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**The resurgence of the Basic Income and Migration Dilemma: Subsuming the
Canadian Migrant Worker in the Basic Income Discourse**

By

Elizabeth Nunoo

An Internship Paper
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
through the Department of Political Science
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Master of Arts
at the University of Windsor

Windsor, Ontario, Canada

2021

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**The resurgence of the Basic Income and Migration Dilemma: Subsuming the
Canadian Migrant Worker in the Basic Income Discourse**

by

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January 26, 2021

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ABSTRACT

Undeniably, the Covid-19 pandemic has led to economic hardships for Canadians and has highlighted the loopholes in existing welfare programs. As a result, there have been calls for implementing a universal basic income policy that is anticipated to better lift Canadians out of poverty. Amid the arguments for a basic income, it is essential to point out that the labour force does not only consist of Canadian citizens. Available research has been silent on how a basic income policy would involve migrant workers in Canada and rely on the definition that basic income will be for ‘all persons’ in Canada. This reasoning is too simplistic because this research finds that Canadian immigration policies segregate migrant workers from Canadian citizens and permanent residents.

The temporary status of migrant workers stressed by clauses in federal immigration or provincial laws has usually served as justification for their denial of welfare programs although they contribute to these programs. Statistical evidence shows migrant workers are increasingly becoming a permanent part of the Canadian society. Hence, to formulate a basic income policy that would not just wield the universal brand but be genuinely inclusive, the research recommends that policymakers acknowledge and tackle the prevailing challenges that have prevented migrant workers from enjoying welfare programs in Canada.

Keywords: Basic income, migrant workers, temporary status, access to welfare, structural discrimination

DEDICATION

This paper is dedicated to the memory of my dad, Joseph Vandduin Nunoo. Also, to my aunt, Kate Akua Boadi and my brother Vandduin Ebo Nunoo. Without your invaluable sacrifices and support, my completion of this MA program would not have been possible.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCING BASIC INCOME

Introduction

Often, Universal Basic Income (U.B.I.) has been described by some researchers as a utopian welfare ideology with a very limited chance of being translated into a pragmatic program (Bidadanure, 2019, p. 482). Irrespective of this view, in measuring the economic hardship associated with the global Covid-19 pandemic, scholars, stakeholders, and U.B.I. advocates have begun to re-evaluate the feasibility of basic income in supporting people through financial difficulties. A lead advocate for U.B.I. in Canada is the Basic Income Canada Network (B.I.C.N.). The B.I.C.N. defines a basic income as an unconditional cash transfer from a government to individuals to enable everyone to meet their basic needs, participate in society and live with dignity, regardless of their work status (Pasma & Regehr, 2019). Although basic income has been thought of as an ambitious welfare program, it is the view of its supporters that with the proper planning and implementation, a basic income can provide individuals with enough money to comfortably live above poverty lines. In short, with basic income support, individuals would have the financial boost to back their own decisions that pertain to their general wellbeing.

In anticipation of a just and non-discriminatory economic recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic, many social observers and political forecasters in Canada have criticized existing social safety nets. For the most part, the Employment Insurance (E.I.) program has been criticized. Many critics of E.I. have labelled it as discriminatory and unreliable in times of national economic crisis, as experienced during the current pandemic (see Cannings, 2020). Creditably, the Federal government implemented the Canada Emergency

Response Benefit (C.E.R.B.) to make up for the inadequacies of the E.I., most especially since a lot of individuals were unable to access E.I. benefits.

Considering that the C.E.R.B. was able to cover people who under normal circumstances did not qualify for E.I., some advocates are championing for the implementation of a universal or guaranteed basic income in Canada, with some strongly calling for the conversion of the C.E.R.B. into a U.B.I. For instance, on April 21, 2020, fifty (50) Senators presented a petition to the Senate of Canada, requesting a progression of the C.E.R.B. into a minimum basic income to ensure social and financial fairness (see Lankin & Pate, 2020). With critics pointing to the cost of a basic income to the Canadian Federal government, the Winnipeg Centre MP, Leah Gazan, also called for a conversion of the C.E.R.B. into a “permanent guaranteed liveable basic income” (see Fuss, Palacios, & Eisen, 2020; McGuckin, 2020). Leah Gazan based her argument on the premise that the federal government’s ability to quickly disburse funds to support Canadians during the Covid-19 pandemic served as proof that a basic income is achievable (McGuckin, 2020).

Amid the arguments for a basic income, it is essential to point out that the Canadian labour force does not only consist of Canadian citizens. A careful look at Canada’s immigration trend demonstrates that Canada has gradually evolved into admitting more temporary foreign workers into its labour market. The usual call for basic income suggests that it would be for everyone, as seen in the definition of basic income by the B.I.C.N. However, social commentators and activists such as Acharya and Withers (2017) point out that the rights of migrant workers compared to that of Canadian citizens and permanent immigrants admitted to Canada are entirely different. Considering this, where do migrant

workers fall within the basic income discourse? Will migrant workers in Canada be eligible for a basic income?

This research highlights the transient nature of the migrant worker's status within the Canadian society. It also establishes that due to the emphasis on the temporary status of migrant workers, they are usually denied access to welfare programs that they contribute to in Canada. The posture of the research is that to weigh the prospect of migrant workers being considered for eligibility in a basic income policy, it is crucial to consider the challenges migrant workers face, especially regarding how they access existing welfare programs in Canada. This chapter reviews research studies that investigate the concept of basic income through the lens of migration. The chapter also reveals the research questions this study delves into, its hypothesis, the method, and the organization of the research report.

Review of Literature

Although heightened in Canada during the Covid-19 pandemic, U.B.I. as a welfare policy is a highly debated subject matter worldwide. The policy has earned various labels “such as social dividend, citizen's income, demogrant, and basic income” (Ghatak & Maniquet, 2019, p. 896; see also Parijs, 2004, p. 7). Moreover, governments have deliberated on the program, and it has been experimented in several countries, including Finland, Italy, Germany, and Canada. For these reasons, it is nearly impossible not to recognize the array of literary research and grey literature available on this subject matter.

In explaining what a basic income is, two authorities can be relied on to define the policy. One authority and activist of U.B.I., who has been on many occasions cited by other

scholars in the U.B.I. discussion, is Philippe Van Parijs. Best known as a proponent and main defender of the concept of basic income, Parijs (2004) in his definition of what a basic income is, described it as “an income paid by a political community to all its members on an individual basis, without means test or work requirement” (p. 8). Similarly, the Basic Income Earth Network (B.I.E.N.) defines a basic income as “a periodic cash payment unconditionally delivered to all on an individual basis, without means-test or work requirement.” Judging from these two definitions, it is easy to assume that the advocacy for a U.B.I. and its implementation is for ‘all persons’, within a political area, regardless of their status and with no strings attached. However, such an inference without further analysis would be too simplistic and flawed.

Critics of the basic income concept, exemplified by Melissa Kearney, Magne Mogstad and Ronald Dworkin, reject the idea that individuals can achieve equality through U.B.I. It is their view that basic income as a welfare policy is too expensive, endorses “idleness,” and removes the urgency for individuals to work for “basic survival” (see Kearney & Mogstad, 2019; Kaza, 2018, p. 57). In their criticism of U.B.I., Kearney and Mogstad (2019) contended that the idea that basic income would lead to a redistribution of wealth is an overestimation. They explain that, unlike other welfare programs that target a specific group of people, a basic income is intended to benefit the widest range of people and is likely to include middle to upper-income families. Consequently, basic income, in their view, would not only help the poor but would also be extended to the rich, thus continuing with unfair resource allocation. Dworkin (2000) contends that achieving egalitarianism in welfare for all members of a society is not a suitable political objective (p. 14). He emphasizes that even “if people have equal income...they will certainly differ

in the amount of satisfaction they find in their lives” because, in his view, people’s preferences are subject to change (pp. 11, 49, 52). By this, Dworkin appears to suggest that basic income as a policy might be too ambitious because governments may not be able to find common ground for individuals to equally thrive since people are naturally drawn to different choices.

In contrast to the views of critics, proponents of U.B.I. are fully convinced of its capability of redistributing wealth and eliminating poverty perpetrated by ‘systems.’ Regarding how the redistribution of wealth should be carried out, researchers have either proposed the reallocation through global, regional, or national systems (Boso & Vancea, 2012, p. 4). For instance, Pogge (2001) recommended the implementation of what he called a Global Resources Dividend (G.R.D.) for the “eradication of global poverty” (p. 6). In Pogge’s (2001) view, a G.R.D. is necessary because people, worldwide, are perpetually struck by severe poverty, brought upon them by a “shared institutional order” that is controlled by affluent states who frequently cheat poor states out in the sharing of world resources. Frankman (1998) shares a similar view as he concludes that there is a need for a social dividend that would tackle the global disparities created by “free-market globalization” (p. 178). That is to say that, per the view of globalists, countries hampered by economic underdevelopment have been plunged into poverty through their unequal global relations with affluent states. Therefore, a global dividend would help revert the harm caused and level the playing ground for all.

Despite the allure of the idea for a generous global basic income, Howard (2006), though a globalist, cautions campaigners to aim for a basic income at the national level since we lack effective regional or global “social policy institutions” (p. 2). If U.B.I.

advocates are to pursue Howard's advice, which is to limit the campaign for a basic income to the national level, then the conundrum of who should be eligible needs to be decided. Pioch (2002) tackles this dilemma by asking if citizenship is still a sufficient basis for the entitlement to a U.B.I. (p. 2). In response to this issue, Pioch (2002) makes the point that if proponents of U.B.I. prefer a national approach to the redistribution of wealth as opposed to the global way proposed by some scholars, then they should factor in the question of "international mobility" (p. 6). That is, although policymakers risk losing the moral support of taxpayers, basic income should not be limited to only citizens but include migrants who have been accepted to live and work in a national welfare state (Pioch, 2002, pp. 6, 8). Considering the afore recommendation by Pioch, the hesitancy of policymakers in leaning towards U.B.I. welfare policy becomes clear. On one end of the spectrum, governments face the challenge of pleasing the electorates to prolong their mandate hence tread cautiously to avoid placing an economic burden on taxpayers or increase government debt. On the other hand, they are also faced with a moral dilemma of ensuring that human rights standards are maintained to please the international community or citizens who lean towards human rights advocacy.

Parijs (2004), in evaluating the "to all its members" component of his definition of basic income, acknowledged that while some advocates would rather have a basic income confined to citizens, generally, the campaign for a basic income is to combat discrimination (p. 10). Hence, Parijs's (2004) recommendation for the 'who qualifies dilemma' is that migrant workers should be considered for basic income in which qualification could be based on the adoption of an "operational criterion" which would include conditions such as the length of residence for migrants (p. 10). Boso and Vancea (2012) advance the

argument on immigrants' entitlement to basic income by assessing the view of some scholars that generous social welfare policies, exemplified by a U.B.I., would serve as a 'magnet' that would attract immigrants. Borjas (1999) tested this 'welfare magnet' assumption with empirical data in the U.S.A. He concluded that the availability of welfare benefits within California, U.S.A., did influence the residential choices of new immigrants (Borjas, 1999).

Regardless of conclusions, such as Borjas's, Howard (2006) opines that the available indication of the "welfare-magnet effects" on migration should not be solely relied on as proof that migration would increase with the implementation of basic income. Although economic factors influence the decision of migrants, Boso and Vancea (2012) maintain that "basic income is not a necessary condition for increased migration from one country to another country, since such migration flows already exist regardless of a basic income being implemented." The prime aim of migrant workers usually includes the quest to improve their economic wellbeing. However, other factors also inform the decision of some immigrants, which range from security to environmental factors.

Narrowing down to the campaign for a U.B.I. in Canada, Acharya and Withers (2017) point out that advocates of the U.B.I. in Canada argue that U.B.I. is achievable in Canada because the country has existing 'universal' programs such as the Old Age Security (O.A.S.), and the Canada Child Benefit (C.C.B.). To this viewpoint, Acharya and Withers bluntly state that "existing universal benefits aren't truly universal" in the sense that "the so-called 'universal' access is generally implemented along citizenship lines." With the same line of argument, Schmid (2019) notes that although the Canadian welfare approach is usually considered to take a liberal inclination, temporary migrants, like Indigenous

persons and other visible minorities in Canada, “face many barriers in participating and accessing relevant support.” That is, Canada’s welfare system may appear generous on the surface of it, but it typically favours citizens and, in some cases, permanent residents.

With intent to contribute to the basic income debate in Canada, Green, Kesselman and Tedds (2020) formulated a series of questions which, in their view, would highlight key areas basic income advocates need to address. The authors ask many fundamental questions such as how recipients would be identified, how much the program would cost, and how people with disabilities would be treated under a basic income program. However, it is important to note that none of their queries about eligibility were in particular reference to Canada’s migrant population (Green et al., 2020). Although scholars and stakeholders have been concerned about how states would administer U.B.I. and still effectively manage migration into their territories, the fact remains that there has been little discussion on how migrant workers in Canada would be incorporated. As it will be established in subsequent chapters of this research, countries, exemplified by Canada, rely on the labour of migrant workers for economic advancement. However, the universality component of U.B.I. has typically been too generalized in the basic income literature. That is, the concern in respect of universality has been in respect of the extent of coverage such as what the age limit should be, the income and assets of recipients, however the literature ignores how migrant workers would be incorporated.

Scholars have also provoked the discussion on basic income and migration; however, the large portion of the available literature has been either generalized or do not necessarily pertain to Canada and its migrant population. In effect, the discussion of how

migrant workers fit into the on-going campaign for a Universal Basic Income and the just recovery from the Covid-19 Pandemic in Canada is warranted.

Research Question

Following the gaps identified in the review of literature, the obvious questions I seek to answer with the study are:

1. How different is a migrant worker's right to welfare mechanisms compared to a Canadian citizen or permanent resident in the labour market?
2. How will a Universal Basic Income efficiently include migrant workers in Canada to tackle systemic discrimination?

Hypotheses of Research

The research puts forward the argument that migrant workers contribute to Canada's economy through their labour and make contributions to the Canadian welfare system. Nevertheless, migrant workers do not have equal access to welfare provisions compared to citizens or permanent residents. Lessons derived from the C.E.R.B.'s implementation depicted that the federal government equally managed migrant workers with citizens and permanent residents and facilitated their access to financial assistance. With such an action by the federal government, it becomes clear that an individual's residential status is a crucial determining factor for their unimpeded access to Canada's welfare policies. Therefore, it is critical to understand the position and rights of migrant workers within the Canadian society and address the relevance or implications of a Universal Basic Income to migrant workers in Canada. Proponents of the U.B.I. proposal should clearly define the "universality" component of the policy. That is, advocates need

to plainly include how migrant workers can be made eligible recipients of the proposed basic income and not merely campaign for a Universal Basic Income for “Canadians” so as not to continue the systemic discrimination migrant workers experience under the existing welfare programs.

Organization of Research

The research will rely on a qualitative analysis that will focus on the economic plight of migrant workers within Canada. Data will be derived from empirical data sources, such as books, journal articles, government websites, thinktanks (grey literature), and dissertations, to collectively provide answers to the paper’s research question. Additionally, various facts and figures will be used from sources such as Statistics Canada and Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, among other sources.

This paper is structured into five chapters. Chapter one contains an introduction to the subject matter and a review of literature. Chapter two concentrates on defining the problem of who a migrant worker is in Canada, their rights, and the challenges of migrant workers, particularly those who migrate to Canada through the Temporary Foreign Workers Program (T.F.W.P.). The chapter highlights the access of migrant workers to some welfare programs compared to citizens or permanent residents. In chapter three, based on information from chapter two, the paper analyzes the posture of migrant workers in the Basic income dialogue in Canada. Particular attention is given to amendments made to T.F.W.P. by the Harper administration, which adopted the ‘Canadians first’ approach to explain the systemic divide between citizens and migrant workers that could be a problem to deal with even with the implementation of a basic income. In chapter four,

recommendations are made on how a U.B.I. could be coined to benefit migrant workers. The chapter references factors that made the C.E.R.B. accessible to Migrant workers compared to the E.I. program. The final chapter contains the conclusion of the research.

CHAPTER 2

DEFINING THE PROBLEM

As its focal point, the research assesses the incorporation of migrant workers in the discussion of basic income in Canada. Accordingly, the chapter defines who a migrant worker is in international norms and Canadian federal legislation. The chapter focuses on the contributions of migrant workers to the Canadian economy. It explains how the recruitment and integration of migrant workers into the Canadian society affect their entitlement to welfare programs in Canada. It will help buttress the stance of the research that until existing regulations that hinder migrant workers in accessing welfare programs are changed, the living standards of migrant workers in Canada would not improve with the implementation of a basic income.

Who is a migrant worker?

According to an International Labour Organization (I.L.O.) report, in 2017, 277 million people (refugees included) were assessed to be international migrants, with 59.2% (168 million) of these people being classified as migrant workers (Popova & Özel, 2018, p. 5). The I.L.O.'s instruments on migration describe migrant workers as individuals who travel from one country to another or have migrated from their country of origin to another, intending to be employed (I.L.O., 1999). Likewise, the International Organization for Migration (I.O.M.) identifies a migrant worker as a person who is to be or has been employed in a waged activity in a foreign country (I.O.M., 2019, pp. 136-137). In addition to this definition, the I.O.M. presents different categorizations for migration, including economic migration and labour migration. An economic migrant seeks economic opportunities through employment and other financial activities such as investment, unlike

a labour migrant who travels with the intent to work (I.O.M., 2019, pp. 61, 123, 136). With this distinction in mind, this research, in its reference to migrant workers, focuses on labour migrants rather than economic migrants.

Although migrant workers are usually challenged with substandard working terms as compared to their native coworkers in their host countries, through their remittances, they have proven to be valuable to the economic wellbeing of their families and the often-developing economies of their home countries (I.L.O., 2004; Maimbo & Ratha, 2005). Moreover, an International Monetary Fund (I.M.F.) report describes migrant workers as valuable to their host countries' economies as they fill labour gaps, improve productivity, and increase the labour force participation rate (Jaumotte, Koloskova, & Saxena, 2019). Popova and Özel's (2018) report estimated that 67.9% of the world's migrant workers are found in high-income countries, with 60.8% of all migrant workers being geographically concentrated in three subregions, that is, Northern, Southern and Western Europe (23.9%), Northern America (23.0%), and the Arab States (13.9%). These statistics show that migrant workers in Canada, a Northern American country, are key parts of the social fabric and labour market. Hence migrant workers need to be discussed in matters of political, social, and economic importance, typified by the Universal Basic Income discourse.

Who are Canada's migrant workers and how do they contribute to the Canadian economy?

The term 'migrant worker(s)' has not been explicitly employed in the legal frameworks that regulate immigration processes to Canada: the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (I.R.P.A.) and the Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations (I.R.P.R.). However, trends in the use of the term by scholars and policymakers indicate

that it has usually been in reference to Canada's temporary foreign workers. For instance, according to a Library of Parliament background paper, a migrant worker is a foreign national who wields the required documents to enter and work in Canada for a specific period (Elgersma, 2014, p. 1). The use of migrant worker(s) in this research is in reference to foreign workers who have been accepted to temporarily reside and work in Canada in accordance with specifications of the I.R.P.A. and the I.R.P.R.

The Canadian immigration system classifies migrants through their initial mode of entry into the country, which essentially routinely defines their status and rights. Specifically, migrants are either termed as permanent residents or temporary residents (O.E.C.D., 2019). Permanent residents gain their residency permit through one of the various distinct permanent immigration programs that have been categorized under the headings of Economic, Family, or Humanitarian classes (Roberts, 2014, p.20). Irrespective of the program they fall under, permanent residents enjoy the same privileges. These privileges include the prospect of arriving in Canada without prior acquisition of a job, they do not require special approval from an immigration officer for studies whiles living in Canada, and they do not automatically lose their status as permanent residents in circumstances where their permits expire, and so on (Roberts, 2014, p. 20; see also I.R.C.C., 2019). In this sense, scholars, such as Acharya and Withers (2017), contend that Canada's permanent residents are "closest to citizens in their grant of rights and legal protections." Consequently, creating the visualized paradigm in which citizens are at the top of a hierarchy, with permanent residents following closely and migrant workers lagging at the bottom.

Temporary migrants arrive through different routes; however, unlike their permanent counterparts, these categories of migrants have limited permit validity and usually have different rights and obligations depending on the type of permit they carry (Roberts, 2014). By way of example, whereas some migrant workers have open permits that allow them to work with different employers or change jobs to suit their welfare, some migrant workers have closed work permits that limit them to one employer without the freedom for change as and when they deem fit (O.E.C.D., 2019). Largely, migrant workers are admitted under two programs, the Temporary Foreign Worker Program (T.F.W.P.) and the International Mobility Program (I.M.P.), and together with international students who are also permitted to work, they constitute the temporary foreign labour force in Canada (O.E.C.D., 2019, p. 44). The disparities in the rights of migrant workers under the temporary permit, as will be discussed in other parts of this research, heighten the challenges of these migrant workers. Also, these disparities have, in some documented cases, limited their access to social safety net programs enjoyed by Canadian citizens and permanent residents (see Sargeant & Tucker, 2009).

Studies interested in the statistical trends of immigration programs in Canada indicate that over the years, Canada's immigration policies have progressively shifted towards the admission of more temporary migrant workers as opposed to permanent residents (Sharma, 2006, p. 18; see also Thomas, 2010). According to the 2018 annual report to the Canadian Parliament on immigration, by the end of the year 2017, Canada had welcomed 620,149 temporary migrants, which is more than double the 286,479 permanent residents who also arrived in the reporting year (I.R.C.C., 2019). Compared to recorded statistics in the previous year, 2016, the report showed that the number of temporary

migrants increased by 12.5% while the number of permanent residents admitted had decreased by 3.34% (I.R.C.C., 2019). In light of these statistics that illustrate Canada's continual admission of more temporary workers as opposed to permanent ones, migrant workers can be understood as very important to the Canadian economy.

It is estimated that Canada's ageing population will lead to a decline in the overall labour force participation rate, especially since 4 in 10 working-age Canadians could be aged 55 or over by 2026 (Fields, Uppal, & LaRochelle-Côté, 2017). McQuillan (2013) argued that although Canada is challenged with population growth due to low fertility rates, projections that the Canadian labour market would fall short of labour supply are overrated (p. 5). With the assertion that migrants do not easily assimilate into the Canadian labour market upon their arrival, McQuillan (2013) questions the notion of labour market gaps and instead emphasizes that there is a "serious mismatch between the skills and talents of the workforce and the demands of the labour market" (p. 27). McQuillan asserts that Canada's admission of migrant workers to fill labour gaps is a misplaced priority or is a solution to the wrong problem.

Regardless of arguments, such as McQuillan's that present disparities in reports about the extent of Canada's ageing population's impact on labour supply, some intellectuals, and policymakers, such as Bryan May and Teresa Woo-Paw, maintain that migrants have been a significant reserve for labour gaps (see May, 2016; Woo-Paw, 2011). Besides, in 2019, Statistics Canada reported that Canada was the country with the highest population growth rate (1.4%) among the G7 countries, a growth fast-tracked by the arrival of many landed residents and migrant workers (Statistics Canada, 2019). The contribution of migrant workers to the Canadian economy does not end with filling gaps in the labour

market. In 2016, it was estimated that international students in Canada helped to sustain approximately one hundred and seventy thousand jobs and boosted the economy in 2018 through their payment of tuition fees, housing, and other miscellaneous expenses worth \$21.6 billion (Global Affairs Canada, 2020). This information affirms that migrant workers contribute to the Canadian labour market through their physical labour and as well contribute to important sectors of the economy, such as through the payment of taxes, housing, transportation, consumer goods, and services.

The significance of migrant workers' contribution to the Canadian economy has been evident during the on-going Covid-19 pandemic. Despite established travel restrictions, the Canadian Federal government has made exceptions. Through the T.F.W.P., the government continues to recruit and welcome more migrant workers to Canada in its bid to guarantee food security and a constant supply of labour to industries the country deems critical to the economy (Employment and Social Development Canada, 2020). The continual admittance of temporary foreign workers into Canada by the federal government seemingly affirms the arguments of social analysts and advocates for migrant workers that these workers are an indispensable part of the Canadian economy. However, are migrant workers treated as indispensable? Do these migrant workers' immigration conditions enable them to access equal rights in the labour market as their citizens or permanent resident counterparts?

The recruitment of migrant workers into the state of temporariness

One immigration pathway through which migrant workers are recruited into Canada is the Temporary Foreign Worker Program (T.F.W.P.). The program, managed by

Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada (I.R.C.C.) in conjunction with the Canada Border Services Agency (C.B.S.A.), permits Canadian employers to employ temporary foreign workers to fill vacancies in instances where competent citizens or permanent residents are not obtainable (Kachulis & Perez-Leclerc, 2020). The history of the T.F.W.P. can be traced to 1973 with the inception of the Non-Immigrant Employment Authorization Program (N.I.E.A.P.), an immigration procedure introduced by the Canadian federal government which recruited skilled migrants to fill labour gaps temporarily. Although the T.F.W.P. has undergone adjustments over the years, some aspects of the N.I.E.A.P. inspire its current structure, especially in respect of the entitlements of migrant workers in Canada (Fudge & MacPhail, 2009, p. 846)

Prior to their entrance into Canada, stipulations under the N.I.E.A.P. subtly ensured that migrant workers were set aside from citizens and permanent residents. For instance, the status of migrant workers recruited through N.I.E.A.P. was tied to a specific employer, with whom he or she had an arrangement predating their entrance into Canada (Islam, 2013, p. 91). In addition to the restriction to an employer, permits issued to migrant workers under N.I.E.A.P. also limited their mobility as it specified their duration and location. Essentially, migrant workers required official consent to change their employers, no incentive to upgrade their immigration status to permanent residence or citizenship and were ultimately subject to deportation for breaching the terms of their immigration contracts (Foster, 2012, p. 24; Islam, 2013, p. 91). Additionally, under N.I.E.A.P., employers needed to go through an assessment known as the employment validation process (E.V.P.) to ensure that migrant workers were indeed needed temporarily and not favoured over Canadian citizens who may be available for the job (Sharma, 2006, p. 107).

In its current form, migrant workers are recruited under the T.F.W.P. through five streams: the high wage stream, the low wage stream, the primary agriculture stream, the caregiver program, and the global talent (Kachulis & Perez-Leclerc, 2020, p. 3). These programs maintain the employer-specific work permit requirements, but migrant workers have different permit expirations reflective of the stream of the T.F.W.P. they find themselves in. Migrant workers under the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program, for instance, have fixed contracts that permit them to only work in Canada for eight (8) months, after which they must return to their home country to wait for the next season (Kachulis & Perez-Leclerc, 2020, p. 6). As a means of ensuring that Canadian employers do not abuse their privileges through the T.W.F.P., they are required to apply for authorization from Employment and Social Development Canada (E.S.D.C.). Like the E.V.P. process under N.I.E.A.P., the mandate of E.S.D.C. is to ascertain, through the Labour Market Impact Assessments (L.M.I.A.) process, the prospective bearing migrant workers would have on the Canadian labour market before a foreign worker can apply for a work permit to Canada (I.R.C.C., 2020)

It is worth reiterating that migrant workers do not only experience exclusion of rights in contrast to Canadian citizens and permanent migrants but similarly, within the migrant worker division, the type of program they fall under segregates them. Unlike migrant workers who fall under the T.F.W.P., migrant workers under the I.M.P. are usually highly skilled and are issued open work permits that allow them flexibility within the job market. Also, employers do not require an L.M.I.A. before this category of migrants are employed (Kachulis & Perez-Leclerc, 2020, p. 8). Such divergences in the T.F.W.P. and I.M.P. requirements concerning assessing the need for employing temporary foreign

workers through the L.M.I.A. have led to some scholars questioning the genuineness of continuing such immigration programs (see Mertins-Kirkwood, 2015).

The integration, welfare entitlement, and segregation of migrant workers in Canada

In Canada, the rights of all workers, including that of migrant workers, are presented on paper to be assuredly protected by federal legislation (see Employment and Social Development Canada, 2020c). In this respect, Hastie (2017) observes that although migrant workers officially possess the same rights as citizens and permanent residents, these workers' ability to have primary access to their rights is a concern (p. 22). In theory, migrant workers have the same legal rights and are protected by Canadian labour laws and are no different from citizens and permanent residents. However, an assessment of the labour conditions of migrant workers in Canada depicts that this is a superficial representation. In reality, migrant workers are confronted with discrimination. In this research's estimation, immigration regulations in Canada hinder migrant workers from easily accessing welfare programs compared to citizens and their permanent counterparts. With the concern that the unfairness currently faced by migrant workers may progress even with the implementation of a basic income if not addressed, this section of the chapter focuses on how migrant workers are hampered in gaining access to welfare programs. It highlights the differences between the rights of migrant workers and citizens or permanent residents.

While migrant workers are sometimes faced with challenges such as lacking familiarity with Canadian labour laws, which could make them susceptible to exploitation, this research focuses on their vulnerabilities in connection to the conditions of their work

permits. Unlike Canadian citizens and permanent residents who are free to choose their work conditions, the lack of mobility within the job market, especially for migrant workers recruited through the T.F.W.P., undermines their bargaining power. Academics, Strauss and McGrath (2017) discussed that employer-specific work permits create what they refer to as unfree labour relations (p. 204). In essence, immigration procedures bind a migrant worker to an employer, empowering the employer and creating an avenue for the migrant worker to be threatened with expulsion.

The lack of mobility for migrant workers particularly affects their access to social welfare programs, as demonstrated by the E.I. program. By law, migrant workers, like citizens and permanent residents, are obliged to contribute to the E.I., with employers also authorized to make certain deductions for policies such as the Canada Pension Plan and income tax. Ideally, per the concept of the E.I. program, workers who lose their work by no fault of theirs receive payments from their E.I. premiums paid. However, paying for E.I. premiums does not make all workers eligible for E.I. claims. For individuals to successfully receive E.I. benefits, they need to also meet certain eligibility requirements (see Employment and Social Development Canada, 2020b). Although migrant workers are generally able to qualify for some special benefits associated with the E.I. program, for example, parental and maternity benefits, most migrant workers in the T.F.W.P. are denied regular E.I. claims based on the technicalities of their immigration status. To meet the eligibility for E.I., an individual needs to be available for work and should actively be searching for a job (Employment and Social Development Canada, 2020b).

The ‘available for work’ clause has been noted to be a challenge, especially for migrant workers who have their status tied to an employer (Nakache, 2013, p. 79). As

Faraday (2012) captures, for some migrant workers to qualify for an E.I. claim, it becomes necessary for them to change the conditions of their work or change the employer listed on their permit (p. 78). However, if temporary workers successfully show proof of securing a new employer, what use will an E.I. be for them since they have a new job? (Faraday, 2012, p. 78). The bottom line remains that even though migrant workers continue to fulfill their obligations to the E.I. program, their status in Canada becomes an obstruction when the time comes for them to claim their entitlement. It is also essential to note that, even when migrant workers are eligible for special benefits, they need to provide a valid Social Insurance Number (S.I.N.) to apply for their claims. In practice, a migrant worker's S.I.N., 'usually referred to as S.I.N. that begins with 9', expires with his or her work permit (Employment and Social Development Canada, 2020a). Therefore, in the case of the Seasonal Workers Program, for instance, migrant workers in this stream are likely to miss the opportunity to apply for these benefits when their eight months of contract expire.

From another perspective, identifying migrant workers as having 'temporary status' also works against them in their access to welfare programs even at the provincial level, a problem that citizens and permanent residents do not have. For instance, to be eligible for social assistance from Ontario Works, an individual is required to live in Ontario and not be a visitor or a tourist (Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, 2020). On the surface of it, migrant workers in Ontario appear to qualify for this social assistance as they live and work within the province. However, Ontario Works expressly categorizes temporary foreign workers and even international students as visitors, making them ineligible for social assistance. In actuality, the only way through which a migrant worker can be made eligible for Ontario Works is when "they have made a claim for refugee

protection or have applied for status as a permanent resident” (Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, 2018). With conditions such as these, Pioch’s (2002) dilemma of whether citizenship is a sufficient basis for the entitlement to a U.B.I., and by way of extension, welfare policies, springs up. Going by the condition for eligibility for Works, it becomes clear that citizenship and permanent residence becomes a luxury that migrant workers need to afford to enjoy some welfare programs in Canada freely especially since they do not receive the benefits for the welfare programs they pay into.

As pointed out in this chapter, the gradual tilting of Canadian immigration towards the admission of more temporary foreign workers as opposed to permanent migrants demonstrates that migrant workers are important for the growth of the Canadian economy. The assessment of how migrant workers are integrated into the Canadian society however reveals that the welfare protection of these workers is of limited concern to both the federal and provincial governments as immigration rules prevent them from freely assessing welfare programs. Although Canadian Immigration rules classify migrant workers as temporary, the constant reliance on these foreign workers suggests that their services are becoming a permanent component of the Canadian economy. Thus, the issue as to whether they should be included in a generous welfare policy needs to be discussed.

CHAPTER 3

ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEM

As discussed in chapter two, the temporary status of migrant workers and immigration conditions has been a basis for migrant workers to be denied access to welfare protection in Canada. To reinforce the argument that Canadian immigration regulations are unfair to migrant workers, the first part of this chapter analyzes how reforms made under the Harper administration between 2007 and 2014, have bolstered the said unfairness against migrant workers. The second part of the chapter offers an analysis of how migrant workers have so far been incorporated in basic income discussions in Canada and discloses that migrant workers have not been included in the discussion of eligibility as far as basic income is concerned. Also, the analysis of previous basic income trials and policy options in this section uncovers that migrant workers are left out in the planning of these generous welfare programs. The exclusion of migrant workers from basic income trials raises the concern that this welfare policy will eventually be implemented along citizenship lines.

Reforms under the Harper Administration and the systemic divide between citizens and migrant workers

In discussing the impasse of whether basic income at the national level should be for “all,” that is, citizens and legal foreign residents alike, Howard (2006) makes a significant observation. He asserted that to address the apprehension that U.B.I. would lead to an influx of migrants and render the welfare policy economically or politically unfeasible, egalitarian states are likely to face the problem of having to choose between:

- pursuing a generous welfare policy with restrictive immigration policies

- or open immigration policies but less generous welfare policies (Howard, 2006, p. 3).

Considering the above assertion, it can be observed that Canada, particularly under the Stephen Harper administration, fits a part of the narrative Howard (2006) sought to depict, that is, toeing the line of managing generous welfare policies with constricting immigration policies. To illustrate, it can be noted that initial changes made by the Harper administration, especially to immigration policies guiding the T.F.W.P., painted a picture of a government inclined to facilitate the admission of more temporary foreign workers into Canada. Nevertheless, the Conservative federal government also established further restrictive immigration procedures and amended policies to guarantee that Canadian citizens' welfare interests are safeguarded over those of temporary foreign workers.

Right from the inception of the Harper administration in 2006, the T.F.W.P. endured a series of changes. The federal government, in response to labour demands, extended the list of jobs that qualified for the Low Skill Pilot Project of the T.F.W.P., which had been initiated by the federal Liberal government in 2002, ensuring eligibility for more foreign workers under the program (Canadian Union of Public Employees, 2013). In the 2007 budget, the federal government divulged its plans of enhancing the T.F.W.P. to satisfy the human resources needs of Canadian businesses. Moving forward with this plan, the government dedicated \$50.5 million to accelerate the application process for admitting temporary foreign workers into Canada. It also expanded the electronic application system and implemented other initiatives such as providing employers with information brochures to guide them in hiring foreign workers (see Employment and Social Development Canada, 2007). Although temporary foreign workers could seemingly migrate into Canada for work

easily under the Harper administration, it should be mentioned that it came with continually bearing the brunt of precariousness.

In response to the public outcry that Canadians were losing their jobs to foreign workers, primarily through the T.F.W.P., the federal government put in place mechanisms aimed at revamping related immigration policies. Coined under the theme of putting Canadians first, the Harper administration's 'overhaul' of the T.F.W.P. effected new protocols intended to regulate Canadian employers' arbitrary reliance on foreign workers. For example, employers were required to advertise vacant positions within Canada for a minimum period of four (4) weeks before making a move to hire foreign workers (Employment and Social Development Canada, 2019). Additionally, as part of the new L.M.I.A. process, employers were obligated to report on the number of Canadians who applied for the job position and were interviewed for it, then also explain the reason for hiring foreign hands over Canadians (Employment and Social Development Canada, 2019). Yet again, as part of the 'overhaul,' the L.M.I.A. fee was reviewed from \$275 to \$1,000 for every temporary worker position requested by an employer, with the allowable duration of work permits per the L.M.I.A. reduced from 2 years to 1 year (Employment and Social Development Canada, 2019).

It can be realized that the "unfree labour relations" that challenge migrant workers in the labour market, as previously discussed, were steadily entrenched by the federal government through the reforms made to immigration policies bordering the T.F.W.P. (Strauss & McGrath, 2017, p. 205). Notably, although migrant workers with employer-specific work permits technically have the right to change their original employers, reforms such as the increase of the L.M.I.A. fees to \$1000, makes it practically impossible for

migrant workers to apply for new employers (Strauss & McGrath, 2017, p. 204). In other words, migrant workers are left with little incentive to challenge unfair treatments due to the new high cost of the L.M.I.A. They are somewhat susceptible to unethical actions meted out to them by their employers. For example, it has been reported that due to the high cost of the L.M.I.A. some Canadian employers who hire temporary foreign workers shift the cost of the L.M.I.A. to these migrant workers (see May, 2016, p. 9)

Along with being denied mobility within the Canadian labour market through the issuance of employer-specific work permits, the Harper administration's introduction of the 'four in, four out' rule, which was enforced in April 2011 and mostly targeted low-skilled migrant workers, led to more precarity for foreign workers. The import of the 'four in, four out' rule was that a migrant worker could have a work permit renewed for an accumulated period of four years, after which they would be required to leave Canada and be ineligible for a temporary work permit for another period of four years (Sharma, 2006, p. 203). Although the 'four in, four out' rule was repealed by the Liberal federal government in 2016, it can be argued that this immigration rule drew attention to the fact that the status of migrant workers within the Canadian society ought to be preserved as temporary. Thus, heightening the systemic divide between Canadian citizens and migrant workers and carelessly ingraining the perception that these temporary foreign workers are disposable.

Sharma (2006), an activist scholar and a critic of the N.I.E.A.P posited that the crafting of who a migrant worker is, under N.I.E.A.P. as an immigration policy, plainly showed how nationality could be utilized as a criterion or lawful means of justifying the unfairness migrant workers in Canada face (p. 18). That is to say that although migrant

workers are fully recognized in Canadian laws, their ‘temporary foreign worker label’ within the federal regulations also makes it easy for them to be denied the rights to protection and welfare benefits that the Canadian states make available to citizens and permanent residents (see Sharma, 2006, p. 135). The Harper administration’s reforms to the E.I. program are once again observed to have validated the hypothesis that Sharma (2006) put forward concerning a migrant worker’s impermanence and his or her access to welfare protection in Canada. To illustrate, up until 2012, although migrant workers had challenges in meeting the eligibility for claiming regular benefits under the E.I. program, they could make claims for special benefits such as the parental, maternity, compassion, and sick benefits, with little to no limitations (U.F.C.W. Canada, 2012).

Before the Harper administration’s reforms to the E.I. program, migrant workers were authorized to make claims for the E.I. special benefits electronically or by mail even when their work contracts had ended, and they had returned to their home countries (J4MW & C.S.S.P., 2010). Thus, migrant workers, under the old regulations of the E.I. program, were able to deservedly benefit from the welfare system they had contributed to in the course of their work in Canada, irrespective of where they lived. However, in December 2012, the government made changes to the E.I. program, which adversely affected the ability of migrant workers to make claims for these special benefits when their work permits expire. With the rationale that the E.I. program is to encourage Canadian workers to transition into the labour market, the Harper administration specified that the payment of special benefits to migrant workers, who had contributed to the program but no longer lived in Canada, defeated the purpose of the E.I. program (Léonard, 2013, p. 10). To reiterate, migrant workers currently require valid S.I.N. numbers to apply for E.I. benefits.

They lose the opportunity to apply for benefits whenever their work permits expire because the S.I.N.'s validity is tied to the duration of their work permits. The 2012 reforms to the E.I. formed the basis of this S.I.N. eligibility requirement, thus creating the ideal grounds for migrant workers to be denied E.I. benefits due to their temporary status.

The migrant worker and the dialogue of basic income in Canada

Having defined the position of migrant workers as indispensable yet transient in the Canadian labour market and society, the critical questions then to ask are, have the 'real-life' rights of migrant workers been considered by basic income advocates in Canada? Will the restrictive conditions migrant workers face concerning their access to existing welfare policy extend to their eligibility for a basic income? The overarching perspective of this research is that Canadian immigration policies do not afford migrant workers equal welfare protection and segregates them from Canadian citizens and permanent residents. Hence, in discussions such as that of the U.B.I, it is important to situate the prevailing rights and challenges of migrant workers to formulate and implement social safety nets that would not just wield the universal brand but be genuinely inclusive.

In line with this paper's concerns, it is even more interesting to note that the hurdle of whether temporary foreign workers should be entitled to a basic income has not been crossed by Canadian policymakers or scholars and is barely a focus in the Canadian basic income dialogue. In past years, there have been trials of basic income programs that used a sample of Canadians. This includes the Manitoba Basic income pilot (Mincome), which commenced in 1974 and ended in 1979. The most recent initiative was the short-lived Ontario basic income pilot (O.B.I.P.) initiated in 2018 but prematurely terminated in 2019.

The Mincome initiative, executed by Manitoba's provincial government in collaboration with the federal government, enrolled low-income families who received guaranteed income benefits based on their family sizes, alongside a control group who did not receive any benefit within Dauphin and Winnipeg (Frankel, 2020). Although some scholars have scrutinized this pilot program to draw out lessons to formulate future basic income policies, one fact remains. There have been little to no reports contemplating on how these past programs had incorporated migrant workers.

The Mincome model was discontinued in 1979 without any interest on the part of the federal or provincial governments to evaluate the program due to the shift in political power (Frankel, 2020, p. 151). Appraisals of the Mincome by intellectuals like Evelyn Forget, Derek Hum, and Wayne Simpson point to the fact that the prime interest of the Mincome initiative was to gauge the response of people towards work in the instance where they had the assurance of a generous welfare benefit (see Forget, 2012; Hum & Simpson, 1993). In other words, little attention was paid to who would be eligible for the basic income program if it were to be run nationally. Instead, the interest of policymakers was to check whether the guarantee of a periodic basic income would induce people to be lazy or discourage them from being active in the labour market. Conceivably, given that the T.F.W.P., then known as N.I.E.A.P., had only been inaugurated a year before the conception of the Mincome, it could be assumed that the Canadian labour market at the time of this project was not as diverse as its current state. Hence migrant workers were not a subject matter in the discussion of a basic income.

In line with this argument, Forget, Marando, Surman and Urban (2016), before the O.B.I.P. project, counselled the Ontario government to consider the reality that the

Canadian labour market has evolved since the Mincome era. Although these scholars do not explicitly discuss migrant workers as a subject matter, they note that the Canadian labour market has increasingly tilted toward the reliance on precarious or seasonal workers (see Forget et al., 2016, pp. 11-16). Accordingly, the discussion paper on the O.B.I.P. by Honourable Hugh Segal, a Canadian political strategist and advisor for the Ontario government on the O.B.I.P, echoed this notion, emphasizing that the selected trial sites needed to be an accurate reflection of Ontario's diverse inhabitants (Segal, 2016). There was the expectation that the O.B.I.P. would cover members of the Indigenous and racialized communities and include immigrants of various generations (Segal, 2016).

Going by the aforesaid, it is easy to presume that temporary foreign workers were accommodated in the Ontario basic income trial. However, such a conclusion without further scrutiny would be unsound. As part of their evaluation of the O.B.I.P., McDowell and Ferdosi (2020) designed a survey that was open to individuals who resided in the O.B.I.P. trial areas. It is interesting to note that all 217 respondents who partook in the said survey and identified as recipients of the O.B.I.P. held Canadian citizenship status (McDowell & Ferdosi, 2020 p. 686). Specifically, more than 95% of these respondents were native-born citizens, while less than 5% of them were originally immigrants who had attained citizenship. It can be contended that the 217 respondents who participated in McDowell and Ferdosi's survey were just a small portion of the overall project participants and may not be enough to form the basis for a conclusion that migrant workers were excluded from the O.B.I.P. However, it cannot be overlooked that such a disclosure provokes further concern about whether a national basic income will be ultimately implemented along citizenship lines and neglect the welfare protection of migrant workers.

From an alternative perspective, it is observed that the O.B.I.P. was constantly compared to existing social assistance programs in Ontario. The discussion paper of the O.B.I.P. categorically alluded to the fact that the trial program was meant to completely replace the recipients' Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program (O.D.S.P.) incomes (see Segal, 2016). McDowell and Ferdosi (2020) reported that virtually 55% of their survey participants received payment from Ontario Works or O.D.S.P. before and/or after the O.B.I.P. (p. 689). Also, to help test the viability of the O.B.I.P., one component of the trial program was a control group who only received existing Ontario Works or O.D.S.P. benefits without any change to their income support (Segal, 2016). The use of a control group that only received existing social assistance programs in Ontario corroborated the aim of the O.B.I.P., which was to measure the general well being of participants in terms of their health, life choices, career choices, education outcomes, and work behaviour, among other things (see Segal, 2016). As discussed earlier, temporary foreign workers and students are categorized as visitors in Ontario and do not qualify for either Ontario Works or O.D.S.P. Thus, the indication that the Ontario government was seeking to compare the welfare of Ontario residents under existing social assistance programs with that of the O.B.I.P. reinforces the concern as to whether the trial was designed to accommodate migrant workers. Such comparisons make it noticeable that migrant workers are not thought of in the planning of basic income policies in Canada.

The comparison of basic income benefits to existing social assistance programs is not exclusive to the O.B.I.P. case. The Basic Income Canada Network (B.I.C.N.), a proponent of the basic income dialogue in Canada, constantly referred to existing social welfare programs in their discussions of basic income policy options for Canada. Pasma

and Regehr (2019), in the policy options report prepared for the B.I.C.N., opined that “Canada already has two federal basic income-like programs” (p. 46). That is the Old Age Security and the Guaranteed Income Supplement (OAS/GIS) programs, and the Canada Child Benefit (C.C.B.). They further suggest that for the decision on what the maximum level of the basic income benefit should be, the federal government could make comparisons with active income security programs, exemplified by social assistance, OAS/GIS, or the C.C.B. (Pasma & Regehr, 2019, p. 6). By this, the B.I.C.N. seems to suggest that Canada already has existing basic income structures that the federal government can review and expand to include every Canadian other than few stakeholders.

If indeed a basic income in Canada would be for everyone, as the policy’s definition suggests, then the question of whether the ‘real-life’ rights of migrant workers are considered in policy designs is in order. An assessment of temporary foreign workers’ eligibility to these welfare programs referred to by the B.I.C.N. reveals that migrant workers are once again often found wanting. For instance, the precariousness of some migrant workers due to their immigration status in Canada, has a detrimental effect on their entitlement to the C.C.B. According to the Canada Income Tax Act, for temporary residents to qualify for a C.C.B., they need to have resided in Canada throughout the 18-months preceding the time of their application and need to have a valid permit in the 19th month (Canada Revenue Agency, 2020). Although the Income Tax Act does not outright deny temporary residents from applying for C.C.B., it can be noted that the limiting clauses, exemplified by the 18-month residency requirement, effectively exclude temporary migrant workers. Hence some migrant workers, like seasonal farmers and refugees who are

yet to receive protected status, are subtly disenfranchised in their access to this welfare policy.

Again, according to Pasma and Regehr (2019), in the plan of the B.I.C.N., basic income is envisaged to “be universally available to all Canadians, permanent residents, and protected persons, regardless of employment status, family composition, availability for work...” (p. 8). This statement formed a part of the B.I.C.N.’s set of principles that guided their work in preparing policy options that the group proposed for Canada to consider in implementing the basic income policy (see Pasma & Regehr, 2019, pp. 8-9). Per this statement, it is evident that besides the above observation made in respect of the migrant worker’s existing access to welfare programs, migrant workers were left out in the principles that guided the B.I.C.N. in the preparation of their policy options. The main arguments of basic income advocates usually emphasize the need to redistribute wealth to rid the Canadian society of poverty and ensure that every individual can live with dignity and meet their basic needs. However, although the B.I.C.N. mention in their principle that basic income would be universally available, migrant workers were not listed as eligible beneficiaries in their guiding principles for this envisioned generous welfare policy. It appears therefore that the advocacy for basic income has so far overlooked the wellbeing of migrant workers who are part of Canadian society and contribute to the Canadian economy.

Reforms made under the Harper administration substantiated the fact that migrant workers are considered just transient in the Canadian society. The definition of these workers as temporary has not been helpful or motivating for their welfare protection as enjoyed by Canadian citizens or permanent residents. Although supporters for basic

income, exemplified by the B.I.C.N., have called for a basic income for everyone to meet their basic needs, an assessment of policy suggestions and basic income trials show that the welfare of migrant workers in Canada not included in this call. The objective of past basic income trials in Canada has been to measure people's attitude towards work when they receive an alternative revenue like a basic income and test whether this welfare policy can effectively eliminate poverty compared to existing policies.

CHAPTER 4

RECOMMENDATIONS

In discussing the subject matter of basic income and migration, scholars such as Pioch (2002) and Parijs (2004) have drawn attention to the fact that migrant workers cannot be overlooked in deliberations due to international mobility. An analysis of the integration of temporary foreign workers in Canada in chapters two and three shows that the rigidity of some immigration regulations, coupled with the ingrained perception about the temporary status of these workers, makes them prone to bias in welfare protection. A look at the trend of basic income trials or basic income policy proposals in Canada has also depicted that migrant workers have been omitted in the contemplation of a basic income program for Canada. Other than relying on the simple definition that the basic income is for all members of a political community, the research maintains that the implementation of a basic income should include a thorough plan that would consist of all members of the Canadian society, including migrant workers, who contribute to the economy.

Subsuming the Canadian migrant worker into the basic income discourse

Macao, an autonomous territory of China, serves as an example of how temporary residents were included in a basic income policy. The government of Macao in 2015 revealed a basic income policy which had a condition that migrants needed to have a valid Macao resident identification card to be eligible for the basic income support. In the government's plan, permanent residents were to receive 9,000 Macanese patacas, which is approximately CAD 1,458, while temporary residents would receive 5,400 Macanese patacas, which is about CAD 860 (see Laurinavičius & Laurinavičius, 2016). It can be realized that Macao relied on a principle whereby permanent residents were given more

income support compared to temporary residents. Canada does not necessarily need to replicate Macao's principle; however, such examples show that there is a possibility of including migrant workers in its basic income plan.

It is the view of this research that the prospect of migrant workers to be genuinely included in a basic income program lies with the formulation of the rules that would regulate eligibility for the policy. Based on the observation that migrant workers are typically deprived of welfare entitlement merely because of their temporary resident status in Canada, human rights and migrant worker rights activists have advocated for permanent resident status for these workers (see Canadian Council for Refugees). Certainly, it is the perspective of this research that if migrant workers are disconnected from the 'temporary' label, it will create an urgency for these workers to be thought of as part of the Canadian society and included in the basic income policy. If migrant workers are not considered as just transient but recognized as a perpetual part of the Canadian society and labour market, it would instigate a moral obligation for the federal and provincial governments to safeguard the welfare interest of the migrant population.

Creating the avenue for migrant workers to deservedly achieve permanent resident status would go a long way to provide them with the opportunity to be protected by federal and provincial laws, as enjoyed by their permanent resident counterparts. However, lessons drawn from the implementation of the C.E.R.B. also show that even without the official classification of migrant workers as permanent residents, welfare policies can be invented in a way that advances eligibility for migrant workers. A crucial action by the federal government that aided the access of temporary migrants to the C.E.R.B. was waiving the requirement to prove their eligibility to E.S.D.C. (Blackwell, 2020). Per the initial

requirements for the C.E.R.B., temporary migrants were managed differently from citizens and permanent residents. They were required to go the extra mile of proving their eligibility with an image of their valid permit or confirmation that they were renewing an expired permit. With the federal government's waiver of this requirement, it can be argued that the federal government has admitted the fact that temporary migrants need to meet the same criteria as citizens or permanent residents to enjoy welfare programs such as the basic income adequately.

This research proposes that for migrant workers to be adequately incorporated in a basic income policy, a valid S.I.N. requirement as an eligibility criterion should be eliminated. The use of the S.I.N. beginning with '9', which has an expiration date for migrant workers and is usually tied to the validity of their work permits, has been a key means for migrant workers to be denied access to other welfare policies. Migrant workers' use of S.I.N.s that begin with '9' sets them aside because Canadian citizens and permanent residents are issued different series of numbers that do not expire. Hence, for migrant workers to be fully considered for future basic income policies, the valid S.I.N. eligibility requirement must be excluded in basic income support requirements.

Additionally, it is recommended that clauses that define migrant workers as visitors and would prevent them from accessing the basic income policy, as seen in the Ontario Works welfare policy, should be excluded from legislative acts that would establish the basic income policy. Judging from existing policies, it can be noted that the semantics of legislative acts is a powerful tool that determines the fate of migrant workers within the labour market and Canadian society.

This research agrees with Parijs (2004) that policymakers should adopt an “operational criterion as it would create a middle ground that would alleviate the fears that a generous basic income policy that includes migrant workers would attract more migrants to Canada.” A criterion used by the federal government to measure individuals’ eligibility for C.E.R.B. was whether the individual had earned a minimum of CAD 5000 (before taxes) in the last 12 months. Although Forget (2020) admonished that the C.E.R.B. is not a basic income because of the conditionalities attached, it should be admitted that migrant workers had reasonable access to financial support compared to the E.I. and other welfare programs. Thus, in the formation of a basic income that would include migrant workers, a quota like the instance of the C.E.R.B. should be instituted to ensure that migrant workers who receive the basic income support have invested in the economy through their taxes. It can be contested that the issuance of conditionalities goes against the principle of basic income, as pointed out by Forget (2020). However, this would be a progressive step for migrant workers compared to the current situation whereby they have been overlooked in the advocacy for basic income.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Although the advocacy of basic income for all persons seems uncomplicated and appealing, the analysis of this research has revealed that Canadian society is composed of different groups of individuals who enjoy different sets of rights. Particularly, the assessments of this study indicate that an individual's mode of entry into Canada determines the extent to which they would enjoy welfare protection under Canadian federal or provincial laws. While Canadian citizens and permanent residents generally have easy means of qualifying for welfare programs, migrant workers are saddled with hindrances such as employer-specific work permits and expirable S.I.N.s that limit their access to welfare protection.

The research has established that temporary foreign workers have become an indispensable part of the Canadian economy as they fill labour gaps and make other contributions through the payment of taxes among other things. Although the T.F.W.P. is steadily becoming a permanent part of the Canadian economy, immigration laws and reforms have continually disqualified these workers in the access to existing federal welfare programs like E.I. or provincial programs like Ontario Works irrespective of their contributions made. Given the extent of the mismatch between the real-life circumstances of migrant workers and their theoretical rights or protection, it can be reasoned that the Canadian immigration laws create the avenue for migrant workers to be exploited and have been the backbone of their alienation. In other words, the basis of the vulnerability of migrant workers and their ineligibility for welfare programs has been the emphasis placed on their temporary status in Canadian society by both federal and provincial laws. Although

migrant workers contribute to Canada's economic prosperity, they experience structural inequalities and have minimal rights.

In assessing how a basic income policy can efficiently include migrant workers, the research finds that the negotiation of this generous welfare policy in Canada, has so far neglected the interest of temporary foreign workers. Previous basic income trials in Canada have failed to recognise and address the concerns or challenges of migrant workers under existing welfare programs. Even though migrant workers have challenges meeting the qualification for existing welfare programs, advocates of basic income have constantly compared U.B.I. policies to these existing welfare programs and have sometimes anticipated it as a replacement for them. Such actions on the part of advocates for U.B.I. makes it noticeable that the real-life rights of migrant workers have not been gauged.

In this regard, a vital step for policymakers in considering migrant workers for a basic income policy would be to first acknowledge and tackle the existing gaps between migrant workers, Canadian citizens, and permanent residents. For a basic income policy to be truly inclusive, it is necessary for migrant workers to be treated equally as their citizen and permanent resident counterparts, as experienced with the C.E.R.B. Also, as seen from existing welfare policies, immigration rules and reforms have served as the underpinning for the discrimination of temporary foreign workers in Canada. Thus, the research recommends that legislative acts that would establish a basic income policy in Canada should exclude prejudiced clauses that would use the temporary status of these migrant workers as a disqualification criterion or give preference to citizenship and permanent residential status.

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