

OCCUPATIONAL MOBILITY OF BRAZILIAN IMMIGRANTS IN
SEGMENTED LABOUR MARKETS

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ABSTRACT

Canada needs immigration in order to maintain economic success, thus Canada accepts approximately 250,000 immigrants from countries around the world. Some of these immigrants find themselves gaining employment in the secondary labour market in the service and construction sectors. This paper aims to identify and analyze the experiences and issues Brazilian immigrants face in segmented labour markets. The study incorporates the knowledge and information gained from interviewing fifteen Brazilians who have recently immigrated to Canada and are employed in either the construction or service sector. After an in depth study, the following research will explore the issues revolving around occupational mobility, barriers to employment, educational credentials, and personal attitudes that Brazilian immigrants face in the labour market.

Key words:

Brazilians; immigrants; employment; occupational mobility; segmented labour markets

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

It is widely accepted that Canada needs immigrants in order to maintain economic success, thus Canada accepts approximately 250,000 immigrants (close to 1% of the Canadian population) from countries around the world (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2012). In 2010, Canada accepted 2,597 immigrants from Brazil. This was a staggering increase from 2002, when Canada only accepted 759 immigrants from Brazil (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2012). In comparing both years, there was a 342 percent increase in immigrants in just under a decade and one can gather that the rate of immigration from Brazil to Canada will most likely increase into the 21st century. Even taking a glance at the Canadian census, the number of people identifying as Brazilian may be small but there has been a significant increase. In 1986, there were only 1,365 Brazilian permanent residents listed and by 2006 the number reached 12,500; a number that cannot be easily ignored (Barbosa, 2009). Since Brazilian immigration to Canada has been minimal and is just starting to substantially increase, researchers and academics have only recently begun to examine these rising numbers as well as the experiences of Brazilian immigrants living in Canada. This paper focuses on Brazilian immigrants experiences in segmented labour markets with a detailed look at occupational mobility.

This Major Research Paper (MRP) is exploratory and follows a qualitative approach which includes a literature review and semi-structured interviews with open-ended and closed questions. The research project is also a case study and focuses only on Brazilian immigrants who reside and work in Toronto. A case study in particular is the intensive examination of a single or a few subjects, where the goal is to present current themes and interesting facts that may be present in a larger study (Gerring, 2007). This

type of methodology allows one to understand and explain certain experiences that immigrants may face while settling in Canada.

This study draws on segmented labour market theory. In its simplest form, the theory states that the labour market is divided into two segments: "good" jobs that reward workers for their human capital and "bad" jobs that do not (Averitt, 1968; Doeringer and Piore, 1971). More specifically, the primary segment of the labour market includes workers with recognized qualifications, relatively stable job tenures, higher incomes, and a promotional atmosphere; and the secondary segment is comprised of jobs that are seen as less skilled, repetitive in nature, quickly learned, with poor working conditions, and worker's educational credentials along with their work experience are not recognized (Hiebert, 1991). Movement between these two segments is difficult and the boundaries are reinforced through various rules of labour market engagement, cultural practices, and social capital ties (Lusis and Bauder, 2010). The fact that there are two distinct but interdependent labour segments is important to note because according to a study by DeMaris and Goza (2003), Brazilians, regardless of legal status, gender, education level, and English proficiency, find work quickly once they arrive in North America; however, they generally earn low wages and work long hours, which is associated with the secondary segment. The importance of adopting a theoretical framework such as the segmented labour market theory, allows me to understand that the labour market experiences of Brazilian immigrants are situated in an existing two-tiered structural system.

This is much different than human capital theory, which suggests that individual workers who maintain enhanced skills, work experience and education will have the

opportunity to move freely within the labour market because they have the required experience and skills to do so (Harrison and Sum, 1979). However, it is important to state that this theory fails to include that the economy is impacted by other factors such as cultural practices, social processes and is partially racialized that overall impedes others to move freely within the labour market, which will be discussed below.

The purpose of this particular study is to acquire a holistic understanding of the experiences of Brazilian immigrants in segmented labour markets. The research aims to examine in detail the occupational mobility of Brazilian immigrants who are employed in segmented labour markets, particularly in the construction and the service sectors in Canada; specifically in Toronto, Ontario. Through a literature review and the analysis of personal interviews with Brazilian immigrants employed in the above mentioned sectors, this MRP will shed light on and discuss the experiences; the challenges and the accomplishments of those employed in the corresponding sector.

The next chapter will review the current literature on Brazilian migrants living in Canada. It will also analyze the current research on occupational mobility. The third chapter will discuss the methodology that is used for this study in detail. The fourth chapter presents the results of the 15 participants interviewed. This chapter analyzes the occupational mobility of Brazilian migrants in segmented labour markets and voices interesting concerns raised by the participants. The paper will conclude in chapter five with a recap of the current themes and findings discussed throughout this study and highlighted areas in need of further research.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter examines and engages with bodies of literature that relate to Brazilian immigrant experiences in segmented labour markets in Canada. It will first take a look at what has been written on the topic to draw attention to the gaps and also the current trends in research. Much of the current research surrounding Brazilian immigration is in regards to their living experiences in the United States (Margolis, 1994; Beserra, 2006; Messias, 2008). Since this research project takes upon a Canadian context, the research that has been done on Brazilians in Canada will be examined. In short though, there has been very little research conducted on Brazilian immigrants in Canada to this date.

The literature review addresses the following questions: What research has been done on Brazilian immigrants in Canada? What are some of the experiences of immigrants in segmented labour markets, more specifically in the construction and the service sectors? Lastly, this MRP will explore the current research on the occupational mobility of immigrants in the labour market.

2.1 Current Research on Brazilian Immigrants in Canada

An interesting study conducted by Franklin Goza and Leticia Marteleto (1998) examined the remittance activity among Brazilian immigrants in Toronto, Canada. By looking at the behaviour of individuals (individual-level characteristics) and the financial capacity to remit, the authors gained an understanding of the flow of remittances from North America to Brazil. Goza and Marteleto (1998) interviewed 195 Brazilian-born residents and the results of their study are noteworthy: legal status, monthly earnings and

whether or not they had children in Brazil played a large factor of whether or not one would send a remittance. In other words, those who were legally in Canada, earned a relatively higher wage and had children back in Brazil were more likely to remit funds back to their country of origin and that these funds would be used for consumption purposes like basic needs rather than investment purposes (Goza & Marteleto, 1998). Basically, those Brazilian immigrants in Toronto who are established support their families and relatives back in their country of origin. They also help act as social networks that facilitate the movement and integration of additional newcomers to Canada due to the less favourable economic situation in Brazil (Goza and Marteleto, 1998).

A Canadian study examined the push-pull factors as to why Brazilian immigrants choose Canada as a destination country to immigrate to, which is a theme that is present within this study's research. Rosana Barbosa (2009) conducted a qualitative study and investigated the reasons why Brazilian immigrants left Brazil, but also why they chose Canada, and if Canada was their first choice for immigration/residence. Barbosa suggests that even though most scholars would agree that Brazil's economic crisis of the 1980s was a major factor in pushing people to emigrate, the sharp increase in violent crime in large urban centers was also a determining factor in influencing individuals to immigrate. Two studies were conducted and out of the first one, 39 out of 98 respondents stated that they had left Brazil because of the social insecurity. In the second study, 52 out of 119 respondents stated that they had left Brazil for a more stable and safe environment (Barbosa, 2009).

The Canadian government was a major pull factor, with its campaign in Brazil to promote Canada as a country to immigrate to. This campaign included ads in newspapers

and magazines, as well as public meetings and consultations organized by the Canadian Embassy and Consulates throughout Brazil (Barbosa, 2009). Barbosa (2009) discovers that 77 out of 119 Brazilians identified Canada as their first choice for immigration because of Canada's high standard of living, the safety of its cities, and its economic stability.

An all-inclusive study that was prepared and conducted by the Brazil-Angola Community Information Centre in Toronto, was a considerably large and intensive study, encompassing 622 respondents (Megalhaes et al., 2009). The study examined five main areas: sociodemographic data, immigration and adaptation aspects, family and social aspects, labour aspects, and social representations. Megalhaes, Gastaldo, Martinelli, Hentges, and Dowbar's (2009) study was conducted to create recommendations for community programs and the development of public policies and legislation. The final report of this MRP touches upon many themes that are present within this study's research: immigration experience, education, and labour experience/aspects, providing a good statistical backbone to this study. Some important findings of this study that are relevant to this MRP are the following: most of the respondents have a high level of education (70% completed university); nearly 70% of the respondents work full-time; and over 55% of respondents stated that their current job in Canada does not correspond to their professional and educational experience in Brazil (Megalhaes et al., 2009). However, the study does not examine occupational mobility, which is the centre piece to this MRP.

Franklin Goza (1994, 1999, 2004) and Alfred DeMaris' (2003) studies were mostly comparative analyses of Brazilian immigration and adaptation experiences in the

United States and Canada. The main objective of these studies was the analyses of the immigration and adaptation experience, social networking, and unemployment transitions among Brazilian immigrants in the U.S. and Canada. These studies are important to note and consider because they provide basic information on Brazilians in the labour market. However, these studies were designed to provide an overview of the Brazilian immigration experience in multiple facets of life such as employment, culture and social adaptation. These studies do not focus on one area of study and they generalize between important differences among Brazilian immigrants who are employed within the segmented labour market and those who are not. Nonetheless, some important findings to note are: the occupations most often filled by Brazilian immigrant men in Canada were janitorial/service cleaners (32%) and construction labourers (11 percent) out of 205 participants; and in addition, social capital ties were a significant factor in how fast a Brazilian immigrant in Canada found employment.

2.2 Segmented Labour Markets

Michael J. Piore (1979) carefully tackles the particular characteristics of the migrant labour market which is important to mention when discussing segmented labour markets. Piore states that migrants (immigrants) are not in competition with the primary segment of the labour force where the majority of native born residents are employed but rather migrants swell the ranks of the secondary segment of the labour market- the jobs that non-migrants do not want. Piore makes reference that in France, Germany, and the United States foreign workers or migrants overwhelmingly and systematically are concentrated in manual-labour categories in occupations like construction and manufacturing and that there are national restrictions in place to reserve 'good' jobs for

the native population. Basically, in a theoretical approach using segmented labour market theory, migration is a response to general labour shortages, it satisfies the need to fill the bottom positions in the social hierarchy and meets the requirements of the secondary sector (Piore, 1979).

The segmented labour market is not only between citizen and migrant distinctions but it is also gendered and racialized. A study by Majella Kilkey, Diane Perrons, and Ania Plomien (2013) found that in particular industries in the United States, such as household cleaning are dominated by women overwhelmingly or the gardening/landscaping industry is dominated by Latin workers. Jamie Peck (1996) also talks about this issue and states that labour segmentation does not result only from organization of the labour process and related demand-side factors it is also conditioned by social actions like stigmatizing migrants which reinforces economic and political power of the native population or those who are already employed in good positions. In other words, the existence of marginalized groups such as migrants provides a regulatory safety valve for the labour market (Peck, 1996).

2.3 Occupational Mobility

Occupational mobility can be broken down into two key phases: the initial entry into a country's labour market; and the movement between jobs within that country's labour market (Campbell et al., 1991). In terms of past and current research that examines immigrant occupational mobility there have been a couple of important studies to note for example: Thomas Bauer and Klaus Zimmermann (1999) conducted a study that examined the occupational mobility of ethnic German migrants who entered Germany since 1985. An important finding that the research states is that those with higher

schooling such as university degrees, experience the sharpest deterioration in their labour market position and have a higher probability to suffer from downward occupational mobility. Within this study, Bauer and Zimmermann (1999) take upon a human capital theory approach and argue that immigrants' human capital that is obtained in their country of origin may not be fully transferable to the requirements of the host country's labour market and therefore they will experience a decline in occupational mobility. This article, however, fails to note the importance of segmented labour markets and its critical relationship to immigrants.

A study that closely resonates with this MRP but was done on a much larger scale examined Greek, Yugoslav and Vietnamese immigrants in labour markets in Melbourne, Australia (Campbell et al., 1991). The framework of this study adopted the segmented labour market theory as its backbone to the research. Occupational mobility was examined through questions about employment before coming to the receiving country, the first job in manufacturing in Australia and the current job in manufacturing. Through the above approach, the study was able to demonstrate that there were social processes that encourage the continuation of immigrants in lower skilled jobs within a segmented labour market. Some of the social processes that led to the continuation of immigrants in lower skilled jobs are: non-recognition of credentials, a lack of opportunity for skill formation, and lack of proficiency in English (Campbell et al., 1991). These social processes will also be investigated within this MRP. The above referenced literature on occupational mobility are relevant to this MRP because level of education, work experience, job classification, and social processes that were major themes in their research are also discussed in much detail within the following chapters.

In addition to social processes mentioned above, social capital also plays a role in the labour market experience of immigrants (Anisef et al. 2009; Reitz, 2007a). There is evidence that those immigrants who lack contacts, friends, or family members within the host country are less likely to receive assistance in finding employment, and those who do not receive assistance have greater difficulty in acquiring a job (Ooka and Wellman, 2006). However, the question remains: what type or kind of job do these immigrants obtain? Research conducted by Tom Lusi and Harald Bauder (2010), found that social capital can in fact connect migrants to occupations in the secondary labour market. Therefore, social capital can encourage the continuation of immigrants in lower skilled jobs.

The labour market experience of immigrants in Canada is definitely a complex picture to summarize. Nonetheless, there has been important research conducted that suggests that immigrants in Canada's labour market are experiencing a lot of difficulty in a wide variety of areas. Despite a shift in policy to select immigrants on the basis of greater human capital, the deterioration in immigrant economic welfare continues to occur (Picot, 2004). According to Jeffrey G. Reitz (2001), immigrants in Canada suffer from the underutilization of their foreign work experience and education credentials. Basically, this is a form of employment discrimination based on the non-recognition of foreign education credentials and work experience by Canadian employers and licensing bodies which is related to the decline of immigrant access to highly skilled professions (Reitz, 2001, 2007b). Furthermore, there is evidence of racial discrimination and xenophobia towards immigrants within the workplace (Shantz, 2011).

To present some context of Brazilian immigrants in Canada in relation to other immigrants from source countries it is important to note that other source countries from Africa and the Caribbean compare worse and earn significantly less than countries from South America, including Brazil (Reitz, 2007). Furthermore, visible minorities such as blacks experience higher forms of discrimination and segmentation in the labour market (Reitz, 2001). However, as Brazilian immigrants may come across at first glance as being privileged when comparing to other immigrants of source countries, amongst the Portuguese speaking community, Brazilians are racialized. Evidence within Megalhaes, Gastaldo, Martinelli, Hentges, and Dowbar's (2009) study suggests that Brazilians are taken advantage of and discriminated against by Portuguese residents (who are considered to be more established in Canada) because they are seen as opportunistic.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Brief Outline of Study

As mentioned above, this research is exploratory in nature and follows a qualitative approach which includes semi-structured interviews with open-ended and closed questions. The goal of the research which presents a case study is to bring voice to Brazilian immigrants who are working in sectors of the secondary labour market, like client services and construction.

3.2 Data Collection

Initial participants were recruited by a flyer posted in several store fronts and a community centre in the Portuguese-Brazilian area of Toronto known as Dundas West Village. After the study recruited a few participants via flyer, a snowball sampling technique was used to recruit the remaining participants. The participants that were interviewed who contacted the author based on the posted flyers were asked to refer other Brazilians who are working in similar fields and who are also immigrants. This study interviewed a total of 15 participants, fourteen men and one woman of Brazilian origin.

It is important to address the consequences of having almost all male participants for this case study. As a beginner researcher numerous problems were encountered along the path of recruiting participants. This research project intended on having an equal male to female ratio of participants. The purpose was to examine, compare and contrast the gendered differences in occupational mobility of Brazilian immigrants in segmented labour markets. However, due to time constraints it proved difficult to attract female participants for the study. Without the voice of female participants, the value of my research is limited in respect to exploring gender differences.

The data were collected in Toronto between May and July 2012. The sample consists of Canadian residents (permanent residents and/or citizens- although I did not specifically limit my sample to those with status, everyone in the sample disclosed the fact that they were either permanent residents or citizens) who are within the ages of 24 to 60, have recently (within the last 10 years) immigrated to Canada, and are employed in a segmented labour market (construction or service sector). Due to the non-probabilistic nature of the sampling framework (flyers and snowball technique), it would be inappropriate to generalize to other Brazilian immigrants outside the sampling structure who possess wide variety of credentials and immigration experiences (Goza, 2004). Nonetheless, the study can be suggestive of current trends and patterns amongst Brazilian immigrants in segmented labour markets.

The contribution of this MRP emerges from data collected through face-to-face, in-depth interviews. Each interview lasted between 60 to 90 minutes; this time frame included reviewing and signing the consent form with the participants, as well as the interview component. The interviews consisted of broadly framed open-ended and closed questions. This format ensured that certain topics were covered with each informant, but also was flexible enough to allow the pursuit of new lines of questioning as relevant issues emerged or certain topics required further exploration (Goza, 2004). Comments provided during some of these interviews will be inserted below to emphasize specific points. Since this study involves Brazilian-born residents with Portuguese being their mother-tongue language, problems with the language barrier could surface. Fortunately, most of the informants were fluent in English, thus there was no difficulty in revising the consent or comprehending the questions used during the interview. Only in a couple of

cases, the informant's English proficiency required me to rephrase some questions in simpler language.

3.3 Case Study Research

Case study research examines many features of a small number of cases which can be individuals, groups, organizations, movements, or events (Neuman, 2011). The chief purpose of a case study is to focus on the specificities of a case, providing rich, detailed data, which is why the case study approach was incorporated within this study (Babbie & Benaquisto, 2002). It allows the researcher to provide a holistic elaboration which permits the incorporation of multiple perspectives and viewpoints. Furthermore, it provides a "heuristic impact" which is for the creation of new theories, developing or extending concepts, and exploring the boundaries among related concepts (Neuman, 2011). Following a case study approach allowed me to explore in detail of the issues Brazilian immigrants face in segmented labour markets and, in addition, give voice to multiple immigrant viewpoints on the topic at hand.

3.4 Summary of Methodology

The aim of the study is to explore the experiences that Brazilian immigrants have in Canada's segmented labour markets and to closely examine their occupational mobility within their workplace. Interviewing a small sample of Brazilian immigrants living in Toronto was a very effective method to learn about their experiences in segmented labour markets. Knowledge gained and learned from this exploratory analysis of findings revealed the problems associated to Brazilian immigrants in Canada's labour market especially within the area of occupational mobility.

The next chapter provides an interpretive analysis of the primary research. It will analyze information provided by the participants, all of whom are employed within the construction and service sectors.

CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.1 Education

The participants came to Canada with a wide variety of skills and diverse range of education, English-language proficiency levels and unique employment experiences. To get an in-depth understanding of the participants' background before the study moves on to discuss occupational mobility, I first concentrate on education credentials and employment experience.

Table 1 indicates the level of education credentials that the participants stated they had obtained in their country of origin. Astonishingly, most participants had some level of post-secondary education. All participants had completed high school and more than half had a University degree or a College diploma. A substantial number had also attempted post secondary education or completed several years before immigrating to Canada. One can note that this group of Brazilian immigrants was a relatively educated group of individuals.

Table 1 Highest education obtained in Brazil

Qualification	Participants (Number)
Postgraduate	0
Bachelor degree	6
College diploma	2
Incomplete Post Secondary	5
Trade Certificate	0
High school	2

4.2 Employment Experience

The employment experience of participants prior to arriving in Canada (table 2) are interesting to note. One third of the respondents were unemployed, whether as a student in University or one who could not find work. The remainder of the participants ranged over a number of occupations in various occupational groups (classification according to HRSDC). Of those who were employed, 60 percent were employed in a relatively stable professional occupation that utilized their degree such as a business administrator or lawyer. The rest were in employed in occupations that required no education and were repetitive in nature like a construction labourer or customer services representative. Interestingly, as table 2 shows, a considerable portion of the participants were employed in occupational groups A, B, and C and according to HRSDC required at least highschool or occupation-specific training. When these participants immigrated to Canada, they quickly found themselves employed within the construction or client services sector as this was part of the sampling criteria used in this study.

Table 2 Occupation prior to arrival in Canada

Occupational Group	Participant	
	(Percentage)	(Number)
A (Professional/ Managerial Positions)	26	4
B (Technical, Paraprofessional, and Skilled occupations)	6	1
C (Intermediate occupations)	6	1
D (Labouring occupations)	26	4
Student	20	3
Not employed	13	2

(Note: occupations are classified according to the 2011 National Occupational Classification by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada: Group A: Occupations usually require a University education.

Group B: Occupations usually require college or vocational education or apprenticeship training. Group C: Occupations usually require secondary school and/or occupation-specific training. Group D: No formal education requirements or on-the-job training.

On entering Canada's labour market, not one participant was employed as a manager, professional, or paraprofessional position or in any field related to their education credentials. As table 3 points out, 9 out of 15 people (60%) were employed as general labourers or cleaners which require absolutely no education or on-the-job skill training. Positively, those who were students or unemployed in Brazil were able to find some form of employment. The importance of these findings suggests that there is a large difference in occupational distribution of Brazilian immigrants before and after they arrive in Canada. Furthermore, it demonstrates that those with university education settle for lower skilled jobs. The findings go hand-in-hand with a recent study by Galarneau and Morissette (2004) that found that among immigrants with a university education 25 percent of men and 38 percent of women were working in jobs that, at most, required high school education. In this small case study, all of the Brazilian participants who have a degree or diploma ended up in low-skilled jobs in the construction or the service sector. The reason is because in the segmented labour market, production processes and work procedures involve simple, repetitive tasks and responsibilities that untrained people or those desperate to find work because their education credentials are not recognized or valued can learn quickly and easily (Harrison and Sum, 1979). Furthermore, institutionalized cultural practices of credential non-recognition and expected cultural norms of professionalism exclude immigrants from the primary segment (Girard and Bauder, 2007), in addition to social capital ties that attract and often place newcomers in the secondary segmented labour market (Lusis and Bauder, 2010).

Table 3 Occupations within three months of landing in Canada

Occupational Distribution					
Construction Sector			Client Services Sector		
Job Title	Number (%)		Job Title	Number (%)	
General Labourer	5	(33)	General Cleaner	4	(26)
Boardman	1	(0.5)	Hotel Bellman	1	(0.5)
Painter	1	(0.5)	Server	2	(13)
			Barrister	1	(0.5)
Total Number	7	(46)		8	(53)

4.3 Occupational Mobility

Interestingly, there was occupational mobility within the sample. The closed-ended questions during the interview targeted the participants' occupation and asked about the first job in the construction or service sector, the main or current job presently held and the current activities/tasks of the respondents. I analyzed occupational mobility through the lens of vertical mobility, which refers to an employee moving “up the ladder” from a general labourer position (Group D of NOC) to a professional/ managerial (Group A of NOC) position or skilled/paraprofessional position (Group B of NOC).

Table 4 Occupational Mobility in Segmented Labour Markets

Occupational group	Sector				Total	
	Construction		Client Service		1 st	Curr
	1 st	Current	1 st	Current		
A	0	0	0	0	0	0
B	0	0	0	2	0	2
C	2	4	0	1	2	5
D	5	1	8	7	13	8
Note: Two participants in occupational group D in the construction sector moved laterally to client services in the same occupational group.						

As shown in table 4, there was some modest occupational mobility. When comparing between first and current jobs in each sector the data suggests that there has

been a slight improvement in the occupational allocation of the Brazilian newcomers. Within the constructions sector, some migrants who were at first general labourers decided to remain in the sector to move up and become skilled professionals such as finish carpenters and painters. Interestingly enough, a couple migrants were able to secure paraprofessional occupations such as an Autocad designer and Orthopaedic technologist (both of these professions were at first part-time work on the side, however, the participants informed me that they have secured full-time work in a couple months). Furthermore, there are also differences between the construction and client services sector. According to the data, there seems to be a greater chance of occupational mobility in the client services sector as opposed to the constructions sector because some participants were able to secure jobs classified in group D. Overwhelmingly though, most of the migrants remained in positions that do not require any education or formal training which are classified in group D of the NOC and in accordance did not experience any sort of occupational mobility. Some of the participants even considered applying to higher positions or asking for a promotion; out of the ten who did, five were rejected, three received temporary supervisory roles on the weekends, and two received actual promotions. When the respondents were asked why they were in their current occupation or why they had not received a promotion, there were a few key themes that the research discovered through qualitative narratives.

CHAPTER FIVE: SOCIAL PROCESSES

Through analyzing qualitative narratives of the fifteen participants, four important themes worth mentioning are present within this research that the following chapter will highlight. When presented with open-ended questions like “what are your thoughts on the current occupation you currently hold and/or how do you feel about being employed within the construction or service sector and feel free to elaborate?” most participants mentioned that they are within these sectors to make ends meet or for survival means. In addition, they viewed their employment within these industries as temporary in nature. When followed up with the question as to why they may think that they are situated within such sectors, the number one barrier that was mentioned among those with education credentials was the non-recognition of their education credentials in Canada and the difficulty it caused them in finding a good job. Lastly, when examining the participants' entry into the Canadian labour market, the theme of social capital ties was present in all interviews. The following chapter will discuss in detail each theme.

5.1 Survival

Many respondents claimed that they acquired work in construction or the service sector for a means of survival. As one participant stated, “I was overwhelmed and confused... I needed to find a job very soon in order to make money and this was the job I landed.” Another participant said, the “construction industry gives me a good amount of money, that’s why I’m in it... also it’s hard for me to get something else.” Many employers notice the need to produce an income as one of the most important work motivators for immigrants and therefore they know that those who are desperate to gain

an income will fill the ranks of undesirable work (Bauder, 2003). As one participant illustrated:

Canada has created a lot of barriers to validate personal certification, life experience, work experience... I have to support myself so I don't have the time nor money to go back to school to upgrade to Canadian education, so in the end, I end up working in a fancy coffee store.

In other words, the occupations that these migrants are employed in (i.e. general labourers) can be viewed as desperate strategies that are shaped by very real constraints (lack of English proficiency, skills or education, the non-recognition of credentials and foreign work experience) (Valenzuela, 2003; Ochsner et al., 2008). One participant's narrative truly gives off the sense of desperation by stating, "nothing else that you can do besides cleaning and construction... you don't feel like you're worth more or important but overall though you're making money."

5.2 Non-recognition of education credentials

The lack of recognition of immigrants' education credentials is a serious problem confronting highly educated immigrant men and women (Man, 2004). The lack of a standard assessment process and the lack of knowledge of comparative education systems limit the participation of immigrants in skilled professions (Skills for Change, 1995).

Furthermore, as Guida Man (2004) argues that,

professional associations and licensing bodies function as 'labour market shelters' to protect and reduce competition for those already licensed by placing entry restrictions into higher-status and better paying occupations and professions (p.142);

this message strongly resonated through the Brazilian migrants who participated in this study. Since more than half of the participants had a University degree or diploma and

five had some form of post-secondary education, the recognition of their education credentials is very important. Most of the participants stated that they were angry with how the Canadian government manages the education credentials of immigrants and that the non-recognition of credentials along with the lack of or ill-equipped proper assessment units leads them to choose jobs in unskilled occupations in the second tier of segmented labour markets. For example a participant expresses his frustration by stating:

I'm a lawyer in Brazil, I spent five years of my life obtaining a degree that I always wanted. So, I decided to come to Canada, to start a life here because my country is violent... I'm now working in Second Cup because I was told that I needed to go back to school to 'upgrade' my skills. The system is complicated and in all honesty I feel stuck, Canada or even Ontario- governments should do more.

One participant stated that they were completely “shocked” to find out that their university credits that they paid good money for in a well-known university in Brazil were not recognized in Canada and hence cannot be transferred to a Canadian university. Another participant believed that there is a connection between the fear of employers hiring immigrants and the non-recognition of education credentials by stating that:

I can't find work in my old industry where I do have an education because there is the lack of recognition of education credentials due to fear from the employer's perspective of hiring an immigrant... they want to keep immigrants out of great jobs and only hire Canadians or those with Canadian education and experience.

Out of the participants surveyed a strong universal message, which was brought to the interviewer's attention, was that of frustration with the Canadian labour market and immigration system and to end the barriers against the recognition of foreign credentials.

5.3 *'Temporary' employment*

Another theme that is interesting to note in the research is the fact that many participants viewed their occupation in the service or construction labour market as temporary. Out of the 15 immigrants who participated in this study, 13 (86 percent) of them disclosed that they viewed their current occupation as temporary in nature; however they ended up remaining in the industry because they cannot find anything else. One participant stated:

I am satisfied with construction but it's not what I want to do for my whole life. I want to go back to school to improve my English and to find a better job but it's hard to support my lifestyle right now and construction offers me good money.

Surprisingly, even though most Brazilian migrants in this case study viewed their occupation as temporary and more for survivability than actual desire, slightly more than half were quite satisfied with their position. A few participants were optimistic about even being employed and they believed that hard work would eventually pay off. As one participant said: "even though my degree and my talent are not used, I feel satisfied – the work is challenging but you have to work hard you know? Things can be worse in Brazil." Another participant said, "I am content with being employed in construction because I was looking for a job and for the first time in my life I am making money without my family support." Interestingly enough, the findings suggest that those who work in segmented labour markets are not necessarily unhappy with their occupation even though it does not match their education credentials, foreign work experience, and/or that they view the work as temporary.

5.4 Social Capital

Social capital can be defined formally as the resources that are made available to an individual through varied relationships that a person has with others (Field, 2003). A migrant's social capital is a significant resource that those immigrating can use to gather knowledge about life abroad and to facilitate integration into the labour market in the destination country. However, social capital can often connect migrants to occupations in segmented labour markets (Lusis and Bauder, 2010). While the literature suggests that social capital creates opportunity (Ooka and Wellman, 2006; Anisef et al., 2009), I discovered that social networks were the main linkage between Brazilian migrants and the occupation that they are currently employed in which is situated in the secondary labour market and quite often dead-end jobs. Out of the 15 Brazilian migrants who participated in this study, 12 obtained their job through a friend or contact already employed in the industry. For example one participant said that he found employment through his "contacts" here in Canada and when asked who his contacts were he stated that they were "trusted close friends" who immigrated here a few years before he did. Another participant stated, "it only took me three whole days to find a job here in Canada because of people I know... I don't consider them friends but I forget the word they use in English." Only 3 of the participants found employment on their own using the internet and flyers. This finding coincides with a recent study conducted by Franklin Goza in 2004 which surveyed Brazilian immigrants in Toronto to examine social networks and found that only 23 percent found employment by themselves, while the rest were through friends and family members. One participant even expressed the fact that social networks are an integral part of actually finding a job. He went on to say, "it's very hard to get a

job on your own if you don't have people to help you... you need to have good contacts and references." As the research suggests, most of the Brazilian migrants who are employed in either the construction or service sector find employment through a friend or acquaintance.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

This study examined the occupational mobility of Brazilian immigrants in a segmented labour market in Toronto. The study incorporated a case study approach using data collected from 15 Brazilian migrants between the ages of 24 to 60, who have immigrated to Canada within the last 10 years and who are employed within the construction or service sector. The MRP analyzed the occupational mobility of these 15 participants within their selected industries. This research has demonstrated that Brazilians in segmented labour markets in Toronto, only experience modest occupational mobility. The research also highlighted several themes as to why Brazilian migrants are employed in low-skilled occupations. This research is important in that it establishes that Brazilian migrants within segmented labour markets are not doing well in terms of acquiring better employment that matches their foreign work experience or education credentials or even projected career path.

The results revealed that there were only a few cases of occupational mobility of Brazilian immigrants; however for the majority of them their mobility remained overwhelmingly stagnant. Furthermore, this sample group was a relatively educated group with more than half possessing post-secondary education acquired in Brazil. The fact that they had a post-secondary education had no bearing on upward occupational mobility or position within a segmented labour market. I find it interesting that the participants are fixated within the secondary segment of the labour market (as labour market segmentation theory suggests) but that education apparently does not facilitate upward mobility. According to the results found, foreign educational credentials are

practically irrelevant to moving out of the secondary labour market in the case of this sample used even though participant's viewed their current occupation as temporary.

Most of the Brazilian migrants viewed their entry into the segmented labour market as temporary- they never thought that they would be working in construction or the service sector for years to come. In addition to being viewed as temporary in nature, jobs within the secondary segment of the labour market were viewed by many participants as a survival strategy. Participants expressed their frustration with finding employment and not having their education credentials recognized and thus ended up taking jobs that they did not want but were in essence forced to in order to survive in Canada.

As previously discussed, social capital plays a key role in the attainment of employment by immigrants. As this study demonstrated, participants got their job mainly by contacts or friends who were already employed within such industries, thus leading to an easy segue into the market and therefore following their peers into working in low-skilled occupations. However, as this research may suggest social capital ties may not be beneficial to migrants in the long run as they facilitate the continuation of migrants within the secondary labour market.

Interesting though, there was a sense of satisfaction amongst slightly more than half of the participants in terms with how they viewed their occupation. One would assume that most do not like to work as a general labourer or server while having high expectations for oneself and a good education. However as this research presented, some participants were quite satisfied to work in occupations at the lower end of the spectrum because at the end of the day, it is a job.

It is interesting to consider that throughout the study, 6 participants identified acquiring additional money to offset their lifestyle by participating in pharmaceutical tests through companies such as Apotex. Further research in this area would be vital for immigration studies. It would be interesting to pursue and gain knowledge of participation rates and overall health of immigrants.

Despite its small sample, this project accomplished its goal to shed some light on Brazilian immigrants in Canada's segmented labour markets. Further and more in-depth research is required to gain a better understanding of Brazilian immigrants in Canada's construction and service sectors. Nevertheless, this MRP makes a small contribution to the minimal amount of literature on one of Canada's fastest growing immigrant source countries - that being Brazil.

**Ryerson University
Consent Agreement**

**A Case Study: Occupational Mobility of Brazilian
Immigrants in Segmented Labour Markets**

You are being asked to participate in a research study. Before you give your consent to be a volunteer, it is important that you read the following information and ask as many questions as necessary to be sure you understand what you will be asked to do.

Investigators:

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Supervisor:

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Purpose of the Study:

The study is designed to assess the experiences of Brazilian immigrants in the Canadian labour market. The study will consist of 15 participants who have immigrated to Canada from Brazil, are between the ages of 24 to 60, and who are currently employed.

Description of the Study:

You are being asked to participate in a 30 to 60 minute interview at a designated location of your choice. The type of questions related to this study will be personal in nature. The questions will reflect on your experience in the Canadian labour market, education credentials, and work experience. Some examples of the questions you will be asked are stated below:

Describe your first impression as you entered the Canadian labour market?
Are you comfortable with the position you currently hold?

Risks or Discomforts:

Due to the personal nature of the questions asked, you may reflect on unpleasant memories while responding to a question during the interview. There is the potential that you may experience a level of discomfort. If you feel uncomfortable or wish to stop the interview for any reason, you may discontinue participation at anytime, either temporarily or permanently.

Benefits of the Study:

This study will help highlight some of the issues that Brazilian immigrants face in the downtown Toronto labour market. In participating in this study you will help bring attention to some concerns of Brazilian immigrants who are settling in Toronto, to the greater community. The research will also serve as a stepping-stone for a larger more in-depth study on Brazilian immigrants in the Canadian labour market.

Confidentiality:

The study will maintain the utmost confidentiality and no one will be identified in any research report, publication or presentation. Personal information will remain protected and you will not be identified in the recorded information. Information that is recorded will remain locked in a secured location of which only I have access to. When the research is published, your recorded information will be destroyed and there will be no trace of any personal information that can identify you.

Incentives to Participate:

The participant will not be paid to participate in this study.

Costs and/or Compensation for Participation:

There are no costs or compensation associated with your participation as a participant in this study.

Voluntary Nature of Participation: Participation in this study is voluntary. Your choice of whether or not to participate will not influence your future relations with Ryerson University. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent and to stop your participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are allowed. At any particular point in the study, you may refuse to answer any particular question or stop participation altogether.

Questions about the Study:

If you have any questions about the research now, please ask. If you have questions later about the research, you may contact.

Study Coordinator: Giovanni Vendramin
E-mail: Giovanni.vendramin@Ryerson.ca

If you have questions regarding your rights as a human subject and participant in this study, you may contact the Ryerson University Research Ethics Board for information.

Research Ethics Board
c/o Office of the Vice President, Research and Innovation
Ryerson University
350 Victoria Street
Toronto, ON M5B 2K3
416-979-5042

Agreement:

Your signature below indicates that you have read the information in this agreement and have had a chance to ask any questions you have about the study. Your signature also indicates that you agree to be in the study and have been told that you can change your mind and withdraw your consent to participate at any time. You have been given a copy of this agreement.

You have been told that by signing this consent agreement you are not giving up any of your legal rights.

Name of Participant (please print)

Signature of Participant

Date

Signature of Investigator

Date

Signature of Participant or Parent/Guardian

Date

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