

Niche Employment or Occupational Segmentation?

Immigrant Women Working in the Settlement Sector in Germany and Canada

Sita Jayaraman & Harald Bauder
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Abstract

Much of the research on the settlement sector focuses on the impact of settlement programs on the integration of immigrants. The settlement sector as a field of employment for immigrant women is still an emerging field for research. This working paper examines the experiences of immigrant women working in the settlement sector and compares Germany with Canada in this respect. The central thesis is that immigrant women working in this sector experience occupational segmentation based on their gender, race, and immigration status. Our research findings support this thesis, suggesting that the settlement sector is a deeply segmented labour market where, on the one hand, language and cultural competencies facilitate the employment of racialized immigrant women, while on the other hand, the positions these women occupy are characterized by precarious working conditions with limited opportunities for professional growth. These similar labour market outcomes occur in Germany and Canada, despite the rather different structures of the settlement sector in the two countries.

Keywords: immigrant women, labour market experiences, settlement services, occupational segmentation

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Introduction

German and Canadian labour markets are inherently segmented, with women being overrepresented in jobs with lower incomes, minimal job security, and little opportunity for growth and promotion. As immigrant women enter the segmented job market, their position is further exacerbated by their immigrant status and race, often placing them near the bottom of the job market. The understudied experiences of immigrant women as providers of settlement services fits this pattern. Most employment in this sector is short term, underpaid, part-time, and with limited opportunities for growth. While immigrant women are disproportionately represented in frontline work, senior management positions are more likely to be held by non-racialized, non-immigrant men and women.

In this working paper, we report on the results of an empirical study of immigrant women's experiences as workers in the settlement sector. To understand these experiences, we apply a theoretical framework that links the concepts of labour market segmentation and social closure. In addition, we examine models of settlement services in Germany and Canada and review the literature of immigrant women's experiences in the labour markets of both countries.

Our central thesis is that the settlement sector is a highly segmented labour market, with immigrant women working in positions with low pay, little job security, and limited career opportunities. In pursuing this thesis, we investigate if immigrant women are

finding employment in the settlement sector, under what conditions they work, and if they are more likely to perform frontline, managerial, or other tasks on their jobs. Our research contributes to an emerging literature on settlement services as a provider of employment to immigrants, in particular women (e.g., Türegün, 2011, 2013, forthcoming).

Background

Theoretical Framework

According to labour market segmentation theory, the labour market is divided into segments with different employment characteristics. While the primary segment tends to provide high wages, job security, and career development opportunities, the secondary segment is characterized by low wages, high turnover, and minimal chances for growth (Reich et al., 1973; Samers, 2010). Workers are allocated to these segments based on not only human capital (i.e., education, skills, training, etc.) but also their cultural capital, racialization, gender, and place of origin (Bauder, 2001, 2002; Block & Galabuzi, 2011; Boyd, 1984). Once workers are allocated to one or another segment, they tend to stay in this segment (Peck, 2006).

Labour market segmentation theory has been used before to explain the employment situations of migrants (Lusis & Bauder, 2009). Their employment in the lower segment of the labour market serves to absorb seasonal and cyclical economic fluctuations and thereby provide stability to a non-immigrant workforce in the primary sector (Piore, 1979). Various mechanisms allocate immigrant workers to labour market segments. For example, lack of immigration status and citizenship often provides access to only certain types of employment and renders immigrants vulnerable and exploitable (Bauder, 2008). Cultural mechanisms relate to employers' perceptions of the labour market motivations attributed to immigrants, embodied cultural capital (demonstrated through behaviours, gestures, and mannerisms) that signifies competence, and institutionalized cultural capital (e.g., foreign credentials) that is often devalued after migration (Bauder, 2003, 2006).

The "cultural segmentation" (Bauder, 2006: 45) of immigrant labour is linked to practices of social closure. Max Weber (1958) explains that social closure can be understood in the context of dominant groups monopolizing access to resources and opportunities, while excluding others from gaining access to protect their own interests. For example, credentialism is a form of closure that creates an artificial scarcity, granting "the chosen a legal, state-enforced basis for profiting from and appropriating the labour and skills of other workers" (Murphy, 1985: 236). Often, these social practices of inclusion and exclusion are based on gender and race. Racialized women in particular often have unequal access to resources and are unable to safeguard their interests. These practices of exclusion extend into the labour market where racialized women are often denied access to higher status positions (Witz, 1990). In the context of migration, empirical research has applied social theories of distinction (e.g., Bourdieu, 1984) to explain how the exclusion of immigrant and racialized workers from certain jobs serves the reproduction of existing social structures (Bauder, 2006). The employment of immigrant women in the settlement sector can be understood in the

context of exclusion from professions as well as a counter strategy by immigrant women to enter specific niche employment available to them in the secondary segment of this sector.

Labour Market Experiences of Immigrant Women

Given the paucity of research on labour market outcomes for immigrant women specific to the settlement sector, we examine the literature on the broader labour market experiences of immigrant women. The German and Canadian labour markets are deeply segmented, with immigrant women experiencing lower levels of success and encountering significant barriers to labour market participation. In Germany, immigrant women are disproportionately employed within the three Cs – Cooking, Cleaning, and Caring – experiencing lower pay, longer spells of unemployment, and less job mobility than non-immigrant women or immigrant men (Dustman & Schmidt, 2001; Kofman & Raghuram, 2009; Kogan, 2011; Kral, Roosblad & Wrench, 2009; Steinhardt, 2012; Mushaben, 2009; Lutz, 2008). In Canada, too, immigrant women tend to be employed in temporary positions with low wages and minimal benefits (Block & Galabuzi, 2011; Li, 2001; Pendakur & Pendakur, 1996; Lightman & Gingrich, 2013).

The German literature on immigrant women's experiences in the labour market identifies various mechanisms of labour market segmentation. Immigrant women's citizenship and legal status are key factors impacting labour market access (Bauder, 2006). For example, EU Citizenship is required in Germany to access public sector jobs and teaching positions in schools. Many women possess temporary visas, which grant access only to contractually limited work (Kesler, 2006; Mushaben, 2009). Other women have been arriving as spouses in the context of family reunification or as refugees and asylum seekers, which does not entitle them to work, and women coming to Germany under the reunification category have restricted access to paid labour opportunities for the first two years of their residence (Rubin et al., 2008). Despite the importance of citizenship and status, even naturalized women are employed in high numbers in cleaning, healthcare, and household labour (Steinhardt, 2012: 819), indicating that other factors are also contributing to the labour market segmentation of immigrant women.

Among the factors contributing to higher unemployment rates and lower incomes among immigrants are lower educational attainment, lack of job-market specific knowledge, insufficient language skills, and unfamiliarity with workplace culture (Kalter & Granato, 2002; Gundel & Peters, 2008; Stichs, 2008; Dustmann & Schmidt, 2001; Neidhart, 2001; Constant & Massey, 2005). Immigrant women whose educational credentials are recognized in Germany fare better compared to women without recognized credentials (Stichs, 2008).

Other factors influencing immigrant women's experiences in the labour market relate to xenophobia and sexism. These factors have blocked, for example, access to employment opportunities for Turkish women who subsequently turn to self-employment, operating travel agencies, hair salons, and offering services in the food industry, clothing alterations, and cleaning (Mushaben, 2009). "Resistance to diversity" and "ethnically exclusionist" (Kesler, 2006: 747) attitudes are barriers to labour market access for immigrants (Kaas & Manger, 2012).

In Canada, institutional barriers impact immigrant women's participation in the labour market even before the point of entry and persist post-arrival in Canada. The selection criteria for immigration to Canada privilege those who have considerable financial resources, high levels of education from formalized institutions, speak at least one of the official languages, and can demonstrate their potential in the Canadian labour market. These criteria reproduce women's marginalized economic situation around the world (Al Masri, 2013, Arat-Koc, 1999) and tend to limit women to entering Canada predominantly as spouses or dependents, under the Family Class, or as refugees. Even once immigrant women settle in Canada, gender continues to be a key factor in determining labour market outcomes. Blatant gender discrimination, un-paid care-taking, and household responsibilities compel many women to take flexible and lower paying jobs (Man, 2004; Wang, 2008).

Additionally, factors like country of birth and ethnicity have differential impacts on women immigrating to Canada. For example, women born in the UK and the USA experience fewer challenges with regard to discrimination by employers and hiring practices when they move to Canada as compared to women born in other countries (Boyd, 1984). Also, while immigrant status carriers "earnings penalties" (Pendakur & Pendakur, 1996: 24) for all immigrant women, immigrant women from visible minority communities face significantly higher penalties than 'white' immigrant women (Galbuzi, 2001; Block, 2010).

There is a growing disconnect between immigrant women's human capital and their employment and income levels (Man, 2004; Mills, 2006). In this context, the lack of recognition of foreign credentials has been identified as a cause for lower labour market outcomes for immigrant women (Pendakur & Pendakur, 1996; Banerjee, 2009; Li, 2001). In addition, the lack of "Canadian work experience" is a major barrier to immigrant women's access to the labour market (Oreopoulos, 2009).

A range of factors and their intersectionality impact immigrant women's outcomes in the labour market. In both Germany and Canada they face barriers based on legal frameworks and government policies, bear the consequences of racism and patriarchy, and experience the devaluation of their education and skills. As a consequence, immigrant women in both countries are disproportionately trapped in precarious employment with low pay and minimal benefits.

Models of Settlement and Integration Service Delivery

In this section, we examine different models of delivering settlement services to newcomers, foreigners, and people with migration backgrounds (Scherr, 2013) in Germany and Canada. The differences between the countries are exemplified by the terms used to describe the sector in each. In Germany, services to newcomers and long-time foreign residents are framed in terms of "integration," while the Canadian context identifies a distinct "settlement" sector.

In order to address these differences, however, it is first important to recognize that, despite being continents apart, Germany and Canada both have a long history of immigration (Knowles, 1997; Bade, 2004). In the wake of the post-WWII economic

boom, Germany recruited large numbers of guest workers in the 1960s and 70s from Italy, Spain, Greece, and Turkey. The guest workers were not perceived as permanent immigrants and were expected to return to their country of origin after a few years in Germany. However, many of the guest workers stayed and brought their children and spouses to Germany in the mid-70s to mid-80s. In the following decades, Germany witnessed a surge in asylum seekers and opened its borders to returning co-ethnic Germans from Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union in the 1990s (Münz et al., 1999). Since 2000, immigrants from Africa, Eastern Europe, and the Middle East have accounted for a large share of immigrant arrivals (Kogan, 2011). At the same time, migrants from other European Union countries are entitled to residency and work and are not considered “immigrants”. Despite the long history of immigration, the formal recognition of Germany as an immigration country did not occur until 2005 with the enactment of the country’s first immigration law (*Zuwanderungsgesetz*).

The immigration law of 2005 laid the foundation for a national strategy to foster integration of foreign residents living legally in Germany (Storr & Albert, 2005). The federal government committed €750 million for direct integration programming, with additional funds being allocated for programs to target families and strengthen educational and labour market outcomes for immigrants and their children (Bundesregierung, 2007). The 2007 National Integration Plan outlines strategic initiatives by the Federal Government for strengthening language development for children, providing integration courses that focus on language training, orientation, and instruction on German history, culture, and its legal system. These integration courses are mandatory for non-EU citizens (known as Third-Country Nationals) who are drawing unemployment benefits or are otherwise deemed to require integration (Siemiatycki & Triadafilopoulos, 2010). Length of residence in Germany is not the central qualifier for integration services: they are designed for long-established and recent newcomers. In addition, the Federal government has committed to recruiting employees with a migration background in its administration and promoting diversity in the private sector (Bundesregierung, 2007).

The *Länder* (equivalent to Canadian provinces) play a coordinated role alongside the Federal Government’s integration strategy. Each *Land* is able to set its own particular focus based on regional needs. The *Länder* have subsequently developed programs aimed at promoting multi-language ability, teacher training in intercultural competence, and hiring teachers and social workers with a migration background. Additional programs address foreign-credential recognition, improving access to healthcare, promoting civic engagement, and collaborating with diverse religious institutions, particularly Islamic faith groups (Bundesregierung, 2007).

The National Integration Plan envisages the role of the municipalities as liaising between the people and regional and federal governments. The municipalities are charged with documenting best practices, coordinating local efforts between stakeholders engaged in integration initiatives, maintaining intercultural competence in their delivery of services, increasing the number of employees with a migration background, involving immigrants in decision-making processes, promoting local ethnic economies, and fighting xenophobia (Bundesregierung, 2007). More recently,

discussions at the municipal level are focusing on empowering immigrant self-help organizations (SHOs).

Canada, as a settler society, has framed its national identity around its history of immigration (Bauder, 2011). Like in Germany, the demand for labour has shaped immigration to Canada (Kelley & Trebilcock, 2010). In the post-WWII period, Canada shifted immigrant selection from a system that discriminated based on 'race' and origin towards a formally non-discriminatory system that selects immigrants through Economic, Family, and Refugee Classes. The demographic profile of immigrants has therefore changed considerably in recent decades, with the majority of immigrants coming from Asian countries (Lim et al., 2005).

The evolution of the settlement sector in Canada can be traced to the 1970s. The federal ministry of Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) is the central body that sets the framework for integration and settlement programs. In 1974, the Immigrant Settlement and Adaptation Program (ISAP) was introduced by CIC to support the "adaptation, settlement and integration of newcomers to Canada" (CIC, 2011: 1). CIC-funded programs for newcomers have included the ISAP, LINC (Language Instruction for Newcomers), and HOST (connecting immigrants with the 'mainstream' community) programs. In 2008, however, the Modernized Settlement Program replaced ISAP, LINC, and HOST to offer greater flexibility for agencies to meet clients' needs, focus on outcomes, and enhance accountability (CIC, 2012). Services are now provided under the six streams, including Needs Assessment and Referral, Information and Awareness Services, Language Learning and Skills Development, Employment-Related Services, Community Connections, and Support Services. In 2007/2008, a total budget of \$170.3 million funded 188 service providers, which served 92,235 clients served and offered 572,471 services (CIC, 2011). Permanent residents, live-in caregivers, persons who have applied for permanent residency, and protected persons are eligible for services.

Different provinces have developed immigration and settlement policies based on regional needs and demographics. Since the empirical study below will focus on Ontario, we will use this province to illustrate regional-level policies. Despite being the province that received the largest number of newcomers by far, Ontario has only released its first ever official immigration strategy in November 2012 (MCI, 2012). The principle tenets of the new immigration strategy are to attract a skilled workforce, support newcomers and their families to succeed, and to foster a globally connected community. Services supported by the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (MCI) include Newcomer Settlement Programs (NSP), language training, and Bridge Training Programs to help newcomers in licensed trades and professions receive recognition for their foreign credentials (MCI, 2013).

Municipalities serve a critical role in newcomer settlement. While municipal governments are neither mandated nor funded to provide immigrant settlement services, municipalities have incorporated settlement services into their operational plans and budgets (Cappe, 2011). Housing and public transportation have been identified as key areas for successful immigrant integration. Many municipalities also have policies and collaborate with civic institutions and local employment councils to foster the economic integration of newcomers, promoting public awareness and enabling equitable access to services for immigrants (Tossutti, 2009).

Roles of the Non-Governmental Sector

In Germany, two distinct and differently funded models of settlement services delivery are in operation: (1) services offered by large mainstream, well-funded welfare associations, and (2) programs offered by small to medium-sized immigrant SHOs. The bulk of the integration courses tend to be delivered by traditional, well-funded, large welfare associations with full-time staff and volunteers, such as the German Red Cross (*Deutsches Rotes Kreuz – DRK*), Caritas (affiliated to the Catholic church), Diakonie (aligned with the Protestant church), and *Arbeiterwohlfahrt* (AWO, the Workers Association). Integration services offered by these organizations include needs assessment, information, counseling, and initiatives to promote volunteerism for immigrants and combat discrimination. This small number of larger organizations possesses a near monopoly in getting government funding for settlement and other social and welfare services (Zimmer, 2000). While government funding minimizes the impact of market fluctuations, the organizations are vulnerable to government policy changes. Additional funding sources include the EU-Social Funds Stream, foundations, unions, corporations, and associations, making immigrant integration a cross-sectoral priority (BAMF, 2013).

The role of immigrant SHOs in promoting integration was a polarizing debate in the 70s and 80s in Germany. Proponents favored SHOs as providers of valuable information on day-to-day practices and as advocates for immigrants; opponents believed that SHOs create isolated silos and perpetuate segregation (Hunger, 2008). In the last decade, the role of immigrant organizations as partners in providing integration services has been widely recognized. There are an estimated 6,000 registered immigrant SHOs in Germany, formed around shared ethno-specific or national identities and political ideology as well as professional associations of teachers, lawyers, or social workers with migration backgrounds, whose mandates range from providing language training, to education for children, to professional training for adults. Some of the bigger SHOs, such as the Turkish Community Association, have up to 50 employees (ZSD, 2011). A recent evaluation of government supported SHOs estimates that over 30% of all projects supported by the Ministry for Migration and Refugees are carried out by established organizations such as Caritas or Diakonie in partnership with immigrant organizations such as Africa Positive, Association of Islamic Cultural Organizations, and multicultural family associations (Beer & Ernst, 2012). Despite growing government support, SHOs typically lack the financial stability to employ full-time staff and rely instead on volunteers (Bartels, 2009). There are, however, gaps in research on the profile of workers and their working conditions in German immigrant SHOs.

In Canada, the settlement sector is characterized by numerous large, multi-service organizations and smaller ethno-specific organizations that provide information and referral, counselling, housing, employment services, language instruction, interpretation, and health services for newcomers. Examples of large multi-service organizations in the Greater Toronto Area include agencies such as the Centre for Education and Training, Halton Multicultural Council, Dixie-Bloor Neighbourhood Services, and COSTI. The majority of the funding is provided by the three levels of government, foundations, and private funders. Inadequate and unstable funding for community service agencies

providing settlement services has led to gaps in services, an increase in part-time, contract positions, rising workloads, reductions in on-the-job training, and worsening conditions for staff working in the sector (ANIW, 2006; Richmond & Shields, 2005). Like in Germany, a two-tier settlement system exists, whereby the larger, multi service agencies, with the know-how and capacity to apply for government funding sub-contract smaller ethno-specific agencies to fill gaps in terms of language or cultural competence. This arrangement leads to an inherent power imbalance and threatens the very survival of smaller agencies, while exposing the workers to the risks of precarious employments (Sadiq & Doucet, 2004).

Research from the late 1990s revealed that 80% of workers in the settlement sector were women and over 70% of all workers in the settlement sector were first generation, racialized immigrants working in frontline and counseling jobs (Lee, 1999). In a more recent study on immigrant workers in the settlement sector, Türegün (2011) suggests that working in the settlement sector is an attractive choice for skilled immigrants to rebuild their professional careers due to the lack of rigid professional standards in this sector and immigrants' desire to give back to the community. The required skills for working in the sector include understanding cultural norms and values of immigrant populations, multi-lingual abilities, ability to counsel, and a thorough knowledge of government resources available for immigrants (Amin, 1987). Compared to other sectors, pay scales are up to 30 percent lower for positions requiring similar skills (Wilson, 2006). Volunteerism increasingly takes the place of paid employment. Under the guise of acquiring "Canadian work experience," immigrant women often end up providing unpaid clerical support (Lee, 1999).

There are a number of key differences and similarities between Germany and Canada in terms of the settlement service sector. While Germany has developed a national plan to foster immigrant integration, mandating and resourcing all three levels of government, Canada is lacking such a national plan. In Germany, funding for integration programs is available from diverse sources such as the European Union, multiple federal and regional-level ministries, and civil society organizations. In comparison, the federal ministry of Citizenship and Immigration Canada and its provincial counterparts are the primary funders of settlement services. In terms of settlement service delivery, in Germany, large, well-established charitable organizations provide a wide range of social services not only to immigrants but to the wider community. In Canada, agencies are more likely to be dedicated to either settlement work or mainstream social services. The phenomenon of smaller, resource-strapped organizations appears to be common in both countries. Gaps in basic infrastructure, stable funding, and capacity building among these organizations has impacted their ability to offer full-time jobs and attract and retain well-qualified staff. Instead, SHOs in Germany and ethno-specific agencies in Canada rely heavily on volunteers.

Research Design

Our research questions are:

1. Who is working in the settlement sector in Germany and Canada?
2. What are the working conditions in this sector?
3. What kinds of jobs are immigrant women performing?

We gathered qualitative data through personal interviews lasting 40-50 minutes with seven key informants working in the settlement sector. Three of the interviews were conducted in the city of Düsseldorf and one in Duisburg in North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany. Two of the interviews were conducted in Toronto and one in Peel Region in Ontario, Canada. North Rhine-Westphalia and Ontario are among the most diverse and populous states/provinces in each of the respective countries. All participants represented agencies in urban locations, which have attracted large numbers of immigrants.

Key informants had 2-20 years of experience working in the settlement sector. In Germany, two were women and two were men, and in Canada, two were women and one was a man. Of the total sample, three were Executive Directors of their respective organizations, one was the lead staff of a very small organization, and three were Program Coordinators performing frontline work and with some supervisory responsibilities. Four of the key informants were of immigrant background, two were native-born, and one did not disclose her background. They represent a broad range of organizations, including two ethno-specific agencies, one religious community organization, one immigrant advocacy agency, one mainstream settlement agency, and two national voluntary welfare agencies. Six of the seven interviews were audio-taped and transcribed verbatim. One of the key informants declined to be audio-taped, and hand-written notes were taken during the interview instead. The four interviews in Germany were conducted in German, and therefore the quotes cited are our translations.

Findings

Who is Working in the Settlement Sector?

Germany. Affirming a study on work patterns in the non-profit sector, which found that “women represent 69% of the labour in the German non-profit sector, compared to 39% for the economy as a whole” (Anheier et al., 2013: 11), Participant C stated: “Generally, there are women in the social service sector, we know few men in the sector.... They are all female colleagues. We have 5 integration agencies, but only one male colleague.” Participant A explains the large number of women in the field in this way: “What one earns is not really a job; it is not considered very manly either. And I believe that women in social service have more empathy.”

While the knowledge of participants C and A represents their experience with their own agencies, key informant B, who works for a very small immigrant self-help organization, had a different perspective:

Many that I know are men [in the sector]. They are themselves immigrants... They don't get a job here and they want to do something. I feel it is important for men to do something. I mean there is this ego: I want to be something... And the women are busy with the children, and even if they don't have children, they work – they clean. Main thing is that they get a job: doesn't matter what they do. They are usually poorly paid.

While there are gaps in research on women workers in the larger, well-established welfare associations, smaller SHOs are even less researched. The observation from Participant B seems to suggest that immigrant men may be attempting to find work in non-traditional areas due to their inability to find work elsewhere.

In the larger agencies there appears to be a mix of workers with and without a migration background. Participant C said:

Because we work on promoting intercultural interaction, we try to have 50-50, so we have 50% with a migration background and 50% without. So there are many with a migration background – creates trust... someone working with me who does not have migration background is able to complement me.

Participant A observed that workers' backgrounds reflected their agency's programming in religious teachings and Russian language: "We do not have... not solely workers with a migration background, but the majority has. Everyone who comes in contact with people, everyone in our social service department, has [a migration background]."

While it was acknowledged that within integration agencies, it was required to have an education in social work or sociology, Participants A and C shared that there were a number of people in the field who did not possess a relevant degree. Participant A said:

We have a majority of social workers who do not have an educational background in social work and cannot be designated as such and cannot be paid accordingly... Some of the employees come from very different backgrounds. Our security person was a former engineer... The head of our integration agency was a former teacher. This qualification was not recognized here... So we have many people whose education was not recognized here.

Similarly, Participant C remarks:

In social work, colleagues have social work degrees, but I would say generally, one does not have to necessarily have the qualification. It is a prerequisite to have a social work degree to work in an integration agency, but I know a number of casual workers who have ... a degree in German studies. They can do the work because they have the experience.

Participant B presented a very different view on her qualifications and eligibility to work:

I am a qualified social worker, studied here... I work part-time at this agency and I worked as a casual worker, not employed... It is very sad ... I started this homework project. This agency took it over... and they expanded it... They employed other Germans as managers of the program... and I work as an assistant for nothing – only 20 hours a week and what I am getting is a job of a child care worker... I am

taking it because it is full time. I have to finally work for my children, too, but it is very sad.

Two of the key informant's agencies had full time staff working with a fleet of casual workers referred to as *Honorarkräfte*, who worked for an hourly honorarium to deliver workshops and information sessions, but who were not part of the staffing complement of the agency. Key informants described this apparently common phenomenon.

Participant D:

Casual workers are people who carry out certain projects. I work with many casual workers who provide information, counselling... accompany clients to a doctor's appointment, do art therapy... This is very common... They are engaged as often as I need someone to do the work... Their remuneration depends on their qualification.

Participant C:

We are the only two [employees], but we are very happy that we have 21 volunteers and very many casual workers who work with us... Casual workers are mixed – majority of women, but also men... They get an hourly rate. They make the same rate they would make for a similar hour anywhere else.

When asked about casual workers at their organization, Participant A made the following observation: "Casual workers ... I don't subscribe to that. It is a strategy for employers to keep the salary costs down." These interviews indicate that while some employers in the settlement sector see casual labour as an opportunity to deliver services effectively, others recognize the exploitative nature of this arrangement.

Canada: A 2006 study by the Social Planning Council of Toronto and The Family Service Association reports that over 86% of workers in Toronto's settlement sector are women, 75% immigrated to Canada, and 63% are racialized (Wilson, 2006). The key informants confirmed this pattern. Participant E stated, "I will say about 80% of the settlement sector are women and 20% are men... These are predominantly immigrants with degrees in economics... masters in interior design... The majority have non-social service related education." Similarly, participant F observed: "I have noticed frontline positions... In my experience of supervising two teams, every worker is an immigrant. It does feel at [name of organization], we have a very high volume of first generation... frontline workers."

Adding a geographical dimension with reference to the employment of racialized workers in the settlement sector, Participant G stated:

That is a Toronto issue... I think we are probably seeing more women of colour, because immigration demographics have also changed... [but elsewhere] the sector is very white. Even the settlement sector, it mirrors the demographics of the place. The workforce is still very white in terms of the leadership. In the north there is one ED [racialized]... Where you see the majority of racialized men and women, it tends to be in the GTA centres: Toronto, Mississauga, Markham.

Türegün (2011) observed a disconnect between the qualification of workers and their roles and responsibilities within settlement agencies. Key informants concurred

with Türegün's findings, supporting the claim that workers in the sector have unrelated qualifications and shedding light on the emerging professionalization of the sector in terms of workers' qualifications. This has led to unique tensions within the sector between those who have years of work experience and newer entrants into the sector, who are equipped with sector-specific qualifications such as diplomas and degrees in immigration and refugee studies. Participant E noted:

These are predominantly immigrants with degrees in economics ... masters in interior design, masters in linguistics. They are quite very well educated ... and I would say that very few workers that I have found have completed a diploma in settlement service work... Some have social service worker... majority have non-social-service related education.

Participant G stated:

I think there are many... who may not have had any formal education, but had the kind of languages and developed their expertise from work experience. So then... as the sector becomes more and more professionalized... there is a real tension that exists between those who have been in the sector a quarter of a century... and see immigrant integration as a political cause... and the kind of change that is happening in terms of the tone of the sector, where younger workers are... seeing this as a career choice... It is very different in the last decade where you see people making a choice to obtain formal education that focuses on immigrant settlement and integration.

Accentuating the difference between political calling and career choice, Participant F said, "I myself, as a white, Canadian-born woman, I have been asked, and I get very confused by this, why do I work in this sector? ... It is a career interest."

What are the Working Conditions in the Settlement Sector?

Germany. An analysis of job satisfaction among entry-level positions in German welfare associations showed that 80% of the roughly 1.4 million employees work for large welfare associations and that 54% work part time (Walk, 2011). New collective agreements have been implemented since 2005, which have impacted employees who joined the sector after 2005, resulting in lower pay. Some of the welfare organizations have furthermore exercised their right to negotiate their own pay scales and set incomes below that set by the collective agreement in 2005 (Walk, 2011). An emergency ruling allowed a leading welfare association, Diakonie, to actually cut wages of existing employees (ver.di-Landesbezirk Hessen, 2013).

Despite these changes, workers with permanent contracts in larger welfare associations tend to be satisfied with their employment circumstances. Participant C stated:

We don't have to be afraid. We don't have the insecurity. We have permanent contracts... We have very friendly employers – being sick is not an issue."

Participant D had similar observations: "I have worked here for many years... I have a permanent contract... Every few years the funding is renewed... I have a pension

plan, medical benefits... There is a collective agreement... The longer a person works, the more money.

Conversely, Participant A, who is employed with a smaller religious community cooperative, has no formal extended medical benefits:

Medical benefits... no we don't have that. We have a company pension plan... Members of our community are... one is a pediatrician, another is a pathologist, the other is a pharmacist, a doctor... so there are different ways we get medical assistance here.

Addressing the pay scales in the settlement sector, Participant A stated:

For many, it is not attractive to work in this field, of course. This is partly because one cannot earn as much here as in the corporate sector... We do earn less... We are not bound by collective agreements... As the head of the organization, I make 25%-30% less than what I would make in the corporate sector.

Participant B, who is the lead staff of a small ethno-specific migrant SHO, addressed the issue of volunteer labour:

Everything is voluntary. We don't get any money for our work... We got this money for a homework project... when we see how many of us are working in this... if we were to pay them all... if we would pay 5 Euros per hour... we would be over the budget. Then one can only work with volunteers. There are no benefits for project work – you get nothing... If I have to go for an appointment, I have to buy a ticket. I don't get that money from anybody... And if I sit for four hours and make a flyer... I do that at home – it all costs money, you don't get that money from anybody.

The issue of office infrastructure was brought up in two of the smaller agencies.

Participant A:

The personal infrastructure and technical infrastructure, even the screen monitors... decent office chairs... we just now [acquired]... That was partly a difficult fight to have... We started with a tea pot and then chairs... For us it is a matter of fact, but it is not a matter of fact for all cooperatives.

Participant B:

This is not my office... I work for [name of organization], but I work for my own organization from home... I have taken Fridays when I do counselling... but without a firm office, it is very difficult.

The question about professional development for workers in the sector elicited mixed responses. The issue of professional development was not even on the radar of the smaller SHOs, which struggle with financial instability and rely on volunteer labour (Beer & Ernst, 2012; Bartels, 2009). Participant C, who works in a larger agency, said:

Right now we are focusing more on intercultural opening for our clients, but I have attended a course on anti-discrimination and our casual workers get a lot of training opportunities, when we have the money.

The need to invest in staff was reiterated by Participant A:

We are financially supporting a co-worker to complete a Master's degree in social work... We have employed people while they were studying... Then we said, you have to commit yourself to us for 2-3 years. It is considered time off to study ... not vacation ... I want people to have the opportunity to qualify themselves.

Canada: Little research exists on working conditions specific to the settlement sector in Canada. Ted Richmond and John Shields (2005), however, report that inadequate funding for community service agencies providing settlement services has led to gaps in services, instability, and worsening conditions for staff working in the sector. Also, professional development and training-related expenses are no longer eligible for reimbursement by CIC (CIC, 2012). The Alberta Network of Immigrant Women (ANIW) documented in 2006 that reduced funding has led to an increase in part-time contract positions and increased workload, and there was minimal on-the-job training or orientation.

Speaking to the funding cuts to the sector, interview participants confirmed that most jobs in the sector (with some exceptions in some larger, unionized agencies) are based on annual, renewable contracts with low pay and minimal benefits. Participant E said:

No agency has full time. There is no such thing as a full time employee at any of the agencies... They are all renewable one year contracts now... That is because the funding is never guaranteed... The contract says that we will give you three months' notice and we have the right to decide at any given time that we are going to rescind the funding... But, for example, [name of organization] has been there for the last 50 years. They have better pay scales, CPP, and because contracts have already been in existence for the last 40-50 years, they continue to be renewed. But for us to compare with them, CIC will say sorry, no doing.

Along the same lines, Participant G remarked:

Across the province there are larger, unionized organizations. They seem to be better paid with some benefits. There are many of our organizations where there is little or no benefits. And folks are paying barely more than minimum wages. Wages seem to be better in centres like Toronto, Ottawa, Hamilton, Windsor, increasingly so London, but in the smaller centres, I am often surprised at what folks are being paid to deliver social services. And as I said, very little extended health benefits and certainly very little professional development, as part of your compensation package ... If you spoke to frontline workers, they would say they have heavy workloads, very little recognition for the work they do... It becomes very routine and there isn't any space for innovation.

While the long-term workers in larger settlement agencies are somewhat protected by the funding cuts through unionization and bumping rights, new entrants in the agency appear to grapple with job insecurity even within larger organizations. Participant F said:

If you add it up, our budget has had a dent of 30% in our CIC funded programs... A lot of lay-offs and then because we are unionized, bumping, people get bumped out... It really does disrupt the flow of services. A lot of our positions are permanent with benefits for our frontline workers... When it is a new program, it is not

necessarily a unionized position. We do have majority full-time with benefits. If you are a permanent worker, you are getting benefits. If you are part time, you are not. We have been in a period of pull-back, so recently we have not had the experience where new programs are piloted and they become permanent. In the retraction piece, if they get cut down to 21 hours, they are no longer unionized... We have actually lost positions. In the past four years there has been no expansion.

Participant G acknowledged increasing turnover and the precarious nature of employment within the sector:

There has been a whole shift over the last 20 years away from core or operational funding to project funding... So what it means for individual workers is that you are never certain of your work, so there is no loyalty built... What agencies are seeing is high turnover in staff ... and it goes back to the question whether... one comes to the sector as a cause or a career, they are not staying very long in our sector... The concern that folks are having is that around succession planning... knowledge transfer does not happen, so you are constantly having to bring in new folks and train them and they go off and find more stable [jobs].

The cutbacks to the sector and precarious working conditions seem to have opposite impacts on workers: (1) high turnover for some agencies with staff leaving for better opportunities, and (2) for other agencies virtually no staff turnover, as there are no new jobs.

What Kinds of Jobs are Immigrant Women Performing?

Germany: When asked about the work roles of women within integration agencies in Germany, Participant C stated:

Men are still at the very top. Even when I think of other welfare associations, frontline workers are women with migration backgrounds. Higher positions are held by women, but without migration backgrounds.

Questions about career advance opportunities drew mixed responses. These responses correlated with the size of the agency. Participant A who works for a smaller agency said:

The chances are few because we are not such a big place. For example, a childcare provider can become a supervisor of kindergarten... there will be a generation change at some point, but other than that... Of course, one can be recruited by another agency... but in this organization itself there will hardly be any opportunities.

These remarks affirm existing research, which has found that smaller agencies are rarely able to offer “routes for professional development” because a middle management level is often absent (Walk, 2011, p. 22).

A divergent observation was made by Participant D, a male staff member with an immigrant background working for a larger organization, who said: “Career advancement is good, not a problem. There are opportunities to grow and develop. Every department has a workers’ council and it is fair.”

Canada: In a Canadian context, frontline workers tend to be racialized women, while senior management positions are more likely to be occupied by white women. As racialized women are not involved in the decision making processes within the sector, their interests are underrepresented and not sufficiently addressed (Lee, 1999). A recent survey of 240 member organizations revealed that 91% of Executive Directors of non-profit agencies were white, followed by 2% of Executive Directors who were Aboriginal, and less than 1% who were Black, Chinese, Japanese, and West Asian (Bradshaw et al., 2009). Concurring with this research, Participant G said:

Racialized women are on the frontlines, some in the middle management, but not in the senior management. But if you look nationally, leadership is white and male. Even where there is a shifting in terms of women's leadership. But even there the women's leadership is white, right? You can count the EDs who are racialized in the sector and many tend to be heads of ethno-specific organizations, so if you look at some of the larger settlement organizations, they are still white organizations.

When asked to reflect on the reasons for the lack of top leadership positions in settlement agencies filled by racialized women, Participant G responds:

Not racism! [Laughs]. Two things. For many organizations, there are not many steps. It is a difficult career path within smaller agencies. Often you have frontline folk and the ED with no middle steps, so there is no place to move, right? But in larger organizations, where there is space to move, it plays out the same way it does in mainstream organizations... It is about networking, it is about the relationships, it is about who you know, it is about the opportunities.

Echoing the well-known double burden for women having to balance household work and paid work (e.g., Boyd, 1984), participants explained the gender imbalance among leadership positions. Participant F said: "I have seen some really skilled workers... maybe there is an opening and they just choose not to apply. Because of child care reasons, it does not fit their life stage right now." Participant E observed:

I think that has been generally in all social service sectors, not just in settlement. Predominantly all CEOs are male and predominantly from the dominant culture. It just so happens that, somehow, men have either the ability to have taken the opportunity for education and a variety of different jobs and the ability to be in that position to get that experience. With women, they are at a disadvantage, either because they will have to look after the kids or looking after the home, the family and then studying becomes a bit more difficult... There is sexism in the Canadian patriarchal system... Here also there is a glass ceiling, old boys club.

Funding cuts have further minimized racialized immigrant women's opportunities for career advancement, says Participant E:

Within the last 5 years, there has been an enormous amount of cuts... The middle management positions have been eroded. Now you have maybe for every 10 settlement workers maybe one manager, or maybe for the entire team, where you had four to five managers, you have only two managers... So when we interviewed for our settlement positions, we had staff applying who were supervisors and

managers, that applied to frontline positions, because they are out of job, so recently we just hired ... and all the six candidates that we interviewed all had over 10 years of experience, all had supervisory experience.

Participant E concluded with a bleak forecast for the sector and the future of immigrant women's employment in the sector:

This is a sector which I think... will see shrinking amounts of money pumped in. Fewer and fewer agencies will survive. There will be bitter animosity between agencies... and those that can do some work, have some prestige, will survive, and those for whatever reasons the government or the provincial government feels that is not their favourite agency will simply wither away with no explanation as to why that agency has withered away. I think that there will be no jobs available. I think that if there is no new money, you can't hire. Doesn't matter how much the demand is.

Conclusion

This working paper makes a contribution to the emerging literature on the settlement sector as an employer of immigrants and paves the way for future research in this field. Our findings suggest that despite the different national delivery models of settlement and integration services, there are significant similarities among the situations of immigrant women working in the settlement sectors in both Germany and Canada. In both countries, women are providing the bulk of frontline services. These women were recruited because of their knowledge of culture and language abilities. Their remuneration is low when compared to the corporate sector, and they are not equally represented in the highest positions of the organization as decision makers or heads of agencies. Their career mobility is constrained by their dual roles as paid employees outside the home and individuals with responsibilities for caregiving within the home, and they often lack the specific qualifications or have qualifications that are not recognized to advance into leadership positions.

In Germany, the majority of integration services are embedded within departments of large, well-funded welfare organizations whose staff experience stable employment with benefits. This situation is similar to the large, settlement-specific agencies in Canada. The smaller migrant SHOs in Germany appear to face challenges of under-funding and precarious working conditions similar to the challenges faced by ethno-specific Canadian organizations. While the Canadian organizations in this sector are following a trend of providing only one-year, annually-renewable contracts for a majority of new workers entering the sector, Germany appears to be grooming a parallel workforce of casual women workers who are employed by the hour. Volunteer labour is wide-spread in both countries.

Our findings are consistent with labour market segmentation theory. Vulnerable immigrants tend to be allocated to the secondary segment of the labour market (Bauder, 2006). Furthermore, being an immigrant intersects with gender, which is another key factor of labour segmentation. Both Germany and Canada have an overrepresentation of women in integration and settlement agencies, primarily occupied as frontline workers. The disconnect between workers' education and job experience, as well as

their jobs within the settlement sector, also underscores the social closure theory. Our findings suggest a rising tension between workers who see settlement work as a cause and workers who see this work as a career. In Canada, the growing professionalization of settlement work likely inhibits the career advancement of racialized immigrant women who have years of experience in the sector. In Germany, the sector appears to be working with a large number of on-call, casual workers, many of whom are themselves immigrants

Our research points towards important policy implications for both Germany and Canada. Germany has just recently begun investing in the settlement sector, embedding integration services within mainstream welfare associations, which has offered some stability for workers in the larger organizations. However, the smaller migrant SHOs struggle due to lack of funding and lack of knowledge about fundraising. A strategic and systematic approach to building capacities among smaller SHOs seems to be critical in improving the working conditions of immigrant women within these organizations.

Canadian settlement services have developed as a parallel sector to mainstream human service agencies. Racialized immigrant women have found employment as frontline workers in this sector, where their language abilities and cultural knowledge have been perceived as assets for working with immigrants. However, the sector has witnessed shrinking and volatile funding in recent years, which has had a negative impact on workers. Canada could learn from the German model and increase the involvement of diverse ministries in supporting immigrant settlement – making settlement a cross-sectoral priority.

More research is required to understand the roles and remuneration of men and women immigrant workers in the settlement sector. An exploration of successful strategies of advancement within the sector may shed further light on the processes of distinction and social closure that structure the labour market of the settlement sector. Finally, the continued comparison of Germany and Canada would produce valuable insights into how structural processes related to the settlement sector unfold in national contexts with different histories and approaches towards settlement and integration.

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