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A Narrative Inquiry into the Experiences of Racialized Internationally Trained Professionals in  
the Academe: A Pedagogy of Cultural Wealth.

By

Samuel Jokodola

A Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies

through the Faculty of Education

in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for

the Degree of Master of Education

at the University of Windsor

Windsor, Ontario, Canada

2023

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January 9, 2023

## **DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY**

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I certify that, to the best of my knowledge, my thesis does not infringe upon anyone's copyright nor violate any proprietary rights and that any ideas, techniques, quotations, or any other material from the work of other people included in my thesis, published or otherwise, are fully acknowledged in accordance with the standard referencing practices. Furthermore, to the extent that I have included copyrighted material that surpasses the bounds of fair dealing within the meaning of the Canada Copyright Act, I certify that I have obtained a written permission from the copyright owner(s) to include such material(s) in my thesis and have included copies of such copyright clearances to my appendix.

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## ABSTRACT

Though significant attention has been drawn to the diversity or lack thereof within the Canadian academe, the attention shown to professionals in non-faculty positions has been quite insignificant in comparison to that shown to faculty members. The purpose of this study is to investigate the experiences of racialized internationally trained professionals in academe and to raise awareness of the gap created by a lack of research into the experiences of non-faculty staff members in Canadian academe. In this study, a narrative approach to understanding the experiences of racialized internationally trained professionals (both faculty and non-faculty) in Canadian post-secondary institutions was used to investigate how these professionals respond to and deal with real and perceived challenges, and how these experiences affect them both professionally and personally. This study includes six participants with professional experience ranging from two to twelve years, and their experiences are situated within a pedagogy of cultural wealth. This study identified a lack of support, foreign credential recognition, institutional structure and responsibilities, and language and cultural differences as common themes in participant narratives. Implications for faculty, non-faculty, post-secondary institutions, and future research are also presented.

*Keywords: Narrative Inquiry, Internationally Trained Professionals, Academe, Cultural Wealth, Deficit Thinking.*

## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated to:

*To God*

*To my parents*

*To my elder brother*

*To my advisor*

*To my family and friends*

*To everyone who inspires me*

*To all Racialized Internationally Trained Professionals*

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

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## GLOSSARY

**Academe:** This term refers to an academic environment or community.

**Cultural taxation:** Padilla (1994) coined the term to describe the additional responsibilities placed on racialized faculty and non-faculty members due to the assumption that they are best suited for specific assignments that their institutions do not formally recognize or reward.

**Cultural wealth:** Yosso (2005) defines cultural wealth as a collection of knowledge, skills, abilities, and contacts that marginalized individuals possess and use to survive and resist oppression.

**G7:** The G7 (Group of Seven) is an organization of the world's seven largest advanced economies which dominate global trade and the international financial system. They include Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America. The European Union is an unlisted member.

**Internationally Trained Professionals:** This term refers to individuals (faculty or staff members) who completed a degree equivalent to a Canadian college or university credential outside Canada before obtaining additional educational or professional certification or experience in Canada.

**Pastoral care:** Pastoral care is the unpaid emotional, social, academic, and career support or mentoring that the few available racialized faculty or staff members frequently provide to racialized students who seek them out.

**Racialized:** This term is used to refer to the social construction of individuals or groups as non-White. It is generally used to identify the process by which ethno-racial groups are among those created, categorized, inferiorized, and marginalized as “others” (Henry et al., 2017, p. 4).

**Tokenism:** This is the practice of making a symbolic effort to appear inclusive by recruiting a few members of equity-seeking groups.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents an overview of my Master of Education research including the purpose of the study, research questions, theoretical framework, significance of the study, and the organization of the thesis.

#### **Background of the Study**

In Canada and across the globe, working in the academe is a noble profession, but it comes with many challenges and responsibilities. As Wittung-Stafshede (2020) writes, “working in academia is wonderful [but, it] is never easy, and one is never done” (p. 789). This tends to be the case for both Canadian-trained and foreign-trained professionals alike. Due to its relatively favourable immigration policy, Canada is one of the most diverse countries in the world. This diversity encourages professionals from across the globe to choose Canada as their new home. Internationally trained professionals (ITPs) move to Canada for several reasons, such as, advance their educational qualifications, gain international work experience, seek professional opportunities, and for economic reasons.

Regarding the country’s academe (also referred to in this study as ‘academia’ to mean the community and scholarly environment within Canada’s post-secondary institutions), there seems to be a mismatch between the diversity of the student body and the limited diversity of the teaching force (Schmidt, 2015; Ball & Tyson, 2011). Schmidt opined that the ethnic diversity of the teaching body in Canada has not kept pace with the diversity of the student body. Therefore, it is widely accepted that “while changes in the student demographics have been dramatic, changes in the demographics of the teaching force have been slow as “most teachers continue to be white, female, monolingual, and middle class” (Ball & Tyson, 2011, p. 2). Many educators in

Canada will eagerly agree with the importance of preparing teachers to handle the nuances of Canada's diverse classrooms.

However, it is not only the students who reflect Canada's diversity; teachers do as well (Banks, 2015; Schmidt & Block, 2010). The need for faculty diversity in Canadian institutions was emphasized by Henry et al. (2017) as necessary

[N]ot only to bring about a diversity of bodies that reflects the student population and the ethnic and racial diversity of Canadian society and the world, but also to help establish what is a scholarly and intellectual environment that is relevant to today's economic, cultural, political, and social context. (p. 169)

Though significant attention has been drawn to the diversity within teachers' and students' populations, not enough attention has been given to other ITPs in the academe who hold non-faculty positions as administrators, counsellors, student advisors, accountants, health practitioners, law enforcement officers, etc. Therefore, it is not only critical to understand the experiences of ITPs on the academic side of the academe, but also the non-faculty side of the academe. This study aims to investigate the experiences of ITPs in academia, including those in academic and non-academic career fields.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Educational institutions are a microcosm of Canadian society and should reflect the country's demographic composition of the teaching and non-teaching staff, as well as the student population. Increasingly, more ITPs are entering the Canadian workforce and various levels of government across the country have developed policies that are intended to support the successful hiring, placement, and flourishing of ITPs. These include Bill 98: Fairness for Ontario's Internationally Trained Workers Act, 2022 (Ontario, 2022), and the Canada Foreign

Credential Recognition Program (Employment and Social Development Canada, 2021). Despite these important initiatives, there remains a failure to address the struggles of integration that racialized ITPs experience, and the effectiveness of recruitment and transition programs for ITPs cannot be easily assessed or determined.

Successful transition by ITPs into the Canadian academic labour force in general, and especially in the academe – given that Canada is a top destination for international students – is of great importance to the country. ITPs provide substantial educational assistance to the progressively growing number of international students (Deters, 2015; Schmidt, 2010; Schmidt, Young & Mandzuk, 2010), and play a vital part in educating both international and domestic students to fit into the evolving school system and demographic. ITPs enrich the campus environment by bringing perspectives and experiences that are often distinct from those of their Canadian counterparts.

One of the challenges ITPs often encounter is navigating the rules and regulations that must be followed before gaining entry and holding a position within the academe. This causes a struggle for many racialized ITPs to integrate into the academic system (Walsh et al., 2011), as they often must have their academic credentials and professional experiences assessed. Multiple assessments of academic credentials and professional experiences by various regulatory and provincial bodies, because of differing certification and licencing requirements (Albert et al., 2013), have been frequently cited as a limitation and the most pressing challenge that ITPs face. This integration challenge for ITPs may also influence their social-cultural, psychological, or professional lives (Pasca & Wagner, 2012). Additionally, ITPs are under-represented in the academe and may lack initial guidance and support for entering the academe and adjusting to the academe's demands.

## **Purpose of the Study**

Many studies have examined the experiences of, and challenges encountered by internationally trained teachers (Ball & Tyson, 2011; Banks, 2015; Schmidt, 2015; Schmidt & Block, 2010), but little has been done to explore the challenges of other ITPs within the academe who possibly hold positions as administrators, counsellors, student advisors, accountants, law enforcement, health practitioners, etc. Doing so would enable researchers to identify similarities or differences in the experiences of these groups. In this regard, this qualitative study will explore the experiences and perceptions of both faculty and non-faculty racialized ITPs within the Canadian academe, examine how these professionals react to and handle real and perceived challenges and how these experiences affect their professional and personal lives.

The professional and personal lives of racialized ITPs may also be affected by several individual factors including their interactions with students and colleagues. These professionals might also face issues of racism and tokenism which might hinder the success of their adjustment as newcomers within the academe. This study is significant because it will result in important knowledge being gained about oneself and other racialized ITPs, and it will allow participants and the scholarly community to identify and appreciate each group's cultural wealth. Furthermore, this study may help to spark interest and motivation in conducting research, particularly with non-faculty racialized ITPs in Canadian academia, a phenomenon that has received little attention to date.

## **Research Questions**

The study is guided by the following overarching research questions: What are the professional experiences of racialized ITPs within the Canadian academe? What do racialize



ITPs rely on as they navigate the academe daily? The following sub-questions have also been formulated to guide the investigation process.

1. What is the perception of ITPs on the entry process into the academe?
2. How do ITPs perceive their Canadian-trained colleagues' view of their competence and cultural wealth?
3. What are the issues and challenges that ITPs currently encounter in the academe?
4. What kind of support would facilitate the success of ITPs in the academe?
5. What types of cultural wealth do ITPs draw on as they navigate the academe daily?

### **Theoretical Framework**

The knowledge of the construction of cultural capital is best understood in its relation to social reproduction. Historically, theoretical models used in academic research tend to rely on traditional conceptualizations of cultural capital, usually through a Bourdieuan framework, prompting scholars to question whose knowledge counts or is discounted within the academe (Ladson-Billings, 2000; Bernal, 1998, 2002). In addressing the knowledge debate in the context of social inequality, Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) argued that in a hierarchical society, the knowledge of the upper and middle classes is considered more valuable than that of the lower class since cultural, social, and economic capital can be acquired from one's family and or through formal education. Individuals who were not born into the dominant class with perceived superior knowledge could access this knowledge through formal education for upward social mobility.

Refuting Bourdieu and Passeron's opinion, Collins (2009) noted the basic reproductionist argument that "schools were not exceptional institutions for promoting the equality of opportunities; instead, they reinforced the inequalities of social structure and cultural order found

in a given country” (p. 34). Jayakumar (2013) adds that although schools are “no longer directly linked to the economic elite, [they] are part of a broader system of social institutions that implicitly advance existing power relations by subtly legitimizing certain ways of being, understandings of the social world, and definitions of what counts as education—all aligned with the interests and ideologies of the ruling class” (p. 556). Therefore, it is valuable to note the absence of a singular social or cultural capital in any society, thereby making it imperative to highlight the wealth of experience, knowledge, values, strengths, and skills exhibited by marginalized individuals that often go unnoticed or are not acknowledged by members of the dominant group.

This research study employs Yosso’s (2005) pedagogy of cultural wealth as a theoretical framework to comprehend and describe the narrated experiences of racialized ITPs in the academe. Yosso introduced this framework by critiquing and challenging assumptions of the traditional interpretations of Bourdieuean cultural capital theory (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977). Bourdieu's model of cultural capital has been “used to reinforce the idea that cultural capital possessed by the middle-class and predominately White communities is of higher value than the cultural capital of other groups,” Yosso’s Community Cultural Wealth (CCW) “asserts that all communities have valuable cultural capital” (Manzo et al., 2018, p. 342). The CCW holds that students of colour and marginalized groups in general, do not enter the classrooms with social and cultural deficiencies, but rather they have the capital unique and valuable to their homes and communities.

Yosso (2005) defines CCW as “an array of knowledge, skills, abilities, and contacts possessed and utilized by communities of colour to survive and resist macro and micro forms of oppression” (p. 77). A pedagogy of cultural wealth aims to invalidate deficit thinking, which

argues that marginalized individuals lack the required skills, values, and knowledge needed to excel. A pedagogy of cultural wealth identifies the cultural wealth or assets nurtured by marginalized individuals through six classifications of capital: aspirational, linguistic, familial, social, navigational, and resistance (Yosso, 2005). *Aspirational capital* refers to the ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future, even in the face of real or perceived social and structural barriers. This resiliency is evidenced in those who allow themselves and their children to dream of possibilities beyond their present circumstances, often without the objective means to attain those goals. *Linguistic capital* includes the intellectual and social skills attained through communication experiences in more than one language or style. It also refers to the ability to communicate via visual art, music, or poetry, just as students may utilize different vocal registers to whisper, whistle, or sing, they must often develop and draw on various language registers, or styles, to communicate with different audiences.

*Familial capital* (Yosso, 2005) refers to the cultural knowledge nurtured among kin that carries a sense of community history, memory, and cultural intuition. Through these kinship ties, the importance of maintaining a healthy connection with the community and its resources is established as they help model lessons of caring, coping, and, providing, which informs emotional, moral, educational, and occupational consciousness. *Social capital* refers to the individual and communal network within the sphere of influence of marginalized individuals (Yosso, 2005). These peer and other social contacts can provide both instrumental and emotional support to navigate through society's unsupportive and hostile institutions. *Navigational capital* refers to skills of manoeuvring through social institutions, inclusive of educational institutions. Historically, this infers the ability to manoeuvre through institutions not created with communities of colour or marginalized groups in mind. Lastly, *resistant capital* refers to those

knowledge and skills fostered through oppositional behaviour that challenges inequality to secure equal rights and freedom. It includes cultural knowledge of existing inequities and the motivation to transform such oppressive structures. Therefore, these classifications of capital can be considered positive coping mechanisms employed by marginalized individuals since their cultural wealth is not often recognized or valued.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study utilizes an asset-based perspective, namely, Yosso's (2005) pedagogy of cultural wealth as the theoretical framework to comprehend the experiences of racialized ITPs in the academe, using a narrative inquiry methodology. Though ITPs have been credited for enriching the academy by bringing their perspectives and experiences that are sometimes different from their Canadian counterparts, ITPs often face personal and professional challenges because their qualifications and ideologies are sometimes perceived with a deficit lens, that is, lacking in knowledge and skills - linguistic, social, and cultural, etc. (Zhou et al., 2005; Yep, 2014).

Using Yosso's pedagogy of cultural wealth, this study intends to deemphasize the deficit thought about ITPs and emphasize the assets, strengths, and strides ITPs have made and continue to make in their professional journey. It also sheds light on the possible support mechanisms or programs ITPs have benefitted from or currently benefit from in a bid to make them mainstream or templates for the creation of institutional, communal, or provincial programs or policies. Additionally, the study may highlight what participants regard as important for them to be successful as racialized ITPs within the academe; thereby, contributing to the research on the experiences of racialized ITPs which is a growing proportion of Canada's workforce.

### **Locating Myself in the Study: Personal Reflection and Challenges**

As an international student and ITP by extension, my interest in international education and this project stemmed out of my inability to find employment in the Canadian public school system because I was yet to have my foreign credential assessed by the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT). Despite completing a bachelor's degree in Education and gaining professional experience in my home country, I was oblivious to the fact that ITPs must first obtain Foreign Credential Recognition (FCR) from the OCT before they can ply their trade. At this point, I was exasperated not just because of my inability to gain Canadian work experience, but the lack of information from the admitting institution. Learning from this experience, I believe all educational institutions admitting international students into programs whose professions are regulated should be mandated to explicitly provide information on their regulatory organizations. By doing this, international students and ITPs are empowered with the information needed to make informed decisions on acquiring Canadian recognition for their credentials.

Secondly, I witnessed first-hand the lack of heterogeneity when class members are given the freedom to choose group members for class projects. In my experience, international students with English as a second language often end up in the same group. I remember vividly when I was taking a course and we were asked to choose class members for a group assignment, a domestic student whom I later became friends with admitted to picking a group based on the English language proficiency of class members. This experience gives credibility to the argument of Chen and Lawless (2018) on the attitudes and biases of students, teachers, and staff members against instructors or students with what they consider to be foreign or have thick accents. Similarly, García et al. (2017) discovered that bilingual students were previously viewed as "problems to be addressed and corrected by the education system" (p. 21).

As educators, we must do better and not propagate deficit thinking by realizing these students are bilingual or even multilingual and therefore need support, not avoidance. These negative stereotypes and deficit perceptions of internationally trained students and professionals, framed as baggage to be brought along or left behind, focus on cultural gaps and challenges rather than cultural assets and strengths. Such a focus deflects attention from an important yet invisible level of socialization and capital building occurring outside formal educational settings, which may contribute to ITPs' emerging achievements (Kiramba & Oloo, 2019; Orellana, 2016; Shapiro & MacDonald, 2017; Wilkinson et al., 2017).

Thirdly, it appears anyone with the prefix “international” either as a student or professional is often labelled as deficient in skill, knowledge, language, cultural competence, etc., and I believe this stereotype is even worse for those from developing countries. Despite being an international student, I am equally guilty of deficit thinking. I once had the privilege of taking a course taught by a professor whose first language was not English. Although I grumbled for the majority of the first class, this experience humbled me as I learned to adapt to the classroom and learn from the professor’s wealth of knowledge. Thus, echoing Alberts’ (2008) belief that students' education is harmed by the widely held yet stigmatized belief that ITPs have inferior English language proficiency, giving them a justification for complaining rather than an incentive to accept, adapt, and learn from these instructors.

Chen and Lawless (2018) note that the attitudes and prejudices held by American students and colleagues toward instructors with perceived foreign or heavy accents—whether conscious or unconscious—are one well-known, yet a troubling aspect that frequently receives the most attention. This observation is also made by Ross and Krider (1992) who report on the prevailing view that "foreign instructors," as cultural outsiders, should bear the primary burden

of integrating into the conventional classroom culture of the United States. Conclusively, the onus is on us all – either domestic or international to become conscious of whatever prejudice we might hold and make necessary adjustments. The next chapter is a review of the literature relevant to this study.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

In this chapter, I review and discuss some of the key issues in the literature that are relevant to this study. This includes Canada's skilled immigration model, which prioritizes academic credentials and professional experience, as well as opportunities and challenges for racialized ITPs to join and thrive in the Canadian labour force. The critical synthesis of previous research related to this thesis enables me to identify gaps in research and practice, thereby justifying the need for this study.

Immigration has been influential in transforming Canada into an ethnoculturally diverse and economically prosperous nation. Henry et al. (2017) for example state that in the past three decades, Canada's population has become increasingly ethnically and racially diverse, while "the university is a racialized site that still excludes and marginalizes non-White people, in subtle, complex, sophisticated, and ironic ways from everyday interactions with colleagues to institutional practices that at best are ineffective and at worst perpetuate structural racism" (p. 3). In a study of the ethnic and racial origins of Canadian university administrators – including presidents, vice presidents, and deans from - 1951 to 2011, Nakhaie (2004) concluded that there was an apparent underrepresentation of racialized faculty members in leadership positions. As a result, Henry et al. (2017) revealed that both racialized and indigenous people are largely underrepresented in Canada's post-secondary institutions, particularly those in urban cities with a very diverse student body, and little is known about their experiences in the academe.

Scholars in Canada have examined higher education institutions contextually as a workplace to identify the experiences that racialized employees face. Inclusivity, belonging, and tokenism have been highlighted as top concerns since racialized faculty and staff remain



significantly underrepresented (Aguirre 2000; Wolfe & Freeman 2013). Despite the efforts by scholars, Henry et al. (2017) state the absence of comprehensive data and institutional effort to generate knowledge about the everyday lived experiences of racialized professionals within the academe. Therefore, it can be deduced that though ITPs account for a growing proportion of Canada's workforce, a gap exists in the available data and knowledge about the everyday lived experiences of racialized ITPs.

### **Briefly Mapping Canada's Immigration Journey**

Immigration has been instrumental in shaping the way Canada is seen globally – a diverse society with a strong economic and social foundation with continual potential for further growth and prosperity. Canadian immigration policy has evolved over the years, but Vineberg (2011) noted that its principles can be traced to the 1966 white paper that led to the 1967 immigration regulations and subsequent changes in immigration legislation in the 1976 Immigration Act. Many scholars have highlighted the overtly racist and exclusionary immigration policy of Canada until the 1960s. Before this time, the policy first gave preference to citizens of the United States of America, the United Kingdom, and British territories. Secondly, preference was given to Northern Europeans and finally to Central and Southern Europeans (excluding Greeks, Italians, Spanish, and Portuguese) who were agricultural workers or close relatives of a Canadian (Hawkins, 1972; Whitaker, 1991; Dirks, 1995; Kelley & Treblicock, 1998; Knowles, 2007).

Economy, family, and humanitarianism as identified by Mackenzie King - the tenth prime minister of Canada - are the three main pillars that continue to form the foundation of Canada's immigration policies (Vineberg, 2011). For almost two centuries, immigration has been integral in the support of population, economic, and cultural growth in Canada, and the

enrichment of nation-building. Alongside those who migrate permanently to Canada, many come as visitors, international students, or temporary foreign workers. Regardless of their pathway of entry into Canada, they contribute meaningfully to the country's economy, industry, diversity, and culture. Given Canada's reliance on immigrants, El-Assal et al. (2018) report that by the early 2030s, Canada's population growth will rely exclusively on immigration. As a result, immigration will continue to be significant in advancing Canada's economy, especially in the context of low birth rates and an aging population.

Modern Canada was built on the migration and contributions of many immigrant groups, beginning with the initial French settlers, through newcomers from the United Kingdom, Central Europe, the Caribbean, and Africa, to immigrants from Asia and the Middle East. In the late 1960s, Canada introduced a point system to set merit-based standards for individuals applying to immigrate to Canada to stem overt racial discrimination in immigration policy. Using this system, applicants are awarded points for different criteria such as age, education, family ties, language proficiency in English and or French, etc. Those who accumulate enough points are then invited to apply. This system gives preference to independent, skilled, and immediately employable immigrants (Troper, 2021). Because most immigrants are young, have the equivalent of Canadian degrees or are pursuing Canadian educational qualifications, have in-demand labour skills, and are fluent in at least one official language, they are frequently ideal candidates for permanent residency to ensure population growth (Choi et al., 2021).

According to Rollin (2011), newly admitted immigrants to Canada since the beginning of the twenty-first century are more educated upon arrival than previous cohorts, and they are also more educated than Canadian-born citizens. According to the 2006 Census, 51% of immigrants aged 25 to 64 years who had been in Canada for five years or less had a university degree,

compared to 28% of previous immigrants and 20% of those born in Canada. However, among university graduates aged 25 to 54 years, recent immigrants enrolled in postsecondary education at a rate of 14%, compared to 6% of their domestic counterparts. (Gilmore & Le Petit, 2008; Statistics Canada, 2008). As a result, while the individual motivation for postsecondary education varies, scholars note that it is frequently related to problems associated with labour market integration, such as partial or no recognition of experience and credentials obtained abroad, a lack of local experience and social networks, and a language barrier (Anisef et al., 2010; Houle & Yssaad, 2010; Sweetman, 2004; Statistics Canada, 2005).

### **Challenges Encountered by Racialized Internationally Trained Professionals**

In a 2007 equity review, the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) noted that many equity-seeking groups remain seriously underrepresented in Canadian post-secondary institutions, and the lack of consistent and reliable data about equity makes it very difficult for policymakers, administrators, and academic staff associations to determine the full extent of the problem and develop the most effective and appropriate tools to ensure equity. Considering this, the following key themes in the literature on racialized ITPs are discussed: foreign credential recognition, microaggression and racism, tenure and promotion, student evaluation of teaching, and lack of support.

### **Foreign Credential Recognition and Integration**

Foreign credential recognition (FCR) is the process by which the skills, knowledge, work experience, and education obtained in another country are accessed by Canadian regulatory bodies, government agencies, employers, or postsecondary institutions against established standards for Canadian professionals (IRCC, n.d.). As a result of not obtaining FCR for their degrees, many professionals trained outside of Canada find it difficult to find work in their

respective disciplines or occupations in which they previously worked in their home countries. Most often, a Canadian degree is deemed superior to a foreign one by employers (Thompson, 2000), and not obtaining FCR has caused many ITPs to move into new and perhaps inferior occupations when they arrive in Canada (Girard, 2010). These new occupations are commonly referred to as survival or transition jobs. In many cases, the process of FCR devalues the human capital of ITPs, leaving them with little choice but to settle in Canada's largest cities where their ethnic and social networks are better developed, and survival jobs are more plentiful (Girard & Bauder, 2005).

Obtaining FCR from a regulatory body is not always as simple as submitting transcripts alone; examinations and certifications are often necessary. Surveys indicate that foreign credential recognition is a key barrier to the successful economic integration of Canadian immigrants. The results of a longitudinal survey of newly arrived Canadian immigrants by Schellenberg and Maheux (2007) indicated that 62% of those between the ages of 25 to 44 years encounter challenges in their job search during their first four years in Canada. Some jobs in Canada are governed by a provincial or regulatory authority. As a result, regulated jobs and their requirements for FCR vary by province (Girard, 2010), making labour mobility for ITPs relatively difficult.

The emphasis on FCR by Canadian employers and professional bodies is often cited as an explanation for the increased earnings gap between Canadian and immigrant workers and the inability of ITPs to find similar employment to what they had occupied in their home countries. Though many ITPs enter the Canadian workforce without additional Canadian educational credentials, others enrol in Canadian post-secondary institutions to attain further education or professional certifications (Oloo, 2016). The unfamiliarity with FCR by many ITPs to get

Canadian recognition for the educational and professional experience already obtained internationally puts them at a disadvantage in finding employment before, during, and even after obtaining their Canadian degrees. As a result, despite having relatively higher levels of educational attainment, ITPs continue to face lower average incomes (Reitz, 2001).

Professional and regulatory organizations in Canada have developed mechanisms to provide assessments of international credentials resulting from the challenges of the FCR process. A lack of homogeneity in the educational systems and professional practices around the world makes assessments regarding the comparability of foreign degrees and experiences difficult. However, these services are not used by all ITPs due to a lack of knowledge and availability of resources (e.g., time and money) that these processes entail (George et al., 2012), or lack of access to the documents required for the credentialing process (Krahn et al., 2000). Evans (2011) reported that the loss of productivity which connotes “brain waste” occurs due to a mismatch of ITPs skills with occupations in Canada and is a significant problem that costs the country over \$3.4 billion annually. Brain waste does not just cost Canada billions of dollars, ITPs also experience professional dissatisfaction in the process. The cause of this brain waste rests largely on the lack of recognition of ITPs credentials and professional experiences.

Contextually, ITPs may be considered outsiders as they often encounter other forms of institutional and social barriers that negatively impact their ability to integrate into Canadian society. In a bid to optimally integrate into Canadian society, Guo (2013) noted that ITPs and immigrants generally are unevenly distributed across Canada’s largest urban cities. A census revealed that between 2001 and 2006, over one million new immigrants arrived, and almost 70% chose to live in Canada’s three largest cities: Toronto, Vancouver, and Montréal (Statistics Canada, 2007). In comparison, only one-third of Canada’s total population lives in these cities

(Guo, 2013). A large concentration of immigrants in these large cities can be attributed to the challenges of integration and an abundance of family and national ties in these cities compared to other urban or smaller city centres.

### **Microaggression and Racism**

Racism is a pertinent issue for racialized persons and groups, and the expression of racial microaggressions is often commonplace within the academe (Louis et al., 2016). Sadly, racial microaggressions that are experienced by racialized persons in higher education are often perpetuated by faculty, administrators, staff, and students of other races who are completely unaware of the consequences of their overt racist behaviours (Constantine et al., 2008; Louis et al., 2016; Sue et al., 2011). According to Sue et al. (2007a), racial microaggressions are one of the new faces of racism and are defined as “brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioural, and environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults to the target person or group” (p.72).

Reflecting on the unconscious worldview of racism, Sue et al. (2008) articulated the expression of racial microaggressions in three different forms: microassaults, microinsults, and microinvalidations. Microassaults are conscious and deliberate, that is, using racial slurs, while microinsults and microinvalidations are unconscious and subtle exchanges between perpetrators unaware of their hidden prejudices and biases, and how they impact racialized individuals. Additionally, microinsults are verbal, nonverbal, or environmental actions that convey insensitivity, rudeness, or directly demean a person’s racial heritage or identity (Sue et al., 2007b, p. 274), while microinvalidations are used to dismiss the psychological thoughts, feelings, or experiences of racialized individuals (Sue et al., 2007a, 2007b). These attitudes and behaviours are considered micro because of their subtle nature compared to other forms of overt

racism. Henry and Emerita (2004) claim that racialized and indigenous scholars often grapple with microaggression, frosty and inhospitable climates, and resentment from other faculty members, which in turn contribute to feelings of self-doubt and tokenism. Consequently, despite the subtle nature, the impact of racial microaggressions has large implications for the target person or group (DeCuir-Gunby et al., 2020).

Gatwiri et al. (2021) narrated how the pedagogical positions of female racialized instructors in Australia are constantly questioned and devalued by disrespectful, racist, and condescending teaching evaluations that they often receive anonymously from their peers and students. This deficit perception has resulted in racialized ITPs experiencing micro and macroaggression which could negatively impact their professional growth, development, and retention. Offermann et al. (2014) noted that in the higher education workplace, African Americans are at an increased risk of experiencing racism and racial discrimination. Though Offermann et al. focused on African Americans in their study, it is important to note that members of other racialized groups often experience similar forms of racial discrimination (see Sue et al., 2007a, 2007b, 2008).

The negative experiences of racialized ITPs within the academe significantly impact their psychological and physiological health, requiring adaptive coping strategies such as actively confronting racism, forming professional networks, seeking mentorship, turning to religion or spirituality, setting boundaries, and engaging in self-care, etc. to ensure healthy psychological functioning. In some instances, several maladaptive coping strategies such as suppression or internalization of feelings, isolation, evade confronting racism, denial, and working harder to prove others wrong, etc. have been employed (DeCuir-Gunby et al., 2020).

## **Tenure and Promotion**

Henry et al. (2017) recorded that

The introduction of employment equity and affirmative action programs in universities in the 1990s aimed to remove structural barriers and biases that hinder the recruitment, hiring, tenure, and promotion of racialized and Indigenous faculty members and, ultimately, to increase the diversity of the professoriate. (p. 84)

Racialized professionals, including ITPs, often must work harder to prove that their scholarship and not just affirmative action is the reason why they were hired (Carter & Craig, 2022; Mohamed & Beagan, 2019). Recurrent reminders about their presence in the academe mean racialized professionals constantly must contest not only their removal and legitimate presence within the academe, but also those of the faculty and non-faculty staff members they mentor, the students they teach, the research they conduct, and the scholarship they produce (Henry et al., 2017).

Obtaining tenure and promotion are important goals for all university faculty and staff members. Park (2011) noted that apart from salary, tenure and promotion are the most important and lasting rewards available in the academe. In higher education, everyday racism can occur in individual interactions and through the structure of the institution itself. In addition, the lack of racialized administrators and tenured professors largely indicates to racialized students and faculty that they do not belong and their likelihood of advancing in the academe is minimal (Huber et al., 2015; Wing-Sue, 2010).

Though Canada is becoming more ethnically and racially diverse with an increasing number of university students, graduates, and professors, Henry et al. (2017) noted the difficulty in measuring the demographic structure of Canadian faculty and staff as it is not mandatory for



universities to collect race-based data. Available qualitative data indicates that racialized faculty face several barriers to promotion and tenure, which includes a lack of recognition of community and application for research work in the tenure and promotion process, subjective evaluation criteria, and substantial service loads that take away from research productivity (Henry & Kobayashi, 2017; Henry & Tator, 2012).

Abawi (2018) reports that Canadian universities have engaged in academic capitalism resulting from ongoing government funding cuts. This creates a surplus demand and reliance on seasonal academics to the detriment of racialized, Indigenous, and other equity-seeking scholars. The term academic capitalism was coined and defined by Slaughter and Rhoades (2000) as the neoliberal or market-oriented shift marked by the reduction of public funding in universities in exchange for a corporate university model. Newson (2012) claims “by the early to mid-1990s, it was possible to argue that Canadian universities to varying degrees had begun to exist in the world less as distinctly academic and educational institutions and more as business organizations that sell knowledge-based products to paying customers and targeted markets” (p. 104).

Sessional instructors are non-permanent faculty members hired on a term basis to teach university courses. These instructors have fewer responsibilities, less job security, and lower pay than their tenured counterparts, and are no longer viewed as a flexible source of academic labour, but rather as a defining feature of the global capitalist university (Webber, 2008). Academic capitalism is evident in the discourse of diversity as it operates through the corporatization of the university, whereby diversity is commodified as a marketing strategy to attract a plethora of both racialized international and domestic student demographics (Ahmed, 2012; Sensory & DiAngelo, 2017), a part of the practice which Henry et al. (2017) labelled the “Equity Myth.”

Seatter (2016) draws attention to the glaring diversity gap between tenured professors and student demographics in Canadian universities as a disservice to the increasing number of racialized and Indigenous students in the academe. The dominance of non-racialized persons occupying most tenured faculty positions in Canadian institutions thus marginalizes scholarly and epistemological contributions from racialized and Indigenous perspectives (Abawi, 2018). It is estimated that more than half of all faculty on Canadian university campuses are in non-tenure track positions (Foster, 2016). Hence, one wonders what percentage of equity-seeking faculty members, such as ITPs, are on the tenure track. The academic culture and recruitment decisions, such as tenure, equity, inclusion, and diversity policies unconsciously preserve the racial status quo, because although discursive practices and policies promote equity and diversity in faculty hiring, such policies remain lip service, lacking concrete commitment, oversight, and regulation (Abawi, 2018; Ahmed, 2012; Muzzin, 2008).

Although studies have repeatedly assessed the representation of marginalized social groups amongst Canadian university students (Childs et al., 2016; Finnie et al., 2015) and faculty (Dua & Bhanji, 2012; Henry et al., 2017; Ramos, 2012), little peer-reviewed research exists on the academic and executive leaders, such as presidents and provosts - individuals charged with leading contemporary universities (Nakhaie, 2004). Racial and ethnic minorities are less likely to hold leadership positions than their Caucasian counterparts even after controlling for occupation, education, and experience (Elliott & Smith, 2004; Smith, 2002). Thus, Henry et al. (2017) contend that having deans, vice presidents, or provosts who are more committed to diversity measures can make a significant difference. This recognizes the importance of having allies of equity and individuals who identify with a racialized group to occupy administrative positions within the academe.

Even when present or promoted, racial and ethnic minorities tend to occupy marginal positions in the middle or bottom of the leadership hierarchy, that is, low relating to power, prestige, and influence within the academe (Henry et al., 2017; Reskin & Roos, 1992). Scholars have identified several barriers that explain the underrepresentation of minorities in leadership positions. These barriers include discrimination and bias (Tilly & Moss, 2003; Pager et al., 2009), racial tokenism (Chused, 1988), lack of quality mentoring (Essien, 2003), exclusion from social and informational networks (Essien, 2003; McGuire, 2002), and downgrading (Essien, 2003; Pager et al., 2009). Spafford et al. (2006) suggest that racialized professionals are welcomed into the Canadian academe if they do not seek positions of influence, prestige, and permanence and if their visibility tends to serve the institutions' purposes rather than the overall goal of equity. As a result, they warned that if equity is ever to be realized within the academe, racialized professionals must be seen and valued through something other than the normative lens of the White middle-class.

### **Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET)**

At most Canadian post-secondary institutions, students are invited to complete a Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET) each term to evaluate teaching based on their perception. Scholars indicate that SET has both formative and summative objectives. The formative objective of the SET is to promote the professional development of instructors, while the summative objective is to hold instructors accountable for their practices (Chan, 2001; Delvaux et al., 2013). Beran and Rokosh (2009) argue that though most instructors support SET for formative purposes, many are apprehensive about its summative purposes, particularly when decisions regarding tenure, promotion, and salary increases are based on SET. This argument was further strengthened in a precedent-setting case when an arbitrator nullified the use of SET results to measure teaching

effectiveness for tenure or promotion at the Toronto Metropolitan University (formerly known as Ryerson University) in Toronto, Canada (Farr, 2018).

Many scholars have shared additional anxieties with SET, including uncertainties about the reliability and validity of SET instruments, insufficient evidence to positively correlate student ratings with actual student learning, lack of motivation on the part of students to complete evaluations, reservations about students' abilities to provide appropriate evaluation, and an apparent lack of awareness regarding the importance of SET (Beleche et al., 2012; Chen & Hoshower, 2003; Spooren et al., 2013; Uttl et al., 2016). Gatwiri et al. (2021) described how disrespectful, racist, and condescending anonymous teaching evaluations constantly question and devalue the pedagogical positions of female racialized instructors in Australia.

English language proficiency or the influence of foreign accents is one factor that often negatively affects student evaluation of racialized instructors. Chen and Lawless (2018) drew attention to the conscious and/or unconscious motivations of students', faculty, and non-faculty staff members' attitudes and biases against instructors with perceived foreign or heavy accents in the United States academe. Alberts (2008, p. 195) concluded that “the popularized yet stigmatized perception that ITPs are poor English speakers harms the education of U.S. students by giving them an excuse to complain rather than an incentive to accept, adapt, and learn from these instructors.” Racialized ITPs are viewed as fundamentally different by the dominant group as a default position, with the primary responsibility for adapting, acculturating and assimilating into the mainstream U.S. classroom culture. Rather than placing the burden and responsibilities of adaptation on racialized ITPs alone, the institutions must work with students, faculty, and staff to become aware of their implicit, unconscious, and cultural biases toward foreign distinction (Chen & Lawless, 2018; Ross & Krider, 1992).

Because their pedagogical positions sometimes differ from those of the dominant group, racialized ITPs frequently receive negative evaluations. Gatwiri et al. (2021) argued that when SETs become a core performance management tool, particularly in the context of hostility toward foreign and Indigenous knowledge, anonymous feedback increases the risk of backlash from students whose worldviews may be disrupted by racialized ITPs' pedagogical positions in the classroom. In discussing the backlash racialized ITPs experience from challenging dominant pedagogy in the higher education context, the terminology “student hostility” rather than “student resistance” was used by Gatwiri et al. (2021). This hostility and backlash are not peculiar to students alone, as some faculty and non-faculty staff members are outraged by racialized ITPs foreign and Indigenous knowledge and pedagogical positions.

As the number of racialized ITPs entering the Canadian workforce and academe increases, racialized academics continue to report incidences of racism, sexism, homophobia, and other forms of discrimination in the workplace because they are often viewed erroneously without objectivity (Gatwiri et al., 2021). This view is reinforced by the fact that many racialized ITPs within the academe frequently teach topics they are entwined with, both personally and politically. Henry et al. (2017) cited an anonymous scholar referring to the use of Indigenous knowledge, pedagogy, and scholarship... “if it is a little too close to home, then it can be seen as suspect” (p. 133). Gatwiri et al. (2021) further note that as racialized professionals, their “teaching recognizes that education is political and disruptive and is aimed at encouraging students to imagine a different world outside the normalized, patriarchal, capitalist, essentialized, racialized, and gendered social order that they are socialized into” (p. 4). Education is humanistic, and as humans, racialized ITPs take the full range of their experiences into account as they navigate their way through the academe. As a result of such experience, many scholars

(see Gatwiri et al., 2021; Korteweg & Fiddler, 2018; Murrey, 2019; Shirley, 2017) have observed how racialized professionals within the academe, amongst other reasons, are often viewed as rebellious and angry for teaching using foreign and Indigenous knowledge and decolonizing pedagogies.

### **Lack of Support**

In January 2016, Huda Hassan, a University of Toronto Ph.D. student posted the following on Twitter “if you’re a black woman applying for grad school & would like a writer+phd student to revise your statement, email me.” In one month, Hassan’s tweet garnered 2,598 retweets and 3,497 likes. Hassan indicated that she received 120 applications from black women (and some men) from Canada, the US, and East Africa. The premise behind her tweet was based on her own experiences as a Ph.D. applicant – Hassan volunteered to review Ph.D. applications without financial compensation at the expense of taking valuable time away from her research. Being a first-generation graduate student in her family, Hassan reiterated a lack of role models and familial assistance in her application to graduate school. Her experience echoes that of young scholars like Lao et al. (2017) who found navigating the requirements and application process difficult because of their status as racialized and first-generation graduate students. Toutkoushian et al. (2015) discovered that parents with post-secondary degrees recognize and communicate the benefits of their post-secondary degrees to their children after studying the experiences of first-generation college students.

Having a role model or support system is of utmost importance, especially when navigating the academe as an undergraduate student, graduate student, emerging scholar, and racialized ITP (Lao et al., 2017). Bramble (2000) observed that it is especially important to have this support in an environment that has been one where being a member of a historically

marginalized group and bringing that discourse “[challenges] the historical configuration of the university” (p. 274). This explains why racialized students seek out racialized members of faculty and or staff for pastoral care because having role models that align with their own needs and realities is of great importance. Henry et al. (2017) also noted a lack of institutional support to help racialized and indigenous professionals “navigate narrow spaces, blindness, silences, and tokenism” within the Canadian academe. They observed that racialized and indigenous professionals have been forced to develop their coping mechanisms, thereby developing feelings of loneliness, which in turn fosters insecurity and alienation.

Pastoral care is characterized by students from marginalized groups seeking out the few available racialized faculty or staff members for mentorship, support, and help to navigate the academic institution. Wijesingha and Ramos (2017) referred to pastoral care as the focus of racialized faculty and staff on teaching, mentoring, community outreach, and administrative duties which often puts them at a disadvantage when it comes to tenure and promotion. Hence, Padilla (1994) coined the term “cultural taxation” to explain the inability of racialized faculty and staff to obtain tenure and promotion at the same rate as their non-racialized peers. Cultural taxation includes serving on multiple committees and being called experts on cultural and racial issues, representing the university in outreach to “their” communities to increase racial representation because they form a limited pool of diverse people within the academe – all of which adds up to extra service work (Henry et al., 2017, Henry & Tator, 2012, Joseph & Hirshfield, 2011, Padilla, 1994).

According to Albert et al. (2013), ITPs seeking credential recognition should create a dossier to submit to the appropriate regulatory body because dossiers are a commonly accepted tool for demonstrating evidence of prior learning. Despite the importance of dossiers, they felt it

was necessary to inquire whether Canadian educational institutions offered dossier-building courses that met the needs of ITPs and whether accreditation bodies looked for similar information in a dossier to make decisions, asking if there is a match between the content of dossier courses taught by educational institutions and the accreditation bodies' requirements. These are important questions because, if educational institutions do not provide information for ITPs on building a dossier as well as other support mechanisms that ITPs may require, such as language support, mentorship, and career planning, who is responsible? Crawford (2007) described the importance of a mentorship program developed by the Employment Help Centre in St. Catharine's, Ontario to assist ITPs to move toward licensure and certification, and offered a call to action for the continuance and replication of such programs across Canada.

Henry et al. (2017) note that, although some Canadian institutions have mentorship programs to support racialized and Indigenous faculty members navigating institutional structures, they have been marginally successful at best. As an alternative to mentorship, Hewlett's (2013) idea of "sponsors" for women can be applied to all marginalized groups. As she notes:

Mentorship ... is a relatively loose relationship. Mentors act as a sounding board or a shoulder to cry on, offering advice as needed and support and guidance as requested; they expect very little in return. Sponsors, in contrast, are much more vested in their protégés, offering guidance and critical feedback because they believe in them. Sponsors advocate on their protégés' behalf, connecting them to important players and assignments. In doing so, they make themselves look good. And precisely because sponsors go out on a limb, they expect stellar performance and loyalty (para. 5 & 6).



Analogously, Henry et al. (2017) write "... individuals, especially those who have achieved tenure, promotion, or positions of power in universities, have a unique ability to act as sponsors and/or champions of young faculty and those who are in marginal positions within the academe" (p. 313). According to the authors, such people are more likely to understand and appreciate unconventional career paths, and they provide legitimacy to those who would otherwise be excluded. Therefore, Henry et al. (2017) urge universities and faculty unions to collaborate with and encourage tenured and senior faculty members, as well as those in senior and administrative positions, to serve as responsible sponsors or champions for racialized and other equity-seeking groups.

### **Conclusion**

After a careful review of related literature on racialized ITPs within the academe, it can be observed that more research has been conducted focusing on members of faculty than non-faculty staff members. Effecting change within the Canadian academe requires a conscious shift from everyone involved, that is, both racialized and non-racialized professionals. Ryan et al. (2009) suggest that racialized professionals can counter marginalization within the academe by occupying positions of authority and influence. But before this equilibrium can be achieved, there is a need to take stock of the current state of the academe. Lao et al. (2017) contend that academic administrators, faculty, staff, and students need to recognize that more than just statistics will suffice in measuring the underrepresentation of racialized and marginalized professionals within the academe because the goal should be the validation and amplification of their voices. Therefore, this study provides an avenue for the validation and amplification of the voices and experiences of racialized ITPs. The next chapter explores the methodology used in this study.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study is designed to explore the experiences and perceptions of racialized ITPs within the Canadian academe, to examine how they react to and handle real and perceived challenges, and how these experiences affect their professional and personal lives. ITPs account for a growing proportion of Canada's workforce and various levels of government across the country have introduced policies related to their absorption and transition into the Canadian labour market. Considering this, a study into the recruitment and integration of not just ITPs, but racialized ITP professionals into the Canadian academe is significant. Racialized ITPs often encounter challenges (such as those related to FCR, micro and macroaggression, etc.) that often make other students, faculty, and staff view them from a deficit perspective and regard them as lacking in knowledge and skills - linguistic, social, cultural, etc.

This study employs a narrative inquiry methodology to give participants a safe environment to share their stories of lived experiences. The study is grounded in Yosso's (2005) Cultural Wealth framework to emphasize the various forms of cultural wealth that racialized ITPs bring to the Canadian workplace, specifically the academe. As described in Chapter one, Yosso identifies six forms of "community cultural wealth" that she posits are born out of the experience of belonging to a minority or marginalized group.

#### **Why Narrative Inquiry?**

The idea that meaning is socially constructed by individuals in interaction with their world is central to understanding qualitative research. The world or reality is not the fixed, single, agreed-upon, or measurable phenomenon that positivist, quantitative research assumes it to be (Merriam, 2002). Instead, there are numerous constructions and interpretations of reality

that are constantly changing. Qualitative researchers want to know what those interpretations are at a given point in time and in each context. An interpretive qualitative approach is defined as learning how individuals experience and interact with their social world, as well as the meaning it has for them (Merriam, 2002).

Several key features run through the various interpretive qualitative research designs. The first distinguishing feature is that researchers strive to comprehend the meaning that people have constructed about their world and their experiences. Merriam (2002) reports that this understanding is an end in itself because it does not attempt to predict the future, but rather to understand the nature of that setting and what it means to participants to live there, as well as what the world looks like from their perspective in such a setting.

A second distinguishing feature is that the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis. Merriam (2002) notes that because comprehension is the study's goal, the human instrument, which should be immediately responsive and adaptive, appears to be the ideal means of collecting and analyzing data. Other benefits include the researcher's ability to expand their understanding through nonverbal as well as verbal communication, immediately process data, clarify and summarise material, check with respondents for accuracy of interpretation, and explore unusual or unexpected responses (Merriam, 2002). However, the human instrument has flaws and biases that affect the study; rather than attempting to eliminate these biases, it is important to identify and monitor how they may shape data collection and interpretation.

Qualitative researchers can approach an investigation through various philosophical or theoretical lenses, depending on the specific research design used to carry out the study. The most common theoretical lenses for understanding a phenomenon are ethnography, phenomenology, grounded theory, historical, case study, and narrative inquiry. Furthermore,

each theoretical lens has a slightly different focus, resulting in differences in how research questions are asked, how samples are selected, how data collection and analysis are conducted, and how results are reported. That said, these methods share some characteristics that cause them to fall under the umbrella concept of qualitative research. The most obvious feature is that they are all highly descriptive.

Ethnography is one of the most popular and widely recognized methods of qualitative research because it immerses researchers into an unfamiliar culture for an extended period. The goal of ethnography, according to Kimberlee (2019), is to learn and characterize culture in the same way that anthropologists observe cultural challenges and motivations within different cultural groups. Narrative inquiry borrows from ethnography and has two main starting points, namely listening to individuals tell their experiences as stories, and living alongside participants as they live and relive their stories (Clandinin & Huber, 2010). The second starting point of narrative inquiry, which involves living alongside participants as they live their stories, is parallel to ethnography. Despite the similarity, ethnography is a less suitable research method for this study because it is time-consuming and it requires the researcher to immerse him/herself into the lives of participants, and gaining access to every aspect of their lives as professionals within the academe may not be possible.

The goal of the phenomenological research method is to describe how each participant experiences a specific event (Kimberlee, 2019). Phenomenology is concerned with how participants feel about particular events or activities. This is a limitation of this research method because the experiences of racialized ITPs are not homogenous. Hence, phenomenology insinuates that a single event occurs, affects, or impacts all racialized ITPs. This is a deviation from the goal of the study, which is to identify the experiences of participants. Phenomenology

would be a more appropriate research method to further investigate an identified phenomenon that exists with research participants.

The grounded theory seeks to explain the evolution of a particular course of action. This research method is commonly used by businesses to conduct consumer satisfaction surveys to determine the reasons behind consumer product and service choices (Kimberlee, 2019). This research method appears confrontational because it may include requesting clarifications or responses from colleagues or university administrators. Though their responses would be informative, there is a risk of violating participants' confidentiality because, as previously stated, racialized ITPs constitute a small number of professionals within academia, thus their identity can be more easily triangulated. Therefore, subsequent studies could investigate the evolution of the experiences shared by racialized ITPs, but that is beyond the scope of this study.

Kimberlee (2019) states that the historical research method describes past occurrences to comprehend current patterns and foresee potential future events. Though narrative inquiry focuses on past and present events to understand patterns, it does not attempt to anticipate or predict future events. Rather, this study intends to use narrative inquiry to add to the body of knowledge by highlighting the suggestions proffered by participants as important for them to attain success within the academe.

The case study research method offers a thorough examination of one test participant. The test participant could be an individual or family, a company or organization, a town or city, etc. This in-depth analysis of a particular participant—in this case, racialized ITP—provides a comprehensive understanding of a single person. Examining just one participant may not provide a comprehensive picture of experiences because racialized ITPs have such a wide range of

experiences. Although the purpose of this study is not to generalize the experiences of all racialized ITPs, a wide range of experiences are being sought.

Narrative inquiry has sparked considerable interest in the social sciences in recent years as a form of qualitative research. Thomas (2012) observes that academics who are fortunate enough to work in contexts where such a research approach is accepted as mainstream may be surprised to learn that some of its advocates are still required to defend their approach because definitional misunderstanding, purpose, process, and possibilities offered by the narrative inquiry as a methodological approach continues to impede its widespread acceptance as a legitimate research method in some parts of academia.

Narrative inquiry was pioneered by Dr. F. Michael Connelly and his former student Dr. D. Jean Clandinin, conceptualizing narrative as both methodology and phenomenon. Narrative inquiry as a research methodology is defined by Connelly and Clandinin (2006):

Arguments for the development and use of narrative inquiry come out of a view of human experience in which humans, individually and socially, lead storied lives. People shape their daily lives by stories of who they and others are and as they interpret their past in terms of these stories. Story, in the current idiom, is a portal through which a person enters the world and by which their experience of the world is interpreted and made personally meaningful. Viewed this way, narrative is the phenomenon studied in inquiry. Narrative inquiry, the study of experience as story, then, is first and foremost a way of thinking about experience. Narrative inquiry as a methodology entails a view of the phenomenon. To use narrative inquiry methodology is to adopt a particular narrative view of experience as phenomena under study (p. 477).

Clandinin and Connelly (2000) build on Dewey's (1938) notion that experiences are continuous and interactive, and if intentionally reflected upon, may be educative:

Narrative inquiry is a way of understanding experience. It is a collaboration between a researcher and participants, over time, in a place or series of places, and social interaction with milieus. An inquirer enters this matrix in the midst and progresses in the same spirit, concluding the inquiry still while living and telling, reliving, and retelling, the stories of the experiences that made up people's lives, both individual and social (p. 20).

The above passage also describes narrative inquiry's three-dimensional space (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) or commonplaces of narrative inquiry (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006). The commonplaces of narrative inquiry are temporality, sociality, and place. Connelly and Clandinin suggest that for a research project that uses narrative inquiry to understand lived experiences, all three commonplaces of temporality, sociality, and place, must be addressed concurrently. The commonplaces are an inherent part of the theoretical framework as well as the method within narrative inquiry that adheres to Dewey's concept of experience, which asserts that individuals cannot be considered only as individuals; they are always in relation with others, always in a social context. This means that the experience as told through stories exists in three dimensions. In other words, experience occurs in a location or locations over time, as well as in a relationship, which may be within oneself or with others (Thomas, 2012).

Temporality implies that people, events, and places are always in transition because they have a past, a present, and a future. Connelly and Clandinin (2006) write that "events under study are in temporal transition" (p. 479), meaning that human experience is dynamic and continuous as opposed to static. Secondly, sociality refers to the personal conditions (such as feelings, hopes, aesthetic reactions, and moral dispositions) and social conditions (such as

existential conditions, the environment, surrounding factors, people, and forces) to form the social context for everyone, as well as the relationship between the researcher and the study participants that form the context for the stories of the individual study participants (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006, p. 480). Thirdly, place refers to the physical location or locations where the inquiry and events emerge. Connelly and Clandinin indicate that “all events take place someplace” (p. 481).

Clandinin and Connelly (2000) indicate that “stories lived and told educate the self and others” (p. xxvi). Storytelling as a concept and means of informing others is not in itself novel. Eisner (1997), for example, asserts that “humans have used storied forms to inform since humans have been able to communicate” (p. 264), and this is evident in the use of folktale as a storytelling genre that includes, but is not limited to, myths, tall tales, legends, fables, and fairy tales. What is relatively new is the claim that “such stories are legitimate methods for the acquisition and representation of knowledge in mainstream discourses” (Thomas, 2012, p. 213). One reason for this resistance as noted by Thomas (2012) is that people’s accounts are always partial, situated, and tentative. Although undeniably rich in meaning, no narrative can ever be “a complete reflection of the teller’s life” (Lieblich, 2006, p. 64). Consequently, as narrative inquirers “we have access only to participants’ lives as told; we do not have direct access to their experiences” (Thomas, 2012, p. 215).

Therefore, narrative inquiry provides a legitimate way of thinking about and understanding experiences. The collaboration between the researcher and participants is done by seeking clarification to ensure that there is no incoherence between the meaning derived from an experience and the actual reporting of such experience by the inquirer. Such collaboration aids in removing, or at the minimum limiting the clash between the research, the researched, and the



researcher. Since time immemorial, humans have used stories and experiences to educate themselves and others, but the meaning derived from these experiences tends to always be within a social context. Consequently, although there are several ways to explore human endeavour and experiences, narrative inquiry offers a legitimate and theoretically rich approach (Thomas, 2012).

### **Research Design**

This study aims to investigate the perceptions and experiences of racialized ITPs in the academe. It has an exploratory typology and uses a qualitative approach. Gelling (2015) described qualitative research as an approach to inquiry enabling researchers to explore human experiences in both personal and social contexts to gain a greater understanding of the factors influencing their experiences. Qualitative research allows the researcher to identify participants as experts in the process of inquiry and enables them to understand the participants' socio-cultural experiences, knowledge, and engaging experiences and the factors impacting these encounters (Gelling 2015).

This study employs a narrative inquiry methodology to understand the perception and experiences of racialized ITPs in the academe. Clandinin and Huber (2010) define narrative inquiry as a way of understanding experience, and “an approach to the study of human lives conceived as a way of honouring lived experience as a source of important knowledge and understanding” (p. 437). Narrative inquiry aids the understanding of human experiences within its broad social and cultural context, and it is continually reflexive and reflective. Clandinin and Huber (2010) noted two starting points for narrative inquiry, namely listening to individuals tell their experiences as stories and living alongside participants as they live their stories. The former is the most employed starting point, often utilizing interview and conversational methods or interviews as conversations. This study employs a conversational approach to narrative inquiry.

In this study, a narrative inquiry is used to explore the experiences of racialized ITPs who have worked within the Canadian academe for a minimum of one year. The data in this study were derived entirely from virtual interviews with research participants. Virtual interviews were utilized because of the relative ease and convenience for both the researcher and participants. Identifying participants as experts in the process of inquiry, interviews were conducted to elicit the personal experiences of these professionals rather than making assumptions. Employing Yosso's (2005) pedagogy of cultural wealth framework, the interviews were designed to explore the lived experiences of racialized ITPs within the Canadian academe to obtain their views, knowledge, use, and appreciation of their cultural wealth.

### **Research Participants**

The study aims to explore the experiences of racialized ITPs and does not intend to be a generalization of all ITPs. Data on the population of racialized ITPs as a proportion of Southern Ontario may not be readily available. However, the City of Windsor is recognized as one of the most culturally diverse communities in Canada with over 100 cultures represented and one out of every four residents being born outside Canada (the City of Windsor, n.d.). Though these residents include those who came to Canada before and after completing a degree program outside Canada, it helps to shed light on the representation of ITPs in Southern Ontario and the wider Windsor-Essex labour market, because the experiences of the sample for this study might reflect similar experiences of the entire population.

To be included in this study, prospective participants must have worked as a faculty or non-faculty staff member at a post-secondary institution for at least a year, identify as a member of any racialized group, and complete the equivalent of a Canadian college or university degree internationally. Five of the six study participants came from post-secondary institutions in

Southern Ontario, with the sixth coming from a post-secondary institution in Vancouver, British Columbia. Participants who had worked at their current institution for less than a year were still allowed to participate in the study because they had valuable experience from previous Canadian post-secondary institutions of employment, and this study is not an investigation into any specific institution, but rather the experiences of racialized ITPs in academia in general. A minimum of one year of experience in Canadian post-secondary institutions was required for the researcher to gain insight into the experiences of participants who are relatively new to academia as well as those who have been in academia for a significantly longer period. This variation enabled the researcher to compare the experiences of participants.

This study excluded racialized professionals who earned their first professional degree in Canada but included racialized professionals who earned a degree equivalent to a Canadian college or university degree outside of Canada before obtaining additional educational or professional certification or experience in Canada. Though there are intersections between racialized Canadian-trained professionals and racialized ITPs, there are challenges specific to racialized ITPs, such as FCR and professional experience assessment, and English language proficiency or accent barrier, which have a significant impact on their entry and progression into the Canadian workforce and academe particularly.

Additionally, potential dual roles or undue influence arising from the recruitment of study participants were avoided by excluding members of faculty or staff with whom the researcher has had either personal or professional prior interaction previously. A total of six (three faculty and three non-faculty members) racialized ITPs were interviewed in this study and their professional experience within the Canadian academe ranges from two to twelve years.

## **Sampling Techniques**

To recruit study participants, a combination of probability and non-probability sampling techniques was used. In the probability sampling technique, every individual has an equal chance of being selected from the population, and its advantages include the fact that little knowledge of the population is required (Acharya et al., 2013). Although there are numerous classifications of probability sampling techniques, a simple random sampling technique was utilized in this study by placing flyers in multiple locations on the university campus and publishing an article about the study in the University of Windsor's Daily News. The article in the Daily News of the University of Windsor invited all those who met the study's eligibility criteria to express their willingness to participate. This probability sampling technique attracted two participants.

Secondly, while there are various classifications of non-probability sampling techniques, this study used the purposive and snowball sampling techniques. In non-probability sampling techniques, the probability of selecting a sample is unknown, which may result in selection bias in the study (Acharya et al., 2013). This selection bias is obvious because it relies on the researcher's judgement in selecting participants. For example, when purposive sampling was used to search the directory and read the professional profiles of staff and faculty members on the University of Windsor's website, some profiles did not include where their degrees were obtained, so the researcher occasionally assumed they fit the study criteria based on their image or names that seemed "non-Canadian." A total of one hundred and one (101) potential participants were identified. As a result of contacting them directly, there was a response rate of about 10%, with six responding that they did not complete their degree internationally and three agreeing to participate in the study.

Thirdly, snowball sampling was employed by encouraging study participants recruited through probability or non-probability methods to assist by suggesting other potential study participants. One participant was recruited through snowball sampling. Finally, participants recruited through the various sampling techniques were contacted by the researcher and/or supervisor through their official email addresses. A total of six (four females and two males) participants were recruited.

### **The Research Site**

In this study, virtual interviews were utilized because of the relative ease and convenience for both the researcher and participants. The use of virtual interviews eliminated the challenges of commuting, distance, and location since participants could freely and easily choose convenient and relaxing locations, so far as they had access to the internet. Virtual interviews also allowed participants to choose a quiet location where they could freely speak and clear recordings for data collection were facilitated. The interviews were conducted at a time and date chosen by participants between August 1<sup>st</sup> and September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

### **Data Collection**

After the successful recruitment of research participants, their experiences were shared as stories, using conversational methods or interviews as conversations employed and encouraged by the narrative inquiry methodology. Gelling (2015) described interviews as an effective way to get detailed information about an individual's experience and pertinent knowledge of a given phenomenon. A single semi-structured interview of between sixty and ninety minutes was conducted virtually on Microsoft Teams for each participant. The semi-structured interviews were informal and consisted of open-ended questions (see Appendix D) designed to help obtain

participants' perspectives and experiences as racialized ITPs. The interviews were recorded with the permission of each participant.

### **Data Analysis**

Transcription of the audio-taped interviews resulted in over thirty pages of narrative data at the end of each interview. Despite being initially overwhelming, the narrative data were used to construct narrative accounts for each participant that reflected their experiences to the research questions that informed this study. Thematic analysis and the theoretical framework used in this study were simultaneously used to identify patterns in participant narratives and identify the type of cultural wealth racialized ITPs draw on as they navigate the academe daily. Braun and Clarke (2006) defined thematic analysis as “a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (p. 79). Furthermore, they claim that because thematic analysis is an organic and reflexive process, it provides foundational knowledge and core competency for conducting other methods of qualitative analysis. Thus, the process becomes unique and occasionally extremely emotional (Braun et al., 2014). The goal of thematic analysis is to develop a narrative from the experiences of participants, the result of which highlights the most prominent constellations identified in their experiences (Joffe, 2012).

Thematic analysis is appropriate for researchers new to conducting qualitative analysis, involving research participants in the analysis process, and when identifying patterns. The key themes identified using thematic analysis were used to highlight the experiences of racialized ITPs in the Canadian academe. Braun and Clarke (2006) describe the typical process of thematic analysis as a six-phase recursive process:

1. Familiarizing yourself with your data: Transcribing data (if necessary), reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas

2. Generating initial codes: Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code.
3. Searching for themes: Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.
4. Reviewing themes: Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2), generating a thematic 'map' of the analysis.
5. Defining and naming themes: Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme.
6. Producing the report: The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis (p. 87).

In thematic analysis, themes or patterns within data can be identified inductively or deductively. An inductive approach identifies themes that are strongly related to data collected specifically for the research (e.g., through interviews or focus groups), and the identified themes may slightly deviate from the specific research questions asked of the participants (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In contrast, a deductive thematic analysis is driven by the researcher's theoretical or analytic research interest. Braun and Clarke (2006) note that this type of thematic analysis provides a detailed analysis of one aspect of the data rather than a rich description of the entire data. The choice between inductive and deductive thematic analysis is influenced by the researcher's research objective. Given my dual role as a researcher and ITP, I used an inductive approach to analyze the collected data because the data-driven inductive thematic analysis does not attempt to fit data into the researcher's analytic preconceptions.

Without the use of any computer software, the data collected for this study were analysed in three phases as follows. The first phase involved taking field notes while conducting participant interviews to document important key points that would be useful in future analysis. The second phase began after each participant interview was completed and transcribed, and the transcriptions were read several times to elicit emerging themes. Lastly, similar ideas and responses were combined to form several emerging themes, while these responses were also situated within the study's theoretical framework. The experiences of racialized ITPs in the Canadian academe were explored based on participants' narratives. The study's findings are reported and discussed in the following chapters.

### **Ethical Concerns**

This study was cleared by the University of Windsor's Research Ethics Board (REB) and participants were informed of their rights to voluntarily participate in the study. After obtaining informed consent, participants were informed of their right to continue or withdraw from the study. The participants also had the right to withdraw from the study and were given three weeks after being interviewed to withdraw and have their data deleted. After this period, participants were unable to withdraw from the study. Before the interview, participants were notified that they were required to recount past experiences which might lead to feelings of discomfort and get an opportunity to take a break until they were comfortable continuing with the interview should any discomfort arise. To maintain confidentiality, all identifying information was omitted and replaced with pseudonyms to describe participants in this thesis. Additionally, information regarding support services and resources available at the post-secondary institution and the community were provided to participants.



## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

In this chapter, I retell the stories of the six racialized ITPs who participated in this study. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) point out that stories lived and told educate both the narrator and listeners. In the same vein, Van Manen (1990), asserts that "we gather other people's experiences because they allow us to become more experienced ourselves" (p. 62). Gathering other people's stories allows researchers access to their lives and a better understanding of how they make sense of their own experiences. As Thomas (2009) asserts, all narratives provide a partial, temporal, and situated account of the social, political, and historical moment. This study aims to understand the lived experiences of the six participants as told by the participants themselves, the meanings the participants attach to those lived and told experiences, and the lessons that could be learned to enhance the experiences of ITPs in the academe. After interviewing participants for this study, I had several hours of audio recordings of racialized ITPs' stories, as well as numerous pages of transcriptions. While I chose which stories to retell, Oloo (2016) states that the criteria for selecting which stories to tell must be guided by the purpose of the study and the research questions.

As researchers investigating human experience, we frequently live in fear of offending participants, especially during the analysis and subsequent representation stages, because the real point of tension appears to be in the balance between respecting participants' knowledge and expertise and drawing on our own body of academic knowledge and ability as researchers to analyze and interpret data (Hoskins & Stoltz, 2005; Thomas, 2009). Hence, in retelling the stories of participants in the study, my goal was to stay as true as possible to their perspectives and narratives. Conclusively, in staying truthful to participants' narratives, trustworthiness was

the yardstick for validity in this study. To maintain the confidentiality of each participant, the following pseudonyms have been assigned to them: Felix, Dalia, Park, Medina, Edna, and Victoria.

### **Felix**

Felix is a middle-aged man, living in Canada for about twenty-five years. He immigrated to Canada from Kenya. Kenya has over forty ethnic languages, but Felix speaks Luo as his mother tongue. English, which is frequently used as a language of instruction in schools, and Swahili, also known as Kiswahili, which is widely regarded as Kenya's national language because it is commonly used to communicate in the Kenyan parliament and for commerce.<sup>2</sup> Regarding his linguistic competence, he discusses the personal and professional impact:

It taught me the value of language at a young age, so I know that people in my community speak Luo, but people outside my community speak Swahili. Some people are fluent in it, while others are not. As a result, it increases your appreciation for the medium of communication and how some people comprehend it better than others. In Canada, I realized my English was different, especially because of my accent. It's humbling because I didn't think I could speak it very well. Still, speaking has advantages because it allows you to communicate and understand others, but it also teaches you how to effectively communicate with people who speak [a] different English.

Discussing how his linguistic competence has impacted him professionally, he states:

Yeah, I think, on a personal level, it's been a good thing. It's changed me for the better. I'm a more reflective person because I came to Canada as an international student and struggled with the concept of correct English. So, in my classroom, with students who speak a different kind of English than I do, I'm more empathetic and more understanding

of what they're going through. I like them because I can relate to their situation, but the goal is to have everybody I'm talking to get to understand what I'm talking about.

Felix immigrated to Canada soon after completing his undergraduate degree to further his education as an international student. He first obtained a master degree before proceeding to obtain a doctorate much later. Though Felix has been working professionally in Canada for sixteen years, he has worked in the Canadian academic environment for twelve of those years. Felix did not work professionally in his home country for a long time, he realized that the short experience he had prepared him for working in an international or Canadian environment by highlighting differences and similarities:

I worked briefly with a nongovernmental organization that was headquartered somewhere in Europe that focused on assisting refugees. My immediate boss and some other employees were foreigners; therefore, the work environment had some similarities with international standards outside Kenya, but there was also the Kenyan context to it because we were also working with people and laws that were locally Kenyan.

Having obtained a bachelor degree and teacher qualification from his home country before coming to Canada to begin the masters program, Felix soon realized that his qualification from Kenya did not automatically translate to a teacher certification in Canada. Since the teacher's certification is provincially regulated, he was directed to the Alberta Ministry of Education to obtain detailed information on how to fulfil the requirements for obtaining an Alberta teacher's certification. After making inquiries and applying to the Alberta Ministry of Education for his credentials to be assessed and certified, he was informed that additional qualifications must be attained in addition to his bachelor degree to be certified in Alberta.

After the assessment process was completed by the Alberta Ministry of Education, he was informed that he had to complete three more courses in addition to his Bachelor of Education degree from Kenya to become a certified teacher in Alberta. The required courses were related to Indigenous education or Indigenous perspectives, classroom management in the Alberta context, and practicum experience. Felix notes that these requirements were relevant and had the following to say about the process of obtaining the teachers' certification:

There were various requirements for people from various countries, so somebody, for example from South Africa or England [they] may not be required to take those additional courses that I had to take. In that sense, it was different, and difficult to know what was required. It was good though, that there was this requirement to contact this office to get the information. So, once I was told what I had to do, I embraced that because I was going to university at the same time. It could be different for somebody who had to go to university because they needed those additional qualifications. For me, it was not a problem because I was already going to the university for my master's program.

Felix also had this to say about the integration and experiences of ITPs into the Canadian workforce and the academe specifically:

Among the G7 countries, Canada accepts some of the highest numbers of people [immigrants] relative to its population, and many of the people come for various reasons for those who come, they want to join the labour force, and they have a lot to offer. But I think that it is very important to get to talk to them to see how they see the labour market, what their experience are and how those experiences could be improved, to make it better for them. The government has what they call [some] resources to help, but not everyone

knows these resources and people have different experiences when it comes to getting into academia. For those who are not immigrants, getting an academic job can be very hard, so for immigrants, it is even harder sometimes.

Felix mentions that the requirement for gaining employment in the academe is clear and straightforward for both faculty and non-faculty staff members. The attainment of a doctorate is often mandated to obtain a faculty position, whereas a doctorate is not necessary to obtain a non-faculty position. Given his previous experience in the Canadian academic environment of twelve years as a sessional instructor previously and now as a tenure-track assistant professor, Felix described his experience as a sessional instructor in a Saskatchewan Polytechnic and experience as a tenure-track assistant professor in the university thus:

As a sessional instructor, you are given courses to teach, there is no guidance and mentor(ship) close by. It is [basically] you are teaching this course, so you do it, and if you have a question, talk to this person [supervisor] rather than somebody working with you and telling you that this is how it is done. That is the expectation, so in that sense, it was different when it came to the university, [it was another different thing] because I'm now a tenure-track assistant professor. There is a [lot of] support system in place, if you need support with how to teach then the university has a Centre for teaching and learning. If you need help with how to teach online, then there are the IT people [department] who are available to help you. So, the nature of support available as a sessional instructor is different from the support [that is] available at the university as a tenure track assistant professor. So, I [have] found the university to be very helpful, or at least the resources are available should I need them.

In a parallel instance, Felix notes the importance of the resources available to faculty members and even students in the university during the process of induction or orientation. There are resources for instructors on academic integrity, curriculum development, course planning, performance assessment based on faculty association requirements, and how to advance in rank when it comes to tenure and promotion. As a racialized ITP, Felix states that having more information on the interview process and negotiating wages before accepting a faculty position would have been beneficial. Explaining his experience with the interview process:

I think that [the] interview process from my experience, I could have benefitted [from it] if I got some advice and some tips from people who are already there. So, if as a Black person, I've been invited for a job interview at this university in Canada, I would benefit if I was able to talk to a Black person in that faculty, in that university so they can give me their advice, what they think about the job, about the university and something like that. In my case as a Black person, that did not happen until much later. So, getting that information earlier could be very useful.

Probing the nature of this experience during the interview he said:

The job [being a professor] is high stakes. If somebody applied for a job as a professor, whether a full professor, associate, or assistant professor, but you apply for a job as a professor and you are shortlisted and invited to visit the campus. The interview itself, the process takes more than one full day, it takes [involves] talking to the Dean, talking to Associate Dean Research, talking to students, talking to faculty members, and talking about yourself to too many people. For many people who were trained internationally, their experience may be so different it may not be like that. And so, when you come to campus in Canada, your experience and expectations may not be the same as what you're

going to get. And when you are, for example, a Black person like me. The number of Black people who are professors in postsecondary universities in Canada is between two and four percent, so it's a very small number. So, when you go to some universities, the number may be even smaller. In some faculties, the number may be even smaller. So as a person of colour, Black person, Asian person, etcetera. I could have benefitted if I got some advice and some tips from people who were already there.

Regarding negotiating wages before accepting a faculty position, he says:

I think there's one key thing that is worth noting for me as an internationally trained person. The excitement came with that job offer to be an assistant professor, that it's like I've looked for this so long, I'm going to get this. I think this is a great thing that has happened to me. As time went by, I got to realize that there may be people who were hired at the same time in the same faculty, but the amount of money they were offered, their starting salary could be higher than mine. Others may be offered a higher starting salary than I as a foreign-trained professional and their racial background may or may not be material. [This is] because when you are offered the job, there's a provision for you to bargain and negotiate. But for me, as a foreign-trained professional, I did not know that, so I got carried away with a job offer I did not know about the provision for negotiation for higher pay. So, I think that some international professionals may not know [about] that, and pay increases are also based on the starting salary.

Felix notes that for many racialized ITPs the academe can be a very lonely place sometimes, given the underrepresentation of racialized individuals within the academe and the inability of many faculties to be further divided into departments based on subject areas and specializations. Felix further adds that when universities have large faculties, they usually have

departments, and those departments have department heads. He points out that further dividing faculties into departments are instrumental in building relationships and identifying faculty members with similar research interests.

...If they [universities] have large faculties, they usually have departments, and those departments have department heads. My faculty does not have that. But I'm talking about that because if there are departments, you will likely know the specializations of others. In our university, there are no departments and when you come to such a faculty, it is sometimes hard to know the research someone is doing that is closely aligned with the research that you do. So, for international [trained] professionals, I think it would be good to know those you can collaborate with in research as early as possible because I realized that in academia, collaboration is very important, you cannot do it by yourself all the time, so getting to know people in that field is very important.

Despite the academe sometimes being a very lonely place, Felix notes how some peers and other social contacts have been instrumental in enabling him to access and navigate the Canadian academe and other social institutions:

Moving to a new country entails a significant learning curve because it is impossible to know everything, so having people bounce ideas off, ask questions, and share frustrations, hopes, and dreams with those who will support you are essential. I have people with whom I discuss career issues, play soccer, people from church, and people I meet at the gym. They each add some positive energy, and we exchange ideas and encourage each other. They have different backgrounds but having such a social network is critical because they are often closer to you than your biological family back in the motherland.



Felix further discussed how he frequently feels the need to prove or establish his professional competence and qualification to students and be assertive when dealing with colleagues.

...for example, when I work with students, sometimes I feel like I need to prove to them [students] that I deserve to be there [in the academe]. I must reiterate the educational background that qualifies me to be here [in the academe], and colleagues or non-racialized professionals may not have to prove that they deserve to be there [in the academe].

On being assertive when dealing with colleagues, he responded:

Sometimes you need to prove yourself to your colleagues by showing you are smart and knowledgeable. It may appear to be something simple, but having to prove and justify your presence there, and that someone did not bring you there just to do you a favour, but that you deserve to be there, can be very stressful. Secondly, sometimes because I'm racialized because I'm Black, I get many invitations to join equity-related committees. They may mean well, but in doing that they can limit me to only equity-related issues. So, I resist some invitations in other not to be confined to such issues alone.

Growing up, Felix viewed education as a pathway to a better life, a path to getting away from where he was, both physically and mentally, to moving to a place where he desired. As a young boy and even to this day, education has been ingrained in him as a gateway to something better, because he regards education as a means of liberation. As a result, his approach to teaching and interacting with his students is to ingrain the idea that education will also liberate and assist them to achieve whatever they set their minds to achieve, despite the challenges or barriers they might encounter. He asserts that:

Support of the family is very important for immigrants in general, but more so for first-generation immigrants. [Generally speaking], they have strong ties to the family and their family could be here in North America or they could be back home in the motherland, but the tie is very strong, and the family is always there to support them. There may be outliers and differences, but the family is always there to support them, and this starts with parents encouraging their children to be educated and having high expectations for them to reach their full potential. As a result, family support is very important.

### **Dalia**

Dalia is a middle-aged woman, from Iran. After completing her bachelor degree in her home country, she went to the United States to complete her master degree, before crossing over to Canada to pursue her doctorate. She has been living in Canada for about ten years. Her first language and the official language of modern-day Iran is Persian – known to native Iranian speakers as Farsi. Dalia speaks English as a second language and has some knowledge of Turkish and French. Stating the influence, impact, and importance of being multilingual, she responds:

As an Iranian, I feel happy and at ease when I meet another Iranian because they have someone to talk to if they are having difficulty communicating. I always speak in English in the classroom, even with students who are Iranian or from other countries where the language is spoken. However, one of the ways I connect with my students is during office hours. If I have an Iranian student who comes to my office, for example, communicating in Persian helps them understand confusing concepts and engage in other informal discussions such as career and educational advice. I won't deduct points for grammatically incorrect sentences; however, if I were born and raised in Canada, I might

be stricter in my grading. I believe my knowledge of different languages helps me better understand and connect with students.

Over more than five years in Iran, Dalia developed her professional skills working in the financial industry. She then transitioned to university as an instructor for a solitary semester before relocating to the United States to pursue her master degree. Dalia has worked professionally in the Canadian academic environment for about four years. Comparing her professional experience in Iran, the United States, and Canada, she says:

Everything is the same, even the curriculum being taught, and the way exams are administered. Culture is the main factor that differs. I don't want to argue that their [students'] behaviour is rude, but because it is so informal, the expectations for respect are different. Professors are held in high esteem and given high regard in Iran, where the relationship between students and professors is more formal. For instance, calling your professor by their first name is not practiced in Iran.

Probing further to determine if her experience in the United States prepared her for life in Canada she responds:

It was very helpful because [the] US is very similar to Canada in my opinion, and it was in the US that I began learning about cultural differences, which was the biggest cultural shock I experienced travelling outside of my country for the first time. After I moved to Canada, I was already familiar with the informal relationships and dynamics of the classroom and how people communicate and dress informally. I believe everything in the US is very informal, both for the professor and students, and this prepared me for something similar in Canada.

Discussing the informal relationship between colleagues she explains:

In terms of collegiality, everyone is very nice and more friendly compared to Iran where everything is incredibly formal. Here [in the US and Canada] everyone is more friendly, and you see colleagues hanging out or going for drinks after school [work]. So, it's a different environment. The US is very similar, and it made me ready for the Canadian environment.

Dalia described her view on racialized ITPs' chances of being employed in the Canadian academe by emphasizing the importance placed on obtaining a Canadian degree.

If a person doesn't have a higher-level degree from a Canadian institution. It is almost impossible to have a full-time academic position. For example, if someone has a Ph.D. from a university outside Canada, I will say from my country, I don't know about any other country. But if I was coming from Iran with a Ph.D. and applying to become a professor here, I might get a position as a sessional instructor, but I don't think I would get a tenure-track position.

With regards to her view on racialized ITPs' chances of being employed in the Canadian academe, she concludes that:

If someone without a degree from a European or North American country comes to Canada, they must accept a lower-paying position than they would otherwise receive in their home country. And I believe this is also true for jobs in other industries because they will not automatically be at the same level since they require some sort of equivalent degree. As a result, it is a disadvantage for people trained outside of Canada because it wastes a lot of their time and effort.

Given the challenges ITPs often encounter with credentials obtained from countries outside North American or European countries, Dalia suggests that:

There needs to be some sort of universal examination in our industry [academia]. For example, if someone has a Ph.D. in accounting from another country, once they become a CPA [Certified Public Accountant] here in Canada in addition to the degree they already have in accounting, then they should be qualified to get hired for a tenure-track position in a Canadian university.

On credentials obtained internationally, she further asserts that:

I understand the Canadian viewpoint when they say, we're not in other countries, so we don't know what's going on, what the qualifications are, and what's [being] taught, but there are certified agencies that access these degrees, [yet] I think companies or universities are not comfortable giving the position to someone without a Canadian degree. So, it is a damaging macro-level policy issue with weaknesses and limitations because it limits a group of people who are otherwise qualified for the job.

Dalia further discussed how she found the cultural difference most challenging. Besides the social culture, Dalia also observed differences in the academic culture.

As an instructor, I teach a course and design the exam based on the material being taught. Opportunities are also given to students to ask questions or approach me during office hours whenever they are having difficulties understanding the concepts, [yet] no one comes. Afterward, many students have low grades even after repeating the exact end-of-chapter questions. I hate giving students low grades, but I must be fair across the board.

Probing further on the challenging academic culture, she says:

Some students who do poorly complain about the difficulty in the exam, the material being taught, the time allotted for the exam, and so forth. As a result of such complaints, I have a feeling the [university] administration sides with the students by saying you need

to cooperate with the students and make them happy. The idea of always making students happy is a double-edged sword because some students just want high grades without [actually] learning the material which could negatively impact them professionally or in their pursuit of graduate studies. I struggle to find a balance between making students happy or being a little bit strict for their benefit if they learn the material. I have the impression that I need to be lenient even when it is not justified, which gives students the confidence to complain and ask for bonus points even after they have performed poorly. I think there should be a balance and we should be very careful in overemphasizing what students want because instructors or the university generally should guide the students in the direction that's best for them, not just what would make them happy at that moment which is a short-sighted view preventing some from working hard.

Discussing her previous experience in a Canadian post-secondary institution as a sessional instructor and now as a tenure-track assistant professor at the university in the past two years, Dalia described the differences in the induction programs provided at these institutions:

The induction program was amazing, and it was organized by the [institutions] Centre for Teaching and Learning. My previous experience and those of my friends in other institutions are different, because you just get someone to assist you with documentation and answering a few questions, unlike what I received at [this institution] which was organized over a week. I got to learn from different departments in the university and received various resources, for example, if I have a question regarding salary, insurance, how to conduct an exam, or any other thing, I know who to contact. The information I received over that orientation week was comprehensive.

Dalia notes that academic institutions can further facilitate the success of racialized ITPs by including a section that will briefly introduce ITPs to the Canadian culture, provide subsidized writing support, and organize an informal gathering.

I had some teaching experience before coming to [this institution], but for the sake of someone teaching at the university for the first time, a section about the in-class culture or communication culture should be included. For example, in my culture, it is considered impolite to send an e-mail, letter, or make a phone call, without first exchanging pleasantries before asking a question. Though they are not trying to be impolite, it's just the cultural difference. In addition, different cultures have their perspectives on personal space, so explaining all these prevents a lot of strange behaviours, weirdness, and misunderstanding.

Regarding the provision of subsidized writing support, she responds:

Though many ITPs don't speak English as their first language and speak with an accent, I believe writing assistance for faculty members will be extremely beneficial. Writing a research paper, for example, may not appear professional due to the language barrier, and while editing services are available outside of the university, they are very expensive. [This university] offers writing consulting to students, but when I contacted them, they didn't have anything for faculty members, which I believe should be added to their services because there are so many internationally trained faculty members who don't speak English as their first language. These services do not have to be provided for free; they can be provided at a reduced rate in comparison to what others charge. This could increase publication rates because academic papers are frequently rejected because of how they were written. This editing service is currently unavailable.

On organizing informal gatherings, she summates that faculties should:

Hold a retreat or gathering in a fun environment at least once a semester for faculty members to hang out and get to know each other in a fun and informal way, as opposed to holding a faculty council meeting or other formal meetings where some faculty members do not show up or are in a hurry to attend another meeting or teach a class. This retreat does not have to be elaborate; it can be held on a weekend or a holiday when people can come with their partners. This would allow people to feel like they are a part of the community and socialize with their colleagues, particularly ITPs looking to make new connections at the university and in the city.

Dalia, like Felix, credits her cultural upbringing with instilling in her the value of education and her high regard for the position of a teacher, particularly growing up during a time of war when resources were scarce. Consequently, she strives to diligently perform her responsibilities without taking the position she occupies for granted. Furthermore, as a female racialized ITP, she attributes her tireless work ethic and resilience to her experiences in Iran, where women have fewer opportunities and are accustomed to working harder to obtain the positions that they deserve. Despite this first-hand knowledge and experience of gender discrimination, she strives to always achieve equality in all she does. The attainment of equity and fairness, and the elimination of prejudice are something that guides her actions and teaching. Conclusively, Dalia credits her husband for his support and applauds the university and other social contacts for making her transition easy.

I always feel sorry for people who are alone and have no family here, whether it is their father, mother, spouse, or significant other. My parents are not here, but I am with my husband, and we left Iran together we've always been together over the years, both in the



United States and here in Canada. Without his support, my journey into academia and other milestones would have been extremely difficult to attain.

On the impact of the university and other social contacts, she states:

My colleagues within and outside of my department, particularly our chair, have been extremely helpful every time I meet with her and ask questions. The formation of a mentorship group for new faculty members was an amazing feature of the university's orientation program. Though it was virtual due to Covid, it was beneficial. We could talk about different things and different factors that were stressing us out in the mentorship group, or if you had any questions or challenges personally or professionally, it was a safe space and safe group to mention and ask for guidance. My mentor has been fantastic in guiding me through this journey.

Regarding the mentorship program, she adds:

The Centre for Learning and Teaching organized it by sending an email to new faculty members about group mentorship opportunities. Because it was voluntary, I chose a group that fit into my schedule, especially since I didn't know any of the mentors beforehand. But I'm pleased with the mentor I received, and I'm sure other groups had similar experiences because I believe the key here is to have a space where you are free to say anything. After all, there is no judgement, and confidentiality is guaranteed in the group. Even though the group only meets once a month, we could e-mail our mentors and contact them directly if we had any problems or questions in the meantime. I'm not sure if the university had this program before the pandemic, but I learned a lot from it and would be happy to serve as a mentor to new faculty members in the future.

## **Park**

Park is a middle-aged woman originally from China. Soon after completing her bachelor degree and gaining about a year's worth of professional experience in her home country, she immigrated to Canada as an international student to obtain a master degree at a university in Southern Ontario. Park has been in Canada for nearly fifteen years, and while she has been working professionally in Canada for about ten years, she has spent five of those years in the Canadian academic environment.

Park currently works as a non-faculty staff member at a university located in Vancouver, British Columbia. After completing her master program, she received a temporary position as a non-faculty at a university in Southern Ontario. After the expiration of her contract at the university, Park found it difficult to find employment in her discipline. Discussing what she found most challenging about working professionally in Canada she states:

I think job expectation is one of the most challenging because, in China, I took finding a job within my educational field for granted. But after I came to Canada, at one point I didn't have career goals, I was just trying to find a job that just make me [you know] survive. I didn't consider using my educational background because I didn't believe I could use my bachelor's or master's degrees at all. It's just that at one point I was just trying to pay bills with any job that I could find. Another challenge was waiting to become a PR [Permanent Residence]. I hoped that after becoming a PR [Permanent Resident], things would change, but it was pretty much the same for a while.

She further explained that:

Then I considered continuing my education by pursuing a Ph.D., but due to my inability to find employment in my field despite my bachelor's and master's degrees and work

experience as a non-faculty staff member, I shifted my career and educational goals. I started working as a bus driver [transit operator] after being unemployed for nearly six months. I earned an office administration certificate while working at that job, which helped me get my current job. Now I intend to resume my studies for a Ph.D.

Discussing how ITPs could be assisted to have what could be considered soft-landing upon their arrival or to further facilitate their success, Park suggested that:

One of the most important issues today, in my opinion, is the requirement for a Canadian degree and professional work experience. I believe this is something that must be deemphasized because most internationally trained people lack Canadian degrees and professional work experience when they first arrive in Canada. Another issue is a lack of social and professional networks which is important for gaining information and direction.

Regarding a lack of social and professional network, she further notes that:

It's really about the people you know or encounter when completing your studies or at your workplace. Even though it didn't lead to a job, the contract job I got at the university in Southern Ontario after finishing my master's degree was a very valuable experience. I got it through a professor I met at the university. She was genuinely interested in assisting international students and new immigrants like me because she had similar experiences as an international student. Mentors, such as my professor, are important because they can guide and assist you in getting your foot in the door of some organizations, which can be difficult to achieve on your own.

Though Park is grateful and excited about getting her career back on track, she credits her husband for his encouragement and support in her decision to become a transit operator to get

her foot in the door and prepare her for other positions. Additionally, she notes that as a racialized ITP, language, culture, and the excessive workload she occasionally performs have been among the most challenging thing about working professionally in academia. she says:

It can be difficult to feel like a member of the team due to language and cultural differences. Although my colleagues frequently say that it is a person's personality, not necessarily language and cultural differences, that makes it difficult, I've noticed that I have difficulty with other people's jokes, and sometimes this can make me quite a bad conversation partner especially when I'm not sure if my joke will be misinterpreted by others. Most times during conversations, I simply respond by saying yes or no without adding additional comments, especially when discussing sensitive topics. This often makes my colleagues think I'm not approachable.

Regarding the excessive workload, she adds:

I think it's about setting boundaries. For example, I'm a people pleaser so whenever work is assigned to me, I simply accept it and I never say no. Eventually, I take on a lot of work that isn't necessarily within my job description because they realize I can do it. This is something that needs to be addressed because the extra workload causes me to become stressed.

Park observes that employers frequently organize orientation programs for new employees, but she does not find them particularly useful because they tend to focus more on providing background information on the company, how well the company treats its employees, or something along those lines. These orientation programs, according to Park, are generic. She admits that in her current position, she did not attend the orientation program diligently because she expected it to be generic. The orientation was entirely voluntary, and it took place virtually

during the Covid-19 pandemic. Thus, she was more focused on perfecting the new skills she needed for her job. She responds to what she found most useful during the orientation.

Employees can take professional development courses and further their education by taking courses for free because we have the privilege to register for any course of our choice as long as there are open seats three days before the class begins. So, that was the most impressive aspect of the orientation I attended, and I have taken advantage of that opportunity several times.

Discussing how these orientation programs can be improved she responds:

[Generally speaking], for me, orientation can be generic and even boring, especially when they discuss the company's history and brag about how well it is doing. Besides jobs people take to pay bills and survive, they already know it is a good company which is why they applied to work there. Rather than saying so much about the company, more effort should be put into ensuring new employees get practical information that will serve them professionally and personally. Particularly for internationally trained professionals, time should be devoted to discussing things like health coverage and insurance.

Discussing further what could be done to facilitate the success of ITPs she says:

There should be opportunities for internationally trained professionals to learn about Canadian culture. A mixer or social event can be organized to meet and interact with local families, and other members of faculty and staff so that they can engage in [some kind of] cultural exchange. There should also be [some kind of] mentorship program to assist new international professionals and students by bringing successful mentors with similar educational experiences to guide them.

Park emphasizes the high level of dedication, work ethic, and humility that racialized ITPs bring to the Canadian workforce. She observes that many ITPs are overqualified for the positions they hold; for example, a colleague who previously worked as a medical doctor in her home country is now working as a nursing instructor in Canada because she is yet to obtain a Canadian medical licence. Although being overqualified for these jobs means they frequently lack job satisfaction or perform duties beyond their job role, Park used the television show *The Big Bang Theory* to describe how a physics professor from the former Soviet Union solved a difficult physics problem while working as a janitor in a United States university. She goes on to say that these professionals bring skills and knowledge to their organization that is not expected of them and that this improves the work process or workflow. She concludes that, while this lack of professional satisfaction does not reflect the experience of all ITPs, many new immigrants and international students suffer professionally.

### **Medina**

Medina is a middle-aged man who has lived in Canada for nearly two decades. He immigrated to Canada after earning two master degrees, one from his home country Pakistan and the other from the United Kingdom. Though Medina has been working professionally, he has worked within the Canadian academe for the past six years as a sessional instructor in a Canadian college, and he is currently completing his doctorate at a university in Southern Ontario. Medina's first language is Urdu, which is also the official language of Pakistan, and he speaks English as a second language. Discussing his experience of entering the Canadian academe:

As an immigrant, I was asked to have my degrees assessed by WES [World Education Services], but I refused, even though they offered to pay for the assessment. But I refused

because, in my opinion, it is the hegemonic way of controlling education. That's the hegemonic way of controlling education by establishing equivalencies to demonstrate that Western education is superior to others based on their standard. These assessments, such as WES, IELTS [International English Language Testing System], and TOEFL [Test of English as a Foreign Language], serve as gatekeeping instruments or tools to ensure their monopoly on education.

He further states:

With a master's degree from the United Kingdom, I moved to Canada. When they interviewed me after I applied for a job at the college, they mentioned that I had not yet had my degrees evaluated. I am grateful to the person who interviewed me because he trusted my credentials. I believe international exposure is very important because my international education and professional experience showed my competence. He also identified with a racialized group, and we seemed to connect in some way.

Comparing the Canadian academe to other countries where he has gained professional experience he responds:

I can break it down in various ways, such as administration, pedagogy, collegial harmony, and student approaches. I have found those in the administrative departments to be very helpful. In terms of pedagogy and collegial harmony, I've felt like, you know, straight racism in my face, and they thought that we are somehow inferior to them and their ways of knowing are better than our ways of knowing in terms of teaching.

Probing further on a particular experience when his professional competence was questioned by students, he responded:

I frequently have the impression that I am being investigated because of my skin colour on the first day of a class. When I begin teaching and engaging my students, they are generally pleased and have no more reservations about my skin colour. When I taught a course about five years ago, my entire class was White, except for two racialized students, and I could see the uncertainty on their faces at having a Brown-skinned person teach them. After a successful class at the end of the semester, students apologized for their initial perception of me as inferior and incompetent. My competence has been called into question several times, and while it is extremely difficult to navigate, I do so by constantly proving my knowledge and satisfactorily answering all questions posed to me.

Medina sees a lack of connection among academics as a major challenge. He claims that the college does not provide any avenue for colleagues to build relationships, which hurts racialized ITPs' ability to socialize, build professional connections, and collaborate with their peers. Medina considers the lack of guidance and the excessive workload he frequently juggles to be overwhelming.

The induction program was very shallow and insignificant. All we did was meet with the chair and some other people, after which I was told to take some health and safety courses. There was no formal training session before going to the classroom. All I got was a random email with my class schedule and the courses I was to teach. It would have been great to have some form of guidance and mentorship.

Regarding the excessive workload he frequently juggles, he states:

We're all juggling a lot, and many of us are feeling overwhelmed. Allow me to give you an example. I taught two courses last semester, but in the 2021 Fall semester, I taught seven courses to over 270 students, with several assignments and assessments. There was



no graduate or teaching assistant assigned to me. I didn't have any help; I was completely alone, fighting for my survival.

Despite the challenges he encounters in the academe, Medina states that he derives motivated and influenced by his father who was also a professor, and his elder brother. He also identifies himself as antagonistic because he is always ready to resist and address anything he finds inappropriate. Medina further explains how he uses his skill and knowledge to navigate the academe:

In terms of social justice, even though my ideology as a Muslim does not conform to that of the LGBTQ community; however, as a professional, I completely support and assist my students by providing them with popular media, research articles, and classroom discussions to shape their thinking. Also, when I mentioned earlier that I taught a class with only two racialized students, I recall designing the course and including three out of seven articles focusing on African and Asian communities in America to enrich classroom discussion by discussing topics that possibly discuss their lived experiences.

Medina notes that collaboration is the best way to facilitate the success of ITPs in the academe and all spheres of Canadian society. He recalls how a senior racialized professor was instrumental in assisting him to adjust to the expectations and responsibilities of the Canadian academe. Medina stresses that this collaboration is not only necessary for providing guidance and mentorship which is often lacking, but also in producing academic research, and lastly for challenging the inferior narrative that often clouds the professional qualification and experiences of ITPs.

## **Edna**

Edna is a middle-aged woman who has lived in Canada for about twenty-five years. She immigrated to Canada from Kenya shortly after completing a two-year diploma program in Education. Upon arriving in Canada, she gained additional qualifications by obtaining bachelor and master degrees. Kenya has over forty ethnic languages, but Edna speaks Keiyo as her mother tongue and Swahili or Kiswahili as it is also called – which is largely regarded as Kenya’s national language because it is the language commonly used to communicate in the Kenyan parliament and for commerce, and English which is often used as a language of instruction in schools. Edna has over fifteen years of professional experience in Canada and eight years have been in the Canadian academe as a non-faculty staff member. She identifies social and racial diversity as the most significant difference between Canada and Kenya.

Kenya is a homogeneous society; we are all Kenyans. Although there are foreigners in Kenya, mostly one works with regular average Kenyans, as opposed to Canada which is a very diverse society where you will find yourself working with people from all over the world. In Canada, the challenge is getting people to appreciate you for who you are and to see beyond your race, colour, and nationality. These factors play a significant role in impacting the dynamics at work.

Probing how colour, and nationality impact racialized ITPs, she states:

So, for example, in my first job, I was employed by a firm, and we were all new hires because it was a new company, we had the opportunity to grow and become leaders. At the time of employment, we were told that after a year or two, we would move from junior to senior employees and after another year or two, we become managers. But, as time passed, I discovered that everyone else followed that path except for me and other

racialized individuals who were stuck in the same junior positions. After more than three years, during which I should have been promoted at least twice, I left to pursue my master's degree. That experience taught me that racialized professionals require more education and professional experience than non-racialized professionals to obtain the same job. My motivation for continuing my education was to better position myself for future opportunities.

Examining further her perception of why racialized professionals tend not to achieve professional success at the same rate as their counterparts, she responded by emphasizing the social diversity that exists in Canadian society:

So, for example, in the private sector, when a job is available everyone competes internally to get a much better position. There is a lot of lobbying to fill the new position which leads to internal shuffling within the organization. As a result, most times only the least positions in organizations are advertised to the public, which explains why racialized ITPs often occupy the lowest positions. Racialized ITPs also try to advance when better positions become available but getting it is a different story. Advancing is often difficult because they [racialized ITPs] tend to live in 'silos' [communities], that is African community, the Chinese community, the Indian community, etc., and then there's the 'regular Canadians.' Social diversity is reflected in the fact that the top management is White, which makes it easy for them to connect within their community. Racialized professionals lose out because they lack this social connection that helps to build trust and confidence, and [of course] the existence of racism is also a factor.

Discussing the entry requirement for racialized ITPs to access the Canadian workforce and academe, Edna notes:

It is tougher for ITPs. Like I said earlier, I left to pursue my master's degree to advance professionally, and even after that, I was still employed in positions comparable to those with a bachelor's degree, so I was largely overqualified because I had also obtained a diploma in Kenya. Even though I finished my bachelor's degree here [Canada], a non-racialized person's degree was worth more than mine, so I quickly discovered that even my Kenyan degree didn't count for anything, so I might as well delete it [from my resume] and focus on the one I obtained in Canada. Eventually, you realize that your level of education and experience is a lot higher than [those of] your peers, yet you don't get hired or promoted not because of a personality flaw or a disagreement with the manager but because of the system.

To combat the underemployment of racialized ITPs, Edna suggests the enactment of institutional policies that will consider their educational and professional experiences.

A policy should be in place. A policy requires a committed decision by an institution because you cannot solely rely on managers or HR [Human Resources] to make this decision. This begins with recognizing and acknowledging the value in the education and experiences of racialized professionals for employment and promotion. So, if I sit here and say I have a master's degree and the next person says they have a bachelor's degree, there should be some way to recognize that I have put in more effort to demonstrate my capacity rather than just relying on the discretion of managers and HR.

Edna regards the lack of recognition for her professional competence as the most challenging for her within the Canadian academe.

I'd say it's in the little things, like interaction and being recognized for my abilities. It takes time for people to become convinced about my competence. In my role in

academia, I have worked with leaders, and they tell me to use their names if I need something or if I'm working with someone. For example, I might say, "My controller requires this, or I'm speaking with the controller, and they've asked me to look into this, I'm working with the AVP [Assistant Vice-President] on this, could you help me? In my experience, racialized professionals are not easily trusted, so I must constantly drop big names to gain recognition or credibility for my position because some people have prejudices. To be successful and not have my leaders do my job for me, I must continue to hide behind them. It becomes difficult because I do it all the time.

Edna recalls that the induction program, or onboarding process, she received from her previous and current academic institution of employment was very technical and work-related. The induction comprised mostly just learning the work systems, information regarding human resources, and health and safety issues. She suggested that the program should be improved.

I believe that people should be taught about working together in general, given the interaction of race in the workplace, because some people have never interacted with racialized people or immigrants. There could even be [some kind of] personality test, like what is done for those summoned for jury duty, to determine if someone has an unconscious prejudice and because that gives the person a chance to say, oh, I didn't realize I was prejudiced in this way, but now I realize that this is considered prejudicial. For example, when people say I speak good English, I do not regard it as a compliment. So, this training is just as important as learning the work systems or dealing with health and safety issues in the event of an emergency.

On that note, Edna mentions that she has formed some relationships within academia with a handful of people who support, advise, and provide her with strategies to stay centred

whenever she feels overwhelmed or discouraged. She describes how she was on the verge of leaving academia but was encouraged to persevere after hearing the personal success stories of her contacts. She also believes that ITPs are distinguished by their exceptional work ethic and advocates for the establishment of an office to address and advocate for racialized professionals in academia.

That office [representing racialized professionals], in my opinion, should address the concerns of racialized professionals in the same way that a union works to advocate for its members. This office will assist in the resolution and investigation of issues because we have nowhere else to go when we run into problems, so you learn to hide behind your bosses because you want to succeed at your job, or we are being too professional to discuss it. This office should also address the lack of representation of racialized people in institutional leadership by training and grooming individuals to take on this role without the perception that they are being fast-tracked. In addition, maybe a club where African or racialized non-faculty and faculty members can interact should be established.

Edna mentions that the presence of racialized professionals in academia has a significant impact on students. She observes that the presence of these professionals has an impact on both student recruitment and retention because students, particularly racialized students, see themselves through the eyes of these professionals. She also mentions how students feel at ease when they are served by racialized professionals because they are assured that they can better understand and empathize with them, and they feel welcome and assured that they have a place within the institution, not only as students, but they can also aspire to become professionals within the academe if they so desire. Edna further observes:

A part of the job that is unrecognized and unpaid involves mentoring students and assisting them to navigate the system. Not just students because I remember I once had a janitor come into my office for some career advice because she worked for a private company contracted to do the cleaning and her superior was being difficult, and she didn't know who to turn to for help. So, our presence [racialized professionals] brings a lot of ease to academic institutions.

### **Victoria**

Victoria is a middle-aged woman originally from Nigeria. Shortly after finishing her bachelor degree and gaining a few years of professional experience in her home country, she immigrated to Canada as an international student to obtain a master degree at a university in southern Ontario. Victoria has been in Canada for nearly ten years, and while she has been working professionally in Canada for about five years, she has spent nearly two of those years as a non-faculty staff member in Canadian academia. She emphasizes the differences in her work experience between Nigeria and Canada.

I have had a very positive experience in Canada. The first difference is that the work culture and environment are not as hostile as they are in Nigeria. My interactions with my direct supervisors have been different because they are more understanding and respectful in their communication style. Furthermore, you are not required to work extra hours; they understand that they are asking you to do so, but it is not required that you work extra hours outside of your scheduled work hours. Though I'd say the chances of getting a job are better, I know from one or two people I've spoken with, not me personally, that there appears to be a ceiling placed on international professionals, making professional advancement more difficult.

When asked what she meant by being hostile, Victoria responds:

It has to do with the supervisor's personality or the leadership structure in general. My immediate supervisor in Nigeria, in my experience, made the work environment intimidating and unfriendly. For example, a time when I did not complete a task properly, my supervisor sent an e-mail and copied everyone. There are better ways to correct or discipline people. Here [in Canada], the supervisor addresses you directly and instructs you on how to do better to complete the task. I also recall joining the organization with a friend right after school, and she [supervisor] told us to stand in a meeting, saying, "Imagine what these young girls earn, what are they going to do with the money?" This is a workplace; I was interviewed, hired, and now I'm here to do my job.

Victoria notes that she believes the entry requirements for ITPs into academia are fair and excellent based on her experience and what she has learned on the job, but the fact that vacant positions are first posted internally makes it a little more difficult for ITPs to get their foot in the door.

Vacant positions in the university are typically advertised internally first. They post it internally first, for about a week or two, and if they are unable to fill the position internally, they post it externally for others to apply. As a result, most good jobs are already filled internally before vacant positions are posted externally. But in my [department], I believe that because it is demanding, not many people enjoy working there. So, I found the job on [I believe it was] indeed and applied. I received a call about three weeks later for the initial test. Following the test, the interview, and about two weeks later, I was informed that I had been hired. It was a quick process that I thought was fair and excellent.



Working in academia has been a smooth and barrier-free experience for Victoria as a racialized ITP. She describes her previous experience working in a customer-facing industry in Canada, where customers requested or waited to be attended to by another representative due to her race. What she finds most challenging is not receiving full credit for her degrees and professional experience. Victoria observes that not receiving full credit for degrees and professional experience is a chief reason why many ITPs switch careers, especially ITPs with many years of experience.

I believe the educational system is unfair to ITPs and the impact is felt professionally. So, I got my bachelor's degree in Nigeria and my master's degree in Canada. In general, it appears that only the CPA [Certified Public Accountant] is considered for professional certification in finance, not even a master's degree. Normally, the degrees I already have should exempt me from a few basic CPA courses; however, I was told that I must complete seven undergraduate courses before applying to start the CPA program. It's unfair because I've completed all these undergraduate courses, except for courses like taxes and law, which are country specific. Many ITPs are discouraged by the requirement to take so many undergraduate courses, especially because they are very expensive and must often be paid for out of pocket due to limited access to loans.

Describing the importance of obtaining this professional certification, she says:

One may be unable to advance in your career if you do not obtain a CPA. If you are not a certified public accountant. For instance, I have a new colleague who just finished his undergraduate degree and has already begun the CPA program, whereas I am still in the process of completing the seven undergraduate courses I was instructed to complete before beginning the CPA program. For us [ITPs], the playing field is not level. My

undergraduate degree was completed over twelve years ago, so all my professional experience counts for nothing. So, not having it [CPA] creates a career ceiling.

She goes on to say:

It is relatively easier for young ITPs without any experience to start afresh than those with many years of experience. It is difficult to adjust to a new country without much or any family or communal support, and this makes it difficult for ITPs to learn about open job positions, especially when they are posted internally. Additionally, my husband, who is also an ITP, is at a point in his career where it is not necessarily about his knowledge of the job because the company requires him to bring in new business, but many ITPs have not formed the necessary social relationships to attract new business, which could limit their growth.

Victoria mentions that as a new employee at the university, she did not receive any formal induction program, possibly due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and she is yet to receive one. She believes that such a program would have assisted her with the transition and other issues she encountered initially, such as not knowing the system or completing all the human resources documentation. Although her supervisor and colleagues attempted to provide an informal induction, she claims that they were largely unsuccessful because the department is understaffed, making it difficult for them to make time for her, so she has had to figure it out on her own, ask questions when having difficulty, and learn from her initial mistakes. Victoria notes that organizing an induction program will help facilitate the success of racialized ITPs.

A formal induction or training will be beneficial. It is understandable that a department like mine, which is understaffed, would have difficulty organizing such a thing, but in today's world, where everything is moving online, creating interactive video tutorials can

help bridge this gap. There were a few helpful video tutorials, but they were not comprehensive or up-to-date. Having comprehensive and current interactive video tutorials will help new employees understand their role and the systems, and they will be able to refer to them in the future.

She goes on to say...

The university is doing an excellent job of encouraging personal growth. For example, though stressful, the only reason why I considered obtaining a CPA is that full-time [and maybe part-time] employees are entitled to free tuition. The tuition, incidentals, and other charges for the program in which I am currently enrolled are approximately \$5000, and the university covers tuition, which is nearly 90% of the cost. This encourages employees to pursue their professional designation while working because provisions are also made to accommodate our schedules. ITPs in academia should take advantage of this opportunity because it is available not only to them but also to their spouse and child(ren). However, there is room for improvement with job assistance, such as staffing, and ensuring we have the right equipment, tools, and systems because many things that should be automated are still done manually. Automation would help simplify the work.

When Victoria first arrived in Canada as an international student, she was grateful to have Nigerians in her program. Though they had to figure out most things on their own, she was grateful that there were other Nigerians in the same program ahead of them to whom they could go for course materials, advice, and information. In the same vein, she claims to receive similar support from her husband and colleagues who have completed the CPA program, as well as colleagues who are currently enrolled in the program. In that regard, being able to rely on them for assistance has been beneficial. Elaborating on her husband's assistance, she says:

It is challenging to attend school, work full-time, and have responsibilities at home.

Because I am sometimes unavailable, my husband has had to drop off and pick up our son from school, as well as take him to programs. Having an understanding and supportive partner who can pick up the slack has been extremely beneficial.

### **Conclusion**

A narrative account of the interviews with the six participants in this study has been presented above in this chapter. Participants' experiences and narratives include the highs and lows, lessons learned, and their hopes and recommendations for attracting and retaining prospective professionals into academia, which could significantly increase diversity and representation, particularly among racialized ITPs. The key themes emerging from participant narratives, the implications, and the study's conclusion will be discussed in the following chapter and to the greatest extent possible, linked to the pedagogy of cultural wealth theoretical framework used in this study. Lastly, I am thankful to the participants who are the champions of this research study for their initial interest in the study, for responding to the call to participate, for making time out of their busy schedules to be interviewed, and for sharing their stories.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **COMMON THEMES, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS**

Thomas (2012) defined narrative inquiry as a method of investigating the significance, meaning, and transmission of an event or a series of events. Participants' narratives in this study are reflections of how they understand and make sense of their lived experiences. As samples from a larger population, their stories are not meant to be generalized, as narrative inquiry seeks understanding and meaning rather than conclusive findings. This study includes six participants: three faculty and three non-faculty staff members, comprising two males and four females. Participants in this study came to Canada as international students from China, Iran, Kenya, Nigeria, and Pakistan after completing various types of higher education degrees.

I presented the narratives of the six study participants in chapter four, attempting to be as true to their voices as possible. In this chapter, I identified and discussed four key themes that emerged from participant stories as much as possible by linking them to a pedagogy of cultural wealth theoretical frameworks. Participants' stories revealed four key themes: pillars of support, foreign credential recognition, institutional structure and responsibilities, and language and cultural differences.

#### **Pillars of Support**

All six participants agree that providing some form of assistance to racialized ITPs is important. This is significant because all six participants immigrated to Canada as international students, and cultural exchange occurs with their peers and academic staff members with whom they come into contact. Participants experienced cultural shock and a need to learn how to navigate Canadian social institutions upon arrival in Canada, because for some, immigrating to Canada as international students was also their first time leaving the shores of their home

country. For others who had visited or lived in other countries, it was their first time in Canada as students. Anwar-Travas (2018) described cultural shock as the sense of disorientation experienced by immigrants as they integrate into an unfamiliar culture and society, which can be difficult to overcome, particularly among those with deeply rooted traditions and ways of life. Hence, given all the experiences they have accumulated since they arrived in Canada, they have all returned to the academe, not just as students in the case of those continuing their education, but as recognized professionals.

Participants mentioned the importance of proper guidance and mentorship for racialized ITPs as pillars of support. Hallie et al. (2004) described mentoring as a process in which one person, usually of superior rank and outstanding achievement, guides the development of another individual by offering support and sharing knowledge, expertise, and experiences. Felix emphasized the importance of having induction and mentorship programs, as well as other resources identified by racialized ITPs, available long before they enter the academe. With Henry et al. (2017, p. 47) stating that “underrepresentation in a profession is just one form of inequity; a discount of economic reward is another,” Felix indicated “I could have benefitted if I got some advice and some tips from racialized people who are already there [in the academe].”

Felix observed that getting more information on what to expect during the interview process and job expectations would have been very useful. Felix equally observed, “I got carried away with the job offer of assistant professor, I did not know about the provision for negotiation for higher pay.” He observes that many racialized ITPs, including himself, may become carried away or are unaware of the importance and provision to negotiate their wages before accepting a faculty position, especially since pay increases are based on that starting salary. Previous earnings inequality research has suggested that race and gender are important factors associated

with earnings disparities in Canada, implying that there are earnings disparities among ethnic groups, particularly between visible minority Canadians and other Canadians, that cannot be attributed to individual characteristics such as levels of human capital, lack of access to good jobs, the valuation of foreign credentials, and possible discrimination (Henry et al., 2017; Li, 2001; Pendakur & Pendakur, 2007).

Medina, who is currently pursuing a doctorate at a southern Ontario university while also working as a sessional instructor at another institution, recalls that after being appointed, "I met with the chair and some other people, and then I was told to take some health and safety courses." He stated that the lack of formal guidance, mentorship, or support made adjusting to his responsibilities extremely difficult, particularly after receiving his class schedule and the courses he was to teach via email. Medina's experience echoes that of Felix when he worked as a sessional instructor in a middle-level postsecondary institution in another Canadian province. Felix states that "As a sessional instructor, you are given courses to teach, there is no guidance and mentor(ship) close by." In both cases, they were only informed of the courses they were to teach and the class schedule; they had to figure out how to design their courses on their own because there was no one to guide them. Felix also stated that he was only expected to contact his supervisor when he hit a brick wall.

Savage et al. (2004) note that documented feelings of isolation among new faculty, combined with the demise of faculty clubs, have sparked renewed interest in mentoring as an effective method of induction for new university faculty, as they face increased teaching and advising responsibilities due to economic constraints in higher education. Before the decline in faculty club membership and the number of university facilities dedicated to faculty clubs, they

served as meeting places to promote interdepartmental collegiality, stimulating scholarly interchange, and camaraderie (Savage et al., 2004; Schneider 1997).

Rice et al. (2000, p. 13) report that new faculty frequently experience isolation, separation, fragmentation, loneliness, competition, and sometimes discourtesy at their institutions, prompting them to seek support from a community of scholars outside their institutions or departments. Likewise, Savage et al. (2004) state that universities must provide new tenure-track and temporary faculty with a broad information base regarding a university's policies and culture, as well as effective mechanisms for structuring faculty collaboration within the university community (p. 21). Hence, these challenges affect many new faculty members at post-secondary institutions across Canada. As a result, ITPs may face additional challenges and require additional support due to their unique circumstances, which include difficulties related to their sociocultural capital (Yosso, 2005).

Park stated that "a lack of social and professional networks that is important for gaining information and direction" is common among racialized ITPs. She observed that at some point she no longer had career goals because she found it difficult to find employment in her field of study. As a result, she focused on paying her bills with any job she could find, and it was only through her perseverance, as well as the encouragement and suggestions of her husband and a professor she met at the university during her master program, that she was returned to her career goals. Park demonstrated navigational and familial capital in traversing the unfamiliar professional terrain in Canada by drawing on her skills and abilities, including those of her husband. Similarly, Edna acknowledged how she has formed relationships within academia with a few people who support, advise, and provide her with strategies to stay focused when she feels overwhelmed or discouraged. She pointed out that though racialized ITPs do not always receive



the necessary support, "their presence in academia has a significant impact on students' recruitment and retention because students, particularly racialized students, see themselves through the eyes of these professionals," and they also serve as mentors to their peers and students.

Navigational and social capital are demonstrated in this study when Felix stated that, despite the academe being a lonely place at times, some peers and other social contacts have been instrumental in enabling him to access and navigate the Canadian academe and other social institutions. He notes that moving to a new country involves a significant learning curve," so having people to bounce ideas off, ask questions, share frustrations, hopes, and dreams with who will support you is critical." He stated further that he has friends with whom he talks about career issues, plays soccer, goes to church, and goes to the gym and that they all encourage and share ideas. He went on to say that these friends come from various backgrounds but having such a "social network is important because they are often closer to you than your biological family back home."

Dalia, on the other hand, attributes her easy transition to her husband's support, as well as the university and other social contacts. She expresses her sympathy for ITPs who do not have family or a spouse in Canada, noting that while her family is still in Iran, she has always had her husband's support to rely on as she navigated her way into academia. Other milestones would also have been extremely difficult to achieve had they not both travelled together from Iran to the United States and are now residing together in Canada. Additionally, she also discusses the impact of the university and other social contacts, mentioning how her colleagues within and outside her department have been extremely helpful in satisfactorily answering her questions, and how the university's mentorship group for new faculty members was an amazing feature of

the orientation program because it allowed her to discuss personal and professional challenges in a safe space.

Similarly, Victoria describes the difficulty she had adjusting to life in Canada as an international student by expressing gratitude to her fellow Nigerians in her program. Though they all had to figure out most things on their own by learning how to navigate the various Canadian social institutions, she was grateful that she did not have to do it all alone and that there were other Nigerians ahead of them in the same program to whom they could go for course materials, advice, and information. On the other hand, Park stated that "a lack of social and professional networks that is important for gaining information and direction" is common among racialized ITPs, noting that the encouragement and suggestions from her husband and a professor she met at the university during her master program assisted her in setting new career goals for herself.

Victoria, a non-faculty staff member, claims that she received no formal induction program when she was hired in her current position and that while her supervisor and colleagues attempted to provide an informal induction, she claims they were largely unsuccessful because the department is understaffed, making it difficult for them to make time for her. She recalled that having some initial guidance would have made things easier and provided her with a smoother transition because she had to figure things out for herself, ask questions only when they were difficult, and learn from her mistakes.

In contrast to the experiences of other participants, Dalia states that following the university's induction program, she received an email "informing all new faculty members about the availability of group mentorship opportunities." Consequently, Dalia selected a group that worked with her schedule, and she claims, "I'm pleased with the mentor I received, and I'm sure

other groups had similar experiences because I believe the key here is to have a space where you are free to say anything because there is no judgement and confidentiality is guaranteed in the group. She adds that she would be delighted to serve as a mentor to new faculty members in the future. Dalia's experience supports Cullingford's (2006) claim that "mentoring is best when it is free of pressure and feels reciprocal" (p. 9).

Participants' stories under the theme of Pillars of Support reveal familial capital, according to Yosso's (2005) pedagogy of cultural wealth, the study's theoretical framework. Felix believes that family support is critical in Canada, especially for first-generation immigrants who have strong family ties back home but lack the necessary familial support after immigrating. He notes that such support begins "with parents encouraging their children to be educated and having high expectations for them to reach their full potential," and that family is always there to support them emotionally despite the distance. Park observed that during a period of career uncertainty, it was her husband's encouragement and support that led her to decide to become a transit operator rather than doing nothing, noting that the decision prepared her for other job opportunities.

Similarly, Medina claims that, despite the difficulties he faces in the academe, his elder brother motivates him, and he is influenced by his father's experience as a professor. Victoria mentions how her husband provides academic assistance and support in her quest to become a Certified Public Accountant now that he has obtained the certification. She goes on to say that "it is difficult to attend school, work full-time, and have domestic responsibilities." She emphasizes the importance of having a supportive and understanding partner who picks up the slack, especially "when I am unable to drop off and pick up our son from school, as well as take him for programs."

Given their experiences, all six participants highlighted the importance of guidance and mentorship as pillars necessary to support racialized ITPs. Park expressed her dissatisfaction with most orientation programs, suggesting that "institutions should talk a little less about their history" because new employees are aware of their pedigree, which is why they applied for the job. Employees should be directed to the institution's website or be given a brochure to learn more about its history. Instead, she advocated for "more effort to be put into ensuring new employees get practical information that will serve them professionally and personally," particularly linking racialized ITPs to mentors with a comparable background. Similarly, Victoria proposed that an understaffed department like hers can keep up with the times by "creating and updating interactive virtual video tutorials to bridge the gap by helping new employees understand their role and the systems, especially since they can always refer to these virtual tools." Consequently, guidance and mentorship do not always have to be organic or require immediate human attention; they can also be digital if they are comprehensive and updated regularly.

### **Foreign Credential Recognition**

Before coming to Canada, all racialized ITP who participated in this study had obtained at least the equivalent of a Canadian college or university degree and furthered their education upon arrival. Scholars (Chiswick & Miller, 2009; Friedberg, 2000) observe that because most immigrants come from less developed countries, they often have less human capital than their local counterparts, and their human capital is country-specific and cannot be easily transferred from one country to another. Despite Canada's preference for highly skilled immigrants due to their significant contribution to human capital resources in the Canadian labour force, the non-recognition of foreign credentials and prior work experience is the central immigration issue of

the twenty-first century, not just in Canada, but in all post-industrial societies that accept immigrants (Guo, 2009; Wanner, 2001).

Medina, who immigrated to Canada after earning two master's degrees in Pakistan and the United Kingdom, respectively described foreign credential recognition as "the hegemonic way of controlling education by establishing equivalencies to demonstrate that Western education is superior to others based on their standard." That is, foreign credential recognition is used to exert educational influence over ITPs as well as indirectly exert social, cultural, ideological, or economic influence. Medina contended that the process of evaluating foreign credentials is frequently used as a "gate keeping instrument" to keep out ITPs and to maintain a "monopoly on education" as custodians of knowledge. Medina claims that he was only able to avoid having his degree assessed due to his previous international degree from the United Kingdom and various international work experiences, as well as the goodwill of his interviewer, who also identified with a racialized group.

In contrast to Medina, Dalia says she understands the Canadian point of view that "we're not in other countries, so we don't know what's going on, what the qualifications are, and what's [being] taught, but there are certified agencies that evaluate these degrees." Despite this assessment, Dalia believes that many institutions are still hesitant to hire ITPs who lack Canadian degrees, and such practice "limits a group of people who are otherwise qualified for the job." She goes on to say that an ITP with a Ph.D. from a university outside of North America or Europe is more likely to be hired "as a sessional instructor rather than a tenure-track position." Dalia draws a parallel by saying, "I believe this is also true for jobs in other industries," because the FCR process frequently necessitates additional certification for ITPs. As a result, despite

increasing enrolment in Canadian post-secondary institutions, ITPs continue to face lower average incomes (Oloo, 2016; Reitz, 2001).

Victoria found it difficult to receive full credit for her academic degrees and professional experiences and she believes this is a major reason why many ITPs, particularly those with many years of experience, switch careers. After having her credentials evaluated in her attempt to obtain a Certified Public Accountant credential, she was informed that she would need to take seven undergraduate courses. Like Dalia, Victoria could justify taking undergraduate courses in taxes and laws because they are unique to Canada, but let down because ordinarily, she believed the degrees “I already have should exempt me from a few basic CPA courses; however, I was told that I must complete seven undergraduate courses before applying to start the CPA program.” Victoria goes on to say that “many ITPs are discouraged by the requirement to take so many undergraduate courses, especially because they are very expensive and must often be paid for out of pocket due to limited access to loans” and that “it is relatively easier for young ITPs without any experience to start afresh than those with many years of experience.”

In the same vein, Edna states that her motivation for pursuing a master degree was "to better position myself for future opportunities" because she discovered that "racialized professionals require more education and professional experience to obtain the same job than non-racialized professionals." Edna earned a two-year Diploma in Education before relocating to Canada to pursue a bachelor and master degree. As a result, she was largely overqualified for many of the jobs that were offered to her, because, despite having earned a diploma in Kenya and a bachelor degree in Canada, she claims that "a non-racialized person's degree appeared to be worth more than mine." She notes that the international degree was not considered when applying for jobs, so she deleted it from her resume to “focus on the ones obtained in Canada.”

Edna's decision to remove her college degree from her resume affirms Victoria's claim that it is easier for young ITPs with no experience to start over than those with many years of experience.

On the other hand, Felix first encountered FCR after making inquiries to obtain an Alberta teacher's certification. At this point, Felix realized that having obtained a bachelor degree and teacher qualification from his home country before coming to Canada to begin his masters program, those qualifications do not automatically translate to teacher certification in Canada. After making inquiries and completing the assessment process by the Alberta Ministry of Education, he was informed that he had to complete three additional undergraduate courses to be certified as a teacher in Alberta.

Like Victoria, Felix states the importance of the required courses for him to operate in the Canadian context, but they diverge on how they receive their respective assessment agencies' decisions. Though disappointed, Felix says he accepted the decision because he was still completing his master degree at the time, but he recognises that "it may be different for someone who had to attend university to obtain those additional qualifications." I believe receiving timely and adequate information is the reason why Felix and Victoria diverge on how they received the assessment agencies' decisions. Hence, since Felix and Victoria both immigrated as international students, Canadian post-secondary institutions should take on more responsibility for informing ITPs, particularly international students about obtaining FCR.

Aspirational capital is evident in the discussion when Felix, as a young boy, saw education as a means of moving away from where he was, both physically and mentally, to a better place. He sees education as a means of liberation and a doorway to a better life. As a result, his approach to teaching and interacting with his students is to instil in them the belief that "education will liberate and assist them in achieving whatever they set their minds to, regardless

of the challenges or barriers they may face.” Regardless of the challenges of FCR, the desire to persevere and overcome can be attributed to the presence of aspirational capital for the realization of hopes and dreams.

Similarly, Dalia attributes her cultural upbringing to instilling in her the value of education and her high regard for the position of a teacher, especially growing up during a time of war when resources were scarce, and children went to schools in shifts. Consequently, she works hard to fulfil her responsibilities without taking her position for granted. Furthermore, as a female racialized ITP, she credits her unwavering work ethic and resilience to her experiences in Iran, where women face fewer opportunities and are accustomed to working harder to obtain the positions they deserve. Despite her first-hand knowledge and experience with gender discrimination, she strives for equality, stating that “my actions and teaching are guided by the pursuit of equity and fairness, as well as the elimination of prejudice.” ITPs demonstrate aspirational capital through their commitment to personal empowerment and liberation, as demonstrated by Felix and Dalia's experiences.

Although Canadian post-secondary institutions are not responsible for informing international students about obtaining FCR, Victoria applauds them for encouraging employees to pursue personal development and additional professional qualifications tuition-free. She points out that she pays about 10% of the cost of enrolling in her current program of study and encourages racialized professionals in academia to take advantage of such provisions. Similarly, Park observes that employees are allowed to take any course of their choice and continue their education for free if there are open seats three days before each class begins. Conclusively, Edna and Dalia call on policymakers to enact policies to better serve and protect ITPs, such as a



professional examination for academia, like those used in law, medicine, engineering, and other regulated professions.

### **Institutional Structure and Responsibilities**

The structure of post-secondary institutions has a significant impact on how colleagues form both academic and social relationships. As a result of underrepresentation, Felix observes that the academe "can be a very lonely place" for many racialized professionals. Unlike his employer, he notes that universities with large faculties are typically divided into departments and that by doing so, department heads are appointed, allowing for the development of relationships, and the identification of faculty members with similar research interests. It is critical to have a structure that allows ITPs to build and establish both personal and professional relationships, especially since many move to cities where the institutions are located without any family or friends present. Similarly, Dalia suggests that faculties organize informal gatherings where faculty members can get to know one another more personally, "rather than only holding faculty council meetings or other formal meetings where some faculty members do not show up, are in a hurry to attend another meeting, or teach a class." These informal gatherings would provide an avenue and enable racialized ITPs to build their social capital and navigational capital at work.

Such informal gatherings, according to Dalia, do not have to be elaborated because they can be held on a weekend or a holiday when people can come with their partners or significant others. She claims that doing so will allow people to feel like they are a part of the community and will allow them to socialize with their colleagues, especially ITPs looking to make new connections at the university and in the city. Dalia further says that post-secondary institutions should provide faculty members, especially ITPs, with "writing support services" like those

provided for students at a subsidized rate. She goes on to say that “many ITPs do not speak English as their first language, which makes the scholarship they produce appear unprofessional, necessitating the use of expensive writing support services outside of the university.”

Medina believes that a lack of social connection within the academe as a major challenge. He claims that the institution where he works does not provide much opportunity for colleagues to build relationships, which hinders the ability of ITPs to socialize, network, and collaborate with their peers. Like Dalia, Medina emphasizes that this collaboration is essential not only for providing guidance and mentorship, which is often lacking, but also for producing academic research and, finally, for challenging the inferior narrative that frequently obscures ITPs professional qualifications and experiences. He goes on to say that he is frequently overwhelmed by the excessive workload for which he is responsible.

Similarly, Park claims “I take on a lot of work that isn't necessarily within my job description because my colleagues realize I can do it” because I accept whatever work is assigned to me to please others. She notes the need to set boundaries to avoid being overly stressed by the excessive workload. Like Dalia, she asserts that “informal or social events where ITPs can meet and interact with local families, and other members of faculty and staff so that they can engage in some form of cultural exchange should be organized.”

In Edna’s case, she says the frequent disregard for her person and her competency is blatant as she frequently hides behind the office of her superiors, such as the Assistant Vice-President when requesting information or emphasizing the urgency of a task to receive prompt responses "because some people have prejudices." She claims that because racialized professionals are not easily trusted, she frequently hides behind her superiors' offices to gain recognition or credibility for the position she occupies, which frequently makes fulfilling her

responsibilities difficult. She stresses the need for training sessions or workshops on diversity and inclusion to be organized “given the interaction of race in the workplace because some people have never interacted with racialized individuals” before entering the academe. These diversity and inclusion workshops should not be limited to new employees; they are also required for ongoing professional development. Furthermore, she suggests that personality tests, like those administered to individuals summoned for jury duty, can be used to determine each person’s unconscious prejudice, and provide them with the opportunity to make necessary conscious adjustments.

Medina observes that collaboration is the best way to ensure the success of ITPs throughout Canadian society. He recalls how a senior racialized professor helped assist him to adjust to the expectations and responsibilities of Canadian academia. Medina emphasizes the importance of this collaboration in producing academic research and challenging the inferior narrative that frequently obscures ITPs' professional qualifications and experiences. Edna acknowledged how, within academia, she has formed relationships with a few people who support, advise, and provide her with strategies to stay focused when she feels overwhelmed or discouraged. Although racialized ITPs are not always given the necessary support, "their presence in academia has a significant impact on students' recruitment and retention because students, particularly racialized students, see themselves through the eyes of these professionals," and they also serve as mentors to their peers and students.

When Felix observed that he frequently feels the need to demonstrate or establish his professional competence and qualification to students, as well as to be assertive when dealing with colleagues, it highlights that resistance capital is visible in the study. He observes with students that "I need to demonstrate to the students that I deserve to be in academe by reiterating

the educational background that qualifies me to be here," a problem that "non-racialized professionals may not have to deal with." He also emphasizes the importance of being assertive when dealing with colleagues, noting how stressful it is to "constantly justify his presence by proving his knowledge and turning down several invitations to join equity-related committees to not be limited to such issues alone."

Medina described himself as antagonistic because he is always ready to resist and confront anything he considers inappropriate. For example, despite being a Muslim and having an ideology that differs from theirs, he claims to champion the struggle of the LGBTQ community. "As a professional, I completely support and assist my students by providing them with popular media, research articles, and classroom discussions to shape their thinking about LGBTQ issues," he says.

Victoria noted that "it is difficult for ITPs to adjust to a new country without much or any family or communal support," and because job openings are typically posted internally first, many ITPs do not often have access to such privileged information at all or promptly. Furthermore, Victoria observes that her husband, who is also a racialized ITP, is at a point in his career where advancement is not necessarily based on his knowledge of the job because the company requires him to bring in new business, but she also observes that "many ITPs have not formed the necessary social relationships to attract new business, which could limit their growth and create a career ceiling." Similarly, Edna perceives that racialized ITPs tend to stick to their national communities, and because top management is often non-racialized, they lose out because they lack the necessary social connections needed to build trust and confidence, and she also does not rule out racism as a factor.

## Language and Cultural Differences

Anwar-Travas (2018) observes that adjusting to socially accepted behaviour, which includes using certain expressions and body language, is another learning curve for ITPs and all immigrants in general when discussing various aspects of cultural shock. Comparing her professional experiences in Iran, the United States, and Canada, Dalia notes similarities in curriculum and pedagogy but quickly identifies culture as the most obvious difference. She avoided describing student behaviour as rude, instead “calling it informal, and observing that the standard and expectations for respect differ in Canada and the United States.” She goes on to say that in Iran, where the relationship between students and professors is more formal, “professors are held in high regard. In Iran, for example, calling your professor by their first name is frowned upon.”

Dalia described how her first trip outside of her home country to pursue a master degree in the United States prepared her for the cultural differences in Canada. This experience exposed her to the classroom's informal relationships and dynamics, as well as how students communicate and dress casually. Similarly, Felix described how the nongovernmental organization with which he briefly worked in his home country prepared him to work in an international or Canadian environment by emphasizing how his immediate supervisor and other foreign nationals operated using international standards while still adhering to local laws and culture in Kenya. These experiences demonstrate navigational capital by demonstrating how previous experience enabled the study participants to better navigate the unfamiliar social space that is the academe.

Dalia notices a difference in academic culture by stating how university administrators appeared to side with students by emphasizing the need for professors to cooperate and make

students happy. She goes on to say that she has the impression that, "I need to be lenient even when it is not justified, which gives students the confidence to complain and ask for bonus points even when they performed poorly." She concludes by stating that there should be a balance and the university should be cautious about overemphasizing what students want, because professors guide students in the direction best for them, not just what makes them happy at the time, which is a short-sighted view that prevents some students from working hard. In terms of collegiality, that is, the relationship between colleagues, Dalia observed how common it is to see colleagues "hanging out or going for drinks after school [work]." This warm relationship contrasts with what exists in Iran, where "everything is incredibly formal."

As a racialized ITP, Park said, "it can be difficult to feel like a member of the team due to language and cultural differences," making it challenging to build a social network at work. She noticed that she often keeps to herself and avoids making conversation because she is unsure how others will interpret her jokes or comments, especially when discussing sensitive topics. Park observed how her colleagues claim that only a person's personality, not language or cultural differences, makes it difficult for ITPs to socialize, making her appear unapproachable. As a result, she emphasized the importance of both ITPs and their domestic counterparts respecting and learning about each other's cultures. Similarly, Dalia stated that academic institutions can help ITPs succeed by organizing induction workshops that briefly introduce them to several cultural differences they are likely to encounter to avoid unnecessary misunderstandings. Racialized ITPs, according to Edna, tend to live in "silos" or communities, and as a result, they often miss out on opportunities because they lack social connections with people of other nationalities and those who grew up locally.

Linguistic capital was observed in the study when Felix recognized the importance of language at a young age after observing how people in his community differ in terms of language proficiency. As a foreign student in Canada, he "struggled with the concept of correct English" after realizing his English was different, especially because of his accent. Felix stated that the challenge of learning multiple languages taught him how to communicate effectively with people who spoke different variations of English. He went on to say that because he can relate to their situation, he is "more reflective, empathetic, and understanding" of students who speak English differently," and he strives to ensure adequate understanding regardless of each student's level of English language proficiency.

Similarly, Dalia recalled speaking French to welcome a French exchange student and how getting excited she gets when she gets to help another Iranian who is struggling to communicate in English. Though she always uses English as the medium of communication in class, she uses other languages during office hours to explain difficult concepts and provide career and academic guidance to her students. She went on to say that her knowledge of different languages helps her better understand and connect with students and that while she never deducts points for grammatically incorrect sentences, "if I were born and raised in Canada, I might be a little stricter in my grading."

Felix, on the other hand, recalled how he learned the value of language at a young age after observing how people in his community differ in terms of language proficiency. "In Canada, I realized my English was different, especially because of my accent," Felix noted, adding that the challenge of learning multiple languages taught him "how to effectively communicate with people who speak [a] different English." He, like Dalia, discussed how his linguistic competence has impacted his professional life, noting that "I'm a more reflective

person because I came to Canada as an international student and struggled with the concept of correct English." He noted that he is "more empathetic and understanding" of students who speak "a different kind of English" because he can relate to their situation, and he strives to ensure adequate understanding regardless of each student's level of English language proficiency.

Conclusively, Edna believes that ITPs are distinguished by their exceptional work ethic. Similarly, Park emphasized the high level of dedication, work ethic, and humility that racialized ITPs bring to the Canadian workforce. She observed that many ITPs are overqualified for the positions they occupy and continued by stating that these professionals bring skills and knowledge to their organization that is not expected of them and that this improves the work process or workflow. She concluded that, while this lack of professional satisfaction is not shared by all ITPs, many new immigrants and international students suffer professionally. As a result, the lens of a pedagogy of cultural wealth enables us to highlight the assets and strengths racialized ITPs bring to the academe using the six categorizations of cultural wealth. While these categories overlap, they are useful in understanding how participants in the study navigated and resisted deficit ideologies, low expectations, and negative stereotyping about themselves.

### **Conclusion of the Study**

The narratives of the ITPs who participated in this study revealed a variety of unique and varied experiences, as well as recurring themes. The four key themes that emerged from participant stories were pillars of support, foreign credential recognition, institutional structure and responsibilities, and language and cultural differences. Attempts were made to link these key themes to the pedagogy of cultural wealth theoretical frameworks. According to Oloo (2016), ITPs experiences, particularly the challenges depicted in their narratives, are not necessarily exhaustive; rather, they reflect what they chose to discuss. A cultural wealth pedagogy



recognizes, values, and engages the diverse forms of capital that ITPs bring to the Canadian workforce; these diverse forms of capital are not mutually exclusive, but rather form a dynamic process that builds on one another as part of community cultural wealth (Yep, 2014; Yosso, 2005).

Regardless of the challenges that study participants faced, such as joblessness, isolation, loneliness, or uncertainty, they were unwilling to give up and bow their heads in defeat as their stories are filled with resistance and perseverance. Participants recognized the impact of their family, community, and culture in imbuing in them the attribute of resilience and unwavering work ethic. Dalia, for example, states that she strives for equality despite her first-hand knowledge and experience with gender discrimination because her actions and teaching are guided by the pursuit of equity and fairness, as well as the elimination of prejudice. Similarly, despite being a Muslim with a different ideology than the LGBTQ community, Medina stated that, as a professional, he champions and supports their struggle and helps his students shape their thinking about LGBTQ issues by providing them with popular media, research articles, and classroom discussions. This kind of selfless service is understandable and not out of character for racialized ITPs who have had to overcome various forms of discrimination and strive to ensure equity wherever they find themselves.

Hearing and reliving the stories of study participants as they recounted their experiences has been very rewarding, because I was humbled to be trusted with these stories and I could relate to a few of their experiences. As Clandinin and Connelly (2000) point out, lived and told stories educate both the narrator and the listener, and similarly, Lane (2005) suggests that we cannot learn to live in the unfolding present without first learning to live in the past. Retelling these stories allows me to validate and amplify the voices of the study participants while also

attempting to keep their experiences alive through narrative research. As a result, six ITPs entrusted me with their stories of lived experiences.

Given my observed prejudice and FCR experience while locating myself in this study, I became curious to investigate the obstacles ITPs in Canadian academia have had to overcome before achieving the current positions they hold. The purpose of this study was to investigate the experiences of ITPs in the Canadian academe, particularly with non-faculty racialized ITPs, a phenomenon that has received little attention in the literature to date. I aimed to gain an understanding of who these ITPs are, their pathways into the academe, the challenges they encounter, the opportunities available to them, and the kind of support they believe would facilitate their success. Furthermore, I was curious about the strengths that ITPs bring to Canadian academia, as well as their positive experiences and the factors that contribute to such experiences.

Based on the findings of the study, ITPs enter and navigate the academe with diverse cultural wealth which influences their experiences. For example, Dalia demonstrates linguistic capital as she gets excited whenever she can assist others who are struggling to communicate in English, and although she always uses English as the medium of communication in class, she uses other languages during office hours to explain difficult concepts and provide career and academic guidance to her students. Describing himself as antagonistic, Medina exhibits resistance capital by rejecting and confronting anything he considers inappropriate, such as championing the struggles of the LGBTQ community despite being a Muslim and having an ideology that differs from theirs.

Park and Victoria demonstrate familial capital respectively by crediting their husbands. Park values his encouragement and support in her decision to become a transit operator to get her

foot in the door and prepare for other positions. Similarly, Victoria notes that having an understanding and supportive partner who can pick up the slack has been extremely beneficial because balancing school and work full-time is difficult. Edna acknowledged forming relationships within academia with people who support, advise, and provide her with strategies to stay focused when she feels overwhelmed or discouraged, demonstrating navigational and social capital. Lastly, displaying aspirational capital, Felix described how, as a child, he saw education as a means of liberation and a doorway to a better life, allowing him to move away from where he was, both physically and mentally, and to a better place.

The study has provided some understanding of who racialized ITPs are and provides important insights into their experiences as they attempt to contribute to and enrich the education of the increasingly diverse student population in the Canadian academe. The study indicates that, although racialized ITPs encounter a series of challenges, they also have some opportunities. All study participants mentioned the difficulties with FCR, with Medina referring to it as "a gatekeeping instrument and the hegemonic way of controlling education by establishing equivalencies..." Conversely, in a less resistant manner, Victoria claims FCR can be unfair to ITPs, especially after having her credentials evaluated and being required to take several undergraduate courses even after earning a Canadian degree, even though she understands the evaluating agency's decision for her to take undergraduate courses in law and taxes as justified because they are country-specific.

Alternatively, Felix claims that after his degrees were evaluated, he accepted the decision to take additional undergraduate courses because he was enrolled in university at the time of earning his master degree. Because all participants immigrated to Canada as international students, Felix's reaction, when compared to those of other participants, highlights the

importance of timely and adequate information for both ITPs and international students. Despite the difficulties of FCR and the financial cost of completing the required courses to obtain credential recognition, Park employs ITPs in academia to take advantage of the opportunity to take professional development courses and further their education for free. Similarly, Victoria claimed that the university does an excellent job of encouraging personal and professional growth by providing free tuition to both faculty and non-faculty staff members, and she believes that ITPs in academia should take advantage of this opportunity because it is available not only to them but also to their spouse and child(ren).

Participants also mentioned the opportunity to build social and professional relationships, as well as an effective mentorship program, like what Dalia received as a faculty member, which was an email with several mentorship group opportunities for her to choose from. Though Dalia claimed she is unsure whether the university had such a mentorship program before the pandemic, it was difficult to ascertain because the only other participant to enter the academe around the same time as Dalia was Victoria, a non-faculty staff member who claims she did not receive any induction, let alone the opportunity to join a mentorship group. Victoria's claim implies a distinction in the onboarding process for both faculty and non-faculty staff members, which must be addressed and improved.

Dalia said she learned a lot from the mentorship program and would be happy to serve as a mentor to new faculty members in the future because of her positive experience with it. As a result of the interest in such volunteer service, the university has an opportunity to recruit beneficiaries of such mentorship programs, train, and equip them to lead individual and group mentorship programs. The continuation of such a program will be critical in reducing or possibly eliminating the feelings of isolation, separation, fragmentation, loneliness, competition, and

discourtesy experienced by new faculty and even non-faculty staff members, as identified by scholars (Rice et al., 2000; Savage et al., 2004; Schneider 1997), because racialized ITPs understand the institution's structure and have experience navigating the complexity of Canadian academia.

### **Implications of the Study**

Despite efforts to support the successful hiring, placement, and flourishing of ITPs entering the Canadian workforce, including academe, a significant gap exists, particularly because of the lack of race-related data. This study attempts to fill some gaps and contributes to research on the experiences of ITPs, who make up a growing proportion of Canada's workforce and highlights what participants considered important for their success as ITPs in academia. Implications of the study for faculty staff, non-faculty staff, post-secondary institutions, and further research are discussed below.

### **Implications for Faculty ITPS**

Racialized ITPs who desire to enter the Canadian academe as faculty members can learn from the experiences of participants in this study. These experiences include the possible evaluation of foreign credentials, the application process, and institutional culture which comprises relationships with students, colleagues, and the university administration. A lack of knowledge about evaluating foreign credentials is one of the most common reasons for challenges faced by ITPs across all Canadian industries. Because the process is time-consuming and costly, ITPs must receive timely and accurate information regarding the evaluation of their foreign credentials, regardless of the immigration pathway, that is, either as international students or skilled workers.

A professor's job is considered "high stakes," and not all ITPs are prepared or aware that the interview process may include meetings with the dean, associate dean of research, students, and faculty members to determine if they are a good fit for the faculty and university.

Mentorship from a trusted and experienced professional, particularly a racialized professional who has overcome similar challenges, can play a critical role in the entry and early career development of new racialized ITPs into the academe. The challenge for many ITPs is that they are not only new to the educational institution, but also the community and Canada in general, and thus may not have developed the necessary contacts to have such mentors. As a result, ITPs should have access to more academic literature, information on educational institutions, and immigration Canada websites; after all, Maxwell (2022) observes that most people find their first mentors in the pages of books. However, at some point, you must also find personal mentors because following only yourself will lead you in circles. This mentoring should not be restricted to the academe, but should also include strategies for ITPs to integrate into the community.

Participants in this study observed the largely informal nature of the Canadian academe, in contrast to their home countries. As a result, ITPs must make necessary adjustments because socially acceptable behaviour expectations differ, which is another thing for them to learn. Racialized ITPs must often be vigilant to resist being limited or assigned to only equity-related committees or courses by faculty, and they must be aware that they may have to reiterate their qualifications and prove to both their peers and students that they deserve to be in the academe. Conclusively, participants observed the importance of upholding their cultural upbringing and educational values that appreciate the position of a teacher to ensure that their position in the academe is not taken for granted.

## **Implications for Non-Faculty ITPS**

Non-faculty members are professional employees who contribute significantly to the success of post-secondary institutions by bringing an important repertoire of professional skills, a wealth of institutional knowledge, critical resources, and collaboration with faculty and administration to realize the institution's goal and mission. Gupta (2021) notes that many of the non-academic staff at post-secondary institutions have served through several administrations and numerous leadership changes at the departmental level, and their long-term experience provides invaluable expertise and consistency to the institution's daily operations.

Two out of the three non-faculty participants in the study stated that they were frequently overqualified for the positions they occupied. Edna noted that she only pursued graduate studies to advance professionally because the diploma she obtained internationally before completing a bachelor degree in Canada was not recognized. She also observed that getting people to appreciate you regardless of race, colour, or nationality is an important factor that has a significant impact on workplace dynamics. Similarly, Park observed that many ITPs are overqualified for the positions they hold, citing a colleague who previously worked as a medical doctor in her home country and is now working as a nursing instructor in Canada because she is yet to be registered as a licenced physician in Canada. Furthermore, given that Park had to work as a transit operator for a few years before landing her current position, as well as the experience of her colleague mentioned earlier, this speaks volumes about the work ethic, humility, and perseverance of many ITPs.

According to Henry et al. (2017), women and racialized minorities frequently face nearly insurmountable challenges in hiring and promotion, and Essed (2004) reports women and racialized minorities must compete in two ways, "as a woman, or as a candidate of colour, you

do not just compete with other applicants; you must also prove yourself in light of a dominant negative group image" (p. 119). Coincidentally, all three racialized ITP non-faculty participants in the study are female, implying that they have had to overcome not only the two-fold competition of competing with other applicants and the negative stereotypes that inform hiring and promotion, but also the intersection of race and gender. Henry et al. (2017) conducted empirical research on women and racialized minority leaders, observing a lack of leadership diversity in the academe among racial minorities, observing that racialized women have rarely cracked the concrete ceiling and currently serve in top leadership positions in only 7% of Canadian universities. According to the study, "none of the racialized minority leaders in the academy would have emerged unless they were tapped, sponsored, coached, or mentored by senior men and, to some extent, senior women" (p. 292).

Participants in this study stated that they are frequently overburdened with work. Park, for example, noticed that she is given responsibilities outside of her job description because her boss recognizes her ability to complete such tasks. Similarly, Victoria mentioned the excessive workload she must deal with because her department is understaffed, as well as the need for job assistance improvements such as staffing and ensuring the right equipment, tools, and systems are available to simplify work processes by automating many things that are still done manually. Conversely, Edna complained about a lack of recognition for her professional competence, claiming that because of prejudice, there is a distrust of racialized professionals, which limits her ability to gain recognition or credibility for the position she holds.

Participants agreed that obtaining Canadian degrees and professional work experiences should be deemphasized because ITPs lack these when they first arrive in Canada. The lack of or ineffective induction programs for non-faculty members denies ITPs the opportunity to build



social and professional networks, which is critical for gaining information and direction. If these induction programs cannot be organized, comprehensive and current interactive virtual video tutorials can help new employees bridge the gap. Because of their inability to build social and professional networks, ITPs frequently seek out and remain within their national communities; thus, mentorship programs should be organized to assist and guide ITPs in adjusting to the complexities of Canadian society. Furthermore, it was suggested that an office be established to address and advocate for racialized professionals, as well as the implementation of policies that will adequately consider all the educational and professional experiences of ITPs in academia, rather than relying solely on the goodwill of human resources managers to make all hiring and promotion decisions.

### **Implications for Canadian Post-Secondary Institutions**

Although the population of post-secondary institutions has been growing and becoming more racially diverse in recent years, it is still a source of cultural clash and tension because some staff or students have never had the opportunity to work with racialized professionals. For example, given the interaction of race in the workplace, Edna believes that some sort of training about working together should be provided, as some people have never interacted with racialized people or immigrants. Edna, for example, believed that given the interaction of racial and cultural differences, some kind of training in working together should be provided.

The presence of racialized professionals in academia has a significant impact on students because they frequently carry out unrecognized and unpaid responsibilities, such as mentoring students and assisting them in navigating the system. Because students, particularly racialized students, see themselves through the eyes of these professionals, the presence of these racialized professionals has an impact on both student recruitment and retention. Students feel at ease when

they are served by racialized professionals because they are assured that they can better understand and empathize with them, and they feel welcome and assured that they have a place within the institution, not only as students but as members of the university community.

The presence and impact of racialized professionals on students in the academe, particularly racialized students should be given more recognition. This lack of recognition of the impact of racialized professionals is explained as cultural taxation by Padilla (1994) to describe the inability of racialized faculty and staff to obtain tenure and promotion at the same rate as their non-racialized peers. As a result, because there is a limited pool of diverse or racialized professionals in academia, serving on multiple equity-related committees and being regarded as experts on cultural and racial issues adds up to extra service work.

Extra service work performed by racialized professionals should be considered in tenure and promotion processes. According to Henry et al. (2017), racialized professors are 14% fewer than the overall number of tenured professors, and it takes three years less for non-racialized professors to be promoted to full professors, while racialized professors are promoted 3% less. This implies that racialized professors do not receive tenure as frequently as their peers, and it takes them longer to achieve both tenure and full professorship.

According to the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT), more research is required to investigate the circumstances and reasons for racialized professionals' higher rates of unemployment, as well as lower rates of promotion and tenure. These findings suggest a difference in standards between how racialized and non-racialized professors are evaluated for advancements in the academic system, especially given that members of visible minorities with PhDs have higher unequal opportunities. Based on the experiences of study participants, cultural

taxation can be used to explain racialized professionals' higher rates of unemployment and inability to achieve promotion and tenure like their non-racialized counterparts.

### **Implications for Further Research**

This study opens several new lines of inquiry for future research into the experiences of racialized domestic and internationally trained professionals in Canada. As stated in Chapter One, little research has investigated the experiences of non-racialized or racialized non-faculty staff members in Canadian post-secondary institutions, with most of the research focusing on faculty members. Additionally, this study identified a research gap in understanding non-faculty staff members' experiences as a phenomenon that has received little attention to generating interest in this research area.

Additionally, this study can be further expanded to compare the experiences of ITPs at other post-secondary institutions in Ontario and across Canada. Though there are similarities in the challenges confronting all “visible minorities” or “racialized groups”, individually they form a modest number of faculty and staff members in Canadian post-secondary institutions. Henry et al. (2017) observed that the categorization of over ten ethno-racial groups to form the visible minorities represented in the Canadian census does a disservice to the understanding of ethno-racial positioning by hiding the individual representation of different racialized groups and ways in which racialization is experienced within these different groups in Canadian post-secondary institutions. Therefore, further research should be conducted to specifically examine the different racialized groups within the academe, including both racialized internationally trained professionals and racialized domestically trained professionals.

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## **APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX A**

#### **Consent to Participate in Research**

Title of Study: *A Narrative Inquiry into the Experiences of Racialized Internationally Trained Professionals in the Academe: A pedagogy of cultural wealth.*

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Samuel Jokodola and supervised by Dr. James Oloo at the Faculty of Education, University of Windsor. The results of this research will contribute to Samuel Jokodola's thesis and completion of his Master of Education program. If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact Samuel Jokodola at [jokodol@uwindsor.ca](mailto:jokodol@uwindsor.ca) or Dr. James Oloo at [james.oolo.@uwindsor.ca](mailto:james.oolo.@uwindsor.ca).

#### **Purpose of the Study**

Internationally trained professionals (ITPs) have been credited with enriching the academy by bringing their perspectives and experiences that are sometimes different from their Canadian counterparts. However, they often face personal and professional challenges because their ideologies are sometimes viewed as deficient, that is, lacking in knowledge and skills - linguistic, social, cultural, etc. Therefore, this study seeks to explore the assets and contributions ITPs have made and continue to make in their career and highlight possible support mechanisms or programs they have benefitted from or are currently benefiting from to identify where progress has been made and where effort needs to be intensified.

#### **Procedures**

Participants in this study, you will be asked to follow several steps:

Step 1: Read the consent form before the interview.

Step 2: Informed consent will be obtained verbally

Step 3: Each interview will be audio-recorded, ranging from 60 to 90 minutes.

Step 4: Agree on a date for the interview. Except in a case of emergency, at least 24 hours notice should be given to cancel an interview.

Step 5: Interviews will be semi-structured and conducted virtually.

### **Potential Risks and Discomforts**

The risk for this research is very low with the possibility of minimal emotional risk. In a situation where research participants are feeling emotional, participants would have an opportunity to take a short break or reschedule the interview. Additionally, support services and resources available at the University of Windsor and the community will be shared with participants.

### **Potential Benefits to Participants and/or to Society**

The research will create awareness and give participants a voice to share their stories detailing struggles and victories about being racialized internationally trained professionals (ITPs) in the academe. It may lead to important knowledge gained about self and peers as the study provides an avenue for them to identify and appreciate their cultural wealth. The study intends to shed light on the possible support mechanisms or programs ITPs have benefitted from or currently benefit from in a bid to make them mainstream or templates for the creation of institutional, communal, or provincial programs or policies.

### **Compensation for Participation**

A \$20 digital gift card would be given to participants in appreciation of their time.

## **Confidentiality**

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission. To ensure that your identity is confidential, your name will not appear on any identifying information or appear in any writing that may arise from the research. All interview transcripts will be under the control of the principal investigator and will be kept only in locked cabinets in the faculty offices at the University of Windsor. The data will be available only to the researcher and will be used for academic and research purposes only. All data will be destroyed upon completion of the study (December 30, 2022).

## **Participation and Withdrawal**

Participation in this study is voluntary. This study does not require video recording and audio recording is not mandatory. While audio recording is not mandatory for this research, audio recordings are important because they will enable the researcher to review and code the provided information. Participants in this study will be given 21 days after their interview to withdraw from the study and have all their data completely deleted. The researcher may withdraw participants from this research if circumstances arise that warrant doing so.

## **Feedback of the Results of this Study to the Participants**

Upon completion of the study, a summary of the research findings will be made available by April 2023 on the University of Windsor, joint Leddy/Research Ethics Board website at <https://scholar.uwindsor.ca/research-result-summaries/>.

## **Subsequent Use of Data**

These data may be used in subsequent studies, publications, and presentations.



## **Rights of Research Participants**

This study has received ethics clearance through the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact: Chair – Research Ethics, University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario, N9B 3P4; Telephone: 519-253-3000, ext. 2434; e-mail: [ethics@uwindsor.ca](mailto:ethics@uwindsor.ca).

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Recruitment Letter - Via Email**

Greetings to you,

My name is Samuel Jokodola, and I am a master's student from the Faculty of Education at the University of Windsor. It is my pleasure to invite you to participate in the research study I will be conducting titled: A Narrative Inquiry into the Experiences of Racialized Internationally Trained Professionals in the Academe: A pedagogy of cultural wealth.

Going through the directory and professional profile of members of faculty and staff on the University of Windsor's website, I am writing to ascertain if you will be willing to participate in my study and fit the following criteria:

- Completed the equivalent of an undergraduate degree outside of Canada
- Identify as a member of a racialized group
- Must have held a position as a member of staff or faculty for at least a year in a Canadian post-secondary institution
- Give informed consent to participate in the study

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your participation will include giving a chronological account of your experiences from the time you completed your academic certification outside Canada to your current position at a post-secondary institution in Canada. This study does not require video recording and audio recording is not mandatory. While audio recording is not mandatory for this research, audio recordings are important because they will enable the researcher to review and code the provided information.

This study has been cleared by the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board. Participation in this study is completely voluntary as all obtained data will be used in my thesis and potential subsequent research adhering to all principles of confidentiality. Please feel free to

contact me for more information at [jokodol@uwindsor.ca](mailto:jokodol@uwindsor.ca) or my research supervisor Dr. James Oloo at [james.ooloo@uwindsor.ca](mailto:james.ooloo@uwindsor.ca).

Thank you for your time.

Yours Sincerely,

Samuel Jokodola

## APPENDIX C

### Research Study Flyer



This research has been cleared by the U Windsor Research Ethics Board  
To participate or for any inquiry, please contact:

**Dr. James Oloo - james.ooloo@uwindsor.ca**  
**Samuel Jokodola - jokodol@uwindsor.ca**

As a token of appreciation for your time, you will receive a gift card.

Have you held a position as a member of staff or faculty in a Canadian post-secondary institution for at least a year?

Do you identify as a member of any racialized group?

Did you complete the equivalent of a Canadian college or university degree internationally?

## SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE AS A RACIALIZED INTERNATIONALLY TRAINED PROFESSIONAL IN A CANADIAN POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTION

This study seeks to explore the experiences of racialized internationally trained professionals (ITPs) in the Canadian academe by creating a safe and non-judgemental space to share their lived experiences. In sharing these lived experiences, important knowledge about self will be gained as the study provides an avenue for participants to identify and appreciate their cultural wealth. The study may highlight what participants regard as important for them to attain success as ITPs within the academe, while also featuring the possible support mechanisms or programs they have benefited from or currently benefit from in a bid to make them mainstream or templates for the creation of institutional, communal, or provincial programs or policies.

## APPENDIX D

### Interview Protocol and Questions

**Title of Study:** A Narrative Inquiry into the Experiences of Racialized Internationally Trained Professionals in the Academe: A pedagogy of cultural wealth.

#### SECTION 1

Instruction: This information is for research purposes only. Complete confidentiality of the information provided is assured.

1. Name of Participant \_\_\_\_\_
2. Date of interview: dd/mm/yy/ \_\_\_\_\_
3. Gender identity: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Age range: 21-40 years \_\_\_\_, 41–60 years \_\_\_\_, Above 60 years \_\_\_\_
5. Country of origin: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Years in Canada: 0-5 years \_\_\_\_, 6-10 years \_\_\_\_, 11-15 years \_\_\_\_, 16-20 years \_\_\_\_, 21-25 years \_\_\_\_, 26-30 years \_\_\_\_, Above 31 years \_\_\_\_.
7. International country of professional certification \_\_\_\_\_
8. Educational attainment upon arriving in Canada: \_\_\_\_\_
9. Additional educational qualification attained in Canada: \_\_\_\_\_
10. Total number of years working in the academe \_\_\_\_\_
11. Current position of employment - Faculty or staff member \_\_\_\_\_
12. Awards/recognition received in recognition of your performance: \_\_\_\_\_
13. Employment Status: Full time \_\_\_\_, Part time \_\_\_\_

## **SECTION 2**

Semi-Structured Interview with open-ended questions to address the experiences of internationally trained professionals in the academe.

### **Interview Guide**

1. How long have you been working professionally in Canada? And how is working in Canada different or like your home country?
2. What is your assessment of the entry process/requirements for ITPs as employees in a Canadian post-secondary institution? How can it be improved or simplified?
3. What, if any, has been the most challenging about working professionally in Canadian post-secondary institution(s)?
4. What do you think are current issues/challenges facing racialized ITPs working in Canadian post-secondary institutions?
5. Did you benefit from any new employee induction/orientation program(s) in the Canadian academe? If yes, what aspects were beneficial to you? How can these program(s) be further improved?
6. What kind of support do you think would further facilitate the success of ITPs working professionally in Canadian post-secondary institutions?
7. What do you understand by the term cultural wealth? Do you utilize any? If yes, what form of cultural wealth do you utilize?
8. Has your professional competence and/or cultural wealth as an ITP within the academe ever been questioned or viewed as deficient? If yes, please share your experience.
9. In your opinion, do racialized ITPs make any contribution to Canadian post-secondary institutions through their cultural wealth? If yes, what are some of these contributions?

10. In discharging your professional responsibilities, do you daily rely on any form of cultural wealth? The questions below are informed by Yosso's (2005) pedagogy of cultural wealth:

- Aspirational capital: How do you remain hopeful about the future despite the challenges (real and perceived) that you face?
- Linguistic capital: What is your first language? Besides English, what other language do you speak? How have your linguistic skills benefitted you professionally?
- Familial capital: What role has your immediate and extended family network played in your professional journey?
- Social capital: In what way have your peers and other social contacts been instrumental in enabling you to access and navigate the academe and other social institutions?
- Navigational capital: What knowledge, skills, and abilities have you drawn on to enable you to navigate the somewhat unfamiliar Canadian social institutions like the academe?
- Resistance capital: Historically marginalized groups have often engaged in social justice and resistance to perceived and real forms of oppression. How has your experience been?

Note: Each question will allow the participants to express and share their experiences without limitations.

## **VITA AUCTORIS**

NAME: Samuel Jokodola

PLACE OF BIRTH: Lagos, Nigeria

EDUCATION: Kings Foundation, Lagos, Nigeria 1996-2003  
St. Gregory's College, Lagos, Nigeria, 2003-2009  
University of Ilorin, Kwara, Nigeria, B.Ed., 2013-2017  
University of Windsor, M.Ed., ON, Canada, 2021-2023