

FOREGROUNDING THE EXPERIENCES OF SKILLED IMMIGRANT WOMEN FROM
THE CARIBBEAN IN THE CANADIAN LABOUR MARKET

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Abstract

This qualitative study focuses on the lived experiences of women from the Caribbean in the Canadian labour market who migrate to Canada as skilled workers. It examines their lived experiences of racism and sexism to scope out connections with the historical and contemporary constructions of race and gender in Canada, especially for women who identify as Black. The study centers the lived experiences of participants as viable knowledge and amplifies their voices for empowerment. The study also positions their experiences alongside mainstream narratives on skilled migration.

Critical Race Theory (CRT) is used as the primary theoretical framework to focus on dynamics of race and racism, along with Canadian Anti-racist Feminist Thought (ARFT) to tease out understandings of feminist theorizing on race and gender more distinctly. The study uses Critical Race methodology to investigate the lived experiences of fifteen skilled immigrant women from three English-speaking Caribbean islands. It uses one-on-one in-depth semi-structured face-to-face interviews for data collection. Participants resided in the Greater Toronto and surrounding Area (GTA).

The study reveals patterns of discrimination that perpetuate racist and patriarchal practices and reinforce White privilege. The study provides counternarratives to dominant accounts on skilled migration, which omits the impact of race and gender on the post-migration employment experiences of especially Black skilled immigrant women. The study highlights ways in which participants resisted aspects of the ongoing discrimination and sheds light on their collective experiences. Overall, findings reveal that the stories that participants share establish linkages to similar patterns of unfair practices directed towards Black women in Canada historically, that are in line with stratified inequity.

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I began my PhD studies with a timeframe and a destination in mind. These were later replaced with life lessons that became part of my journey - for how can one place a timeframe and destination on learning when learning is a lifelong process? The shoulders on which I stand to navigate the tides between the rational and the irrational and perhaps hallucination and coherence are many. There are those who have kept me from crossing into a blank space altogether and others who have simply listened. I am grateful for those who have supported me and contributed to expanding my horizons and for nurturing my curiosity. Thank you!

To my research participants, thank you for being vulnerable in my presence. I met fifteen wonderful and bright women who are educated, smart, talented and have the skills and experience to rule the world. It is a shame that the claws of bureaucracy cannot scratch past the colour that creates the barriers, instead, it scathes the individuals who happen to have the colour. I hope that by writing your experiences into history, it will be the catalyst that tips the tide of action. Without your experiences, this research would not have been possible, and I thank you sincerely.

Thank you to my doctoral committee supervisor Dr. Wilburn Hayden and committee members Dr. Uzo Anucha and Dr. Carl James. Your encouragement, your guidance and constructive comments are what made the completion of this dissertation a reality. Thank you for supporting me in my intellectual development to get to this transition post, for the next leg of my journey is only just beginning to take shape. I thank you for respecting my battle wounds that are still in the process of healing and for guiding me to a path forward.

Dedication

*As long as experiences of race continue to be illuminated by the beams of the oppressor,
the story of the oppressed will remain in darkness.*

To my son. You are and will remain, my greatest teacher about life.

*To the younger generations in my family, life is about experience. You grow as you learn
and learn as you grow and sometimes you have to start over to be stronger.*

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Aim and Scope of the Study

This qualitative study focuses on the lived experiences of women from the Caribbean in the Canadian labour market who migrate to Canada as skilled workers. It examines their lived experiences of racism and sexism to scope out connections to the historical and contemporary constructions of race and gender in Canada, especially for women who identify as Black. To better understand their lived experiences of race and gender and make these connections, this study focuses on patterns of racial and gender discrimination that negatively impact participants' experiences. The study also focuses on the intersecting experiences of race and gender that intensify patterns of discrimination that participants describe.

In addition, the study seeks out power dynamics of race and gender that impede participants' access to opportunities for upward mobility and economic prosperity within the Canadian labour market, especially as Black women. It uses their first-hand accounts to highlight their struggles and bring their experiences to the forefront of the discussions on skilled migration and skilled immigrant women (Fernández, 2002; Martin & Garza, 2020; Okoroji et al., 2023). In centering their lived experiences as viable knowledge, the study counter mainstream narratives on skilled migration that exclude experiences of race and gender. The study seeks out avenues of resistance that participants describe throughout their experiences. to amplify their voices for empowerment.

The study uses Critical Race Theory (CRT) as the primary framework to focus on dynamics of race and racism along with Canadian Anti-racist Feminist Thought (ARFT) to highlight their experiences of race and gender and how they shape their experiences. Along with these critical frameworks, Critical Race methodology is used to investigate the lived experiences of fifteen skilled immigrant women from three English-speaking Caribbean islands. Participants

shared their stories in individual in-depth semi-structured face-to-face interviews, lasting between forty-five minutes to one hour. Participants in this study migrated to Canada over a 17-year period between 1997 to 2014 and resided in the Greater Toronto and surrounding area (GTA). All participants migrated to Canada from the Caribbean under the Skilled Worker Program. The study engages their experience within the context of the research question and within the theoretical frameworks used to define the scope of this study.

Context of the Study

Canada is among one of the top three countries to which individuals from the Caribbean emigrate (Chamberlain, 2002; Dixon & Arthur, 2019; Ho, 1999; Jaupart, 2023; Jones, 2008; Thomas-Hope, 1988, 2002; Thompson & Bauer, 2003). For decades, women have made up the greater portion of individuals from the region who call Canada home, especially during earlier periods. The steady stream of women from the region has some bearing on the growing number of female immigrants in Canada overall. In 2011 for example, over 51% of the immigrant population in Canada were reported to be women, and female immigrants accounted for over 52.3% of Canada's immigrant population at the time (Chui & Maheux, 2011). This growing number of immigrant women from the Caribbean and in Canada generally, positions gender at the forefront of discussions on Canadian immigration. These discussions are not complete without the inclusion of women from the Caribbean in Canada.

Between 2006 to 2016 more than forty-seven thousand (47,635) of the over ninety-thousand individuals who migrated from the Caribbean to Canada were women, and under forty-three thousand (42,970) were men (Statistics Canada, 2016). This is a difference of almost five-thousand more women than men who migrate to Canada from the region during the reported

period. Increases have been noted in general among women in Canada migrating from South America and the Caribbean much earlier, based on data from the 2006 Canadian census (for 2001) (see Chui & Maheux, 2011; Thomas-Hope, 2002). During this period, a reported 14% increase was noted in the overall female immigrant population from the region between 2001 and 2006, and the numbers increased consistently over a 15-year period.

Observations made by James and colleagues (1999) show a 120:100 female to male ratio of immigrants from the Caribbean to Canada during the late 90s, which indicate that the increase extends well beyond this 15-year period. While there have been noted changes in the numbers in more recent years, perhaps due to wider pools of migrants from other source countries, the numbers, especially women from the region to Canada continue to increase steadily (Dixon & Arthur, 2019; Statistics Canada, 2017). Similar uptick in numbers was present in 2017, which showed higher numbers of women than men coming from the region to Canada (Statistics Canada, 2017; United Nations, 2019). More recently however, the 2021 Census shows that the number of men coming from the region to Canada have surpassed the number of women, with upwards of 21,125 men compared to approximately 19,735 women (Statistics Canada, 2021). Still, the numbers remain relatively high overall, and gender still remains a crucial issue of concern in discussions on immigration in Canada. Therefore, this provides valid reasons to study the experiences of women from the Caribbean in Canada to add to the discussion on skilled migration.

The accounts about the range of their experiences have not kept up with established trends considering their growing numbers in Canada. Research about women from the Caribbean in Canada typically focus on their post-migration encounters of racism and sexism more broadly and in earlier years (see Calliste, 1993/94, 2000; Flynn, 1998; Silvera, 1989; Rolle Sands et al.,

2020; Shkimba & Flynn, 2004). Little is known about their later post-migration experiences beyond their earlier entry as domestic workers (Arat-Koç, 2006; Calliste, 1993/94; Lawson, 2013; Silvera, 1989). Research on their experiences as skilled immigrants is even more sparse, even though many qualify to migrate to Canada in the skilled immigrant category of migration.

This means that research about women from the region who qualified to migrate based on their education and skills is lacking. Information about the utilization of their skills post-migration along with their experiences are unclear. With the current concerns about the increasing brain drain waves due to the significant number of skilled and highly educated women leaving the Caribbean, little is known about how they fare once they enter Canada (Flynn, 2004; James et al., 1999; Dumont et al., 2007; International Organization for Migration [IOM], 2017). More importantly, considering the historic patterns of discrimination towards them in Canada, the effects of race and gender on their post-migration experiences as skilled immigrants need to be examined. As such, these gaps provide the basis for further examination of their experiences as skilled immigrants in Canada. This research focuses on their post-migration experiences as skilled immigrants in the Canadian labour market and is a direct response to the noted gaps in literature that this study seeks to address.

Purpose and Objective

The purpose of this study is to examine the lived experiences of skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean in the Canadian labour market. It draws on insight from their experiences of racism and sexism to scope out connections with the historical and contemporary constructions of race and gender in Canada. The study focuses on the lived experiences of especially skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean who identify as Black. It draws on the

historical understanding of women from the Caribbean as members of immigrant groups who have been negatively impacted by Canada's racist immigration policies that favour European immigrants (Thobani, 2000; Roache, 2022; Flynn, 2013; Bobb-Smith & Barrero, 2004). Earlier groups of women from the region migrated to Canada primarily as domestic workers and were forced to settle for low-wage, low-income jobs due to racism and other forms of discrimination (Arat-Koç, 2006; Calliste, 1993/94; Flynn, 1998; Silvera, 1989). However, review of literature indicates that the experiences of skilled immigrant women from the region in Canada have not been fully examined and documented.

Attention is given in this study to the intersecting impact of race, gender, and other forms of discrimination that intensify issues of marginalization and oppression in the course of their experience (Dua & Robertson, 1999; Collins, 2000, 2019; Mensah, 2010). Instances where race and gender appear prevalent in shaping the experiences that participants report are of particular importance in this research. This also means that the role that the power dynamics of race and gender create that result in barriers to impede their access to opportunities for upward mobility and economic opportunities, are points of examination as well (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Collins, 2000, 2019). The study seeks to amplify the voices of participants by foregrounding their first-hand experience as the basis for this examination (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004; Dua & Robertson, 1999; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). It centers the lived experiences of participants as viable knowledge within social work, immigration, and social sciences literature, as well as within Canadian society. The study also positions their experiences as counter to mainstream narratives on skilled migration that omit understandings of race and gender.

The primary goals of this study are to examine the experiences of Black skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean in the Canadian labour market and;

- (i) Identify experiences of racism and sexism that they encounter in the Canadian labour market that marginalize and oppress them;
- (ii) Scope out connections between their lived experiences of racism and sexism and the historical and contemporary understanding of race and gender in Canada, and;
- (iii) Amplify their voices to foster their empowerment and position their experience as part of knowledge creation within social work and immigration literature, as well as in the broader socio-political context of Canadian society.

Research Question

This dissertation is guided by the following research question: “What do the lived experiences of Black skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean in the Canadian labour market reveal about the historical and contemporary constructions of race and gender in Canada?” The research seeks to answer this question by focusing on the kinds of experiences that race, and gender typically enact and re-enact and how they appear in the accounts that participants describe (Amarshi, 2018; Bannerji, 2020; Murad, 2013; Solanke, 2009). This includes how certain characteristics shape the course of their experiences in Canadian society and the barriers that they encounter as a result. The defining characteristics are based on perceptions that are socially constructed and have real life impact on those affected. Romero (2008) notes the socially constructed categories of race and ethnicity as markers of Black bodies for discrimination. Similarly, Elabor-Idemudia (1999) notes the justification and denial of basic

human rights to Black individuals that racist and sexist stereotypes create. Perceptions about these characteristics are a result of historical and cultural processes which are ingrained in societal institutions to dictate social norms and label certain groups for exclusion (Allahar, 2010; Branker, 2017; James, 1994).

This study engages these understanding of characteristics such as race and gender and how they operate in shaping the everyday experience for participants. The study validates their experiences of racism and sexism based on their accounts and shows how especially Black women are uniquely racialized in ways that continue colonial operations of discrimination (see Garrison et al., 2023; Jain, 2010). This is in line with both CRT and ARFT analysis. The research question is key to guiding the examination that this study undertakes.

Conceptualization and Operationalization of Key Terminologies

Reference to **skilled immigrants** in this study is in line with the actual immigration category under which individuals migrate to Canada which is based on the points system program. The points system is administered through the Federal Skilled Worker Program (FSWP) where applicants are assessed based on specific criteria with points allocated for each criterion (see Appendix E, p. 283). Points are allocated for, education (maximum score 25 points), work experience (maximum score 15 points), language skills (maximum score 28 points), arranged employment in Canada (maximum score 10 points) and adaptability (maximum score 10 points), (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada [IRCC], 2024); Hou et al., 2021). An overall score of 100 points is allocated and applicants require a minimum of 67 points to qualify for assessment in the FSWP. A key point to note in that education, skilled work

experience and language ability are baseline criteria that all participants must meet before they can submit their application to immigration officials for further consideration in the FSWP.

Prospective applicants must meet the minimum language skills requirements for English and/or French (Citizenship & Immigration Canada, 2017). Reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills of prospective applicants must be at a minimum level across all 4 levels respectively. Applicants must meet the selection criteria threshold for language at level 7 of Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) for English and/or the Niveaux de compétence linguistique canadien (NCLC) for French, (Citizenship & Immigration Canada, 2017).

Their credentials are assessed based on Canadian standards by a third party designate of Canadian Immigration and Citizenship (CIC). Their education must meet the Canadian equivalent of post-secondary education before they can qualify to migrate under the FSWP (Citizenship & Immigration Canada, 2017). Similarly, the overseas employment experience of prospective applicants must match the essential duties outlined in the Canadian National Occupation Classification (NOC) TEER categories (Citizenship & Immigration Canada, 2017). Their skilled work experience must align with a similar type of job that is specified in the Canadian NOC.

It is important to note that individuals including women who possess similar levels of education and skills, migrate to Canada under other immigration categories (family class sponsorship, refugee claimant, etc.). However, the points-based assessment criteria is unique to the FSWP and is used as the primary qualifying criteria for the FSWP and for individuals to migrate as skilled workers, (see Citizenship & Immigration Canada, 2017). This is unlike other categories of migration which makes the skilled program quite unique in its requirements.

The program marks a decisive shift in the admission of immigrants based on selective source countries, to more emphasis on human capital that prioritizes highly skilled immigrants (Bailey & Mulder, 2017; Branker, 2017). The shift was intended to curb racism and racial discrimination within the immigration systems and resulted in Canada easing up on its preference for immigrants from primarily European countries (Bailey & Mulder, 2017; Thobani, 2000). However, critics note that the FSWP is still rife with issues of discrimination towards certain groups of immigrants, which is not unlike the discrimination that plagued earlier groups of women from the region who were admitted to Canada under various categories of immigration (Boyd, 2014; Branker, 2017). This insight frames the focus on skilled immigrants in this study. Their interactions within the Canadian labour market are also a key point of focus in this study.

The focus on the **Canadian labour market** in this study is in line with similar veins of inquiry used by other scholars who conduct research about skilled immigrant groups (Aydede & Dar, 2017; Bannerjee et al., 2021; Grant, 2015; Kaushal et al., 2016; Li & Sweetman, 2014; Lu & Hou, 2020; Orepoulos, 2011; Reitz, 2013, 2014; Riaño & Baghdadi, 2007; Wald & Fang, 2008). Their respective focus on the labour market relates predominantly to the skilled category of migration and how skilled immigrants fared in occupational and comparable employment in host countries. In addition, the emphasis placed on their faster rate of contributions to both the Canadian labour market and the Canadian economy, positions the labour market alongside Canadian immigration, as a key component in the post-migration journeys of skilled immigrants (Bannerjee et al., 2021; Boyd, 2014; IRCC, 2024; Li & Sweetman, 2014; Sweetman, 2017). This would also position their efforts to secure employment as a key factor to begin to make the anticipated contributions in the Canadian labour market at a faster rate compared to members from other immigrant groups. This study adopts a similar focus on the Canadian labour market to

scope out revelations about race and gender that lead to their marginalization as skilled immigrant women and members of a racialized group.

The focus on **marginalization** in this study incorporates insights from Hall's (1999) approach to the term that points to specific aspects that include economic exploitation, dehumanized disregard for the experiences and contributions of workers. Hall's (1999) approach also contends with unemployment and underemployment within the understanding of marginalization. The author's approach to marginalization incorporates factors based on race, gender and other forms of discrimination that operate to reduce social and economic opportunities for individuals and groups. Hall (1999) also points to perceptions of negative stereotypes (in this case towards immigrants) as part of the understanding of marginalization, which he notes is reflective of similar attributes that the Frankfurt school of thought and critical theorists consider problematic.

In engaging with the complexity between social work and marginalization, Najmuddin (2024) contends with aspects of marginalization as, "...a process in which certain groups of the population find themselves on the periphery of social, economic and political life, as a result of which their needs and rights are ignored or silenced" (p. 111). In a similar vein, hooks (1984) points to the exclusion of women based on their race, gender, and other forms of discrimination as a form of marginalization in dominant culture. Najmuddin (2024) also points to other terms such as exploitation and powerlessness within the understanding of marginalization. The author contends with these terms as byproducts of marginalization that are derived from oppressive experiences that unjustly deny non-Whites of opportunities in ways that impede social justice. Lastly, Zutlevics' (2002) analysis of marginalization engenders oppression based on the inability of individuals to "...exert resilient control over their future due to unjust and invasive

interference by others”, (p. 90). These understandings of marginalization point to disempowerment of individuals and their exclusion from opportunities that place them at a disadvantage in society. The effects of marginalization that include limited access or the outright exclusion from mainstream society, which leaves marginal opportunities for women in particular to participate in all aspects of society also factors in the understanding of marginalization from these authors. These effects are in line with CRT and ARFT’s framework that that is used to guide his study. I use these insights to help contextualize reference to the concept in exploring the effects of marginalization that leads to the oppression of participants in this study.

Zutlevics’ (2002) analysis of **oppression** rests on two key components which are justice and autonomy. This approach will also lend context to framing the use of the concept in this study. The author notes that when one’s life chances are altered for the worse due to unjust treatment and unfair opportunities it results in oppression. In his analysis, the author contends with privilege that is derived from resilient autonomy which is “...when one is able to both realize and reasonably project into the future a life plan of one’s choosing”, (p.92). This outcome in dominant societies is usually achieved among identities that are typically White, that are associated with privilege and control which are further normalized to maintain power. On the flip side, the author denotes identities that are associated with non-Whites as those that typically experience oppression. These individuals are disenfranchised and marginalized in dominant societies. The author notes that their success or failure is contingent on factors such as race, gender, ethnicity, status as immigrants and other discriminatory factors rather than their potential.

In addition, prejudicial thoughts, actions, institutional power with historical patterns of such treatment towards these groups, create injustice which minimize their autonomy and result

in their oppression as well (Zutlevics, 2002). When one is oppressed, they are "...unjustly denied the opportunity..." to achieve "resilient autonomy", (Zutlevics, 2002, p. 80). The author further notes that these individuals encounter prevalent patterns of discrimination that are not isolated and are instead, pervasive encounters of injustice that increase their precarity and reduce their life chances. Whereas "...in non-oppressive societies, external factors or circumstances, such as others' personality... would not present an impediment to the people living in accordance with their own values and desires" (Zutlevics, 2002. p. 92). The author further notes that counter to oppression is anti-oppression strategies to challenge oppression, with the goal to abate effects of power imbalance and achieve equity and social justice.

Both the approach to marginalization and oppression aligns with CRT and ARFT lenses in contending with the unique perspective that members of Black and racialized groups provide about their experiences based on their race, gender, and other forms of discrimination (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Ogbonnaya-Ogburu et al, 2020). The focus in this study is on experiences that subject non-White individuals and groups to persistent unjust, and unfair treatment that disenfranchise and disempower them. This focus also includes the disproportionate and inequitable overt and covert encounters that reduce their access to opportunities and deprive them of optimal social, emotional, financial and/or political well-being.

More definitively, this study contends with the inequitable treatment that maintain the status quo and place Black and racialized women on the margins of society and render them powerless. This exclusion from mainstream society also renders their contributions invisible (Collins, 2000; hooks, 1984). This pattern of treatment systematically denies them of opportunities that restrict or limit their pursuit of justice and otherwise autonomous life chances. They are also based on "...unjust external forces..." that deflect them from their plans to

successfully integrate in the Canadian labour market in a shorter time frame, (Zutlevics, 2002, p.90). Thus, they cannot be “...reasonably assured that [their] life would continue in the vein that it had to date” and as it had prior to migration (Zutlevics, 2002, p. 90). This study draws from these noted concepts in its examination of the experiences of skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean in the Canadian labour market and the historical, temporal and societal contexts that connects to their experiences.

Overview of dissertation chapters

Chapter one provides an introduction of the research and outlines the aims and scope of the study along with the context of the study. It also outlines the purpose and objectives of the study, the research question that guides this study, conceptualization and operationalization of key terms used in this research. It concludes with overview of the dissertation chapters.

Chapter two explores CRT and ARFT as the theoretical frameworks used in this research. It provides a brief introduction of the chapter and an historical overview of both theories respectively, their main concepts and applications, and their rationale and relevance to this research. This chapter positions CRT as the overarching theory to synthesize the manifestations of race and racism in the everyday experiences of racialized skilled immigrant women. ARFT compliments CRT to tease out deeper understandings of feminist theorizing on race and gender more distinctly. ARFT is also used to engender discussions on the intersection of race and gender in combination with an intersectionality lens. ARFT also provides the context within which this study examines “gendered racism and racialized patriarchies” in addition to the manifestations of race and racism highlighted through CRT’s lens (Siddiqui, 2019, p. 96). These theories, when synthesized, provide a framework that critically illuminates the historical and contemporary

constructions of race and gender which is a key component of this research. Following this explication, the chapter concludes with the rationale and relevance of the theories to this study.

Chapter three provides a review of selected literature using both CRT and ARFT lenses in the review about the movement of Black and racialized bodies through the Canadian immigration and labour market systems and the emphasis on their labour. The chapter engages with understandings of Canada as a White settler nation with highlights of historical patterns of marginalization and oppression towards particularly non-White immigrants and individuals. The chapter provides insight into the experiences of non-White immigrants in social work and social sciences literature, as well as a brief and contextualized overview of migration narratives on skilled immigrant women. These are core aspects of the population that this study engages, and this chapter provides insights into existing discussions in the literature. Similarly, this chapter provides a review of the early experiences of Black women from the Caribbean in Canada. The review of the respective groups adds historical context about their experiences and patterns of discrimination to draw inferences in the discussion of findings section in this study. The chapter provides a synopsis of the application of the literature to this research and concludes with a summary of the overall chapter.

Chapter four provides an overview of the chapter, and a discussion of the methods and methodological approaches used in this study, which is critical race methodology (CRM). It provides an overview of CRM as a critical qualitative research design and delves into the rationale for choosing CRM for this study. This section focuses more closely on considerations for critical race study design generally which is used to inform the actual research design outlined for this study. Chapter four also outlines the research process, including recruitment, sampling, data collection, transcription, and data analysis. The chapter outlines ethical

considerations and provides a synopsis of my journey of self-awareness and positionality for transparency and reflexivity for this research. The chapter concludes with a summary.

Chapter five engages with the analysis of findings and early discussions. The chapter is divided into two main themes that highlights participants' stories, with sub-themes to engage specific aspects of their stories about their experiences and provide insight into trends for examination. The chapter is framed within the context of the theoretical lenses of CRT and ARFT. It engenders a discussion with each theme and sub-theme to build on the existing understanding of raced and gendered experiences, incorporating excerpts from participants to amplify their voices and provide insight into their experiences. The chapter concludes with an overarching analysis of themes and discussion, focusing on the research question.

Chapter six is the final chapter in this dissertation and provides the discussion of findings, significance and implications of this research. The discussion engages aspects of participants' experiences that shape the course of their experiences. The chapter also highlights counter narratives based on participants' stories and further amplifies participants' voices and experiences for empowerment. The chapter delves into the significance and implications of the study, which includes its contributions to social work theory, practice and policy. This chapter touches on strengths and weaknesses of the current study and directions for future research. The chapter provides concluding thoughts for the study followed by the list of references and appendices.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Frameworks

Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Anti-Racist Feminist Thought (ARFT)

Introduction

The chapter explores the historical context of both CRT and ARFT, highlighting the main themes and concepts respectively that are engaged throughout this research. It provides the rationale and relevance of both theories to this study, along with key considerations for their application. The chapter concludes with key considerations for their application in the current research. Both CRT and ARFT lenses inform the framework to analyze race and gender as inherently constructed characteristics that shape the experiences of Black and racialized individuals (Delgado & Stefancic, 2000, 2001; Calliste & Dei, 2000; Dua & Robertson, 1999). The complimentary approach with CRT and ARFT establishes the premise to frame instances of the intersecting manifestations of racial and gender discrimination, which are key to examining the experiences of participants.

Both theories combined help to frame the stories of participants in this research and highlight the multi-layered impact of race and gender on their lived experiences. CRT and its emphasis on centering race and racism in experiences as normal parts of everyday experiences rather than irregular occurrences, also frames participants' stories. The chapter also highlights intersectionality as a key component in CRT that provides the framework to better understand the intensity of the combined impact of race and gender on Black women. These aspects of CRT are significant for this research to contextualize the experiences of participants and examine them within this context based on the goals of the research. Their stories provide counternarratives that allow for the re-examination of mainstream narratives on skilled migration, which is also key aspects of the combined frameworks.

Canadian ARFT that incorporates the distinct workings of gender from an anti-racist feminist lens, within a Canadian context is used as a compliment to CRT. This helps to distinguish the impact of gender more definitively within a Canadian setting and frame the context of the examination of experiences accordingly. This is not to say that associations of the workings of gender cannot be made with other anti-racist feminist iterations. However, this more defined context supports the examination of participants' experiences within the scope of this research.

The key CRT tenet, intersectionality, is also an important concept that informs the framework for this study to emphasize race and gender, along with the patriarchal effects of gender that the addition of an ARFT lens include. ARFT deepens the focus on gender alongside race and adds emphasis within Canadian context. With this dual-informed approach, sharper and more distinct connections can be made between the manifestations of race and racism through gender and the systems of power and oppression through which they operate. The construction of women of colour in Canada, as raced, classed and gendered, and the resulting marginalization and oppression that shape their experiences are more readily identified and teased out from this angle.

Of particular interest are the ways that these lenses allow for the engagement to theorize the intensity and intersecting impact of race and gender. Both CRT and ARFT engender intersectionality as an analytical tool, laying the groundwork to frame the multiple characteristics of participants – including race, gender, skilled immigrant status, and participation in the Canadian labour market – as well as how these factors shape their experiences. These lenses focus attention on the intersections of race and gender and their manifestations in participants'

experiences, offering a clear way forward in understanding the multifaceted and nuanced experiences of Black skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean in Canada.

Along similar lines, these lenses enable a focus on Whiteness, White Supremacy, and the dynamics of power and privilege that create and maintain the subordinate positioning of non-White individuals, including participants in this research (Dua & Robertson, 1999; Harris, 1993; Hayden, 2015). In other words, both lenses allow for focus on how race and gender operate to structure inequity for Black and racialized women based on the standards that Whiteness negates to maintain power. These dynamics, however, shift in their form and function over time, as illustrated both by evolutions in critical/anti-racist work and participant sharing. Analysis of pervasive gendered and racialized hierarchies, traced over historical and current cultivations, requires understanding of the ways White supremacy, colonialism, patriarchy, and other projects of dominance establish and reestablish themselves.

CRT and ARFT are both uniquely salient to address the impacts of these projects; with the former focusing in on issues of race at its intersections and the ways in which these issues become formalized in policy and law, with the latter focused how these structures interact with patriarchy and create nuanced experiences for racialized women. In addition, both allow space to conceptualize the historical and contemporary functioning of race and gender with their emphasis on contextualization. The experiences shared by Black skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean in Canada, both historically and at present, are therefore more strongly understood through a combination of CRT and ARFT, making them more important for this research.

Both lenses provide a more well-rounded scope to engage with and conceptualize participants experiences. By way of an examination, both lenses offer the framework to identify the workings of race and gender that impact and shape the experiences that participants reported.

The focus of ARFT on the historical positioning of women in Canadian society and how they have experienced various aspects of their locations and identities, adds a broader scope to CRTs understanding of their experiences. Considering that Black women have a very specific history in Canada that cannot be conflated within immigration history, ARFT provides a suitable lens to seek out associations with the historical and contemporary construction of race and gender. Its emphasis on economy and the exploitation of Black women, ties into capitalism. These are significant aspects to add to the scope of CRT's analysis of the oppression of Black and racialized women.

As complementary frameworks, both CRT and ARFT provide a comprehensive lens to attend to the impact of race and gender on participants' experiences in tandem and with supplementary engagement, rather than in isolation. CRT and ARFT allow me to undertake this investigation from the position that participants' stories about their experiences are not complete without considering the race and gendered aspects of their experience. In addition, both CRT and ARFT enable the centering of Black women's experiences through elevating the voices of participants and positions them as knowers and contributors of knowledge construction about them. This validation challenges existing stories about them that are inaccurate or are based on dominant accounts. It foregrounds participants' counterstories to these dominant narratives.

Furthermore, these lenses support the resistance and disruption of colonized and patriarchal identities created for Black women, allowing this study to be more intentional in its disruption of racist and gendered norms that shape negative experiences for Black women and often remain unquestioned. CRT and ARFT work in tandem to contextualize the dynamics of the experiences shared by participants, as well as how these dynamics shift throughout time and how

they may be resisted and retold. These lenses form the basis for my approach to this research and are important to engage with manifestations of race and gender.

Overall, A CRT and ARFT informed framework pinpoint marginalizing and oppressive effects that Whiteness and White Supremacy cultivate on non-Whites. This allows for deeper scrutiny of the simultaneous effect of patriarchy within this context (Gillborn, 2006; Mohanty, 2003). These combined lenses provide deeper understandings to determine how notions of race and gender operate to structure inequity, which is crucial to answer the question that guides this research. Participants' experiences are also more readily fleshed out to make connections to the historical and contemporary construction of race and gender in Canada and within the context of their experiences.

Critical Race Theory: Historical Overview

CRT emerged out of Critical Legal Studies (CLS) and Radical Feminisms in the post-civil rights era in the United States (Bell, 1992; Crenshaw, 1993; Delgado & Stefancic, 2000, 2001). It emphasizes the need for voices from race-based perspectives and race-conscious views as vital for effecting change. The birth of CRT is attributed to the efforts of scholars, activists, and lawyers in the U.S. who felt that racial justice was missing from the legal discourse, which was assumed to be colour-blind, objective, and neutral (Aylward, 1999; Brown, 2003; Crenshaw et al., 1995; Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). CRT challenges social structures and institutions that uphold racial and racist policies that create negative experiences for people of colour (Abrams & Moio, 2009; Hayden, 2015; Huber, 2008; Parker, 1998).

CRT builds on the works of eighteenth-century pioneers such as Frederick Douglass, Ida B. Wells-Barnett, W.E.B. Du Bois, and other early writers and advocates who challenged racism

and fought for the recognition of the rights of Black people (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Hayden, 2015). In its quest to dismantle the dominant views that sustain issues of race, racism, and the resulting power imbalances, CRT draws from postcolonial and ethnic studies and from disciplines such as sociology and anthropology. Although CRT emerged in the legal field, it has extended to other disciplines in the social science and humanities field (Daftary, 2020; Einbinder, 2020; Leung & López-McKnight, 2021; Pérez, 2020).

In this regard, some tenets of CRT may differ slightly across disciplines and scholarly authors. However, what remains central throughout its use is the emphasis on race and racism, as well as dismantling the power and privilege afforded to White people through White Supremacy at the expense of people of colour (Aylward, 1999; Crenshaw et al., 1995; Delgado & Stefancic, 2000, 2001; Einbinder, 2020). CRT considers discrimination and inequities in various forms and aims to deconstruct and reconstruct systems that are oppressive and transform power relations (Aylward, 1999; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001).

Proponents of CRT acknowledge its analytical framework as multidimensional due to its ability to explore the intersectionalities of racist oppression that shape the experience of people of colour within the broader society (Aylward, 1999; Crenshaw, 1993; Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). This framework allows for the creation of knowledge from an alternate lens through which marginalized and racialized individuals and groups have a voice and make their experiences visible. The engagement of such a framework seeks to facilitate ways of knowing about immigrant groups beyond the traditional Eurocentric approach as the primary way of producing knowledge about them.

In Canada, CRT emerged in the 1980s after similar concerns to those in the U.S., were raised about the treatment of Black individuals in the Canadian legal system (Aylward, 1999;

Razack, 2002). The development of CRT was much slower in Canada, however, due to the underrepresentation and exclusion of legal scholars of colour in the justice system and in Canada in general (Bannerji, 2020; Brown & Brown, 1996; Dua et al., 2005). In addition, CRT's slower growth in Canada was attributed to the country's desire to portray Canada as a multicultural and racially tolerant nation, despite implementing systemic structures and policies that perpetuate discrimination (Aylward, 1999; Brown & Brown, 1996; Dua et al., 2005). This denial was believed to present more dire problems than in the U.S., where at least the existence of racism was acknowledged, albeit in its perpetuation of the law (Aylward, 1999; Cooper, 2007, 2017; Edugyan, 2022; Maynard, 2017; Pon, 2009; Henry et al., 2017). Growing concerns were consistent about the failure of Canadian laws to protect Black individuals which prolonged racism and disenfranchised marginalized individuals through systemic discrimination (Aylward, 1999; Dua et al., 2005; Razack, 2002). Canadian scholars became more vocal about developing CRT in a manner similar to the U.S., to challenge overt and covert forms of discrimination (Aylward, 1999; Akande, 2002; Johnson & Aladejebi, 2022).

Canada has long rejected the comparison to racism in the U.S., asserting that Canada is peacekeeping, well-meaning, and kind, allowing the nation to deny the existence of racism and the oppression that it creates. This colour-blind approach not only neutralizes the effects of racism but also rejects discrimination in its many forms. Brown and Brown (1996) and Mullings and colleagues (2016) describe Canada's perception of itself as a country that is not racist, which expands a "colour-blindness" approach and encourages the idea that racism is not an issue in Canada. Furthermore, Brown and Brown (1996) call attention to the damaging, unjust, and overall negative impacts on individuals, groups, and society that this misconception fosters. By refusing to take up discussions about systemic discrimination, for example, Canada continues to

promote an image of a racially and culturally tolerant country while simultaneously normalizing its Eurocentric image (Aylward, 1999; Fleras, 2013; Pon, 2009).

Dua and colleagues (2005) raised similar concerns about Canada presenting itself as a “peacekeeping nation” that is “innocent of racism,” and a country that is multicultural and welcoming of immigrants and refugees (p. 1). The authors contend that instead, ostensibly “neutral” Canadian policies implement structures that marginalize people of colour socially, politically, culturally, and economically. Essentially, the denial is an attempt to erase “the history of colonization, slavery, and discriminatory immigration legislation” on the part of Canada (Dua et al., 2005, p. 1). These systematically supported oppressive actions and behaviours are part of Canada’s historical patterns of injustice towards people of colour. The uphill battle and the struggles for CRT to take root in Canada is yet to be resolved.

Main Concepts

Of the various understandings of CRT and its principles, key in this study is the notion that racism is a normal part of the ways in which society operates and is present in the everyday experiences of people of colour (Aylward, 1999; Delgado, 2011; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). CRT asserts that the historical (and present) nature of discrimination on racialized groups changes based on the intended purpose and desired outcomes (social, financial, and economic) of the dominant group, or what is considered as “differential racism” (Aylward, 1999; Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). The permanence of racism is also a key principle of CRT to note in this study, as this principle requires the acknowledgement of the permanent role of racism in shaping policies and practices in hierarchical structures that govern all aspects of society (DeCuir & Dixon, 2004; Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). Further, this principle contends that racism is a

permanent feature of discrimination through which privilege is allocated to White individuals at the expense of Black individuals in all areas of society.

Whiteness as property is another CRT principle noted in this study. This tenet works in tandem with both race and racism to increase opportunities for Whites, which essentially positions them for better prospects and overall outcomes in their well-being (Harris, 1993; Hayden, 2015; Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). Hayden (2015) calls attention to "...the endless cycle of oppression, racism and Whiteness..." that is set in motion with these increased opportunities, with Whites as the beneficiaries (p. 46). As a form of property interest, Whiteness is "...contingent on, intertwined with, and conflates with race," (Harris, 1993 p. 1714). In this regard, the dominance that manifests in various forms throughout history is reproduced to subordinate Black and racialized bodies in the present (Cabrera, 2018; DeCuir & Dixson, 2004; Delgado, 2011; Harris 1993). In this process, "...White identity became the basis of racialized privilege that was ratified and legitimated in law as a type of status property," during slavery and colonialism (Harris, 1993 p. 1714). In other words, White privilege was legitimized as the basis for entitlement and domination of Black and racialized bodies beyond land and ownership of Black labour, but into the physical ownership of the souls of Black individuals.

The commonality between the concepts of Whiteness and property, is their tendency to exclude these bodies that are targeted. Whiteness as property permeates society, justifies and shapes the resulting experiences of oppression on Black individuals (Arai & Kivel, 2009; Abrams & Moio, 2009; Guinier, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Razack & Jeffery, 2002). CRT underscores the power dynamics of Whiteness and White Supremacy along with their effects, primarily in the subordination and marginalization of people of colour (Einbinder, 2020; Crenshaw et al., 1995). A call to action for CRT is to challenge the dominant ideology in society

that fuels colour-blindness and objectifies and neutralizes racism, along with the normalizing of racism through Whiteness (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). Whiteness as the basis for racialized privilege justifies the allocation of privilege to Whites and the oppression of Blacks (Fields, 2001; Harris, 1993). This increase the oppression of Black individuals and is a key component in challenging racism. In essence Whites became markers of social, economic and other forms of privilege, while Blacks became deprived and oppressed.

Another key CRT principle noted is intersectionality; an analytical tool that encourages the examination of multiple identities that inform the stories and narratives of people of colour (Crenshaw, 1993). As a framework, intersectionality calls attention to the multi-faceted experiences of women of colour that are left out of mainstream feminist and anti-racist discourses (Anderson & McCormic, 2010; Crenshaw, 1993; Cuàdriz & Uttal, 1999). More importantly intersectionality engages the simultaneous impact of multiple forms of stereotypes such as race and gender, which intensifies the experiences of Black women. By engaging with the negative impact of race and gender for example, the dynamics and converging patterns of discrimination on Black women can be more accurately analyzed within this unique context. This approach is significant to not only the inclusion of their voices but to the inclusion of their lived experiences as well (Collins & Bilge, 2020; Yosso et al., 2009; Razack & Jeffery, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1998). CRT and intersectionality broaden the epistemological understanding of how race and gender are constructed and fundamentally affect the experiences of Black women.

As a framework, CRT engages “diverse experiences, worldviews and differential social power and privilege” (Miller et al., 2004, p. 377). It takes a deep analysis of the power relationships that scaffold understandings of race and racism and looks at ways to deconstruct and transform oppressive policies and legislations (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). Further, it

examines power, privilege and racial hierarchies and deconstructs society's role in perpetuating racism (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Abrams & Moio, 2009). CRT ensures injustices are analyzed based on various forms of discrimination, recognizing both overt and hidden methods (Aylward, 1999). The lived experiences and voices of people of colour are part of the core principles of a CRT framework.

In addition, their effort to efficiently analyze race and racism, Razack and Jeffery (2002) and Gotanda (2000) agree that historical background must be considered in this analysis. Ladson-Billings (1998) explains that history is a critical factor in identity formation; refusing to acknowledge history, then, not only fosters colour-blindness, but rejects the realities of people of colour. By listening to their stories and narratives, space is created to analyze misconceptions about Blacks as inferior that is fueled by Whiteness and in the process, learn from their firsthand experiences regarding race, racism, and oppression (Allen, 2004; Delgado, 1995; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001).

As a result, CRT highlights and foregrounds oppressed voices and silenced stories and reinforces empowerment, change, self-recognition, and self-validation, within a context where Whiteness would otherwise dominate (Einbinder, 2020; Razack & Jeffery). Delgado and Stefancic (2001) agree that asserting stories can have powerful effects that may trigger and remind society of their humanity, subsequently acknowledging neglected indications of racism. Further, storytelling can also assist in readdressing historical wounds as it allows for the recognition and re-examination of historical records, experiences, and evidence. As Delgado and Stefancic (2001) note, storytelling has been used historically during slavery and among Indigenous peoples, and not by coincidence, both populations are considered as outsiders with respective histories of colonization. Delgado (1989) points out that typically, those who have

stories to tell have had their voices, perspectives, and consciousness repressed, undervalued, and considered abnormal.

There are instances within our history of erasing voices of colour and their contributions, thereby silencing them in the process to favour a narrative that better suits the dominant group (Abrams & Moio, 2009). As a result, White dominant groups are viewed as the norm within society, which serves to justify the racial hierarchy and minimize minority groups (Abrams & Moio, 2009). These views and norms are reinforced through power and oppression. In addition, the stories about those who are oppressed are told from a deficit-informed lens in dominant societies which are considered the norm. To challenge these privileged norms, it is important for the voices of people of colour to be amplified by telling their stories in their own voices.

The impact of counter storytelling is a key feature of CRT that is of significance to this study. According to Yosso and colleagues (2009), “when the ideology of racism is examined and racist injuries are named, victims of racism can often find their voice” (p. 74). By identifying their experiences of racism or oppression, they are no longer alone but rather part of “a legacy of resistance” (Yosso et al., 2009, p. 75). In agreement with Razack and Jeffery (2002), Yosso and colleagues (2009) maintain that providing space for stories to be told and heard empowers individuals, as they can learn through the process; things like understanding how narratives are framed and gaining the knowledge to defend themselves in racist or oppressive situations. Ladson-Billings (1998) also agrees, explaining that storytelling can resemble medicine that heals injuries from racism or oppression and passes on important learnings. Ladson-Billings (1998) describes the realization that occurs from this process of sharing, which has the potential to bring to light and challenge the ways in which people of colour come to internalize racial power dynamics.

In addition to the potential for healing, telling counterstories is key to interrupting the often-slow pace of shifts towards social justice in law and policy. Aylward (1999) notes that these systems are often highly conservative, often drawing from the notions that Canada is a benevolent and welcoming nation-state that would not allow racism to proliferate. As such, counterstories that are grounded in the lived experiences of the people living the oppression is important, as it acts as evidence to counter the Canadian national narrative. Given the normalization of racism and the entrenched association of Whiteness with privilege, Guinier (2004) explains that these assertions only distract the people from the fact that both resources and power are not being equally distributed. Counterstories through CRT's method, allow Black and racialized people to connect their harms to tangible social, historical, and economic conditions of oppression to recover their voices.

It is through the amplifying and recognizing of voices of colour that consciousness will be brought to issues in the effort to achieve radical racial reform (Abrams & Moio, 2009). CRT can also encourage the restructuring of laws and history, simply by including lived experiences of minority groups who speak to the ways in which this must be done (Delgado, 1989; Gotanda, 2000). According to Aylward (1999), CRT supports the analysis of issues by considering historical racism as history that is linked to present circumstances. By drawing on some of the core CRT principles, the discriminatory forces that shape the experiences of marginalization and oppression for racialized skilled immigrant women in the Canadian labour market can be scrutinized within this context. This approach furthers CRT's goal to radically reform institutions and structures that allow systemic racism, discrimination, and oppression to thrive (Einbinder, 2020).

Application to current research

This dissertation engages CRT principles to focus on race, racism, and power relations of Whiteness, primarily at the intersecting axes of oppression (Coxshall, 2020). The inequities that race and racism create have historical roots that are deeply intertwined in both the legal and economic institutions in society (Ogbonnaya-Ogburu et al., 2020). The foundational premise that considers race and racism as primary sources that create barriers for racialized individuals are also recognized in this study (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004; Hayden, 2015).

By drawing on this lens to scrutinize the inherent and systemic patterns and practices that Whiteness creates to shape the experiences of non-White groups, the barriers and reduced opportunities that Black skilled immigrant women describe, can be more readily identified and named. Their stories provide counternarrative to the majoritarian stories on skilled migration, which is also a strategy rooted in critical race methodology. Similarly, the intersecting points of their discrimination as a result of their race and gender are engaged to better understand their experiences.

CRT connects both the root cause of racism and the sustaining of racism in society to the allocation of material resources and the negative ways in which non-Whites are perceived and treated (Delgado, 2009). These linkages are connected to the historical circumstances that are inherent to the manifestations of racism and oppression and how these elements shape the present. Furthermore, the application of CRT provides the lens to deconstruct historic and current practices of social structures and institutions that are embedded in racial and racist policies as part of the demand for change in this research (Abrams & Moio, 2009; Hayden, 2015; Huber, 2008; Parker, 1998). The ingrained racist practices are seen as the primary factors that

shape the negative social experiences for individuals who are considered non-Whites and minorities such as Black skilled immigrant women.

These focal points are significant aspects to examining the research question for this study. The application of CRT is intended to give voice to the unique experiences of research participants. Additionally, because of the marginalization and oppression that individuals in racial minority groups face, their experience provides a unique perspective in relation to race and racism (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Ogbonnaya-Ogburu et al, 2020). Making these stories known helps to challenge and counteract dominant narratives about these experiences from a CRT informed lens. Hidden forms of racism can also be teased out in these narratives with supporting evidence that further debunks mainstream narratives. By illuminating the distinctive and unique experiences of racial oppression and the lower positions on the social ladder that immigrant women occupy due to their race, social justice can become a more imminent reality (Aylward, 1999; Closson, 2010; Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Razack, 2002). The application of CRT in this research further helps to frame anti-racist insights and responses in support of the researched population and other related groups.

Rationale and relevance to study

CRT is selected for its emphasis on race and racism and its premise to challenge Whiteness and the power relations it creates (Coxshall, 2020). A CRT analysis includes race as a construct as well as the concept of Whiteness in tandem with privilege and its resulting standards that (re)produces White Supremacy (Coxshall, 2020; Hayden, 2015). This lens is used to pinpoint the different forms of discrimination and racism that shapes the experiences of Black skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean, making these dynamics visible through their

experiences. As a result, stronger connections can be made to the historical and contemporary constructions of race and racism in Canada, so that the struggles relating to race and racism within this context are more readily teased out from a CRT lens. In addition, the stories of participants can be told through their voices and experiences to become part of the immigration narrative in Canadian society.

Crewe (2021) encourages the use of theories such as CRT in social work education to “counteract the racism that has historically guided too many of our approaches to working with vulnerable groups,” (p. 416). The tools that CRT offers to identify and dismantle practices of White privilege and White Supremacy, are in alignment with social work values to recognize the dignity and worth of every individual. Similarly, Bello and Mancini (2016) note the worsening conditions that the interacting components of racism and sexism combined create. The authors note manifestations such as the stratification in employment based on race and gender, which is best understood with the broader scope that CRT provides alongside intersectionality. By exposing the role that racism and sexism plays in the negative experiences of racialized women, pervasive inequities and discrimination are illuminated and the quest for change is strengthened.

CRT was selected because it provides the framework to examine the historical and contemporary constructions of race and its marginalizing and oppressive effects on the researched population. CRT is best suited to deconstruct the oppressive structures that shape these experiences of Black skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean in the Canadian labour market to offer deeper explanations of these encounters. A CRT lens incorporates analysis from an intersectionality approach to emphasize the “intersecting and interacting axes of oppression, which include the axes of race,” which are key components to tackling the research question for this study (Coxshall, 2020, p. 639). Other considerations for using CRT include being able to

fully engage with the points of connection of power relations with race and gender that a framework such as CRT can highlight.

To articulate the experiences and shared histories of the researched population and expose the power relations of Whiteness which “...serves to elevate White standing...” in society and decrease the chances and opportunities for Blacks and racialized individuals (Hayden, 2015, p. 46), CRT was believed to be more suited than a post-colonial lens. The latter framework would be more concerned with the conceptualization of immigrants as subjects within specific points of Canadian history and how Canadian laws and policies have constructed these images (Thobani, 2007; Ku, 2012; Johnstone & Lee, 2014; Hogarth & Fletcher, 2018; Grewal Gill, 2019). Within a White settler colony such as Canada, there is ample need to engage the subjectivity and subjugation of non-European individuals and their post-colonial identities. However, the characteristics that denote the historical and contemporary forms of oppression were more pertinent to answering the research question for this study. By attending to these specific forces of oppression and providing the language and lens to tackle racism as a marker of oppression as well as the elements of imbalance of power and inequality that it creates, CRT provided a more suitable lens (Coxshall, 2020; Senthe & Xavier, 2013; Gajaria et al., 2021) than a postcolonial approach. Understanding the resulting marginalization that stems from racial oppression is key to this study. Therefore, CRT provides a lens to engage the aspects that are key to understanding the experiences of Black skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean in Canada within this context.

Anti-racist Feminist Thought

Anti-racist Feminist Thought (ARFT) is part of the anti-racist feminist movement that focuses on integrating race, class and gender in feminist theorizing. This approach emerged in response to critique of mainstream feminism for focusing on the experiences of White middle-class women and excluding the voices and experiences of women of colour, as well as the criticism of race-based approaches that tend to focus on racialized male experiences (Clark & Saleh, 2019; Sommersell, 2003). ARFT builds upon broader feminist movements that seek to create equality for women by exposing and dismantling patriarchy by illuminating the inextricable linkages and interconnections between gendered issues and those of race, class, and other forms of oppression in its analysis (Mohanty, 2003; Dua, 1999; Calliste & Dei, 2000; Calliste, 2000). Similar to other threads of anti-racist feminist approaches, ARFT provides the lens to interpret, deconstruct, and reconstruct systems that have been historically oppressive towards Black and racialized women.

Other similar approaches to ARFT within the anti-racist movement include Critical race feminism (See works of Begum Verjee, Adrien Wing, Menah Pratt-Clarke, April Few-Demo, and others) and intersectional feminism (See works of Kimberlé Crenshaw, Patricia Collins, Pauli Murray, and others). It should be noted that reference to ARFT is more prevalent in Canada (See work of Dua & Robertson, 1999). The distinguishing feature between Canadian anti-racist feminists' writings and other anti-racist feminist approaches, is the focus on how race, class and gender have shaped both the historical and contemporary positioning of women of colour in a Canadian White settler colonial society, which is more specific. It is also important to note that there are different interpretations among anti-racist feminist scholars about how to pursue this

unique analysis of incorporating race, class and gender, and which category should be prioritized within these iterations.

For example, from a standpoint perspective, Wane and Jagire (2013) assert that lived experience, as Indigenous or racialized women respectively, is a pre-requisite for speaking and theorizing about this particular reality from such a perspective. The authors assert that this approach is necessary to validate and inform scholarship that reflects the historical, material, and epistemological conditions within the communities where these experiences unfold. Wane and Jagire (2013) also emphasize that it is important for these stories to be told and heard in non-Eurocentric voices and from the experts of the experiences. Similarly, Collins (1990) argues that the Black women's way of knowing offers a unique epistemic lens which positions race as the signifier of their identity and experience of oppression. Hartsock (2004) asserts that a more accurate view of the social reality of women includes understanding the patriarchal oppression that shapes their experience. The epistemic strength within standpoint theory is the attention to race as a marker of colonialism, imperialism, and capitalism that shapes the unique experience of oppression that Black women face.

Expanding on this standpoint approach, Bannerji (2000) considers the starting point of anti-racist feminist theorizing to be the historical positioning of women in Canadian society and how they have experienced various aspects of their locations and identities. This relational approach to the study of racism is based on the different meanings and positioning of the structural location and the different expressions among women of colour. This approach to theorizing challenges basic understandings of race and class, moving beyond the emphasis on more immediate and siloed experiences towards the complex interconnections between race, class, and gender (Dua, 1999). It draws from resistance movements to position the analysis of the

lived experiences of women of colour within capitalism, or the social and economic relations that enable and maintain the exploitation of women.

Dua (1999) notes that the works of anti-racist feminist writers within this stream draw from the works of Marcus Garvey, Frantz Fanon, and Walter Rodney whose writings are squarely rooted in Third World Marxist and radical resistance movements. Bannerji's (2000) approach speaks to a reformulation of the Canadian political economy approach which engages the socio-economic impact on women of colour, which aligns with capitalism. The approach places emphasis on theorizing that includes the positioning of women of colour within Canadian society. Both the historical construction of race, class, and gender through patterns of racialization that ascribe identity to individuals and groups based on racial characteristics are also engaged in Bannerji's (2000) approach. From this lens, the principles of colonial legacy on which Canada was built as a nation and their impact on women of colour are actively engaged in this approach (Dua, 1999). This understanding center capitalism as a structure of power that intersects with racism and gender to produce the experiences that Black migrant women face. Both the standpoint and reformulated perspectives within anti-racist feminist work attend to the dismantling of patriarchy, gender oppression, and the achievement of gender parity. Racial justice is also a key aspect of both perspectives to address the foundation of the oppression that is at the intersection of patriarchal and colonial impact on Black and racialized women to create economic inequities and systemic oppression on them.

Historical overview

Anti-racist feminism gained traction across Canada, the United States, and Britain in the mid-1980s as part of the contemporary third wave feminist movement. In theory, it seeks to address the shortcomings of early models of feminism that were characterized by experiences of

White middle-class women, ignoring the experiences and voices of Black, Indigenous, and other racialized women (Mohanty, 2003; Breines, 2002). This critique was raised by anti-racist scholars and advocates especially towards the first and second wave feminist movements (1830s to early 1900s and 1960s to 1980s respectively). Like the mainstream feminist movement, anti-racist feminists have been committed to exposing and dismantling patriarchy and creating gender equality across the sexes (Calliste & Dei, 2000). The impact of racism is also a key feature of anti-racist feminism and a response to critique of mainstream feminism that typically focus on White feminist issues.

Within the anti-racist feminist movement, there are various iterations about how to achieve this outcome. Dua (1999) highlights the works of scholars such as Collins (1990) and Stasiulis (1990) which are considered part of Black feminist writing. This work is often more reflective of the specific histories within the U.S. and British societies. Other writers identified in this grouping include Kimberlé Crenshaw, Angela Davis, bell hooks, Andrea Davis, Afua Cooper, and others. Indigenous scholars have also been referenced for their anti-racist feminist work, such as Andrea Smith, Bonita Lawrence, Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, Winona LaDuke, and Linda Tuhiwai Smith. Other streams of writings such as Third World and postcolonial feminism (see Gayatri Spivak, Chandra Mohanty, and Saba Mahmood), queer anti-racist feminism (see Sara Ahmed, Audre Lorde, and Gayatri Gopinath), and more general feminist works considered anti-racist (see Enakshi Dua, Tania Das Gupta, Roxanna Ng, Sherene Razack, Nandita Sharma, Malinda Smith, Sunera Thobani, Himani Bannerji, Njoki Wane, and Soma Chatterjee) are just a part of the different iterations of anti-racist feminist thought.

These streams of work also place emphasis on slightly different aspects of the interconnection of social categories that shape the oppression that Black and racialized women

experience. For example, Brand (1988), Dua (1999), and Agnew (1996) consider literature that centers the lived experiences of women of colour as the starting point of analyzing feminism in their work on anti-racist thought. On the other hand, works of scholars such as Stasiulis (1990) and Khayatt (1994) are more concerned with examining the multiplicity of experiences as another vein in the iteration of anti-racist feminist thought (Dua, 1999).

These streams are not without their share of criticism, some for obscuring the specific histories, experiences, and opportunities as well as the different forms of domination that exist among women of colour (Spivak, 2006). However, there is a consensus across different streams around the fact that the narratives of Black women were excluded from earlier waves of feminist movements. Emphasis on gender oppression that works both in tandem with and is intertwined with race and other forms of oppression, remains a distinguishing feature of anti-racist feminists' work.

Main concepts

ARFT foregrounds the overlapping forms of oppression that Black and racialized women face in Canada and takes exception to the exclusion of anti-racist feminist histories in mainstream feminist approaches. The earlier focus of ARFT in Canada centered on race and class relations within the neo-liberal state and its economy, especially in relation to immigration and labour policies (Amarshi, 2018; Bannerji, 1996; Aylward, 1999; Stasiulis et al., 2020). Later themes that emerged from this approach challenge the construction of the ideal Canadian versus those perpetually considered non-Canadian, the othering of racialized bodies, and the challenges to Canada's image as a peace-keeping nation (Thobani, 2007).

Other themes of interest in ARFT's application in Canada, contends with understandings that tackle Canada's White settler colonial foundation that sustains race and gender

discrimination (Razack, 2000; Smith, 2016; Thobani, 2002). The subjugation of racialized bodies and in particular decolonization and the re-centering of [Indigenous peoples] knowledge about them are also key iterations within ARFT understandings (Sharma & Wright, 2009; Razack, 2000). The construction of Whiteness and normalization of racism, understandings of sexualities and gender identities, as well as anti-Black racism as a unique cause of oppression that creates social inequality for Black individuals, have also been incorporated into understandings of the interconnection of race, gender, and class oppression.

Within the broader scope of ARFT, attention is given to race and gender and the intersecting forces of marginalization and oppression. The aim is to expose these structures of domination that create oppression for women of colour (Calliste & Dei, 2000). Challenging racism, sexism, classism, White supremacy, heteronormative, and neo-colonial structures are considered necessary to achieve equality for women and in particular women of colour (Smith, 2016). The understanding also includes challenging historical and contemporary injustices, exclusionary practices, unequal access, opportunities both in general and within the labour market, and within societal structures that create oppression. These challenges are both within mainstream feminism and within dominant structures that oppress women of colour.

As part of their approach to ARFT, Dua and Robertson's (1999) advocate for the rethinking of the constructed image of "women who have been racialized as dangerous, as alien, as hyphenated Canadians" (p. 24). Their understanding also touches on the scrutinizing of the historical patterns of racialization that have shaped the Canadian state and its institutions, as well as how these patterns create experiences for women of colour that are raced, classed, and gendered. They also point to the fragmented work of ARFT writers that focus more broadly on specific aspects of statehood, nationalism, social and economic relations Their approach to

ARFT incorporates the examination of race and gender as socially constructed forces that negatively impact the experiences of women of colour.

Application to current research

I draw on ARFT as an overarching term that embodies different anti-racist feminist mobilizations focusing on race as a central marker of identity that shapes the experience, marginalization, and oppression faced by women of colour in Canada (Amarshi, 2018; Bannerji, 2020; Murad, 2013). I use Dua and Robertson's (1999) contribution to Canadian ARFT to tease out an understanding of feminist theorizing that reflects a “distinct way of understanding race, gender, and society” and how they are enacted to shape participants’ experiences (p. 7). Since ARFT is often subsumed within critical race feminism and Black feminist thought, there is a gap in the literature on distinct writings of ARFT within a specific scope. As such, I draw on Dua and Robertson’s (1999) approach that incorporates a broader understanding of ARFT in my approach.

In this regard, my focus centers on the constructions of race and gender and how they function to structure inequality and oppression in Canada, especially for women of colour. This analysis contends with the stereotypical and dominant ways of identifying Canadians that reinforce the exclusion of historically marginalized groups such as racialized immigrants (in this case Black skilled immigrant women) and Indigenous Peoples. A critical history of colonization and immigration that feeds into patterns of racialization in Canada are underpinnings of my analysis, similar to Dua and Robertson (1999) approach. While the emphasis on ARFT is within Canadian feminist literature, the connections to other iterations of the broader anti-racist feminist movement beyond Canadian society will be engaged based on relevance to my discussions.

Chapter 3: Race and gendered construction of immigrant experience in Canada:

Review of Literature

Introduction

This chapter engages both CRT and ARFT understandings in the review of literature for this study. The review extends to literature from the broader social sciences due to noted gaps in social work literature on certain immigrant groups. The chapter focuses on selected topics that can provide context to the race and gendered constructions of immigrant experiences in Canada. It also provides a broad overview on skilled immigrant women and experiences about women from the Caribbean in Canada as reported in the literature. Lastly, the review in this chapter informs the inquiry that this study undertakes.

The chapter commences with a brief overview of emerging patterns in Canadian immigration policies towards non-White immigrants and their positioning in Canada's nation-building efforts. It then focuses on three key aspects from the literature as it relates to racialized immigrants' experiences in Canada and in social work literature, skilled immigrant women in context and early experiences of Black women from the Caribbean in Canada. The chapter touches on the application of the review of literature section to the current research. In conclusion, the chapter provides a summary of key aspects reviewed in chapter 3.

The review of literature in this chapter acknowledges other work done on skilled immigrants that were excluded due to the narrowing of my focus on the three key aspects of the literature in this chapter. For example, Annisette (2017) calls attention to the deeply inscribed Anglo-centric culture in Ontario that operationalizes categories such as race and ethnicity in how "foreign-trained" accountants are constructed and excluded. Similarly, Annisette and Trivedi (2013) point out tensions, contradictions and paradoxes in the labour market experiences of

immigrant accountants from India and contends with neoliberal globalization and the differential impact of how identities are structured in Canada. Other profession specific literature on skilled immigrants also include focus on immigrant engineers, where Konnikov's (2023) study for example, reveals that immigrant engineers face higher chances of occupational mismatch in Canada. The study found that the chances of mismatch are higher among women, with race and ethnicity playing a role in this dynamic. For the purpose of my review in this chapter, the tracking of experiences in individual professions was not considered as crucial and could introduce nuances and variables that are outside the scope of this dissertation.

Since the research question engages the collective aspects of participants' lived experiences in the Canadian labour market, which is not just profession specific, it was necessary to narrow my focus on the literature to incorporate aspects to contend with the broader focus in my discussion. Canada's relationship and the longstanding patterns of experience that result for racialized immigrants and especially for immigrant women from the Caribbean are key aspects that informs my discussion of findings section of this study. The decision was made to narrow my focus and make the review more manageable to complete this dissertation. As such, my focus was on core aspects of the literature that were pertinent to the topic being researched.

Overview

Review of literature on immigration policies and practices in Canada reveal a troubling pattern of racist and gendered discrimination towards racialized immigrants (Galabuzi, 2006; Preston & Giles, 2004; James, 1994; Teelucksingh & Galabuzi, 2007; Anisef et al., 2003; Christofides & Swidnisky, 1994). Indeed, Canada's nation building efforts have favoured White European immigrants while carving a supply and demand style relationship with racialized

immigrants to utilize their labour power as needed (Kelly & Wossen-Taffesse, 2012; Mensah, 2010; Thobani, 2007). As an extension of its nation-building efforts, Canadian immigration policies have also prioritized White immigrants from Europe while Black and non-White immigrants have been inadmissible at different periods.

Many Black and non-White immigrants have been prime targets for racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination through both formal and informal discourse. Perceptions about increased threats to safety that they pose, risk of compromised hygiene for the public, and poor work ethics are some of the grounds used to exclude them, albeit the fictitious and misleading narratives. Baffoe and colleagues (2014) point to early immigration policies that openly excluded individuals from Black and non-White groups while prioritizing those from British ancestry (see also Branker, 2017; Calliste, 1993/94; Kelly & Wossen-Taffesse, 2012; Taylor, 1991). Toney (2014) outlines the 1910 Immigration Act, which restricted the entry of Black individuals to Canada on the grounds that they were not “fit” to enter due to their race, thereby codifying overt racism into law (Arat-Koç, 2006; Kelly & Wossen-Taffesse, 2012).

According to Mensah (2010), earlier perceptions in Canada about Blacks labelled them as inferior to Whites physically, mentally, and morally. Perception extended to beliefs that their presence would create racial tensions, which only added to the existing grounds used to restrict their entry. These stereotypical perceptions were prevalent and not only fueled discrimination against Black people in Canada but marked them for oppression. This extends to how Black women were framed to serve colonial imperatives which persist to this day within White capitalistic agenda, although more overt. Thus, the need to counter these stories and disrupt the systemic and institutional effects.

Some scholars point to the discretionary powers that immigration officials were granted under this same 1910 Immigration Act that allowed officials to categorize Black individuals as “undesirable” and therefore inadmissible to Canada (Arat-Koç, 2006; Calliste, 1993/94; Silvera, 1989). Many of these policies worked in tandem with discourses prevalent in other realms of Canadian society. For example, Kelly and Wossen-Taffesse (2012) call attention to racist animosities within broader Canadian society, with specific examples from government documents, media reports, and other sources that reiterated an “Anglocentric logic” while disparaging non-White immigrants. In a similar and earlier example, Bauder (2008) points to populist historical practices in Canada, associated with anti-immigrant sentiments towards immigrants from Mexico and the Caribbean. These narratives are reproduced in Canadian media, constructing exclusionary images of immigrants that reinforce negative constructs, treatment, and labour standards towards these groups.

Similarly, Shepard (1997) calls attention to the 1911 Order-in-Council #1324 which deemed that people of African descent were not suitable to migrate to Canada. This was at a time when Canada was actively recruiting and admitting settlers from Oklahoma in the United States to relocate and settle in Western Canada. Shepard (1997) notes that American farmers, especially those from northwestern European backgrounds who were considered well-educated and fluent in English were considered most desirable for the relocation to Canada. They were considered to attract less attention as they were able to merge seamlessly with other British immigrants and White Canadians. However, other equally educated, English-speaking groups of farmers from Oklahoma were “deemed unsuitable” to make a similar transition to Canada because they were African Americans. Shepard (1997) further notes that while a small number of African American farmers were allowed to settle in western Canada around the same time, once larger groups of

African Americans started arriving, there were large protests resisting their admission. The Canadian Conservative media waged an all-out campaign to protest their entry, and the Canadian government pandered to the public outcry. The entry of Black immigrants was deemed as unsuitable for Canadian climate and Canadian requirements and African Americans farmers were restricted as a result, while leaving a clear path of entry for Euro-American farmers.

Baffoe and colleagues (2014) affirm that many discriminatory practices towards Black people and other racialized groups have been reflective of attitudes and perceptions found in broader Canadian society. Mensah (2010) draws examples from a speech given by the leader of the Conservative Party in 1908 that declared the party to be a champion for a White Canada. During the same period, the ruling Liberal Party introduced Amendments to the 1908 Immigration Act that restricted the entry of immigrants from India (the Continuous Journey regulation) on the grounds that they did not travel directly to Canada (Mensah, 2010). This is despite the fact that an indirect route of travel from India to Canada at that time was the norm. Such policies and practices target non-White immigrants on the grounds of their race, ethnicity, nationality, and in some cases, their gender.

Other equally discriminatory immigration policies and practices directed towards non-White groups include the head tax placed on Chinese immigrants between 1886 to 1923, which resulted in an outright ban on the entry of Chinese nationals to Canada, continuing well after many of these policies were believed to have changed (Zaman, 2010; Wohl et al., 2013; McRae, 2017). Yet another measure implemented to restrict the entry of certain groups of immigrants were the caps placed on the number of Japanese immigrants allowed to migrate to Canada in 1907 (Dua, 2016; National Association of Japanese Canadians, 2023).

These policies not only served to sustain Canada's White nation building ideals, but also shaped conditions that restricted the settlement and integration of non-White individuals into Canadian society, excluding them from many opportunities. Zaman (2010) points to Canada's earlier immigration policies that perpetuated discrimination based on gender, race, and class that reinforced structured labour demands. Examples such as the early recruitment of Chinese men to build Canada's railroad system and the recruitment of women from the Caribbean to fulfil Canada's domestic demands are but some of the ways in which the labour of racialized immigrants were exploited to build Canada as a nation-state. Yet, while they were needed for their labour, they experienced intense levels of discrimination and overall dehumanization as members of racialized immigrant groups.

Kelly and Wossen-Taffesse (2012) review Cooke's (1911) article on "The Black Canadian" from a gendered and racialized lens to scope out perceptions of Black immigrants, and in particular women, shedding more light on Canada's racist and sexist immigration past. Their analysis confirms the positioning of non-White women as "unsuitable citizens and lesser beings than those who are constituted as White" (Kelly & Wossen-Taffesse, 2012, p. 168). Furthermore, they highlight how Canada's "national fantasy" of Whiteness and the normative standards that result, create conditions that activates discrimination and oppression for Black individuals.

In particular, Black women were seen as an even greater threat for Canada to achieve its White nation building based on perceptions that their sexuality and fertility could jeopardize the purity of the European image that Canada so desperately sought (Kelly & Wossen-Taffesse 2012; Thobani, 2007; Holmes, 2016; Ngwena, 2018). Many reports confirm the racist and sexist patterns of discrimination directed towards racialized women that marked them as unsuitable for

Canadian nation building and undermined their humanity and individuality. One cannot deny that the earlier immigration policies noted, worked in tandem with Canada's quest for a White society to further exacerbate their experiences.

The earlier deficient constructs of immigrant women still persist and are considered to be a factor in current perceptions of them as economic dependents of immigrant men or primarily as family members of immigrant men (Mojab, 1999; Adserà & Ferrer, 2014; Dobrowolsky et al., 2018). This, coupled with the deficiency narratives of Black women from the Caribbean invisibilizes their achievements as skilled workers. Even with options for them to migrate based on their own merits, these demeaning perceptions persist. Immigration and citizenship legislations that distinguished between preferred and non-preferred races remained in effect until the 1960s and 1970s sustained and extended these negative stereotypes. These were evident in social support programs that expanded during this period as part of the welfare state. Race and gendered notions around who was deserving of support were core aspects of these programs that rendered the voices and needs of women, immigrants, and other "undeserving" groups as insignificant and peripheral (O'Connell, 2013; Johnstone & Lee, 2014, 2020). These perceptions formed the foundation of many social programs that currently exist and while some aspects for eligibility have been tempered, the early foundations of discrimination are still active.

Early patterns of discrimination towards racialized immigrants and racialized immigrant women became deeply entrenched in Canada's perception of racialized immigrants as counter to the ideal European image that it seeks, as well as to Canada's White Settler nation-building efforts. In the same token, the prioritizing of European immigrants remained crucial to the image that Canada sought to retain. This is despite the increasing trends in immigration from non-White immigrants. Canada retains its preference for European immigrants and its disdain for racialized

immigrants. The immigration system is considered a key mechanism in sustaining these earlier ideologies of Whiteness and streamlining immigrants. The sustained preference for White migrants is evident even in the case of internationally displaced peoples where programs and acceptance rates for refugees from Ukraine are blatantly privileged compared to other groups of refugee peoples.

Thobani (2007) asserts that Canadian immigration policies became central to the process of generating a national population and regulating its access to resources. She calls attention to the early phase of Canada's nation-building efforts, which saw the burgeoning nation juggling two competing goals simultaneously in cementing its White settler image. The first goal was to maintain a racially pure, White nation, while the second was to rely on especially racialized immigrants to fulfil its increasing demand for labour and support its economic development. These two competing goals according to Thobani (2007), placed the country at a crossroads as the latter was at odds with Canada's nation building goals. In the process, racialized immigrants were constructed as incompatible morally and religiously and based on their status as nonpreferred races they were defined as unworthy of citizenship and the devaluing of their labour became normalized (Thobani, 2007; Hernandez-Ramirez, 2019; Tam, 2022). Current outcomes for racialized immigrants in Canada provide a snapshot of the ways that this past informs the present, as many of these issues remain.

It is not surprising then that immigration and naturalization legislations distinguish first British and French, and later, other Europeans as 'preferred races' for integration in Canada as a nation well beyond the Confederation period (Mensah, 2010; McDonald, 2009; Nobe-Ghelani, 2017). According to Thobani (2007), this position constructed Europeans as the 'true' subjects of Canada as a nation, which cemented the structure of citizenship around a White racial identity.

The fusion between the nation's White racial identity as well as its legal citizenship further solidified the construction of a country that is synonymous with Whiteness. Despite the presence of Black, Asian, and other non-White migrants in Canada both before Confederation period and beyond, Thobani (2007) asserts that the racism that they endured still continues and remains intricately linked to the national commitment to ensure that Canada remains a White country.

Racialized Immigrants' Experiences in Canadian Society in Social Work Literature

Chaze and George (2013) note that the focus on immigrants in social work typically highlights settlement services, integration, and other health and human service-related issues. Limited attention has been given to the multiple forms of discrimination and oppression that racialized immigrants face and, in particular, about their experiences of racism and gender. In addition, the longstanding racist and gendered experiences that are directly connected to Canada's nation-building efforts and the prioritizing of European immigrants over other groups are also not explored as core factors within social work literature. For example, a search for journal articles in Social Work Abstracts – a database collecting abstracts concerned with social work research, practice, and pedagogy – using the term “immigrants and Canada” produced 44 results; only 17 of those 44 articles mentioned Canada in their titles. None of these articles mentioned race and gender distinctly in their subject headings or keywords, even though just over half (24) of the 44 articles were published in social work journals.

While the same term searched in Social Services Abstracts, a similar database, produced many more results (696). Only 37 of these articles mentioned race distinctly and 91 mentioned gender in the subject headings. Some of the articles in both searches did, however, mention women, while others referred to specific ethnic groups and populations. The search was

expanded beyond social work literature to include social sciences, which produce more results to support the review of literature. The broader scope provides deeper insights to highlight key themes from the literature on racialized immigrants' experiences in Canada. The themes highlighted are within the focus of this research on race and gender and are taken up within CRT and ARFT frameworks.

In their research on experiences of discrimination among internationally trained engineers in Canada both when searching for work and in the workplace, Chaze and George (2013) found that some participants acknowledged that discrimination based on race was experienced directly, while others acknowledged witnessing discrimination against others. On the other hand, Vang and Chang (2019) found that immigrants are less likely to report encounters of discrimination, especially if they are from a minority group. The author notes that even with the limited reporting, in many cases, encounters were about racism due to race and skin colour. Zaman (2010) notes that immigrant women and many immigrants in general have become active agents of resistance towards racism, especially in the Canadian labour market. The author examines the connection between racism and immigrant women in Canada within the labour market as well as in other socio-economic, political, and legal spaces. Zaman's (2010) examination of the topic draws from the works of other scholars such as Agnew (2009), Choudry and colleagues (2009), Das Gupta (2009), and Dossa (2009) that share common themes around the raced and gendered experiences of immigrant women in Canada. Zaman's (2010) review concludes that racialized women in Canada must contend with both old and new forms of racism that are multi-layered and complex. Despite efforts among especially racialized immigrant women to mobilize, build alliances, and push back against racism, sexism, and exploitation in their workplaces, they still face an uphill battle to be treated fairly.

Creese and Wiebe (2012) employ a race and gender framework to examine survival employment and the deskilling of African immigrants in Canada. Their study interviewed 30 women and 31 men from sub-Saharan Africa who were residing in Vancouver. The authors found that the impact across the labour market was different for immigrant women than immigrant men and that issues of deskilling and inequitable economic integration were compounded by ineffective immigration policies targeting highly skilled immigrants. Findings also highlight issues of low-skilled, low-waged employment and demands for Canadian credentials and “Canadian experience.” Chaze and George (2013) highlight the views of other authors who attribute common barriers such as credentialing and ‘Canadian work experience’ in Canada to racism. Overlapping issues of underemployment, low-wage, and low-skilled jobs especially among skilled immigrant women have direct links to racism and sexism and have overall negative impacts on their health and wellbeing.

In a scoping review of literature on African immigrant women in Western host countries, Okeke-Ihejirika and colleagues (2016) point to themes such as inequality in the job market, isolation, absence of social networks, and inadequate social services to address mental health issues among African immigrant women. The authors conduct focus group discussions with African women in Canada as part of the study and found that results from discussion reinforced themes from the scoping review of literature. In a similar vein, Wong (2014) explores the experiences of Ghanaian women in navigating multiple caregiving roles in the UK, finding issues of discrimination, institutional racism, as well as differences in gender systems in multi-level social settings. The prevalence of racism and sexism in the labour market and in Canadian society, are steeped within Eurocentrism and White Supremacist ideals. The prevalence also positions White, Euro-Western knowledge as the only valid sources of knowledge. For racialized

immigrants and especially Black immigrant women, the colonial legacy of a White settler nation such as Canada continues to shape their experiences. While many of these issues are prevalent across racialized immigrant groups, attention to these understandings for skilled immigrants warrant further review.

Skilled Immigrant Women in Context

In the past three decades alone, the increase in migration of highly skilled immigrants has been credited for the growth in different economic sectors and many countries have come to rely on skilled immigrant labour for economic growth (Bailey & Mulder, 2017; Beaverstock, 2012; Hudon, 2015). The prioritizing of skilled immigrants for permanent residency in Canada for example, has become a huge part of Canada's economic plans as well as to maintain its economic stability. As previously noted in this dissertation, the FSWP in Canada is the key avenue to attract these highly skilled workers, which creates hierarchies within economic migrants. The emphasis placed on recruiting them has also fueled many changes to immigration policies and programs in Canada (Bailey & Mulder, 2017; Iredale, 2005; Riaño & Baghdadi, 2007). The almost singular focus on the benefits in these changes for source countries have overshadowed considerations for any substantive benefits for the skilled immigrants themselves. This means even less consideration for skilled immigrant women.

For example, while the FSWP has gone through many revisions in the past 3 decades, the emphasis on points for specific criteria (language skills -French/English, education, work experience, age, arranged employment in Canada, and adaptability) have replaced the earlier emphasis on projected occupational shortage. Little attention is given to the impact on immigrant women due to historical notions of them as dependents. Significant revisions that were

introduced in March 2012 and implemented in May 2013, included the lowering of the existing age range requirement from between 21 to 49 years old for skilled immigrant applicants to a new range between 18 - 35 years old. Benefits of the lower age requirement for Canada is reported to be twofold; it extends the timeframe in which skilled will contribute to the Canadian workforce and at the same time it replenishes an aging Canadian workforce (Chen, 2008; Grant & Nandin 2007; Man, 2004). Pinpointing the benefits for Canada is much easier than pinpointing the same benefits for skilled immigrants and skilled immigrant women who are yet to be acknowledged in these changes.

More recent changes include a shift in how points are awarded for language proficiency and establishing a new minimum official language threshold which is assessed through the completion of a language proficiency test. In addition, more points are awarded for Canadian work experience and less for foreign work experience. Language ability of spouses is now factored into the qualification criteria (IRCC, 2024). A mandatory component for assessment of foreign credentials against Canadian education standards was added as a part of a more recent round of changes, with points awarded based on applicants' credentials matching up to Canadian standards.

The most recent changes to the program, however, include the introduction of an "Express Entry" component in June 2015, designed to select and process skilled immigrants in a more expedited time frame (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2017). This component was revised again in June 2017 to include allocation of additional points to applicants who have relatives in Canada and higher scores for French and English language competency. Overall, the program has remained consistent in the use of points being allocated for specific criteria. This means that there are minimal differences in the criteria required for individuals who migrate

under the FSWP over the last decade or more. However, the extent of the racial and gendered impact of these changes on skilled immigrant women is yet to be determined. Gaps in research on skilled immigrant women remains an issue.

Riaño and Baghdadi (2007) note that research on migrant women in general, focuses on women in domestic labour and other lower skill sectors. This is reflective of Bailey and Mulder's (2017) point that literature on immigrant women focus primarily on care and gendered work. Similar observations are made about early migration among women from the Caribbean to Canada (Arat-Koç, 2006; Flynn, 1998). The attention given in the literature to women migrating from the Caribbean to Canada as skilled migrants is very limited (Calliste, 1993/94; Lawson, 2013; Silvera, 1989). This may be in part due to the limited opportunities to gain entry to Canada in the early stages of its immigration mandate. The general gap in the literature on skilled immigrant women is noted across different groups but especially among those at the centre of various intersections of discrimination.

The earlier highlights from Riaño and Baghdadi (2007) pointed to the limited attention given to the coaction of race, class, and gender in skilled migration research. Much of this gap rings true today as evidenced by the lack of more recent literature on the subject. Even though Creese and Wiebe (2012), Man (2004), Raghuram and Kofman (2009) looked at the de-skilling of professional immigrant women, the gap in the impact of race and gender on the reported outcomes, remain. Similarly, Meares (2010) and Raghuram and Kofman (2004) focus on the lack of recognition of their credentials after migration. Alboim and colleagues (2005), Avni (2012), Bannerjee (2009), Danso (2009), Grant and Nadin (2007), Ngo and Este (2006), and Orme (2007) focus on the loss of career identity and the economic instability that skilled immigrant women experience after migration. While some attention is given to race and gender in many of

the earlier research noted, more discussion is needed to fill the current gaps for skilled immigrant women.

Kofman, 2000; Meares, 2010 and Purkayshta, 2005, also note that research and discussions in the literature on skilled immigrant women are limited and even more so on racialized women (Leclézio et al., 1985; Verkuyten & Martinovic, 2011). Purkayastha (2005) emphasizes that to understand the experiences of skilled immigrant women, the interaction and complexities of gender and racialized immigration laws, as well as workplace and household experiences, must be included. The “invisibility” of skilled immigrant women in skilled migration studies in Europe, according to Kofman (2000), is directly related to the focus on transnational corporations dominated by males, especially at higher levels. Mainstream research agendas are preoccupied with the dominant accounts that overlook skilled immigrant women and render their narratives invisible. The lack of more recent literature speaks to the ongoing gaps on skilled immigrant women.

Other scholars note that immigrant women are often written about as “co-movers” or companions to their skilled male spouses, with no attention given to them in current literature as primary movers with skills in their own right (Bailey and Mulder, 2017; Jagire, 2019; Roberts, 2019; Rootliep, 2022). Iredale (2005) and Riaño and Baghdadi (2007) also point out that immigrant women are often written about as family class immigrants unlike their male counterparts, who dominate representation in the literature on skilled migration. Earlier observations made by Parr (1987) about the understanding of the gendered immigration process, points to the systemic lag in literature. This observation is several decades old, and the gap still exists now. She points out that discussions on immigrant men portray them as the primary migrants who migrate to explore “distant lands,” while women wait for word from them that it is

safe to join them. This perception also connects to observations noted earlier by Bailey and Mulder (2017) and Riaño and Baghdadi, (2007), that immigrant women are discussed as “co-movers” to immigrant men. The gendered and patriarchal views that feminize the accomplishment of women, is evident in current migration narratives, especially in skilled migration.

Despite some areas of common experiences across immigrant groups, reports indicate that the experience of skilled immigrant women are generally different from that of other immigrant groups as they must also negotiate gender norms, employment, and family life simultaneously (Bailey & Mulder, 2017; Raghuram & Kofman, 2004). Issues such as race are seen as additional factors that intensify their experiences further. Parr (1987) highlights the “sex-selective” process of immigration leads to different experiences of migration by males and females. According to Bailey and Mulder’s (2017) centering skills alongside immigrant women is necessary in the migration literature that is currently predicated upon males as highly skilled immigrants. The current accounts also overlook the pre-migration strides that skilled immigrant women would have made in especially male dominated professions.

Iredale (2005) notes that for women to be able to compete in the skilled immigrant category in the first place, some semblance of equality in gender and education systems must exist in respective migrating countries. She did point to specific professions such as accounting, medicine, engineering and architecture that are typically dominated by males in most countries. She further acknowledges that women’s ability to access the skills to compete in the global market is impacted by more than just attitudes about women accessing higher levels of education. Instead, she indicates that the overall attitude about the status of women, their position in society, and their capacity to migrate can be added factors. At the same time the immigration

system privileges male dominated professions as skilled, whereas professions traditionally occupied by women such as caregiving are less recognized.

Many aspects of Iredale's (2005) observations point to access to education for many immigrant women, which would not be without its share of challenges in their home countries. For example, early access to education, especially higher education, for women in the Caribbean, was considered a privilege due to financial constraints, lack of opportunities, and limited access (Colby, 2000; Miller, 2006). White males had exclusive access to the limited opportunities for higher education in the Caribbean as part of the troubling legacy of colonization. Women's enrolment in higher education was well below 50% of men from the late 1940s to the late 1960s, and only made it above 50% in the late 1980s to early 1990s (Cobley, 2000; Hamilton, 2015). The patriarchal ideology of male-dominated spaces extends to education in the region as well, with common themes of housework and childcare as women's domain identified as significant barriers (Blank, 2013; Figueroa, 2004; Hamilton, 2015). These narratives undoubtedly add to the limited access to education and higher education for women. That decades later women are being deprived of their skills and education because of where they were acquired, is cause for grave concern in general and in social work in particular. These actions and narratives are also significant to identify gaps in the literature on skilled migration. The impact of race and gender on this population is needed to provide context about multiple aspects that warrant further attention in research.

Overview of Early Experiences of Black Women from the Caribbean in Canada

Review of literature on the experience of women from the Caribbean in Canada is important to understand how they have been impacted by migration. It provides insight into how they have been treated and positioned in host countries like Canada post-migration. Accounts of their past experiences also help to pinpoint systemic challenges that they face during the course of their experiences. It also helps to determine the extent of many issues that they face to make inferences in the current research. The literature review also provides context for the current research to develop deeper understanding and explanations about their experiences.

The history of migration from the Caribbean to Canada dates back to the late 1700s (Mensah, 2010; Moya, 2015). In fact, Baffoe and colleagues (2014) note that the first group of immigrants from the region came to Canada to fill unskilled labour shortage in the steel mills and coal mines during this period. Many of these early Caribbean migrants settled in Nova Scotia (Calliste, 1993/94; Moya, 2015; Bonner, 2022). Later, women from the Caribbean were also granted entry to Canada during different periods to fill its nursing shortage and domestic shortage respectively (Calliste, 1993/94; Johnson, 2022; Jefferies et al., 2022). The fact that these various points of entry for migration from the Caribbean to Canada were sporadic at best and were infused with racist and sexist restrictions on eligibility and entry for especially women cannot be overlooked. One could also argue that the reasons and exceptions that warranted their admission to Canada, set the tone for the levels of discrimination that they experience.

This was obvious in the disproportionate requirements that was used to assess women from the Caribbean to gain entry to Canada compared to more lenient requirements for women from Europe in the same program. Women from the Caribbean who were admitted in response to Canada's nursing shortage at different points between 1950 and 1962, for example, had to have

“exceptional merit” to qualify in the face of racial and patriarchal immigration policies (Calliste, 1993/94; Flynn, 2006; Shkimba & Flynn, 2004). In addition, they were restricted from working in hospitals or attending nursing programs in Canada. These stringent stipulations shaped how they could integrate in Canadian society. Intense scrutiny, exclusionary practices, and other forms of discrimination based on race and gender were commonly reported as part of the experience of Black immigrant women in Canada (Arat-Koç, 2006; Mensah, 2010). Thobani (2000) and Roache (2022) call attention to the earlier efforts to intentionally exclude Black women because of fears that they may choose to have children after gaining entry to Canada. This fear not only labelled those who gained entry to Canada for discrimination, but also served as a reminder of the threat they posed to derailing Canada’s White nation-building efforts.

Arat-Koç’s (2006) review of literature on the experiences of migrant workers in Canada from an intersectional and political economic framework, sheds even more light into the experiences of women from the Caribbean who came to Canada as domestic workers. The author notes that it was quite common during the period of the Domestic Scheme Program for domestic workers from the Caribbean to be referred to as “undesirables,” “immoral,” “coloured domestics,” and other derogatory and subjective terms (Calliste, 1993/94; Flynn, 2011; Lawson, 2013; Mabusela, 2021). Interestingly, the Domestic Scheme Program was initially made available to women from select Caribbean islands (Jamaica and Barbados) in the early nineteenth century to gain entry to Canada. More options became available much later only after tension developed between Eastern Europe and North America during the Cold War and the domestic labour from Europe was not as readily available. Canada needed to fill its demands for domestic workers and unenthusiastically turned to the Caribbean to fulfill this demand. Arat-Koç (2006) and Shepperd (2009) note that Canada eventually succumbed to pressure from both the

Caribbean and British governments and signed a deal to take domestic workers from the Caribbean. Still, this move was more in response to Canada's demand for domestic workers and not so much to alter its preference for White European female domestic workers (Arat-Koç, 2006; Calliste, 1993/94; Henry, 1968; Silvera, 1989).

Similar patterns of discrimination existed for women from the Caribbean to qualify for the Domestic Scheme Program to gain entry to Canada from the onset. They had to be single or widowed, possessed a minimum of grade 8 level education, and successfully complete a medical examination (Arat-Koç, 2006, Calliste, 1993/94). The value placed on them is more to do with them as labouring bodies. In addition, female domestic workers from the Caribbean were paid half the earnings of their White counterparts in Quebec even though they did the same work (Calliste, 1993/94; Silvera, 1989). Shortly after the first pilot program for domestic workers from the Caribbean to Canada began in 1911, it was discontinued due to racist assumptions that included physical and immoral accusations and the discontinuation lasted for 44 years until the program was resumed in 1955 (Arat-Koç, 2006; Calliste, 1993/94; Shepperd, 2009). Arat-Koç (2006) highlights that "it is only by examining gender, race and class simultaneously that we can begin to understand how these women continue to be both so needed by Canada and so excluded from genuine membership within the Canadian nation" (p. 196). Even though they were recruited to fulfil Canada's labour demands, these women were treated as outsiders and unwanted immigrants in Canada.

Of key to note is that the earlier entry of many women in the domestic worker program came to Canada as temporary workers, a factor that remains in the current immigration policies for domestic workers. In the earlier admission under the program, a one-year work term agreement was granted. Once this one-year work-term agreement in Canada was completed,

women from the Caribbean were expected to return to their home country. This was a deliberately designed and structured impermanence. Arat-Koç (2006) reports that it was not uncommon for some of the women to be sent back to the Caribbean by their employers based on prejudicial reasons. Also worth noting is that the interest free loans that the Canadian government made available to European domestic workers to assist with their passage to Canada were not made available to Black domestic workers (Arat-Koç, 2006; Calliste, 1993/94). The Caribbean government was responsible for the passage of women from the region even if their contracts ended prematurely. This also meant that they were solely responsible for all medical, recruitment, and transportation expenses, which was unlike the arrangement for women from European countries where the Canadian government covered all expenses (Arat-Koç, 2006; Calliste, 1993/94).

Reports indicate that the Canadian government was not pleased when Caribbean domestic workers began sponsoring their relatives and the government considered adopting measures to prevent them from doing so (Arat-Koç, 2006; Shepherd, 2009). Lawson's (2013) review noted the case of seven Jamaican women who migrated under the West Indian Domestic Scheme Program and who were facing deportation from Canada in 1978 for not disclosing that they had minor children at the time of their applications. In their defense the women argued that they were advised by authorities in their country to omit the children from their application since they were not traveling with them. The women also asserted that Canadian officials were aware of the omission but the demand for labour was greater, and they were granted entry despite the omission (Lawson, 2013). The women sharing their stories argued that when it was time for them to begin integrating into Canadian society, the issue was dredged up for their removal and

to thwart any efforts from sponsoring them to Canada. Not only was their labour impermanent but their status made them expendable as well.

The lack of viability for Black domestic workers in Canada was further evidenced in practice, as they were prohibited from marrying while in Canada, which is unlike White European domestic workers who were encouraged to marry Canadian men (Arat-Koç, 2006). This is an indication of racialized bodies being considered as threats to Canada as a nation, with Black women's reproductive capabilities threatening its racial fabric. Shepherd (2009) indicates that since European women were able to perpetuate slavery and uphold the myth of White supremacy, their offspring could continue both that myth and legacy of the perception, unlike the children of Black women. As a result, White European women were able to integrate as "free persons" within their gendered roles, while Black domestic workers were reigned in as unfree labourers. This offers some explanation to the restrictions placed on their entry and insight into the discrimination they faced more broadly.

In 1962, new immigration policies ushered in programs such as the points system and what was believed to be a new era in Canadian immigration. However, Baffoe and colleagues (2014) point to the shroud of "Whiteness" that Canada's immigration policies vehemently embraced from the 1867 Confederation until well into the late 1960s. While this new flurry of immigration policies curbed some of the formally written and overtly racist policies, racist practices continued in these systems unchallenged. Immigrants are still excluded based on nationality, geographic location, customs and way of life, perceived adaptability, and ability to assimilate (Taylor, 2013; Mooten, 2021). In addition, several accounts of hostility and racial discrimination are reported as part of the regular experiences of Black domestic workers in Canada well beyond these changes. Many of those affected are from the Caribbean. The change

in the policy did result in increased numbers of migrants from the Caribbean to Canada (Plaza, 2004; Taylor, 2013). However, with the shift in focus and the increased numbers of racialized immigrants admitted to Canada, racial tensions and discrimination towards them also increased.

Other literature on Caribbean women in Canada reveal similar patterns of discrimination and exclusion, underpinning both overt and covert forms of racism and sexism. For example, in exploring the role of faith in the identity reconstruction of Black Caribbean immigrant women in Canada post-migration, Dixon and Arthur (2019) highlight racism as one of the key factors of post-migration stress that can fragment the identity of people of African descent. In their review of literature on related topics, the authors note that immigrant Black women in Canada used their spirituality to retain their wholism in the face of dehumanizing narratives. They essentially use faith to reconstruct their identity outside of stereotypical constructions enabled by the White Supremacist ideals and the legacy of colonization (Dixon & Arthur, 2019; Dixon et al., 2023). The authors note that the levels of participation among Black women increased with exposure to leadership opportunities secured within their faith-based community. At the same time, however, a decline in health outcomes for certain groups of immigrants were noted as part of their overall post-migration experiences.

In an earlier study that looked at the gendered process of Caribbean transnationalism, Ho (1999) found that workers from the Caribbean are typically excluded from the benefits that come from being employed, while others face instances of exploitation from employers because of their temporary status. These findings are similar to findings from a more recent study done by Branker (2017) on experiences of labour market discrimination among individuals from the Anglophone Caribbean in Toronto. Interviews with 39 Caribbean immigrants from Trinidad &

Tobago, Jamaica, and Guyana reveal poor labour outcomes due to structural and institutional practices.

Furthermore, Branker's (2017) reveals that issues of racism and sexism within the Canadian labour market further impacted the experiences of participants negatively. Earlier focus on issues of discrimination based on race and gender that many immigrants face in Canada have been noted by scholars such as Galabuzi (2006), Preston and Giles (2004), James (1994), Teelucksingh and Galabuzi (2007), and Christofides and Swidinsky (1994). Similarly, findings from a multi-level study on ethnic communities in Windsor done by Anucha and colleagues (2006), reveals poorer employment trajectory among immigrants from different ethnic groups, including from African/Caribbean backgrounds. These findings are in line with current reports, establishing long standing patterns of discrimination towards certain immigrant groups in Canada.

Goldring and Landolt (2022) in their research on migration and permanent residency refers to the Precarious Legal Status Trajectory (PLST) which creates differential treatment for many Caribbean immigrant women. The authors note the emphasis placed primarily on gendered violence as the legitimate rationale for granting permanent residency to those affected. The authors call out the legacies of colonization and government policies that work in tandem to deny legal status to certain groups of immigrants. This legacy extends beyond legal status to frame the treatment, experiences, and oppression of Black immigrant women from the Caribbean, including their positioning in Canada as less than White women. Even in situations where they are highly skilled, Black immigrant women's skills are deemed as not up to Canadian standards.

Furthermore, Black women in Canada are often overrepresented in care work occupations (Thomas & Lightman, 2022; Faraday et al., 2020; Luna, 2021) which is an industry often

plagued with low wage jobs and lack of job security. The entry of women from the Caribbean to Canada as domestic workers seem to overshadow other categories of entry and have framed most of their experiences and their skills as sub-par to that of Canadians. The levels of discrimination and oppression that they face historically seem to have set the tone for their overall experiences.

Of course, their experiences cannot be discussed without recognizing the role of colonization and Canada's history of pursuing a White Eurocentric nation. In addition, even though their entry as domestic workers no doubt bolstered both Canada's economic and cultural growth, their contributions have been rendered invisible (Calliste, 1993/94; Flynn, 2008; Benn-John, 2016; Hackett, 2019). Individuals from Caribbean origin make up one of the largest groups from non-European, Ethno-specific backgrounds in Canada (Taylor & Richards, 2019; Statistics Canada, 2001). Thomas and Lightman (2022), note that the historical perception about them in Canada is as "quintessential migrant care workers," (p. 30). The fact that they initially came to Canada primarily as domestic workers with limited options to gain entry under other immigration category, helped to cement this inaccurate perception. Read through an anti-black racism lens, there is a continued marginalization of Black migrant women even within the immigration system. The feminized caring professions, deemed low skilled, and designed as impermanent. Their entry was limited to feminized caring profession, deemed low skilled, and designed as impermanent.

Canada's immigration pattern shifted significantly in the early 1970s from the influx of European immigrants to more reliance on immigrant labour, from primarily developing and non-White countries. This dependence on immigrants from non-European countries coincided with the onset of the economic depression of the 1970s and Canada's post-industrial economic needs (Boyd & Vickers, 2000; Pendakur, 2000). The late 1970s to the 1990s saw a decline in

immigration from the Caribbean to Canada, and then an increase in numbers, from the mid-90s to the early 2000s. Canada has since opened its doors much wider to immigrants from the Caribbean and in general.

Today, individuals from the Caribbean can migrate to Canada in all the immigration categories. Though the entry to Canada may not be as onerous as in the past, issues of discrimination is still a factor in their experiences. The lingering sentiments that the tone of the historical racism and oppression create, are still of concern. This study is intended to explore the revelations from the current experiences of participants to get a glimpse into the current issue.

Application to current research

The review of literature in this chapter sheds light on the Canadian immigration system and how many of its policies have served to streamline racialized immigrants as outsiders to Canada. Despite ongoing changes to these policies, the review of literature highlights the longstanding premise of discrimination that is ingrained and reproduced within these policies to marginalize and oppress non-White immigrants. Johnstone and Lee's (2020) observation about earlier changes in the 1947 Canadian Immigration Act that still prioritized the imagined identity of a monocultural, White Anglo-Christian people, is indicative of how these discriminations are reproduced despite the changes.

The review of literature further teases out aspects of assimilationist approaches to social cohesion that Johnstone and Lee (2020) note as key to Canada's nation-building strategy. These are key aspects for the current study to establish historical patterns of discrimination towards racialized immigrants as part of Canada's White nation-building efforts. This section sheds light into the complexity of Canada's reliance on the labour of immigrant women and at the same time continuing practices that deny their humanity. Understanding the kinds of discrimination, they

face historically, is helpful in furthering the discussion of findings for this research. It will help to tease out connections of historical and contemporary functioning of race and gender that is present stories that participants share.

The review also provides context to the streamlining of Black immigrant women within the Canadian immigration system and the Canadian labour market as well as within the broader Canadian society. Understanding how they have been labelled for discrimination and how this continues to shape their experience over time is significant understand the patterns of discrimination they face. The course of experience for skilled immigrant women that leads to the undervaluing of their skills and discrimination within the Canadian labour market, also adds insight and help to pinpoint what is already known. This synthesis provides insight into both the positioning of immigrant women in Canada as outsiders to Canadians and how they have been written about in the literature. It provides context into their past experiences which can be used in the findings of this study to provide context and points of inferences for current discussion.

Of significance from the review are the insights into the treatment of women from the Caribbean, especially for Black women from the region in Canada. This understanding is crucial for consequent discussions about them in the current study. The review indicates that the treatment that they encountered mirrors Black feminist insights about the stereotypical perceptions that negates the negative treatment of Black and racialized women. Such treatment is based on a decontextualized and unidimensional typecasting of them as “mammies” and as caregivers without skills, knowledge, or individual needs (Collins, 2009; Lawson, 2013). These perceptions further erase their humanity and feed into the negative treatment that they encounter. It also justifies practices and policies that overlook their needs altogether. The review establishes

context to scope out similarities in the current study to determine the extent of the patterns of discrimination that exists and to provide new insights based on current experiences.

The review also provides more context into how discrimination is perpetuated in Canada towards racialized immigrants and particularly towards Black immigrant women. Most importantly, this review helps to make connections to the ways that race, racism, and sexism become normalized in Canadian society to marginalize and oppress Black immigrant women. This insight provides context for the current study to better engage with the systemic actors that shape the course of experience for the population being researched. Looking at how these women have both been invited and excluded from Canada, as well as the undermining of their roles and skills, provide the foundation from which to make inferences in the findings from this study.

On a larger scope, the review also provides insight into how race and gender have structured the experiences of racialized immigrants in Canada historically. The emphasis on women from the Caribbean and their entry points to Canada also provides insight into the historical context of immigration and belonging, thus illuminating important connections to the contemporary context of the current study. This insight provides deeper understanding for the current research to establish a threshold on which to base my discussion for current findings. This review provides insight into the extent and depth of the discrimination that women from the Caribbean have faced, establishing a platform upon which to anchor this research.

Finally, this section provides a summary of literature using the theoretical frameworks that guide this study. This helps to flesh out existing evidence of the workings of race and gender that have been taken up in existing research. The current study can build on these findings to develop deeper understandings about the researched population. The review helps to center the

focus of the discussion within Canada and at the same identify broader patterns to examine. The review helps to identify gaps in literature and frame the contributions of this study to both social work literature and the broader social sciences and adds to the narratives on skilled migration.

Summary

This chapter uses CRT and ARFT to frame the review of literature and scope out aspects of Canadian immigration policies that play a role in how racialized immigrants are admitted and perceived in Canada. It provides insights into how the experiences of racialized immigrants in Canada are structured by race and gender, which label them for discrimination. Review in this section engages with the limited discussions on how the experiences of racialized immigrants in Canada have been taken up in social work literature. It also incorporates a review of literature from the social sciences more broadly, to shed light into the marginalizing experiences of racialized immigrants that have been reported in the literature.

Additionally, this chapter provides context for skilled immigrants and the criteria that qualifies them based on the FSWP, which serves to contextualize the population in this study. Also covered in this chapter is a review of skilled immigrant women and how they have been taken up in the literature, primarily as “co-movers” or dependents that re-locate in the shadows of immigrant men. In line with the theories used to frame this study, the discussion in this chapter focuses on the experiences of skilled immigrant women in Canada to create insight into how skilled women in general have been treated and written about. This chapter also highlights noted connections between the stereotypical ascription of roles that underpins the positioning of racialized women in Canada, which mark them for discrimination.

The chapter draws attention to both the entry of women from the Caribbean to Canada and the historical patterns of discrimination that have shaped their experiences in Canada. It focuses on trends and linkages made between racism and sexism about immigrant women from the Caribbean and racialized immigrant experiences in Canada historically. Overall, this chapter provides a synthesis of relevant literature that is necessary to inform this research and establish the platform on which to add knowledge on existing studies in the field. The chapter provides an overview of how the review will inform this research and concludes with a summary.

Chapter 4: Methodology

Overview of chapter

This chapter provides an overview of critical race methodology, which is the selected methodology for this qualitative research. It provides the rationale for selecting this qualitative method of research for this topic and an overview of critical race as a research design. The chapter also provides an overview of key considerations in critical race study design generally and in line with the theoretical frameworks used in this study. The chapter provides insight into specific aspects of critical race study design that the present study uses. It outlines the research process that this study engages and provides a synopsis of my journey of self-awareness and positionality for transparency and reflexivity for this research. The chapter concludes with an overview of key highlights from the chapter.

Selected methodology: Critical Race Methodology

This study uses Critical Race methodology (CRM) in its examination which is a methodological approach that foregrounds the lived experiences of racialized individuals (Aldana et al., 2023; Lapayese, 2007; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). Similar to CRT, CRM's underpinnings rests on specific principles that engage: (i) the pervasiveness of race and racism, (ii) the understanding that White Supremacy privileges White individuals and renders Black and racialized individuals as inferior, (iii) the privileging of voices and experiences of Black and other racialized groups, (iv) the recognition that the convergence of interests often favour the interests of Whites, even in cases with seemingly racial equity gains, and (v) the acknowledgement of intersectionality across systems and categorizations that are interdependent in their oppression on members of Black and racialized groups (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001, 2012; Huber, 2008; Lapayese, 2007; Lawrence & Hylton, 2022; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002).

CRM is also premised on the understanding that categories of differentiation such as race, racism, gender, and other social factors of discrimination are socially constructed, but indeed have material effects that perpetuate the oppression of marginalized groups (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002).

According to Aldana et al., (2023), a CRM approach also centers anti-racism and challenges the production and reproduction of inequity, which is in line with both CRT and ARFT principles. Accordingly, the author notes that the integration of CRT “decenters Whiteness, counters colour-evasive racism in education, and centers anti-racist ideas and practices,” (p. 21). CRM provides a tool to challenge narratives about Black and marginalized groups that are grounded in dominance and that construct their experiences as deficient (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002; Chapman & DeCuir-Gunby, 2018; Briggs, 2018). As a tool, CRM offers a counter narrative to these deficient stories and put forth “space to conduct and present research grounded in the experiences and knowledge of people of colour” (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002, p. 23). This means that in its approach, CRM creates space for Black and racialized individuals to construct their own narratives. CRM’s approach, therefore, is in line with the objectives that this study seeks to achieve.

Furthermore, the strengths-based perspective that CRM engages draws from an interdisciplinary knowledge base to scope out the lived experiences of race and racism for Black and racialized groups (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002; Yosso, 2005; Durrah, 2022). Considering the emphasis on race, racism and gender in this research and the use of CRT and ARFT combined framework, CRM provides the tools that will aptly engage the aspects of race and gender to answer the research question. Essentially, the focus on the lived experience of marginalization and oppression, along with the focus on race and gender, are in line with the theoretical lenses

used in this research (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Dua & Robertson, 1999; Hayden, 2015). This is also in line with my intentions for undertaking this research. CRM therefore provides a unique and meaningful approach to undertake this study.

Lapayese (2007) engages critical race methodology to investigate the labour of bilingual teachers which “expose alternative explanations” about the impact of language policy on the education of students of colour (p. 312). The author draws on Solórzano and Yosso’s (2002) approach, including discussion of five distinct features which CRM adopts as part of its theoretically grounded approach to research. These distinct features include: (i) foregrounding race and racism at the centre throughout the research process which includes challenging the intersection and impact of other discourses to do with race and gender and other forms of discrimination of racialized individuals; (ii) raising questions about explanations that conventional research paradigms can offer about the experiences of the researched population of colour; (iii) engaging an approach that leads to liberative or transformative solutions to race, gender and other forms of subordination; (iv) emphasizing the radicalization of experience that is raced, classed and gendered as strength instead of deficient; and (v) drawing on interdisciplinary knowledge based within non-dominant approaches to increase understanding of the researched population (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Huber, 2008; Khalil & Keir, 2017; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002).

In framing their contribution to methodological literature, Lawrence and Hylton (2022) encourage the development of critical race methodologies to scrutinize a growing digital Western world including the media. The researchers note that this will better equip researchers to challenge “the persistence of racialized hierarchies and the emerging cultural circumstances in which they operate” (Lawrence and Hylton, 2022, p. 1). The authors outline three philosophical

principles to ground CRMs and guide this methodological approach. The first includes the ongoing utilization of the analytical concept of race as tangible and shaped by factors that include social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic, and gender norms. These determining factors are reinforced through different structures in society, accounting for the ways in which they shift over time to be unearthed, excavated, and traced.

The second requires an anti-essentialist approach that centers race and the reproduction of hierarchies that it produces, where groups considered dominant are empowered and those considered subordinate are oppressed. In essence, recognizing the power that individuals who are oppressed hold and at the same time problematizes the idea that social groups are fixed within social hierarchies in each society. The third calls for social justice and activist-scholarship that “provides an ethical, pragmatic, and moral approach to research design” and serves as a vehicle to achieving human liberation (p. 3). The authors reiterate that promoting human liberation and equity are key aspects of CRT methodological design. Engagement of CRM as an approach to research reiterates the salience of race and racism and incorporates gender and its intersectional impact on the lives of racialized individuals. At the same time, the use of CRM advances alternate approaches to doing research which is of significance to this study.

Rationale for choice of qualitative method

CRM was selected as the qualitative approach for this research because it is uniquely positioned to frame the stories of Black and racialized individuals, to provide a deeper understanding and make meaning of their stories (Lapayese, 2007; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002; Camangian et al., 2023; Delgado Bernal, 2002). The emphasis on the impact of race and gender on participants’ lived experiences that this research examines, led to the choice of this

methodology (CRM). As CRM's principles are grounded in CRT, this methodology provides discourses on race, racism, and other forms of oppression on racialized individuals such as gender, which is in line with what this study seeks to achieve (Aldana et al., 2020; DeCuir-Gunby et al., 2018; Mensah, 2019; Souto-Manning, 2022). Also, of key to the choice of CRM as the qualitative approach is the compatibility with both CRT and ARFT frameworks to illuminate the intersectional workings of race and gender and how they shape experiences for the researched population.

A CRM approach is important to create space for participants' voices and inform avenues for social change. This works in tandem with ARFT's emphasis on anti-racist feminist mobilizing (Murad, 2013; Bannerji, 2020). Solórzano and Yosso (2002) call attention to various layers of assumptions within dominant narratives that drown out the focus on racism and other forms of oppression in discussions that a critical race approach seeks to address. ARFT allows for the distinct ways to scope out the workings of race and gender which adds depth to the understanding of race and racism on the experiences of especially Black women (Dua & Robertson, 1999). It also helps to highlight the actual encounters that participants experience and not the dominant construct of these encounters. As such, engaging with the stories that participants share about their lived experiences is necessary to push back at the layers and assumptions that do not accurately reflect their experiences. These considerations made CRM the ideal selection for use in this study.

Similarly, Cuàdras and Uttal (1999) point to the inadequacies of existing methodological bases used in qualitative research in effectively attending to issues of race and gender. The authors assert that many of these methodologies are not equipped with the tools to engage and honour the complex experiences of especially Black women, nor to collect, theorize, and share

their experiences. Many scholars highlight the ways in which White, Euro-Western rationalities dominate research projects, methodologies, and epistemologies, speaking too to these existing shortfalls in research on racialized populations (Chilisa, 2012; Matias et al., 2019; Mathebane & Sekudu, 2018; Vadiya, 2019). Lapayese (2007) notes that when it comes to issues of White Supremacy, power is preserved when hegemonic practices are not disrupted. The author further notes that issues of White Supremacy also includes when the unequal distribution of power and wealth serves as a gatekeeper of rights in areas of education and employment opportunities. Lapayese (2007) calls for the disruption of power and the undercurrent practices that continue to perpetuate hegemonic racial practices as the impact is typically felt by members of racialized groups.

This research honours what Chapman and colleagues (2018) note, when they point out that the locus of power shifts in research when race-based methodology is used, as the research subjects are positioned as the knowers. With the limited attention given to this topic and the researched population within social work literature especially, it is crucial to select a methodological approach that sets the tone for future research in this context. Aldana and Vazquez (2020), Wright and colleagues (2021), and Yearwood and colleagues (2021) note that historically, social work has embraced White Supremacist ideals and maintained colour-evasive racism through its epistemological stance as well as through its pedagogy and practice. I argue that this is also prioritized through social work research knowledge bases as well. With these insights in mind, it is important to select a methodology such as CRM that focuses on the impact of race and gender without framing participants' experiences from a predominantly Eurocentric methodological stance.

For Cuádriz and Uttal (1999), the focus on race and gender in research means paying attention to both participants' voices and their experience while contextually locating their voices in "history, place, and structured social relations" (p. 180). For Solórzano and Yosso (2002) the focus on race and gender in research means engaging a methodological approach that goes beyond "deficit-informed research that silences and distorts epistemologies of people of colour" (p. 23). CRM offers the avenue for such disruption to commence while simultaneously highlighting the impact of race and gender on experience, beyond impacts of deficiency and challenges. As an emerging researcher seeking to make my contributions to critical scholarship, it is important for me to be intentional in my engagement of critical methodologies. CRM was selected because it attends to many of the noted methodological shortfalls when it comes to centralizing race and gender in experience in research.

Finally, since the voices and experiences of Black and racialized populations are not captured in conventional narratives (Cuádriz & Uttal, 1999; Lapayese, 2007; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002), the use of CRM was intended to ensure that their voices and experiences are acknowledged. My hope is also that its use will help to move away from conventional ways of knowing about Black and racialized women from the Caribbean and encourage other researchers to employ similar methods when researching other populations. The engagement of a non-mainstream methodology serves to challenge dominant narratives and move closer to building anti-racist, anti-sexist, and inclusive research scholarship (Chilisa, 2012; Matias et al., 2019; Mathebane & Sekudu; 2018) which are primary goals of both social work and of my work as well. For these reasons and others, CRM was the most suitable methodology to undertake this examination about the experiences of Black skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean in the

Canadian labour market. Their raced and gendered experiences within Canadian context can be better understood from their multifaceted and dynamic encounters and points of impact.

Critical race research design

As an emerging methodology, much of the attention on critical race methodologies seem to be more prevalent in the field of education (Huber, 2008; Khalil & Keir, 2017; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Lapayese, 2007; Malagon et al., 2009; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). Similar to the broad use of CRT across different disciplines however, critical race methodologies are used across different fields including public health (Graham et al., 2011; Ford & Airhihenbuwa, 2010; Amani et al., 2022; Hardeman et al., 2018; Mannor & Malcoe, 2022). Critical race research design draws on CRT's tenets to center race and equity in research, as well as other factors that perpetuate the oppression of Black and racialized peoples (Khalia & Kier, 2017; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). CRT is used by other scholars in social work (Abrams & Moio, 2009; Daftary, 2020; Freeman, 2011; Hayden, 2015; Kolivosky et al., 2014; Razack & Jeffery, 2002; Nakaoka & Ortiz, 2018; Edwards et al., 2023; Franco, 2021). As a research design CRM aligns with the focus of this study and falls within the scope of the social work discipline.

Critical race research design also connects anti-racist research to critical race scholarship by conceptualizing research that validates the experiences of people of colour in creating new knowledge. This is necessary to tackle the issues that members of Black and other racialized groups encounter, be it in social work practice, policy and/or research. The concern from an intersectionality lens that speaks to the increased intensity of oppression due to issues such as race and gender is of significance to this research. The incorporation of ARFT will further tease out these elements but also make connections to anti-racist work in this study. Dismantling and decoding these systems of oppression that structure inequities to negatively impact the everyday

experiences of people of colour, are key focus in critical race studies (Huber, 2008; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002; James et al., 2021; Acevedo-Gil, 2019). The result will lay the groundwork for these experiences to be authenticated and acknowledged.

Critical race research design is concerned with the actual experiences of members of non-dominant groups who face oppression and systematic marginalization as a result of factors such as racism, sexism, and other factors (Khalil & Keir, 2017; Kovach, 2005; Hayes & Juarez, 2011). This design incorporates methods that engage participants' identities and include the historical context that perpetuate their oppression (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Donnor, 2013; Gillborn, 2013; Khalil & Keir, 2017). The methods that a critical race research design engages, create counter narratives to the established White Eurocentric patriarchal capitalist norms about non-White populations.

A critical race research design pushes back at the singular approach to dominant research that omits representation of Black and racialized groups. In this regard, Kovach (2005) raises concerns about the absence of the voices of those who live in the marginal realms of society. The domains of Whiteness and White privilege in knowledge construction and production in academic research and publication are longstanding and current and are at the core of the exclusion of marginalized voices (Baffoe et al., 2014). Kovach (2005) encourages the use of various critical approaches in research, actioned with different epistemologies whose objectives seek to emancipate and include absent voices. The primary assumption of these methodologies must speak to the experiences of the oppressed within the research and knowledge production paradigm. The core intent must be to include the experiences of individuals who are silenced and who face injustice in society.

The other and more crucial aspect is for researchers to be attuned to the voices of research participants that goes beyond simply answering the research question. By this, I mean that the researcher(s) needs to be able to listen beyond the customary “White” way of knowing that extracts and categorizes, instead of focusing on the voices of especially Black and racialized research participants through accounts of their lived experience. This step is necessary to truly challenge traditional ways of knowing and create emancipatory and empowering knowledge beyond the current White constructions. Baffoe and colleagues (2014) call attention to the fact that it is customary for the narratives of marginalized individuals to be drowned out in a research landscape that has deep roots in preserving Whiteness. These ingrained customs extend to upcoming researchers who have to look to more established researchers for guidance, mentorship, and direction; many of whom have had to adapt to these dominant approaches to research in order to navigate their way in White academic spaces.

The dissemination of research is also crucial to recognizing and preserving voices of colour. Frank (2004) speaks to the researchers’ ability to “catch” the reader’s attention. However, Baffoe et al., (2014) note that readers may be more attuned to White approaches to producing research, in order to push back at these long-established practices of exclusion. At the same time, the author notes that the researcher must be mindful and authentic in recognizing and representing the voices of participants who are often excluded from knowledge production. Often, they must indeed be prepared to chart new courses. Even in cases where there is a risk of not catching the attention of the otherwise primed (to Whiteness) readers, the follow-through becomes necessary to change traditional ways of knowing. A key step to this end goal for minority researchers like me, is to first be able to recognize the voices and essence of what

participants share. With this insight in mind, these considerations informed the research design for the current study.

CRM places emphasis on the voices of research participants which is in line with the goals of this qualitative research. It supports pushing the boundaries of dominance and dominant ways of knowing for marginalized groups. If the aim is to dismantle the “White codes” that are present in academia and its byproducts as Baffoe and colleagues (2014) note, the focus must extend to the ways voices are recognized in research. This understanding goes well beyond the academic arena and into the broader social arena, where these systemic patterns extend or are weaved together. This step to recognizing the voices of study participants, I believe, is significant to ensuring this noted goal which is in line with the theoretical frameworks used in this study. Overall, this research design engages strategies to include members of racialized populations who are often under-represented or overlooked in research. This is also part of the strength of critical race research design this study engages.

Design of current study

In using critical race methodology to frame this qualitative study, I draw on Solórzano and Yosso’s (2002) description to create counter-stories based on the shared accounts that participants provided about their lived experiences. I use counter-stories to call attention to racist practices, policies and structures that shape participants’ experiences, while counteracting majoritarian stories about people of colour such as Black skilled immigrant women (Delgado & Stefancic, 1993; Huber, 2008; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). This approach highlights the struggles and injustices that they encounter while centering their experiences. The design of this study

incorporates an anti-racist and anti-oppressive agenda along with measures that bolster the representation of Black immigrant women in research by prioritizing their stories.

Similar to Solórzano and Yosso's (2002) approach, I incorporate Strauss and Corbin's (1990) concept of *theoretical sensitivity*, where the researcher's awareness of the "subtleties of meaning of [and within] the data" informs the research (p. 33). I came to this research with different dimensions of awareness and sensitivity as a result of: (i) my lived experience as a Black Jamaican immigrant woman with postsecondary level education from the Caribbean residing in Canada. This embodiment makes me an insider to a certain extent; (ii) having worked extensively with skilled immigrant population including those from Black and other racialized groups; and (iii) knowledge from the literature on topics relevant to this research (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Solórzano and Yosso (2002) call attention to Bernal's (1998) concept of *cultural intuition* whereby the researcher's personal experience - including lived experience, collective, professional, ancestral, community memory, as well as knowledge gathered from literature - are key aspects in both the research and the analysis. These considerations are significant in my approach to this study's design.

My approach also factors in the history, positioning and interests of those impacted by race and gender in the context of the research design and as factors that combine in how participants' experiences are shaped (Khalil & Keir, 2017, p. 61). In this regard, the early entry of women from the Caribbean to Canada and how they were positioned in Canadian society provides rich insights in designing this study. Similarly, the reported challenges that they experienced are considered both part of the knowledge base and historical awareness that informed my approach to this research (see Arat-Koç, 2006; Calliste, 1993/1994; Flynn, 1998;

Silvera, 1989). Knowledge about the impact of Canada's immigration policies is considered key aspects in how early experiences were shaped.

In the same vein, the prioritizing of European immigrants and exclusion of certain groups such as women from the Caribbean are also elements considered in framing the course of historical and contemporary experiences (see Thobani, 2000; Roache, 2022; Solórzano & Yosso's, 2002). Within this context, I draw on this knowledge to not only unearth the counter-stories, but also to recognize and understand the meanings and significance that are embedded within participants' accounts of their experiences. Furthermore, the basis of CRM, which is key for this study, facilitates a multi-dimensional engagement of various textures of participants' experience which was used as a guide to conduct this research.

Also, in line with CRM's approach, this study uses interviews to gather stories from participants about their lived experiences (Hannabuss, 1996). More often, encounters of discrimination cannot simply be observed to unearth the stories as this omits the feelings associated with the impact. Rather, the interviews convey the meanings from those who lived the experiences and their experiences of the impact (Hannabuss, 1996). It engages with the meaning that participants make of these encounters. This provides more accuracy in the stories that are amplified to inform the knowledge created. The use of interviews in this study's design then provides firsthand accounts from participants about the meaning they make of their experiences to better understand the complex impact of race and gender, and other forms of discrimination that causes oppression.

In this case, race and gender informed the primary critical lens to seek out themes of marginalization and oppression within the experiences that participants shared (Huber, 2008; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). Huber (2008) notes other forms of oppression such as immigration

status, language, ethnicity, and culture that impact experiences that Solórzano and Delgado Bernal (2001) call to our attention. This research design factored in these examples of marginalization and oppression from participants' accounts with the understanding of "*cultural intuition.*" Combined with discussions from the literature about the operation of Canadian historical and contemporary constructions of race and gender and the recruitment of Black women participants, the design of this study facilitates revelations about the experiences of marginalization and oppression of Black skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean in the Canadian labour market.

At the same time, I use excerpts from participants' accounts to highlight their lived experiences in their own words to create counter-stories in this research (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). This is a crucial component in the engagement of both CRM and the combined theoretical framework for this research. My engagement in this research also draws on CRM's positioning of race and gender in historical and contemporary contexts and how those on society's margins are impacted historically and, in the present, (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). This is unlike mainstream research that typically adopts a more singular focus and omits the impact of history on those affected. These measures were engaged to answer the question that this research examines to amplify the voices and experiences of participants in the process of creating new knowledge.

Research Process

Data collection: Recruitment and Sampling

Recruitment strategies for this study include different methods. Recruitment flyers (see Appendix C) were circulated via emails to organizations in the GTA that provide service to immigrant communities, to universities and colleges' email networks, and to Caribbean consul general offices in Toronto. Recruitment flyers were also posted on university campuses and other public spaces as well as handed out in various public settings and at community events. I also did presentations at small groups and invited gatherings, community events and engaged personal networks to spread the word about the research.

The skilled worker classification along with participants' lived experiences are key considerations in the recruitment process. As noted in earlier sections of this study, individuals considered as skilled workers, including study participants, migrate to Canada under the FSWP and are assessed based on six selection factors to determine eligibility under the FSWP Points System – Express Entry program, (Citizenship & Immigration Canada, 2017). The six selection factors are, education, work experience, language skills, arranged employment in Canada and adaptability. Participants require a minimum score of 67 points out of the overall score of 100 points. The higher the score that participants achieve for all six selection criteria, the higher their chances are to qualify for migration as a skilled worker.

Details about participants' respective scores for the six selection factors are not considered crucial to this study. Rather, it is more that they successfully qualified to migrate as skilled workers under the FSWP program that is of significance to this study. While higher scores overall increase their chances to qualify for the FSWP, the study is interested in their experiences in the Canadian labour market as skilled immigrants. This means that they would

have met the threshold migrate to Canada in the first place, regardless of their score, which means that they met the base/core criteria – post-secondary level education, skilled work experience and language ability and other qualifying criteria.

The FSWP markets faster transition into the Canadian labour market for immigrants who qualify to migrate in the program and so this study is interested in the post migration aspect rather than the pre-migration qualification process. This is along with the anticipated greater post-migration economic success that is part of the basis for qualification in the FSWP as well. It is the insight from participants' lived experiences post migration that is sought to better understand the different outcomes that do not align with the purported successes. How their experiences connect to or sheds light in the historical and contemporary constructions of race and gender in Canada is what this study seeks to highlight.

Table 1 provides an overview of the inclusion criteria for this research study. Along with the skilled worker classification, my recruitment targeted participants who identify as female, racialized, of Caribbean origin, and migrated from the Caribbean to Canada. Research population includes skilled immigrant women who secured their educational credentials outside of Canada and migrated to Canada between 2005 - 2010. These dates were later removed as even though the response rate was high, very few participants indicate that they migrated during this timeframe. Overall, the different steps were taken that increase the likelihood for a correlation between sample and the research question that is being examined and tightness of inclusion criteria (Mason, 2002).

Table 1 Inclusion criteria for research study

Sample criteria	Description
Migration category	Secure permanent residence under FSWP
Gender	Female
Racial identification	Identify as member of a racialized group -participants self-identified as Black or racialized
Place of birth/ Ethnicity/nationality	English-speaking Caribbean origin
Country from which migrated	Migrated from English-speaking Caribbean Island to Canada
Education	In line with FSWP criteria - secured at least 1 post-secondary level certification outside Canada
Year migrated to Canada	Migrate to Canada between 2005 – 2010 (later removed due to low response rate for this range)

This study uses a two-stage sampling approach, focusing on racialized women from the Caribbean in Canada who migrated under the FSWP program. First, I used purposive sampling to achieve a manageable amount of data and at the same time with the goal to facilitate a thorough analysis (Ames et al., 2019; Creswell & Poth, 2018). I also used purposive sampling approach to narrow my focus on skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean, to draw from a homogenous sample base where the researched phenomenon would be more likely to occur (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998; Palinkas et al., 2015; Creswell & Poth, 2018). As previously noted, the target population for this study is women from the Caribbean who secured permanent residence in Canada through the FSWP which classifies them as skilled workers (see also Table 1 – Inclusion criteria for study and Appendix E). The study also targeted women who identified as racialized. However, most of the women who came forward to participate in the research identified as primarily Black (14), and Indo-Guyanese or racialized (1), (see discussion in Analysis and findings section, Table 3).

Secondly, snowball sampling technique was used in this study to identify and increase access to participants who met the study criteria and could participate in the study (Noy, 2008; Atkinson & Flint, 2001; Taherdoost, (2016). Woodley and Lockard (2016) note the increased access to a broader range of the research population that snowball sampling allows, which is important especially when doing research with members or groups who are not easily accessed. In addition, the use and suitability of snowball sampling in research with non-mainstream or marginalized populations is well regarded as it is believed to broaden the impact of the research within and among the researched population (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981, Browne, 2005; Obasi, 2022; Woodley & Lockard, 2016). Validation across and among participants is also a positive consideration in snowball sampling as well as the access to cultural knowledge that the technique fosters (Browne, 2005; Obasi, 2022). These considerations were used to find a wide enough pool of women who migrated from the Caribbean in the FSWP for the research sample.

The snowball sampling was done through participants' networks. Upon contact with the researcher, many participants asked if they could refer others for the study even before participating in the formal interview. Participants expressed being very excited to have an opportunity to share their stories and indicated that they were motivated to encourage others to do the same. In addition, some participants were asked to pass on the study recruitment flyer, email, or information sheet to anyone they know who might meet the criteria for the study and was interested to participate or learn more about the research study. The researcher made it clear to participants that they were in no way obligated to share information and whether or not they chose to, this would have no bearing on the current relationship with the researcher. Participants were also reassured that their information would remain confidential and would not be shared

with other participants. A token of \$20.00 gift certificate was offered to participants as an expression of appreciation for their time.

The use of both purposive and snowball sampling strategies in the data collection phase of this research attends to some of the pitfalls that often arise in convenience sampling and at the same time adds to the richness of the data collected to understand participants lived experiences (Mason, 2002; Penner & McClement, 2008, Woodley & Lockard, 2016). Since the investigated phenomenon is not well researched, it is imperative that efforts be made to access a healthy sample that is representative of the population being researched. By using both strategies, it increases the option to attract participants from different sources and hopefully provides a wider pool. The data generated can thus inform a higher caliber of knowledge about the lived experiences of racialized skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean in Canada.

Interviews

In-depth interviews for this study were conducted with 15 female participants who identify as Black and/or racialized. One participant identified as Indo-Guyanese or a member of a racialized group. The number of participants selected is considered adequate for empirical research (Penner & McClement, 2008). Participants were asked to choose the location in which they would like the interviews to be completed to ensure ease and comfort. Most of the research participants chose to do the interview in a private space in their homes. One participant chose an enclosed private space in the building where her home was located, another participant chose to complete the interview in a private office space at work, while another chose a private room in a public library.

I travelled to meet each participant in the respective location at different times based on previously scheduled date and time in the pre-screening conversation between researcher and participant. The scheduling of interviews went smoothly, as there was less time spent going back and forth to come up with suitable locations since the researcher deferred to participants' specified location. Participants indicated that they felt more relaxed in the spaces selected and commended the inclusion for the option to choose. The confidentiality of participants was protected at all times by ensuring the utmost privacy during all interviews as well as ensuring that the space within which each interview was conducted provided ample privacy – closed door and no access to space by others while interview was in progress (see also confidentiality section, p. 94 and Appendix, F). Interviews lasted between forty-five to sixty minutes and were audio recorded with participants' consent. This step ensures accuracy in analysis and allows the researcher to focus on participants' accounts and ensures integrity in the data collected (Firmin, 2012).

Goodman (2011) describes the intimate nature of in-depth interviews in social work research with human subjects in which sensitive materials and strong emotions may erupt and require special attention. Since the experiential world of participants is a vital source of information in the research investigation, it is imperative for researchers to effectively harness these feelings, thoughts, and perceptions. Access to support for counselling in areas closest to participants was mentioned, though most participants indicated that they had family members and/or friends that they could reach out to if they needed to do so. Of significance when conducting the interview was Goodman's (2011) note that although the training that social workers receive provides an advantage, recognizing that participants are the expert in the interviews is very important. Developing data that is rich and relevant based on both verbal and

non-verbal responses from participants was also significant in the interview process (Ayres, 2012).

As a Black female from the Caribbean living in Canada, I was cognizant of any preconceived notions on the topic throughout the research. In addition, my subjective understanding that comes from being a Black woman with post-secondary level education that was completed in the Caribbean prior to migration serves to heighten my understanding of the descriptions of some issues as well. The presence of this dynamic requires acknowledgement for transparency and according to Turner (2003), can enhance the quality of the research and the interaction with participants; thus, improving the overall quality of data generated. Roldan and Shelby (2004) also point out that approaches to qualitative research require deeper involvement with research participants in order to produce data that is rich, valuable, credible and coherent.

An interview guide was prepared to help participants draw on specific aspects of their experiences regarding the researched phenomenon and informed by the theoretical and methodological underpinnings of my earlier approach. I created open-ended questions that could ‘flesh out’ descriptions about the lived experiences of participants and/or serve as follow up to explore closed-ended questions (Peterson, 2013). The questions were designed to probe and help participants to elaborate on the descriptions of their lived experiences. Since concrete examples from participants were key to generating sources of evidence and providing a more distinct synopsis of their experiences, opportunities to probe deeper were built in, hence the open-ended questions.

Questions for the interview guide focused on five core areas (Brewer, 2001). These areas include: demographic information, participants’ understanding of social identity pre- and post-immigration to better understand the connections made to their experiences; their sense of

attachment to specific groups; their understanding of the impact of race and gender on their lived experience post-migration and as it connects to their social identity; and the barriers that they encounter negotiating any shifts in identity as members of the racialized skilled immigrant group. Demographic questions (see Appendix G) include pre-migratory questions relating to the year they migrated to Canada, profession prior to migration, and number of years working in profession. Post-migration questions include current professional status in Canada and number of years worked in unrelated professions/employment in Canada. Consent forms were reviewed and signed at the beginning of each interview (see Informed Consent, p. 93 and Appendix F).

Even though the initial focus of the research was on the understanding of social identity negotiation, the data analysis points primarily to issues of race and gender discrimination that participants faced in the Canadian labour market. As such, this warranted a revision of the initial question that the research intended to answer to the current research question that this study seeks to answer. The focus of research became more narrowly about examining participants' lived experiences of race and gender, rather than about their negotiation of social identity. Also based on insights from the data, I drew on existing literature to seek out the connections between participants' experiences and the historical and contemporary construction of race and gender in Canada. The revised focus also incorporates examining how these factors relate to specific aspects of the experiences that participants describe.

Recording

Each audio recording of participants for this study was saved with a unique identifier along with the date the recording was completed. A separate master file in soft copy was created and stored in files with the unique identifiers linked to respective participants (Bloor & Wood, 2006). The actual identifying details were saved differently from data and all data was stored on

a password-secured computer. Participants were aware of and consented to audio-recordings prior to the commencement of the interview and were aware that they could discontinue the interview and/or recording at any point. The intended storage and transcription process to retain anonymity was explained to participants as well. I did not detect any sense of unease with audio-recordings among participants before or during interviews.

Tessier (2012) highlights the accessibility of digitally recorded interviews and the benefits of being able to replay recordings to check for accuracy of information. Benefits highlighted also include the ability to listen to specific sections of recordings, if necessary, skip, and scan through recorded information. It also allows flexibility to examine recordings even after transcripts are made. The cross checking of written information with actual recording to ensure further accuracy was also among the highlighted benefits. The recordings for this research adhered to the noted criteria. I was able to cross check accuracy by following along with the recordings that were transcribed by a paid transcriber while comparing transcripts for accuracy of transcribed information.

Storage of Data

The storage of data for this research study includes audio-recordings, all written soft and hard copies of documentation, interview transcripts, field notes, consent forms and any other documents related to the research. Soft copy data were stored electronically in uniquely coded files on a secure computer that is kept in a locked office. All field notes and documentations are filed and stored in a locked filing cabinet in a locked home office. All the data that is collected has been under my supervision as the researcher. Only the researcher and thesis committee (upon request) have access to these files. All information provided and recorded for this study is kept

confidential. Any information that can identify participants remains confidential and does not appear in any data collected or in any writing that results from the research (Corti, 2012).

Pseudonyms were used to further protect participants' identities. The data is used solely for academic and research purposes. All data will be destroyed within 5 years of the completion of the thesis.

Informed Consent

The consent form for this study followed the standard template used when human participants are involved in research (Field-Springer, 2018; Schwandt, 2011). It includes the purpose of research and background; what participants are asked to do in the research; any foreseeable risks and discomforts from participation (in this case, uncovering sensitive emotions or discomforts due to sensitive recollections and other similar risks); benefits of research (to both society and knowledge itself); voluntary participation; and confidentiality of information provided. The voluntary nature of participation in the study was reiterated and participants were made aware that they are free to withdraw at any point without reprisals (Brodbeck, 2011; Fitzpatrick, 2011).

Participants were also given opportunities to raise any concerns or questions regarding their participation. The researcher highlighted the ethics approval process by the school's Ethics Committee prior to both participants and researcher signing the consent form and contact details for the Ethics Committee were provided in case participants had any procedural questions and/or questions about their rights. Consent to participate in the study was also discussed between researcher and participant upon initial contact before the appointment for interview was

scheduled. The consent form was discussed again in person before the commencement of the interview and was a requirement for participation in this study (see Appendix E).

Confidentiality

Maintaining the confidentiality of research participants and information related to the research are key considerations to ensure that participants' identity and information are not compromised (Boruch, 2018). This is an ethical practice in research that further protects the privacy of research participants by ensuring that any information that can identify participants is separated from data. These considerations must be practiced in research to ensure integrity and trust in the research process. According to Coffelt (2018), even in cases where demographic data is collected from participants, the researchers' description of participants' characteristics in qualitative research should be in aggregate terms. This is to ensure the utmost confidentiality for participants and address the possibility of any inadvertent identifying information.

For this research, participants were assured prior to and at the start of each interview of similar procedures in place to keep their information confidential. A paragraph on confidentiality was included in the consent form and was discussed prior to the signing of the form (see Appendix F). Confidentiality was also discussed for this study specific to participants' potential interactions with each other before and after data collection. Considering the pre-existing knowledge and/or relationship among some participants for snowballing recruitment to take place, maintaining confidentiality was important and was reiterated to each participant. This pre-emptive step ensured that the procedures were clearly outlined to participants, along with the reassurance of the highest level of confidentiality, which is standard adherence in any research.

In addition, as an insider who identifies with a similar cultural background as the research participants, I was aware that the additional reassurance was key to being transparent and to reaffirming the significance of the confidentiality agreement. The transcriber was also required to sign a confidentiality form (see Appendix I) and the need for the utmost confidentiality was emphasized and agreed by the transcriber. Confidentiality procedures were followed in the storage of not only consent forms but also audio recordings, transcripts, notes, demographic forms and all materials related to the study. Participants were given pseudonyms (see Tables 2-4) to ensure anonymity, protect the integrity of the data and to ensure optimal confidentiality. These cautionary measures that were engaged are outlined in the storage of data (earlier) section of this study.

Data transcription and analysis

Transcription

For this research, a verbatim transcription was done. This allows for more distinct illumination of concepts related to the investigation (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). As previously mentioned, prior consent was received from participants to allow audio recording. A paid transcriber was used in the transcription of audio recordings to written data. Specific instructions were given to the transcriber about expectations and a sample transcription was given to transcriber to follow a similar format for current transcription. As noted earlier, the transcriber signed a confidentiality agreement form in acknowledgement of the ethical procedures involved in this research and to maintain integrity and confidentiality of information (see Appendix I). All information that could identify participants was removed from recordings prior to the transcriber getting access to the audio tapes.

New, high caliber audio equipment was purchased for the interviews to ensure the quality of audio recordings and minimize background noise. This helped to provide clearer audio for better-quality transcription (Poland, 2012). Different strategies were used to ensure that transcriptions reflect intended meanings of participants' stories. For example, some transcripts were provided to respective research participants who gave consent immediately after the interview for follow up contact, to check for accuracy of transcription with their responses. In addition, the researcher compared other transcripts to respective audio-recordings to ensure accuracy between transcripts and recordings. These measures were employed not only to maximize the quality of the transcription, but also to ensure the rigor and accuracy of the raw material that was transcribed. These were necessary steps because, as stated above, the transcriptions formed the basis for analysis. As much as possible, making efforts to ensure authentic and accurate reproduction of verbal recordings is key to alleviating or minimizing any discrepancy between audio recording and transcription.

Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) consider the transcribing of interviews into writing as the initial stage of the analysis process. The authors indicate that factors such as the nature of the research, time, money, availability and reliability of transcriber can determine the amount and form of transcription required. The type of transcription is dependent upon the purpose of the research. However, transcription reports must state clearly how the transcribing was done (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Finally, Corti (2012) emphasizes the importance of data being documented in a comprehensive and accurate manner in order to facilitate informed and appropriate use of the data. The transcript provides the guide to the data, which in turn provides a window of insight through which representation is gleaned (Gibson and

Brown, 2009). These considerations were key to informing the transcription procedures adhered to for this study.

Data analysis

The analysis for this study draws on CRM's premise that centres the lived experiences of people of colour and scope out the negative impact of race, racism, and gender on the experiences of participants (Aldana et al., 2023; Lapayese, 2007; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). Perhaps due to CRM's evolving nature it typically engenders flexible approaches in its analysis. While there are no definitive steps described for the analysis in studies that draw on CRM's approach, many scholars who employ CRM in research use thematic analysis (Chapman et al., 2018; Lapayese, 2007; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). Braun and Clarke (2006) note the flexibility of thematic coding in qualitative research to 'thematize meanings' from data. Both Chapman and colleagues (2018) and Nowell and colleagues (2017) point to the trustworthiness and insight that a rigorous thematic analysis produces in findings and the relative ease in application especially for new researchers.

This study uses a thematic analysis which according to Braun & Clarke (2006 & 2012), includes the use of a systematic method to identify and organize themes and gather meaning from the data. Themes are based on these meanings developed from across the data which "...allows the researcher to see and make sense of collective or shared meanings and experiences," (Braun & Clarke, 2012, p.57). I use a systematic method to code the data and identify themes to get to a report that captures the essence of the stories that participants shared (Braun & Clarke, 2012). I placed emphasis on patterns of experiences that both perpetuate and sustain racism and sexism respectively and/or simultaneously, as well as other aspects of

participants' identities or situations that connects to historical and current impact of discrimination, marginalization, and oppression on them (Chapman et al., 2018; Lapayese, 2007; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). Broader connections to the impact of these categories on Black and racialized populations were also made as part of my analysis. The thematic analysis generated similarities, differences, and unanticipated insights in line with thematic analysis of large volumes of data, which was summarized to produce focused and organized findings (King, 2004; Nowell et al., 2017).

The analysis includes preliminary identification of themes that co-occurred with data collection reflexively and from note taking and observations made during interviews. I note recurring themes that highlight the manifestations of race and gender based on the accounts that participants described. Utterances such as laughter and long pauses were noted in transcription as well (Smith et al., 2009). Notes and comments made during one-on-one interviews added depth to the analysis. Notes include individual words and repeated phrases that seem common across participants or terms that appeared significant to participants. Quotes of interest that spoke directly to discriminatory practices and injustices noted in the study design were underlined at this stage as well.

I highlight identified themes in the data based on racial, gender, and intersectional categories using descriptive themes to distinguish from the larger volume of data (Huber, 2008; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). It was key that analysis moved beyond descriptive notes to the application of a more critical lens utilizing concepts from the theoretical frameworks to pinpoint raced and gendered aspects of participants' experiences (Braun & Clarke, 2012; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). Attention was given to issues of power differentials, privilege, and manifestations of pervasive inequities that impact their experiences. Triangulation was completed between

interview data, the literature reviewed to contextualize this study, and informal observations and notes taken in interviews (Chapman et al., 2018; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002).

Connections were also made to my positionality as an insider-outsider and the engagement of “*cultural intuition*” that factors into my lived experience and personal knowledge (Bernal, 1998; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Lastly, once themes were identified manually, I used NVivo software to do a general coding of data and compared selected themes with manually coded themes to ensure a more “rigorous and high-quality analysis” (Clarke & Braun, 2017, p. 298). The use of NVivo software and the cross comparison of themes was done for added depth and to ensure that the essence of meanings across participants accounts were captured.

I then selected themes that were more common across participants' experiences, ensuring that I remained authentic to the voices of participants (Baffoe et al., 2014; Frank, 2004). It was important for the voices of participants to guide the findings and excerpts from the data were identified to reflect and, in some cases, illuminate selected themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Chapman et al., 2018). A key question in mind as I analyzed the themes from the data was, *whether or not race and gender appeared prevalent in shaping the course of participants' experience and if so, in what ways?* To that end, articulations of race, racism, sexism, and nuances of intersectionality were juxtaposed with immigration narratives for especially skilled workers to add dimensions to themes. Similar to Chapman and colleagues' (2018) approach, I prioritized the epistemologies of the researched population in the analysis and throughout this research. This ensured the centering of their experiences and essentially their voices throughout the research process.

Ethical Considerations

Adherence to principles, as well as moral and social standards of behaviour when dealing with individuals or groups in research is of paramount importance. These established norms and guidelines are important for maintaining honesty, integrity, confidentiality, and trust in research and the research process. The ethics outlines key principles to be adopted in research to ensure that every measure is incorporated to protect participants from risk, which is extremely important to maintain the integrity of the research. Each participant was informed about the voluntary nature of their participation in the research. Ethical decisions that are respectful, beneficial, and just should be used as a guide (Reamer, 2011).

Issues of ethics and safety should be at the forefront of research in the social sciences, and it is important for researchers to pay special attention to ethical standards from the planning stage of the research (Byrne, 2017). Ethical considerations are prudent in formulating the research question as well as in the designing of the research. It is also paramount throughout the research process especially in the data collection and analysis of data, maintaining confidentiality and privacy of participants. The overarching goals of any research, especially when human subjects are involved, should be to enhance moral and social values while protecting participants from research-related harm in the quest for truth and knowledge. At all times, researchers are expected to adhere to substantial and rigorous ethical guidelines and considerations during the research process.

Publicly funded institutions such as York University have developed an Institutional Review Board (IRB) to further ensure the safety of human subjects in research and to ensure that the rights of research participants are respected. Approval for ethical standards granted by the university is based on the Tri-Council Policy Statement (TCPS) to conduct ethical research. As

part of the degree requirement for this program, York University requires the successful completion of the Tri-Council module by its graduate students completing research with human subjects. A certificate of completion of the tutorial is provided to the IRB by the student as part of the application process (see Appendix A). Further, research cannot proceed until ethics approval is granted.

A Thesis/Dissertation Research Proposal (TD1) and Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) ethics review protocol (TD2), are also part of the required package by FGS. Other documents required in the ethics approval package submitted for this study include the informed participant consent document (see Appendix F), confidentiality agreement for transcription (see Appendix I), the dissertation proposal, and the thesis proposal version approved by my PhD supervisory committee. Also included were the project information sheet (see Appendix B), the recruitment flyer (see Appendix C), and email (see Appendix D), with purpose, aim and inclusion criteria for the study and additional details about ethics approval, demographic form (see Appendix G), interview guide (see Appendix H), anticipated duration of interviews and honorarium (see Appendices B and C).

These documents are reviewed by the School of Social Work's graduate program director before they are forwarded to FGS for final review. The chair and subcommittee of the university's Office of Research Ethics IRB complete the final review and provide feedback for students to proceed and complete data collection within the timeframe specified in the ethics approval letter. This study fulfilled the criteria of all the steps outlined above which forms a core component of the ethical considerations engaged throughout this research. To take this a step further, participants were given pseudonyms to ensure confidentiality of the data and as an added measure to ensure that the data is kept private.

Reflexivity: Journey of self-awareness and positionality

I locate myself in this research as a Black Jamaican immigrant woman who resides in Canada, with experience of post-secondary level education in both countries. My social location and experience as a Black woman in Canada have made me very attuned to many of the issues of discrimination and oppression prevalent in Canadian workplaces and Canadian society more broadly. Having worked for one of the largest single employers in Canada for over fifteen years where I experienced racial and ethnic prejudices and discrimination in employment, I can identify with many aspects of the experience that participants shared. These personal experiences have framed my understanding of myself as a Black immigrant woman in Canada and inform the awareness that I bring to this research. More importantly, my experience helps me to be attuned to the stories that participants share and empathize and give space as they share their encounters.

I recognize that the embodiment of empathy is necessary to understand the lived experience beyond traditional and patriarchal constructs (Watson et al., 2021; van Dijke et al., 2019; van Rhyn et al., 2021). This embodiment allows one to recognize the space within which the lived experience unfolds and resides (Finlay, 2002; Frechette et al., 2020). It demands an understanding of the existence of the self that is intricately connected to society. At the same time, this understanding must extend beyond what is known and how this is known. It also must extend to the active development of critical knowledge as an antidote to the traditional constructs. These understandings are necessary for this research to champion participants' accounts of their lived world and validate their experiences.

The fore-structure of my understanding becomes engaged in the research process which is informed by my experience as well. The addition of my "voice" to this research strengthens the collective voices of other Black and racialized immigrant women in Canada. It adds to the

multiple ways of knowing while directly contradicting the “othering” process of racism that Kolivoski and colleagues (2014) highlight in line with CRT’s principles. This is made possible when people of colour share their experiential knowledge, in this case for research. Baffoe and colleagues (2014) note that the deep roots in preserving Whiteness in academic research, often drowns out the narratives of marginalized individuals. It is therefore incumbent upon emerging scholars, like me, to ensure that these non-mainstream narratives are at the forefront of our work. As we make our mark in academia and challenge these systems of oppression, it is crucial to amplify the voices of those who would not normally be heard.

In addition, I adopt an anti-racist, anti-oppressive approach in this research that contends with the researcher-participant relationship as co-creators of knowledge. This is unlike traditional approaches to research where the researcher is often the expert in knowledge creation (Huber, 2008; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). The current approach distinctly responds to some of these underlying power imbalances and empower participants by centering their voices. Furthermore, an anti-racist, anti-oppressive approach aligns with the theoretical frameworks used in this study to transform systems of oppression that are fueled by race, racism, gender, and other forms of discrimination (Dei & Calliste, 2000; Dua & Robertson, 1999). An anti-racist and anti-oppressive approach helps to realize the goals of both CRT and ARFT to expose and dismantle these systems of oppression that are intertwined with race and gender (Aylward, 1999; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Dua & Robertson, 1999). These are key aspects that I seek to engage in this study as part of my efforts to promote social justice.

It is from this understanding that I undertake this research with a strong urge to learn about the narratives of other immigrant women in Canada. In particular, the narratives of Black and racialized skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean. I yearn to hear more about their

stories in Canada and to seek out areas of overlap and differences; areas to draw strength from, and areas to commiserate with their experiences. I also yearn to draw from areas that offer insights into challenges to be better equipped to deconstruct oppressive systems and transform them as well. The more I searched the literature, the more I realized that the complexity and scope of the journeys of Black and/or racialized skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean in Canada are lacking and in some cases absent altogether. My concerns about the absence of the voices of marginalized peoples, especially women, are not uncommon to the concerns that Kovach (2005) and other scholars raise. Kovach (2005) also notes that even when these voices are present in the dearth of research that exists, they are usually the object of the research rather than the authors of the research. My aim is to honor the experiences of research participants and center their voices to better hear and understand their experiences outside of the dominant constructs.

Summary

Chapter four provided a review of the purpose and objectives of the study along with an overview of critical race methodology as the selected methodology for this qualitative research. It provides a rationale for the compatibility and suitability of the selected qualitative method for this research and an overview of considerations when critical race methodology is used to design a study. The chapter provides an overview of how critical race research design was used to frame this study with key points considered in the current design. The chapter engages with the theoretical frameworks of CRT and ARFT that are used to ground this study. It also outlines the steps taken in the research process for this study, which includes the recruitment, data collection, transcription, and analysis. The recording of interviews, storage of data, informed consent,

confidentiality ethical concerns was also discussed respectively in the chapter. This chapter also provides a synopsis of my journey of self-awareness and positionality for transparency and reflexivity for this research, Overall, the chapter highlights the steps taken to ensure that participants were centered in this study in a manner that is supported by the moral and ethical guidelines for conducting research and prioritize confidentiality.

Chapter 5 – Analysis, Findings and Discussion

Introduction

This study examines the lived experiences of particularly Black skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean in the Canadian labour market. The study engages the understanding of defining characteristics such as race and gender and how they shape the course of participants' experiences and in what ways (Amarshi, 2018; Bannerji, 2020; Murad, 2013; Solanke, 2019). The study also scopes out connections between their lived experiences and the historical and contemporary understanding of race and gender in Canada. The research question used to guide the examination of the noted phenomenon is, "What do the lived experiences of Black skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean in the Canadian labour market, reveal about the historical and contemporary constructions of race and gender in Canada?" The study seeks to amplify participants' voices for empowerment and position their experience as part of knowledge creation,

This chapter is divided into two main sections with subsections to provide highlights of participants' stories and share their experiences. Each section includes excerpts from participants as an attempt to centre their stories and present their experiences in their own words. Their narratives are presented as viable knowledge that capture their experiences to inform knowledge development about the population (Browne, 2005; Obasi, 2022). The first highlight provides specific demographic information for each participant. It delves briefly into key factors that influenced participants' decision to migrate as well as their experience transitioning to Canada. This section concludes with a summary of key aspects of the demographic information that participants share and pulls key themes together about their decision to migrate as well as their transition to Canada. This section provides context into how participants were situated prior to migration, their motivations to make the decision to migrate and their early transition to Canada.

The primary focus is on the race and gender impacts they encounter to transition and function in the Canadian labour market in Canada post-migration.

The second highlight in this chapter goes into deeper aspects of participants' stories that map manifestations of race and gender discrimination and other factors that shape their experiences, such as their status as skilled immigrant women and as immigrant professionals. Excerpts from participants stories showcase the discrimination they face and provide insight into their post-migration journeys. In particular, this section delves into some of the more common impacts that participants described that speaks to the foregrounding of race and gender in their experiences and points of awareness that they developed as a result. It highlights race and gender stereotypes that impact their experiences as well as encounters that minimized or reduced the value of their skills and previous employment experiences. The section also highlights roadblocks to employment that they described and their exclusion from opportunities for advancement along with noted underrepresentation in higher level positions among individuals who look like them. The section further highlights patterns in their experiences that serve to marginalize them and conclude with a summary of key points discussed in the chapter.

In drawing on excerpts in this chapter and in this study, attention is given to excerpts that reflect commonalities and in some cases exceptions across the data. Excerpts from participants that are used throughout this study are organized based on relevance to identified themes and sub-themes. Omissions of any part of participants' responses in the excerpts are indicated by [...]. These omissions are typically considered minor and are not believed to impact the essence and meaning of the respective excerpt in any way. Instead, omissions are as a result of my attempts to maintain focus on the theme being discussed and the issue(s) raised. Clarifying information is placed in [square brackets] and is added to provide clarity of the excerpt as

deemed necessary. Accounts of research participants are arranged in a manner that responds to the research inquiry that grounds this examination.

Highlights of Stories I – Participant Demographics

Introduction

This section highlights key aspects of participant demographic profile grouped by variables which, in this study narrowly include three core sections: (i) *personal and migration information* (ii) *background* identifying details (iii) *pre and post-migration highlights* of specific employment-related factors. I did not ask participants to provide either their pre-migration level of education or the type and level of degree that they acquired. The understanding is that participants successfully verified and proved to immigration officials that they completed post-secondary level education equivalent to Canadian standards, as this was a requirement in the FSWP application process. The approach in this study acknowledges that participants completed the onerous pre-migration process and successfully qualified to migrate as skilled workers. Rehashing the process is not necessary as it is the immigration category of entry under which they migrated that is of significance to this research study. Their lived experience post-migration as skilled immigrants are the key aspect of inquiry in this study. This section also provides insight into participants' decision to migrate to Canada as well as their perception about their transition to Canada. The section ends with a summary of the key themes highlighted in the demographics.

Profile

Tables 2- 4 provide different aspects of participant demographic profile grouped by variables. In line with the focus of this study and as noted prior, participants migrated under the FSWP as skilled immigrants and fulfilled the qualifying criteria for the FSWP program (see Appendix E and Appendix H). Participants were primary applicants for the FSWP. All participants migrated from the English-speaking Caribbean (see Table 1 – Inclusion criteria, p.86). Participant profiles were collated based on information provided on demographic forms for research that were either completed directly by participants or indirectly based on participants' responses to the background questions section on the questionnaire (see Appendix H).

Table 2, (Participant Demographics, p. 110) in the upcoming section provides a synopsis of demographic variables based on personal and migration information. The information includes, the pseudonym assigned to each participant and the numeric sequence in which participants completed the interview next to the pseudonym. The table also captures participants' marital status at the time of migration and whether they migrated with children. It also captures the year they migrated to Canada, their age at the time they migrated, as well as their age at the time the interview was conducted.

Table 2: Personal and migration

Pseudonym & Interview#	Marital Status Married = M Single = S	Migrated with children Y = Yes, N = No	Year Migrated	Age at migration	Age at time of interview
Patsy - 001	M	Y	2006	43	53
June - 002	S	N	2009	32	39
Bibi - 003	S	N	2006	41	51
Judy - 004	M	Y	2006	35	45
Doreen - 005	M	Y	2001	31	47
Simone - 006	M	Y	2004	34	47
Jackie - 007	M	Y	2001	28	44
Joy - 008	S	N	2001	27	43
Erica – 009	M	Y	2001	27	43
Agnes – 010	M	Y	2009	28	36
Sharon - 011	M	Y	2014	37	40
Maize - 012	S	N	2006	35	46
Muriel – 013	M	Y	2001	35	51
Maggie - 014	S	N	2000	30	47
Jane - 015	M	Y	1997	29	49

As shown in Table 2, majority of participants were married at the time of migration (10 of 15 participants) and a smaller number (5 participants) indicate that they were single at the time of migration. Although not shown in Table 2, at least 8 out of the 10 participants who were

married at the time of migration indicate that they migrated with their spouses. Only participants who were married at the time of the interview (10) indicate that they migrated with children. None of the participants who were single (5) indicate that they migrated with children.

Overall, participants migrated to Canada between the years 1997 and 2014, with the majority migrating in 2001 (5 participants). This is one more than the total number of participants who migrated in 2006 (4 participants). One (1) participant each migrated in 1997, 2000, 2002, 2009, 2014 and 2019, respectively. Based on the year participants migrated to Canada, the length of time they were living in Canada ranged from 3 years to 20 years at the time of data collection. Majority of participants resided in Canada for 16 years (5 participants), followed by 10 years (3 participants). One (1) participant each resided in Canada for 3 years, 7 years, 8 years, 11 years, 13 years, 17 years and 20 years, respectively.

At the time of migration, participants ranged in age between 27 years old to 43 years old, with majority migrating at 35 years old (3 participants). Two (2) participants each migrated at 27 years old and 28 years old respectively and one (1) each at 29 years old, 30 -32 years old and 34, 37, 41 and 43 years old respectively. At the time of the interview participants ranged in age between 36 years old to 56 years old. The age at the time of migration varied among participants and must be considered alongside the age at the time of the interview, to capture the accurate length of time they had been living in Canada. The median age for participants was 32 years old at the time of migration and 46 years old at the time of the study.

Table 3 captures background identifying details such as identified race of participants, their nationality and country of origin. Their pseudonym and interview number from Table 2 remains in Table 3 to connect identifiers to respective participant.

Table 3: Background identifying details

Pseudonym & Interview#	Identified race	Nationality/Country of origin
Patsy - 001	Black	Jamaican - Jamaica
June - 002	Black	Jamaican - Jamaica
Bibi - 003	Black	Guyanese - Guyana
Judy - 004	Black	Jamaican - Jamaica
Doreen - 005	Black	Jamaican - Jamaica
Simone - 006	Black	Jamaican - Jamaica
Jackie - 007	Black	Jamaican - Jamaica
Joy - 008	Black	Jamaican - Jamaica
Erica – 009	Black	Jamaican - Jamaica
Agnes – 010	Black	Guyanese - Guyana
Sharon - 011	Black	Guyanese – Guyana ¹
Maize - 012	Black	Jamaican - Jamaica
Muriel – 013	Indo-Guyanese (Black identifying family)	Guyanese - Guyana
Maggie - 014	Black	Jamaican - Jamaica
Jane - 015	Black	Jamaican - Jamaica

Majority of participants identify as Black, 14 out of 15 participants. Participants who identify as Black, indicated that they now perceive their Blackness differently since migrating to

¹ Participant resided in England and in Trinidad & Tobago for 10 years. Migrated from Trinidad & Tobago to Canada. However, is a Guyanese national and completed post-secondary education in Guyana but through UK partnered program..

Canada because of the negative experiences they encountered. One (1) participant identify as Indo-Guyanese but with Black identifying family members. The participant wanted her story to be included as a participant in this study, to share her experience and that of her family. She indicates that participating in this research was her way of honoring one of her sons whose experience in Canada as a Black male resulted in his untimely death. The experiences that she shares have some areas of overlap with the general accounts of other participants. In particular, participant's decision to migrate was similar to other participants. Similarly, her transition to Canada, the foregrounding of race and gender in her post-migration experience and the encounters that participant describes regarding her son's interaction with the school system post-migration, had areas of overlap to other participants.

I made the decision to include this account in the data based on the areas of overlap and at participants' request. Furthermore, the recruitment focused on racialized skilled immigrants although majority of the participants who came forward identified as Black. I do recognize that the nuances of Blackness and the way racialization operates can be different depending on the racialized group (Hampton, 2020; James, 2021). However, the review of literature section in this study does allow for some references within a broader context of the issue, even if inconclusive. I felt that the addition of this participant's story not only honours this participant's request but could also highlight future opportunities for further research.

The countries of origin that participants note are all English-speaking Caribbean Islands. They include Jamaica (11 participants) and Guyana (4 participants) respectively. One (1) participant, Sharon-#011 who originated from Guyana, indicates that she resided between Guyana, UK and Trinidad & Tobago alternately due to family and business obligations, prior to migration. All participants indicate that they identify more with the nationality of their respective

migrating country because of their attachment and because this is their country of birth.

Participants also note that they did not feel like they are treated with the respect they deserved in Canada, so their attachment to their countries of origin felt even stronger.

Table 4 provides pre- and post-migration highlights for participants. Similar to Tables 2 & 3, Table 4 has the standing heading with pseudonyms and interview number that connect information to respective participant. The table showcases the countries in which participants secured their post-secondary degrees. As noted earlier, participants were not asked to provide their pre-migration level of education or type of degree as they would have met the baseline for a degree or Canadian equivalent to qualify to migrate as a skilled worker. However, based on participants' accounts their education designations ranged from undergraduate degrees to master's degrees.

Table 4: Pre- and post-migration highlights

Pseudonym & Interview #	Country in which degree was granted	Pre-migration occupation & Industry	Number of years in position	Post-migration occupation & Industry	Number of years in position
Patsy - 001	Jamaica	Junior manager – Financial service/Banking	5	Commissions administrator – Financial service	7
June - 002	Florida, U.S.A.	Assistant Manager for credit risk/Financial	3	Corporate trainer	5 ½
Bibi - 003	Cuba	Dentist/Medical	15	Works in a dental office in different capacities	5
Judy - 004	Jamaica	Training administrator/ Financial	19 - with company, 5-6 in position	Manager of operations	2
Doreen - 005	Jamaica	Systems developer/IT	2	System developer/IT	14 ½
Simone - 006	Jamaica	Group marketing manager/Marketing trade	4	Administrator/Trade	2
Jackie - 007	Jamaica	IT Consultant/Financial	15years with company, 5 years in role	Manager in accounting and Internal auditor/Financial	3
Joy - 008	Jamaica	Computer programmer	5 1/2	Home maker/Domestic Business analyst/Financial Quality & assurance/Financial	2 10+ 1+
Erica – 009	Jamaica	Computer analyst//Unknown	5	Business analyst/Project manager/Financial	15

Agnes – 010	Guyana	Network engineer/Unknown	3	Financial planner/Financial	3
Sharon - 011	Guyana through UK partnered program	Accountant	15	Coordinator - Banking payment operations/Financial Stay-at-home-mom/Domestic	1 year and 4 months current
Maize - 012	Jamaica through U.S.A partnered program	Manager in call centre	20 years with company, 3 years in position	Marketing & community manager	3
Muriel – 013	Guyana)	Teacher/Education	4	Teacher/Education	14
Maggie - 014	Jamaica	Chemist/Pharmaceutica 1	2	Specialist in chemist field/Pharmaceutical	15 years with company, 5 years in position
Jane - 015	Jamaica	Systems analyst/Unknown	7	Information systems manager/IT	1

Table 4 also includes participants' occupation and industry that they worked in prior to migration and the number of years they worked in the noted position before migrating. It also captures their occupation in Canada and the industry that participants report that they worked in at the time of the data collection, as well as the number of years in the post-migration position. Table 4 is particularly important due to the employment related component and is key to engender discussions about race and gendered experiences, in conjunction with the anticipated economic success that is a key feature of the FSWP.

Most of the study participants completed their post-secondary education in the migrating country (11 participants), while one (1) participant secured her degree in the United States (U.S.) but returned to Jamaica to work. Another participant (1) secured her degree in Cuba while two (2) participants secured degrees through online programs with partnering institutions in Jamaica and the U.S. and U.K. respectively. These were completed either while residing in the migrating country or they returned to the migrating country after completing the degree elsewhere. Participants were employed in various sectors prior to migration in fields ranging from Information Technology (IT), medical, finance, education, the sciences (dentistry and chemist),

and accounting. The study did not specify any particular profession and included participants from both regulated and non-regulated professions. None of the participants identified having arranged employment in Canada prior to migration.

Almost all participants indicate that they were working in similar sectors pre and post-migration at the time of the interview. They also indicate that in some regard, their current job titles (at the time of the interview) bear some similarity to their pre-migration job titles. However, they indicate that the actual duties that were associated with the post-migration position was not on par with their pre-migration job responsibilities. In addition, the skillset required in the current position, the level of the position and the income they earned pre-migration (based on cost of living in respective country and affordability not based on Canadian dollar exchange rate) positioned them at a lower level than where they were before they migrated.

Also important to note is that it took most participants between 10-15 years to secure these seemingly similar positions in related industry post-migration. This information is based on the year participants migrated and the number of years they have been in current positions. Many participants note that they held multiple jobs that required lower levels of skills and even lower job titles before they were able to secure these seemingly comparable positions. Based on participants' accounts as well, many of the current jobs were also secured after they had completed at least one or more training courses and/or education upgrade post-migration. Some participants indicate that they had gone back to school post-migration, to do a different degree altogether which is in addition to their pre-migration credentials.

In one case, a participant, Jackie-007 who indicates that she had an IT and engineering degree prior to migration, notes that she returned to school post-migration to do a managerial

course, then she went back to do an accounting degree program. She subsequently completed a Certified General Accountant (CGA) designation. The participant explains that she was tired of working in lower skilled jobs that were low paying due to the lack of recognition of her pre-migration education and skills. She was determined to find gainful employment that could support her family again and pay her bills, and so she made the decision to return to school. This gave participant some flexibility and options to switch jobs until she secured positions that utilized her skills and experience. Jackie-007 indicates that while she was able to secure higher calibre positions because she now has Canadian education and experience, she faces ongoing discrimination. This is despite her acquiring “Canadian” qualifications. It is not surprising that her identity as a Black woman appears to overshadow her accomplishments, which speaks to how racist and patriarchal systems operate within the Canadian labour market system.

Overall, participants describe high levels of confidence in their skills, education, and capabilities and place significant value on their skills, education, and their pre-migration professional accomplishments. They express a high degree of satisfaction for the recognition of their status as professionals prior to migration and their admission in the FSWP as skilled immigrants. They indicated feeling that their education, skills, and experience were acknowledged and accepted until they started looking for jobs in Canada.

Participants considered themselves well situated in employment in their home countries before migration. For example, Maize-010, notes that she was doing quite well in the hotel industry where she worked prior to migration:

At the time I was doing very well in the hotel industry. I was in the industry for a number of years already. I kind of worked my way through just about every department in the hotel and I heard about it [skilled immigrant program]...

Participants also describe having strong professional and social networking relationships prior to migration, where they felt secure enough to navigate the employment terrain. This includes access to finding new and higher levels of employment if necessary. This is unlike the network and access to certain levels of employment that many currently have post migration. Statements from both Jackie-007 and Simone-006 below sum up what many participants (11) throughout the data:

I'm confident in my social identity, which I go as a Black Jamaican woman who is highly skilled. Jackie - 007

I think coming from Jamaica just being Jamaican, you're strong we're strong and tolerable you know we have this we're proud to be Jamaicans. We have such a strong Jamaican cultural identity. Simone – 006

This level of confidence and satisfaction in their accomplishments was what many participants indicate stoked their ambitions for growth beyond their pre-migration achievements. They fully expected to regain similar levels in employment after they migrated to Canada. If not immediately, many expressed that they would expect this within a reasonable time frame but not over the course of between the 3-20 years that they have been living in Canada. These encounters raise questions about the shift in the acknowledgement of their credentials to migrate to the lack of acknowledgement post-migration when they started looking for employment. These are the same credentials that were assessed based on Canadian standards pre-migration. The change in the value of their credentials and the ignoring of their skills allude to a more systemic patterns of behaviour that became more evident as participants' stories unfolded.

Decision to Migrate

Participants describe various factors that influenced their decisions to migrate to Canada as skilled immigrant workers. Among their responses, participants point to a combination of

factors including opportunities for higher levels of employment and education, potential and future opportunities for themselves and their family members, reuniting with friends and family, safety concerns, and seeking a better quality of life. The following four factors appeared common across participants responses in the data: (i) increased employment opportunities, (ii) increased education opportunities, (iii) increased safety, and (iv) better quality of life. This section provides a summary of these four factors noted by participants.

(i) Increased employment opportunities

Participants indicate that their decision to migrate was motivated by increased options for employment for themselves and their family members. Many participants feel that they were ready for a transition in their career development prior to migration but had limited options for growth in their pre-migration organizations. At the time they made the decision to migrate they felt that Canada offered the opportunity to take their careers to the next level and more opportunities for growth and development for themselves and members of their families. A few participants indicate that they felt that there could even be opportunities available for a career change altogether, if they decide to make a change. Patsy's-001 description provides even more insight into the factors she considered, which points to increased work and other opportunities:

Prior to coming from Jamaica to Canada, I visited a number of times and I familiarized myself with the place and that was when I determined that this is a place that I wanted to migrate to live because of potential opportunities. I had two friends here one from a number of years in my past and one that we worked together at the same location in Jamaica.

The focus on increased employment opportunities was a key factor that influenced participants' decision to migrate to Canada. On a similar vein, Simone-006 indicates that her decision was influenced by the potential for her spouse to access more opportunities to do well. Prior to

migration her spouse's business was failing, which further cemented the option for better employment related option:

[...] my husband had a business, and he was struggling a bit especially because there was an economic downturn and his business wasn't doing so well and I just felt like you know maybe a change of scenery would help him, so I decided to apply [to the FSWP].

Simone-006 describes that her decision was influenced by both the opportunities that Canada had to offer, as well as the option to secure permanent residency in Canada through a fairly straightforward process. That she was able to migrate as a skilled worker based on factors that she already achieved was added incentive. She also notes that many of her friends and acquaintances were capitalizing on the same opportunity, and this helped to make the decision to migrate to Canada at the time as well:

[...] Canada was providing an opportunity to get that [permanent residency] just on the strength of you know your work experience and that was something different and people were taking advantage of it.

Similar to Simone's-006 thoughts, other participants felt that the process to transition to Canada as a professional was appealing. These participants indicate that they wanted a change and the process to get the change in motion was not daunting. Many indicate that they felt that their prior employment experience would be an asset in Canada once they migrate because it was among the eligibility assessment criteria to qualify to migrate as a skilled immigrant. Since they successfully qualified for the immigration program that considered these criteria, they thought that they would indeed be able to enter the labour market at a competitive level. Participants share that they also thought that they would be able to secure more lucrative employment in a shorter time frames as well, since their education and skills had been acknowledged in the application process. The perception was that they would be able to enter the labour market right away and use many of the skills and experience they accumulated before migration. The result

would be a ‘win-win’ situation since they expect to start working shortly after they migrated, based on the FSWP’s premise for faster integration.

Participants’ stories show that this was not the case that unfolded for participants. They realized that their skills and experience lost the pre-migration value once they migrated to Canada. Their entry to the labour market was delayed initially because of these barriers. Also, because of the unanticipated delay in securing employment, especially gainful employment, some participants share that they faced financial challenges post-migration. Many were not prepared to be out of work for so long after they migrated, while others indicate that they did not expect to work in significantly lower paying positions for as long as they did. Overall, participants' decision to migrate was influenced by perceptions of increased and more lucrative employment opportunities, as well as career mobility. Their post-migration experiences tells a different story.

(ii) Increased education opportunities

Participants point to increased education opportunities for themselves as the second most common factor in their decision to migrate. For participants who migrated with their children, educational opportunities for their children were among the key factors as well. Many envision having time to explore educational opportunities for themselves and family members once they settle into lucrative employment. The general perception was that migration would allow them to achieve even higher levels of education, which would further improve their employment options, opportunities, and offer more choice for higher level positions. They also note that the anticipated returns on their education was based on the proven results they experienced in their home country by way of access to higher job opportunities and promotions. They felt that their

chances to secure higher levels of employment would increase with higher levels of education. This would mean more stability post-migration once they found the right position.

In the following excerpt, Bibi-003 describes a similar reason shared by other participants about their expectations after migration to pursue even higher levels of education, which she associates with higher levels of employment, remuneration and personal satisfaction:

I would achieve my goal, which is to further my education and getting greater job and personal satisfaction.

Another participant, Joy-008, describes higher education aspirations alongside her decision to migrate:

I had finished university, and I was planning to do my master's and I was trying to decide whether or not I should do it in Jamaica or do it abroad and at that time so, all throughout my migration I was thinking that I would study more.

Doreen-005, another participant, indicates that her reasons include the range of program and degree options offered in academic institutions in Canada. These options she notes were more than the options that were available in her pre-migration country of residence. The participant also notes that the stronger social structures that are present in Canada was among the factors that influenced her decision to migrate:

So, we were thinking about future education so we were thinking that the range of possibilities in terms of what subject matter you could pursue at a tertiary level that would be more in a bigger country like Canada and we came to Canada because Canada seemed to have a more socially oriented structure than say United States which is not quite as social.

Similarly, Muriel-013 discusses the lack of a clear path in educational opportunities in her country of residence before migration. The perception was that these opportunities not only existed in Canada but were easier to access. These considerations were instrumental in her decision to migrate:

I couldn't see Guyana moving forward with the current or the then and even now with their model for education and how things were going and so I really didn't have much hope for Guyana because we were going down a terrible path.

Many participants also point to anticipated educational benefits for their children that influenced their decision to migrate. They note the increasing cost of private education in their home country and the lowering quality of education in the public system as part of the reason to relocate to Canada. The anticipation of a better education system with more options was shared by participants. It was clear that all participants did some level of research about the benefits that Canada could offer in education for them and their families. Some participants indicate that they visited Canada before they officially migrated and was familiar with some of the resources available in Canada. Overall increased education opportunities for participants and/or other family members were among the key factors that influenced their decisions to move to Canada.

(iii) Increased safety

Multiple participants from both Jamaica and Guyana expressed concerns with personal, political, and environmental safety and this played a role in their decision to migrate as well. Many participants refer to crime-related factors as concerns because some were either victims of a crime such being robbed or had witnessed or was aware of violent crimes that others had experienced personally or as a result of their businesses being robbed. These participants note that they were fearful for their safety and the safety of their family members as well. They believe that migrating to Canada was the best option to reduce the risk as everyone in their families would be safer.

Migration provides the opportunity for many to minimize these issues and for some, to remove them altogether. At the same time, they also felt that migration would offer increased

opportunities for stability and growth for the entire family. As Judy-004 notes in the upcoming excerpt, increased safety was among the factors that influence her decision to migrate from Jamaica to Canada:

Not necessarily that I thought that Canada was a better country but the fact that it's a change to what I was used to. I was working in the financial industry for a long time...so I just wanted a change I wanted to sort of explore a little bit and so I thought what better place than Canada, which was what I feel was probably a more stable environment, a more—a better environment for my child, a better environment security wise because at the same time Jamaica was not as safe or secure as we would have want it to be. So, that was one of the things that I thought I would have benefited from coming to Canada, was the fact that the crime here wasn't as much as it was back home, right?

Similarly, Bibi-003 notes security threats to her place of business/financially in Guyana as reason to move. Many other businesses near to her place of work had been robbed and she feared that the likelihood of her facing similar threats were imminent. Participant indicate that she had a private practice like the others and was worried that she was a target as well. This motivated her to move to Canada where the crime rate was believed to be much lower, and her worry would be reduced:

The other reason was the increase in crime. Now, a lot of buildings a lot of businesses around my practice were being robbed and there was a laboratory next door to my practice, they [robbers] went in, and they robbed the laboratory and they locked the workers up in the room. A hospital—they robbed the hospital. A little further down on the street that my practice was on was a jewellery store and they went in there, gun butted the salesman, fractured his skull, robbed the place and I said to myself what am I waiting for? For them to come to me? They had broken into my practice I think two nights—not consecutive nights two different times but during the night and I had signed up with a security company that had wired the practice. There was an emergency button that one was supposed to have pressed in case of emergencies. My assistant pressed the emerge—not—just to see what the reaction would be. She pressed the button, two different occasions nobody came. So, I could not have counted on them to give me the security that I needed and that was part of the reason I left as well. And of course, the political situation. There're other reasons why I left but those were the two salient reasons for my leaving Guyana.

Less than one third of participants note that their decision to migrate was due to personal safety reasons. For example, Agnes-010 did not give specific details about the actual safety concern but she did mention that a past relationship went very badly to the point where she had to make the hard decision to move:

I don't mind being here but my initial thing I was running away from something. I didn't really come here for the opportunity at all because I didn't have a bad life at home...There's no reason for me to leave I know most people oh you know they grew up poor whatever, maybe again in the beginning my parents did have struggles like any other young couple they had five children it was just crazy but eventually we got past that, and we were okay, so I was running.

Participants who cite safety concerns as part of their decision to migrate said that they believed they would feel more secure in Canada than in the country that they were residing at the time. They indicate that they would feel guilty if anything happened to them or their family members knowing that they passed up the opportunity to migrate. Consequently, they felt that they had to do everything in their power to protect their family, even if that meant migrating. Political instability was among the reasons that some participants note as part of their decision to migrate as well. This includes potential risk if you are believed to be supporting one party over another and increased unrest especially near and around elections period. Increased violence due to poor economic support was also cited as a factor for decreased safety. Participants believed that many of these issues were not as prevalent in Canada. This factor materialized for participants but other marred their post-migration successes.

(iv) Better quality of life

All participants confirm that they anticipate a better quality of life in Canada. This was mostly as a result of the increased prospects due to education and employment opportunities and the expectation that their finances would improve. Many indicate that they were already in a very

good financial position and with the expected improvement to their finances in Canada, their quality of life for themselves and their families would be even better. Some participants highlight the higher standard of living in Canada generally, which would also mean better quality of life for them overall. The following excerpt from Jackie-007, echoes what other participants notes:

Canada was offering an opportunity for a better life, better quality of life, standard of living and I wanted an opportunity to you know, you know to experience life outside of Jamaica.

Jackie-007 also mentions better quality of life alongside employment opportunities as well:

[...] my husband was in a great job and I'd had to convince him to take this leap of faith to move because of the violence really that was the number one thing for wanting to leave Jamaica as a skilled worker and then the prospect of a better life in Canada you know and so that was my, my reason for coming here.

Sharon-011 describes wanting a better quality of life for her children and migrating to Canada offered that opportunity:

Immigration wanting a better life, I guess a better quality of life for your children and for yourself too.

Some participants cite economic uncertainty in home countries that made having the option to reside in another country a good decision. This excerpt from Simone-006 offers insight into her perception of the current economic uncertainty in Jamaica that made Canada a better option for access increased quality of life:

I guess the times in Jamaica were just uncertain economically I guess you know Jamaica wasn't progressing as well as people would have liked and having a dual citizenship was desirable.

She also points to opportunities for just wanting exposure beyond her home country:

I would have migrated anyway because I wanted to have that experience outside of Jamaica. I guess I see myself as not limited to Jamaica in terms of living there and culturally I felt like I had one foot there and one foot there let's say in the U.S. like I had a wider experience and I wanted to experience more. I just felt like you know okay yea I want to see more of the world and what not. I love travel.

While these four key themes became a common thread across the stories that participants shared, some indicate that the decision to migrate was not an easy one. Some participants were interested to only visit Canada, not to live. June-002 for example, note her intention of visiting Canada but ended up living in Canada as well:

My intention wasn't to live in Canada; it was more to visit and to go back and everything and then they had changed. I think they had changed the laws around travelling I think you could travel without a passport or something and then they changed that and then I decided okay I'll move, and I said I would spend five years, I am now going on seven and counting, so I'll see.

Both June-002 and Simone-006, indicate that there was no genuine urge for them to migrate as they were each doing well financially. However, in this case one of the participants made the decision to move because her close friends moved and kept encouraging her to apply to the FSWP. This participant also notes that her husband's business was not doing well which was mentioned in an earlier excerpt. Once she made the decision to move however, she too had hopes of an even better quality of life in Canada.

On the other hand, Bibi-003 notes that while she was fully engaged in her community, she needed more opportunities for herself. This quest for more and for wanting more for herself influenced her decision to move to Canada:

I was at the highest level that I could have gotten to at that point in time I graduated, I had a thriving private practice, I had a government job...as their dental surgeon. I worked with rotary international going around throughout ...[the country] giving dental attention, organizing our health programs for the school children but I needed something more. I needed more. Yes, I had given service to the community I had given up myself to the community. I gave up some weekends, I had long days, but I felt that I needed to do something for me and that's part of the reason why I left.

Finally, June-002 made the decision to join other family members who were already living in Canada. She also notes changes in the laws around travels that helped her make the final

decision. This may have been more because of changes in immigration policy rather than residency requirements to maintain status in Canada, for individuals who had permanent residency status. Nevertheless, the participant made the decision to migrate to join family and due to changes in immigration policy:

[...] the reason behind that was that that it felt like I needed a change. There were some personal reasons, but more so my grandparents immigrated [to Canada] from like in the 60s, and the entire family came except my dad [...]. I've always visited and always felt like it was somewhere that I would want to live, and then at one point I decided to apply through the skilled worker program. I did, I got through. My intention wasn't to live in Canada; it was more to visit and to go back and everything and then they had changed the laws around travelling. I think you could travel without a passport or something and then they changed that and then I decided okay I'll move.

11 out of the 15 participants cite increased education and employment opportunities followed by security reasons among the top three factors that influenced their decisions to migrate. They hoped that these prospects and the change of environment would result in better quality of life; many participants felt that with these options, their family would be safer and happier which would make them more content and increase their overall well-being. Most participants cite employment, education, safety, and improved quality of life as their main motivations for moving to Canada. None of the participants cite dire financial need as part of their decision to migrate.

Transition to Canada

This section captures participants' descriptions about their transition to Canada once their applications as skilled immigrants were successful. During data collection, most participants adopt an almost checklist-like approach to reflect on their transition, as if they were looking to find where they made the wrong turn. They seem to be searching for answers about the root

cause of their struggles and where exactly in their journeys did these challenges arise. They note that their applications for PR to Canada was approved less than under two years from the date of submission. As Simone-006 notes in the excerpt below, her application was processed very quickly:

Like in 9 months I mean they were so fast, they were so efficient and everything was just seamless and I have to say that my initial impression of coming to Canada is that it was very positive like it was very overwhelmingly positive like everything just the interaction with the Canadian government officials, the immigration department just, just based on the way everything was handled it was just so professional, so courteous, so welcoming, so efficient I was really, really, really surprised.

Overall, participants indicate that the ease with which the transition process to Canada unfolds, reaffirmed their perceptions and decision to migrate to Canada. However, the process was not without its share of discriminatory interactions reported by at least 1 participant with Canadian Customs after landing. For example, Maize-012 notes one such encounter, which she indicated later in the interview that she dismissed the encounter as an anomaly:

I'm in line [upon arrival in Canada and going through Canadian Customs] and I'm just kind of happy to be here, arrived! And there was a guy who I dealt with in the line he was just the person who was dealing with my paperwork (signing off on permanent residency) and he was so rude and dismissive to me and it was almost like he wanted, he was waiting for me to move along so he could interact with this tall, scantily attire blonde behind me. It could not have been more, if it was scripted! And I was just kind of like okay, are you for real!? And I was shocked because I had never really felt so much as a visible minority as at that moment and this was kind of like my introduction to this nation that I was now planning to call home, and I'd never really experience that... he was a white Canadian with a buzz cut.

Other participants described their excitement and anticipation of what they perceived moving to Canada would be as skilled immigrants. This includes the expectation that participants had for a faster transition into the job market, which would make for a smoother settling in process as

well. The following excerpt from Sharon-011, captures insight from one participant about their transition to Canada:

I'm leaving my job where I am and I'm hoping to make a quick transition because I'm coming as a skilled person a skilled migrant and so if I can see what the [job] market is like and you know I can make an easy transition into the Canadian job market and, settle, make my settling better if that makes sense.

She further describes the existing supports she already had in Canada that helped to ease the transition for her and her family:

Having people here you know when you landed, having friends and family helped you know helped with the settlement. [...]. My friend said okay, you guys stay with us until you get a job and we did that and then okay what are we gonna do? We're gonna buy, we're gonna rent, what are we gonna do? And you just move from there.

Similarly, another participant Maize-012 describes the benefits of having support in Canada that helped with the family's transition:

"[...] people told me that I was very lucky to have family and that community here. I think it took me a long time to really acknowledge what a difference it made to a degree and again as I told you I had a kind of small footprint before I came to Canada and by small footprint I meant my, my life was really you know work, church, my friends you know that kind of thing (laughs) and you know and certainly family."

Yet another participant, Muriel-013, describes her ties to Canada based on friendship forged in her home country that was significant in supporting her transition:

So, in Guyana there was a house next door to mine and one of my earlier houses because I moved at least three times in Guyana and the lady next door she was Jamaican married to a Guyanese, and she had this house, so she was like a snowbird. So, once it got cold somewhere around November she would come down to Guyana and she would putter around in her house and her garden and things like that. Then in March she'd make her way back up to Canada. So we became friends and just around the same time this whole [FSWP] application process and then I was going through my chronic fatigue madness and trying to finish up my write up for my research for my post grad diploma she was saying oh I'm here and I'm going back and I haven't gotten to see you and then I decided okay put my paper work, my research and all this write up down, go visit her and

then she said but where are you going? And I said I don't know, and she says but you just can't land on the plane. I don't even know what city I'm going to. I have no clue. I just know I'm going to Canada. I don't know where to go from there. So, then she says look I'm gonna go back, I'm gonna talk to my kids and we'll see if you can stay with us. And so, we were on the phone from there and then her husband came and picked us up at the airport and they took us in, in their home and so that was it and so I just said she's an angel sent from God.

At least one participant, Sharon-011, indicates that the transition was made smoother because her family was accustomed to moving frequently. This family had resided in other countries and was looking forward to moving to Canada for what was hoped to be more stability: [...] *we'd already disrupted ourselves so, we are seasoned we were seasoned movers by then, so we got here and it was like okay what do we need to do?*

More than 10 participants indicates that as a result of the ease with which they were able to migrate to Canada, they had similar expectations for settling in and entering the Canadian labour market. They were optimistic about their full transition to Canada, as they believed their experience would be consistent with the ease with which their applications were processed. Many felt reassured as a result of the minimal issues that arose during their transition to Canada. Some indicate that those results far confirmed that their decision to migrate was the right one. Overall, participants seem well positioned to meet their expectations for making the decision to migrate and secure lucrative employment. However, their later accounts show that other unexpected factors became prevalent in shaping their experiences negatively, which derailed their well thought out plans before they migrated.

Summary

The Highlight of Stories I section provides an overview of participant demographic information, their pre-migration aspirations that weighed into their decisions to migrate. It provides insight into their transition to Canada as well as into the latter stage of their pre-migration journeys. This include highlights about their anticipated upward trajectory in employment and access to greater educational opportunities. These expectations were associated with their migration status as skilled workers with permanent residence status. The overview in this section highlights participants' belief that they were well positioned to move forward as skilled workers in the Canadian labour market, in the manner that the FSWP promises.

Along with increased employment and educational opportunities that participants hoped to access post-migration, they felt that Canada offered a safer environment for them and their families. They also felt that their quality of life would be better in Canada. Also noted in this section is the support that many participants described from friends and family that helped them to get situated in Canada much faster. Notably, issues of race and gender or other forms of discrimination were not explicitly referenced in this section by participants.

The information in this section provides context to the research and factors that uniquely define participants. At the same time, it is important to note that the key aspect of engagement with participants' lived experience is based on their entry as skilled workers. This means that they successfully secured permanent residence as skilled workers and transitioned to Canada to fulfill their post-migration dreams. Therefore, this section provides the characteristics of participants but also adds context and depth to the research.

Highlights of Stories II – Mapping Manifestations of Discrimination

Introduction

This section outlines examples of different experiences of discrimination that participants described in the Canadian labour market. Though the emphasis is on the impact of race and gender as part of this study, the impacts of other aspects such as their status as skilled immigrant women and as immigrant professionals emerged as factors that influenced their experiences. Race and gender became points of awareness in the Canadian labour market and Canadian society for participants which many indicate was not the same before they migrated.

They also felt that their race and gender was more active and impactful after migration and not in a good way. This section scopes out some of these growing connections that participation made to the discrimination they faced and their race, gender. Other aspects of their identities such as their status as skilled immigrant and professional women are also highlighted. The section highlights stereotypical perceptions of race and gender that shaped participants' experiences primarily those who identify as Black skilled immigrant women. It includes excerpts in their own words that speak to discrimination in their post-migration labour market experiences.

This section also highlights the differences in how participants feel they were treated before and after migration; first as professional skilled women who were able to qualify in a rigorous process for competitive migration program (FSWP). Then as mostly Black immigrant women post-migration with devalued education, skills and experiences in the Canadian labour market. In addition, this section highlights some of the challenges and barriers around employment that participants describe.

These include some of the roadblocks they encounter looking for work and accounts of being excluded from opportunities for promotion in their respective organizations where they work. Participants also commented on the lack of representation they observed in certain positions in their organizations, especially in leadership positions. This section engages with marginalizing patterns of experience that emerged in participants' accounts of their stories. Finally, this section closes with a summary of key points discussed in the chapter to make connections to the ways that race and gender shape the experiences that participants described.

Foregrounding Race and Gender: New Awareness of Defining Characteristics

This section highlights the growing awareness that participants developed about the impact of their race and gender on their experiences in Canada. It includes excerpts that provide insights on related aspects of participants' experiences both as skilled immigrants and relating to work, that help underscore the gradual awareness that participants developed about of their race and/or gender were being operationalized. While both racism and sexism have been core aspects of Canada's immigration policies and have shaped the course of experiences that especially Black immigrant women encounter (Galabuzi, 2006; Kelly & Wossen-Taffesse, 2012; Thobani, 2007; Zaman, 2010), participants did not immediately recognize and/or acknowledge this impact in their experiences. Many feel that the challenges they faced initially were temporary.

However, DeCuir & Dixon, (2004) and Delgado & Stefancic, (2001, 2012) note that racism and other forms of discrimination are present in the everyday experiences of people of colour to negatively impact their experiences. This means that the dominant discourse about newcomer and settlement work that normalizes the challenges that newcomers face simply because they are new, must be problematized. The history of oppression towards racialized women in Canada also adds dimension to experiences and demands deeper engagement to fully

understand these narratives (Dei & Calliste, 2000; Dua and Robertson, 1999). Whether or not participants recognize these impacts, the effects are part of the everyday experiences that racism and sexism negates. Their race and gender cannot be seen as dormant when they shape their everyday interactions. This is the case even if participants cannot name or explain these impacts. Participants did not appear to be aware or were concerned about the potential impact of their race and gender on their post-migration experiences prior to migration.

For Maize-012, she feels that the colour of her skin was not a factor in recruiting her as a skilled immigrant, a title she also feels should not be factor once she migrated:

I mean [skilled] immigrants are not necessarily defined by the colour of their skin. They're just non-Canadians and I think certainly when they're [Canada] recruiting, they always saying to come you know be a Canadian! Canadians love everybody! So, this whole business of actually identifying you and making sure that you wear your sign and remember you're an immigrant and we can make you a non-immigrant at any time kind of thing, I mean it [skilled immigrant] was sufficient as a label coming into the country, but I wouldn't label myself as that having been here, I'm a contributing member of the society. I pay my taxes...

Sharon's-011 comment provides further insight into this seemingly unawareness among participants about how their race and gender can shape a certain kind of experience:

I know I am a Black West Indian, but I don't really place much emphasis on my race as in Black West Indian... So I don't really look at, at myself as being Black and West Indian you know. I look from a broader way I suppose because of different things I guess how I was brought up and so and I don't really see race... I don't often see colour, nationality or those kind of things...

Judy-004, recalls that she did not consider that her race and culture had any bearing on being considered a skilled immigrant:

I think the furthest thing from our mind or my mind when migrating was that hey, because of my race I might not be considered a skilled worker or so. I mean in coming and that's probably for me I never saw that as a hindrance I never saw it as oh hey be careful your you know you have this culture, you're from that race. I just saw it as a country that was opening up its arms to people that were skilled people that were at a certain peak of their educational background or something, people that were ambitious people basically. So, I

believe that was what Canada was looking for or why they were able to open the doors to other immigrants to say look if you are skilled, if you're able to do this then come on in, right? So for me as somehow culture or race or so was not a— I didn't see it as that it would be a major factor.

In the respective countries from which they migrated, participants indicate that they were well situated, and identifying factors such as their race did not present any issues for them. Furthermore, as Doreen-005 notes, ... *everybody [in migrating country] is Black you know, so what difference does it make?* Maggie-014 echoes Doreen's-005 comments in responding to whether or not she sees herself as a Black woman before she migrated: *No because in Jamaica everybody is [Black], they're just it's not really a definition as such. You're a woman.* Indicating that race was not a factor in the country from which she migrated or at least, participants were not as attuned to the functioning and impact of their race on them.

However, after migration some participants allude to feeling overly visible and not in a good way, which made them more self-consciousness about their race and gender as these were often the more visible features that set them apart from others. Erica-009 notes the acute awareness that she developed about her identity, even if she did not personally accept how she was perceived:

I'm acutely aware that I'm a Black person and I realize that as a Black female that can be two strikes you know because in certain instances women are not considered equal, they're considered less than...

Many participants describe the gradual awareness that they developed as the association between the negative experiences they faced, and the impact of their race and gender became clearer. Participants described feeling the opposite of what they experienced before migration. They point to distinct experiences where they felt that their race and gender were prominent in labelling them as not measuring up to Canadians. This they indicate made them feel more aware,

concerned and unsettled. Many participants also indicate that they did not challenge these encounters initially, while more than half indicate that such encounters made them wonder if they would ever be accepted or measure up to these Canadian standards. Underlying participants' stories were their struggles to make sense of the emphasis on certain characteristics of their identity that classified them as different and marked them for discrimination. In Maize's-012 response pushing back at being identified as just a Black woman, she still holds on to the assurances of her pre-migration identity and would not include her race as a factor in her identity if she had to choose:

I suppose if I was forced to make a choice I would probably say you know maybe in this order of significance being a woman and being a Caribbean national...the truth of the matter is even if you think about it Caribbean women as a general rule tend to be very strong and independent individuals and I would be remiss if I did not make any note of the fact that these attributes have actually been a very significant play in the personality that I am because I am independent and you know I am ambitious and I mean a lot of these strengths these core strengths come from being a woman and a Caribbean woman and a Jamaican woman because you've always had to know your identity, you need to know who you are right?

In continuing with Erica's-009 previous engagement of race and gender, she underlines her awareness of race and gender before and after migration as follows:

I am aware being in Canada that I am a Black female because coming from Jamaica that was not something that was an issue...we're all Black people so that was not a title that I would have necessarily attached to myself... I mean I always knew I was Black, but it wasn't something at the forefront of my mind because everybody is Black. It's not something that you have to think about you know everybody is the same and you just go through life you're just people.

Erica's-009 understanding of being Black and female felt different as a result of her post-migration experience, which she compares to her pre-migration experience:

But here [Canada], I mean you realize that you are Black. You're considered a minority, and you know whereas in Jamaica it's not an issue you know here [Canada] you realize that it can be a hindrance...

Similarly, Agnes-010 shares that,

...before I guess everything just gets blurry and it comes down to ethnicity or basically race because in Canada I mean when I compare myself to what I identify with before coming here and what I'm forced to identify with being here its much different... I[now] just mainly see myself as a Black female, professional, just trying to basically get back to that economic status to which I'm accustomed. I guess is the simplest way I could put it.

For Judy-004, some of her experiences that led to the awareness of how her race and gender

operates was sometimes elusive:

At the same time, it's so subtle that it's only based on sometimes often times your perception or what you believe because it's that subtle. I think that's what makes it, perhaps because there's no distinctness about it and there's no directness about it and it's only from your own imagination or I think this is what or think it is...that could probably be proven even wrong as well, you know...

This is similar to Maize's-012 observations:

There were times when perhaps when a response to some kind of interaction was not what you anticipated like when somebody responded to you in a way that you could not fathom why that response was there. I think at some point you were like is this a race thing? Is this what I'm dealing with here? Or is this just this person is having a bad day you know what I mean?

This view was shared by other participants who felt that they were being treated differently. Both characteristics (race and gender) proved more active in their experiences in Canada. These defining characteristics and associated treatment create a new awareness for many participants about the kinds of negative experience that result. This increases their consciousness and makes many feels more scrutinized.

Agnew (2006) described becoming more conscious about her dress, her skin colour, and her overall conduct after moving to Toronto. She felt that these features were weaponized to label her as different from her White classmates. Agnew (2006) note that even after she completed her studies, she felt that similar perceptions of these defining characteristics impacted

her career aspirations. Similarly, June-002 notes the reaction that she received from other co-workers because she typically dresses up for work. The participant notes that this was a common practice in her workplace before she migrated, so this was normal for her. Many of her co-workers on the other hand were typically dressed more casually. They would stare at her constantly, which made her feel scrutinized. The stares also reiterated that she was different. In the excerpt below, the participant (June-002) describes that she was able to see the reaction on people's faces that made her feel even more uncomfortable:

I feel like I always look at people and can see their reaction towards me and something like that. And it's weird 'cause like even if I go to the States, I don't get that feeling. Here I feel like I'm so conscious of who I am.

The participant speaks about becoming more self-conscious about her attire and feeling like she did not fit in. She also notes that she later came to realize that her race may have also been a factor at the time as well. Judy-004 points to an earlier encounter in her workplace regarding her hair that she still has questions about:

...when I just started at my company, I remember I was called up and was told that something that I was using in my hair is affecting a few people's sinuses and for a minute I just stepped back and had to think, is it because my hair not as straight as the others or? But again it's all perception right?...I was using something in my hair but I couldn't even smell it myself but then, hey somebody said something was affecting their nose right? So, you just have to wonder right? So, little stuff like that and so you figure you know it's just that you wonder because nothing or no one is going to come straight up to say you know this is what it is...

This was not a concern that Judy-004 encountered prior to migration and as much as she thought it was weird, she did not know for sure what had transpired. This encounter and others provide deeper insight into the awareness that participants were developing about different aspects of their identity and the experiences that these markers enact.

Going back to the mobility challenges in employment, June-002 notes that when she reflects on the lack of opportunities for upward mobility for her in the organization, she realizes that her White peers did not have similar challenges. Since she met and exceeded all the requirements for promotion, she believes being seen as different could provide some explanation for the different outcomes she experienced, which is unlike the opportunities and that her White peers were able to access.

Patsy's-001 observations points to being treated differently at work from her Canadian peers, many of whom were White. She also notes that this was the case even if these individuals were in lower positions or have lower levels of competency and skills. The participant felt that she had to work much harder than she did before migrating and in much lower-level positions. This excerpt below points to the differential treatment that Patsy-001 observes, which she connects to her status as an immigrant:

“I had to work much harder than I did when I was in Jamaica... because you find that the people, Canadians on a whole, even if they're not doing the same level of job or they don't have the same level of competency, the treatment to them is different from you as an immigrant coming in.”

Regarding work, Maize-012, feels that *I've always thought that my work should speak for itself I shouldn't be going around saying HEY did you see what I did?*

Judy-004 notes that:

One of the biggest challenges I have, and I'll tell you, is just being over worked. Yea you work very hard in this country [Canada] and I tell people I've never worked so hard in my life until I came here to live. It's a lot of stress. Too much is required and too little giving back... In terms of the duties, in terms of going far and beyond, in terms of what they expect of you but then little is given back in terms of compensation, in terms of benefits, in terms of, it's just, I mean often times I think about it and I think I understand where slavery came from.

Joy's-008 feelings about the work arrangement echoes aspects of Judy's perception about the unequal balance, ...*I have to offer my expertise, [they] abuse me in terms of not paying me enough so it's, it [skilled immigrant program/work] is designed to take the best of me for as little as possible. So that's how I look at it.* Similarly, Erica-009 calls attention to a stark reality for her:

...when I converted my then salary, I was earning more in Jamaica than I was earning here! So, I had to explain to him [responding to a negative comment made by a White Canadian about immigrants] that you know, just because you see somebody, and they come from some place else doesn't mean you have a right to judge them because you don't know anything about them!

Participants express that their hard work should have positioned them to move ahead but by process of elimination, they realized that their race, gender and status as skilled immigrants were active factors in the struggles they faced. Maize-012 indicates that:

Literally my coping mechanism was about me just focusing my attention on my job. I mean I tried. I think unconsciously I was actually working towards being measured by my job not by anything else you know...

Doreen-005 echoes the prioritizing of her work in the following excerpt:

I just came to work did my work and just talked to people who were right there. I didn't talk to anybody else more than as I said hello and good morning... I come here [Canada] not because I beg you to let me in through your door. I came here because we [participant and Canada based on program of admission] have an arrangement you feel that I could contribute to your country [employment], and you allowed me to come in. So, I don't feel as though you actually did me any favour...

However, Maizes-012 comment indicates that her hard work was not yielding the anticipated results:

I think there were times that I kind of just dialled it all the way back and just kind of retreated into myself... I thought that the quality of your work should be colour blind, that's not something you should measure by the colour of somebody's skin so I would never want to bring my immigrant status or the colour of my skin as a factor that needed to be monitored when you're evaluating the quality of my work.

Many participants note that while their White co-workers were moving ahead at work for example, they were not. In speaking about her struggles, Bibi-003 shares about coming to terms with the discrimination that she was experiencing:

You go through a kaleidoscope of emotions. First one, it affects your self-worth, it makes you feel defeated, it makes you feel less of who you are or who you considered yourself to be initially. It's like it affects—it also affects your ability to relate to people, you feel a sense of embarrassment in that you know, those persons who knew you from home knew you to be this person and here I am in Canada, and I am not who I am supposed to be...

Participants describe different aspects of their emotional journeys as they tried to fathom how their education and skills that once placed them at the top of their careers and made them qualify to migrate as skilled immigrants, became overshadowed by their race and gender. They also struggled based on the impact of other discriminatory factors such as their status as skilled immigrant women and immigrant professionals. Many of the participants wondered initially if these practices were just based on their experience or point to more prevalent practices. They also expressed concerns about the impact on their children if this was indeed prevalent. The following excerpt from Simone-006 sheds light into similar concerns echoed by other participants who migrated with their children:

Like I think in a way having a sort of over-the-top experience helps to compensate for some of the things that I've encountered here that I'm able to just look past it but I don't know if he'll [son] be able to do the same because he will feel this because of his colour that he's not you know getting where he needs to be.

Other participants also note racial undertones present in encounters that their children had at school and that they (parents) did not fully understand initially. For example, Muriel-013 provides an account about her younger son getting teased at school for having his shirt tucked into his pants. Later in the interview the participant spoke about learning that certain stereotypes

were attached to the clothes as well as how her son was dressed. The participant also notes that she became aware later that these behaviours were typically racially motivated as well:

In Guyana and maybe in the Caribbean too we were taught, our children boys and girls, that you need to tuck your shirt into your skirt or your trousers and that sort of stuff and so when he [her son] went to school with his shirt neatly tucked in because that was the way he was brought up and that we wore uniforms and everything and stuff the kids started teasing him...

Throughout Muriel's-013 interview and data she expressed the void that the passing of her son created and that she misses him:

I love talking about him [son] because I suddenly realize the connection and after he died, even before he died he said mum one day you're gonna understand because when he was going through his struggles, I'm like why is it you can't do school? What is it? I tell stories about myself to the kids [students]. I have kids who are very difficult and so I share my son's story [with them] and so I'm able to bond and connect...

Doreen-005 describes that she realized that she was seen as different during a meeting with the principal and a teacher at her daughter's school. The participant notes that she had to go to the school because her daughter got into a fight with another student that was bullying her daughter. The bullying started shortly after her son began attending school in Canada and they made several reports to both the teacher and the principal, but no action was taken by the school. She notes that her son attends school in an, ... *all white environment and only black student in class. Teacher ignored concerns until there was a fight.* The participant shares that upon meeting with the principal about the altercation, she realized that their race was a factor in how both her and her son were being treated:

I had to wrestle with that because up to that point it never really was at the forefront in my mind [...] but now you realize that okay, other people not only possibly see you as different they may actively see you as different and therefore actually treat you different.

The ongoing awareness about participants' race especially, became foregrounded as they began to associate the different and more frequent encounters of discrimination and aspects of their identities. Maggie-014 notes that,

Here [in Canada] you tend to end up having to define yourself more as not just a woman but either Brown or White or Black woman. In this regard, she indicates that ... I'm a Black woman that's trying to fit in, in the society that's really all...I'm a single black woman making it in the world.

Some participants indicate that they were accustomed to problem-solving issues and making hard decisions to grow in the face of challenges. However, they feel powerless when the cause of their challenges was as a result of racism and sexism, as these forces were outside of their control. These stories that participants share throughout the interviews made it clear that what they described cannot be fully understood without recognizing how the different aspects of their identities (race, gender, immigration status as skilled immigrants and professional identities) were operationalized and in turn shaped their experiences.

Participants also indicate that their experiences of discrimination made them suspicious of other groups as they were wary about how they were being perceived by others in general. Jackie-007, for example, speaks about the importance of having a social network beyond individuals of her own ethnicity. At the same time, she wonders how she could forge a friendship with others of different ethnicity based on her experience of being treated differently in Canada:

Yes, I do feel my social network it's very, very difficult to form friendship outside of your ethnicity and I think it's also maybe from a trust perspective it's like do you trust that other ethnicity to form that friendship or bond?

On the other hand, June-002 notes that her family who was living in Canada before she migrated, did not want her to have any interaction with individuals who were from the same country of migration and who were now living in Canada. Her relatives believe that networking outside of her community would increase her chances of fitting into “Canadian culture” and thereby increase her opportunities for success. This was in part due to the negative labels directed towards the group based on their ethnicity and race. Even though June-002 disagreed with this perception, she was encouraged to distance herself from the group to get ahead in Canada. A small number of participants indicate that members of their family who had resided in Canada before they came held similar perceptions as well. While this approach was believed to be a way to get ahead, there is no denying the systemic impact of race that is not based on association with these individuals but rather based on physical constructs.

While the majority of the participants in this study identify as Jamaicans, the aversion to others from similar nationality was not prevalent throughout the data. In fact, the majority of study participants indicate that they fully embraced their nationality as a core aspect of their identities and felt comfortable being around others from a similar background. They also note that they were open to blending in different aspects of Canadian culture to complement their new identities. In a similar vein, Jane-015 notes that:

[...] I'm a Jamaican living in Canada that's how I feel, [...] we'll go to a park and have you know cookout that kind of thing so I associate that more with kind of blending with a Canadian environment and doing the park type thing but at the same time you bring your Jamaican food with you and you bring your games that you have played and I mean they're [guests] not all Jamaican but the company and the setting or the barbecue that kind of blends the Canadian environment with the Jamaican feeling.

However, some participants indicate that they prioritized their culture as Jamaicans even more so after they migrated because of their experiences of discrimination. This may be a coping

mechanism or a form of resiliency to find strength in one's own racial and ethnic community. As

Judy-004 notes:

I find myself doing more with Jamaicans more with even Jamaicans that were born here you know well Jamaican Canadian background that kind of thing, so you sort of socialize more with them you know.

At the same time, however, participants note that they were open to developing networks with individuals of similar backgrounds and cultural history who were born in Canada. Bibi-003 notes that there is strength in associating with not just individuals from similar nationality but from across the Caribbean:

I'll tell you what, I am West Indian, but I feel most comfortable with persons from the West Indies. I associate with persons from all over the Caribbean, St. Lucia, Jamaica, all over Dominica, Haiti. I'm most comfortable with persons from the Caribbean that's it. That does not mean that I do not get along with persons of other nationalities I do but I think that the West Indians we got culture in common and that is what strengthens the ties I think.

Similarly, Sharon-011 speaks about the richness in interacting with different types of individuals:

I pride myself on being able to get on with different types of people and so being able to sit down and chat with somebody from a different country, a different culture you get to learn from that person. Learn and, you find that there're so many similarities you know in how they're raising children and how you raise children at the end of the day we're all humans and a lot of us are trying to achieve the same thing.

For most participants the association with people from their country of migration may not have affected their awareness of race and gender. However, over time they became more aware about how far reaching these negative perceptions extended. Both similar and different stories were shared throughout the data by other participants, which led to heightened awareness about their race and gender and how these factors can negatively impact their experiences. In reflecting on the new awareness of the positioning of Black women and the space they hold in Canada, Bibi-003 notes the following:

It has been a humbling experience in that before my tolerance level for certain things was not very high, you know? I'm able to—I am very tolerant now—I'm able to see things through different eyes.

The participant explains that before she migrated, she would be quick to confront anyone who treated her less than she felt they should be treated. Since she migrated however, she describes having to temper her expectations and choose how she responds when she is faced with discrimination, which is too often. This is problematic as the participant not only has to assume the responsibility to ensure good relations with the school for her children suppress her true reaction for fear of being stereotyped. This calls attention to the workings of veiled racism and gendered undertones in the situation. She notes how time consuming it is to try and challenge every encounter, and instead she looks for ways to move ahead. Despite the negative encounters, Agnes-010 remains optimistic with a high level of confidence in herself and how she sees herself:

I don't know, for me I would say out of 10 my confidence regardless of everything that I have going on around me here, the changes that I was forced to make and that type of thing it's 8.5 and I think when you're a confident person, regardless of the setting that you're placed into, regardless of the barrier that maybe out there due to your race, gender or your language you attract people and you attract certain things.

This was echoed among the majority of participants. Despite the challenges that they face, most of it unexpected, they felt that they could find a way to move past the negative impact. Many remain optimistic that their education, skills, and experience would eventually take center stage over their race, gender, and other discriminatory factors such as skilled immigrants and professional identities. Many share similar thoughts to Patsy's-001 approach to keep motivated:

I think once you try to be who you are and be self-motivated and be able to relate and work with people of all backgrounds and accept change because change is a very intimidating thing but you have to accept change and know that look, wherever you are as long, if you move from here to there things are gonna be

different and as long as you accept that and be able to work within that, then you know that's one of the biggest barriers that you can overcome.”

However, the growing awareness about the negative impact of race and gender and other forms of discrimination such as immigration status as skilled immigrants with work experience and education outside of Canada, became progressively evident as the barriers that participants encountered became more prominent. Many participants explain that they struggle to understand the basis for the differential treatment they encountered initially, especially when looking for work. Over time, they began to associate these biases with their race, gender, and other characteristics of their identities. Collins (1986), hooks and Mesa-Bains (2006), Perry et al. (2013), and others have confirmed the interconnected impact of racism and sexism that oppress Black women and racialized women and devalue their work.

Despite the lack of awareness initially among many participants about the negative effects of their identities, the impacts undoubtedly made them aware of how these factors shaped the course of their experience. Participants described that they eventually became more aware of the reach of these factors and the effects. These include the differential valuing of their education and skills, their positioning as inferior to Canadian workers, and the undermining of their professional identities.

Race and Gender Stereotypes

James (1994) calls attention to the connections between “perceptions, stereotypes and/or assumptions” and the differential treatment that racial minorities encounter in Canada (p. 1). Contrary to the dominant rhetoric that individuals of colour in Canada are treated based on their merits and achievements, unlike in the United States, their experience indicate that their skin

colour is actually a key factor in how they are treated in Canada (James, 1994). Cuàdriz and Uttal (1999) call attention to the hidden differences of race and gender that are “the products of historical processes that have treated racial ethnic groups differently,” (p. 164). Similarly, Branker (2017), Galabuzi (2006), James (1994) and other scholars note that the many barriers that immigrants face are directly connected to their race and gender, as well as other defining characteristics. Based on participants’ accounts of their experiences in the labour market, it is evident that their race and gender, and other aspects of their identities were linked to the stereotypical assumptions and serve as markers of discrimination that shape their experiences.

In recognizing the negative perception of her identity, June-002 wonders about how she could even begin to accept this negative perception that was projected on her because of her identity when she did not see herself in that light: *How do you reinvent your identity though? ‘Cause I feel like this is who I am.* June’s-002 response was based on an encounter at work where she was the next person in line to be promoted but kept getting passed over as mostly White staff with less seniority were securing promotions. The participant noted that she discussed the situation on different occasions with her manager and came to realize that she was being held back because of her race. June-002 notes that she is still trying to figure out how one could even respond to such a situation. Based on the context of throughout the interview in this study, she did not expect to find an answer to the question of reinventing her identity.

The upcoming excerpt from Agnes-010 indicates that the situation was even worse for her than what June’s-002 shares when she eventually found work initially. She shares what she considers was a “humbling” experience to know that she had to settle for a lower position that she was overqualified for, just so she could find employment. She did not get a chance to be

passed over like some of the other participants, for a higher-level position based on her qualifications:

It was a bit of a humbling experience because here it is now, you're the one that has to be like reporting to take in menial jobs because you just basically wanna make the cut right? So, I was accustomed to being the manager and now you're being managed. My first job was in a call centre and that was like no way because when I was home, I had to kind of like manage call centres, [and now I had to] provide information that they needed like third party not direct but there it was I was like you know at the desk taking calls and stuff. So, it was a little bit of a humbling experience to me. It was a step down, but you know once again that's just what it is when you're in a new country.

Similar to Agnes'-010 "humbling" experience, Maggie-014 shares her early experience after migrating accepting and accepting a lower-skilled job, while still looking for work that was more in line with her qualifications and skills:

I remember where [name of company] hadn't opened up yet and so we were building the shelves, stocking the shelves everything so that was the first experience but at the same time I was still looking for jobs. So that was my first job was seven months in after getting here...

These encounters are not without the impact that their race and gender curates along with other forms of discrimination such as their status as immigrants and where their education and skills were acquired. Joy's-008 comment sheds light on participant expectation and the harsh reality at the same time:

I'm a black woman from the Caribbean. I'm a university graduate so that caused me to have at a minimum expectation in the job force but I'm still not that disillusioned to know that I will get that expectation. So, I know that re-entering the workforce...

Joy-008 further shares how she eventually accepted this harsh reality she had to come to terms with due to stereotypes and discrimination, to regain her employment footing in Canada:

It [identity] has changed in that it has caused me to question everything and to really understand what is important and what I should be focusing on and how little you know, like in Jamaica you're very concerned about you know about the upward mobility so

[now] I'm not necessarily into that. Now all I defend is my pay. I am no longer going after promotion it does not matter any more. Any more at all. I want a decent salary, and the position has some minimal level but no longer thriving to become no manager or whatever.

On the other hand, Judy-004 describes having both her supervisor and her co-workers questioning a manager's decision when she was invited to be mentored for potentially higher-level opportunities in her company. She notes that even after going through the mentorship opportunity the opportunities did not materialize in the company. Nevertheless, the participant notes that the invitation for mentorship was extended because of her contributions to the company while currently in a lower-level position. She also notes that her White peers who were mostly males, took exception to the fact that she was offered the mentorship opportunity over them.

The participant also notes that she had much higher levels of education, skills, and experience than they had, and her co-workers were aware of this fact. The participant indicates that she interpreted some of the microaggressions from her co-workers towards her to mean that as the woman among mostly male team members, she should not have been given that opportunity. In addition, the participant felt that because she is Black it raises further questions about why she was selected - as if her race and gender automatically disqualified her from being offered the opportunity: *I figure that to mean two things, one you're the woman and you're the Black one so why you [...]*

Other stories that participants share echo the lack of opportunities they had compared to their White co-workers. While Judy-004 describes a breakthrough opportunity to be mentored, the response from her White co-workers and the upcoming excerpt from Jackie-007, speak to a more ingrained pattern of normalized behaviour of exclusion and discrimination. These kinds of treatment work in tandem with how participants are perceived as Black and racialized women,

who are viewed as not having the required skills. Jackie-007 firmly notes that she feels that her race and gender were factors in the lack of opportunities that she could access at work:

It's, yes, it's because of my race and because of my gender because, as I say I'm highly educated more so than anyone else I know of right now in my organization within my immediate division [...]

Participants made connections to the different experiences they had as skilled immigrants as a result of their race (Kaushik & Walsh, 2018; Mooten, 2021; Oluwadele, 2021). Many highlight the mixed emotions they felt as they encountered the unfair treatment that was unlike the treatment that their White co-workers experienced. Some participants indicate that they felt like they were unable to change the course of the discrimination they encountered. In the excerpt below, Jackie-007 describes her observations and encounters with lesser treatment directed towards non-White skilled immigrants, compared to more cordial treatment directed to White immigrants or White Canadians: *There is a difference between being a skilled immigrant that's racially identified [...] than being a White immigrant or even a White Canadian born.*

Jackie-007 further comments on how differently she was treated from her White counterparts and other immigrants who were White passing and indicates that in some cases these individuals had lower levels of education than she had. While the participant's White co-workers were encouraged to pursue higher level positions and were often successful doing so, the participant reports that she did not receive the same encouragement. She also notes that she was asked on occasions to do the work for individuals in these higher-level positions but did not get the same recognition, rewards, or opportunities. This was echoed by many participants and was a common thread throughout the data. Similarly, Judy's-004 comment adds to the different experiences and increased confidence with which especially White Canadians were able to maneuver their way

across the employment terrain, which was unlike the experiences that participants report in this study:

I find it is to be honest it is expected, what I do find the difference is that a lot of Canadians and when I say Canadians, especially the born Canadians or the White Canadians, they don't stand for foolishness, so they move on much quicker than we do.

Patsy-001 describes her experience while grappling for answers to explain why she was constantly treated as less than Canadians:

They [non-immigrants] are less qualified than you are and I don't know if it's because they are intimidated by you or they just try to keep to break you then. It's like if you try to say well okay I am qualified at this level they feel that you're you know, pushing something and they try to bring you back down to size then so to speak so they ignore it [qualification].

In engaging further with Erica's-009 response to a negative comment made by a White Canadian about immigrants, she draws attention to typical stereotypical assumptions that often exists about immigrants:

...you know one of the preconceived notions that Canadians, White Canadians may have about immigrants like us because they're different classes of immigrants and I think [to White Canadians] everybody comes here you know as somebody who ran away, hid illegally and then eventually regularized themselves or whatever. They think that everybody came here as a refugee, and I had to explain to him. I said listen, I didn't come here as a refugee. Your country came to my country they put full-page ads in the newspaper and begged the best and the brightest of my country to come here! Promising us the land of milk and honey telling us that we must come and help build Canada because it is under populated and the population is aging yadda, yadda, yadda, and they promised us the world! Come here and your life will be great and wonderful and whatever, I said listen! I did not come here as a refugee.

Maize's-012 observation bears close resemblance to Erica's-009 response above:

...a lot of the Canadians that I've met, like the true Canadians that I've met, they really have a singular and monotony perception of what a Jamaican is like and what a Jamaican lady is like. A lot of times you know first when I interact with people you know the first kind of comments would be like really, you're a Jamaican? You don't sound like a Jamaican; you don't act like a Jamaican! You know you don't speak like a Jamaican!

You know and then there would be that you were educated overseas? And I'm like no I'm not I was educated in Jamaica. I mean some of that was really kind of offensive in the first place you know and then after a while it just, you got less and less of it.

While both response and comment from Erica-009 and Maize-012 mentioned, bear some problematic underlying assumptions about refugees and “true” Canadian, the stereotypical assumptions in both comments that negatively label participants cannot be mistaken.

Despite their experiences of discrimination in the workplace, many participants describe efforts they took to ensure that they maintain a pleasant disposition. They were overly conscious that any hint of unpleasantries may be used as a reason to scrutinize their work more intensely or jeopardize their employment in any way. Many note their concerns about being typecasted as the “angry Black woman” if they showed any form of emotion other than pleasantries, even in difficult situations (Green & Talpade, 2022; Motro et al., 2022; Jones, 2023). Jane-015 describes going to great lengths to ensure that her behaviour could not be misconstrued in any way, even in situations where some level of anger could have been justified in her response:

I feel like there are a lot of times where you're looked upon as like you're judged more harshly against the angry Black woman stereotype. That has been my experience in all of those cases and so I've had to temper myself, reframe my words, pause, say things differently, use a Canadian accent when necessary to get my point across. Whereas all in my mind is a lot of the time I'd really like to say some choice words.

On the other hand, Erica-009 acknowledges the “angry Black woman” trope as she recalls a specific encounter at work with a White co-worker. Erica-009 felt that her supervisor’s constant checking in after the incident, could be perceived as a masking of stereotypical preconceived notions about her as a Black individual:

We know that there is a stereotype of the angry Black woman you know, and I remember I had an experience at work one day so many years ago ... And something happened and someone tried to throw me under the bus for it. It was not something that I did but they were trying to throw me under the bus!... I remember you know I stated my point very

clearly. I wasn't rude, I wasn't aggressive in the you know the way that we're always deemed to be aggressive whenever we start to defend ourselves. My boss was a White lady; a White French Canadian and she'd never seen me that upset before. I probably been working at the company maybe about two years at the time. She realized I was furious and for the entire day that woman kept coming to me like every half an hour are you okay? Are you sure you're okay? Are you okay? Are you sure you're okay? And I'm like why is she asking me this all the TIME? Because I think I was the only Black person on the team at the time and I think maybe it was because of the stereotypes that people have of Black people, the way we behave. She might have thought that I was gonna go ballistic (Laughs) or go postal or I don't know what she thought! But for the entire day she kept coming to me and at one point I stopped her and I said listen, YES I'm upset but I'm a professional. I have a job to do, I'm gonna do my job you don't have to keep coming to check on me. I'm fine and then she stopped coming... I don't know what she expected but she was visibly concerned for the entire day (Laughs) about how I was!

In analyzing the misinterpretation of the emotions of Black women, Green and Talpade (2022) look at the coping mechanisms among their research participants in comparison to the angry Black woman narrative. The authors note that in trying to debunk perceptions of the angry Black woman stereotype, Black women have often portrayed an image of strength, or the “strong Black woman” trope. However, since these interactions occur in predominantly White-normed spaces, the authors note that it was challenging for participants to debunk or defy both strong and angry tropes that plague especially Black women.

As an extension of these tropes, Collins (1986) calls attention to concepts of *controlling images* that stereotype Black women and form the basis to dehumanizing them and exploiting their labour. These stereotypical perceptions also help to maintain the intersection of oppression of Black women and label them as subservient and occupying domestic roles (Collins, 2000; Mullings, 1997). Collins (2002) has long called for these images that affect Black women to be challenged and resisted. In the previous excerpt, the participant felt it was important to defy this stereotypical perception and exert extreme self-control over her emotions. Corbin et al. (2018) note that this performance to defy these stereotypical perceptions can be exhausting and stressful

on Black women; the effects are undeniable and take a toll on their lives, especially in employment.

The excerpt from Simone-006 below gives insight into the ways in which these stereotypical labels become normalized in the Canadian workplace and in the society. The participant describes her realization that her friend had similar encounters of being considered as “different” from other Black people:

I have found that for some reason nobody knows why, for some reason whenever I meet White people they will, they're kind of like oh you know you're not like other Black people. Like I've gotten that before and my friend when we had that big discussion, they sort of said the same thing. That they would be like oh you're not like oh I guess a typical Black person. I'm like what are you talking about? Like what is a typical Black person to you? And I'll find out that the typical Black person that they know would either be their nanny, or you know, the person who works at the garage and I think maybe I could be unfairly generalizing but I think they're looking at lower educated, less skilled people and thinking that we're all the same. Or they're looking at someone who is under privileged let's just make it a broad category or just some under privileged person who is of Jamaican heritage or Jamaican background or maybe just Caribbean because they don't know who Jamaicans are. Just Black and equating them to the person who comes over with a degree you know and what not and they feel like you know this uneducated person who is vulgar and loud and what not, is the same as this person who knows how to sit at a dinner table and have a conversation about a topic that they might talk about with their peers.

This excerpt call attention to persistent frames of reference to unskilled labour which invisibilize and misrecognize the skills of Black women (Arat-Koç, 2006; Calliste, 1993/1994). Race is still a factor in this example even though participants were seen as different from others who were Black.

Race and gender stereotypes emerged in different aspects of participants' experiences. For example, many participants felt that being asked to prove their English Language capabilities even though they migrated from an English-speaking country, was another effort to undermine their capabilities as Black immigrant women. June-002 notes that for someone who migrated

from an English-speaking country, and her language abilities were assessed and confirmed as part of their immigration application process, this was an excuse to single out immigrants who look like her as a reminder that they are different:

I know that English is not everybody's first language, so I completely get that. But these people, it is their first language and, I have to prove that I can speak English or that I have knowledge of English and I have to get documentation to prove that when my grammar is way better than yours kind of thing. So I feel like part of it just goes like, I feel like I already put enough work in so I feel like I am qualified like I don't think I should be going back to school to get a position that someone has that's maybe just finished high school, you know.

Patsy-001 also took exception to the English language requirement as one of the qualifying criteria. She feels that such requirement is an affront to individuals who are migrating from a country where English is the primary language:

As an English country your main language is English. Why would you have to even say to the people who have a degree [they need to do English] because they have done it for the degree, they have...I'm saying this is not gonna help you to get a job at a higher level when you come here [Canada]so why is this new thing being added into the program [FSWP] now?

The practice amounts to structured discrimination and considering Canada's pattern of racist and gendered immigration policies, this treatment cannot be taken at face value. The points system was presented as an option to move away from some of these discriminatory practices towards non-White immigrants migrating to Canada. Yet these measures are present in a program that attracts highly skilled immigrants from primarily non-White source countries. When viewed from a CRT and ARFT lens combined or independently and based on the reported experiences, the program continues to single out certain groups of immigrants unfairly. That these requirements were not added to other migration categories when immigrants were being admitted from primarily White source countries raises further alarm.

On the other hand, Agnes-010 comment shows how language further nuanced their post-migration encounters:

I'm from an English-speaking country. Yes, the accent is there but it's not like it's heavy and as soon as you start speaking oh I don't understand what you're saying and that kind of barrier type of thing.

These discriminatory and stereotypical components of participants encounter, provide broader insight into their encounters of not just how their race and gender charts a negative course of experience, but other aspects such as language as well.

Another area where participants encountered differential treatment based on stereotypes was the ease with which many were able to find low-skilled jobs. Simone-006 points out that her gender actually allowed her access to the job market in ways that males may not be able to access: *I find that being a woman makes it easier for me to sort of get my foot in the door so to speak to be more easily accepted.*

Even though Simone's-006 observations indicate that she was able to gain entry to the labour force easily, the jobs she was being offered were not in line with her skills, level of education and experience. Patsy-001 shares similar experience but focused on the ways in which immigrant women are sometimes less selective about finding a job. The participant indicates that among her friends, the women were more open to accepting any job they could get, unlike many of their spouses who were also highly educated and highly skilled:

I think it is easier for females to get a job here because I find that most of the jobs like in the office environment, I don't know if [immigrant] men see it or because of their mentality, but she's willing to start anywhere and do just about anything, so I find that the woman fit in much easier than the men.

This not only highlight the intersectional impact on the women but points to the normalization of women migrants often settling for lower skilled work. Jagire (2019) notes the

higher likelihood for immigrant women to settle for low-status jobs after they migrate as a survival mechanism. Indeed, like many of the participants in this study, the delay in finding gainful employment force many into these lower skilled positions. This means that many will have to change their professions due to post-migration challenges that do not acknowledge their credentials and skills (Amoako et al., 2023; Suto, 2009; Ferrer, 2015; Nardon et al., 2022). The experiences that participants described speak to the ways in which perceptions and stereotypes of their race and gender shape the experiences in different ways; for the majority this is as Black women within the Canadian context that maintains the status quo (James, 1994; Mullings, 1997). In addition, the perception of racialized immigrant women in particular as domestic workers and without skills are being reinforced in the reported outcomes.

In the excerpt below, Jackie-007 shares her experience of being hired in a low-level position and connects her encounter to stereotypes based on her race and gender. She also notes that she was called upon more often to assist individuals in higher positions with their work in her organization, based on her skillset. However, she was not offered a promotion to move to a higher-level position, even though she demonstrates that she could perform in the duties associated with the job. This means that on one hand the participant was tapped for her skills and on the other she was not promoted even though the skills were acknowledged, albeit when it suits the employer. Again, the stereotypical and historical perception forms the basis of the treatment that she describes that disassociates her skills and normalizes the exploitation of her labour as a Black woman: *But he definitely brought me in lower than what he would have brought in someone from another ethnicity.*

Even though study participants demonstrate that they had higher levels of skills, the colour of their skin, their gender, and their skilled immigrant status rendered their skills without

value. Their experience in the Canadian labour market underlines the two-tiered system in Canada, which is similar to its immigration system (Baines & Sharma, 2016; Kaya, 2017; Park, 2013; Thobani, 2007, 2017) One system sustains inequity for certain groups of immigrants who face discrimination and face less security based on their status. The other system favours those who are considered Canadians or White and confer more security, status and privilege to them. Participants' experiences illustrate that the labour market not only re-reenacts the different forms of discrimination that create inequities, but further sustains them through the undermining of their skills and experience based on their race and gender (Osaze, 2017; Creese & Wiebe, 2012; Taylor, 2018).

Accounts of the discrimination that participants share are similar to other scholars who note the different kinds of experience that raced and gendered dynamics create (Bannerji, 2020; Dua & Robertson, 1999; Solórzano, 1998; Turner et al., 2011). The stories that participants shared confirm the differential treatment influenced by stereotypical assumptions around their race, gender, and other identifying characteristics. Many feel that they were scrutinized unfairly and unnecessarily because of their race and gender, to the point where it affected their mental health and well-being.

In exploring the impact of race and gender discrimination on the stress level of Black women, Perry et al. (2013) found that these factors resulted in poorer health outcomes and impact the overall wellbeing. This is similar to the experiences that participants in this research describe, with many noting that they have more health-related issues post-migration than before they migrated. These encounters reveal troubling practices that affect Black skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean in Canada, which serve to delegitimize them and label them as

inferior to White Canadians. These marginalizing and oppressive encounters have undeniable and significant effects on their health and well-being.

Participants' higher levels of education and skills were overshadowed by stereotypical perceptions of them as raced and gendered bodies which labels them for discrimination. The lower skilled positions that became a prevalent part of their experience cast them as outsiders in White spaces and demark them as unskilled. Other aspects of their interactions point to these stereotypes as well. The perceived differences labeled them as not being on par with the White legitimate Canadian construct of normalcy and the bearers of skills, and the experiences that they share reflect these perceptions. The treatment they describe reinforces the differential treatment they received and highlights how they were assessed, not as highly skilled women who were capable but more like the skills were independent and outside their capabilities. At the same time, exceptions were made when their skills could serve the interest of those in higher positions. Their labour was easily appropriated and opportunities for them to reap the associated benefits of remuneration and promotions were obstructed. Their experiences reveal troubling patterns that were observed in earlier treatment towards non-White immigrants in Canada and especially immigrant women, whose contributions have not been fully acknowledged (Arat-Koç, 2006; Calliste, 1993/94; Chaze & George, 2013; Flynn, 1998; Silvera, 1989).

“De-professionalizing” and “De-skilling” of the Black Immigrant Woman

Similar to the stories highlighted in the previous section, insights reiterate the undervaluing, minimizing and/or selective acknowledgement of participants’ skills which continue in this section. Many participants expressed that the treatment they encountered did not feel like they were being treated as professionals but more as Black immigrant women without skills. This was very different from how they were treated prior to migration and the expectations that they associated with migrating to Canada as skilled immigrants. Many indicate that they feel like they were not seen as viable candidates for much more than low-skilled positions. They also feel like there were deliberate attempts to strip them of their accomplishments, even in cases where they proved that they were more than capable to do the duties and tasks associated with higher skilled and higher-level positions. Similar patterns towards non-White individuals and women in Canada, have been noted in earlier sections of this study.

Participants indicate that they were expecting to find employment commensurate with their education, training, and skills. They feel that their expectations were in alignment with the impression they were given during the application process and upon qualifying to migrate to Canada as skilled immigrants. For example, the excerpt from Agnes-010 provides some insight into what was echoed by other participants:

I didn’t expect it to be like on a platter, but I didn’t expect it to be that difficult. I said okay, I’m educated it should set me apart but my friends that left that did their university degrees in the North they’re in a much better position than I am right now where work is concerned... coming to Canada is like your forced to start all over again. Home I was like one of the youngest manager executives in the company and then coming to Canada that never happened. I expected to just make like a smooth transition that never happened.

Participants share that they had to start from scratch after they migrated, which felt demeaning for many. This was also not the area in which many thought they would be struggling

based on their past experiences, motivation, and proven results. Patsy's-001 comments below sums what she felt it would be like to migrate as a skilled immigrant. The perception was prevalent among other participants in this study as well:

I just think that okay when someone comes under the skilled program you should be able to move into something [employment] on par or close to on par where you're coming from. You should not be seen like oh a new person so to speak coming in, your qualifications are not recognized [...].

In sharing her experience about her understanding of the opportunities that the skilled immigrant program stream of migration should facilitate, Patsy-001 elaborates further about how her skills could have been valued as a skilled immigrant:

[...] if you're coming as a skilled immigrant there should be set opportunities to say okay when you come, they have a certain amount of jobs within that field you can apply for. As an immigrant and based on your level of qualification and what you do in the interview you should be able to get a job easier than what exists right now because what exists now, you're on your own when you get here.

Similar to Patsy's-001 understanding, Sharon-011 notes that she felt she had a leg up coming to Canada as a skilled worker:

... coming as a skilled worker, you're already coming somewhat with a certain confidence that you're qualified, and you are able to I suppose settle quickly or quicker because you're coming with your qualifications...you're coming as federal skilled worker. You are coming as a qualified person, and it is presumed or assumed that I'm gonna make a easy transition so to speak, into the market.

In hindsight, Maggie-014 highlights her belief on the matter, realizing that she could not access the positions she expected after her arriving in Canada:

I think knowing that you know you came here with a certain level of education, knowing that you wouldn't be here if you knew beforehand. You knew that you came with your masters [degree], you knew that you wouldn't get paid based on your master [degree], knowing that maybe I wouldn't have done the masters! Wouldn't have wasted my time. I would have just come earlier!

Many participants feel that the approach below noted by Patsy-001, would provide a fairer chance for them to overcome some of the barriers that they encountered because of their race, gender, and other forms of discrimination. Patsy's-001 comments echo the kind of treatment that most participants feel that they should receive in general as a regular employee:

Well, professionalism is treating me in a manner that a normal employee should be treated. All the rights and the fairness that you display to a normal employee that's all that I'm asking for.

None of the 15 participants interviewed feel that the expectations that the program conveyed for individuals considered as skilled immigrants were met in the workplace. Joy-008 comment sums up what other participants echoed about who the skilled worker program benefits:

...in a professional way I would say the system is working. It's not necessarily working for skilled immigrants...It's working for the people who it's intended to work for. So, it's working for the immigration process itself. It is working for aging Canadians in that it [skilled immigrant program] is bringing in young healthy educated people to work in proper positions. It's working for them. We have to come here [Canada]. We have to figure out. We have to contribute, we're paid less, we're expected to be experts and we're more educated and we're expected to do the heavy lifting really in the workplace...

Judy-004 notes that, *So, you have something [degree and skills] back home you come here there's no guarantee that it will value anything when you get here.* Maize-012 sums up what her post-migration understanding of being skilled immigrant worker meant:

It's almost like each one [word in the term skilled immigrant worker] represents a fence post you know here's skilled as opposed to being unskilled. Immigrant as opposed to being a citizen. Worker as opposed to be—you know what I mean? So, like each of those just kind of, just the term is almost kind of is like a repellent almost from that perspective.

Many participants express that they believe being a Black woman confirms this outcome.

Majority indicate that they witnessed much better treatment and opportunities that only their White peers were able to access without having to struggle to prove themselves.

In describing their struggles, many participants believe that it is important for them to recognize themselves as skilled immigrants, even when they are treated otherwise. However, it was even more important for employers to see them as skilled immigrants and reward them fairly based on their skills and competency. In this regard, Jane-015 notes the following:

I would have considered myself as a skilled worker yes but then that leads you to the question: Does the employer consider you a skilled worker? And I think that is not the case all the time.

Otherwise, the barriers that they face remain intact and the treatment as a Black female immigrant will continue to take primacy over their education and professional experience.

In the face of the ongoing struggles to be seen as professionals, participants shed light on the ups and downs of the process, as well as the overall impact on their mental and emotional well-being. It also shed light on efforts to push through and remain positive, reminding themselves that they are indeed professionals even if Canada chose to not treat them as one.

Bibi's-003 comments below provide insight into the highs and lows that participants constantly negotiate after migration:

Before I migrated, I saw myself as a very positive, goal oriented, intelligent, professional woman, right? Now I see myself as yes, I'm still goal oriented—I do see myself as a professional woman. But there are times when even though you know, you are professional person you tend to forget that and you allow the situation—at least in my case, I may be speaking in third person but you allow the situation to get the better of you and there are times you go into—I don't want to use the word depression because I do not allow myself to sink into the depression but the negativity tend to get to you for a while, until you shake them off and then you are able to move forward or when you get into contact with another professional person then you are able to carry on a professional conversation—another—a conversation—an intelligent person—conversation with that person or in the case of my employer we sit down and we discuss cases and then you spend—you're reminded that yes I am a professional person this is what I was trained to do and it gives you renewed hope.

Bibi-003 speaks about her struggles to hold on to her professional identity, even if this was only in the moments when she is invited to share her opinion:

I do see myself as a professional person. I'm not as positive as I used to be even though I'm working on that, I am working on that. I was never up in your face person, no—but I—now I tend to speak only when my opinion is asked or when I'm spoken to...

Maize-012 on the other hand, finds ironic humour in saying the quiet part out loud about [skilled] immigrants, when she walks in her workplace or in a meeting at work:

It's funny I do make that joke all the time. I'm like "hello immigrant in the room! Let's hear the minorities opinion okay!?" You know, some of that is just to mess with people but as a general rule I just think of myself human sometimes...

The stories in this section were echoed by all fifteen participants, albeit within slightly different contexts and variations in the degree of overall impact. The common point of emphasis was the treatment that participants experienced that made them feel like they were not professionals who are highly educated. The overwhelming evidence that emerged from the data points to the levels of impact that participants described with access to primarily low-skilled and low-paying jobs. Participants felt that they face challenges to hold on to their professions and professional identities. They feel that this struggle was most impactful as it robbed them of a fundamental sense of themselves and their accomplishments that they had worked so hard to achieve prior to migration.

A common theme throughout the data across workplaces indicate that White employees seem to be doing much better than Black and racialized employees. This is even though participants often possessed higher levels of skills and education than their White co-workers. For some participants, it took many years for them to accept that there must be other unspoken dynamics that could explain these one-sided benefits that their White co-workers enjoyed. Many

of these participants indicate that they made these observations over time after they kept pushing themselves harder without similar rewards.

About half of participants indicate that they had participated in some form of mentorship program in their workplaces. Many also sought out other opportunities on their own to ensure that they checked all the requirements to secure a higher skilled position. Yet for many, these positions remained elusive. June-002 points to her post-mentorship opportunity that did not yield any different results to secure a promotion:

So, for the last year I've been talking to my manager, and she said to me that, when she takes over I'm [participant] going to manage the team, I'm going to take over the team. She's like "I've identified leadership skills in you, and I think you're perfect to take over and manage the team." So, we've been having these one-on-one meetings, we've been doing the mentoring, she's had me hosting team meetings, and all of that stuff. And then about three weeks ago, they sent out a new organizational chart, so she got promoted to senior manager, her boss got promoted to director, but then there was no promotion for me.

On a different yet similar note, Joy-008 recalls that she... *signed up for every government program possible. I went to new workers program the first time they have some new Canadian thing...but did not secure the job she expected. As Agnes-010 notes, she was simply... not being employed where you think you should be like skill set to actual job...[and] I wasn't satisfied with the level of work or the level of payment that you were getting you know...*

Agnes-010 further notes that:

...many people that come here as skilled workers are extremely disappointed that you have to meet all these criteria and when you come here, you are selling coffee in Tim Hortons. There's nothing here for you, you know.

Both Joy-008 and Erica-009 perception on being skilled immigrants looking for work sums up what many participants agree on: *I will call it a hard life! It shouldn't have been so difficult...[Joy-008] and, You know you work yourself to death here if you're not careful. You*

constantly on this treadmill you're chasing this everlasting whatever it is to what end? [Erica-009].

Many participants describe being faced with a harsh reality that their race and gender, both exclusively and intersectionally, were factors in how they were being treated as lesser skilled individuals. The high levels of achievements prior to migration and the underutilization of these skills post-migration were constantly mentioned by participants. A few participants indicate that they eventually became more focused on the needs of their families over the kind of work they could secure. They feel that they eventually accepted that their initial expectations that their credentials and skills would be acknowledged in Canada would not come to fruition.

Jackie-007 shares her experience in a job interview where the actions of an interviewer not only undermined her work experience from overseas but created the conditions to strip her of her skills altogether. By reiterating the need for “Canadian experience”, the interviewer consciously or unconsciously reinforced mainstream perceptions about the lack of portability of Jackie’s-007 skills and experience to Canada. In this case as the participant notes, the essential duties that the position entails were not unique to how the job is done in Canada. While she calls out the interviewer for undermining her skills due to lack of “Canadian experience,” the interviewer’s action is informed by the broader mainstream narratives that result in the oppression of skilled immigrant women:

[...] that was my very first experience of recognizing that you know, though you're educated and skilled and IT is an international profession where it's not limited to where you're trained but it's a skill that can be applied anywhere. It's not say like law where law is specific to a particular legal system. It's IT. So, I quickly reminded the interviewer that though I recognize the importance to her that she needed 'Canadian experience' I reminded her that IT is an international skill, and it's not limited or having work experience in Canada does not make it any different than gaining that experience in say England or Jamaica or United States. It's the same.

Jackie-007 believes that a better option could have been for employers to offer probationary employment with closer supervision. A longer-term employment offer would or could be contingent on how well they performed during this probationary period. While this would not be an ideal offer for many, they feel that they would have at least gotten the opportunity to maintain their professional hat and have an opportunity to showcase that they could do the job. Although excerpts from many participants indicate that even when they demonstrated that they could do the job, they were still passed over. Ultimately, the participant realized that the request positioned her to be treated unfairly and took action to push back. This encounter was echoed by all participants who believed that there was more at work than just the lack of acknowledgement of their professional accomplishments. The request for “Canadian experience” masked the underhanded efforts of to discriminate against them and reiterate perceptions of them as Black or racialized immigrant women without skills, rather than professional skilled immigrant women.

In pushing back at not only the level of discrimination that she encounters and to hold on to her professional identity, Bibi-003 also notes the following:

I am a professional person, and this is what I am, this is what I've groomed myself to be all these years, and I will not settle. Even if it means leaving Canada and going elsewhere, I know to myself that what I have got to offer, my contribution would be of value and so in that way, I am more determined now than I was before.

This is similar to what other participants share throughout the study. Participants note that although they were admitted to Canada as professionals who were highly skilled, their experiences in the labour market constantly call their skills into question. Many feel that the different levels of discrimination they encounter also served to redefine them based on their race and gender and not as professionals. Many feel that they were not supported to maintain their professional identities and were instead treated as unskilled immigrant women who were Black.

The upcoming excerpt from Jackie-007 echoes the overall resolve to maintain their perception of self and the value they can add that was noted among participants: *I know that's who I am [Black woman] but I wanted to sell myself as more than what I am socially or what I may be perceive as...*

The frustration that Erica-009 shares is an accurate reflection of what was heard from participants throughout the interviews and data:

Well, one of the things I did find that was frustrating for me when I came and I was looking for a job, was the fact that the common response was always you don't have any Canadian experience and that's just code for you know anything else other than that. Because your experience shouldn't matter where it was [acquired]. You know it's not. I was not a lawyer where the laws are different in the country you know computer science is computer science, so therefore programming is programming. The languages are the same whatever. Where my experience was garnered should not have made a difference but that's just a way to keep people out. It's a very nice, closeted way of screening out immigrants by saying you don't have any Canadian experience! Because you'll never get any Canadian experience if no one will hire you...

Similarly, Agnes-010 shares her frustration that echoed many of what other participants called out:

...my major grievance was just the whole job market. Another thing is them not recognizing your past work experience and your past education or your past qualifications. It was okay to get you into the country but it's not okay to get you a job. I remember going to interviews where you have everything that was needed but them [interviewers] saying oh yea but that was in Guyana so that doesn't count. Like why? Why doesn't it count the same thing you know? It's the exact same like being in a position in management and having to not be in that position anymore. You [interviewer] can look at things from that eye [lens] and another perspective and the Canadian experience that they rant and rave about. What is it really? What is the Canadian experience? You know it was like oh no, you have to have Canadian experience before you can do certain level of work...

Doreen-005 recalls challenging an interviewer when asked about Canadian experience, in the early stages of looking for work in Canada:

I immediately challenged the interviewer which I guess I didn't get that job. But you know that did not work to my favour. I mean worked to my favour not getting the job [participant later secured a different job working from home which she preferred].

Overall, participants feel that their race and gender overshadow and devalue their skills, experience, and credentials and was directly connected to how they were treated in the Canadian labour market. The presumption that they were more suitable for low-wage and low-skill jobs, erased the skills and experience they believed they would be able to utilize post-migration. However, when it suited the needs of the employer, they would be tapped to utilize these same skills in ways that benefitted their White peers and the organization. Among the 12 participants who resided in Canada between 10 – 20 years, more than 9 of them note that they were never able to regain their pre-migration status and footing in the Canadian job market. Instead, they forged a different path to reconcile with their present situation and achieve what they could considering the uphill battle they continue to face. All participants in this study describe negative encounters that robbed them of their professional identities. They feel that these encounters were all connected primarily to their race and gender.

The experiences that participants describe also connect to the historical legacy of racism and gender that have plagued Canadian societies and shape negative encounters for Black and racialized women. Their experiences provide evidence of the ongoing patterns of discrimination that Black and racialized immigrants have experienced in Canada historically. Based the insidious and underhanded ways in which racism and gender operates, the stories that participants share provide evidence of practices that treat them as Black and racialized immigrant women, rather than acknowledging their skills as professionals.

Roadblocks and Barriers to Employment

Evidence that race and gender play significant roles in the roadblocks and barriers to employment that participants encounter, continue to dominate the stories that they share both to access employment and while they are employed. This, combined with other factors of discrimination such as their status as skilled immigrant women and the non-recognition of their pre-migration skills and education, became part of their everyday experiences and encounters. The encounters that many described also include being faced with skepticism that they actually possessed the level of skills on their resumés and at the same time ignoring the value because they were acquired outside of Canada. Participants indicate that they were met with different situations when looking for work and/or in their workplaces. All participants indicate that they believe one or more of the barriers to employment they faced, was directly connected to their status as Black or racialized skilled immigrant women.

Jane's-015 encounter below, shows the length to which the discrimination extended that she faced. In her case she worked for the same company in an overseas branch pre-migration for 7 years in a management level position. After she migrated to Canada, she was offered a much lower-level position in the Canadian branch of the same company. She describes that even though the core aspects of the work that she did overseas would not have changed, she was not considered for a comparable position in Canada. She notes that she was not able to access the higher-level position that she worked in before even after being called upon to help out in similar positions:

I actually had, I had to go back to almost an entry level programming type position even though I was coming into a company where they knew me and knew what I was capable of. I still had to take a step back. For me you know that was difficult that was like a transition that was difficult for me because you know what I mean obviously they acknowledge that they think that you're a good worker but at the same time you know what I mean there is a certain amount of taken

advantage of you. Not giving you necessarily what you are worth and honestly I think that maybe I may have been better off than a lot of people [other immigrants] but at the same time I wasn't exempt from some of the things I saw happen to others where basically you're even though you came here with an education that was considered viable or somewhat equivalent it's still isn't actually equal, treated equally right?

Jane-015 notes that she was not given a clear explanation about why she was offered a lower position instead of the higher level to which she applied. This she notes is the same role that she held in the overseas branch of the company. Despite being disappointed, the participant indicates that she was happy to have a job in the first place and was thankful even if it was a lower-level position. Later in the interview for this study, the participant noted that she realized that all the managers in this Canadian branch were White. Had she been successful for the position that she applied for, she would have been the only Black woman in a managerial position. She feels that her skin colour was the only factor that she could pinpoint as the reason for her not being offered a comparable position to her prior role from overseas.

Jane-015 notes that she became more convinced about her suspicion as even though she was asked for help by her current managers to solve more technical issues that required knowledge and experience above her current role. Yet, she was not considered for a promotion back to a management level position. This was still the case after she had been in the Canadian branch of the company for a reasonable amount of time. This scenario of securing employment in both the overseas and Canadian branch of the same company was unique to this participant in the current study. However, the general thread of the roadblocks to employment, and in this case, higher positions that her race and gender create were found to be active in the encounter she describes.

Joy-008 shares her experience taking on multiple jobs just to get by. She notes that, *as a skilled woman, I find that you just have to fight harder*. She gave some insight of having to take legal action against an employer for an inaccurate performance review:

So and I carried them to court and they did settle so I don't know what experience that would be really but for me it was the whole fighting to defend the fact that I was wronged the whole time...it was some performance review that I thought was too negative and I decide to respond to it and it never went well... The issue with my responding is I think they thought it was confrontational. In the years that passed, I realize that probably to have kept that job, I would have just had to say, oh okay, I accept the feedback and thing...

While Joy-008 did not elaborate on the full details of the issue, she notes that as a Black woman who is highly skilled, she will not be silenced. Joy-008 also points to...*a unique immigrant experience*, that she encountered while working with another employer. She describes getting laid off from a company, and later when the company started re-hiring the same employees, she was asked *...to prove now what else I have to give them*. She notes that, *...I don't think that's the case when a White person leaves and come back, they automatically assumed that they have something else to offer just by being away...*She draws reference to at least one example that she noted while working for the company, albeit very different circumstances:

...like there quite prepared to accept that a Canadian woman going into mat [maternity] leave, have, putting her out of the workforce for some time, they are prepared to accept her back when she does come back [without any training or requirement to prove her skills] but for me somehow my skills got diminished somehow my brain stop work...

While the circumstances warrant very different approach, the participant felt that she was being singled out and faced unnecessary barriers to re-employment as a result. She was particularly disturbed as she felt that the employer knew the quality of her work and was still trying to create unnecessary roadblocks and barriers for her to secure employment.

Participants indicate that they expect some struggles and fully expected to prove themselves to be qualified and competent for employment commensurate with their skills. However, they were not prepared for the outright lack of acknowledgement of their credentials and their work experience by employers. These barriers create roadblocks and unequal access to the certain positions in the workforce in many cases. Participants feel that the discrimination they faced was based on their identities as Black or racialized skilled immigrant women. The following extended quote from Simone-006 provides deeper insight into nuances of this issue. Even though the participant tried to look past the impact of her race, she still recognized its effects it had in creating roadblocks in her employment journey:

Let me tell you, you can't take the race out of it for sure it's there but maybe the way I choose to look at it and again this is all perception, maybe the way I choose to look at it and how I, because I knew there were going to be issues don't get me wrong, I was expecting issues but I always said to myself and I said to my friends who I was talking to at the time who most of them had only been in Canada for a few years and so had very recent experiences as well, I said to them I am not gonna go in to a job interview or into an interaction with you know a White Canadian, with the idea that I'm expecting them to treat me a certain way. I'm just gonna take it as it is and I'm gonna see the good in it and I'm not gonna look for the negative. There could be negative but I'm not going to seek it out and I think if you don't project that idea that you're expecting to be treated a certain way, then maybe it won't happen. So that was my approach so my very first job and I know the colour, still came into it even though I don't think it hindered me, is that they were very like very taken with me. They were very impressed you know so I, and honestly the job was a very, it was a stupid job, it was like it was a low-level job for what I could do but I recognized that I'd have to start over and that was one of the things that people always complained about as new immigrant, is starting over.

The following excerpt from Jackie-007, reiterates many of the challenges that participants face in the labour market which are believed to be directly connected to their race and gender:

As a skilled immigrant woman, I'm faced with the challenge of being a woman and being Black. As such it's never about potential or hard work only but every day is about the perception you create and how you sell and market yourself. It's always a sales pitch for you and thinking about your every move.

The experiences that participants share demonstrates how their employment conditions cultivate the devaluing and undervaluing of their work experience and skills that participants possessed. They did not suddenly loose these skills after they migrated. The fact that many were asked to help with tasks for higher level positions, is indication that they still possessed their skills and capabilities to do the job at a higher level. Rather, it is ongoing practices to deny the value of their skills within the Canadian labour market, which devalue or undervalue their skills.

The undervaluing and devaluing of their skills and experience in this case, reaffirms racialized forms of oppression through the socially constructed identities within society (Branker, 2017; Lawrence & Hylton, 2022). That this is steeped in Canadian institutions such as the labour market is indicative of the longstanding patterns of discrimination directed towards Black immigrant women especially. The roadblocks that participants encounter can be linked to their race and gender as part of a larger systemic issue, and this determines the course of their experience as especially Black skilled immigrant women in Canada.

Exclusion from Opportunities for Advancement

Wilson et al. (2017) among other scholars note the lesser returns for especially racialized immigrants on their education, skills, and experience, which is unlike the trends in higher returns on the credentials and skills typically seen for their Canadian counterparts. It is not surprising that participants in this study shared encounters where their race and gender hampered their access to certain opportunities. Their stories show that they were excluded from some opportunities altogether. For example, June-002 reflects on her experience of being passed over for a lateral position in her company. When she eventually spoke with her manager to try and understand why she was passed over and was not selected for the position, she did not feel like the explanation was plausible:

So, it makes me wonder. Even recently I went for a position that was a lateral move, it was a learning consultant position, and I ticked every single box on that list and the young lady who got the job, she actually does help with the class that I had. I did the training program, and she actually does the admin stuff so she would be printing certificates and getting their [participants in the training program] learning plans all ready and stuff. And she got the job over me, and the reason I was told was that she was a better fit for the team, and I don't know what that means.

Embedded within the response, however, is the coded response for exclusion with the successful candidate being the "...better fit for the team..." over June-002 who possessed more skills. June-002 acknowledges later in the interview that she would have been the only Black female in the new group had she secured the position. This is similar to previous stories that participants share about managerial positions. Other experiences in the same vein were noted among participants as well. The common thread in these experiences reported was that usually someone who is White secures the promotion over study participants.

Jackie-007 described a similar encounter. She, however, appears to be more vocal in establishing her expectations and decisive actions she plans to take if she was passed over for certain opportunities:

So, I moved from my original boss that hired me. You know we worked well together. I've always been professional, but I expressed to him my desire and my desire is to move up, to do well. I need to advance in the organization, and I need to move on. If you're [original boss] going to be promoting me internally that's fine, I'll stay with you but if you're not I'm leaving so it was pretty clear. Again under my other boss there was another promotion in that same department [that was given to someone else over participant] so I moved to the other department and moved to another level up; promotion came up he gave it to someone else that was less qualified and expected me to teach that person because I happened to be off on mat leave and when I came back from mat leave the position came up and then he says sorry you're not getting the position. I'm like okay but he wants me to be there to do the highly technical work and to teach other people to do the technical work. I was like it ain't gonna be happening I'm leaving. So, a position came up and I left. I got hired into the audit department because again I'm one of those persons that's uniquely trained and skilled because I can work in IT, I can work in finances, I can work in audit, I can work at multiple and different areas so another position came up in internal audit and so I left..."

Jackie-007 was not only highly skilled and aware of the contributions she could make at a higher level, but she was transparent about the dynamics she saw at play. She also looked for opportunities based on her range of skills and qualifications in different departments and did lateral moves to different departments until she was able to secure higher level positions. That this participant had to take these steps is an indication of how deeply rooted and prevalent these issues of exclusion and discrimination are towards certain groups of immigrants.

Jackie's-007 encounter makes it obvious that she had to go to great lengths to access certain positions in these companies and she was excluded in creative ways from many of these positions, even before she had a chance. While her response to this treatment and the action and outcome she describes was not common across the data. Jackie-007 was able to shed even more light into discriminatory patterns of behaviours that robbed her of the access to certain opportunities. Race and gender are strong factors in the efforts to exclude participants from securing employment commiserate with their skills and experience.

On the other hand, Joy-008 indicates that she became quite frustrated waiting for her hard work to be recognized. When she realized that she was being overlooked for promotions despite her above average performance, she began to approach her supervisors to initiate conversations about how she could progress in the company. As noted below, she was not afraid to justify why her race, and gender should not be a factor:

I know I'm Black and I know I'm a woman so I'm faced with these, and I can have very hard conversations with anyone about my career and where I wanna go, so I have very hard conversations that okay I cannot change the fact that I am Black. I cannot change the fact that I am a woman, but I want this job. Tell me how I am gonna get there. What can I do to overcome that? And it's getting to that level of confidence and knowing you are going after that and you keep you know keep pushing, pushing forward and for some of those things.

As noted in earlier sections, many of the experiences stripped participants of their professional identity, as they were viewed simply as Black and racialized immigrant women who did not and could not possibly possess the levels of education and skills they indeed possessed. Again, their potential for growth and future with these organizations seems transient and temporary. As a result, their contributions are deemed invisible in their workplaces and as non-White individuals they are not seen as deserving of higher-level positions.

June-002 describes the mental note she made to herself after coming to the realization that she was being deliberately held back in her workplace:

I said the next time I speak with my manager I'm going to ask her if I'm really supposed to think that if this young lady (let's say Jane), am I really supposed to think that if I had Jane's qualifications and Jane had mine, I'd get the job over her? It doesn't make sense, you know. So, it makes me start questioning that kind of stuff like...I think underlying those it's not overt that those things happen, but covert it's there [...].

June-002 described having a full circle moment when she was asked to provide training to an employee that was recently hired for a position she also applied for and was not successful. In the process, she learned that not only was “Jane” (the new hire) much less qualified for the job, but she also did not have the level of experience that June-002 possessed. And yet, “Jane” was promoted to the higher-level position where she would be supervising the participant training her to do the job. June-002 was still expected to support “Jane’s” training and development in the position.

In reflecting upon her experience as a skilled immigrant, June-002 spoke about the value that she placed on hard work because that was how she was raised. Prior to migrating to Canada, she notes that she was accustomed to reaping the rewards of her hard work through the upward trajectory in her employment journey. However, post-migration, her hard work did not prove rewarding, and even though she was working much harder she was having very different results.

The excerpt below from June-002 echoes a common thread among participants that was noted in earlier sections of this chapter. It also gives insight into their disappointments when their race and gender became primary factors that hampered their employment prospects. June-002 questions the impact based on the different results:

I was brought up as a Jamaican who knows if you work hard, believe in yourself, you can be anything you want to be and when you come into this society [Canada] you are being told sorry you cannot be anything you wanna be there's a glass ceiling here set because you're Black and you're female you can't be anything you wanna be. You're gonna say how?

Despite June's-002 work ethics, the “glass ceiling” effect that she describes as a result of her race and gender excluded her from viable employment opportunities. Other participants echo similar frustrations and raise questions about their higher performances than their White co-workers at work, yet their White peers seem to be getting ahead much faster. Many participants feel that while their counterparts were putting in much less work and effort, they were receiving more rewards and acknowledgement. The use of both CRT and ARFT as analytical lenses put many of these reported encounters into perspective by way of the hierarchy of racial construct that positions race as a permanent fixture in society to shape the kinds of experience that participants described (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Lawrence & Hylton, 2022). Additionally, when race and gender are operationalized within systems that are grounded in colonization and patriarchy, the encounters that participants describe especially as Black women, are indicative of the kinds of experience that results (Dua & Robertson, 1999; Murad, 2013).

Many participants express their disappointments with these practices that they encountered, especially when they received no clear explanations about these decisions. Many point to the upward mobility in employment that they experienced pre-migration. They note that it was because of these upward trajectories that they felt it was time to seek out similar

opportunities in Canada. To be faced with such open discrimination that rendered them as not worthy of the consideration for promotions was hard on participants. Many reiterate that they came to Canada to seek out greater opportunities and continue building on their pre-migration successes, but they were faced with more disappointment. In the face of these disappointments, and lack of opportunities in employment for advancement, participants indicate that they were still working to prove themselves in Canada until they break through many of these barriers. The understanding that race and gender provide however, means that these systems that continue to hold the structures of oppression in place cannot be left intact.

Underrepresentation in Positions and Leadership

Several participants describe their observations about the lack of representation of minorities in mid and upper-level management in their workplaces. As previously noted, participants point out that their White counterparts seemed to get promoted much easier while participants continued to struggle. Many describe their frustrations, as they feel that they were working much harder and doing much better-quality work than many of those who were getting promoted. Yet, they were not getting the same opportunities.

The excerpt below from June-002 reiterates the lack of representation in certain positions that many participants observed. The participant also recognizes that other factors must be at play to influence the absence of minorities in mid-high level management positions in her organization:

I'm thinking they're White, or any European background. I think when I look at the company, there are not a lot of minorities, even in mid-level management, and definitely not in upper level, and I refuse to believe it's not because we don't want those positions or not because we're not worthy of them, or we don't work for them; I don't know what it is. So, I recently said to myself that I'm not going to...I don't want to get into that mindset, that it's because of the colour of my skin,

because I know that's not going to help. So, I'm looking at okay, what do I do differently? So, I know a lot of people will say maybe you need to network or, you know, something like that.

The participant explains her decision to not take on a system that she did not understand, as doing so would use up precious energy and possibly cause her to lose her focus of trying to get ahead. This approach was echoed by all participants who described that their family obligations were more important for them to remain focused on as they struggled to deal with levels of discrimination they encounter.

Participants, who were married at the time of the interview, describe efforts to ensure that their work life did not affect their home life. Many feel that their family had sacrificed enough already in supporting their move to a new country. They feel that staying focused was the only option moving forward. When viewed through an intersectionality lens, the intensity of the impact with the different facets of their identities create are brought to the fore based on participants' experiences.

Similar to previous excerpts, June-002 again echoes that it seems that her White co-workers secure promotions over her despite the fact that participant's qualifications and experience were higher:

*Yes, the qualifications are higher, the work experience is higher... For you. Over these individuals who get promoted... Interviewer: Any common theme?
Participant's response: White.*

June-002 also raises questions about the lack of opportunity for promotion in her company for herself and others like her, yet others with less experience and capability to do their job, seemed to be securing those promotions. The participant notes that individuals who are non-White did not have the same opportunities as individuals who were White. Even though June-002 received

acknowledgement for her work, she feels that she was not able to access higher paying that would utilize her skills:

Well because people I work with when you work with people you start realizing what they're capable of and you start realizing what you're capable of, and maybe think you're capable of more than other people. I've been awarded 'Distinguished' like two three times in a row on my team, and it makes me feel like if I were White, would I be further?

Her (June's-002) observations about the lack of representation of Black individuals in her workplace and elsewhere continued in the excerpt below:

Like even like at work, I'm the only Black person on the team. In a building sometimes, it's like forty or fifty employees and I'm the only one there who looks like me, so I feel like that kind of contributes. Like one time I went, I went downtown. I went out for drinks and stuff with two of my friends and they were White. And I'm looking at all of them and it's all White people and I looked around and saw a Black guy and it was actually somebody that I knew and I was like "Oh hey!" So, it's, it's stuff like that.

On the other hand, Jackie-007 manages to work her way into a management position after many trips back to school in Canada and obtaining degrees in different fields. While Jackie's-007 experience is not identical to June's-002, her observations echo June's observations about the lack of representation: *Right now, I'm the only black person in management right and that's after 15 years.*

Based on accounts from participants generally, the lack of representation of Black and racialized individuals in higher level positions was not a surprise. The outcomes that participants describe reflect the barriers and lack of opportunities to access these positions in the first place. The underrepresentation of Black individuals and other minorities in certain sectors is reflective of the barriers that discrimination creates to reduce their access to these positions (Motapanyane & Shankar, 2022; Snaggs-Wilson, 2021; Wijesingha, 2021). These problematic patterns of

experience that participants share point to ingrained practices of exclusion of non-Whites bodies and perceptions of inferiority and lack of skills (Irizarry & Raible, 2014; Fleras, 2023; Guo, 2009). Combined with the reduced access to both opportunities and resources that racism and sexism foster historically and culturally, these perceptions have been normalized in institutions across society (Allahar, 2010; Branker, 2017; James, 2007). The lack of representation in positions of leadership reflects how participants are perceived and positioned in both the labour market and Canadian society more broadly.

Furthermore, the lack of representation reinforces inequitable practices that add to the struggles that participants encounter and diminish their viability as employees. The legacy of colonization that sustains these practices, justify their exclusion as skilled immigrants because of their race and gender (Guo, 2009; Chatterjee, 2016). They deny participants the opportunities to function at the levels at which they are capable in the labour market and disregard their worth as Black women and individuals who are highly skilled. The stories that participants described are testament to White privilege and its dynamics of power that create inequities for non-Whites.

A small number of participants credit more positive experiences to anti-discriminatory policies in their workplaces and supportive managers. Some of these participants indicate that they feel optimistic about accessing future opportunities for promotion. Participants note that they remain optimistic because at least there was some measure of accountability in the organization.

On the other hand, Patsy-001 speaks about the precariousness of moving into higher-level positions, as well as the lack of job security and stability many of these positions entail. For individual such as Black skilled immigrant women who are already dealing with barriers finding employment, the precarity may also be to even seeking these promotions:

It creates that uncertainty and a lot of insecurity in you, and sometimes you don't even want, you don't even strive to achieve a lot like in terms of promotion because I find that a lot of times the higher you go it's the easier you are to go out [let go] because people well I don't know if it has to do with my company but when a lot of people move to the top from the bottom they just get let go. People will come in this month and three months down the road they get let you go. People are there for 25 years, 30 years!

As this participant notes, individuals who have been with the company for up to 30 years have been let go after they were promoted to a management position. While this particular example was shared by only one participant, others express that if given the option, they would prefer positions that offered some amount of job security. Many feel that it would take too much out of them to overcome the many barriers to secure a position, only to lose their jobs shortly thereafter. Overall, many participants believe that their race, gender, and immigrant status as skilled immigrants created barriers to securing promotions. Combined with the precarity noted by a small number of participants, this points to added barriers. This could also be a factor in the lack of representation observed in leadership positions in their organization.

The complexity and intersectional impact of race and gender that the participants describe provide deeper insight into outcomes when the historical patterns of oppression towards Black immigrant women are engaged (Kumsa et al., 2014; Flynn, 2011; Wane, 2013). Participants' experience can be linked to oppressive patterns and practices in the workplace that reinforce prevalent patterns that their skills alone are not enough as a Black woman. Instead, their race and gender are factors which diminish their skills, the opportunities they can access, and negatively impact their overall experience. From what participants share, many of these practices may have accounted for the lack of representation of Black individuals in higher level positions and leadership in many of these organizations.

Marginalizing Patterns of Experience

The marginalizing patterns of experience that participants describe throughout this study point to the impact of race, gender, and other forms of discrimination such as their immigrant status as female skilled immigrants and their professional identities as immigrants. Their stories confirm ongoing patterns of marginalization towards Black immigrant women from the Caribbean in Canada. In this case, the associated practices limited their access to quality employment opportunities, stifled their aspirations and reduced their income capacity. In one case, Judy-004 shared that she actually secured a short term position in leadership, her unsettling interaction with member of her team, raised questions about the typical kinds of experience that underscored the encounter:

I remember one year I decided to work at a polling station. I just heard about it [the opportunity] and decided, hey, it's nice quick money to work ... When I went to register for it and they called me and I went in, they say okay I'm gonna (I don't remember what they called us at the time), but you are basically the person in charge like the manager in charge of your team that's working with you that night. The people that am working with, I didn't meet them until the very day of the election. So, when I went there [polling station], I was working with only Caucasians. So, here I am the person in charge and I'm at the polling station so when people come in [employees?], I'm the one that give the direction. I'm the one that manages, and one particular man came in and he says oh, they're making you do all the talking? And I knew exactly what he was talking about, and I say yea because I'm the one who's in charge right here, you know. So, things like those you know for sure that it's out there it happens, and it will come quite subtly and again it's probably just my perception or what I'm thinking but I'm almost sure I hit the nail on the head. It was you know, but again he could probably challenge me to say no that's not what he meant but I mean gut feeling now you know for sure.

Despite their pre-migration employment experience which positioned them on an upward trajectory to succeed as highly skilled professionals, they faced questions (subtle and otherwise) about their capabilities and were denied opportunities to secure employment in many cases and for growth in employment in others. Their post-migration realities overall show downward trajectories due to barriers that undervalued and undermined their accomplishments and reduced

their access to comparable jobs and opportunities post-migration. The underutilization of their education, skills and experience as Black and racialized skilled immigrant women, negatively impacted their social status, employment prospects, and excluded them from social and economic prosperity (Amoaka et al., 2023; Ku et al., 2018; Bhuyan et al., 2017).

The following excerpt from Bibi-003 for example, shares her struggles to re-enter the (licensed) profession in which she was trained. This impacted her ability to both re-enter her profession as well as to re-establish herself in Canada. She feels that the country in which her credentials were obtained was a key factor in the barriers that she faced to re-enter her profession in Canada:

When you apply for your professional license [in Canada] I don't think they ask your race. My last name is [participant last name]. You cannot tell that I'm Black by my name, okay? I was trained in Cuba."

The dentistry profession that the participant was trying to re-enter is a predominantly male-dominated profession, which may have had even more bearing on the challenges that she faced as well. The strides that were made in this profession before migration was lost after migration and this has longer term gender implications. This is also significant since participants migrated from a so-called developing country to a developed country. The participant describes having to spend huge sums of money in Canada on re-certification and was still not able to regain entry in her profession at the time of data collection.

She describes meeting and exceeding all the Canadian re-testing requirements and finishing in the top one percent of other immigrants who were trying to re-enter the same profession. Yet, she was not able to re-enter her profession. Instead, the participant describes that she settled for a much lower-level assistantship position in the same field that did not warrant re-certification. At the time of the interview, the participant was enrolled in a master's program in

dentistry in the U.K. The participant was hoping to at least be able to teach in the field after completing this degree.

The diminished roles and devaluing of participants' skills and experience that forced them into lower positions and low-wage jobs are prevalent throughout the data. Of the fifteen participants in this study who migrated as skilled immigrants, less than ten participants were in positions that were comparable to their pre-migration duties and level. For those who were in seemingly comparable positions (10), at least six of these participants indicate that they were not receiving comparable remuneration to their pre-migration income. A small percentage who had seemingly higher job titles in Canada than they had before they migrated, indicate that this was still not comparable to their pre-migration positions. This was because the Canadian job description and remuneration was closer to a frontline position, unlike their pre-migration positions.

As noted earlier in this chapter, some participants were open to finding different positions in the company or changing companies altogether in trying to move ahead. At least one participant describes being intentional in making lateral moves in the company with the aim to secure higher level positions. While two participants were able to secure higher wages in a new company, they indicate that the remuneration was still not on par with their qualifications, and in one case neither were the duties assigned:

So again, I was offered more than what I was being paid at the last company, but I knew that I was not being paid what others are worth and this is a company that I knew. I had a boss who made some comments about his [negative] view of immigrants...Jackie-007

So she basically hired me for half of what I would have earned if I had come in off the street...Simone-006

This is yet another reminder that their skills as Black and racialized immigrant women in Canada is not valued the same as Canadians and was considered below market value. Elabor-Idemudia (1999) calls attention to Canada's longstanding racist and gendered construction of particularly Black immigrant women that frames them as being "naturally" suitable for low-level and low wage jobs in the labour market. The author further highlights the struggles that highly educated Black women from the Caribbean in Canada experience to achieve occupational status and to gain comparable earnings to similarly qualified immigrants from Europe, as well as many Canadians.

Stories that point to the devaluing of participants' skills and the exploitation of their labour were common themes across their experiences. To reiterate, the upcoming excerpt from Jackie-007 echoes the devaluing of skills and exploiting of labour that other study participants mentioned:

There are people less capable but in higher positions than I am and I have to be training and developing them. If a position were to come up in those levels, I would not even be considered for those positions...

While the nuances of each encounter had some degree of variation, the prevalent practice within the Canadian labour market provided evidence of these encounters. Participants spoke of the heavy toll that these experiences took on their well-being. Many indicate that their experience made them realize that their skills alone did not negate the opportunities that they could access. This was unlike their pre-migration encounters, and expectations. Many did not anticipate this outcome when they made the decision to migrate to Canada for better opportunities. Bibi-003 sums up the impact of navigating the employment reality as a Black skilled immigrant woman after migrating to Canada, which echoes similar stories from other research participants:

It affects your self-confidence, it makes you question yourself, have I done the right thing? And it makes you want to pack your bags and go back where you came from.

Many participants indicate that they feel like the idea of migrating as a skilled immigrant was misleading. They could not have anticipated the role those other dynamics such as their race, gender, status as skilled immigrants and their immigrant professional identities would have on their post-migration experience. The reality for participants points to the prevalence of racism and sexism and how they function to shape their current experiences (Abrams & Moio, 2009; Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Dua & Robertson, 1999). These factors have been historically constructed as part of Canada's national identity which has proven to be intertwined with past patterns and practices (Mensah, 2010; Mullings, 1997; Razack & Jeffery, 2002; Razack, 1999, 2002). These impacts extend well beyond the Canadian labour market. Based on the stories that participants shared, the immigration system that determined participants eligibility, feeds into and helps to sustain the negative impacts that the historical constructions of race and gender in Canada cultivates. The marginalizing patterns of experience that participants described prevented them from achieving their full potential and lays out evidence of the insidious workings of race and gender and other forms of discrimination that shape the course of their experiences.

Many participants were still hoping to achieve some level of the kind of opportunities in employment that they anticipated when they migrated. Many were able to access educational opportunities, not necessarily for the reasons they migrated but more as a means to finding more substantial employment opportunities. Overall, the majority of participants indicate that their feelings of safety had increased, and their quality of life had also increased. Similarly, all participants note that they experienced significant economic losses due to the challenges encountered around employment.

Amidst the struggles that participants share, their optimism, resolve and strength were evident in their stories as well. Participants express their determination to overcome the post-migration odds and maintain their focus. Bibi-003 spoke about finding motivation to continue despite the marginalizing patterns of experience that she encountered:

What gave me this renewed—burst of energy to go forward? The realization that the life that I have now is not the life that I want or have ever wanted for myself and I have a lot more to contribute to society and when I say society I'm not talking about—I'm just talking society on the whole not just the Canadian society, Guyana—Guyanese society wherever I have a contribution to make and I, I'm going to make my contribution I'm determined to make my contribution [...].

Similarly, Joy-008 comments on her determination to fight harder, which was a common acknowledgement among participants:

... I see myself as a fighter and a survivor, a woman and a Jamaican, which in itself have meaning, that means they must try harder, that means you must win, that means you must progress, that means life must get better all of those things. That means things need to change for the better.

On the other hand, Patsy-001, spoke about the importance to maintain pre-migration networks for future uncertainties:

Well, I think it is important to kind of maintain that network and connection because there are a lot of uncertainties you don't know what may happen tomorrow. So you always try to keep in touch with people cause in the event that you should say find yourself out of a job this might be one of the easiest ways to make contact and you know, get something else you know because they are in different sectors and a broad cross sections. So you keep in touch with people for the whole networking purpose as well as just for socialization you know, and to retain who you are.

Bibi-003 speaks about maintaining contact with her network of former colleagues and friends in the same profession, to maintain some of her skills as she works to regain entry in her profession post-migration. This was 10 years after she migrated:

I do have quite a few friends who are dentists some of them are specialist some of them are general practitioners like myself and I do stay in contact with them. I do have discussions with them, we do consult on different matters, they do quote my opinion on

things, and I do give them my opinion but like I said I have to get my license to practice (in Canada) and that's what I'm working on right now.

In reflecting on her experience, Joy-008 acknowledges the undeniably struggles, barriers and hurdles that she encountered after migrating through an immigration program that promises the opposite experience of what she encountered to find employment. She acknowledges that the solution to the issues is complex but feel that if immigrants become a political force, the outcomes may be different in the future:

... I don't believe the solution is simple, I think it lies in the politics of the system, so it lies in the fact that immigrants need to become a political force to realize that the strategic direction of our country lies in its politics. And until we become citizens and participate in elections, none of what is happening [professed responses from government] is important right now...

Participants in this study show bravery in the face of the discrimination that they face. The stories that they shared reveal commonality in the persistence patterns of marginalization that resulted. The common themes of discrimination present in their experiences directly connect to established patterns of racism and sexism in Canada. Their experiences call attention to ways in which power operate to protect and reward those in the Canadian labour market who are privileged. Their experiences highlight very different opportunities and positions for many of their White peers compared to opportunities and positions for participants who identify as Black for example. The unfair patterns of treatment that they described showed how economic inequity continues to be sustained with the Canadian labour market. It also points to conditions and practices within the Canadian immigration, which sustains and cultivates platforms for inequity and injustice to thrive. Their experiences also show continuation on which race and gender operate and the longstanding patterns of discrimination and oppression that they create for especially Black skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean in the Canadian labour market.

Summary

The Highlight of Stories II section provides examples of the manifestations of discrimination in the encounters that participants shared. The highlights of participants' stories provide insights into their growing awareness of the impact of racism and sexism on their post-migration employment prospects. The impact includes changes in how participants came to recognize the effects of different aspects of their identities and the connections to stereotypes based on their race and gender that shape the course of their experiences. The encounters that they described in the Canadian labour market show how the treatment they received shifted the focus from their skills to their race and gender. Again, this pattern of treatment negated the negative treatment they endured. This section also captures roadblocks and barriers to and within employment, based on participants' descriptions of their post-migration labour market encounters.

Many of the impacts that participants describe include challenges they encountered finding work that was comparable to their skills and experience. They often settle for low-wage and low-skilled employment. They were often excluded from positions commensurate with their skills and experience. This section captures participants' stories of being passed over for promotions and in some cases being asked by their employers to provide support and sometimes training to the person who was hired over the participant. Participants also raise awareness about the lack of representation of Black and other minorities in higher level positions and in management positions in many of the organizations where they worked. The overall marginalizing patterns of experience that participants describe that were captured in this section, illuminate the systemic patterns of discrimination that have been normalized within the immigration discourse, and are ingrained within the Canadian labour market practices.

The thematic analysis in Chapter 5 is arranged in themes that are infused with direct excerpts from participants about their lived experiences. The engagement of these themes by way of analysis, provides evidence of the current impact of race and gender on participants' experience and shed light on the marginalization and oppression they experience as Black skilled immigrant women in Canada. The themes were guided by the research question, with keen attention given to their emphasis within the theoretical framework used in this study. Themes highlighted in this chapter raises questions about the system of meritocracy within the FSWP that prioritizes skilled immigrants for their potential to contribute to the Canadian economy faster. Yet, participants' experiences outlined in this chapter shows that their race, gender and other factors such as their immigration status as skilled women and their identities as immigrant professionals, dictate otherwise.

The findings in this chapter point to efforts within the Canadian labour market that limited, restricted or derailed their contributions altogether, as evidenced by their lived experiences. Elements of their encounters shared in this chapter reveal practices that perpetuate patriarchy and underscores White privilege. It also reveals practices that align with stratification of inequitable and ingrained patterns of discrimination towards them as Black women in Canada. The chapter coalesces insights from participants' individual and collective stories and raises their voices about their experiences thereby fostering their empowerment.

Chapter 6: Discussion and Implications

Introduction

The final chapter of this dissertation discusses critical insights gathered from the stories that participants shared. It engenders insights from the review of literature section in Chapter 3 in the discussion on current accounts about skilled migration. The discussion in this chapter reiterates participants' experience as evidence to connect to how race and gender operate in Canada and in the Canadian labour market, especially for Black skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean. It fleshes out insights from participants' accounts that point to inherently racist and sexist patterns of treatment. The discussion positions current insights alongside historical understandings of race and gender in Canada, in its attempt to answer the research question.

The discussion is laid out based on three core sections that align with the theoretical frameworks of Critical Race Theory and Anti-Racist Feminist Thought discussed in Chapter 2. These include patterns of oppression in current stories that provide context to make connections between current and historical patterns of race and gender in Canada. The discussion highlights counternarratives from current stories to question dominant narratives on skilled migration. The final core section highlights participants' voices through their collective stories for their empowerment as skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean in Canada. This attention to voice allows elements of resistance, optimism and strength to be revealed in the participants' stories. Overall, the discussion in this final section affirms the experiences of skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean in the Canadian labour market, especially those who identify as Black. It validates their experiences as viable knowledge.

The chapter discusses the significance and implications of the study which includes its contributions to social work discipline, social work theory, practice and policy. A reflection on

the study's strengths, weaknesses and directions for future research is provided. The chapter concludes with a summary of key aspects from the discussion based on the research question that guides this study.

Patterns of Oppression and Historical Déjà Vu

The participants' stories show that they faced very different realities than what they envisioned when they made the decision to migrate to Canada. Based on the respective dates that participants migrated to Canada (between 1997 and 2014), their experiences ranged from 2 years to 19 years in Canada. Despite the range of years in Canada for each participant, the evidence points to race and gender as commonly shared factors that shaped their experiences. Their stories reveal that their journeys were fraught with issues of discrimination from the onset, even in the application process to qualify as skilled immigrants. This continued through their post-migration experiences.

The early stages of the application process to qualify as skilled immigrants, bear strong resemblance to troubling patterns of racist and gendered discrimination noted in earlier immigration policies (Galabuzi, 2006; Preston & Giles, 2004; James, 1994; Teelucksingh & Galabuzi, 2007; Anisef et al., 2003; Christofides & Swidnisky, 1994). Once again, the yardstick of measurement bears resemblance to prior immigration policies that favour Eurocentric approaches. The assessment of participants' English Language skills is based on Canadian standards of evaluation. Similarly, assessment of their education and skills to qualify for the program is also based on Canadian standards. These are evident in current practices, which are like previous immigration practices directed towards Black women and racialized immigrants in Canada (Arat-Koç, 2006; Mensah, 2010; Shepperd, 2009).

Similar concerns arise in the transferability of their credential and skills from the migration process to the Canadian labour market as well. The same credentials and skills that migrants used to qualify to migrate as skilled immigrants, lost value once they migrated. The stereotypical perceptions of their race and gender took primacy over their credentials, professional identities, and their skills. The relatively seamless process that participants described to transition to Canada, was not without its share of encounters that were discriminatory but were not considered serious at the time. These encounters masked the underhanded and insidious ways in which race, gender and other forms of discrimination would operate to undervalue and diminish their pre-migration skills and experience. The lack of acknowledgement of their credential and skills post-migration is consistent with the discrimination that they described in the pre-migration process. These outcomes are strong reminders of the entrenched patterns of racism and sexism that are part of Canada's history (Thobani, 2000; Dua et al., 2005).

The negative impacts that participants report continues the adverse patterns of treatment towards Black and racialized immigrants in Canada. Again, their stories reveal different manifestations of discrimination that are eerily familiar to long-standing patterns of discrimination towards racialized immigrants and especially towards Black women from the Caribbean in Canada. Participants note the difference in the opportunities available to them in their workplaces compared to opportunities available to their White co-workers. Their stories clearly identified issues that reflect White privilege where non-Black people, especially those from European backgrounds, receive preferential treatment in employment and other areas in society (Baffoe et al., 2014; Das Gupta, 2009; Thobani, 2007).

The participants' stories reveal that the preferential treatment that their White counterparts received placed them at a disadvantage. They repeatedly recounted the inequitable access to certain opportunities their White peers had, which positioned them as the prime beneficiaries of the current discriminatory practices towards Black participants (Hayden, 2015; Harris, 1993). The prospects for White individuals to succeed were prioritized over the prospects of the Black participants and, in most cases, at their expense. Participants' experiences illuminate practices by many employers who asked them to complete tasks that were beyond the entry level positions for which they were hired. Yet, they were not offered higher level positions. When similar positions became vacant that required the same skills that they were called upon to use prior, many reported that they were still passed over for these promotions. This is even though they had previously demonstrated that they had the required skills, competencies and capabilities to complete these jobs. In many cases participants report being asked to provide training to the individuals who have secured the position over them. Predominantly, participants indicate that the individuals who usually secure these promotions over them were mostly White and had "Canadian experience," experience that was not necessarily related to the position.

Participants note the emphasis that employers placed on "Canadian experience" to devalue and undermine their skills and experience. Sakamoto et al., (2010) note that the discourse for "Canadian Experience" "... maintains the ambivalent racialized status of immigrants in Canada," (p. 21). Similarly, the authors' findings showed that skilled immigrants continue to be marginalized in the labour market and they face challenges to establish their sense of worth due to the demand for "Canadian experience." I would also add that the invalidation of their professional skills perpetuates the narrative of who belongs in the Canadian labour market by demarking who is considered legitimate bearers of skills with recognized value (Bhuyan et

al., 2017; Guo, 2009; Amaoko et al., 2023; Ghadi et al., 2023). The experiences that participants share in this study certainly confirm my assertion.

The multifaceted aspects of participants' identities based on their race and gender also weighed into the stories of discrimination that they shared. Consequential were intersecting perceptions of their identities that became synonymous with stereotypical assumptions of Black women as unskilled and uneducated, thus marked for cheap and available sources of labour (Elabor-Idemudia, 1999; Ng, 1990; Amaoko et al., 2023). When viewed from an intersectionality lens, the interconnection of these factors and identities, produced overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination that explain the experiences that participants described (Crenshaw, 1993). Crenshaw (1993) further highlights the increased intensity of discrimination due to overlapping aspects of identities that impact especially Black women negatively. The intersecting and “interactive dimensions” of participants' identities placed them at further disadvantage in the Canadian labour market (Bello & Mancini, 2016, p. 12). These contemporary manifestations are understood within the intersecting forces of marginalization and oppression and are rooted in historical patterns of gendered racialization (Calliste & Dei, 2000; Dua & Robertson, 1999; James, 1994).

In addition to their race and gender, participants' stories call attention to other that were discriminatory, such as their entry point to Canada as skilled immigrants coming from an English-speaking country and having to prove their English Language proficiency. The Canadian benchmark for assessment of their education and skills further nuanced their experiences as Black skilled immigrant women, and positioned them as outsiders to Canada (Agnew, 2006; Dua & Robertson, 1999). Furthermore, the impact of race and gender as markers of discrimination feeds into hierarchical structures in Canadian societies that allocate privilege to Whites and

exclude non-Whites (Bell, 1992, 1995; Decuir & Dixson, 2004). The manifestations that participants describe are consistent with these structures of inequities that sustain oppression. Their encounters demonstrate how these factors were used to categorize them as belonging to the lower spectrum of the social hierarchical ladder which also reduce their financial earning potential (Bello & Mancini, 2016; Crenshaw, 1993). Even though participants migrated under an immigration category premised on recognizing their skills and experience, their experiences showed otherwise. This premise was upended by how race and gender operate in Canada historically.

Accordingly, participants' stories are incomplete without the recognition that these multifaceted aspects of their identities intensified their experiences of being marginalized, which placed them at a disadvantage in Canada (Anderson & McCormic, 2010; Crenshaw, 1993; Cuàdras & Uttal, 1999). The different categorizations and aspects of participants' identities provide key understandings of both the compounding factors that contribute to the obstacles they face and the layers of discrimination and inequities that their stories reveal. Participants' stories bear witness to the converging of both race and gender stereotypes and other categorizations which point to a deeper relationship between the history of discrimination against Black and racialized bodies that is ingrained in Canada as a White settler nation (Dua & Robertson, 1999; Razack, 2002).

The impact of these factors is in line with historical patterns of discrimination towards Black individuals that reduced their economic prospects, social status, financial health and overall well-being (Aylward, 1999; Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Dua & Robertson, 1999). These impacts are evident in the stories that participants share about the undermining of their professional identities, skills and experience. The participants' share these forms of exclusion

pose as barriers to opportunities for advancement and employment mobility. These outcomes are directly connected to stereotypical perceptions about their race and gender. These patterns of discrimination towards Black women are rooted in the Canadian history of oppression and are systematically reinforced in institutions such as the labour market (Kumsa et al., 2014; Flynn, 2011; Wane, 2013). The patterns of marginalization in the workplace reduced the participants' potential to access a better quality of life as Black and racialized skilled immigrant women.

The participants' stories indicate that they consciously decided to migrate to Canada for variable yet similar reasons. These include increased employment, educational opportunities and increased safety and expectations for a better quality of life overall. All participants hoped to maintain their skills and in fact build on them post-migration. While participants indicate that they were fully expecting to start in lower titled positions as part of the relocation process, they did not expect that the employment options available to them would be primarily lower-level, low-skilled and low-paying positions with multiple and prolonged barriers to advancement. The post-migration reality was a more complex interplay of race and gender that undermined many of their pre-migration expectations.

The increased employment and education opportunities anticipated did not materialize for most participants. For the others who eventually secured higher calibre employment in line with their expectations, their stories reveal prevalent patterns of discrimination both to secure and to maintain these positions. This is illustrated in Zaman's (2010) observation about racialized women in Canada having to contend with both old and new forms of racism. The author further notes the complex and multi-layered dimensions of the racism that racialized women in Canada endure. These practices point to a more underhanded and disingenuous process with discrimination at its core.

Sakamoto et al. (2010), Verkuyten and Martinovic (2012), and Zietsma (2010) point to multiple sites of oppression that feed into the systemic and institutional forms of discrimination that certain groups encounter. The impact on groups such as Black skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean in Canada, results in inequities that are interconnected to their race and gender (Branker, 2017; Perry et al., 2013). Of the 15 women who participated in this study, each of their accounts point to multiple encounters of discrimination in the Canadian labour market relating to their race, gender and other aspects of their identities. Several examples were noted from participants' accounts that illuminate practices by employers to utilize their skills and experiences to help or provide training to their White peers, some of whom were later selected for promotions over the study participants. Participants reported they were not aware of even being considered for these positions. Many added that their race and gender were key factors in these decisions that excluded them from being considered for the positions in the first place.

Evidence of the historical supply and demand style interactions that Canada forged with racialized immigrants historically was present throughout this study (Kelly & Wossen-Taffesse, 2012; Mensah, 2010). Das Gupta, (2009), points to the constant need for cheap labour to bolster profit that sustains both racism and sexism within the Canadian immigration system. These neoliberal practices further sustain the current labour market system. Such interactions result in the depreciated value of their labour power and increased exploitation of their labour. From the stories that participants share, Black migrant women from the Caribbean formed the required supply for low valued labour as their race and gender dictated how they would be perceived and thus made to fit in the primarily lower-tiered jobs that they could access, despite their higher levels of skills, formal training, and professional experience.

Overall, the participants' stories illuminate practices in the Canadian labour market that re-enact the typecasting of participants as less than Canadians, which labelled them for low-skilled, low-wage positions (Arat-Koç, 2006; Calliste, 1993/94; Flynn, 1998; Silvera, 1989). The different forms of discrimination that they encountered, especially as Black skilled immigrant women, increased the intensity of the marginalization and oppression they described (Delgado, 2022; Arai & Kivel, 2009). The workplace experiences that the participants describe in their stories, some minute and seemingly benign while others blatantly discriminatory, nuance the ways in which current patterns of racism and sexism form the conditions of their oppression. These patterns converge and create the more visibly recognized practices of discrimination that are directed particularly towards Black immigrant women from the Caribbean in Canada, as well as racialized immigrants in Canada.

Counternarratives

Participants' stories reveal that the dominant stories about the anticipated successes of skilled immigrants have ignored the impact of race and gender on this presumed post-migration trajectory. Similarly, a key component of the Canadian FSWP that prioritizes skilled immigrants for faster integration and contributions to the employment and economic sectors (Citizenship & Immigration Canada, 2015, 2017; Li & Sweetman, 2014; Sweetman, 2017), omits the impact of race and gender. The demand for skilled immigrants in Canada is presented as a win-win situation for immigrants and Canada alike (IRCC, 2023; Taylor, 2018). Yet, the experiences that participants share reveal otherwise. They encountered stereotypical perceptions about their identities and are treated as less capable and less competent than many of their Canadian

counterparts. These experiences ring counter to the dominant narratives on migration and labour meritocracy based on the encounters that participants shared.

The participants' experiences debunk these dominant narratives to illuminate the realities for Black and racialized skilled immigrant women, which includes various forms of discrimination that create negative experiences and outcomes. Their accounts attest to the marginalization and oppression they face in the Canadian labour market and challenge the dominant narratives that dictate otherwise. The roadblocks to employment that they described and the exclusion from opportunities for advancement, provide firsthand accounts of their experiences. CRT validates the experiences of Black and racialized individuals and considers their stories as proof of the everyday racism that they encounter (Aylward, 1999; Delgado & Stefancic, 2000). It asserts that people of colour have distinctive experiences that can be used to reveal important truths "about race and racism in a White settler society" (James, et al., 2010, p.25.).

Similarly, Amarshi, (2018), Bannerji, (2020) and Murad, (2013) confirmed the primacy of race in shaping experiences of oppression that women of colour face in Canada. Furthermore, the revelations that are evidenced in the stories that participants share, point to much deeper systemic issues of racism and sexism that are ingrained in Canada's history towards Black individuals (Flynn, 2011; Dua et al., 2005; Ng, 1992). This speaks to how and to the extent to which Whiteness and White supremacy are built into our immigration policies and other institutions which create disparities and inequitable treatment for racialized and gendered bodies such as Black immigrant women. These broader systemic issues are present in Canadian society and are reflected in its labour market which are illuminated through participants' stories.

These stories are not only omitted from the narratives on skilled migration but are contrary to the premise on which participants were assessed for migration and admitted to Canada. Markers of their success become shrouded in Canada's White settler constructs that label them for discrimination as Black immigrant women and minorities, regardless of their skillsets (Denis, 2016; Bobb-Smith, 2003; Crawford, 2004). Thobani (2000) calls attention to Canada's conflicting interest to preserve "Whiteness" on one hand while trying to meet its labour demands using racialized immigrants. The outcomes for non-White immigrants are laden with encounters of oppression and treatment as outsiders on Canadian soil (DeCuir & Dixon, 2004; Baines & Sharma, 2002; Mullings et al., 2016). This study confirmed many of these outcomes among participants and illuminates their lived realities, beyond the Canadian skilled immigrant rhetoric.

Participants' experiences illuminate the normalizing of ingrained perceptions that racism fosters (DeCuir & Dixon, 2004; Soltani, 2017; Pon, 2009; Vega Murillo, 2022). These perceptions serve to marginalize and oppress them and are connected to how they have been constructed in Canadian history. Laden with perceptions of inferiority as Black and racialized women, the discrimination that they face are further normalized within the Canadian labour market. Collins (1990) calls attention to type casted images that are directed towards Black women to justify the lower positions that they can typically access. The accounts that participants provide push back at mainstream narratives that activate these images which negatively impact their experiences. This critical account also calls attention to the precarious positions that they hold within Canada as Black women.

The stories that participants shared point to the reproduction of marginalization and oppression within Canadian institutions (Razack, 1999; Thobani, 2000). These stories are not

recognized and legitimated within the narratives on immigration. In fact, the under-reporting of these stories altogether is part of the narrative that is missing from the current mainstream accounts and that this study seeks to illuminate. Of equal importance is the absence of the historical and contemporary construction of race and gender and the role they play in experiences like the ones participants shared. This is irrefutable evidence that the Canadian immigration policies remain inherently racist (Constance-Huggins, 2012; James et al, 2010; Maynard, 2017; Blackhouse, 2017). These narratives are important to push back at mainstream reports that exclude their experiences which is something the study participants recognized as a significant endeavour.

Voice and Empowerment

Collins (2000) note that documenting the collective stories of Black women fosters empowerment and creates collective knowledge. Participants' sharing of their stories are validation of their experiences and acknowledgement of their contributions to knowledge creation on skilled migration beyond dominant understandings. Collins (1991, 2000) speaks to the role of power and oppression in the production of knowledge. This surmises the interlocking systems of oppressions that Black women from the Caribbean encounter through the collusion between both the immigration and labour market systems to minimize or exclude their voices and experience. Their lived experiences provide evidence of the inequitable and unjust reality within a White settler society and create avenues for further discussions about the experiences of Black and racialized skilled immigrant groups. Their stories show many gaps in the levels of accountability and the lack of fair treatment as individuals who are highly skilled, experienced, and capable professionals. The stories that participants shared not only highlight the

mistreatment and injustice they described but it also amplifies their voices to create awareness and inform change.

The stories of resistance, optimism and strength are evident in the accounts of the experiences that participants shared in this study as well. According to Jagire (2019), “immigrant women have been often portrayed as passive victims of discrimination” (p. 2). However, many have found ways to cope despite the levels of discrimination they face in Canadian workplaces. The author notes that many have learned to resist injustices and marginalization in workplaces and have found ways to organize themselves, formally and informally. In addition, many have pushed back at the income inequality that has become synonymous with immigrant women’s work in the Canadian labour market (Agnew, 2006; Amoako et al., 2023). Others have found subtle ways to disrupt the status quo and refuse to be identified primarily by their race and gender.

Subtle acts of resistance came through in the accounts of participants’ stories they shared. For example, some participants found the courage to ask questions of their employers about being passed over for promotions. These participants note that they were aware of the added precarity this action could potentially create in their employment, which could include being blacklisted from future opportunities or getting pushed out of their current employment altogether. Yet, many raised their voices to demand explanations and to let their employers know that they were being treated unfairly. They were also vocal in sharing their stories to other racialized peers. Razack (1999) notes that the telling of stories about racism in White societies are not without their share of consequences. In telling their stories, these participants indicate that they were more concerned about the recurring injustice that was happening to them and

others like them much too often. This motivated them to speak up to question their experience in the moment and to share their stories in their own voice to make their experiences known.

Participants describe visions of having a better life in Canada as one of the reasons that influenced their decision to migrate and still hope to achieve this goal. Still, many felt that this vision and their lived experiences were at odds, given that the systemic discrimination they faced and the racism they encountered were different from their expectations of Canada (Branker, 2017; Denis, 2016; Gooden & Hackett, 2020; Sakamoto et al., 2010). Many express that for skilled immigrants, the opportunities available that lead to a better life are threatened by the high levels of systemic and institutional barriers of discrimination within the Canadian system. The majority of the participants described being confronted with issues of race, racism and gender in a manner that was new for them and in most cases hard to pin-point and understand. At the same time, most of the participants found ways to feel empowered.

In the process of learning about participants' stories of struggles and strength, I became aware of the informal network that participants had established to support each other as well as to support newer waves of skilled immigrants from the Caribbean once they arrive in Canada. In fact, part of my snowball sampling recruitment was made possible because I inadvertently tapped into this network. The support that the women offer through this network to their fellow skilled immigrant newcomer counterparts, extends across the Greater Toronto Area and to different provinces. Whenever individuals from the network move to other provinces or outside of Canada for example, they remain in contact with the network. They also try to build similar networks in the area where they relocate to offer support, tangible resources, and a sense of community for others with similar experiences.

Participants mention that initially, a few members of the group kept in touch with their networks from their migrating countries and it was not uncommon for others who were thinking about migrating to Canada as skilled workers, to reach out to them. Once these individuals arrive in Canada, participants in this network would reach out to them to offer support and insights to prepare them to navigate the contours of the Canadian labour market and Canada in general. The group had an organic start but over time became more defined in its purpose. In connecting new arrivals to networking opportunities, and in some cases to opportunities for employment, the network has grown significantly. Participants indicate that this effort was important to them based on their own experiences. They felt that if they (participants) were more aware of what to expect in the Canadian labour market, they would have been more strategic or made different decisions, including moving into self-employment options shortly after they migrated. By the time they became aware of how deeply rooted the hurdles were in the Canadian labour market, they had used up too much of their savings to change course to a self-employment option.

The network was growing steadily at the time of the interviews for this study and each new wave of newcomers to the group were equally engaged. The women created spaces for themselves and their families to celebrate and showcase their respective cultures and took similar steps to acknowledge and embrace “Canadian” culture as well. Black history month celebration is significant among the women as they attend events together, as well as with their respective families. Even more so, they scheduled activities among themselves as a group to support their children who played active roles in activities to learn about Black history in Canada. I was invited to one such event to do a presentation for recruitment. The event was built around educating the children in the group while the adults provided support, leadership and an environment of appreciation. Their children’s friends (Black and other races) were also present.

It was a beautiful experience to observe. For the women, this network was their way of taking steps to minimize the impact of discrimination on other skilled immigrants or at least help them to ride the tumultuous challenges. It was also a way for them to instill a sense of pride in their children about who they are as Black individuals in Canada, beyond the stereotypical construction of their Blackness. Participants found ways to lift their voices and be empowered in the face of the discrimination they continue to encounter.

Significance and Implications for Social Work: Theory, Practice and Policy

This study is significant to social work because it provides insights that the lived experiences of especially Black skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean reveal, about the historical and contemporary construction of race and gender in Canada. The study elucidates the operation of structural barriers as revealed through their nuanced experiences and maps out the impact on their labour market journeys in Canada. It makes connections to the racist and sexist operations of both the Canadian immigration system and the Canadian labour market system. The attention given to the issues in this study aligns with the social justice efforts promoted by social work profession, namely, social work's efforts to address systemic, institutional, and societal inequities.

The grounding of this research in social work enables the discipline and the profession to articulate and pinpoint the needs of Black and racialized skilled immigrant women more effectively. Skilled immigrant women who are Black and racialized are not often discussed in social work specifically. They are usually considered as part of immigrant groups generally and so their needs are not clearly distinguished. My study creates a unique niche in social work to better understand their needs and support more effective initiatives to advocate for better treatment for Black immigrant women in Canadian society. The study centers the experiences of

the individuals impacted, allowing social work to be better equipped to respond to their unique needs.

The study also contends with the inequities and power imbalances as part of the root cause of the barriers that Black and racialized skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean face in Canada. This positions the impact of these power imbalances within social work discipline and on social work's agenda. Furthermore, the study contends with issues of discrimination, marginalization, and ways in which historically disenfranchised groups are currently being oppressed. The significance of this study to social work, then, cannot be overstated.

This study promotes an anti-oppressive and anti-racist approach to fight issues of racism and sexism primarily, along with other forms of discrimination. It also attends to the effects of anti-Black racism distinctly that is missing from critical immigration studies, as well as the invisibility of Black women as skilled workers in the literature. These are all key issues within the purview of social work. A key significance of this research, then, is that it helps to support more intentional deconstruction and dismantling of systems that negatively impact the experiences of immigrant populations.

Though the impact of race and gender has been taken up in different aspects of immigration research, the focus on this population is missing from social work literature and the broader social sciences discussions. This study goes well beyond current approaches in literature that often leaves racism in Canada unquestioned and thereby normalized. It conceptualizes different ways of knowing beyond traditional Eurocentric approaches in developing knowledge about Black and racialized immigrant populations. There are gaps in the literature to trace contemporary Black women's labour migration to the historical movement of Black labour in the enslavement era. This study which focuses on the Black women migrant skilled workers,

unravels the historical conditions for which Black women migrants are known, as unskilled labourers and as domestic workers. It therefore paves the way for more extensive connections to be made, and appropriately so within social work.

Also, the lack of focus in social work on the multiple forms of discrimination and oppression of racialized immigrants as previously noted in the review of literature section of this study (Chaze & George, 2013), makes this research more significant to social work. This study responds to a key knowledge gap and positions social work to advocate more effectively for equity seeking groups, such as Black and racialized skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean in Canada. The framework used in this study can also help to shape the foundation for more robust and comprehensive responses to tackle racial and gendered experiences of skilled immigrant women. This is well beyond what social work currently offers for marginalized immigrant populations. Similarly, the counternarratives on stereotypical constructs of Black immigrant women that label them for marginalization and oppression, have broader implications for social justice work and for their contributions to be acknowledged in Canada.

Insights into the ways in which the experiences of Black skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean in Canada are understood and regarded have implications for social work theory and social work policies that are put forth to drive transformative change. They also have implications for social work practice response to the needs of this population and to ensuring that they are treated with the dignity and respect that they deserve. The goal of this study is to facilitate both individual and collective well-being for groups who are marginalized, while uplifting the voices of those who are otherwise excluded. This can be done in social work generally as well as in social work theory, practice and policy more specifically.

Theory Implications

The study highlights the need for frameworks that can grapple with the experiences of Black skilled immigrant women outside of Eurocentric constructs. The use of both CRT and ARFT frameworks is but one such attempt to contend with participants' lived realities in this critical manner and in social work. The current approach provides a unique angle from which to develop and expand knowledge on skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean in Canada, especially those who are Black or racialized. It invites more intentional use of critical theories that can attend to the issues that they face, to inform the deconstruction and decolonizing of dominant systems that sustain their oppression. In essence, critical theories such as the ones used in this study can facilitate the kind of critical consciousness that is needed to unpack the broader White hegemonic pro-White normativity and how they operate to marginalize certain individuals and groups.

This study makes connections between participants' experiences and the immigration and labour market practices that create roadblocks to their success. It highlights the need for the issue of racism and sexism that shape their experiences to be positioned at the center of discussions rather than on the periphery. Similar approaches are necessary for social work to better understand, explain and address the systemic inequities that are directed towards especially Black immigrant women and racialized immigrants. Razack (1999) calls attention to the need for a "language of interlocking oppression where we can describe how the racism, we experience has a different structure to it because it depends on how female, racialized bodies are perceived and treated in this society" (as cited in Dua & Robertson, 1999, p. 292). This study offers an insight into participants experiences based on their own stories.

Similarly, Cuàdraz and Uttal (1999) note different challenges in theorizing experiences that are impacted by race and gender. The factors that intensify the experiences for especially Black skilled immigrant women, demand the theoretical lenses to accurately scope out their experiences to inform change. The under theorizing of the issues that impact them, limits the knowledge available about the struggles they face and therefore limits social work's responses. This study offers insights on both the use of non-Eurocentric and critical theories and how these theories can more accurately frame experiences outside of the dominant constructs. It brings the theorizing of race and gender to the forefront of the study which is of significance to social work theory and provides direction for similar applications.

This also charts the understanding about the population particularly within social work, as well as within the broader social sciences and within Canadian society. This study maps current manifestations of race and gender discrimination based on participants' lived experiences and connect their experiences to existing accounts across historical periods. This engagement is necessary for the stories of racialized and Black women to be fully understood (Calliste & Dei, 2000; Dua & Robertson, 1999). Since the dominant constructs about their experiences are inaccurate, the use of critical theories such as CRFT and ARFT are instrumental in creating more accurate accounts of their realities through their shared stories. Their collective experiences call attention to the insidious workings of race and gender and the systems that sustain how they operate to negatively affect the experiences of certain groups.

The critical interrogation that CRT commands and the uniqueness of ARFT within the Canadian context, are key aspects of this study. They add dimension to the ways in which theoretical understandings of Black skilled immigrant women continue to be positioned within Canada's White settler colonial society. Cummings and Lopez (2023) note that the use of critical

feminist analysis prioritizes “women’s situated experiences as local stories” (p. 22). The understandings about how race and gender have shaped both the historical and contemporary positioning of women of colour in Canadian society, is a distinguishing feature of Canadian anti-racist feminists’ writings that differentiate it from other anti-racist feminist approaches (Calliste & Dei, 2000; Cuàdras & Uttal, 1999; Dua & Robertson, 1999). This study adds to that understanding and is informed by lived experiences. Furthermore, social work can capitalize on these features to name and challenge the oppression that these theoretical lenses reveal.

The study challenges the normalization of experiences of oppression as part of the migration journey for Black and other racialized immigrant groups. For social work, this means drawing on similar frameworks that can hold institutions such as the Canadian immigration and labour market systems to account. The grounding of this research in social work also means that this approach can be used to inform the examination of other marginalized populations who are impacted by similar structures of oppression. Social work is well positioned to continue this engagement and inform change work to deconstruct these and other experiences that create oppression for marginalized groups. Social work faculties/departments in academic institutions, can become more active in theorizing a path forward for effective resolutions and coalesce existing strategies that have worked to address these issues. They can support deeper understanding of racial and gender inequities and promote social justice for groups that are historically racialized, such as Black skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean in Canada.

Practice Implications

The discrimination and oppression that this study illuminates point to deeper vulnerabilities that impact the wellbeing of participants. Certainly, the ongoing issues of

exclusion and diminishing of their prior accomplishments are not without some mental and emotional impact. Even though participants focused on pushing through the challenges, many indicate accessing mental health supports formally and informally because of their experiences. The impact of the well-being of their families, is also cause for further health-related issues. These are key areas for intervention within social work practice.

The barriers and systemic challenges that participants describe have been ingrained in how institutions have normalized these discriminatory practices towards Black women historically. Razack and Jeffery (2002) acknowledge the longstanding presence of racism within social structures of dominant societies that creates the appearance of racism as being both natural and normal. The authors suggest that addressing this misperception include more focus on discussions to do with race, racism and racialization within social work. It is crucial for social workers to be equipped with the knowledge that this study provides so they can better attend to these misconceptions when working with this population as well as to provide education to others.

With Canada relying even more on skilled immigrants to fill its labour market and its declining birth rate (Bailey & Mulder, 2017, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2022; Wilson et al., 2017), the current issues that participants describe will be more far reaching. The study offers insights for social work practitioners to seize the reins to support Black skilled immigrant women to better challenge the racist and sexist inequities that they face in Canada. It also creates avenues for them to be better equipped to fundamentally challenge the stigma attached to certain immigrant groups, which is a huge factor in the deskilling and other barriers that they encounter. Social work practice can foster connections and actions to seek change, especially for individuals who are new to Canada.

An interesting caveat in this study was that Black skilled immigrant women were more comfortable holding on to their pre-migration professional identities, their ethnicity and their culture even after living in Canada for some time. Some participants attributed this to their attempts to disconnect from the negative encounters of racism and sexism that they constantly experience post-migration. The attempts to exclude them from Canadian society may also be a factor in their stance. In working with this population, social workers will need to attend to issues of exclusion and its root causes.

This study offers a starting point to begin to attend to some of these issues as well as insights to inform longer term responses in practice. It also assists social workers and social workers in training to gain a better understanding of the issues that impact skilled immigrant groups. Responding to the major needs of this population to achieve their goals and move past the stereotypical perceptions that limit their contributions, can chart the course for more effective social work practice and interventions. The insight into their struggles and the discrimination they face help to inform programs and services that meets their needs such as employment services and advocacy support.

By providing critical insights into the lived experiences of participants, social workers can become more aware about the ways in which racial embodiment and gender shape the lived experiences of Black and racialized bodies. They can also better understand and centralize race and the intersections of race, gender, immigration status and immigrants' identities in interventions in practice. Furthermore, social work practitioners can find ways to challenge these multiple intersectionalities that reinforce power imbalances for marginalized groups such as Black skilled immigrant women. This is instrumental for marginalized peoples to be better positioned to contest their lived realities and combine their efforts to advocate for change. For

Black skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean in Canada, social work can amplify their voices to move closer to the urgent changes required in the immigration and labour market system and Canadian society.

Policy Implications

It is a foregone conclusion that policy implications are intertwined with the normative perceptions and stereotypes of Black immigrant women as unskilled and uneducated. The ongoing public debates around immigration and policy responses about skilled migration, are still immersed in the benefits for source countries at the expense of skilled immigrants. Despite the many changes to the Canadian immigration policies, the entrenched racist and exclusionary practices in current policies are evident towards specific groups of immigrants from non-White source countries (Citizenship & Immigration, 2022; Elabor-Idemudia, 1999; Picot, 2004). This study positions the impact of immigration on Black skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean at the forefront of these debates.

In this regard, it informs initiatives for policies in immigration for example, which support fundamental changes to address their positioning as inferior to Canadians. Even with recent announcements for the implementation of legislation by the Provincial Government to ban requirements in employment for “Canadian experience”, the effects of race and gender have not been considered in these measures (Government of Ontario, 2023). Similarly, recent announcements by the federal government to increase funding to fast track the credentialing of internationally trained health care professionals are still rooted in the supply and demand style relationships that Canada has forged with immigrants historically (Jones, 2024). The Canadian standards of measurement for education and skills feeds into this neoliberal approach that

exploits immigrant labour. This study's illumination on the prevalence of racism and sexism that negatively impact participants' experiences, can inform new policies to address many of these longstanding issues. The extent to which these structures of oppression explain the experiences of marginalization and oppression that participants encounter can be used to formulate policies that are relevant to the issues they face rather than ignoring them. It can lead to active redress of the longstanding history of discrimination towards immigrants to Canada from non-White source countries.

Policy responses, at their core then, must challenge discrimination based on race and gender, Whiteness and the dynamics of power that sustains prevailing notions of Blackness as inferior and that sustains the prioritizing of Eurocentric practices in current immigration policies and Canadian society. These issues have been highlighted throughout this study and are of significance in informing social work responses that are substantive. Policy initiatives must be informed by the lived accounts of those impacted by race and gender. Their impacts are part of the legacies of colonization and the dynamics of imperialism, neo-colonialism, and oppression (Razack & Jeffery, 2002; Solórzano & Yosso, 2001, 2002). This study can inform policies that promotes decolonizing efforts and the deconstruction of ingrained systems of oppression.

Similarly, policies must extend to the sites of oppression and seek to address patterns of discrimination that are prevalent in the employment process for Black and racialized immigrants from job applications, interviews and the recognition of credentials and skills, to offer of employment, promotion, and representation in different positions of employment. Policy responses must also activate just and accountable measures to counter the historical practices of appropriating the labour of Black and other marginalized individuals which is normalized within labour markets. That these are sustained within the current neoliberal agenda should also be of

concern to social work for effective responses. The realities for Black skilled immigrant women illuminate these historical and current practices which then require accountability and tools of measurements to track progress and ensure intended results.

Robust policies in Canada, for example, must create pathways to the implementation of joint partnerships between Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), the labour market, education systems-universities and regulatory bodies. Similar partnerships have been established in New Zealand and Australia for their immigration points system program which has bridged *some* of the divide for better transition of skilled immigrants into their respective labour market (Albaugh & Seidle, 2013; Ongley & Pearson, 1995; Sweetman, 2017; Trlin, 2010; Walsh, 2011, 2011). The fundamental issues of race and gender in these implementations have by no means been placed at the center of these partnerships mentioned. However, when drawing on these examples as a first step, this study can inform the noted gaps for more inclusive, rigorous and robust implementations and equitable outcomes. It can also inform clearer policies to govern employment for Black skilled immigrant women to ensure that they are treated fairly, instead of being marked for discrimination and exclusion.

This study also has implications for the actual immigration policies that sustain the longstanding racist and sexist treatment towards immigrant women and in particular Black immigrant women. The attention that this study brings to these different and coordinated actors in the oppression of the researched population, offers a platform to begin tackling these ingrained issues with relevant policy changes. While this may be a huge undertaking and an uphill battle, this study highlights the urgency for this change work to be prioritized. Social work is positioned to push for these changes to become a reality and findings from this study can be key in the advancement of such policies.

The racial and gendered experiences that participants described are similar to the experiences of women who first migrated from the Caribbean to Canada as domestic workers (Arat-Koç, 2006; Calliste, 1993/1994; Silvera, 1989). Their experiences also mirror findings of discrimination on Black and racialized immigrant in earlier research (Creese & Weibe, 2012; Elabor-Idemudia, 2000; Iredale, 2005; Man, 2004). At this point, there is overwhelming evidence about the prevalence of race and gender discrimination towards racialized immigrants in both Canadian immigration system, the Canadian labour market and Canadian society in general. This study further confirms the racist and sexist discrimination directed towards Black skilled immigrants from the Caribbean in Canada and connects to the longstanding patterns of discrimination based on race and gender. The systemic issue of race and gender then, requires fundamental policy changes that are practical, equity seeking and informed by the lived experiences of those affected.

This study can inform models of coalition building, service provision, funding models, ally-ship and the establishing of platforms for collegial and community collaborations at the policy-making level to tackle racist, sexist and prejudicial treatment towards marginalized groups. Partnerships between the Canadian government, labour market, education systems such as universities and regulatory bodies, are key areas that this research can inform. The processes that generate inequitable and unjust outcomes require policy interventions that address the fundamental and ongoing systems that sustain oppression. This study highlights the need for more effective policy considerations for groups such as Black skilled immigrant women who are hampered by the effects of their stereotyped identities. It also informs how other non-White immigrants are treated as non-Canadians who are also marked for exclusion.

Strengths and Limitations

The unique approach to using CRT complimented by ARFT to examine the experiences of Black skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean in the Canadian labour market, is part of the strength of this study. The emphasis on the historical and contemporary functioning of race and gender to explain the experiences of marginalization and oppression of the research population is worth highlighting as part of its strength as well. The use of CRM is also noteworthy because it foregrounds the lived experiences of participants in line with the frameworks used (Aldana et al., 2023; Lapayese, 2007; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). The unique engagement of the different aspects combined to frame and conduct this study is part of its overall strengths. The response to the gap in research on the population and the championing of their experiences in their own voices, is also a significant part of the strength of this study.

This study is no different from other research that comes with strengths that add to the body of knowledge and limitations or gaps that create avenues for further research. While the impact on Black skilled immigrant women expands the understanding about the persistence of the impact on this population more broadly, it does not speak to the nuanced impact on other racialized groups as broadly. The impact on Black women in other migration categories adds more dimension to the discussion on migration but the specific issues are unique to the stories of participants as skilled immigrants. The findings do not speak to the totality of their encounters but is reflective of their lived experiences primarily in the Canadian labour market. It is with these considerations in mind that the following strengths and weaknesses of the study are noted.

The absence of empirical research that engages similar combinations of theories to research this population is limited. However, the literature section in this study highlights other research on skilled immigrant women and on Black immigrant women from the Caribbean in

Canada, which establish some alignment with the findings of this study. This also helps to establish historical prevalence of the impact of race and gender on their experiences. The scope of experience for Black immigrant women and other racialized immigrants who are marginalized in Canada, have unfortunately exhibited similar patterns of stereotype, discrimination, and oppression. The findings from this study about the aspects that are known, align with these known outcomes as well. The overlapping components provide additional reliability and confidence in findings about the aspects that are different. If what is already known is corroborated, then this makes a stronger case for the credibility of new areas that are uncovered. Findings are reliable and accurate and can be used to guide the development of further research and knowledge about this phenomenon.

The homogenous sample for this research was drawn from the FSWP category of migration that admits skilled immigrants to Canada. The six selection factors described in earlier section (Data collection) outlines the requirements for the Canadian immigration criteria that participants had to meet to qualify as skilled immigrants. Inadvertently, these selection factors were instrumental in determining the homogenous sample for this research (See Appendix E). This means that other immigrants and immigrant women from the region in Canada who met these selection criteria but migrated under different immigration categories such as refugees or family class, were excluded. The focus on individuals from primarily English-speaking Caribbean islands to narrow the parameters of the research, also means further exclusion of potentially suitable applicants. This focus was partly due to the historical significance of women from the English-speaking Caribbean, as they were among the first group of individuals to migrate to Canada under a formal immigration program. Additionally, my research interest and

the fact that I was born in the English-speaking Caribbean helped to influence my focus and sample choice for this study.

Lastly, participants had to be residing in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) for easier access for in-person interviews and for stronger engagement with research participants. Individuals from Calgary and Edmonton expressed interest to participate in interviews but were screened out due to the parameters of the study and considering the face-to-face interview component. Future research can attend to these omissions in stages to develop a broader understanding of the phenomenon among women in Canada from across the region. This study can provide the basis to extend research on the topic and is a well needed contribution.

Directions for Future Research

This research stokes an urgency for similar research studies that explore the experiences of Black skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean in Canada, and gives attention to the impact of race, gender and other forms of discrimination on their experiences. In addition, existing research on skilled immigration makes it clear that more research is needed on Black immigrant women (Bailey & Mulder, 2017; Branker, 2017; Iredale, 2005). The depiction of immigrant women in current immigration literature as “co-movers” compared to immigrant men, most notably researched by Bailey and Mulder (2017) and Riaño and Baghdadi, (2007), demands more research to provide in-depth and accurate knowledge about their migration experiences. In capturing a more accurate depiction of the migration reality for Black skilled immigrant women in general, more knowledge on the population can become available to inform social work responses. The acknowledgement of the past oppression and their current manifestations are crucial to both understanding their impact and pushing for transformation in current systems.

The limited attention given to the combining effects of race and gender in skilled migration research that Riaño and Baghdadi (2007) call to our attention, requires more integration into the skilled migration narrative. Of equal importance is the need for research about the association of the emotional safety and security of Black and racialized skilled immigrant women alongside their access to employment. Further investigation is needed in research to flesh out these effects and develop new understandings to better support the population.

Canada needs to take more accountability in the settlement and transitioning of skilled immigrants into Canadian society, beyond the current accounts that are steeped in mainstream rhetoric. More research in this area would be timely considering the ongoing public debates on immigration and especially on skilled immigrants. These issues continue to rank high in the public discourse without acknowledging the historical legacies that are at the forefront of how they are positioned and treated in host countries such as Canada. It is important for future explorations to include the use of critical theories to better position the voices of the current population at the centre of explorations and discussions. Daftary (2018) calls for strong theoretical frameworks such as CRT, “to guide research related to oppression, inequities and other social problems” (p. 1).

Bridging this gap allows for the uniqueness of CRT and ARFT to focus on issues within the social, historical, and political contexts and to center issues of race, power, privilege, and oppression. These are issues that are extremely significant in social work and in research related to marginalized populations. The current research provides an opportunity for disciplines such as social work to take more active roles in leading research and scholarship using non-traditional

theories in research. The experiences of those whose labour power are being exploited deserve to be understood from their perspectives.

Social work is well-positioned to locate and interrogate these acts of discrimination and oppression within the wider context of coloniality, race, racism, gender and other forms of discrimination and injustices. It can create pathways to equity and social justice, with broader implications for study in areas of social work theory, policy and practice. Measures are needed that inform anti-racist, anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive social work research to develop techniques to debunk and challenge racist and stereo-typical beliefs about groups such as Black skilled immigrant women. Avenues for research in these areas from a social work lens, can begin to pave the way for social justice and social transformation work.

Conclusion

The lived experiences of Black skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean in the Canadian labour market reveal overlapping patterns of discrimination that are directed towards women from the region in Canada. Their stories confirm that historical and contemporary construction of race and gender in Canada operate to position Black women as unskilled, uneducated and more suitable for precarious, low-skilled, and low-paying jobs that ignore their professional capabilities. The lack of acknowledgement of their skills and experience offers examples of how race and gender discrimination are structured and maintained across different systems. These measures benefit those in power and maintain the status quo.

The stereotypical enactment of race and gender prove to be central in the discrimination that participants described. The devaluation and exploitation of their labour, the reduced access to employment opportunities and employment mobility adds credence to workings of race and

gender. The findings from this study capture the voices of primarily Black skilled immigrant women and the unique impact that are influenced by social and economic histories (Cuàdras & Uttal, 1999; Siddique, 2019). It also recognizes the similarity of their collective experiences to the established patterns of discrimination towards racialized immigrants in Canada.

These patterns of treatment and different forms of discrimination that participants described are not anomalies. They continue longstanding pattern of unjust treatment towards Black immigrant women in Canada (Flynn, 2011; Wane, 2013; Mullings et al., 2016). The findings in this study bears resemblance to similar patterns of discrimination that also emerged in earlier studies that focused on different historical periods (Arat-Koç, 2006; Calliste, 1993/94; Henry, 1968; Silveria, 1989). Also, of significance to these patterns of experiences are the stereotypical assumptions and practices that support the exclusion of Blacks and other racialized groups in early Canadian immigration policies (Arat-Koç, 2006; Mensah, 2010). The experiences of racism that some participants in this study report that their children faced in schools, provide further evidence of the insidious and prevalent nature of the patterns of discrimination across generations.

These oppressive practices are rooted in the historical and social contexts of a settler colonial Canada, which continues to negate the discrimination that participants' stories currently reveal. The impact prevents participants from fully re-gaining their financial footing and undermines their well-being post-migration. The reported practices that participants encountered, negatively impact their sense of self and prevents many from developing meaningful post-migration professional identities (Shuval, 2000; Amaoko et al., 2023). The stories shared in the current research point to regular encounters of racism and sexism in the Canadian labour market that are based on socially constructed identifiers of differences that operate to marginalize and

oppress participants. While their stories are unique to their experiences, they are also reminiscent of past patterns of discrimination as previously noted.

The racist and gendered impacts that they described in the Canadian labour market, are but part of the narrative for Black skilled immigrant women in Canadian society. Participants' stories are important to share understandings about their individual and collective experiences, to create knowledge and to position their experiences within the discourse on [skilled] immigration. This study amplifies their voices and foster empowerment for primarily Black skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean in the Canadian labour market in Canadian society.

In its conclusion, this study calls attention to the accounts that participants share to debunk the dominant narratives that informs the system of meritocracy on which skilled immigrants are admitted to Canada. These narratives omit the impact of race and gender on certain groups of immigrants. This study inserts the impact of race and gender on the post-migration employment experiences of one such group that the dominant narratives have omitted. This study makes direct connections to the discrimination that participants report as part of their experience in the Canadian labour market, to their race, gender and other forms of discrimination that are in line with the historical and contemporary construction of race and gender in Canada.

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Certificate of Completion

This document certifies that

Dalon Taylor

*has completed the Tri-Council Policy Statement:
Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans
Course on Research Ethics (TCPS 2: CORE)*

Date of Issue:

14 June, 2016

Project Information Sheet

Study Name: Researching Social Identity using the case example of racialized skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean in Canada.

Researcher: Dalon Taylor (PhD Candidate); School of Social Work, York University

Contact: dalon@yorku.ca; (416) 458 – 7130

You are invited to participate in a research study by a doctoral student from York University, School of Social Work, which aims to understand the lived experiences of skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean in Canada who are racialized.

Purpose of Research: The aim of my research is to understand how skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean in Canada who are racialized, negotiate their social identities of belonging to the skilled immigrant group in Canada. My focus is particularly on skilled immigrant women from the English-speaking Caribbean who were granted permanent residence in Canada under the Federal Skilled Worker Program (FSWP), which falls under the Canadian Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA). Canada is one of the top three countries to which individuals from the Caribbean migrate with higher numbers of female migrants from the region to Canada than males (Chamberlain, 2002; Ho, 1999; Jones, 2008; Thomas-Hope, 1988; Thomas-Hope, 2002; Thompson & Bauer, 2003). In addition, skilled immigrant women experience migration very differently from other groups (Raghuram & Kofman, 2004). Therefore, research on how skilled immigrant women negotiate their social identities in Canada is warranted.

The findings of the study will be presented in a dissertation, journal articles and at conferences.

Recruitment Flyer



Participate in a study about Social Identity and Racialized Skilled Immigrant Women from the Caribbean

You are invited to participate in a research study to understand the lived experiences of racialized skilled immigrant women who came to Canada from the Caribbean and how they negotiate their social identities.

Study participants should:

- Be Skilled Immigrant Women from the English-speaking Caribbean in Canada who were granted permanent residence in Canada under the **Federal Skilled Worker Program (FSWP)**.
- Have migrated from the Caribbean to Canada between the period 2005 - 2010

Participants will receive a \$20 honorarium to thank for their time.

Please contact Dalon Taylor (PhD Candidate), School of Social Work, York University at dalon@yorku.ca or (416) 458 - 7130.

dalon@yorku.ca (416) 458-7130	dalon@yorku.ca (416) 458-7130	dalon@yorku.ca (416) 458-7130	dalon@yorku.ca (416) 458-7130	dalon@yorku.ca (416) 458-7130	dalon@yorku.ca (416) 458-7130	dalon@yorku.ca (416) 458-7130	dalon@yorku.ca (416) 458-7130	dalon@yorku.ca (416) 458-7130	dalon@yorku.ca (416) 458-7130	dalon@yorku.ca (416) 458-7130	dalon@yorku.ca (416) 458-7130	dalon@yorku.ca (416) 458-7130	dalon@yorku.ca (416) 458-7130
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Recruitment Email

Hello,

My name is Dalon Taylor, and I am a current PhD Candidate at York University in the School of Social Work program. I am writing to you to invite you to participate in a research study that seeks to **understand the lived experiences of skilled immigrant women from the English-speaking Caribbean in Canada who are racialized.**

I am looking to recruit study participants who are:

- a) Skilled Immigrant Women from the English-speaking Caribbean in Canada** who were granted permanent residence in Canada under the **Federal Skilled Worker Program (FSWP).**

- b) Participants will ideally have migrated from the Caribbean to Canada between the period 2005 – 2010.**

In particular, my research aims to understand how skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean in Canada who are racialized, negotiate their social identities of belonging to the skilled immigrant group in Canada.

You will be asked to:

Participate in a face-to-face interview that describe your lived experiences about how you negotiate your social identity after migration to Canada as a Skilled Worker. The interview will be 60 – 90 minutes in length.

In exchange for sharing their lived experiences, participants will be offered a small honorarium or a gift certificate valued no more than \$20 Canadian dollars.

Your participation is completely voluntary. I have attached a poster with more information. If you have any questions and/or would like to receive the letter of information with full details of the study, please contact me at dalon@yorku.ca.

This research will inform my doctoral dissertation which is a component to fulfill my study requirement in the PhD in Social Work program.

The findings of the study will be presented in a dissertation, journal articles and at conferences.

This research has been reviewed and approved by the Human Participants Review Sub-Committee, York University's Ethics Review Board and conforms to the standards of the Canadian Tri-Council Research Ethics guidelines.

If you have any questions about this process, or about your rights as a participant in the study, you may contact the Senior Manager and Policy Advisor for the Office of Research Ethics, 5th Floor, York Research Tower, York University, telephone 416-736-5914 or e-mail ore@yorku.ca.

I would greatly appreciate your support in circulating the attached recruitment flyer among your colleagues, friends, family members, agency & community networks and other relevant sources.

Thank you,

Dalon P. Taylor, PhD Candidate. York University

Canadian Immigration FSWP points systems selection factors for skilled workers

Selection Factors	Description	Maximum points allocated
Language skills	Meet required benchmark in first official language of French or English reading, writing, listening, speaking	28
Education	Educational assessment of overseas credentials comparable to Canadian university degree or equivalent	25
Experience	Based on number of years in full-time paid work with equivalent of minimum 30 hours per week for minimum 1 year or part-time, minimum 15 hours per week for minimum 24 months	15
Age	Based on age on the day of application with maximum points allocated to individuals between the ages of 18-35 years old at the time of data collection	12
Arranged Employment in Canada	Full-time job offer in Canada before FSWP application for minimum 1 year (qualification for FSWP not contingent on this factor)	10
Adaptability	Spouse or common-law partner migrating with applicant who meets any of above criteria for additional points, relatives (specified) in Canada, previous employment in Canada (specific skill criteria), arranged employment for applicant and/or spouse in Canada	10
TOTAL	Points allocated	100
Points to qualify	Minimum points required to qualify	67

Participants must meet the base criteria for skilled work experience, language ability and education selection factors before they can submit their application for further consideration by immigration officials. Their skilled work experience must align with a similar type of job that is specified in the Canadian National Occupation Classification (NOC) TEER categories (Citizenship & Immigration Canada, 2017). Their overseas employment must match the essential duties of the occupational description in the NOC. The higher the score that participants achieve for the selection criteria, the higher their chances are to qualify and migrate as a skilled worker.

Informed Consent Form

Study Name: Researching Social Identity using the case example of racialized skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean in Canada.

Researcher: Dalon Taylor (PhD Candidate); School of Social Work, York University

Contact: dalon@yorku.ca (416) 458-7130

You are invited to participate in a research study by a doctoral student from York University, School of Social Work, which aims to understand how skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean in Canada who are racialized, negotiate their social identities of belonging to the skilled immigrant group in Canada.

Purpose of Research: The aim of my research is to understand how skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean in Canada who are racialized, negotiate their social identities of belonging to the skilled immigrant group in Canada. My focus is particularly on skilled immigrant women from the English-speaking Caribbean who were granted permanent residence in Canada under the Federal Skilled Worker Program (FSWP), which falls under the Canadian Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA). Canada is one of the top three countries to which individuals from the Caribbean migrate with higher numbers of female migrants from the region to Canada than males (Chamberlain, 2002; Ho, 1999; Jones, 2008; Thomas-Hope, 1988; Thomas-Hope, 2002; Thompson & Bauer, 2003). In addition, skilled women experience migration very differently from other groups (Raghuram & Kofman, 2004). Therefore, research on how skilled immigrant women negotiate their social identities in Canada is warranted.

The findings of the study will be presented in a dissertation, journal articles and at conferences.

What will you be asked to do in the research: You will be interviewed by the researcher and asked to share your experiences negotiating your social identity in Canada as a racialized skilled immigrant woman. Interviews will be audiotaped and will be 60 to 90 minutes in duration. A follow-up contact will be requested should the researcher have questions regarding the completed interview.

Risks and discomforts: The risks to the participants are minimal. Risks may include resurfacing of emotions about difficult experiences that participants may have had that was revisited for discussion in the interview. The expertise of the interviewer who has training and experience recognizing signs of distress, will be used to make the assessment to discontinue the interview and refer participants to appropriate resources, if the interview becomes too emotional.

Benefits of the research and benefits to you: The thoughts and insights that you share for this study is very important to better understand how racialized skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean in Canada negotiate their social identities. this information can help to further research on similar population and help to inform service providers on the kinds of support that are

important for similar individuals. This is an important opportunity for you to share your experience to help develop knowledge and understanding about this topic.

Voluntary participation: Your participation in the study is completely voluntary and you may choose to stop participating at any time. Your decision not to volunteer will not influence the relationship you may have with the researchers or study staff or the nature of your relationship with York University either now, or in the future.

Withdrawal from the study: You can stop participating in the study at any time, for any reason, if you so decide. Your decision to stop participating, or to refuse to answer particular questions, will not affect your relationship with the researchers, York University, or any other group associated with this project. In the event you withdraw from the study, all associated data collected will be immediately destroyed wherever possible.

If you decide to stop participating you do not have to give any reason.

Confidentiality: Confidentiality will be provided to the fullest extent possible by the law. Any information you provide to us in connection with this study that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will not appear on the collected data, or in any writing that will arise from the research. All collected data will be under the control of the researcher and will be stored in encrypted files on a computer in a locked office. Only the researcher and her thesis committee will have access to these files. A paid translator will have access to audio recordings with identifying information removed for the purposes of translating speech. The data will be used for academic and research purposes only. All data will be destroyed within five years of completion of this thesis.

Questions about the research? If you have questions about the research in general or about your role in this study, please feel free to contact Dalon Taylor at (416) 458-7130, or by email at dalon@yorku.ca. Alternately, you may contact the thesis supervisor, Professor Wilburn Hayden (whayden@yorku.ca; 416-736-2100 ext. 20467).

This research has been reviewed and approved by the Human Participants Review Sub-Committee, York University's Ethics Review Board and conforms to the standards of the Canadian Tri-Council Research Ethics guidelines. If you have any questions about this process, or about your rights as a participant in the study, you may contact the Senior Manager and Policy Advisor for the Office of Research Ethics, 5th Floor, York Research Tower, York University, telephone 416-736-5914 or e-mail ore@yorku.ca

Legal rights and signatures:

I, _____, consent to participate in _____ conducted by Dalon Taylor. I have understood the nature of this project and wish to participate. I

am not waiving any of my legal rights by signing this form. My signature below indicates my consent and my receipt of the honoraria.

Participant Signature: _____ **Date:**

Principal Investigator Signature: _____ **Date:**

Demographic Form

Study Name: Researching Social Identity using the case example of racialized skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean in Canada.

Researcher: Dalon Taylor (PhD Candidate); School of Social Work, York University

Contact: dalon@yorku.ca; (416) 458 – 7130

You are requested to provide demographic and contact information about yourself in order to help the researcher organize and analyze the interview responses. You can decline to provide a response to any of the following categories. Your name and identifying information will be coded for confidentiality and will not be kept with the interview data.

Name: _____

Gender: _____

Year of birth & place of birth: _____

Year of migration to Canada & migration class (skilled immigrant):

Country from which you migrated to Canada: _____

Country in which degree was granted: _____

Occupation in country from which you migrated: _____

Number of years in your country employed in this occupation:

Approximate annual income range:

Present occupation: _____

Number of years of Canadian employment in this occupation:

Approximate annual income:

Racial Identity & Nationality:

Telephone contact: _____ Email contact:

Your information will be held in confidential and will only be accessed by the researcher for purposes of the research only.

Interview Guide/leading questions

This guide is meant to be a starting place and a grounding tool for interviews. Questions are meant to guide conversations where necessary.

Introduction/Preamble

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview

This interview will be audio taped to facilitate transcription of your responses

Before we start this interview, I want to explain a little more about the project and this interview

Review the informed consent and seek written consent for audio taping and use of the data

Complete demographic information sheet

I expect that this interview will be about 60 to 90 minutes

Before beginning the interviewer distribute a thank you card/gift card (\$20.00) in an envelope to thank participant for taking the time to participate in the research.

Any questions regarding the process or the project before we get started?

- A. Questions for ice-breakers to establish rapport between myself/researcher and the participants**
- B. Understanding of social identity**
- C. Group affiliation - attachment and meaningfulness of group identity**
- D. Gendered experience and impact on social identity - lived experience of social identity as a racialized skilled immigrant woman**
- E. Challenges in negotiating social identity**

A. Questions for ice-breakers

Interviewer: Thank you again for taking the time to participate in this research. I am going to give you a hand out with some questions to review. I would like to capture the descriptions of your experience in line with these questions without much interruption from me. However, I will use these questions to guide the process along where necessary. Please describe responses in terms of your own experience as much as possible as the aim is to capture your lived experience. Include your thoughts, feelings images, sensations and memories of each situation in your descriptions.

I will start by asking you to tell me about your background, then describe what your experience has been like in negotiating your social identity in Canada.

1. What is the immigration category under which you migrated to Canada?

2. What year did you migrate to Canada and which country did you migrate from?
3. What is the highest level of education you completed outside of Canada?
4. Which country was your certification/degree granted in and what is your country of birth?

For the remainder of the interview, I will use the questions as prompts if the participant does not address specific areas that are relevant to my research. As is in line with phenomenological methodology, implicit meanings should emerge from the interview without suggesting what the researcher is looking for directly.

B. Understanding of social identity

Interviewer: Please provide details of your experience that will help to understand your social identity. Some areas below may require some probing. Examples of probing questions can include, please tell me more about that experience, can you please provide an example of what you mean?

The literature outlines that an individuals' affiliation to specific groups help to shape his/her social identity, and cultural differences contribute to the different ways in which individuals are identified as belonging to specific groups.

1. How do you understand your social identity and please describe what your social identity means to you?
2. What are some of the factors that influenced your decision to migrate to Canada as a skilled immigrant worker?
3. How would you describe your social identity in relation to a skilled immigrant?
4. How important is your social identity to you?
5. Do you consider your social identity as different from that of skilled immigrant men, immigrants in general, individuals who were born in Canada etc., and if so please describe some of these distinct differences?
6. Can you describe any connection between your level of confidence, your self-esteem and your social identity? Please describe any these that you consider to be more important than the other and if so why?
7. Do you feel like there is a specific community (or organizations) in which you have to socialize based on your background and if so can you describe what that means to you?
8. Has your social identity changed since you migrated to Canada and if so what are some of the main areas that have changed?

C. Group affiliation - attachment and meaningfulness of group identity

Interviewer: The following questions are intended to develop a sense of your connection to any group (s) that you feel is significant in establishing your social identity or to maintain your social identity.

1. What group (s) do you identify with (cultural, ethnic, immigrant, racial etc.,) and why is this affiliation meaningful to you?

2. Describe your level of involvement in ethnic or cultural activities and whether or not this involvement has any connection to your social identity?
3. Do you consider your attachment to any of these groups as a result of social influence and do you think there are distinct experiences that result from being part of these groups?
4. How significant is your involvement with any cultural or ethnic group to your perception of your social identity?
5. Do you consider yourself a member of the skilled immigrant group and how does that shape your social identity? Is there a shared sense of identity with other members of this group?

D. Gendered experience and impact on social identity - lived experience of social identity as a racialized skilled immigrant woman

Interviewer: These questions are meant to gather an understanding of whether or not you believe that your race, gender and immigration category made a difference in your experience to establish your social identity in Canada.

1. What are some of the ways in which you negotiate your social identity and what parts of your experience speak to how you have adjusted in Canadian society?
2. Do you believe that your social identity is shaped by your race, gender, migration and if so please describe some of the ways in which they have shaped your social identity?
3. What area of your life is impacted by your social identity and how would you describe the impact on each area of your life after migration?
4. How would you describe your social identity in relation to the immigration category under which you migrated and is there any significance between these areas and your social identity?

E. Challenges in negotiating social identity

Interviewer: These questions are intended to gather information about any challenges that you encounter while establishing your social identity. Please include details in your descriptions about your feelings, emotions, thoughts and experiences.

1. Can you tell me how your social identity has changed since coming to Canada?
2. Describe some of the ways in which you have negotiated your social identity since coming to Canada and some of your experience during this process.
3. Can we talk a bit about how you believe that your social identity has shaped specific aspects of your life and describe the impact on each area of your life?
4. How would you describe your social identity in relation to the immigration category under which you migrated and what is the significance for you between them?
5. Do you consider any of these challenges to be connected to your race, gender, immigration category or country from which you migrated? If so, please provide specific examples based on your experience.
6. Based on your experience, what are some of the (institutional, structural and systemic) challenges that you encounter and how did they impact your social identity?

7. Please describe 4 aspects of your experience that you consider to be the most challenging as you negotiate your social identity and the emotions and feelings that you have attached to these experiences.
8. Describe your level of involvement in ethnic or cultural activities and whether or not this involvement has any connection to your social identity.

Closing:

Thank you for your time and sharing of your experience, thoughts and feelings. Before we end this interview, is there anything else you would like to add/clarify/expand on in what you have shared with me?

Can you think of anyone at this time who you would recommend for me to interview?

You have given me permission to contact you for follow-up or clarification from this interview, is that okay?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this interview.

Confidentiality Agreement for Transcription

Study Name: Researching Social Identity using the case example of racialized skilled immigrant women from the Caribbean in Canada.

Researcher: Dalon Taylor (PhD Candidate); School of Social Work, York University

Contact: dalon@yorku.ca; (416) 458-7130.

I, _____, have been hired to transcribe: audio recorded interviews, written transcripts of interviews.

I agree to:

1. Keep all the research information shared with me confidential by not discussing or sharing the research information in any form or format (e.g., disks, tapes, transcripts, emails) with anyone other than the *Researcher(s)*.
2. Keep all research information in any form or format (e.g., disks, tapes, transcripts, emails) secure while it is in my possession.
3. Return all research information in any form or format (e.g., disks, tapes, transcripts) to the *Researcher(s)* when I have completed the research tasks.
4. After consulting with the *Researcher(s)*, erase or destroy all research information in any form or format regarding this research project that is not returnable to the *Researcher(s)* (e.g., information stored on computer hard drive, emails).

Transcriber:

(Print Name)

(Signature)

(Date)

Researcher(s):

(Print Name)

(Signature)

(Date)