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Access to professions : the experience of Japanese immigrants in Canada

Yukari Hayakawa
Ryerson University, yukari.hayakawa@ryerson.ca

ACCESS TO PROFESSIONS: THE EXPERIENCE OF JAPANESE IMMIGRANTS IN CANADA

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ABSTRACT

This paper investigates employment experience faced by 8 Japanese immigrant professionals in the Greater Toronto Area, including 3 Japanese-educated professionals, 3 both Japanese and Canadian-educated professionals, and 2 exclusively Canadian-educated professionals. This study attempts to examine whether Japanese credentials are recognized in licensing and hiring processes, and whether Canadian education improves the employment experience among Japanese immigrant professionals. In the case of the Japanese immigrant professionals in this study, barriers to licensing they experienced differ from profession to profession. Despite licenses, participants also experienced barriers to employment in their professions including Canadian-educated Japanese professionals. Except one case, it appears that obtaining Canadian degrees in their professions facilitated practicing their professions in the mainstream labour market. Most of the participants were also benefited by some forms of Canadian education in addition to their professional knowledge.

Key words: foreign credentials; Japanese immigrants; employment experience; Canadian education

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INTRODUCTION

Considerable attention has been devoted to the issue of foreign credential recognition and underutilization of skills faced by internationally educated professionals in Canada. The most frequent issue which has been often identified is that they cannot find work in the fields of their expertise once they immigrated to Canada, despite having been admitted based on the quality of their human capital under the current immigration policy.

Human capital refers to an individual's education and experience, a form of investment, which brings a financial return when s/he joins the labour market. It is explained that the higher the investment is as a human capital, the higher returns one receives as a result of higher productivity (Li, 2003; Todaro & Smith, 2003). The current point system, to which a human capital theory is introduced (Reitz, 2005), screens skilled immigrants based on their human capital such as their levels of educational credentials, occupational competencies in their countries of origin, and their official language proficiency. It seems that the Canadian immigration policy has achieved its goal to attract highly educated immigrants, taking into account that 44 per cent of immigrants possess at least one university degree as of 2000 (Li, 2003). The current Canadian immigration policy is rooted in the belief that the knowledge-based economy no longer necessitates manual labour (Li, 2003); however, it does require manual labour, low-skilled and semi-skilled labour, some of which are filled by those well educated immigrants. Hence, it has raised the debate over skill underutilization of immigrants in the current immigration dialogue. The

debate over earning disparities resulting from skill underutilization raises a question of the human capital theory among highly educated immigrants in Canada.

Scholars, community organizations and the government have attempted to address the problems of immigrant skill underutilization and foreign credential recognition. The Maytree Foundation, which attempts to combat systemic poverty and assist refugees and immigrants to settle in Canada (The Maytree Foundation, 2006), has raised awareness to the public and employers to utilize and recognize the skills of immigrants through television and the website of "hireimmigrants.ca." The Ontario government also implemented the first legislation of its kind in Canada, the Fair Access to the Regulated Professions Act, on March 1, 2007 to "help insure that regulated professions and individuals applying for registration by regulated professions are governed by registration practices that are transparent, objective, impartial and fair" (Fair Access to the Regulated Professions Act, 2007). In the following May, 2007, Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration launched the Foreign Credentials Referral Office, which assists internationally educated professionals to have foreign credentials assessed and acknowledged sooner (CIC, 2007). This includes in-person services, labour market information providing, referral to appropriate regulatory bodies and raising public awareness (Government of Canada, 2007). This makes it clear that economic integration of internationally educated professionals is an urgent and significant issue in the ongoing Canadian immigration discourse.

There is adequate research on the economic integration of internationally educated professionals including major problems experienced by internationally educated professionals and barriers to certain regulated professions such as engineers and social workers. Some literature reveals that visible minorities are more likely to experience the employment barriers (Reitz, 2001, 2005; Teelucksingh & Galabuzi, 2005). Visible minorities, under the Employment Equity Act, include Chinese, South Asians, Blacks, Filipinos, Latin Americans, Southeast Asians, Arabs, West Asians, Japanese and Koreans (Belanger & Malenfant, 2005). However, it is important to note that there is a small body of literature investigating foreign trained professionals from specific countries of origin or race.

This study attempts to enrich the existing literature on economic integration of skilled immigrants and focuses on immigrant professionals from Japan. There are some reasons why it is interesting to examine Japanese immigrant group. Recent Japanese immigrants are one of the smallest visible minorities in Canada. This may explain why little research attention has been drawn to either recent Japanese immigrants or their employment experience. These Japanese immigrants come from economically and technologically developed society with a relatively high level of education. Their homeland economy and technology are highly recognized in the world. Their homeland university education system is also well established. It raises a question here whether these factors improve the

employment experience of Japanese immigrant professionals. It also questions whether Japanese obtained academic and occupational credentials have or have not been recognized in Canada. If not, it is imperative to examine whether Canadian education improves the employment experience among Japanese immigrant professionals and how it does so.

Furthermore, being Japanese myself, I would like to reveal the lived experience of Japanese immigrants in recent years in Canada for my personal interest due to the lack of research on this subject. This study will focus on Japanese immigrant professionals in the Greater Toronto Area, by investigating experience and challenges faced by recent Japanese immigrant professionals and by comparing the findings with those of Canadian educated Japanese immigrant professionals and with the major problems faced by internationally educated professionals in the preliminary literature. This study will provide implications for recognition of experience, issues and needs among recent Japanese immigrant professionals, better understanding of the recent Japanese immigrant community in Canada, a dissemination of the issue of economic integration of internationally educated professionals, and finally a contribution to develop policy suggestions and further services for internationally educated professionals and Japanese immigrants.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Internationally educated professionals are immigrant professionals who obtained

their academic and occupational credentials outside of Canada. In this study, internationally educated professionals refer to immigrant professionals who come from non-English speaking countries, whose credentials are not often recognized as equivalent as the Canadian ones (Yee et al., 2006; Li, 2003) in terms of "human capital quality and accreditation standing" (Li, 2003, p.112). DeVoretz (2006) identifies 326,424 net immigrant professionals who immigrated between 1982 and 2001 based on LIDS 2004 and NBER CPS Merged Outgoing Rotation Group 2005 data. It should be noted that there is no universal definition of self-regulated professions. In my study, professionals are defined according to the Ontario Regulators for Access (2004). There are 38 professions and 22 of them are health related professions, including dental hygienists, dieticians, midwives, nurses, opticians, optometrists, pharmacists, physicians and surgeons, psychologists, plus beyond the health sphere - architects, accountants, lawyers, professional engineers, social workers, teachers, veterinarians and et al.[1] (Ontario Regulators for Access, 2004).

Research on internationally educated professionals has been well conducted in recent years. It should also be noted that the problems of lack of foreign credential recognition have been documented since 1980s. Preliminary literature have attempted to

[1] Other professionals include audiologists and speech language pathologists, chiropodists, chiropractors, dental surgeons, dental technologists, denturists, dieticians, massage therapists, medical laboratory technologists, medical radiation technologists, naturopath/drugless practitioners, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, respiratory therapists, certified engineering technicians & technologists, certified general accountants, chartered accountants, foresters, funeral directors, geoscientists, insurance brokers, land surveyors, management accountants, real estate agents, social service workers (Ontario Regulators for Access, 2004).

reveal the barriers in assessment and licensing procedures, racial discrimination, characteristics of internationally educated professional population, comparative earning disparities with native-born Canadians and with immigrants from different origins such as European or Asian, and influences on the Canadian economy. Furthermore, the Canadian government as well as community organizations have attempted to assist internationally educated professionals with their employments in their professions by raising public awareness, implementing legislations, and providing specific services and offices mentioned in the introduction.

The introduction of the point system in 1967, which is based on the human capital theory (Reitz, 2005), has increased the number of immigrants from non-traditional source countries and reinforced the diversity among immigrants. Especially after 1986, when the point system was revised to attract highly skilled immigrants who were required to pass 70 points out of 100 (Bambrah, 2005), a large number of well-educated and highly skilled immigrants such as engineers, physicians, dentists, accountants and lawyers – regulated professionals – immigrated to Canada. In 2000, the number of skilled immigrants accounts for 58.1 per cent, compared to only 35.1 per cent in 1980 (Li, 2003). In spite of the large number of intake of highly educated immigrants to Canada, preliminary literature reveals that they have experienced higher rates of unemployment, a two-digit income gap, over-representation in low-paying occupations and under-representation in better paying

and more secure occupations (Teelucksingh & Galabuzi, 2005; Reitz, 2005; Sobkow, 2001). It is paradoxical that skilled immigrants are selected based on their higher education and occupational competencies in their home countries, while those foreign credentials are not often recognized once they have landed in Canada. Not only frustration and disappointment among internationally educated professionals but also the loss to the Canadian economy have been often demonstrated. It is estimated that Canada will experience that 100 per cent of both population and labour force growth will depend on immigration by 2011 (Omidvar & Richmond, 2003; Alboim & the Maytree Foundation, 2002). However, as Reitz (2001, 2005) calculated, internationally educated immigrants earned $2.4 billion less than Canadian-born resulting from their skill underutilization in Canada. The Conference Board of Canada also estimates that the Canadian economy has experienced annual loss of between $4 and $6 billion as a negative outcome of lack of foreign credential recognition (cited in Alboim & the Maytree Foundation, 2002).

Major problems faced by internationally educated professionals which have been often identified are lack of foreign credential recognition (Omidvar and Richmond, 2003; Alboim and the Maytree Foundation, 2002; Reitz, 2001, 2005; MacDade, 1988), lack of Canadian work experience (Reitz, 2001, 2005), limited official language proficiency (Li, 2003), lack of knowledge about Canadian workplace practices prior to migration (Alboim & the Maytree Foundation, 2002; Li, 2003), lack of social capital (Li, 2004; Voyer, 2004),

racial discrimination in the labour market (Teelucksingh & Galabuzi, 2005; Reitz, 2001, 2005; Yee, et al., 2006), and limited bridging programs (Alboim, et al., 2005).

In Canada, the law requires professionals to be registered or certified to practice their regulated professions no matter where they are educated and trained. Hence, assessments of foreign academic credentials and occupational competencies of internationally educated professionals are necessary either prior to or after migration to Canada. However, lack of foreign credential recognition experienced by internationally educated professionals is identified in different situations (Omidvar and Richmond, 2003; Alboim and the Maytree Foundation, 2002; Reitz, 2001, 2005; MacDade, 1988). Reitz (2001) defines two different levels of non-recognition of foreign credentials regarding regulated professions in Canada. They are 1) "[n]on-recognition of foreign professional or trade credentials by Canadian licensing bodies for professions and trades;" and 2) "[n]on-recognition of foreign professional or trade credentials by employers, for immigrants who have received Canadian licenses," which will be further elaborated in the following.

Firstly, licensing bodies do not license internationally educated professionals in particular fields despite their homeland licenses (Reitz, 2001). Some immigrants are required to repeat their professional education and practical trainings in Canada in the process of licensing, which are already completed by internationally educated professionals in their homelands (McDade, 1988). Besides, the assessment and licensing procedures differ

from province to province. Those who have the same degree in the same origin of country, for instance, may be assessed differently in different provinces. It should be noted that Teelucksingh and Galabuzi (2005) argue that the assessment processes are "often subjective and the competence assessment tools [are] unclear" (p.23). In addition, a 1992 Task Force (Alberta Task Force on the Recognition of Foreign Qualifications, 1992, cited by Li, 2003) points out the absence of agencies to evaluate foreign qualifications and demand for Canadian experience as a criterion for registration. Therefore, these barriers in assessment and licensing procedures can prevent internationally educated professionals from assessing their qualifications and accordingly practicing their professions in Canada. Alboim and the Maytree Foundation (2002) argue that collaboration with the organizations that conduct assessments is required to "avoid duplication, meet service standards and ensure the demand for assessment services is being met" (p.24). However, it is imperative to note here that accrediting foreign credentials is time-consuming and very challenging financially and systematically for both assessment and licensing bodies and immigrants. It is also mentally challenging for some immigrants due to its long processes, feeling of repetitiveness and frustration.

Secondly, employers do not recognize foreign professional credentials of internationally educated professionals who have been licensed by Canadian licensing bodies (Reitz, 2001). Employers simply do not recognize or underestimate foreign professional

credentials or occupational competencies as equivalent ones obtained in Canada. Teelucksingh and Galabuzi (2005) argue that economic discrimination occurs when employers "make generalized assumptions about the worth of [immigrants'] human capital" (p.6). Reitz (2001, 2003) argues that this occurs due to the unfamiliarity with qualifications of certain countries. Furthermore, employers are not capable of doing their own assessment (Teelucksingh and Galabuzi, 2005; Alboim & the Maytree Foundation, 2002). On the other hand, post-secondary educational institutions conduct their own assessment on foreign educational credentials of candidates (Alboim & the Maytree Foundation, 2002). This contrast of employers and educational institutions also implies inconsistency or ambiguity in recognizing foreign credentials.

The second type of non-recognition of foreign professional credentials leads to another problem that assessing and licensing foreign academic and occupational credentials does not fully ensure skilled immigrants can integrate into the labour market because of the lack of 'Canadian' human capital such as Canadian work experience (Reitz, 2001, 2005), and official language proficiency with preferred proper accents (Li, 2003). Reitz (2001) argues that employers discount foreign experience of internationally educated professionals by requiring Canadian experience, defined as devaluation of foreign credentials (Li, 2003), or one of the immigrant skill underutilization. It is obvious that newcomers do not have Canadian work experience or Canadian education upon arrival because of the fact that they

were selected as economic immigrants based on their foreign educational qualifications, occupational competencies and official language proficiency, which have been highly emphasized on human capital theory based (Reitz, 2005) immigration policy. It is also difficult for adult immigrants in particular to acquire English without any 'undesirable' accents; despite being able to communicate in English.

Another identified barrier is lack of knowledge about Canadian workplace practices prior to immigration (Alboim & the Maytree Foundation, 2002; Li, 2003). Knowledge about workplace practices include "codes of ethics, Canadian legislated requirements, knowledge of employment standards and occupational health and safety legislation, confidentiality expectations, organizational structures, and protocols for communication with colleagues and individuals receiving one's services (Alboim & the Maytree Foundation, 2002, p.31). It should also be noted that the educational level among native-born Canadians has been increasing, which makes the labour market more competitive for skilled immigrants (Li, 2004; Reitz, 2005), taking into consideration of the disadvantages such as English as a second language, lack of Canadian work experience and lack of knowledge about Canadian workplace practices.

Furthermore, social capital, which refers to "features of social organization such as networks, norms and social trust that facilitates coordination and cooperation for mutual benefits" (Putnam, 1995, as quoted in Suzuki, 2005, p.18), plays an important role in

facilitating immigrants' participating in the Canadian labour market. Yet, Li (2004) argues that social capital complements human and financial capitals, but does not replace them. For instance, programs such as the Host Program or mentorship programs help newcomers to build their social networks; however they do not secure jobs in their professions. More importantly, Voyer (2004) also points out that a decline in the quality of networks among economic immigrants also contributes to the difficult experiences in participating in the Canadian labour market.

Racial discrimination in the Canadian labour market, employment discrimination, against immigrants, particularly against visible minorities from non-traditional source countries is a frequently identified barrier as well (Teelucksingh & Galabuzi, 2005; Reitz, 2001, 2005; Yee, et al., 2006). The employment discriminations including immigrant skill underutilization and pay inequity result in disadvantages in earning, which, Reitz (2001, 2005) identified, have been experienced by visible minorities in particular. They often stem from "negative employment decisions based on statuses such as birth place or origins" (Reitz, 2001, p.353). For instance, Reitz (2001) identifies that Blacks, Chinese, South Asians, Filipinos and other Asians have experienced disadvantages in earning compared to immigrants of European origins. In workplace as well, visible minorities are more likely to experience difficulties in advancing their positions: glass-ceiling (Yee, et al., 2006; Teelucksingh & Galabuzi, 2005; Reitz, 2005). Despite the revision of the immigration

policy which used to select immigrants based on the ‘desirable’ race and ethnicity, visible minorities still have faced racial discrimination both in hiring practices and workplace.

The immigrant skill underutilization is regarded as often being associated with the debate over brain drain (Li, 2003; Reitz, 2001). Highly educated professionals emigrate from source countries, mainly from less developed countries, which is regarded as brain drain (Li, 2003). Their high quality of human capital results in being underestimated or being underutilized in Canada, which leads to brain waste: the loss to the global economy as a whole. Furthermore, Canada has experienced the exodus of highly educated people to the United States (Reitz, 2001), which is again considered as brain drain or “the transfer of human resources and capital from the less developed to the highly developed parts of the world” (Li, 2003, p.165). This debate makes it clear that economic integration and skill utilization of immigrants should be significantly prioritized on both domestic and global levels.

In order to fill the gaps between required criteria of licenses and immigrants’ actual qualifications and to alleviate these barriers to the Canadian labour market in their professions, there are bridging programs called Bridge Training Programs (Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration, 2006) and settlement services. These include language and business training services provided by settlement organizations such as Skills for Change, Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC) and by educational institutions

such as the G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education at Ryerson University, which, for instance, has International Midwifery Pre-registration Program, Internationally Educated Dietitians Pre-registration Program, and others[2]. The TRIEC also launched Career Bridge in 2003 to provide internships for skilled immigrants and Mentoring Partnership for immigrants to develop social capital and obtain information on their fields of professions (TRIEC, 2006; Alboim, et al., 2005). Settlement organizations as well as post-secondary educational institutions have provided bridging programs and advanced English courses which help internationally educated professionals strengthen their professional knowledge, obtain Canadian work experience in their fields of expertise, and improve their official language proficiency in order to fill the gaps and alleviate these barriers. Attempts to incorporate various players such as stakeholders, skilled immigrants, regulators, educational institutions, employers, settlement providing organizations, credential assessment services, academia and the government to solve these issues have been made (Alboim & the Maytree Foundation, 2002). Consequently, these bridging programs seem to integrate some skilled immigrants into the mainstream labour market; however, it should be noted that positions in those programs are limited (Alboim, et al., 2005) and application requirements need to be met. Furthermore, additional shortcomings are limited time availability and financial affordability. Access to those programs can be improved by further expanded positions,

[2] Others include Internationally Educated Social Work Professionals and Internationally Educated Engineers Qualification Bridging Program.

flexible full-time and part-time positions, affordable tuitions, and accessible financial assistance for further education. Also, little research on the specific outcomes of internationally educated professionals after completing bridging programs has been conducted yet.

The barriers to economic integration of internationally educated professionals are associated with various factors and dimensions. Two levels of lack of recognition of foreign credentials exists: 1) barriers in the assessment and licensing processes such as devaluation of foreign credentials of certain countries, and 2) employment discrimination by employers despite being licensed in Canada, which implies licensing does not guarantee internationally educated professionals to successfully integrate into the labour market. There are also barriers such as demand of Canadian work experience, need of official language proficiency, racial discrimination that still exists in the Canadian labour market. Furthermore, the limited knowledge of Canadian workplace practices, and lack of social capital can prevent internationally educated professionals from fully participating in the Canadian labour market. It should also be noted that there is limited availability of bridging programs that have still been developed.

The review of major employment barriers of internationally educated professionals allows this study to examine those of Japanese immigrant professionals. In the next two sections, a brief history of Japanese immigration and current context of Japanese

immigrants in Canada will be reviewed.

HISTORY OF JAPANESE IMMIGRATION TO CANADA

History of early Japanese immigrants and Japanese Canadians in the early twentieth century in Canada has been well documented because of their unique experience. The first immigrant, Manzo Nagano, from Japan to British Columbia dates back to 1877. However, the number of Japanese immigrants was very small until the mid-1890s. Between the mid-1890s and the beginning of World War Ⅰ, approximately 30,000 Japanese immigrated to Canada. The two peaks of Japanese immigration to Canada in its history were identified in 1899-1990 and in 1906-1907. However, the number of immigrants decreased continuously since 1920s, and was quite low during World War Ⅱ. This led the Japanese community to have lost "the stimulus of close contact with the mother country and [come] to rely on the social and cultural resources which could be generated within itself" (Ward, 1982, p.6).

Most of the early Japanese immigrants had fishing, farming or merchandising backgrounds. Many of them came from the four prefectures in Japan: Hiroshima, Wakayama, Shiga and Kagoshima. Those farmers were exploited by landlords through heavy land taxes (Ward, 1982; Takata, 1983; Adachi 1976). This reinforced Japanese immigrants to Canada for economic reasons just as other early immigrants from other parts

of the world (Ward, 1982; Adachi, 1976) and for “freedom of individual action” (Adachi, 1976, p16). However, it should be noted that these first generation of Japanese immigrants (Issei) did not intend to settle permanently in Canada (Ward, 1982; Takata, 1983). Furthermore, the early Japanese immigrants were young single male “sojourners” (Ward, 1982) to earn money. It is interesting to note that they used to send remittances to back home at such an early period, and families in Wakayama enjoyed the standard living with those remittances from their sons (Ward, 1982; Adachi, 1976).

Not until after 1910s did women start to immigrate to Canada. This was the time when many “picture brides” (Ward, 1982; Takata, 1983; Adachi, 1976; Sugiman, 2006) landed in Canada to alleviate the imbalanced ratio of male and female among the Japanese community. The inflow of Japanese ‘picture brides” encouraged the Japanese community to start families and child rearing, and eventually to settle in Canada. However, many did not stay permanently, either moving on to the United States, or the experience of some 13,000 who went back to Japan by the late 1930s (Ward, 1982). Between 1901 and 1941 in Canada, there were more than 95 per cent of Japanese immigrants and their descendants lived in British Columbia. The fact that the 60 per cent of the Japanese community were Canadian born by 1941 (Ward, 1982) implies that the community was highly depended on itself and its natural birth.

There are significant facts that should be addressed in Japanese Canadian history.

In September 1907, there was a race riot in Vancouver, which led Japan to have agreed to the Gentlemen's Agreement of 1908 in which Japan voluntarily restricted the number of outmigration to Canada (Adachi, 1976). Japanese immigrants had experienced "limitations upon employment opportunities, immigration restrictions, discriminatory housing covenants, and segregation in public accommodation" (Ward, 1982, p.10). As mentioned above, many Japanese immigrants engaged in fishing industry in Steveston, British Columbia. After 1922, the federal Department of Marine and Fisheries limited the number of licenses issued to Japanese fishermen under the pressure of white fishermen (Ward, 1982; Adachi, 1976). Furthermore, the second generation of Japanese immigrants had also experienced employment discrimination such as underemployment and denial access to professional jobs resulting from racism and segregation (Ward, 1982; Roy, 2003 & Ward, 1978, cited in Sugiman, 2006). These facts remind us that 'feeling of fear' in human beings is likely to urge discrimination against certain groups to psychologically protect themselves. Discrimination, especially racial discrimination against some ethnic groups like above cases of pre-war Japanese immigrants, can be easily provoked especially when it comes to one's interests.

What made the Japanese community and its experience unique in Canadian history was the internment during World War Ⅱ. The attack on Pearl Harbour on December 7, 1941 made whites see Japanese immigrants and their descendants as "enemy aliens" and

Canada interned them in detention camps and ghost towns in the interior of British Columbia, and forced some males to work on sugar beet farms in southern Alberta or Manitoba "regardless of national status" (Ward, 1982), which included Canadian born people of Japanese origins. On February 27, 1942, more than 21,000 people of Japanese origins (more than 90 percent of the Japanese community) had their homes confiscated and were evacuated from the places they used to live (Ward, 1982). After World War Ⅱ, people of Japanese origin were manipulated by the government to relocate to the east of Rockies: some moved to the prairies, most settled in Toronto, Ontario, or to 'choose to repatriate' to Japan with the aim of eliminating all the people of Japanese origin in British Columbia (Ward, 1982; Adachi, 1976; Sugiman, 2006). Only one third remained in British Columbia (Ward, 1982; Sunahara, 1982, cited in Sevy & Torpey, 2004). Ward (1982) argues that Japanese Canadians "lacked the cultural and social unity" (p.15) because of their dispersed community across Canada in the post-war period. Their dispersal seemed to have made the Japanese Canadians become "less visible" and "less threatening" (Ward, 1982, p.17) than previous concentrated settlements prior to World War Ⅱ in the west coast of British Columbia.

CURRENT CONTEXT OF JAPANESE IMMIGRANTS

Since the peaks of Japanese immigration to Canada in the late 1890s and early 1900s,

the number of Japanese immigrants has not dramatically increased in its history. Only 2,300 Japanese immigrated to Canada from the end of World War Ⅱ to 1967 (Ward, 1982). From 1967 to 1982, approximately 700 post-war new Japanese immigrants (Shin-Imin) entered Canada annually (Ward, 1982; Adachi, 1976; CIC Immigration Statistics, 2007). For most of the 1980s, annual intake dropped to less than half this number per year (CIC Immigration Statistics, 2007). Subsequently, the annual numbers began increasing again. From 1989 to 1992, approximately 500 Japanese immigrated to Canada each year, and from 1993 to 1996, the number rose to about 1,000 (CIC Immigration Statistics, 2007).[3] It appears that Japan's rapid economic growth in the post-war period did not play as strong a role as an ultimate push factor of outmigration as in other countries for economic reasons. However, these new immigrants are "urban, highly-skilled and well-educated" (Ward, 1982, p.17), and most of the university degree holders had technical skills (Adachi, 1976) who are "technical immigrants, or gijutsu-imin 技術移民" (Shibata, 2005), or skilled immigrants. These post-war newcomers are generally called Shin(new)-Issei and Shin-Nisei who are second generation of Shin-Issei in order to be differentiated from the pre-war Japanese immigrants, Issei.

It should be noted that the number of Japanese immigrants in Canada in the post-war period and recent years has been quite small; however, the Japanese community in Canada

[3] Annual statistical publications, immigration statistics, from 1966 to 1996 were available through CIC, Citizenship and Immigration Statistics Archives. The publications ceased with the 1996 report.

is internally diverse. There are Japanese Canadians including fifth generation of pre-war Japanese immigrants (Gosei), new Japanese immigrant Shin-Issei and their Shin-Nisei children, temporary Japanese residents in Canada: visa students, working holiday visa holders, business and academic workers who are transferred by their companies and their dependants, and tourists, whose number of temporary residents increased in 1990s (Shibata, 2005). Its diversity allows the Japanese community to sustain and support a variety of community organizations. In the Toronto area, for instance, these include the National Association of Japanese Canadians (NAJC) which represents Japanese Canadians, the New Japanese Canadian Association (NJCA) for new Japanese immigrants, Japanese Canadians and Japanese nationals residing in the Toronto area, the Japanese Social Services (JSS) which provides services such as counselling, referral, advocacy, educational workshops for people with Japanese ethnic background (JSS, 2006), and the Japanese Visitors Association (JAVA) which supports Japanese residents in the Toronto area by providing workshops and social events (JAVA, 2007). Despite the diversity within the community, Shibata (2005) points out that some Shin-Issei women's core social network was post-war immigrants. Ward (1982) also argues that "except for their common racial origins, most second generation (Nisei) and third generation (Sansei) had very little in common with the newcomers" (p.17) due to a small surviving number of the first generation of Japanese immigrants in 1970s and 1980s and a higher rate of intermarriages among third generation.

These arguments suggest that there are fewer contacts between descendants of pre-war immigrants and post-war immigrants, and implies that Japanese immigrants tend to interact with those who are in similar situations in terms of immigration periods and background. However, there are interactions among volunteers including descendants of pre-war Japanese immigrants, new Japanese immigrants and Japanese temporary residents through the JSS and the Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre (JCCC), which serves for the Japanese Canadian community and those who have interests in Japanese culture (JCCC, 2007).

Due to the limited literature and statistics data on recent Japanese immigrants, the Landed Immigration Data System (LIDS), which is sustained by Citizenship and Immigration Canada, is employed to take a close look at the new Japanese immigrant community in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). The LIDS data covers all the immigrants who have immigrated to Canada between 1980 and 2001, including age, gender, mother tongue, year of landing, immigration class, language ability, year of schooling, education qualifications, country of last permanent residence, country of birth and intended occupation. To identify Japanese immigrants in the LIDS data, country of last permanent residence, Japan, was used in this study. It should be noted that this may include non-Japanese nationals, and exclude Japanese nationals who lived in other countries prior to migration to Canada.

By using the variable of country of last permanent residence, the total number of

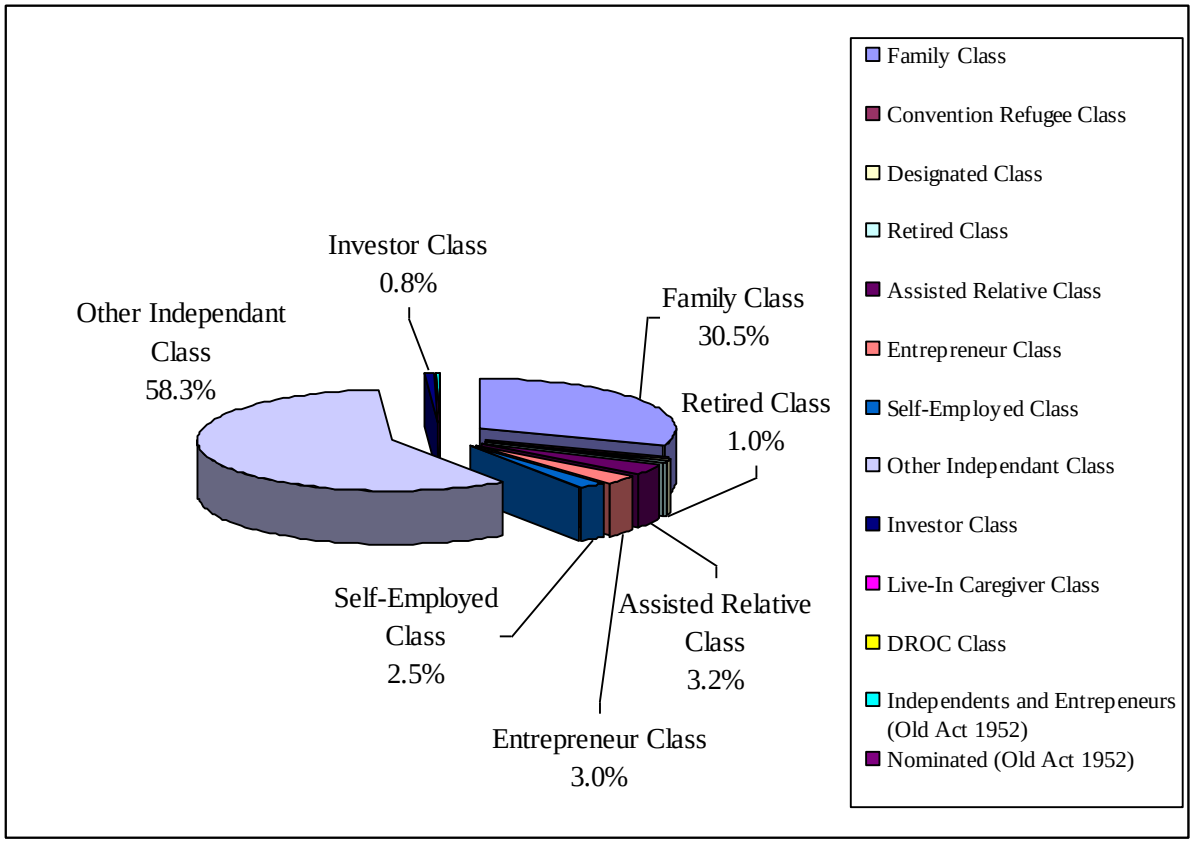
4,048 Japanese immigrants was collected in the GTA. There are two major immigration classes: family class and independent class, which consist of 1,234 immigrants (30.5 per cent) and 2,360 immigrants (58.3 per cent) respectively. Other immigration categories such as assisted relative class, entrepreneur class, and self-employed class remain in the range of 100 and 130 immigrants (3.2 per cent, 3.0 per cent and 2.5 per cent respectively). Among those immigrants, approximately 42.8 per cent of the total Japanese immigrants are 25 to 34 years old. As for year of landing, approximately 200 Japanese immigrated annually in the early 1980s, but dropped to 76 in 1983. The number of Japanese immigrants started increasing in the late 1980s during the so-called bubble economy. Then it had been slightly but continuously growing in 1990s during the economic depression, and has reached approximately 300 Japanese immigrants in 2001. Regarding educational level of Japanese immigrants, 1,239 immigrants have secondary or less level of education (30.6 per cent)[4], while 1,210 immigrants have at least bachelor's degree or more (2.9 per cent). 83.1 per cent of those who have post-secondary degrees have English skills, only 14.6 per cent of them do not have any official language proficiency. It is interesting that the ratio of male and female Japanese immigrants is approximately 4 to 6. It should be noted that the ratio of male and female Japanese immigrants under family class is approximately 1.5 to 8.5. Indeed, this large gender imbalance in the family class accounts for most of the difference.

[4] It should be noted that this figure includes school age children.

Table 1: Japanese Immigrants in the GTA by Immigration Class between 1980 and 2001

Category	Male	Female	Total (%)
Family Class	185	1,049	1,234 (30.5%)
Convention Refugee Class	4	4	8 (0.2%)
Designated Class	7	5	12 (0.3%)
Retired Class	16	23	39 (1.0%)
Assisted Relative Class	65	65	130 (3.2%)
Entrepreneur Class	61	59	120 (3.0%)
Self-Employed Class	43	57	100 (2.5%)
Other Independent Class	1,145	1,215	2,360 (58.3%)
Investor Class	15	17	32 (0.8%)
Live-In Caregiver Class	0	4	4 (0.1%)
DROC Class	1	1	2 (0.0%)
Independents and Entrepreneurs (Old Act 1952)	2	4	6 (0.1%)
Nominated (Old Act 1952)	1	0	1 (0.0%)
Total	1,545	2,503	4,048 (100.0%)

Figure 1: Japanese Immigrants in the GTA by Immigration Class between 1980 and 2001



Data source: LIDS, Citizenship and Immigration Canada[5]

[5] Other classes such as Convention Refugee Class, Designated Class, Live-In Caregiver Class, DROC Class,

The Japanese community is also comprised of a relatively large number of Japanese temporary residents as well. According to Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Japan is ranked as the fourth top source country for foreign students in 2006, accounting for 4,051 (6.6 per cent) out of 61,703 students in Canada (CIC Facts and Figures, 2007). Among those Japanese international students, female students account for as twice as many as male counterparts (CIC Facts and Figures, 2007). Japan is also ranked as the eighth top source country for foreign workers in 2006, accounting for 5,601 (5.0 per cent) out of 112,658 workers (CIC Facts and Figures, 2007). On March 1, 1986, Canada and Japan introduced the Working Holiday Program, whose aim is to promote further cultural understanding of both countries through young adults' spending at most one year while working temporarily (Government of Canada, 2007; Shadan Hohjin Working Holiday Kyokai, 2007). In 1998, the quota was raised up to 5,000 from 3,500 (Shibata, 2005), which is applicable to Japanese who are between 18 and 30 years old.

Table2: Temporary Japanese Residents in Canada in 2006

Category	Number (Percentage)
# of international students from Japan	4,051 (6.6 %)
# of foreign workers from Japan	5,601 (5.0 %)

Independents and Entrepreneurs (Old Act 1952) and Nominated (Old Act 1952) consist of less than 0 % of the total number of Japanese immigrants.

As reviewed, it is imperative to recognize that the diversity within the Japanese community in Canada. The total number of recent Japanese immigrants is small compared to other ethnic groups such as Chinese or Indians. However, taking into consideration that these new Japanese immigrants are well-educated and highly skilled, it is significant to explore employment experience faced by Japanese-trained professionals.

METHODOLOGY

Given that major barriers faced by internationally educated professionals and experience of both pre-war and post-war Japanese immigrants are reviewed, this research will examine employment experience of Japanese immigrant professionals. The purpose of this study is to identify their employment experience during the licensing and hiring processes, and to compare them with those of internationally educated professionals in the previewed literature in general. Experience faced by Japanese-educated professionals will be also compared with those faced by Japanese immigrant professionals who have completed their further or additional education either in their professions or in different professions in Canada to examine how much advantage derived from Canadian education. In order to best explore employment experience faced by Japanese immigrant professionals, qualitative research method was employed as a primary source due to the nature of the topic and subjects in this research.

Participants were recruited through posters placed at the Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre (JCCC), and through online postings on the Toronto Nikkei Forum and on the Bulletin Board Service on the Japanese community websites: "e-Maple.net" and "bits lounge," which are mainly used among recent Japanese speaking residents in Canada including Toronto for the purpose of exchanging information such as rooms for rent, jobs, immigration and visas. The Toronto Nikkei Forum is also an online bulletin board maintained by the Toronto Internet Information Exchange Club (IIEC) offered by the New Japanese Canadian Association (NJCA). The bulletin board is set up for the purpose of exchanging information about community events, volunteer opportunities and so forth for Japanese Canadians (Toronto Nikkei Forum, 2007). The researcher also visited the Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre (JCCC), the Japanese Social Services (JSS) at which the researcher volunteered, and the Nikkei Voice[6] office in Toronto for further information on candidates for interviews in this research. Participants were also recruited through my personal contacts, snowballing sampling, key informants at the JSS and the Family Talks Forum, which provide information on child raring and education for Japanese Canadians affiliated with the NJCA (Family Talks Forum, 2007), and volunteer members in the Kosaten Project which was established in cooperation with the JSS, the Japan Foundation Toronto, the JAVA, and the NAJC (Kosaten Project Web, 2007). The Kosaten Project, where the researcher is currently volunteering, provides information and workshops such as

[6] The Nikkei Voice publishes monthly national newspapers for the Japanese Canadian community.

housing and health for mainly Japanese resident women in the Toronto area. Recruitment of Japanese immigrant professionals appeared to be challenging at first, taking into consideration of smaller number of Japanese immigrants in Canada, especially of those who were educated and trained in Japan. It turned out, however, that there are more Japanese professionals than the researcher had expected to be able to contact with, including Canadian-educated professionals and both Japanese and Canadian-educated professionals. Due to the time constraint, the researcher completed a total number of eight interviews as previously planned for this research.

As a qualitative research, individual interviews were employed for the purpose of best capturing each individual's experience and perceptions on securing a professional job in Canada. Due to the time and physical constraints, two participants were interviewed over the telephone. Six other participants were interviewed in person at mutually convenient time and place. Each individual interview lasted approximately 60 to 90 minutes. All the participants are proficient in English. Therefore, all the consent forms were provided in English. However, the language options were given to each participant of being interviewed in either English or Japanese, or both in English and Japanese. Consequently, three participants were interviewed only in English, one was interviewed in both English and Japanese, and four were interviewed in Japanese. Throughout the interviews, all the participants were asked to share their background information such as reasons for

immigration and their professions, employment experience, challenges or difficulties which they have confronted in the process of securing the kind of work they hoped/have hoped to have as a professional. The interview questions based mostly on open ended questions, and included basic questions regarding their background information and some prompt questions about their licensing and hiring processes (See Appendix). All the interviews were conducted between the middle and the end of July in 2007, immediately after receiving the approval of this research proposal from Research Ethics Board at Ryerson University.

To analyze the collected data, qualitative analysis was employed which "extract[s] themes or generalizations from evidence and organiz[es] data to present a coherent, consistent picture" (Neuman, 2006, p.157). Firstly, the researcher categorized all the participants into three groups (See Table 3). The researcher also identified major themes which emerged from the literature review, examined the interview data of Japanese immigrant professionals, and categorized them into three themes (to be identified in the following section). These categorizations allowed the researcher to better identify and compare major barriers faced by internationally educated professionals in general with those faced by Japanese immigrant professionals within the conceptual definitions identified in this research, and to investigate the value of Canadian education.

For the benefit of the readers' recall on the categorized groups and professions of each participant, the simplified identification system will be employed in the following

sections as follows: participant's name (Group#/Profession). It should be noted that six out of eight participants are currently practicing their professions in the mainstream labour market. Two of them who are not currently practicing their professions belong to the Group 1: Keisuke (1/Teacher), who will assess his Japanese credentials, and Kazuhiro (1/Speech-Language Pathologist). Here is a categorization of the participants and their professions.

Table3: Categorization of Participants

Group		Participant (Group#/Profession)
1	Those who were educated and trained in their professions in Japan.	Keisuke (1/Teacher)
		Asako (1/Nurse)
		Kazuhiro (1/Speech-Language Pathologist)
2	Those who are originally educated and trained in Japan, and obtained education in their fields in Canada.	Atsushi (2/Dentist)
		Ayumi (2/Nurse)
		Ken (2/Engineer)
3	Those who were educated and trained in their profession in Canada.	Koji (3/Social Worker)
		Aiko (3/Social Worker)

RESEARCH RESULTS

Eight participants, 5 males and 3 females, were interviewed regarding their employment experiences in the process of securing a job as a professional. They are categorized into three groups based on the locations where they were educated and trained as a professional. The first group comprises three Japanese immigrants who were educated and trained in their professions in Japan. The second group comprises three Japanese immigrants who were educated and trained originally in Japan and subsequently obtained

further or additional university degrees in the same professional fields in Canada. The third group comprises two Japanese immigrants who obtained their first university degrees in Japan and were subsequently educated and trained in a different professional field in Canada. Assumptions from the literature review suggest that the third group would have experienced least barriers in practicing their profession because of the fact that there is not necessity for them to have their Canadian educational credentials verified in the first place. It is, on the contrary, assumed that it would be hardest for the first group to practice their professions because firstly they need to assess their foreign credentials in Canada, secondly their foreign educational and occupational credentials may not be recognized by employers, and thirdly they do not have a Canadian experience upon migration. Hence, employment experiences of these three groups will be compared to examine if Canadian education makes any difference in securing a job as a professional. This categorization also allows this study to evaluate which factor has been the most difficult barrier for the Japanese immigrant professionals: lack of Canadian education, lack of Canadian work experience, limited official language proficiency, lack of knowledge about workplace practices, lack of social capital, or racial discrimination, and to evaluate at which stage they are more likely to experience barriers: licensing or employment processes. This analysis based on the categorization will also discover which factors would help internationally educated professionals in general to practice their professions.

In the following sections, all the participants will be referred by using pseudonyms to ensure confidentiality. It should be noted that four interviews were tape recorded, and the other four were not since some did not consent to audio recording. However, attempt was made to capture what the participants have said precisely by taking good selective notes from the interviews and transcribing key quotes immediately after. Due to this factor in this study, the researcher will identify the quotes that were not recorded by employing pseudonyms starting with an alphabet A. The quotes from recorded interviews will be identified by employing pseudonyms starting with an alphabet K.

Hereupon, all the eight participants in each group will be briefly introduced. The first group consists of Keisuke, Asako and Kazuhiro who were educated and trained in their professions in Japan. Keisuke first came to Canada as a visa student in 2004. He obtained a landed immigrant status in 2006. He was a school teacher (English) for 5 years. Currently he is working on his master's degree in education and will soon apply for assessment of his credentials. The interview was conducted in Japanese.

Asako originally came to Canada as a visa student to study English in 2002. She completed her education and training as a nurse in Japan and worked for 12 years. She became licensed as a registered nurse in Ontario and currently working as a nurse for about 3 years with a work permit. She is now under the immigration application process. The interview was conducted in Japanese.

Kazuhiro immigrated to Canada as a skilled immigrant as a speech-language pathologist in 1992. He obtained his bachelor's degree in sociology and master's degree in speech pathology and worked as a speech pathologist for 16 years in Japan. He was certified as a speech-language pathologist in Ontario in 1992. He is working in a different field while practicing his profession for Japanese community. The interview was conducted in Japanese.

The second group comprises Atsushi, Ayumi and Ken who were originally educated and trained in their professions and further obtained education in their same fields in Canada. Atsushi immigrated to Canada in 1999. He completed his 6-year education and trainings as a dentist and worked as a licensed dentist for 4 years in Japan. He was retrained at school for 2 years in Canada and licensed in 2003. He is currently working as a dentist in Ontario. The interview was conducted in English.

Ayumi applied for her credential assessment prior to migration to Canada. She immigrated in 1996 and obtained a license as a nurse in the same year. She completed her education and training as a nurse in Japan. She worked as a nurse for 3 years in Japan and 7 years in other two countries. She also completed some programs and her bachelor's degree in nursing. She is currently working as a nurse for 5 and half years. The interview was conducted in Japanese.

Ken immigrated to Canada in 1974. His major was engineering and worked as an

engineer for 4 years in Japan. He completed his master's degree in engineering in Canada. He has been working as a professional engineer for 28 years in Canada. It should be noted here that neither registration nor licenses are required to become engineers in Japan. The interview was conducted in English.

Finally, the third group comprises Koji and Aiko who obtained education in their profession in Canada. Koji came to Canada as a visa student in 1996 to attend university in Ontario. He majored in Psychology as his second bachelor's degree. His first degree was in a different field in Japan. He obtained a landed immigrant status in 2000 as a translator. Then he completed his master's degree in Social Work in 2004. He is currently working full-time as a registered social worker for about 6 months. The interview was conducted in both English and Japanese.

Aiko first came to Canada as also a visa student to study English in 1997 for one year. She came back to Canada and applied for a permanent residency in 1999. She then obtained her master's degree in Social Work in 2002. She is currently working full-time as a registered social worker for almost 5 years. Both her previous education and occupation in Japan were completely different from her current occupation. The interview was conducted in English.

The findings of the interviews have been categorized into three themes that emerged both from the literature review and the interview data. They are: 1) lack of foreign

credential recognition: barriers to professional licenses; 2) lack of foreign credential recognition: barriers to employment; and 3) the value of Canadian education.

Lack of Foreign Credential Recognition: Barriers to Professional Licenses

Four Japanese-educated professionals, Asako (1/Nurse), Kazuhiro (1/Speech-Language Pathologist), Atsushi (2/Dentist) and Ayumi (2/Nurse) were required to assess their qualifications or obtain retraining in order to practice their professions in Canada. Their interviews revealed different licensing experiences among different professionals.

Unlike the literature suggested (Reitz, 2001), neither Asako (1/Nurse) nor Ayumi (2/Nurse) had experienced barriers in the process of assessing their Japanese educational and occupational credentials at the College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO). Ayumi stated that her assessment went quite smoothly. Both said that Japanese education seems to be considered as equivalent as Canadian education in nursing, and the CNO recognized the credits, hours of the courses and the grades they obtained in Japan. Asako added that she knows Filipino and Chinese nurses were required to take extra courses by the CNO. She further added,

> If you are Japanese, you don't have to (take additional courses), because Japanese nurses are well-trained in the Japanese medical system. You know, the Japanese medical technology… (Asako, Researcher's translation from interviewing in Japanese).

She recognizes the current advanced Japanese medical technology and its high quality.

Given these at least 4 years of education in nursing and 10 to 12 years of work experience as a nurse in Japan, it seems the CNO acknowledges the Japanese educational and occupational credentials in nursing. This may be verified by the fact that both Asako and Ayumi know several other Japanese-trained registered nurses in Ontario.

Regarding the accessibility to assessments, Ayumi encouragingly stated that if you truly wish to work as a nurse in Canada, all you have to do is to go to the website of the CNO, read the application requirements and apply for an assessment, which can be easily conducted in this technologically advanced world with an easy access to the Internet. Researching requirements allows you to clarify what to do next such as improving English skills and so forth. She also mentioned the assessment system at the CNO is well established because of the fact that there are many nurses from different countries.

Kazuhiro (1/Speech-Language Pathologist) also smoothly obtained a membership of the Ontario Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists (OSLA). He explained that the OSLA recognized his Japanese educational credentials and certified him because he had requisite and equivalent credits at his one-year master's program in Japan, which adopted American curriculums in a master's degree. On the contrary to his experience, he further explained the current situations among speech-language pathologists after the law has been changed.

> If English is not your first language, it's very difficult. They [OSLA] will not accept you. When I first got a membership [license as a speech-language pathologist] from OSLA (before the law has been changed), it seemed like

> they didn't evaluate whether we [foreign-trained speech-language pathologists] could perform our skills well enough in terms of our language skills. But since the law has been changed, since the College has been created, you have to get an almost perfect score on an English speaking test. … They set up criteria which would be hard for people whose first language is not English. And then, barriers, they set up a hurdle (to get in). There seem a lot of people from Eastern Europe who want to be certified speech pathologists, but it's hard to get in (Kazuhiro, Researcher's translation from interviewing in Japanese).

In spite of the change, the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario (CASLPO) certified those who have already had a membership of OSLA including him afterwards. The College did not require him to take further exams or revaluation.

It appears that both of the Japanese-educated nurses, Asako and Ayumi, and a speech-language pathologist, Kazuhiro, had not encountered the so-called barriers in the initial stage of assessing their Japanese credentials and being licensed, despite Asako (1/Nurse) exhaustedly saying "Shindokatta." ('The paper work and exams were a lot of work and tiring.') It is clear that one of the reasons for a relatively smooth licensing is because the Colleges gave the licenses to them prior to the major changes in the assessment requirements.

Nevertheless, Atsushi (2/Dentist), who immigrated after the change in the law and is currently working as a licensed dentist, had experienced his licensing process differently from the three previously discussed participants. Originally, he completed his educational and practical trainings for 6 years and worked as a dentist for 4 years in Japan. In spite of his education and occupational competency, every foreign-trained dentist including him had

to enrol at school at least for 2 years. He stated that it did not matter if a foreign-trained dentist is from a developed country like Japan or a developing country. In this sense, it appears no foreign-trained dentists are discriminated based on their countries of origin. He recalled,

> If I hadn't had to go back to school, I wouldn't have done that because I spent so much money for 2 years. … Many (of his classmates he knows) gave up their (licensing) process because they needed a lot of money to go through the process (Atsushi).

He spent enormous amount of money on his retraining and on support for his family for 2 years. He added that his tuition was two to three times more expensive than those imposed on Canadian-educated dental students despite the fact that he was a permanent resident, not an international student. This allowed him to speculate that the university does not open up its doors to foreign-trained dentists, being afraid that the dental field may become more competitive. He finally became licensed after completing the two-year program at university and passing the nine-day exams for foreign-trained dentists including math, Canadian history, written and oral English and dental practical. He further added, "University doesn't give foreign-trained dentists a DDS [Doctor of Dental Surgery] degree" because they already have a DDS degree from their home countries, albeit they completed the program and became licensed.

With reference to this impression of 'deliberate exclusion' of foreign trained dentists observed above, Asako (1/Nurse) also had a similar experience at the final stage of

licensing. Asako explained,

> Itabasami 板ばさみ [I was in a dilemma]. If you are a permanent resident or a Canadian citizen, you can get a license if you pass a RN [Registered Nurse] test and TOEFL test. But if you are not, they [CNO] don't give you a license. They ask you if you have a job. But employers ask you if you have a license. Itabasami 板ばさみ [I was in a dilemma] (Asako, Researcher's translation from interviewing in Japanese).

Since she was not a landed immigrant, the CNO required her to have a job or a job offer in order for her to become licensed. Contrarily, prospective employers required her for a license. She revealed that her friends complained of this policy and that the CNO should have explained it to them who were not permanent residents at the initial stage of the assessing process. "Why didn't they [CNO] tell us in the first place?" (Asako, Researcher's translation from interviewing in Japanese). As Kazuhiro (1/Speech-Language Pathologist) previously explained the revised criteria and requirements imposed on foreign-trained speech-language pathologists, these become clear that they were not discriminated against their Japanese credentials; however, requirements of licenses seem to be designed intentionally to attempt to exclude foreign-trained professionals.

Atsushi (2/Dentist) also stated that it was competitive to enter the licensing program at university: only 12 foreign trained dentists out of approximately 300 were accepted. Taking into consideration that every foreign-trained dentists needs to be retrained in Canada, it makes it clear that the opportunities for dental retraining are limited, and accordingly it leads to barriers to licenses.

Although barriers to licenses among internationally educated professionals have been identified both in this study and in existing literature (Yee et al., 2006; Li, 2003; Omidvar and Richmond, 2003; Alboim and the Maytree Foundation, 2002; Reitz, 2001, 2005; MacDade, 1988), some participants emphasized the importance of license in the Canadian context. Ken (2/Engineer) discussed ethics which 'professionals' should keep in mind to practice their professions in the first place.

> When I came here, I studied for a professional license, especially ethics and the law. You have to study never mind if you have a degree or not. And I said this is good. … The first priority of professional engineers is a public safety. … If that is not safe for the public, I should not work for it, … There is a big difference between (people's) attitudes (here). … System is to me sometimes too rigid, and disqualifying the people who are really capable of giving something good to this country or communities. But if we admit everyone, what happens to the public safety? That's the mandate of the license. People have to have a mindset that you are working for the public, not for the company or not for the profit (Ken).

Keisuke (1/Teacher) also stated he disagreed with the old system that allowed everyone could transfer their certificates and teach, though he himself may have to take additional courses and practical trainings and volunteer work to get licensed.

> Instead of complaining, first you need to get in. You need to adjust what you have to what they expect as a teacher here. … Even though you have lots of achievements in your country, like you helped students upgrade their grades and so on, you can't only say that. You can't say anything when you are told you are here in Canada (Keisuke, Researcher's translation from interviewing in Japanese).

He further added that you need a license and meet the requirements at first, then you need to have your special skills that you can offer. As both Ken and Keisuke acknowledged a

license as necessary, it seems important to learn ethics or common sense in the country where foreign-trained professionals are planning to work, especially in countries like Canada, unlike Japan, where there are people with different backgrounds and values from various countries. People need to have shared 'common sense' within Canada which consists of immigrants from diverse cultures and values.

Lack of Foreign Credential Recognition: Barriers to Employment

Whether foreign credentials are recognized by employers also depends on how much 'foreign' human capital is acknowledged and how much 'Canadian' human capital is preferred. Most of the participants in the study became licensed after putting enormous efforts to assess their foreign credentials, prepared for the exams and/or repeat their education and trainings. Notwithstanding their licenses, they stated that it was difficult or "discouraging" (Aiko) to secure a professional job.

Currently, Kazuhiro (1/Speech-Language Pathologist) is not practicing his profession in the mainstream society. He quietly said,

> I haven't worked as a speech pathologist in the Canadian mainstream (labour market) yet at this point (Kazuhiro, Researcher's translation from interviewing in Japanese).

Instead, he has been practicing his profession in Japanese for the Japanese Canadian community since he received a license, and is also working full-time in a different field.

> Researcher: Do you want to work as a speech-language pathologist in the future?
> Kazuhiro: Yes, I want to try once again. … I want to do it again (Researcher's translation from interviewing in Japanese).

He also calmly expressed his feelings.

> It is a shame that I can't work here as a speech pathologist, even though I have a license, work experience and achievements as a speech pathologist. It is a shame that my experience is not recognized at all, even though I used to work at a professional level by presenting in conferences, developing a communication system. … I was ashamed that I didn't have a job. It was frustrating not to have a job… (Kazuhiro, Researcher's translation from interviewing in Japanese).

He further added,

> Kazuhiro: I felt there is a barrier.
> Researcher: What do you mean by a barrier?
> Kazuhiro: They [prospective employers] don't give me a job. I felt it was difficult for (foreign-trained) professionals to go into (the Canadian labour market) soon after (migration) (Kazuhiro, Researcher's translation from interviewing in Japanese).

Albeit his license, he has encountered with barriers to employment as a professional in the mainstream.

In another case, Atsushi (2/Dentist) had to move far away from Toronto because he could not find a job in his profession. He said,

> All of my classmates (at university) went way up north to get a job, where towns are under service (Atsushi).

He further stated that his homeland work experience did not help. He argued, when you consult with a dentist,

> Practically, there is no difference between foreign-trained and Canadian-trained dentists. Patients don't see any differences (Atsushi).

He also added that it made him more difficult to get a job without any Canadian work experience.

> You have to forget you were a dentist in your country (Atsushi).

As it is assumed that the third group who were trained in their profession in Canada may not have experienced as many difficulties as the other groups have. However, when it comes to securing a job in their profession, it took about one and a half years for Koji (3/Social Worker) to get a full-time job as a social worker after the acquisition of his master's degree in Social Work.

> Koji: Even though I applied, I didn't get a job (Researcher's translation from interviewing in Japanese). Yeah, yeah, I applied for many jobs. For social work positions. Well, yeah, it didn't work (Researcher's translation from interviewing in Japanese).
> Researcher: Even though you are a registered social worker and have a master's degree?
> Koji: It doesn't really matter. Qualifications are needed…five years of experiences are needed…I didn't even get interviews… Not at all.

He was continuously looking for a job as a social worker while working for shops on a short and part-time basis until he obtained his current job. He further added,

> I was looking for a social work job, because that's how I was trained for. … You have to have education here, but that doesn't guarantee your job (Koji).

It illustrates that these participants, licensed professionals, had experienced barriers to employment no matter where their educations are obtained.

However, Japanese work experience seems to be regarded differently in certain fields. As for Ken's (2/Engineer) case, he first worked as a draftsman upon arrival because he did not possess a license as a professional engineer, even though he was an 'engineer' in Japan. It seems that he was overqualified as a draftsman. Reitz (2001) argues that "Canadian immigration policy has achieved considerable success by selecting immigrants

on the basis of education and other forms of human capital influencing labour market success" (p.348). Ironically, however, the Canadian labour market has also benefited by such overqualified immigrants who have been working in positions below their qualifications. Nevertheless, it appears that his Japanese experience in engineering assisted him with obtaining his first job as a draftsman and hence Canadian work experience, which led him to achieve further positions as he is qualified for. Ken further stated that his Japanese work experience as an engineer, work experience as a draftsman in Canada and his license helped him to work as a professional engineer afterwards. As Atsushi (2/Dentist) mentioned, he also claimed that Canadian work experience is important no matter how small it is.

In nurse' cases, furthermore, Japanese work experience in nursing seems to be highly valued by employers. Ayumi (2/Nurse) found part-time jobs as a nurse. She interpreted that she obtained these jobs because of her specific work experience in the specialized fields in nursing. She further added that her salary was paid based on her experience under the rules in the union. Also, in Asako's (1/Nurse) case, she was not required to have Canadian work experience. Asako, who was trained as a nurse only in Japan, has not experienced as many difficulties to find a job as others have. Assumptions suggest that her case would be the most difficult one; however, she smoothly found a job as a nurse with her Japanese education, Japanese work experience and a license in Ontario. It

should be noted that her case was very unique in a sense that she even had not received a license at the point she got a job offer and did not even have a landed immigrant status. She further noted that her nurse friends from Japan could not find a job so that they left for Japan. She observed,

> Even if you have a long experience at surgery of internal medicine department, but if you don't have a specific experience like working as a midwife, or working at ICU, brain surgery, or paediatrics, and so on, prospective employers can't picture what you can do. You need to have specific job experience (Asako, Researcher's translation from interviewing in Japanese).

It seems that the supply met the demand for nurses in their expertises. Consequently, their Japanese occupational credentials have been recognized by their employers. It seems that specific work experience in particular fields in nursing are more likely to be recognized and desired. Besides, these cases proved that access to professions by internationally educated professionals has not been totally denied in the Canadian labour market.

These cases recall Keisuke's (1/Teacher) observation regarding transparency in hiring practices. Keisuke wondered,

> If I can get in, it would be ok. But it seems difficult to get in (to be hired). … It's ambiguous who they [employers] are hiring. … It's getting competitive. That [license as a teacher] doesn't guarantee a job position even among Canadian educated teachers. But I guess they tend to give preferences to Canadian citizens. … I am wondering if there are annual data on background information of teachers who are hired in each year. … We may see some tendencies. For example, what languages they [newly hired teachers] speak, whether there are more males or females, and so on (Keisuke. Researcher's translation from interviewing in Japanese).

This makes it clear that it remains to be uncertain whether internationally educated

professionals are racially discriminated against, or whether foreign credentials are discounted, or whether candidates are simply not qualified to perform a job. Koji (3/Social Worker) recalled that he did not hear from prospective employers after sending many resumes.

> Koji: I always used my name. I didn't get an English name or whatever.
> Researcher: So you felt like they were discriminating you?
> Koji: You never know. Because I mean like, no one comes up to you and says, 'you don't get a job because I don't like your name. I'm not gonna give you (a job) because you are from a different culture. Interpretation is totally up to you. It creates some sort of ambiguity. …You never know. No one came and said, 'hey, I am a racist. I'm not gonna give you a job.'…

Atsushi (2/Dentist) also said, "Employers don't want to hire foreign trained dentists." However, it should be noted that most participants in this study did not specifically identify that they have experienced racial discrimination.

Throughout the research, as literature suggested (Reitz, 2001, 2005), it appears that so-called barriers to employment have been identified among at least four participants in spite of their licenses.

Value of Canadian Education

Despite neither Canadian education nor licenses ensuring professional jobs immediately, most of the participants benefitted from the value attached to their Canadian education. In fact, though Atsushi (2/Dentist) was required to go back to school, except the Asako's (1/Nurse) case, this research revealed that the participants, who obtained further or additional university degrees in their professions in Canada, are currently practicing their

professions in the mainstream Canadian labour market. As for the case of Koji (3/Social Worker), he said that his Canadian education validated all the experiences and knowledge he had, otherwise some of which could not be specified in his resume. Ken (2/Engineer) also claimed that he would not be what he is now if he had not obtained a Canadian master's degree and subsequently a license as a professional engineer.

> Ken: Having a license in this country makes whole things different, which is bad and good. But for me, it worked really well. Without it, I don't have this life today.
> Researcher: Why do you think it worked well for you?
> Ken: Without the license, I wouldn't have this job.

Additional education is usually extra work and costly; however, participants mentioned with one voice that Canadian education including university degrees and continuing education helped them in various ways. What benefited them was not only the professional knowledge they acquired, but also contextual assets that strengthened their human capital to work as a professional in Canada. It appears that Canadian education was beneficial in terms of 1) upgrading language proficiency; 2) obtaining Canadian work experience; 3) building social networks; and 4) gaining knowledge about Canadian norms.

Firstly, undertaking courses or programs assisted participants in improving their English skills. Kazuhiro (1/Speech-Language Pathologist) said he overcame his disadvantage in English throughout the course. Ayumi (2/Nurse) also mentioned that taking courses in nursing upgraded her skills, refreshed her knowledge and assisted her with English terminology. Furthermore, Atsushi (2/Dentist) commented on what one acquires in

addition to professional knowledge in terms of language skills.

> It [education in Canada] was good because to be a dentist, you have to be fluent in English. One education in one country is not enough to convert your skills into other languages. You need to be a really good communicator because you need to consult and communicate with your patients, doctors, pharmacists, ... (Atsushi).

As Atsushi argued, Keisuke (1/Teacher) also emphasized the importance of language.

> Here, as for the immigration policy, it attracts a lot of immigrants and welcomes them a lot, but when it comes to getting a job, it's difficult. In terms of jobs, I think there is still a hierarchy. … But it doesn't mean that I don't understand the Canada's position. … For example, the issue of language in particular. Like me, or in general, those professionals who had status as a professional in their countries of origin, the language matters whether they can perform their professions. … There is nothing you can understand each other without communicating. The language is the most important factor. … The language is something which needs to be primarily prioritized, especially in professions. It's difficult to evaluate if professionals can perform their skills without considering English proficiency (Keisuke, Researcher's translation from interviewing in Japanese).

Furthermore, Ayumi (2/Nurse) stressed the importance of communication skills as well as English skills. She argued that it is important how adequately you convey what you are trying to say, and that accents do not matter as long as you communicate appropriately with people. She confessed that she was first slightly afraid of working in the English environment because of the linguistic and cultural differences. She also said that she knows some Japanese nurses in Canada are currently not working as a nurse because of their anxiety over their language proficiency and possible lawsuits from malpractices in the medical field. In spite of emphasizing the significance of language proficiency, Aiko (3/Social Worker), Koji (3/Social Worker) and Ayumi (2/Nurse) further stated English as a

second language was one of the barriers to practice their professions because it is not their native language despite their ability to communicate in English.

However, Ken (2/Engineer) argued,

> When it comes to engineering, the language doesn't matter. Engineering language is a universal language. Yeah, so I can do in other countries (Ken).

In fact, many of technical languages such as computer languages are borrowed but not converted into the Japanese language. This can, to some extent, reduce some barriers to professional terminology. Asako (1/Nurse) also argued that you would be fine to work as a nurse if you understand what is happening around you and if you have knowledge as a nurse in Japan. It seems that these different stances on language depend on how much language proficiency is expected in each type of professions or positions and on how they perceive their situations.

Secondly, some Canadian education offered practical opportunities which lead to acquisition of Canadian work experience. Three participants stated that they appreciated their practical trainings though their programs. Indeed, three out of four participants, who have had practical trainings in their expertises, are practicing their professions. Besides, five out of six participants, who are currently practicing their professions, obtained some sort of Canadian experience such as volunteer experience, practical trainings or part-time or full-time work experience prior to practices of their professions. This becomes clear that Canadian experience is important since, as Koji (3/Social Worker) and Keisuke (1/Teacher)

stated, Japanese work experiences are different. It may be not differentiated when it comes to ‘performing professional skills’ such as technical treatments by dentists or medical aides by nurses. However, when it comes to the work ethics or cultural norms in workplaces, what should be prioritized or considered as culturally appropriate differs from those in Japan. In fact, Ayumi stated that her practical training made her become more confident working in the English environment. Furthermore, professions such as teaching and social work are hugely different from those in Japan due to the natures of their professions as Koji and Keisuke mentioned.

Thirdly, it seems that being enrolled in courses or programs at school gives opportunities to develop social capital among every participant. For instance, it helped them with networking in their fields and some participants with references which are not generally required in Japan. Aiko (3/Social Worker) mentioned that she appreciated the mentor program at school to obtain information and learn strategies. She concluded that networking is important; otherwise it is difficult to start from the beginning not knowing anyone or anything in the field.

Lastly, it appears that Canadian education facilitated participants to gain knowledge about cultural differences, Canadian cultural norms, social systems and work ethics, which most of them claimed to be significant to recognize, in addition to the knowledge about workplace practices (Alboim & the Maytree Foundation, 2002). For

instance, Aiko (3/Social Worker) listed her limited knowledge about "communication styles," "small talk" and "adequate cultural norms in the Canadian context," which are different from Japanese culture, as one of the difficulties while looking for a job as a social worker. She insisted that significance of recognition of how the system works in Canada, and of being confident, comfortable, assertive and expressive. Koji (3/Social Worker) also noted, "Communication style is very different (Researcher's translation from interviewing in Japanese)." Ayumi (2/Nurse) and Koji (3/Social Worker) also mentioned that being humble, which is considered as a virtue in the Japanese culture, makes others think you are not confident or capable. In this sense, what the participants have acquired through their experience at school in Canada allowed them to become more familiar and comfortable with cultural norms and systems in the Canadian society. Accordingly, it seems to have led them to practice their professions since they needed to know what they were expected by prospective employers or in workplaces in Canada, which is different from culture to culture.

Ken stated that his characteristics also helped him to obtain a job especially in interviews in Canada.

> I am pretty tidy to prepare for interviews, I kept good drawings I did, … pictures of what I produced. I also acted in the Canadian way I suppose. I...when I was small, I was pretty, how can I say, arrogant. I say what I have to say. … I talked to professors straight. … I think that kind of things worked in this society better. .. But even I was labelled as an arrogant person in Japan, in this society, even if I took the same attitude, I was still looked as reserved (Ken).

This statement illustrates that there is a considerable cultural difference in Canada and Japan in terms of cultural norms, and culturally adequate behaviours that are frequently expected.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The findings of this study on employment experience faced by Japanese immigrant professionals uncovered that most of the participants have experienced barriers to employment rather than barriers to licenses, and difficulties in adapting themselves to culturally adequate norms and communication styles in the Canadian context. Indeed, in spite of the barriers and difficulties, six out of eight participants are currently practicing their professions in the mainstream labour market. Throughout the study, it has been observed that one of the cornerstones of success among Japanese immigrant professionals was the fact that Japanese educational and occupational credentials in certain fields seem to be more or less recognized. More significantly, the fact that all the participants except one have some forms of Canadian education makes it clear that further or additional Canadian education appears to have facilitated them to improve their language proficiency, to obtain Canadian experience, to develop social capital, and to acquire knowledge about cultural norms in addition to their professional knowledge. Furthermore, Canadian degrees facilitated six of them except one to practice their professions in the mainstream labour market.

Although this study is limited in terms of the pool of the participants and the categories of their professions, on the contrary to the assumptions from existing literature (Yee et al., 2006; Li, 2003; Omidvar and Richmond, 2003; Alboim and the Maytree Foundation, 2002; Reitz, 2001, 2005; MacDade, 1988), Japanese-educated professionals in certain fields could have their credentials, 'foreign' human capital, recognized smoothly in terms of "human capital quality" (Li, 2003, p.112). However, there seem to be distinctions from profession to profession. For instance, Japanese educational credentials in nursing appear to be more recognized in assessing and licensing processes, in contrast with credentials in dentistry. Japanese credentials in dentistry do not exempt Japanese-educated dentists from re-education and retraining in Ontario. This makes it clear that the requirements differ even in the same health related field such as the cases of nursing and dentistry whether or not Japanese medical technology is recognized. This difference may be attributed to the extent of occupational responsibility as a professional as well as the diversity in nursing such as races, ethnicities and background. In the case of the speech-language pathologist, it is not clear whether his Japanese credentials were recognized in the licensing process because he was certified under the previous assessment requirements or because an American curriculum was adopted in his master's program in Japan. However, the statements of some participants raised a 'feeling of exclusion' of foreign-trained professionals in licensing processes. These findings suggest that the

locations of education and trainings obtained slightly differentiate the licensing process in some professions; however, credential recognitions all depend more on each profession and the recent changes in the rigid licensing criteria in each licensing body. These also remain to be unclear to what extent and how licensing bodies recognize foreign credentials in each field as Teelucksingh and Galabuzi (2005) argue that assessment processes are often subjective and uncertain.

Every Japanese-educated professional except one (one will be assessed soon) in this study became licensed or registered in Ontario, despite the extent to which they have put in their efforts may hugely vary from professional to professional. Participants in nursing and engineering seem to have experienced fewer barriers in hiring practices. The fact that Ayumi's (2/Nurse) salary in a part-time position was paid based on her experience in Japan and other two countries indicates that pay inequity, unlike Reitz suggested (2001), was not specifically identified in this case. However, most of the Japanese immigrant professionals have also encountered barriers to employment albeit licenses except for a few cases as Reitz (2001, 2005) demonstrates. This is verified by the fact that some participants explained that licenses do not guarantee whether one can obtain a job as a professional. Although neither racial discrimination nor employment discrimination were particularly identified by six out of eight Japanese immigrant professionals in this study, some statements of participants imply that there might have been employment discrimination due

to their racial background, employers' unfamiliarity with different cultural background, or employers' unfamiliarity with foreign credentials (Reitz, 2001, 2003; Teelucksingh & Galabuzi, 2005) or incapability of assessing foreign qualification (Teelucksingh & Galabuzi, 2005; Alboim & the Maytree Foundation, 2002). Also, there are some factors which have initially hindered Japanese immigrant professionals from securing professional jobs: lack of 'Canadian' human capital such as Canadian work experience and limited knowledge about Canadian cultural norms and communication styles. Reitz (2003) argues that the important issue is whether "immigrant qualifications are truly transferable and equivalent to those of the native-born" (p.471). Suppose employers do not discount immigrant qualifications, and suppose immigrant qualifications are equivalent in terms of actual hard skills, acquisition of culturally adequate norms or communication styles makes them more 'equivalent' in terms of soft skills and may mitigate barriers to employment.

In this study, employment experience faced by Canadian-educated Japanese professionals in the third group was also examined to discover how much advantage Canadian education can benefit immigrants. On the contrary to the assumptions discussed earlier, they also have faced difficulties in securing a kind of job they hoped to have. This may be attributed to their limited knowledge or familiarity with Canadian cultural norms or social systems as identified among other Japanese immigrant professionals. Several other factors may also be involved here: it may be that two years of study is not sufficient to

compete with Canadian-born or immigrant professionals who have completed their early schooling in Canada; or it may be that their experience in their profession are limited since they have changed their careers, similar to the case of transition from school to work; or it may be due to their race as a visible minority. These findings make it clear that information disclosure and accountability in both licensing and hiring processes should be transparent and accessible.

Consequently, this study revealed that Canadian education, especially degrees in professions, seemed to have mitigated those barriers faced by Japanese immigrant professionals. Whether further or additional Canadian education was voluntarily obtained or not, it appears to have assisted most participants in overcoming the barriers and difficulties they have encountered. First of all, it verified all the professional knowledge and experience which Japanese immigrant professionals possess. Moreover, it helped them build social networks, obtain Canadian work experience, gain further knowledge about Canada which has its own norms and values, and overcome their proficiency in English, not only in the matter of speaking or listening skills, but also in the matter of culturally appropriate ways of communication including small talks or business talks, which were frequently found to be particularly different in the Japanese context. In fact, they are all identified by most of the participants as essential factors that can mitigate barriers to employment. This knowledge can be gained through some forms of Canadian education as well as Canadian work

experience. Therefore, there should be easier access to further or additional studies and to gain work experience in their fields.

Throughout this study, it seems that participants in this research who have been successful in practicing their professions in Canada have looked the positive sides, have kept their aspirations to work as a professional and have kept upgrading their hard and soft skills to fit both occupationally and culturally in the Canadian labour market. However, it should also be recalled that it took Japanese-educated professionals at least a few to five years to practice their professions or obtain a full-time job, and that not having their achievements and experiences as a professional recognized as well as the long frustrating processes could deteriorate one's self-esteem.

Overall, in the case of the Japanese immigrant professionals in this study, obtaining Canadian degrees in their professions worked as a key factor to practice their professions in the mainstream labour market. Also, some forms of Canadian education helped most of the participants with acquiring confidence and knowledge about cultural norms and social system. Furthermore, obtaining Canadian education in their professions makes it easier for Japanese immigrant professionals to have their homeland occupational experiences verified as well. Nevertheless, it should be noted that these Japanese immigrant professionals in this study, despite personal sacrifice, did have capacities to pursue additional education after migration. They might not have gained what they currently have if they could not afford

further investment in human capital or if they did not possess fundamental human capital, which allowed them to have been accepted in further education that leads to licensing. Again, this makes it clear that affordability and accessibility to supplementary education in Canada need to be available to every internationally educated professional upon or prior to migration.

RECOMMENDNATIONS

This study revealed Canadian education and knowledge about Canadian cultural norms and social system facilitated Japanese immigrant professionals practicing their professions. This suggests that accessibility to different forms of Canadian education both financially and quantitatively including specific bridging programs and degrees in professions should be attained for every internationally educated professional soon after or prior to migration. Furthermore, for those who have already enough education and language proficiency in their professions, or those who have financial difficulties, easier access to practical opportunities in their professions, for instance through the Enhanced Language Training (ELT) programs, needs to be available to help gain Canadian work experience, social network, and knowledge about cultural norms and social systems in Canada which also facilitate immigrants to economically and socially integrate into the Canadian society. These services should be made available to not only newcomers but also those who have

not practiced their professions for a long term.

Moreover, information disclosure and accountability in licensing and hiring practices are important aspects to possibly mitigate further barriers to licensing as well as barriers to employment. It should also be promoted by the government that ethnic organizations provide accessible information on licensing and employment in professions in different languages, which also can be accessed from abroad. In order to make the practices accountable, as some participants claimed in interviews, a significant idea of license should be commonly shared among internationally trained professionals from different backgrounds, which also should be encouraged by licensing bodies as well as community organizations.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND AREAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study attempted to enrich existing literature on economic integration among internationally educated professionals and recent Japanese immigrants in Canada. Nonetheless, limitations of this study should also be addressed. Firstly, the size and population of the participants in this study are limited due to time and financial constraints and due to their relatively small-sized ethnic group in Canada. Hence, the variety of professions of the population is also limited. Secondly, despite the fact that most of the participants except one are currently practicing their professions, the representation from

this population in this study may not be inclusive. Indeed, some participants stated that they know several other nurses including registered nurses in Ontario as well as those who used to be working as nurses in Japan but not in Canada due to some of the reasons mentioned by a participant in interviews discussed in the research results section or due to one of the traditional cultural ideas which married women are more likely to stay home and take care of their homes and families upon marriages or childbirth. However, this factor has not been evidently identified because it is not clear whether they have brought this cultural idea to the Canadian context. This also all depends on families and preferences of each woman especially in recent years. Thirdly, the employment experience expressed by the participants in interviews might be narrated differently in different time and situations. Since most of the participants are currently working as a professional, their reflections on their experiences could more likely be positive compared to those who are currently attempting to obtain a professional job, as one participant stated that her experience was hard but good.

Future research should attempt to investigate a larger pool of Japanese immigrant professionals, including those who are practicing their professions in the mainstream society and those who are not. Professions should be more inclusive, or consistent depending on how large a population is. Since one participant who used to be a teacher in Japan is about to apply for an assessment, it would be interesting to follow up his experience in assessment and licensing process as well as hiring process and to compare those of other participants

revealed in this study. Furthermore, since it turned out that there are some American-educated Japanese immigrant professionals in the GTA, there is also a future area to investigate the comparative employment experience of Japanese-educated, Canadian-educated and American-educated immigrant professionals. Lastly, I wish this study will lead to further research on economic integration of internationally educated professionals. I also wish this study on Japanese immigrant professionals will contribute to the better understanding of recent Japanese immigrants in Canada and to further research on the Japanese community in Canada.

APPENDIX
Interview Questions

Interviews were set up to learn about employment experience faced by Japanese immigrant professionals in Canada. The following questions are open-ended, and further questions and prompts were asked depending on the flow of the interviews.

Background Information

1. When did you immigrate to Canada?
2. Under what category did you immigrate?
3. What made you decide to immigrate to Canada?
4. What is your profession?
5. In which country did you obtain your professional education and training? If both, why is that?
6. Have you worked as a professional in Japan? If so, how long have you worked? If not, what was your occupation in Japan?
7. What is your current occupation?
8. What were you planning to do at the time you immigrated to Canada?

Questions pertaining to employment experience

9. How had/has it been like securing the kind of work you were/are looking for as a professional?
    a. Prompt: Had/has your knowledge of English, cultural differences, foreign credential recognition, homeland work experience, or lack of Canadian work experience been problems in practicing your profession?
    b. Prompt: Had/has your Canadian education helped you easily to become licensed and work as a professional? (For those who obtained Canadian education)
10. Have you attempted to have your qualifications recognized in Canada? If so, how had it been like? If not, why is that? (For those who were educated in Japan)
11. Have you experienced any other difficulties trying to find the kind of work you hope/d to have in Canada? If so, what were/are they?
12. What do you think was/is the most difficult barrier for you to practice your profession in Canada?
13. What do you think would help/have helped you practice your profession?

    Examples: English proficiency, knowledge of Canadian cultural norms, Canadian education/certificates, assessment of foreign obtained credentials, license, Canadian or Japanese work experience, settlement agencies, employment agencies, bridging programs, internships, or social network

14. With the experience you have had in Canada, what advice would you give someone in your profession or in your situation who is now thinking of migrating to Canada?
15. What is your overall impression about your experience in the process of practicing your profession? Questions or comments?

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