WHO IS SUCCEEDING IN THE CANADIAN LABOUR MARKET?

Predictors of Labour Market Success for Skilled Immigrants

October 31, 2019

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Founded in 1974, World Education Services Inc. is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping people with international education to achieve their higher education and professional goals.
Outline

Part I - Introduction and Methods

Part II - Main Findings:
1. Profile of survey respondents
2. Employment outcomes
   i. Employment rates
   ii. Commensurate employment
   iii. Job satisfaction

Part III - Implications for policy and practice
Part I:
Introduction and Methods
Purpose of Study

- Examine factors affecting the labour market outcomes of skilled immigrants in Canada
- Inform Canadian policy and practice with respect to skilled immigrants
- Increase awareness among prospective immigrants of factors associated with labour market success
Study Population

- 2018 survey of individuals who had applied to WES for an Educational Credential Assessment (ECA) 2013-2015
  - 26,395 respondents

- Final sample: 6,402 (25%) respondents
  - Admitted to Canada as a permanent resident through one of the skilled immigrant categories (now included in the Express Entry system)
  - Residing in Canada at the time of the survey
Data Analysis

- WES survey data imported into SPSS, cleaned and coded
- Variables created to measure the main outcomes of interest and key factors associated with these outcomes
- Additional analyses conducted using data from Statistics Canada
- Descriptive, bivariate and multivariate analysis conducted
Data Limitations

- Important data on factors that may be associated with labour market outcomes were difficult to code (e.g. occupation, work sector) or missing (e.g. regulated profession)

- Self-report bias (language proficiency and regulated profession)

- Survey only offered in English
Part II:
Main Findings
Profile of Survey Respondents

Imigration Category

- Federal Skilled Worker: 64%
- Provincial Nominee Program: 18.8%
- Canadian Experience Class: 10.7%
- Federal Skilled Trades: 4.8%

Top Three Countries of Origin

- India
- Philippines
- Nigeria
### Profile of Survey Respondents – Cont.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90%</td>
<td>30-39 years; 8.3% were under 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71%</td>
<td>High levels of English proficiency (self-reported)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49%</td>
<td>Nearly half reported that their profession was regulated in Canada; 14.4% were ‘not sure’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21%</td>
<td>Majority residing in Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56%</td>
<td>reported that they had experience in Canada prior to obtaining permanent residency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Employment Outcomes

80.3% employed

- Most employed in permanent jobs (78.7%)
- Most survey respondents (61.2%) found their first job in under three months; 73.8% had found jobs within six months
- Findings are consistent with 2017 Statistics Canada data
# Employment Barriers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Barriers to Employment</th>
<th>Frequency (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of professional connections</td>
<td>48.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employers do not accept qualifications and experience</td>
<td>30.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign education is not recognized</td>
<td>25.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of licensure in Canada</td>
<td>17.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Résumé/CV and/or cover letter writing skills</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Significant Predictors of Employment Rates

**Gender:**
Males 1.6 times more likely to be employed

**Age:**
Younger respondents were more likely to be employed

**Canadian experience:**
Having experience or education in Canada doubled the likelihood of being employed

**English proficiency:**
Those with higher proficiency were more likely to be employed

**Licensure:**
Professionals in regulated fields were less likely to be employed

**Use of employment services:**
Those who used post-immigration supports were more likely to be employed
Significant Predictors of Employment Rates

**International work experience:**
Employment rates declined as years of international work experience increased

**Sector prior to immigrating:**
Respondents who previously worked in food services were eight times more likely to be employed than those in other sectors

**Level of degree:**
Employment rates declined at each successive degree level
Employment Rates by Immigration Category

- CEC: 92.3%
- FSW: 80.3%
- PNP: 76.3%
- Quebec: 74.2%
- FST: 73.4%
Employment Rates by Pre-Migration Sector

- Food service, hospitality and accommodation: 96.2%
- Manufacturing: 85.8%
- Information technology industries: 85%
- Professional Services: 82.9%
- Financial services, banking, and insurance: 80.8%
- Management of companies and enterprises: 80%
- Construction: 79.2%
- Health care and social assistance: 76.3%
- Arts, entertainment, and recreation: 74.8%
- Other sector (not specified): 74.1%
- Educational services: 64.1%
Commensurate Employment: Definitions and Indicators

▪ Employment commensurate with educational background and previous experience/skills (i.e., skills-commensurate work)

▪ Retention of job seniority

▪ Retention of sector

▪ Over-qualification (defined by Statistics Canada as those with a university degree or higher who were working at jobs that only required a high school degree or had on-the-job training)
Commensurate Employment

- Commensurate employment scale created based on 3 survey questions:
  - Does your current job require a degree in your subject area?
  - How similar are the duties in your current job in type and complexity to those of your pre-immigration job?
  - How much of your previous experience are you using in your current job?

- 39.1% of respondents had jobs with duties mainly similar in type and complexity to their pre-immigration jobs
- 54.1% used ‘a lot’ of previous job experience in their current job
- 50.3% were working in the same field at a job requiring a similar degree level
Significant Predictors of Commensurate Employment

**Gender:**
Males more likely to be working in commensurate employment

**English proficiency:**
Higher levels of English associated with commensurate employment

**Canadian experience:**
Those with education or experience in Canada were more likely to be working in commensurate employment

**Sector:**
Survey respondents who worked in the IT and professional sectors prior to immigrating were more likely to be working in commensurate employment

**Licensure:**
Regulated professionals were less likely to be employed in commensurate employment

**Country of degree:**
Those whose highest degree was obtained in the U.S. were more likely to be working in commensurate employment
Retention of Job Seniority

35% of respondents experienced a decrease in their level of seniority post-migration

- 1% Stayed at executive level
- 6% Stayed at entry level
- 7% Increased level of seniority
- 21% Stayed at management level
- 35% Decreased level of seniority
- 30% Stayed at technical level
Retention of Job Sector

Pre- and Post-migration Work Sectors

- Arts, entertainment, and recreation: 2.4% (Pre), 1.8% (Post)
- Construction: 2.4% (Pre), 2.4% (Post)
- Educational services: 3.1% (Pre), 4.4% (Post)
- Financial services, banking, and insurance: 8.2% (Pre), 9.0% (Post)
- Food service, hospitality and accommodation: 2.4% (Pre), 4.1% (Post)
- Health care and social assistance: 11.1% (Pre), 10.0% (Post)
- Information technology industries: 19.1% (Pre), 18.9% (Post)
- Management of companies and enterprises: 16.0% (Pre), 19.6% (Post)
- Manufacturing: 3.3% (Pre), 5.8% (Post)
- Other: 9.2% (Pre), 14.4% (Post)
- Professional, scientific and technical services: 14.5% (Pre), 18.3% (Post)
Overqualification Rates

Overqualification Rates in University-Educated Canadian Population and WES Survey Respondents aged 25-54

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overqualified Employment Rates</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total population</td>
<td>28.5%</td>
<td>23.9%</td>
<td>33.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadian-born</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All immigrants</td>
<td>30.9%</td>
<td>26.0%</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recent immigrants (2011–16)</td>
<td>38.1%</td>
<td>32.2%</td>
<td>43.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WES survey respondents</td>
<td>31.8%</td>
<td>29.5%</td>
<td>35.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comparisons with Statistics Canada data (2016)

WES survey respondents were significantly more likely to be working in lower-level jobs (31.8%) compared to the Canadian-born population (9.3%) but less likely than recent immigrants in Canada overall (38.1%)
Job Satisfaction

- Respondents were satisfied with their sector of work (71.3%), opportunities for advancement (60.7%), and their level of seniority (53.8%)

- Significant predictors of low job satisfaction:
  - Not having commensurate employment
  - Lower salary
  - Being in a casual/informal job
  - Lower Job status (e.g. entry level)

- Job satisfaction was significantly lower among respondents who reported that they previously worked in a profession that was regulated in Canada and among respondents who were not able to retain their sector of employment
Part III:
Implications for Policy and Practice
Sharpening the Focus on Commensurate Employment

**Canadian experience**
Take competency-based approach to assess full contributions of skilled immigrants

**Evidence-based information**
Continue providing potential immigrants with realistic picture of what they may face and how they can prepare

**Regulated professions**
Build evidence on where there are persistent barriers and how to address them
Sharpening the Focus on Commensurate Employment

**Services and intervention**
Build the evidence base on what services and interventions are most associated with commensurate employment

**Comparative research**
Explore international research on commensurate employment
WES will:

- Continue to leverage WES applicant data to build evidence and develop insight
- Explore the efficacy of competency-based tools, passports, for increasing employer confidence in international vs Canadian education and experience
- Provide accurate, realistic, timely information to potential newcomers to help them decide, plan, navigate
QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS
THANK YOU

Need more information?
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