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Canadian Ethnic Studies, Volume 44, Number 3, 2012, pp. 121-145 (Article)

Published by Canadian Ethnic Studies Association
DOI: [10.1353/ces.2013.0010](https://doi.org/10.1353/ces.2013.0010)



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The Intersecting Dynamics of Social Exclusion: Age, Gender, Race and Immigrant Status in Canada's Labour Market

Abstract

Through the use of a social exclusion framework and analysis of recent data from the Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics (2009), a national longitudinal database, this empirical research investigates the mechanisms through which social groups are made and socio-economic outcomes are determined in Canada today. Our objective is to explore and describe the social characteristics and personal attributes that intersect to direct divergent economic realities. To this end, we initially present a brief review of the social exclusion literature, as well as descriptive data on several aspects of age and immigration. This is followed by logistic regressions for five dimensions of economic exclusion, to examine who is made socially excluded in economic terms in Canada. Subsequently, to progress the analysis from a focus on the individual effects of specific social attributes, we calculate the combined odds of two dimensions of economic exclusion (low individual earnings and insecure employment) for eight prototypes of individuals, to highlight the intersecting effects of social dynamics related to age, gender, visible minority status and immigrant status, and to ultimately explore who gets ahead and who falls behind in the Canadian labour market. We conclude with a discussion of policy and research implications.

Résumé

À partir d'un cadre d'exclusion sociale et de l'analyse de données récentes de l'Enquête sur la dynamique du travail et du revenu de 2009, une base de données longitudinale et nationale, cette recherche empirique étudie les mécanismes de formation des groupes sociaux et d'identification des enjeux socio-économiques d'aujourd'hui au Canada. Notre objectif est d'explorer et de décrire les caractéristiques sociales et les attributs personnels qui s'entrecoupent pour adresser des réalités pécuniaires divergentes. À cette fin, nous présentons d'abord une brève revue de la documentation sur l'ostracisme social, ainsi que des données descriptives sur plusieurs aspects de l'âge et de l'immigration. Puis, nous en venons aux régressions logistiques pour cinq dimensions de l'exclusion économique, afin d'examiner qui est socialement l'objet d'un rejet en termes financiers au Canada. Ensuite, pour faire avancer l'analyse à partir d'une focalisation sur les effets individuels d'attributs sociaux spécifiques, nous calculons les probabilités de deux composantes de cette exclusion économique (de bas revenus individuels et un travail précaire) pour huit prototypes d'individus, afin de mettre en lumière les effets croisés de dynamiques sociales reliées à l'âge, au genre, au statut de minorité visible et à celui d'immigré, et pour finalement explorer qui passe devant et qui reste en arrière dans le marché du travail. Nous concluons avec un examen des implications à étudier dans les domaines des politiques et de la recherche.



INTRODUCTION

There is widespread recognition of deepening economic and social divides in Canadian society, especially since the mid-1990s when tax cuts severely curbed the redistributive capacity of Canada's social welfare system (e.g., Fortin et al. 2012; Mackenzie and Shillington 2009; OECD 2008; Yalnizyan 2010). Taken-for-granted "escape strategies" are shown to be ineffective for certain groups: for example, high levels of education and credentials may have little or no financial return in the labour market for some; and for many, more paid work does not pay more in terms of their overall share of earnings, in purchasing power, or even in disposable income (Frenette and Morissette 2003; Yalnizyan 2009). Consequently, not only is Canadian society increasingly polarized in a fixed point in time, but *fortunes*—the chances of upward mobility—are more and more uneven.

This paper reports on our initial cross-sectional findings from a quantitative and longitudinal analysis of the processes and outcomes of economic exclusion in Canada. Our empirical research investigates the mechanisms through which social groups are *made* and socio-economic realities are organized. Through statistical analysis of the Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics (SLID), our objective is to explore and describe the dynamics of social characteristics and personal attributes that intersect to direct divergent economic outcomes. Ultimately, we aim toward a practical policy conception of social inclusion—strategies to reconcile economic, spatial, socio-political and subjective divides (Good Gingrich 2006).

Theoretically, we situate our study within a social exclusion framework. We begin with a brief discussion of the history of the concept in social policy discourse and practice, and a definition and description of our conceptual model. This is followed by a review of current literature on labour market outcomes in Canada, with specific consideration of the experiences of immigrants, visible minority groups, women, and younger and older workers. The bulk of the paper reports on our secondary data analysis. We initially present descriptive findings on aspects of age and immigration in 2009. Next, to examine *who* is made socially excluded in economic terms in and by Canada's labour market, we run logistic regressions for five indicators of economic exclusion. Subsequently, to progress this analysis from a focus on the individual effects of specific social characteristics, we use a logistic regression equation to calculate the combined odds of two dimensions of economic exclusion for several prototypes of individuals. Finally, we highlight the intersecting effects of social dynamics related to age, gender, visible minority status and immigrant status, and the implications of our labour market findings in combination with current trends in Canada's social welfare system. We argue that when taken together, coincident labour market outcomes and social policy trends reveal processes of social exclusion that direct who gets ahead and who falls behind in Canadian society today.

CONCEPTUALIZING THE DYNAMICS OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION

Amidst growing international and intra-national economic disparity and social polarization, along with widespread employment insecurity and labour migration, there is an “emerging consensus regarding the limitations of poverty research that focuses solely on income” (Pisati et al. 2010, 405). Particularly in Europe, the language of *social exclusion* has permeated policy and academic poverty debates for well over a decade (Shucksmith et al. 2006; Eurostat 2007; Social Exclusion Unit 2006). In Canada, the term has gained popularity more recently, finding its way into several provincial policy strategies (e.g., Manitoba, Quebec, and New Brunswick) and guiding a current research agenda for Human Resources and Skills Development Canada.

However, despite the term’s widespread appeal, key aspects of the concept’s innovative potential often disappear in its application. For example, social exclusion research and policy literatures reveal a recurring tendency to lapse into an old model of identifying and measuring easily quantifiable characteristics that are attached to individuals, as social exclusion is most often operationalized as a tally of people—especially women and visible minorities—who lack secure attachments to the labour market (Eurostat 2000; Esping-Andersen et al. 2001). More recent research efforts to incorporate subjective and social (rather than material) indicators of deprivation remain focused on individuals at a fixed point in time, and the resulting policy responses are generally geared toward labour market engagement (Marlier and Atkinson 2010; Nolan and Whelan 2010). Its most common version—made popular by Tony Blair’s 1997 Social Exclusion Unit—retains a multi-dimensional focus, but functions as a static, categorical point-of-view (Edwards 2009).

The less common relational perspective, rooted in the original French notion of *les exclus* (Lenoir 1974), emphasizes uneven social engagement, and structural or social processes that lead to the rupture of social bonds for certain individuals or groups, as “some groups experience social boundaries as barriers preventing their full participation in the economic, political and cultural life of the society within which they live” (Madanipour et al. 2000, 17). The dynamic and relational nature that generally distinguishes social exclusion from more traditional concepts is evidenced to be especially elusive in its methodological application (Sen 2000; Byrne 2005). Much of the research that resists a static notion is conceptual or qualitative in nature, ranging from the indiscriminate injection of the term, to more unusual descriptions of the spiraling path of exclusion and testimonies of its experience (Diez 2010). Aiming toward accurate personal accounts, this runs the risk of reducing social exclusion to individual subjective experiences of *feeling* marginalized and deprived of social recognition (Stewart et al. 2008). This focus on recognition and individual subjectivity leaves us with a diminished and partial view of the everyday/

everynight realities (Smith 1990) of all forms of social exclusion that we argue are first and foremost *economic* in consequence.¹ Hence, our quantitative population-based research aims to address some of the limitations of personal accounts utilizing small non-representative research samples, while maintaining a dynamic concept of social exclusion.

Whether applying notions of poverty, deprivation, or social exclusion, research gives evidence of the following crucial features of the socioeconomic disparities in Canada: the divide between the rich and the poor is expanding in predictable—yet only partially understood—patterns; fewer and fewer are getting ahead, and more and more are left behind; the descent to the bottom is often rapid; and for certain individuals and groups among us, the glass ceiling is low and the floor is “sticky”.² On their own, familiar static and categorical concepts (such as poverty lines and income measures) are inadequate to these social realities. Our analysis adopts a conceptual model that integrates processes *and* outcomes of exclusion, and thus provides the framework and analytical tools that aim to be adequately dynamic, relational, practical, and material for such an inquiry.

Our definition of social exclusion refers to *the official procedures and everyday practices that function to (re)produce and justify economic, spatial, socio-political, and subjective divides*. The outcomes of social exclusion are secured through the denial of legitimate means of accumulating various types of capital from subordinate social positions. Social exclusion denies effective exchange of one’s holdings—or capability (Sen 2000)—and thus cuts off avenues for upward mobility. Not only is the playing field steeply uneven; some are not even allowed in the game. The primary and consequential outcome is the making of kinds, or “group-making” (Bourdieu 1989), and social divides that are manifested as four forms of social exclusion (see Good Gingrich 2003a, 2003b, 2006, 2008, 2010). Our theoretical framework insists on the inherently dynamic quality of social exclusion, and the vigorous yet shifting nature of the codes of differentiation and schemes of valuation. We consider age, immigrant status, visible minority status, and gender, not as classifications of and for people that are given in the social world, but as forceful social dynamics that intersect and interact to make and order social categories of people and work to *justify* divides and distance—gaps—between individuals and groups. As a whole, our research aims to trace, with some precision, these social dynamics that function to stoke Canada’s existing divides.

EVIDENCE OF CANADA’S GROWING GAPS

Perhaps reflecting global tensions, public concern for poverty has shifted to focus on difference and disparity—gaps or divides in the social fabric of Canadian society. Often reported with some sensation in the media, study after study gives evidence to

expanding social and economic distance between the haves and the have-nots, the included and the excluded, and the disappearance of the middle class. Economic gaps show up in disparate levels of income (Couturier and Schepper 2010; Block 2010), earnings (Yalnizyan 2007; Frenette and Morissette 2003), wealth (Osberg 2008; Zhang 2003), housing conditions and location (Engeland and Lewis 2004; Kim and Boyd 2009), affordability of basic necessities (Kerstetter 2009), and labour market and labour union participation (Fuller and Vosko 2008; Reitz and Verma 2004). But Canada's gaps are not only about material advantage and disadvantage. Divides are expressed in uneven access to health services and health outcomes (Raphael 2010; Lightman et al. 2008); available social resources and political involvement (Zhao et al. 2010); environmental impact (and thus consumption of natural resources) (Mackenzie et al. 2008); and even subjective sense of belonging and trust (Reitz et al. 2009).

Moreover, the gap between Canada's rich and poor not only persists, but has increased more rapidly than ever in the past three decades (Fortin et al. 2012; Osberg 2008; Yalnizyan 2009). Since the mid-1990s, both inequality in household earnings and numbers of people living in poverty have risen faster in Canada than in any other OECD country (OECD 2008). In 2008, "after a decade of blockbuster economic growth and job creation," there were 2.2 million working age adults living in poverty in Canada (Yalnizyan 2010, 4-5). Since the early 1980s, the share of low-wage jobs (less than \$10/hour) has not decreased, and increases in the average wage of full-time workers have not even kept pace with inflation (Saunders 2005; Yalnizyan 2009). The result is a net decline in standard of living for the majority of Canadians. At the other end of the divide, the wealthiest 1% of Canadians have seen an increase in their share of all wages from 5% to 10% in the same time period, and the "average pay of the top 100 CEOs went from 104 times that of the average full-time worker to 259 times" (Yalnizyan 2009, 2). A few have left many behind.

A body of literature examines which individuals and groups are most likely to get ahead, and who is more vulnerable to downward trajectories in Canada today. Immigrants, specifically, are found to earn less than Canadian-born workers, particularly upon entering the labour market (Picot and Sweetman 2005; Mitchell et al. 2007); are two to three times more likely to experience low income for at least one year (Palameta 2004); suffer negative impacts of a recession first and longer (Picot and Sweetman 2005); and fill the most precarious jobs and experience unusually high unemployment rates (Vosko 2002; Saunders 2005).³

Similarly, research indicates that whether one is a visible minority—that is, discernibly not white—matters in Canada. There is general consensus that the disadvantage that new immigrants face initially and over time is more severe for "non-Europeans" or "visible minorities" than for immigrants from "traditional

source countries” (Banerjee 2009; Frenette and Morissette 2003). Pendakur and Pendakur (1998, 2007) show that Canadian-born men and women who are not white face large and significant earnings gaps in comparison to white workers, with certain ethnic groups (such as Caribbean-origin men and women, and Aboriginal men) faring considerably worse than white workers across the full distribution of work characteristics.

Age as a social dynamic is rarely considered on its own or in combination with gender, race, and immigration status. With respect to the impact of aging on labour force participation and economic outcomes, there has been limited research conducted on the older workforce in Canada. Initial findings suggest that there are concerns about the response of Canadian organizations to the rapidly aging workforce (Armstrong-Stassen and Templer 2005), that the cost-effectiveness of job retraining remains unclear, and that there are difficulties associated with defining and identifying age discrimination in employment (Kuhn 2003). At the other end of the age spectrum, we know, for example, that in the two decades leading up to the turn of the century, the age group with the highest incidence of low pay in Canada was young people (those aged 17–24) at over 60%, compared to roughly 20% of workers aged 25–34 (Morissette and Johnson 2005).

Yet the criteria defining socioeconomic groups and their trajectories do not correspond neatly with preconceived social classifications. For example, certain newcomers in certain time periods do not demonstrate poorer economic outcomes than Canadian averages (Kustec and Xue 2009; Picot and Sweetman 2005; Zhang 2003). Highlighting gendered processes, Fuller and Vosko (2008) found that recent immigrant status “increases men’s odds of employment in [precarious] contract work, but decreases women’s” (48). Other research has shown that probabilities of getting stuck in temporary employment or experiencing low income are not associated with visible minority (or Aboriginal) status (Fang and MacPhail 2008; Palameta 2004). Some note that when considering labour market success and overall “assimilation rates,” ethno-racial identity is not only about colour of skin, but is complicated by factors such as culture, religion, language, and even speech accent (Banerjee 2009; Reitz et al. 2009).

Overall, we argue that criteria of difference are specifically applied in dynamic social relations to classify individuals and make groups. Our work is aimed at a deeper understanding of these complexities through a quantitative methodology.⁴

EMPIRICAL APPROACH AND DATA

This research was guided by the following overarching question:

Who is made socially excluded in economic terms in Canada's labour market?

Specifically, we investigate the impacts of social dynamics such as age, immigrant status, visible minority status, and gender on economic outcomes in the Canadian labour market today.

We utilize recent (2009) cross-sectional data available from Wave 6 of the microdata set of the SLID; consequently, our paper explores the economic positions of specific groups at a particular recent point in time. The SLID, a representative longitudinal survey conducted by Statistics Canada, has been fielded annually since 1993. The SLID is primarily designed to capture the dynamics of income and labour market activities over time for individuals and households across Canada. The dataset contains an extensive array of individual-background variables, which, along with the large sample size, make it a convenient data source for a wide range of empirical studies (Hansen and Kučera 2003).⁵

Keeping in mind that 2009 data were collected during the height of the most recent recessionary period (Hetzl 2009), it seemed likely that we would find relatively high levels of unemployment and work precarity for the population overall; our research sought to determine if the economic burden at this time was born disproportionately by groups identifying as immigrants, visible minorities, women, and individuals at the lower and higher ends of the working age spectrum.

Guided by our theoretical framework, we focused on five different indicators (or dependent variables) of economic exclusion to examine the multifaceted nature of this concept. The indicators are the following:

1. Household After-Tax Income Below the Low Income Measure (LIM)⁶ to measure *low income*;
2. Individual Earnings in Bottom Quintile (20%) Where Earnings were Greater than \$0 to measure *low earnings*;
3. Individual was Unemployed (and Looking for Work) Half of the Year or More to measure *long-term unemployment*;
4. Individual had a Non-Permanent Job (as opposed to a Permanent Job) to measure *work precarity*, and;
5. Individual had a Job Without A Pension Plan (as opposed to a Job With a Pension Plan) to measure *non-wage benefits*.

Thus, three out of five of our indicators focus on *employed individuals*, people who were engaged in waged labour in the Canadian labour market; the remaining indicators examine individuals with *low income* and *long-term unemployment*, who may

or may not be employed.⁷ The maximum Spearman correlation between these chosen indicators of economic exclusion is 0.34, providing an acceptable level of interdependencies. The indicator selection was informed by aspects of *precarious employment* described by Vosko et al. (2003), attending to wages, job permanence, and benefits. For our cross-sectional secondary analysis, we extracted a sample of working-age individuals aged 18-64, and excluded respondents who reported full-time student status.

A PORTRAIT OF ECONOMIC EXCLUSION IN CANADA'S LABOUR MARKET

Descriptives

Our sample size was approximately 38,000 individuals, allowing for robust and representative estimates. Of this sample, roughly 22% (or 4,300 individuals) were immigrants. Of the respondents who reported visible minority status (about 18% of the total sample), 14.3% were also immigrants. Thus, over fifty percent of immigrants reported visible minority status, while only about 5% of Canadian-born did so. This evidenced the major compositional shift of immigrants in Canada since the introduction of the Immigration Act and the points system in 1976. Prior to this, during the 1960s, visible minorities comprised only about 10% of immigrants in Canada (Reitz and Banerjee 2007).

Initially, we performed cross-sectional analysis solely on the immigrant population within our sample. Table 1 provides descriptives of individuals who reported immigrant status in terms of several aspects of age and time—their current age, age at immigration, and time in Canada since immigration. We chose to divide the population into three groups—those entering the workforce, aged 18-29; those presumably near the end of their traditional employable years, aged 50-64; and those in the middle, aged 30-49. This latter group was recognized as being in the peak of their working years, with the majority having likely completed their education and become more established in their career, but presumably not yet experiencing any potential discrimination related to being older. Viewing age as a social force that functions to re-value labourers and labour, we consider workers at the ends of the conventional working age spectrum—18-29 year olds and 50-64 year olds—to be relatively more susceptible to age-related dynamics of social exclusion (Hansen and Kučera 2003).

Table 1 highlights that in 2009 the vast majority of immigrants (approximately 87%) were 30 years of age or older, and almost half fell within the prime working age group (30-49 years). The data show that over 60% of immigrants arrived in Canada when they were under the age of thirty, and that almost 70% of immigrants have been in Canada for 11 or more years. Thus, immigrants in Canada in 2009 tended to

TABLE 1. 2009 Immigrant Population in the SLID

	Total (%)
Current Age	
• 18-29	13.2
• 30-49	49.0
• 50-64	37.8
Age At Immigration	
• 18-29	61.0
• 30-49	33.2
• 50-64	5.8
Time in Canada Since Immigration	
• 5 years or less	16.4
• 6-10 years	14.1
• 11-20 years	26.7
• More than 20 years	42.8

be in their presumed peak working years, had come to Canada when they were relatively young, and had already lived in Canada for a considerable amount of time.

In order to explore how annual earnings change over the life course, we compared average earnings (where earnings were greater than \$0) at various ages between Canadian-born and immigrants, as compared to the total population. (See Figure 1.) Here, the data show that average earnings are lowest when individuals are younger, and rise in a semi-linear fashion until people reach their mid-50s, when earnings begin to decline fairly steeply, likely due to retirement as well as age discrimination (Gunderson 2003). In 2009, average annual earnings for all individuals who were 18-29 years old were approximately \$26,900; average annual earnings rose to about \$48,200 for those aged 30-49; and average annual earnings declined slightly to roughly \$47,900 for individuals aged 50-64. The standard error was largest for the oldest age group, indicating high rates of variation among this age group, as expected.⁸

In comparison to people who are Canadian-born, Figure 1 presents a fairly dire picture for immigrants: average earnings for immigrants in all age categories are consistently below those of the Canadian-born. However, at the end of the working age spectrum the differences diminish. This narrowing of earnings differentials could suggest relatively improved labour market outcomes for immigrants near the end of their employable years, perhaps due to accumulated Canadian work experience, improved language proficiency and/or acculturation.⁹ Yet casting doubt on this somewhat standard explanation, the data, instead, indicate that rather than immigrants catching up, Canadian-born appear to “catch down.” In other words, the earnings of Canadian-born decline at a faster rate than immigrant earnings when individuals reach their late 50s. Notably, a cohort effect, related to the macro eco-

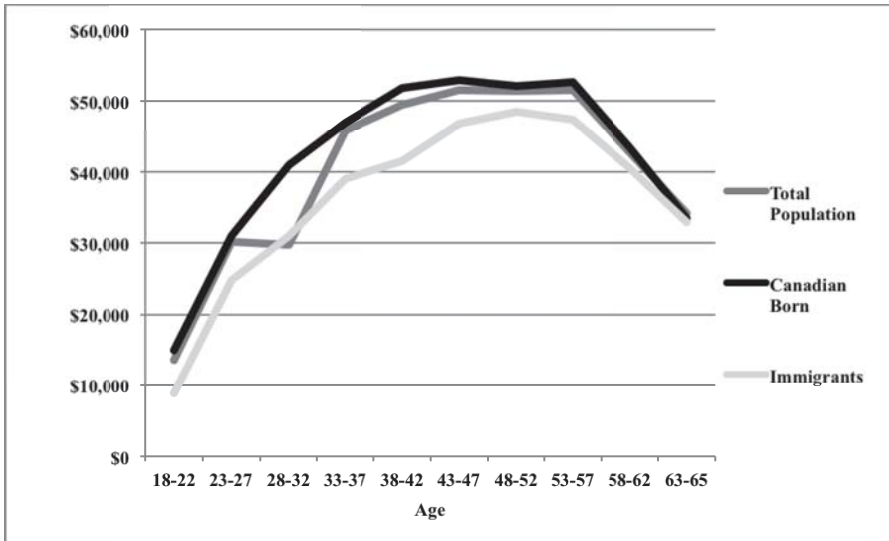


Figure 1. Average Annual Earnings for 2009

conomic trends at time-of-arrival, likely also influences the ongoing financial prospects for immigrants.

RESULTS

Next, progressing from this descriptive analysis, we turned to logistic regressions to examine specific indicators of economic exclusion (detailed in the section on Empirical Approach and Data). As our chosen indicators tend to have binary or dichotomous response outcomes (e.g., Yes/No), logistic regression was chosen to model the odds of being excluded on any of these five variables (Hosmer and Lemeshow 2000). Logistic regression was preferable because it attempts to model the log-odds of an outcome using one or more predictor variables that may be either continuous or categorical (Meynard 2002). In each regression, we controlled for the following individual-level variables: *sex*, *visible minority status*, *time since immigration*, *being in the younger and older age groups* and *years of schooling*. This allowed us to distinguish the individual effects of each of these social characteristics on the dependent variables. The reference categories were: male (or being in a male major income earner household), a non-visible minority, Canadian-born and aged 30-49, as each of these was conceptualized as the more/most privileged or valued position, or most likely to meet the norms required for the ideal standard employment relationship (SER) as described by Vosko (2008). The controls selected are the social characteristics that are both available in the SLID and of interest in analyzing the

TABLE 2. Economic Exclusion Indicators

Predictors	Odds Ratio (Confidence Interval)				
	Household After-Tax Income is Below the LIM	Individual Earnings were in Bottom Quintile (20%)	Individual was Unemployed (and Looking for Work) Half of the Year or More	Individual had a Non-Permanent Job ^a	Individual had a Job Without a Pension Plan ^a
Female	2.6 (2.2-3.0)*	1.8 (1.6-2.0)*	0.6 (0.5-0.8)*	1.1 (0.9-1.2)	1.1 (1.0-1.2)
Visible minority	1.6 (1.1-2.1)*	1.3 (1.1-1.7)*	1.4 (1.1-1.9)*	1.4 (1.1-1.8)*	1.2 (1.0-1.4)
Immigrant in Canada 5 years or less	2.5 (1.3-3.8)*	2 (1.3-3.1)*	1.4 (0.7-2.8)	0.8 (0.5-1.4)	1 (0.7-1.5)*
Immigrant in Canada 6-10 years	1.3 (0.8-2.0)	1.6 (1.1-2.3)*	1.4 (0.8-2.6)	0.9 (0.5-1.6)	1.2 (1-1.5)
Immigrant in Canada 11-20 years	1.2 (0.8-1.7)	1 (0.7-1.4)	1.8 (1.2-2.7)*	0.8 (0.6-1.2)	1 (0.8-1.8)
Immigrant in Canada more than 20 years	0.8 (0.6-1.1)	0.9 (0.7-1.2)	0.9 (0.6-1.3)	0.7 (0.5-0.9)*	0.8 (0.6-0.9)*
Aged 18-29	1.3 (1.1-1.6)*	3.1 (2.7-3.5)*	1.9 (1.4-2.4)*	2.3 (2.0-2.7)*	1.9 (1.7-2.2)*
Aged 50-64	1.1 (1.0-1.3)	1.6 (1.4-1.8)*	0.8 (0.6-1)	1.3 (1.1-1.5)*	0.9 (0.8-1.0)
Years of schooling (continuous)	0.86 (0.83-0.88)*	0.9 (0.88-0.92)*	0.9 (0.90-0.97)*	1 (0.97-1.02)	0.87 (0.85-0.88)*

* Significant at the 95% confidence level.

^a Includes employed population only.

effects of gender, age, race and immigrant status in the Canadian labour market. In line with guidelines from Statistics Canada, the confidence intervals around each point estimate were adjusted with a bootstrap technique using 1,000 replications (Smith et al. 2009).

Table 2 identifies variables that are statistically significant in predicting whether an individual is more likely to experience each indicator of economic exclusion. An odds ratio above one and a significant p-value mean the social characteristic in question is associated with an increased probability of the economic exclusion indicator; odds of less than one and a significant coefficient means the attribute is associated with a lower probability of the indicator (Allison 1999).

For simplicity sake, our analysis focuses on each dependent variable individually.

Household After-Tax Income Below the LIM

When computing the odds of having a household after-tax income below the LIM, a control was added for being in a *female major income earner household* vs. a male major income earner household, rather than calculating the impact of being female vs. male. This was necessary for conceptual consistency in the examination of gen-

dered social processes because this variable is computed at the economic family level rather than the individual level.

Here, the data demonstrate that those who are in a household in which the major income earner is a woman, as well as recent immigrants to Canada (controlling for other factors) are at a serious disadvantage with respect to household income. In both cases, the adjusted odds of being below the LIM are at least 2.5 times greater than the associated reference category (i.e., being in a household in which the major income earner is male, or being Canadian-born). Individuals who identify as a visible minority also have 1.6 greater odds of being in a household below the LIM. In other words, visible minorities have 60% greater adjusted odds of being below the LIM than non-visible minorities, holding other factors constant. Younger individuals are also at a slight disadvantage. However, immigrants living in Canada six years or more do not have an adjusted odds ratio that is significantly different than the Canadian-born for this variable. Due to limitations in the SLID dataset, it is notable that the education variable does not indicate whether schooling took place inside or outside of Canada. However, the education variable demonstrates that each additional year of schooling decreases the odds of being below the LIM by about 13%, suggesting good economic return for education for all groups. Moreover, for four out of the five measures of economic exclusion, schooling has a positive impact (holding the other factors constant), significant at the 95% confidence level.

Earnings in Bottom Quintile

For 2009, individual earnings in the bottom quintile (where earnings were greater than \$0) were roughly \$12,300 or less. Here, our findings show that younger workers aged 18-29 are much more likely to have earnings in the bottom quintile (controlling for the other factors), as they had more than three times greater adjusted odds than individuals aged 30-49. Importantly, many people who were within this youngest age group of workers may have been enrolled full-time in school and thus excluded from our sample, perhaps skewing these results. However, the data show that older individuals also have 60% greater adjusted odds of being in the bottom quintile of earnings than the reference age group, demonstrating that both older and younger workers are at a disadvantage in terms of earnings. Immigrants in Canada five years or less have two times greater odds of being in the bottom quintile than Canadian-born workers. For their first 10 years in Canada, immigrants in 2009 had greater odds of being in the bottom quintile of earnings as compared to those born in Canada. Yet after immigrants crossed this threshold, their odds were not significantly different than those of the Canadian-born. Women and visible minorities, however, also had significantly greater adjusted odds of being economically excluded in this measure. Holding all other factors constant, each additional year of schooling reduced the odds of having earnings in the bottom quintile by about 10%.

Long-Term Unemployment

The measure of long-term unemployment was coded to demonstrate the adjusted odds of an individual looking for work and remaining unemployed for 25 or more weeks of the year. This was the only outcome variable measured where the data reveal that females had a significant advantage; controlling for the other factors, females were 40% less likely than males to be unemployed and looking for work for at least half of the year in 2009. This may be explained by the tendency for women, more than men, to work without pay in the home as primary caregivers, or to be positioned in sectors of the labour market where there is significant turnover (Stewart et al. 2006). Consequently, females may be less likely than males to be actively looking for paid employment over the long term. Individuals who reported visible minority status were at a significant disadvantage; holding other factors constant they had 40% greater adjusted odds of being unemployed over the long-term than non-visible minorities, and younger people had almost twice the odds of experiencing long-term unemployment than those in their peak working years. Interestingly, the only significant variable concerning immigrant status was for immigrants who had been living in Canada 11-20 years. This population had a 1.8 adjusted odds of being unemployed for 25 or more weeks of the year, suggesting a lack of economic integration as measured by this variable, despite considerable time in Canada. This finding hints at the range of variability of experiences among the immigrant populations in Canada, and contradicts assumptions of consistent immigrant integration over time that are suggested by the other indicators. Again, education was found to be significant, and reduced the odds of long-term unemployment by about 10% for each additional year of schooling (holding the other factors constant).

Non-Permanent Employment

The variable measuring job security as a component of economic exclusion examined the odds of having non-permanent, rather than permanent, paid employment. Consequently, for this variable the sample was restricted to employed individuals, and excluded people working without pay or those who were self-employed, notwithstanding the fact that such individuals make up an increasingly large proportion of the precarious workforce (Cranford et al. 2003). Many of the social characteristics controlled for were not significant for this variable, suggesting considerable variability in the data. However, the data show that both younger and older individuals have significantly greater adjusted odds of being without the security of permanent employment (controlling for the other factors) than the reference age group, and for the former the odds were more than twice as great. Visible minorities also had 40% greater odds of non-permanent employment than non-visible minorities in 2009. However, the data suggest a more positive outcome for immigrants: immigrants who had been in Canada 20 years or less

had results that were not significantly different than those for the Canadian-born, and immigrants who had been in Canada more than 20 years were 30% more likely to have permanent (as compared to non-permanent) employment than the Canadian-born. This suggests that over time employed immigrants tend to find stable jobs and even surpass the Canadian-born on this indicator. However, immigrants may also be more likely to be self-employed or outside of the paid labour force altogether than Canadian-born.

Employment Without a Pension Plan

The fifth and final indicator of economic exclusion analyzes a component of non-wage benefits, measuring the odds of *not* having versus having an employee pension plan, again excluding individuals who were self-employed and restricting the analysis to the employed population. Here again, the data show generally positive outcomes for immigrants as they become more established in Canada. Similar to the permanent employment indicator, immigrants who have been in Canada 20 years or less do not have adjusted odds of a job without a pension plan that is significantly different than the Canadian-born (controlling for the other factors). After being in Canada more than 20 years, immigrants have significantly lower adjusted odds of not having a pension plan in their jobs than the Canadian-born; such established immigrants are, instead, 20% more likely than the Canadian-born to have a job *with* a pension plan. Younger individuals, however, have almost twice as great odds of having a job without a pension plan than individuals in the reference age category. Combined with the greater likelihood of young people working in non-permanent jobs, the precarious nature of entry-level positions is clearly demonstrated by the data. As with most of the selected indicators of economic exclusion, additional years of schooling led to diminished adjusted odds of scoring high on this measure; the data reveal a 13% reduction in the odds of having a job without a pension plan (controlling for the other factors) with each additional year of schooling.

In general, these odds ratios suggest that controlling for a variety of factors, women, new immigrants and especially younger—but also older—employed people tended to be made more economically excluded in the Canadian labour market in 2009. However, the data also suggest that eventually, immigrants have similar or lower odds of being in poverty or precariously employed than Canadian-born, controlling for the other variables, implying that, over time, the dynamics of economic exclusion defined by nationality or immigrant status are overcome or countered. Yet in four of these five regressions the data show that visible minority status, on its own, remains a salient source of economic exclusion in Canada.

A major limitation of logistic regression is that it looks at each independent control variable in isolation. Thus, our next step was to examine the impact of combinations of these social characteristics.

Predicted Probabilities: Examining Intersections of Social Dynamics

In order to analyze the *combined effects* of our selected social attributes (sex, age, and immigrant and visible minority status) we “created” eight prototypes of individuals—combinations of our previously determined socio-demographic and immigration characteristics—using dummy variables for these social characteristics. We then used a logistic regression equation to calculate the combined odds for these prototypes of *having earnings in the bottom quintile* (where earnings are greater than \$0) and their odds of *having a non-permanent job* (as compared to having a permanent job). (See Table 3.) The specific prototypes were chosen to further explore the impact of older and younger age dynamics, and to reflect schemes of valuation that are demonstrated to make certain individuals and groups particularly vulnerable to economic exclusion.

The predicted probabilities were calculated using a standard logistic regression equation in order to provide a simplified presentation of the combined effects of these controls. As well, the goal was to delve deeper into an analysis of the intersecting dynamics of social characteristics in processes of economic exclusion. The selected outcome variables focus on low earnings and job security, two integral components of economic inclusion or exclusion in the Canadian labour market. The customary formula found in the literature was used to calculate the probability of each prototype being economically excluded (Olson and Brouillette 2006).¹⁰ For each prototype, the average years of education in the population (approximately 13.5 years) were controlled for, to move beyond explanations of divides between individuals and groups that situate education as the sole determining factor. Initially, we noted that the trends across the table are quite similar for both of these measures, suggesting consistency in the impact of different social characteristics for our chosen indicators of economic exclusion.

TABLE 3. Probabilities of Economic Exclusion by Prototypes

Attributes	Probability (2009, with Average Years of Schooling)	
	Individual Earnings In Bottom 20%	Non-Permanent Job (employed population only)
#1. Male, White, Canadian born, Aged 30-49*	0.24	0.15
#2. Male, Visible Minority, Immigrant in Canada more than 20 years, Aged 50-64	0.19	0.11
#3. Female, Visible Minority, Immigrant in Canada 11-20 years, Aged 50-64	0.29	0.17
#4. Female, Visible Minority, Immigrant in Canada 5 years or less, Aged 18-29	0.57	0.28
#5. Female, White, Immigrant in Canada 5 years or less, Aged 18-29	0.55	0.27
#6. Male, Visible Minority, Canadian born, Aged 18-29	0.38	0.22
#7. Male, White, Canadian born, Aged 18-29	0.36	0.21
#8. Female, Visible Minority, Canadian-born, Aged 18-29	0.47	0.22

* Note that Prototype #1 represents the reference subject, presenting the probabilities for a White, Canadian-born, 30-49 male who is taken to hold the most privileged space in terms of these combined social characteristics. The other prototypes are combinations of our socio-demographic and immigration characteristics, with #4 comprising the subject with the expected least advantage based on our previous analyses.

Probabilities for Older Individuals (Aged 50-64)

We first examined the effects of being at the higher end of the conventional working age spectrum (aged 50-64). Interestingly, for both chosen indicators of economic exclusion, a male visible minority immigrant who had been in Canada 20 years or more (Prototype #2) has a slightly lower probability of being excluded than the white male Canadian-born prototype in his expected prime working years in 2009 (Prototype #1). This reference prototype (Prototype #1) has approximately a 1 in 4 chance of having earnings in the bottom quintile, and a 0.15 chance of having non-permanent (vs. permanent) employment. By comparison, an older female visible minority immigrant who has been in Canada 11-20 years (Prototype #3) has a higher probability of having earnings in the lowest quintile and non-permanent employment. This suggests that with the passage of time immigrants are no longer necessarily at a disadvantage in terms of these measures of economic exclusion (controlling for other factors). Instead, it seems that gender and visible minority status are the more pertinent factors for older individuals in terms of increased odds of economic exclusion. Thus, the data tend to confirm our hypothesis that age is a complex force and has a different impact on different individuals, depending on the dynamics of other social characteristics.

Probabilities for Younger Individuals (Aged 18-29)

Next, we examined the effects of being at the lower end of the working age spectrum (aged 18-29). Our previous logistic regressions (see Table 2) demonstrated that being younger is very often a disadvantage in our measures of economic exclusion, controlling for the other variables. Here, we looked specifically at the combined effects of visible minority status with gender, new immigrant status, and youth. We compared two younger immigrant women, one a visible minority, and the other a white new immigrant, both of whom have been in Canada five years or less (Prototypes #4 and #5). The data show that visible minority status is an economic disadvantage in this case, but only slightly, increasing the odds on each variable by no more than .02. In other words, a young visible minority new immigrant woman is only about 4% more likely to be made economically excluded than her white counterpart.

Still focusing on young workers, we looked further at the impact of immigrant status, visible minority status, and gender dynamics in Canada's labour market. When comparing Prototypes #4 and #5 with Prototypes #6 and #8, our findings show that being Canadian-born decreases the probability of low earnings by about 20%, as does being male. In regards to job permanence, being Canadian-born is likewise an advantage, and decreases the probability of being excluded by about 5%. However, we find that for young, Canadian-born, visible minorities, the probability of non-permanent employment is the same for males and females, suggesting that

gender only matters in certain scenarios. Among the Canadian-born population (comparing Prototypes #6 and #7), the data show only a slight negative effect of visible minority status on these measures of economic exclusion, holding the other social characteristics of a prototype constant. Thus, the negative effects of visible minority status are small, but amplified when combined with gender, immigrant status and relative youth.

Overall, our prototype analysis (Table 3) allows us to use a logistic regression equation to compare various combinations of a defined set of socio-demographic and immigration characteristics. Looking specifically for the dynamics of social characteristics that work to disadvantage, we can investigate the impacts of being younger, a visible minority, a female and/or a new immigrant on indicators of economic exclusion. For example, the data show that an older, established visible minority male immigrant (Prototype #2) is almost three times less likely than a young white new immigrant woman (Prototype #5) to have low earnings or no job security. Thus, social dynamics defined by gender, age, immigrant status and visible minority status lead to divergent outcomes for individuals at different life stages, and uniquely determine economic outcomes and gaps between social groups in the Canadian labour market.

CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Overall, our findings demonstrate a cumulative and robust effect of social dynamics defined by gender, race, new immigrant status and youth in Canada's labour market. *Gender, visible minority status, age, and length of stay in Canada* are all found to be strong predictors of economic exclusion in our logistic regressions and predicted probability analyses. These social characteristics intersect in ways that result in rather profound material outcomes. At the same time as Canada's social and economic gaps are rapidly growing and prospects for new immigrants, racialised groups and youth are decidedly grim, it is projected that by 2031 over one-quarter of Canadians will be first-generation immigrants, and almost one-third of the total population will be a member of a "visible minority" group (Caron Malenfant et al. 2010). Moreover, visible minorities will be over-represented in younger age-groups about to enter the workforce, with 36% of the population under the age of 15 projected to be a member of a racialized group (Caron Malenfant et al. 2010). Thus, the trend seems clear—Canada's divides are likely to continue to deepen, and the need for research and innovative policy responses is urgent.

In our ongoing research, we shall supplement our analysis here with longitudinal studies to examine social exclusion trajectories over time and across geographical regions.¹¹ Here, we conclude by synthesizing the primary themes from our initial

work, and proposing a number of policy and research implications deriving from this analysis. First of all, existing literature demonstrates that race matters in Canadian labour market outcomes and that visible minority immigrants receive lower returns to education, work experience and unionization (Banerjee 2009; Reitz and Banerjee 2007). Supporting this research, our analyses suggest that race matters most when combined with social processes that devalue women and women's work, and social relations that idealize characteristics associated with being Canadian-born. Specifically, those most likely to experience multiple pressures toward economic exclusion in Canada's labour market are young new immigrant and racialised women.

Secondly, age discrimination is also shown to result in material disadvantage in Canada's labour market, and operates for individuals at both the lower and higher end of the working age spectrum. Much has been written about discrimination of older people in our North American society (Fang and MacPhail 2008; Picot and Heisz 2000; Morissette and Johnson 2005; Cohen 1985). Some of the literature suggests that the effect of ageism against older workers was especially significant in the 1980s and 1990s, but that since then conditions have improved for older workers in current labour market conditions (Scott 2005; Fong 2012); our findings, however, indicate that despite any such advances, ageism remains a significant barrier to economic inclusion for some. Currently, less is understood about the factors contributing to the social exclusion of a seemingly expanding age category associated with "youth". Our research clearly shows that younger workers are at a disadvantage (controlling for other factors) in several measures of economic exclusion. Given limited work experience and various forms of capital young people may not possess (Putnam 2000), it may be argued that this finding is not surprising or even unjustified. Yet, recent evidence points toward worsening economic opportunities for youth (e.g., Carrick 2012) that parallel macro economic trends leading to employment freezes and job downsizing; rising tuition and housing prices; and a recent targeting of youth in Canadian laws and policies that may exacerbate age-based discrimination.¹² Whatever the sources of economic exclusion for youth, more research is needed to compare and track the trajectories of Canada's young people in a labour market that is increasingly unregulated and polarized, suggesting that upward mobility is unlikely for some.

In the case of immigrants, our analyses suggest that *length of time* in Canada is a pertinent consideration in terms of economic exclusion. Interestingly, much of our data indicate that after 11 years in Canada, immigrant labour market outcomes are either on par with or even better than Canadian-born. This suggests that after experiencing significant economic barriers in their early years in Canada, immigrants tend to adapt and "integrate," and perhaps their higher average rates of education than the Canadian-born population lead to relatively rapid upward mobility over

time. As our cross sectional analysis shows that almost 70% of immigrants have been in Canada 11 or more years, this finding indicates that the majority of immigrants are currently overcoming, at least in part, the excluding dynamics that operate for immigrants in Canada's labour market. The specific strategies through which this is accomplished, as well as possible variation across ethno-national groups and the effects of the continuing economic recession, are worthy of continued research.

Finally, and more generally, patterns in labour market outcomes are necessarily pivotal to the capacity for social policy systems to address socioeconomic inequities, or social exclusion. Beginning in earnest in the 1990s, the privatization and residualization of Canada's social welfare system put the market at the centre of the welfare state, and employment-oriented policies and programs now constitute the basis of social assistance at all levels of government. The explicit and solitary goal of employment-oriented social assistance programs in Canada is to "help people move to long-term self-sufficiency" (Government of Ontario 2005). Labour market participation is generally assumed to be synonymous with economic inclusion. Our results, however, reinforce an abundance of evidence demonstrating that the labour market works in favour of some more than others. During the precise years of welfare "reform" in Canada, labour markets saw disproportionate growth in jobs defined by varying degrees and certain dimensions of "precariousness"—as compared with full-time, standard employment arrangements (Vosko et al. 2003; Jackson et al. 2000; Jackson 2003; Picot and Heisz 2000; Galarneau 2005). Even more, scholars point out that high un- and under-employment among Canadian youth, for example, have been met not only with massive cuts to welfare, healthcare, and employment insurance, but have been coupled with the introduction of a range of laws and "zero tolerance" policies to deal with "minor transgressions and incivilities in schools" (DeKeseredy 2009, 312). A similar punitive trend is apparent in recent changes to immigration laws and policies—such as the discarding of almost 300,000 permanent resident applications, those pending since before 2008 (Cohen 2012); the discontinuation of health benefits for refugee claimants (Tyndall 2012); and automatic 12-month detention, without review, for groups of refugees, among other punishing measures proposed in Canada's Bill C-31 (Kogawa et al. 2012; Hyndman 2012).¹³ These are noted to be part of a larger overall shift from the "welfare state" to the "penal state" to manage mounting social insecurity, which has been documented especially in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada (Wacquant 2009; Currie 2004; DeKeseredy 2011).

The result of this steady ideological turn in Canada's social welfare system—and perhaps in the Canadian public in general—is that those who are excluded from the *primary distribution* of resources in the labour market are also excluded from the *secondary distribution* of resources (Lightman 2003) in Canada's social welfare system.

This is state-enforced double jeopardy (Good Gingrich 2008). In other words, the neoliberal residualized welfare state and global markets together form a closed loop that function synergistically to make groups and keep people in place.

Ample evidence shows that the current ideological drive will result in hardship not only for those on the swelling margins, but rising social and economic costs for all members of Canadian communities (Yalnizyan 2008). Toward reversing Canada's participation in what has been aptly dubbed a global "race to the bottom" in social welfare program design and delivery (Lightman et al. 2006), we advocate for policy planning informed by our deepening understanding of the processes by which social and economic gaps grow and shrink.

NOTES

1. Good Gingrich's conceptual model of social exclusion builds on Pierre Bourdieu's notions of social fields, systems of capital, and habitus, and situates the material necessities of life at the core. The four forms of social exclusion—economic, spatial, socio-political, and subjective—correspond to the dispossession of and denial of access to four species of capital: economic, social, cultural, and symbolic. The important point here is that we aim to distinguish between definitions of social exclusion that refer to non-participation, lack of engagement, or feelings of not belonging that do not necessarily result in economic or material disadvantage. For a more complete description of this conceptual model of social exclusion, see Good Gingrich (2006).

2. The common notion of the "glass ceiling" has been augmented by discussions of "sticky floors". See, for example, Booth, Francesconi, and Frank (2003), Pendakur and Pendakur (2007), and Rice (2001).

3. Wealth and income levels of Aboriginal peoples persistently fall significantly below those of other Canadians, even immigrants (Picot and Sweetman 2005). Although rigorous inquiry of this shameful socioeconomic divide in Canada is urgent, it is not an objective of this proposed study as the SLID dataset excludes residents of the Yukon, the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, and Indian reserves.

4. This quantitative work extends Good Gingrich's theoretical and empirical program of research on social exclusion, which has been primarily based on qualitative research with migrant women from Mexico and Guatemala, Mennonite (im)migrants from Latin America, and single mothers living on welfare.

5. Our analysis was performed using SAS statistical software.

6. Statistics Canada calculates the Low Income Measure (LIM) as a dollar threshold that delineates low-income in relation to the median income. For the purpose of making international comparisons, the LIM is the most commonly used measure of low income.

7. We choose to use the term 'employed individuals' to distinguish from the broader population of individuals who work, which includes persons who do not receive financial compensation, for example individuals caring for children and/or the elderly at home.

8. In general, earnings variables, while routinely cited, tend to be highly skewed. A small number of high earners often pull the tail of the distribution far to the right, making the average higher than with other measures of central tendency.

9. In addition, in relatively few cases individuals close to retirement age may be on public pensions, which tend to equalize incomes as compared to labour wages across groups. However, this occurrence would have only a minor effect on our results, as the analysis was limited to individuals under 65 years of age.

10. The standard equation is: $Probability = 1/[1 + \exp(-b_0 - b_1X + \dots + \beta_k^*x_k)]$, where b_0 is the intercept, the other bs are parameter estimates, and the Xs are variable values inserted into the equation to solve for a set of particular circumstances (here the chosen prototypes).

11. For this analysis of the SLID, sample sizes were not sufficiently large to include controls for geographic location and/or account for specific city-based labour markets.

12. The manifestations of what some identify as a specifically Canadian version of "moral panic" (Good Gingrich 2003a) are numerous. See, for example, the "Get tough on crime" rhetoric of the Conservative Government (Goodyear 2008) and critiques of the new omnibus crime Bill C-10, entitled the *Safe Streets and Communities Act*.

13. At the time of writing this article, Canada's Immigration Minister, Jason Kenney, bowed to opposition pressure and announced several amendments to Bill C-31, "Protecting Canada's Immigration System Act." Namely, he proposed to reduce the detention before review period from 12 months to 14 days (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2012).

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The research reported herein is funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada—Immigration and the Metropolis Program.

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Caught in a Transnational Nexus: Teacher Practices and Experiences in a Context of Divergent Ties to the Homeland

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Abstract

The Greater Toronto Area (GTA) is a hub for both wealthy and impoverished immigrant families and youth who often seek the benefits and prestige of a Western education, while still maintaining ongoing ties (transnational connections) to their place(s) of origin for professional advancement, personal support and/or due to the uncertainties of their residency in Canada. Yet despite the increasing significance of transnationalism for many immigrants, only limited educational research examines this phenomenon.

This paper reports on fifteen qualitative interviews with teachers in public and private secondary schools in the GTA. Initially, a brief overview of the relevant North American literature connecting the schooling realm with transnationalism is provided. Subsequently, the analysis focuses on how the divergent transnational connections of students affect teaching practices and experiences in selected GTA schools. Themes explored include: how strong emotional connections to countries of origin are related to teacher concerns about a perceived lack of “Canadian” identity within the student body; growing concerns about a “transnational transformation” of secondary schooling; and, how, if, and why teachers are increasingly questioning the (ir)relevance of the multicultural framework within GTA schools.

Keywords: transnationalism, secondary schooling, Greater Toronto Area, multiculturalism

Introduction

Today, students in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), Canada, increasingly come from diverse backgrounds and maintain ongoing links to their/their parents’ place(s) of origin. Such students and their families sometimes experience multiple, divided and/or fluctuating loyalties as they travel back and forth, emotionally as well as in practice, between Canada and their homeland(s). At present, there is very limited research exploring the implications of these transnational connections within the realm of education. Significantly, it remains unclear if such ties generally assist or hinder the academic success and social integration of youth in secondary schools. Teachers, as a primary conduit for conferring a common language, heritage, values, knowledge of institutions, and modes of so-called “legitimate” behaviour to youth (Levin, 2001), are integral actors within this schooling/transnational nexus.

The data presented in this paper emerged from fifteen in-depth qualitative interviews with teachers in public and private secondary schools in the GTA. Initially, a brief review of the relevant North American literature connecting schooling to transnationalism is presented. Subsequently, the paper examines how the divergent transnational connections of students affect teaching practices and experiences in selected GTA schools. Themes explored include the extent to which economic class impacts the way that transnational links are expressed and viewed within a classroom context; how teachers, with diverse access to resources and mandates, view young people’s ongoing ties to their place(s) of origin; and schools’ institutional responses and the controls they impose, which teachers must work within and around.

Beyond 'Transilient' Transnationals: Connecting Socioeconomic Status, Transnationalism and Education

Numerous definitions of transnationalism abound. Often, an emphasis is made on *regular and sustained* connections between immigrants in their new place of residence and the friends, family, business and professional contacts that remain in their sending nations and hometowns (Portes, Guarnizo, & Landolt, 1999). This focus on physical ties between sending and receiving countries is thought to distinguish transnationalism from other routine aspects of the immigration/integration process. However, other scholars utilize a less rigorous definition of transnationalism, and also include feelings of identity and connectedness to multiple sites over the lifecycle: “both ways of being and ways of belonging” (Erdal & Oeppen, 2013, p. 871). The definition of transnationalism utilized in this study encompasses both *behavioural characteristics* (e.g. physical travel back and forth to the place(s) of origin or sending ongoing remittances) and *attitudinal characteristics* (e.g. a strong emotional connectedness to the place(s) of origin, “imagined mobility”, or an enduring historical/political/cultural orientation to the needs of another nation) (Baas, 2009; Urry, 2000). This definition recognizes that transnational ties are experienced at the individual level in a way that is both contextual and evolving over a lifetime (Levitt, 2002; Ley, 2013).

Since at least the beginning of the 20th century, some transnational communities have sent their children back to the place(s) of origin for education that is deemed more appropriate or to assist with cultural maintenance (see Hagan, 1994; Kasüitz, Waters, Mollenkopf, & Anil, 2002). Providing a historical example, Ayukawa (2008) documents how prior to WWII the eldest son in Japanese families in Canada was sometimes sent back to Japan for education and language retention purposes. In the comparative North American literature, Hagan (1994) finds that members of the Maya, an indigenous group from San Pedro, Guatemala who live and work in Texas, sometimes send their children back home to be raised by grandparents or relatives in what is considered a “morally purer” environment.

Most existing research examining the perspectives of *teachers* with transnational classroom populations is situated in the United States or the Global South and may have limited applicability in the Canadian context. Such studies often find that students with transnational ties are invisible to teachers. Yet once the existence of students with transnational ties is brought to their attention, in some cases teachers do express interest in supporting them, but are perplexed and unsure how to achieve this purpose. In other cases, teachers both in the United States and in the Global South are found to view the transnational experiences of students as an academic disadvantage (Hamann & Zúñiga, 2011; Hamann, Zúñiga, & Garcia, 2010; Rendall & Torr, 2008).

In a case study in Georgia, Hamann (2001) finds that many local teachers complain about the lengthy absences of newcomer Latino students, particularly around Christmas time when whole families return to Mexico. As well, Zúñiga and Hamann (2009) find that some Mexican teachers have misconceptions about American schools, viewing them as overly technology-oriented, anonymous and marked by antisocial behaviour and conflicts. Such teachers claim that students with transnational ties are behind their native Mexican peers in language, as well as in Mexican history and geography, and that they do not understand local schooling norms. Reyes (2000) and Zavala (2000) similarly find that Puerto Rican teachers misunderstand and reject students with transnational ties returning from the United States mainland, while Goodman (2012) and White (1993) document the stereotyping and biases experienced by Japan's *kikokushijo* or “returnee children.”

In the Canadian context, most case studies connecting transnationalism and schooling focus on what Richmond (1969) terms the *transilients*; in this case, wealthy East Asian populations on the West Coast of Canada who are sometimes considered “the most desirable immigrants on earth” (Cannon, 1989, p. 21). For elite Asian transnationals in Canada, fear of educational failure back

home is often the impetus behind migration. Relocation to Canada is also sometimes perceived to be a cheaper option for families, as compared to paying international tuition rates for post-secondary education. Canadian schools (both secondary and post-secondary) are often considered more prestigious and easier academically than in the countries of origin, and may provide better opportunities for English language acquisition (Ley, 2010).¹ As well, some within these communities perceive an added benefit in the critical thinking promoted in Canadian schools, as compared to perceptions of rote-learning back home (Mitchell, 2003; Waters, 2005; 2006b).

As a result of this emphasis on transilient populations on the West Coast, little is currently known about the educational experiences of transnational youth and families outside the socioeconomic elite in Canada, or those who live in the Toronto or its surrounding metropolitan areas. Existing literature on poorer transnationals in Canada generally focuses on individuals with temporary work visas, such as live-in caregivers, fieldworkers, “mail order” brides, or fast-food employees, who often lack protection or coverage for social services, as well as refugees or migrants who arrive with professional skills but are unable to recertify or gain Canadian work experience upon their settlement (e.g. Bakan & Stasiulis, 1994; Block, 2010; Langevin & Belleau, 2000; Polanco Sorto, 2013). However, there is minimal discussion of the educational experiences of these groups.² This study sought to broaden the population of interest in research connecting transnationalism and education to include teachers in Canada, specifically in the GTA context, and to explore the potential presence of secondary school students with transnational ties that are located outside of the socioeconomic elite.

Methods and Study Participants

For this chapter, the primary research occurred between 2011-2012, utilizing in-depth, qualitative, semi-structured interviews with fifteen teachers in GTA secondary schools. The research methodology was approved by the University of Toronto Ethics Board, and relied on grounded theory, an inductive process of theory generation from data collection (Glazer, 1992). The individuals selected for the sample were not random or representative, but were purposefully chosen because they had an interest in the subject area, were available to meet during the allotted time period, and worked in schools with high levels of diversity and/or a rapidly increasing proportion of immigrant and visible minority students (Anderson & Hughes, 2010).

While I initially contacted administrators in several GTA secondary schools to set up interviews and aimed to get referrals for appropriate teachers in their schools, I largely relied on suggestions for interview participants from personal and professional contacts (a snowball sampling methodology). No interview participants were under the age of consent and each interview lasted for approximately 60 minutes and was conducted at a time and place convenient for the participant and that guaranteed minimal distractions. With the permission of interviewees, each interview was recorded with a digital recorder, and I made interview notes during each interview and took field notes after each interview. The interviews were subsequently transcribed and coded using the

¹However, some research finds that Western degrees do not always confer the privilege expected by migrants in their sending country labour markets upon their return (see Tierney, 2006; Willie, 2000).

²Robertson (2013) similarly finds that Australian “student-migrants” are typically homogenized into two stereotypes: elite, unproblematic “designer migrants” who come with resources and do not need settlement supports, and “back-door migrants” who are thought to exploit education for disingenuous purposes and/or are a threat to social stability and Australian multiculturalism (pp. 6, 162).

software program Dedoose. All participants were given a pseudonym to protect their identity and allow for openness in their responses.

Of the fifteen GTA teachers interviewed, ten were working in highly diverse publicly funded secondary schools, with six of them in secular schools and four in Catholic public schools. The other five interview participants worked within the private secondary school system, two at all-boys schools, another two at all-girls schools, and the final participant as a teacher at a co-ed private religious institution. Eight of the teachers were female, and seven were male. The majority of the interviewees were white and middle-class, reflecting the current demographic reality of GTA teaching staff (Ryan, Pollock, & Antonelli, 2009; Solomona, Portelli, Daniel, & Campbell, 2005). Eight of the teachers were working at secondary schools in the inner-city of the GTA, while the other seven worked in North York (the north end of the GTA), Scarborough (the east end of the GTA), or Etobicoke (the western side of the GTA). The teachers taught a wide range of subjects in their schools, including English, geography, drama, businesses, and mathematics, for grades ranging from 9-12. All had been employed as secondary school teachers for a minimum of five years.

The GTA was chosen as the site for the research as it is a highly diverse region and has higher percentages of poor refugees and South Asian and Middle Eastern immigrants than the rest of Canada. The GTA consequently provided a context that is more diverse, both socioeconomically and ethnically, than the affluent regions of the West Coast described in the majority of the existing relevant Canadian literature connecting education and transnationalism (Basu, 2002; Ley, 2007).

Broadly, the research goal was to explore these teachers' insights on the meaning of transnationalism in their schooling context and any responses of their schools to the transnational links among their students. From a detailed analysis of the data, three relevant themes that emerged included: *strong emotional connections to countries of origin were sometimes related to concerns by teachers about a perceived lack of "Canadian" identity; there are growing concerns about a "transnational transformation" of secondary schooling in the GTA; and, teachers are questioning the (ir)relevance of the multicultural framework within their schools.*

Each of these themes suggests that teachers *are* aware of transnational connections among their students (although they may not consider them through this specific term). As well, clear differences between the perspectives of the teachers in private schools as compared to those working in the public system were evident, backing the supposition that transnationalism is *not solely an elite phenomenon* but, rather, manifests differently in different schooling contexts and is affected by economic privilege, among other factors. Notably, while many of the themes explored in these interviews could be relevant to any immigrant student/teacher interaction, it is the combination of these themes that lead to new ideas about transnationality within Canadian schools.

Themes in the Data

1. Strong emotional connections to countries of origin by students are sometimes related to a perceived lack of "Canadian" identity

Perhaps not surprisingly, the fifteen teachers who were interviewed emphasized that many of their immigrant and minority students sustain strong emotional connections to their/their parents' place(s) of origin. While the teachers mostly viewed these connections positively, there was some concern that they came at the expense of a unified "Canadian" identity. The teachers felt that some of their students were more connected to issues in their home countries or even in the United States, as compared to specifically Canadian issues. A., a teacher at an inner-city public high school, emphasized that some of her transnational students were not interested in Canadian politics, but,

instead, used various communication technologies to stay up-to-date on issues of concern in their place(s) of origin:

They're not engaged with Canadian issues... They probably know when there's an election, but they're much more likely to hear if there was a huge accident or something. But most of them keep tabs on what goes on at home. They talk about it, and now with the Internet it's so easy [to stay in touch]. I have a student from Korea, her parents are there, and she tells me all about Korea and what's going on there... I think it's wonderful because in the past they would call on the telephone and that was really expensive... now they Skype, they email, they use social media.

Thus, despite her concerns about a lack of "Canadian-ness" among students with transnational ties, A. stressed that, in her opinion, such students' international experiences and worldviews add richness to classroom conversations. She said that, when possible, she incorporates these different perspectives and priorities into her assignments.

Many of the private school teachers perceived their students with transnational ties as having a "post-national" identity; the students appeared to have minimal attachment to Canada, and instead saw their future locations and loyalties as being dictated by wherever the best school or work opportunities lie. Rather than being a safe haven, Canada was perceived as a jumping off point for these students' future economic or social upward mobility.

R., who teaches at a private boys' school, said that some of his students have family who own property all over the world and that many of his students from the Middle East have family businesses that they expect to run when they are older. However, R. gave the example of a student from Kazakhstan who has decided, much to chagrin of his family, to study film in Toronto rather than returning home to run his family business upon completion of secondary school, demonstrating that some students stay in Canada for professional opportunities and/or deviate from the expectations of their families back home. B., who teaches at a private girls' school, provided the example of some of her Korean students who say that they will return to Korea after finishing their schooling, or perhaps go to America for university:

There's a sense that [after high school] they'll go back to Korea for a while or go to the United States and then go to Korea. Sometimes when I ask them why [they plan to return], they'll say they find life in Canada a bit slow. Some of the Hong Kong girls say that too. Socially it is slow, business is too slow, and opportunities are too slow. Some of them will say 'Schooling in Canada, back to Korea for opportunities.'

However, this sense of geographical boundlessness was more the case for the students at the private schools who are more likely to have the financial resources to facilitate future school, work or travel abroad. For public school teachers, there was more of a sense of traditional nationalism about the place(s) of origin permeating the student body. This nationalism sometimes manifested in gangs or fights between students from different countries, while at other times the teachers said it was primarily evident in terms of support for different sports teams, such as cricket or soccer. It may be that this heightened nationalism is a case of "reactive ethnicity" (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001), occurring as a result of a hostile receiving context in their host society. However, there may be other reasons for this nationalism as well.

Generally, the interviewees said that many of their immigrant and minority students are strongly connected to their homeland(s) in an ongoing manner and all of the teachers voiced concerns that this was somehow related to a lack of connectedness to Canada. While to some degree the teachers did perceive it to be their role to engender a greater Canadian identity in the student

body, this dearth of “Canadian-ness” manifested itself differently in different contexts and was impacted by students’ familial and economic resources (as well as other factors).

2. Growing Concerns about a “Transnational Transformation” of Secondary Schooling

Most existing research on the marketization of education to transnationals focuses specifically on tertiary education (e.g. Abada & Tenkorang, 2009; Arvast, 2006, Gargano, 2009). Robertson (2013), for example, examines transnational “student-migrants” coming to Australia for university with international visas, while Waters (2006a) documents an “international education industry” which comprises language schools both internationally and domestically, satellite university campuses, distance or e-learning programs, (inter)national education “brands”, and the growing entrepreneurial focus and activities of educational institutions.

An important finding from this study was that the “transnational transformation” of schooling is now also evident at the secondary schooling level in the GTA. Study participants noted that there has been a marked increase in for-profit private (sometimes religious) secondary institutions targeting wealthy transnationals and international visa students. This, however, has led to concerns about the lack of provincial oversight for these schools (Howlett, 2013; Lysyk, 2013). Several of the teachers suggested in their interviews that such schools simply view students and their families as “cash cows”.

Among the public school teachers, some respondents stated that their schools were doing a good job of serving students with ongoing ties to other nations. J., who teaches at a highly diverse public school in Etobicoke, said that the school she works at provides many services to students to help them adapt to life in Canada and simultaneously sustain their connections to their places of origin. Yet from her response, it was clear that J. largely did not (or could not) distinguish between her students with transnational ties and other immigrant and minority students. J. mentioned that her school has a community council, homework clubs, and a Somali Youth Association that organizes basketball games. She said that while on Muslim holidays such as Eid hardly anyone attends school, the school does provide a prayer space. The school also sends home important announcements on the phone in three or four languages, including Urdu and Arabic.

J. also said that her school has had to adapt to a rise in for-profit religiously-based private secondary schools in the neighbourhood. She mentioned that recently, many students dropped courses at her school and instead were taking them at a local private Islamic school where, she believes, “basically you buy your credits.” J. saw this as part of a global trend towards privatizing education and attracting wealthy transnational students from abroad. L., who teaches English as a Second Language (ESL) at an inner-city public school, also spoke about for-profit schools essentially selling high grades to students from abroad. However, L. noted that in both the public and the private school system there is often false or misleading advertising aimed at international visa students. L. said this occurs because in the current era of fiscal restraint, schools are desperate for the high fees international students confer:

There’s a lot of money grabbing. International students bring in a lot of money to the school system and what they’re getting back is not reflective of what they’re paying for. There needs to be a real investigation into making an education system that is feasible for them...I don’t know how aware or unaware their parents are. But I honestly believe there is a responsibility, if you’re taking students’ money, to provide safer environments and more monitoring than is done, especially for students coming on their own.

Here again the perspective of private school teachers was considerably different from those of the public school teachers. While there is wide range of private schooling institutions in the GTA,

there was a refusal by all the private school teachers interviewed to acknowledge that there might be lower academic standards in their particular institution than in the public school system. Q., a teacher at a prestigious all-boys private school, pointed to several ways that his school is adapting to the students' increasing transnational connections. Q. pointed out that in the standardized International Baccalaureate program that his school offers (which can be considered transnational in itself) all students are required to study a second language. In addition to this, the school hires tutors to teach literature courses in the students' native languages for those who have problems with English. However, Q. recognized that hiring these tutors is costly and a luxury few public schools can afford.

Overall, the tactics used to attract international students with transnational ties appeared to differ acutely in the public and private school systems. However, both are involved in the perceived emergence of a transnational transformation of GTA secondary schooling, which is motivated at least partially by an effort to subsidize their existing funding bases.

3. Educators are Questioning the (Ir)Relevance of the Multicultural Framework within GTA Schools

Discussion of transnationalism and the accommodation of differences in the classroom necessarily included consideration of the efficacy of the multiculturalism framework in the GTA. Yet there was little consensus as to the relevance of the multicultural framework in assisting with the integration of students with transnational ties in secondary schools. While some educators saw multiculturalism as helpful and inclusionary for students with ongoing connections to their sending societies, others, while generally supporting a multicultural discourse, argued for limits to the cultural/ethnic accommodation in schools as well as in society more broadly.

S., a Catholic school teacher in Scarborough, said that multiculturalism is "absolutely relevant" but emphasized the need to tackle negative ethnic and racial stereotypes held by his students. He used the analogy of trying to have different cultures "baked or embedded into the cake" of classroom teaching, rather than just having it attached on top "like the frosting".

Yet other teachers suggested that educators and schools could do a lot more to transform classroom multicultural dialogues into something more relevant and helpful to students with ties to other countries. A drama teacher at a Catholic school in Etobicoke, E. emphasized that it can be difficult to address contentious issues in a classroom where there are students who hold ties to different national narratives:

I don't think we're sensitive to the idea that these two kids are Palestinian and these two kids are Jewish, or whatever. We just take it as a theoretical issue or something that will fade over time. We think 'Oh yeah, there's this conflict thing happening overseas'. I think we miss opportunities to engage with the experiences these kids have had [personally] and the understanding that they have of a complex issue, whether it's Israel-Palestine, Korea, or whatever. They should be encouraged to share in these discussions.

N. also mentioned the difficulty that often arises in discussing divisive international events in the classroom. A public school educator in a school with many low-income students, N. concluded that teachers often don't have the appropriate training for these discussions, and that they may even have personal transnational connections or biases that are hard to repress:

It's interesting to think about how much of ourselves we bring into the classroom as teachers. When the war in Gaza broke out, we got a letter from the [school] Board that said something to the effect of 'This is a contentious issue. If your students want to explore it, be very careful or don't.' As teachers we're not trained facilitators, no one's taught us to facilitate difficult conversations in the classroom. When you have something that brings in so many aspects of someone's identity, which in

my case my students assumed was at odds with theirs, because I am Israeli and many of them are Muslim and Arab, it is a challenge.

Ultimately, many of the teachers suggested that without a clear definition of what multicultural classroom content entails in the current context, multiculturalism has generally lost its meaning or value. Thus, the broad suggestion was that multiculturalism is something that needs to be continually re-evaluated and updated to reflect emerging dynamics within the student population. Given current trends in immigration, it is evident that transnationalism will be an increasingly relevant component to future dialogues about accommodation, diversity and difference within schools and within Canadian society more broadly. Necessarily, educators will have an essential voice to contribute to these evolving discussions.

Limitations and Conclusions

The quotes and ideas presented here summarize the perspectives of fifteen teachers on how the transnational connections of their students affect their professional practices and experiences in GTA secondary schools. Inevitably, teachers come to classrooms with their own lived experiences, as well as any national, ethnic or religious identities. Thus, teachers' individual experiences and backgrounds contribute to their views on how and if students with transnational ties can or should be accommodated in the classroom. However, teachers do hold an important intermediary (and possibly more objective) subject position between policymakers and administrators and students with transnational ties and their families/communities. Thus, they have a valuable voice in analyses and critiques of the education system (Feuerverger, 1998).

While the entire range of pedagogical implications that follow from this research are beyond the scope of this article, a major goal was to explore whether transnationalism, at least so far as it is recognizable in a schooling context, is purely an elite phenomenon. Here, the data suggests that socioeconomic class *is* an important component of how transnationalism is perceived and performed within schools. Private schools often target what Bauman (2000) defines as "tourists", students who have come to Canada for education due to preference, with few or no barriers to their movement. The private school teachers in this study appeared to perceive their students as practicing a form of strategic cosmopolitanism, "motivated not by ideals of national unity in diversity, but by understandings of global competitiveness, and the necessity to strategically adapt as an individual to rapidly shifting personal and national contexts" (Mitchell, 2003, p. 388).

The perspective of the teachers in public high schools who were interviewed was quite different, but also highlights the importance of transnational connections among their student populations. To the public school teachers, transnationalism was not an elite phenomenon; it is a daily reality for their immigrant students and their families who are emotionally and otherwise connected to their place(s) of origin. While public schools are attempting to support immigrant students, through ESL programs, homework clubs, and co-op programs among other things, these teachers had much more limited time, resources and social and economic capital at their disposal in their classrooms. Their students with transnational ties, rather than attaining a post-national orientation, appeared to maintain strong nationalistic feelings to their places of origin, perhaps due to social exclusion in the GTA. Thus, overall, the data demonstrates that while the current curriculum largely does not incorporate ideas of transnationality, in Canadian schools transnationalism is evident among a range of students. In these schools, transnationalism is *not* solely an elite phenomenon, but certainly *is* impacted by socioeconomic privilege, among other factors.

From this research, it appears that students with transnational ties are not entirely invisible to teachers, as suggested by Rendall & Torr (2008). On occasion, the interviewees for this research had

negative or stereotypical views about such students' prior schooling experiences. Generally, however, the teachers viewed these connections as providing an added element of diversity within the classroom. As well, these teachers felt it was, at least partially, the role of the school and individual teachers to accommodate the potentially differing needs of students and families with transnational ties. The interviews demonstrate clearly that transnationalism plays out differently in different schooling contexts and thus requires myriad tactics and strategies by teachers to best assist such students.

Future research in this area could focus on the perspectives of socioeconomically varied parents and secondary students in the GTA who hold transnational ties, as well as teachers. The former could provide a range of first-hand accounts of how and if schools are adapting to the transnational context, and if they should, and would complement the findings in this study. Such research would expand existing knowledge on what, if anything, ought to be done by Canadian schools at a policy level to address the needs of students with transnational ties, or conversely, to build on the strengths these ties provide.

Ultimately, a small qualitative study such as this one cannot conclusively state whether or not the transnational ties of students in the GTA provide benefits or barriers to students' social integration and academic success within classrooms. However, it is hoped that this research provides some valuable insight into both the opportunities and the challenges that students' transnational ties provide for multicultural policy, globalized and globalizing classrooms, teachers and educational faculty, and the Canadian school system as a whole.

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