

Background

- Canada accepts a large number of skilled immigrants under the Federal Skilled Worker Program to address labour shortages (CIC, 2015).
- Recent immigrants to Canada are the most educated and highly trained immigrants to date (Banerjee & Verma, 2011), yet challenges to effective integration remain (Drolet et al. 2015; Gauthier, 2016; Lowe & Ortiz, 2015; Picot & Sweetman, 2012).
- Settlement experiences of skilled immigrants are distinct as they are economically motivated, professionally trained and vocationally oriented. (Chen, 2008; Meraj, 2015).
- Despite the current economic slowdown, Calgary remains one of the most popular destination for immigrants to Canada (Government of Alberta, 2017).
- Past economic downturns in Canada have shown that immigrants have greater difficulty re-entering the labour force even after the economy rebounds; and that they are often left with no choice but to accept jobs below their qualifications (Globe and Mail, 2009).
- Immigrants who arrive during unfavourable economic conditions experience a permanent disadvantage in integration (Ayedemir, 2003).

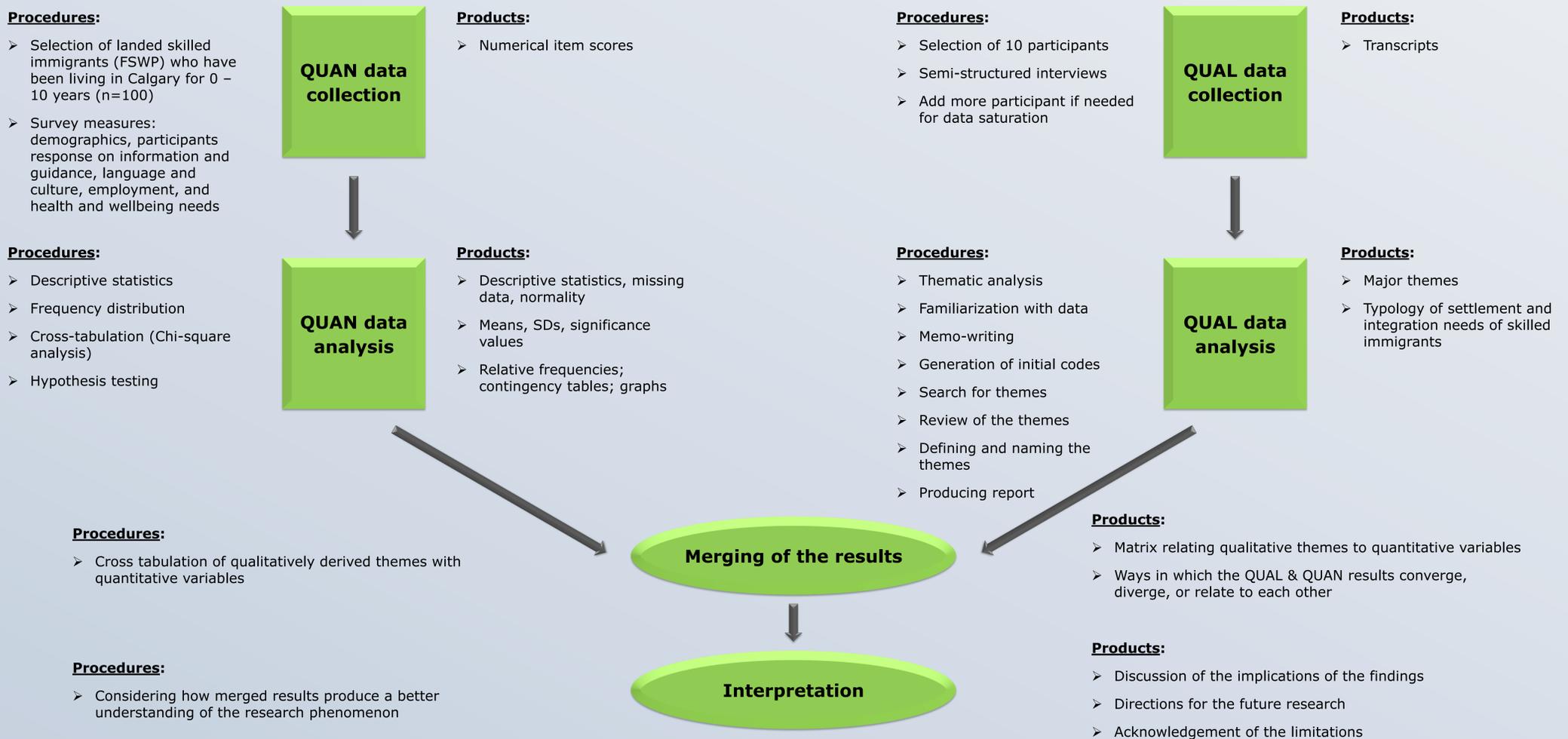
Research Questions

- What are the areas of greatest settlement and integration needs of skilled immigrants in Calgary?
- What are the settlement and integration needs of skilled immigrants that are not addressed by the existing settlement support in Calgary?

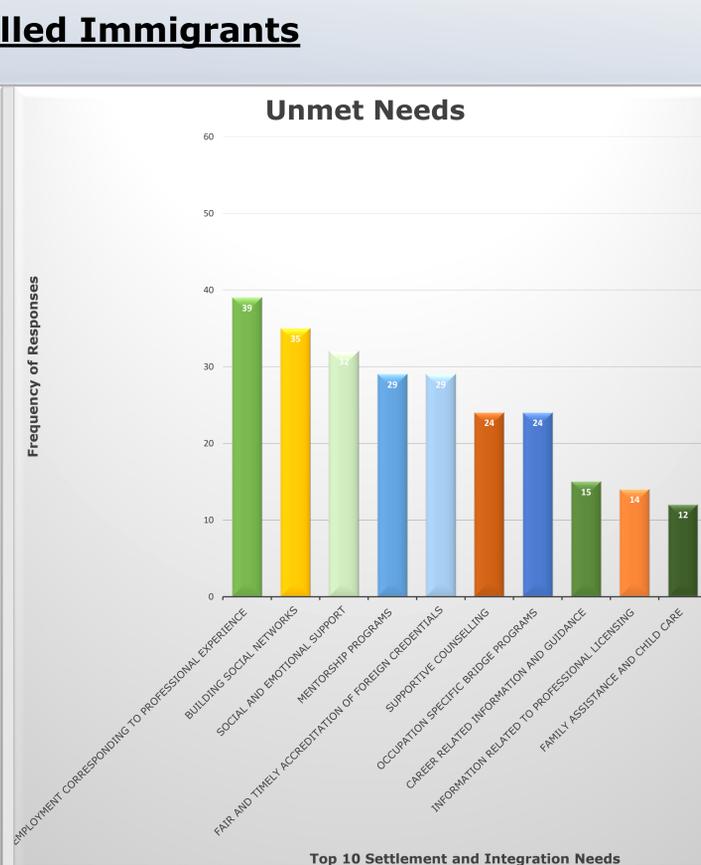
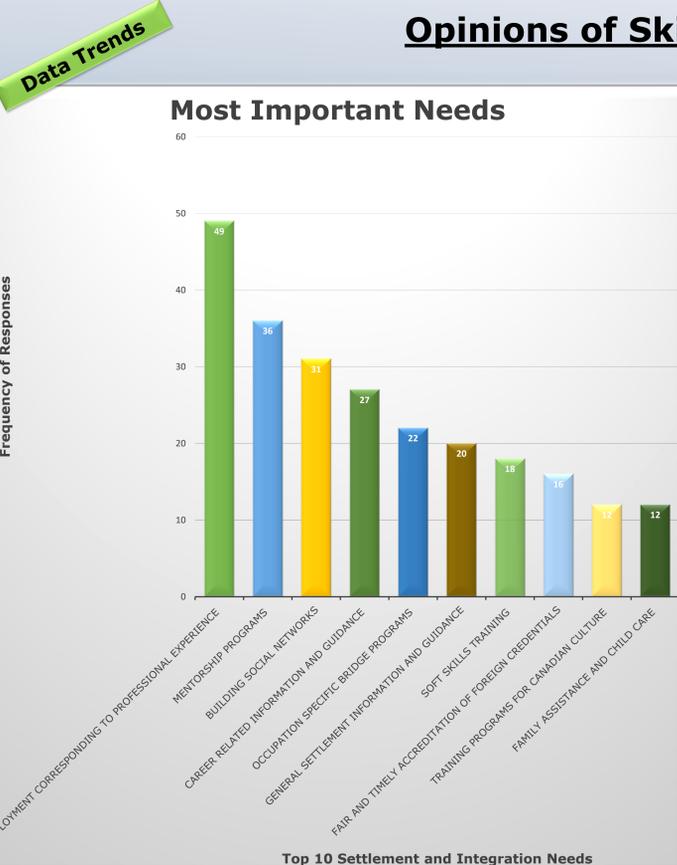
Framework / Approach

- Conceptual framework: Welcoming communities (Bahbhani, 2008; Esses et al, 2010; National Working Group, 2007)
- Theoretical lens: Intersectionality (Hankivsky & Cormier, 2011)
- Philosophical approach: Pragmatist approach (Patton, 2002)
- Research approach: Mixed methods approach (Cresswell & Plano Clark, 2011)

Study Diagram: Convergent Parallel Mixed Methods Research Design



Opinions of Skilled Immigrants



Perspectives of Service Providers

Most Important Needs

- To understand where they "fit in" – transferability of skills
- To understand workers' rights and employment standards in Canada
- To achieve professional positions in Canada similar to what they had in their home countries
- Fair evaluation / recognition of credentials
- Mentorship and bridge programs

Unmet Needs

- Consistent information and guidance support
- Pre-arrival services and support
- Relevant support for professional immigrants
- Receiving services and support in shortest possible time – long waiting times
- Mentorship and bridge programs

"We're not doing a good enough job making sure that people get the information"