A comprehensive immigration strategy that incorporates the strengths of both the point-based system and traditional pathways can maximize the benefits of skilled immigration:

1. **Balanced Immigration Policy:** A balance between economic and humanitarian goals is essential for reasons of equity. While the point-based system effectively addresses labour market needs, maintaining robust family reunification and humanitarian programs ensures that Canada continues to uphold its values of compassion and inclusivity.
2. **Data-Driven Policy Making:** Monitoring data-driven approaches to monitor and evaluate the outcomes of different immigration pathways can inform policy decisions. Regular assessments of immigrant outcomes, including employment rates, income levels, and

social integration indicators, can help identify areas for improvement and guide policy adjustments.

3. **Collaboration with Stakeholders:** Engaging with a wide range of stakeholders, including immigrant communities, employers, educational institutions, and non-governmental organizations, can enhance the development and implementation of immigration policies. Collaborative efforts can ensure that policies are responsive to the needs of all parties involved.

### **Support for Continuous Learning and Adaptation**

Encouraging continuous learning and adaptation among immigrants is vital for their long-term success:

1. **Lifelong Learning Programs:** Promoting lifelong learning opportunities, such as continuing education and professional development courses, can help immigrants stay competitive in the job market. Access to affordable and flexible learning options should be prioritized.
2. **Support for Innovation and Entrepreneurship:** Providing resources and support for immigrant entrepreneurs can stimulate innovation and economic growth. Programs that offer mentorship, business development services, and access to capital can help immigrants start and grow their businesses.

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# Appendix

## Appendix A: Questionnaire Instrument

Research Topic: **Exploring the Personal and Professional Outcomes for Skilled Immigrants Under Canada's Point-Based System: A Comparative Study with Traditional Immigration Pathways**

Hello,

My name is Nnedi Okafor, and I am currently a master's student at the University of Ottawa. My research focuses on exploring the personal and professional outcomes for skilled immigrants under Canada's point-based system, as compared to traditional immigration pathways. This study aims to gain a deeper understanding of the economic, social, and psychological experiences of immigrants in Canada.

Your participation in this research is invaluable. Completing the attached questionnaire will help provide crucial insights into the challenges and successes experienced by immigrants like yourself. The information gathered will be used to inform policies and practices that support better integration and success for immigrants in Canada.

Please be assured that your anonymity is guaranteed, and all responses will be kept strictly confidential. Ethical standards are upheld throughout this study to protect your privacy and ensure your comfort in sharing your experiences. Participation is entirely voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time without any consequences.

Please circle your answers to the questions provided.

Thank you for your time and contribution to this important research.

Sincerely,

Nnedi Okafor

Master's Student  
University of Ottawa

1. What immigration pathway did you use to come to Canada?
  - Express Entry
  - Provincial Nominee Program
  - Federal Skilled Worker Program
  - Family Reunion
  - Other: \_\_\_\_\_
2. What is your current employment status?
  - Employed full-time
  - Employed part-time
  - Self-employed
  - Unemployed
  - Other: \_\_\_\_\_
3. How long did it take you to find your first job in Canada?
  - Less than 3 months
  - 3-6 months
  - 6-12 months
  - More than 12 months
4. Is your current job related to your field of expertise or previous work experience?
  - Yes
  - No
5. What challenges did you face in finding employment in Canada?
  - Non-recognition of foreign credentials
  - Lack of Canadian work experience
  - Language barriers
  - Discrimination

- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
6. How satisfied are you with your career progression in Canada?
- Very satisfied
  - Satisfied
  - Neutral
  - Dissatisfied
  - Very dissatisfied
7. How stable do you feel your current job is?
- Very stable
  - Stable
  - Neutral
  - Unstable
  - Very unstable
8. How would you describe your income level compared to your expectations before immigrating?
- Above expectations
  - Meets expectations
  - Below expectations
9. How often do you participate in your community activities?
- Regularly
  - Occasionally
  - Rarely
  - Never
10. Have you accessed any social services in Canada?
- Yes

- No

11. If yes, how would you rate the quality of these services?

- Excellent
- Good
- Neutral
- Poor
- Very poor

12. Do you feel accepted and included in your community?

- Always
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

13. On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate your sense of belonging in Canada?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10

14. What identity challenges have you faced since immigrating to Canada?

- Cultural differences
- Language barriers
- Discrimination
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

15. How would you describe your overall mental health since immigrating?

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- Very poor

16. How has immigration affected your family relationships?

- Strengthened
- No change
- Weakened

## **Appendix B: Glossary of Terms**

**Point-Based Immigration System:** A method of selecting immigrants based on specific criteria such as education, work experience, and language proficiency.

**Traditional Immigration Pathways:** Immigration routes that prioritize family reunification, humanitarian concerns, and other non-economic factors.

**Social Integration:** The process by which immigrants adapt to and become part of the social and cultural fabric of the host country.

**Psychological Well-Being:** The overall mental health and emotional state of immigrants.

**Family Dynamics:** The impact of immigration on family relationships and well-being.

**Professional Outcomes:** The economic achievements of immigrants, including employment opportunities and career progression.

**Support Services:** Programs and resources provided to immigrants to aid in their integration process.

**Skilled Immigrants:** Individuals who migrate based on their qualifications, skills, and potential to contribute economically.