Skilled Japanese Immigrants in Vancouver:
Employment Hardships and Settlement Experiences

by

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Abstract

Skilled immigrants in Canada face barriers in finding jobs, despite having high educational background and professional experiences from their home countries. They suffer deskilling and unemployment due to gendered and racialized institutional processes embedded in state policies and employment practices. Skilled Japanese immigrants in Vancouver are no exception, but there is hardly any research focusing on the settlement experiences of skilled Japanese immigrants in Vancouver. This qualitative research explores the 'push and pull' factors that influence their migration and investigate the employment issues that affect their settlement experiences through in-depth semi-structured interviews. My findings reveal that Japanese skilled people immigrate to Canada for lifestyle reasons. They left Japan to escape harsh working conditions and gender marginalization and seek work-life balance and a more relaxed lifestyle in Vancouver.

Keywords: Skilled Immigrants; Deskilling; Japanese immigrants in Vancouver; Lifestyle Migration; Gender; Hegemonic Masculinity

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Chapter 1.   Introduction

Japanese people immigrate overseas for various reasons. Studies have shown that they leave Japan for socio-cultural and lifestyle reasons, neither for a political nor economic reasons. Many studies have found that harsh working conditions, gender marginalization and strict social norms often prompt their migration. Gender marginalization affects both men and women in Japanese workplaces. For women, they are often excluded from promotional opportunities and they struggle to get away from expected gender roles in male-dominated workplaces. By migrating overseas, female workers seek to learn English and create better career opportunities for themselves. On the other hand, in Japan, there is a strong societal expectation for men to be financially stable and to be a breadwinner for his family. Some men feel immense stress from keeping up with the social expectations, employment stress and familial constraints. As a result, they seek to immigrate overseas and find liberation for themselves by moving to a more relaxed working and living environment.

In recent years, scholars have started to categorize these Japanese immigrants as lifestyle migrants. As opposed to the conventional migrant groups such as economic migrants, political migrants and refugees, lifestyle migrants move across borders to improve the quality of their lives. As Knowles and Harper (2009) define it, lifestyle migration is 'where aesthetic qualities including quality of life are prioritized over economic factors like job advancement and income (p.11)'. Studies have found that lifestyle migrants are relatively affluent individuals whose economic and structural privileges, such as economic power and citizenship from a powerful nation-state, allows them to cross borders with ease (Benson & O'Reilly, 2016; Benson & Osbaldiston, 2014). Many Japanese immigrants fit this description as they are skilled and economically and politically privileged individuals.

Intensified international migration and the emergence of a knowledge-based global economy have resulted in intensified migration of highly educated and skilled people (Bauder, 2003; Danso, 2009; Favell & Smith, 2006). In Canada, the majority of immigrants are accepted for entry as skilled immigrants because of their high human capital (Dean & Wilson, 2009). Despite the assumption among policy makers that skilled immigrants are the most desirable, flexible and easily integrated immigrants, recent

studies have revealed that they are often forced to take up jobs for which they are overqualified and face significant challenges and structural barriers upon arrival to Canada (Bauder, 2003; Creese & Wiebe, 2012; Li, 2003).

Skilled immigrants in Canada face issues such as non-recognition of foreign credentials and lack of Canadian work experience despite having high educational attainment and professional experiences in their home country. Non-recognition of foreign credentials causes deskilling, loss of professional identity, and downward social mobility (Guo, 2009). Skilled immigrants are often required to go through additional schooling in Canada to receive full accreditation of their foreign degrees. Employers often require immigrants to possess Canadian work experience, dismissing skilled immigrants' professional experiences from their home countries. These practices create discriminatory structural barriers within policies and practices for skilled immigrants (Bauder, 2003; Dean & Wilson, 2009; Guo, 2009; Picot, 2004).

In particular, immigrant women and racialized groups face greater challenges, creating highly gendered and racialized institutionalized labour practices in the mainstream Canadian labour market (Creese & Wiebe, 2012; Danso, 2009). Shan (2009) points out that Canadian labour practices attribute differential values to credentials and certificates produced at different places. Specifically, credentials from non-European and developing countries are valued less than those from North American and European countries. With increasing numbers of racialized immigrant workers, Shan (2009) argues that this system helps to preserve the Canadian labour market with patriarchal and white supremacist power. Particularly for immigrant women, gendered responsibilities at home and gendered labour market hold women back from their career endeavors. To advance their careers and overcome these barriers, they resort to re-training and re-education. These processes can be time-consuming, expensive and alienating (Zaman, 2010).

1.1. Justification of Research

Methodologically, existing studies on this issue have focused on looking at visible minority groups, such as Chinese, South Asian, and African immigrants. To date, there are no studies on Japanese skilled immigrants in Vancouver, which focuses on their employment challenges. Existing studies on Japanese immigrants in Vancouver focus

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on historical analysis of the migration trends and Japanese Canadians' experiences in internment camps during WW2. There are four studies on recent Japanese immigrants in Vancouver after 2000. These studies focus on the topic of sojourning and identity around international migration in the field of cultural anthropology (Kato, 2004, 2013, 2014, 2015). Therefore, my study is the first research that investigates the experiences of skilled Japanese immigrants in Vancouver which focuses on their employment struggles and settlement experiences.

Existing studies on the underemployment of skilled immigrants of various racialized groups in Canada tend to only analyze the institutional barriers and factors contributing to the occupational disadvantages such as non-recognition of foreign work experiences and deskilling. The way in which skilled immigrants understand and define their settlement experiences have not been a priority in migration studies (Kelly & Lusis, 2005). To address this gap in the field of migration study, greater sensitivity to the lived experiences of immigrants needs to be constructed within the academic discourse. That is why examining the lived experiences of skilled Japanese immigrants in Vancouver using the interview method will reveal the complex and contextual factors that influence their settlement experiences and decision making around migration. This will also contribute to understanding recent trends in the migration of Japanese people to Canada, which then contribute to the growing body of research literature on lifestyle migration of Japanese skilled immigrants. I am proposing to bridge the gap within these existing literatures to understand the lived experiences of skilled Japanese immigrants in Vancouver, specifically how they navigate employment challenges.

1.2. Research Questions

The central question guiding this project is: What social and structural factors influence skilled Japanese immigrants' migratory decision making? And how does gender influence their decisions/migration journey? More specifically, I ask:

- Why do skilled Japanese immigrants choose to leave Japan and immigrate to Canada?

- How do skilled Japanese immigrants experience structural barriers to employment after arriving in Vancouver?

- How do their employment struggles affect the overall satisfaction of their lives in Canada?

1.3. Organization of Thesis

This thesis is organized into following five chapters. Chapter Two provides a comprehensive literature review to provide the readers with necessary background knowledge to understand the migration flow of Japanese people from Japan to Vancouver. Topics such as contemporary structural issues and gender marginalization of workers in Japanese workplaces are covered. It also reviews research studies on the transnational migration of Japanese people to provide information on recent trends of lifestyle migration by Japanese migrants.

Chapter Three provides a theoretical framework and outlines the research method used in this study. The theoretical framework consists of social theories around 'doing' and 'undoing' gender, as well as Kandiyoti's (1988) notions of patriarchal bargaining and Connell's (1995) notion of hegemonic masculinity. This chapter also details the methodology and research method used in this study.

Drawing on the participant's responses in the interviews, Chapter Four presents research findings on factors that prompt the participants to immigrate from Japan to Canada. This chapter is divided into two sections – the 'push' factors of emigration and the 'pull' factors. This chapter begins by presenting the 'push' factors, focusing on demonstrating how harsh working conditions in Japan prompted the participants to leave Japan. Next, it discusses what aspects of Vancouver attracted the participants to settle in Vancouver. The 'pull' factors including lifestyle reasons and gender relations regarding marriage are presented.

Chapter Five explores the settlement experiences of the participants after immigrating to Vancouver. This chapter begins by discussing participants' perspective on their 'ideal lifestyle' and its influence on their settlement experiences. Then it examines issues associated with underemployment and participants' involvement with Japanese communities in Vancouver. Finally, the chapter discusses participants' experiences with trying to conform to gender norms/roles and the struggles they experienced along the way.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

The settlement and integration of Japanese skilled immigrants into Canadian society involves various factors. This chapter outlines existing studies on these factors to provide knowledge necessary to understand the migration flow of skilled Japanese immigrants from Japan to Vancouver. First, research findings on the major labour issues within Japanese society are presented. This provides the context of Japanese workers' experiences in terms of working conditions. Second, research findings on recent global trend of lifestyle migration by Japanese migrants are presented to give an overall picture of reasons why Japanese people are migrating. Finally, this chapter reviews the literature on structural and institutional employment issues skilled migrants face in Canada since my participants are skilled migrants settling in Canada.

2.2. Contemporary Structural Issues in Japan

2.2.1. Harsh Working Conditions

Workers in Japan suffer from various labor issues such as long working hours. Reported cases of *Karoshi*, which translates as death by overwork, and *Karo-jisatsu*, suicide by overwork, are increasing annually (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, 2016). The negative effects of working long hours on workers' mental and physical health has been receiving considerable attention from media outlets and academics in Japan. *Karoshi*, a term coined during the 1970s is a phenomenon in which workers die from accumulated stress, including physical symptoms such as heart attacks or strokes. Among the phenomenon of *Karoshi*, the most disturbing is *Karo-jisatsu* (suicide by overwork), which is often induced by extremely stressful working conditions. The problems of *Karoshi* and *Karo-jisatsu* began to be recognized as social problems in the late 1980s. Those who commit *Karo-jisatsu* are often exposed to extremely long working hours, poor working environments with no holidays, and heavy workloads (Kawanishi, 2008). These factors lead victims to develop depression, ultimately taking their own life.

In Japan, suicide is considered a major social issue. In 2016, the country had the highest suicide rate among G7 countries (World Health Organization, 2016). In 2017,

there were a total of 21,321 suicide cases in Japan (with 126.8 million population), of which 9.3% were caused by issues related to work (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, 2016). Moreover, there were 795 cases of work-related heart attacks in 2015, with 96 of them resulting in death cause by *Karoshi*. Furthermore, the number of work-related mental disorder claims are increasing annually. In 2015, there were 1,515 cases of work-related mental disorder claims, of which 93 resulted in *Karo-jisatsu* (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, 2016).

Although these statistics demonstrate the severity of problems associated with Japanese work culture, these numbers are underestimated because not all cases of *Karoshi* and work-related injuries are reported in governmental reports (Kawanishi, 2008). Often, these cases are not reported because some families are dissuaded from taking legal action due to financial and social reasons, and others may settle with the employer in private (Kawanishi, 2008). Hiroshi Kawahito, secretary general of the National Defense counsel for Victims of *Karoshi*, said that the actual number of people who die from work-related stress could be 10 times higher than what is reported (Stanley, 2016).

Extreme working conditions such as long working hours and high expectations on workers within Japanese workplaces are causing serious problems such as *Karoshi* and *Karo-jisatsu*. These structural issues within Japanese workplaces need extensive reform to protect the health and well-being of workers in Japan. Yet, the pressure to conform to traditional gender roles and ideals within Japanese workplaces compels workers to stay in these working environments.

2.2.2. Gender Norms in Japanese workplaces

Salarymen Hegemony *in Japan: Representation and ideology*

Along with harsh conditions in Japanese workplaces, there are also traditional gender expectations that pressure Japanese men and women to conform to idealized notions of masculinity and femininity in the workplace (Brinton, 1993; Cook, 2013). For men, the masculine image of the Salaryman is the dominant version of hegemonic masculinity in Japanese society even though many men suffer from societal pressure to fit into idealized masculine images, specifically that of Salaryman (Dasgupta, 2003, 2013; Nemoto, 2013b; Roberson & Suzuki, 2003). Dasgupta (2013) describes an

average Salaryman as someone who spends a high proportion of his/her time working and prioritizes work, social relationships at work, matters related to promotion and income over everything else in their life (Dasgupta, 2013). The Salaryman lifestyle emerged when Japan was experiencing an economic bubble during the 1970s when real estate and stock market prices were greatly inflated. The emergence of the Salaryman lifestyle reinforced the distinct divisions of labor based on heterosexual complementarity, binding men to working outside of homes and women to domestic work at home (Hidaka, 2010). Within the dominant discourse among the Japanese general public, Salarymen are often described as having a privileged class position with social prestige, assumed to have or perform corporate and work-centered identities and practices, and they benefit from the 'patriarchal dividend' of male superiority and separation from the domestic sphere (Nemoto, 2013a; Roberson & Suzuki, 2003). Scholars conceptualize Salarymen to include masculinist, capitalist and statist ideologies and embody an archetypal heterosexual husband, father and provider (Dasgupta, 2003, 2013; Nemoto, 2013b; Roberson & Suzuki, 2003); and through education and vocational trainings, Japanese people, mostly men, are taught to aspire to this post-war embodiment of the ideological model of masculine superiority and success through employment achievements (Roberson & Suzuki, 2003). Many scholars claim that Salarymen masculinity acts as the dominant form of hegemonic masculinity within Japanese society (Dasgupta, 2013; Robertson, 1998; Hidaka, 2010). In Japan, college graduates, both men and women, are exposed to societal pressure to adapt to a 'Salaryman' lifestyle after graduating from university; taking a year off after graduation is considered deviant and college graduates are expected to join the workforce right after graduation (Nemoto, 2013). Although women are expected to marry and have families of their own once they are at a certain age, societal expectations for young educated women to adapt to a Salarymen lifestyle is still relevant. In the context of Japanese patriarchal capitalist society, men who do not fit the idealized masculine image of the Salaryman lifestyle in Japanese society are socio-culturally marginalized. For example, their failure to successfully adopt this role results in disapproval from one's family and other members of society.

Another important traditional metaphor of static Japanese manhood is '*daikokubashira*', which translates as a great central pillar that supports one's home and family. Gill (2003) elaborates on the concept of the pillar as something that "supports the

household which has honor, represented in its/his dominant central position, but also bears a heavy load. It is an image of reliability, of strength, of stasis" (p. 144). For some men, it is difficult to fulfill the prescribed gender expectation of being a '*daikokubashira'*, because of economic insecurity. In fact, the majority of working class Salarymen and women are often socio-culturally and economically marginalized for this reason (Dasgupta, 2000). As a result, only a handful of white-collar Salaryman benefit from the privileges associated with being a Salaryman, and most Japanese Salarymen, especially the younger generations, work in low income positions and struggle to fit the idealized masculine image demanded of them in contemporary Japanese society.

Gender Expectations for women

Gender inequality and sex segregation are deeply rooted in workplace cultures in Japanese society (Hidaka, 2010; Nemoto, 2016). Japan's gender gap is by far the largest among all advanced economies and has widened over the past year, with women making 65 cents for every dollar that men make (World Economic Forum, 2019, p31). There is also a gender gap with respect to political representation, where the percentage of female representation in the Japanese parliament is 10% and there is only one woman in the 18-member cabinet (World Economic Forum, 2019).

Scholars claim that Japan's system of lifetime employment and culture of long working hours systematically rewards men over women and legitimizes discriminatory gender practices (Hidaka, 2010; Nemoto, 2013b, 2013a, 2016). The custom of working long hours within Japanese corporations is strongly tied to worker's sense of discipline, identity, and sense of belonging to a company, and it has been integral part of Japanese workplace-culture (Hidaka, 2010; Nemoto, 2013b, 2013a, 2016). Nemoto (2016) claims that the culture of working long hours negatively influences female workers' career aspirations and eventually leads them to quit their positions, especially after marriage. Household chores and childcare responsibilities prevents women from working long hours and it is alienating for women at workplaces. When women take some time off from work to take care of their children, they are blamed for neglecting work. Japanese femininity is often manifested in the idea of being a housewife, caretaker, helper, and assistant. This gender ideology also results in sex segregation and alienation in workplaces; employers tend to reward male workers with promotions as the expectation

is that many young female workers will eventually transition to the domestic sphere after marriage.

Gender expectations for women to be a mother and caregiver is deeply rooted in Japanese society. In 2009, the Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare, Hakuo Yamasaki, said publicly that "women are child-bearing machines" (Hiroka, 2018). In another case, on July 2018, Mio Sugita, a female parliamentarian, used stereotypes around childbearing to attack same-sex marriage couples. During a political discussion on a TV show, Sugita said taxpayers' money should not be used for same-sex marriage couples because "they lack reproductive ability, therefore, do not contribute to the prosperity of the nation" (Hiroka, 2018). Gender stereotypes institutionally discriminate women and minority groups and poses disadvantages for those who do not fulfill these idealized gender roles.

As demonstrated above, cultural legitimation of sex segregation at work combined with corporate emphasis on overwork institutionally rewards men over women in Japanese workplaces (Nemoto, 2016). It is not long ago that several newspaper outlets reported that one of the most prestigious medical school in Japan, Tokyo Medical School, has been systematically discriminating against female applicants by lowering their entrance exam scores to restrict the number of female applicants for more than 7 years (Hiroka, 2018). The manipulation of scores started after the share of successful female applicants reached 38 percent of the total in 2010. As a result of the fraud, percentages of successful female applicants remained around 20 percent since 2010. It was reported that the school wanted fewer female doctors, since it is anticipated they would shorten or halt their careers after having children (Hiroka, 2018). A survey by Nikkei newspaper reported that 65 percent of Japanese medical doctors said that they can understand the motive behind this misconduct, since extreme working hours for doctors make it impossible for female doctors to work full-time while taking care of their children (Hiroka, 2018). The same survey revealed that many female doctors who answered the survey were told by colleagues not to get pregnant because it would increase the burden for others in the workplace. The misconduct of the Tokyo Medical School and the survey results illustrate the deep-rooted sexist practices towards women in both Japanese patriarchal culture and within employment practices.

2.3. The transnational mobility of Japanese people

2.3.1. Feminization of oversea travel and migration out of Japan

During the 1980s, practices of institutional gender discrimination prompted many Japanese women to seek opportunities overseas. As a result, the numbers of women who travel overseas started to surpass that of men (Kato, 2010; Thang et al., 2006). Namely, so-called "OLs, (office ladies)", female administrative workers started to travel overseas to pursue their interests, such as attending language schools and participating in working holiday programs (Kato, 2010, 2013, 2015). Back home in Japan, they had sufficient income from the 'Economic Miracle' but were excluded from promotion opportunities in male-dominated workplaces where they were expected to work as assistants to male workers. OL female workers were dissatisfied with patriarchal working environments in Japan and travelling overseas was one means of escaping such an environment and the constraints of expected gender roles which often prevented them from pursuing their careers (Kato, 2010, 2013, 2015).

Sato (2001) conducted a study on Japanese women who migrated to Australia for lifestyle reasons and named them "spiritual migrants" in his study. His study revealed that the OLs dreamed of returning to Japan with English skills to start a new career (Kato, 2010; Sato, 2001). In reality, they either settled in the country of destination, or returned Japan to work in foreign owned corporations as bilingual secretaries to foreign executives (Kato, 2010; Sato, 2001). A study by Thang, Sone and Toyota (2012) examined the motivations of Japanese women who moved to Australia in their 50s and 60s. They found that their main motivation for their move was to 'search for freedom'. For those middle-aged women, migrating to be free was more important since they felt marginalized in Japan due to their status as single, widowed or divorced women (Thang et al., 2012). Another study by Sasaki (2012) depicts the reality of career segregation of Japanese female workers who work in Japanese financial firms in London. Her research revealed that even though Japanese women fled Japan to escape from its patriarchal values, those who found employment in Japanese firms in London found themselves working as bilingual clerical workers, segregated from Japanese career track male workers (Sasaki, 2012, p.135).

It is not only female administrative workers that seek to escape from Japanese patriarchal work culture, but also skilled women in white-collar jobs, often referred to as skilled migrants, who leave Japan to settle in foreign lands as a form of escape or liberation (Thang et al., 2002). As mentioned above, studies on skilled transient migration has been characterized by their primary focus on male expatriates; females are generally subsumed as passive followers who are dependent on their husbands (Ben-Ari & Vanessa, 2000; Sakai, 2012). Existing studies on Japanese female migrants often focus on the economic roles female expatriates play in providing affordable bilingual support to Japanese expatriate males in Japanese corporations outside of Japan (Sasaki, 2012). In other words, even when women are the primary focus of studies, most of existing studies only focus on their marginal positionalities between two cultures, Japanese and that of the host society.

To counter these trends, Thang, MacLachlan and Goda (2002) conducted a study, examining the social dynamics that surrounds skilled Japanese single women working in Singapore. Thang et al. (2002) found that these Japanese women "empower themselves by integrating more deeply into the local community" (p. 540), while "carving out the niche for themselves by contrasting themselves with the two versions of Japanese expatriate identities that threaten their status the most -- that of Japanese male expatriates in their workplaces, and married women in the post-25-year-old age groups in Singapore, who come to Singapore to accommodate their husbands" (p. 549). It is significant to note that Thang et al. not only focused on the marginal positionalities of women in their workplaces, but they also examine the ways in which these women found opportunities for self-improvement professionally, socially, and emotionally outside of their workplaces in Singapore.

2.3.2. Japanese Male Emigrants

Much of the contemporary scholarly research on Japanese transnational mobility have analyzed the experiences of expatriate men and their families, or female office workers who migrate overseas to escape from Japanese patriarchal work culture and society (Sakai, 2012; Thang et al., 2002, 2006, 2012). The transnational mobility of Japanese single men has not been a major area of inquiry until about ten years ago when scholars started to investigate the sociocultural dimensions of Japanese men's decisions to migrate or travel overseas (Aoyama, 2015a, 2015b; Ono, 2015; Suzuki,

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2015). These studies argue that the negative aspects of single men's lives prior to migration, such as work-life imbalance and the shortage of full-time employment in 1990s has motivated young Japanese men to search for a better way of life abroad.

Suzuki (2015) studied what it was like to be a Japanese man and how this intersected with their transnational mobility by interviewing men living in Dublin as temporary residents. Her study discovered that employment stresses and familial constraints in Japan were the key factors that prompted their transnational mobility. Among the participants, transnational mobility was thought of as a practical expedient that would allow for creating an extended period of freedom in order to pursue their *ikigai,* a Japanese word for 'meaning of life'. In Susuki's study, the majority of the participants expressed a certain degree of hesitation about reintegration into Japanese society after going back to Japan, as their stay in Dublin was temporary. Similarly, Kato (2013) conducted qualitative research with Japanese temporary residents in Canada and Australia. Kato (2013) demonstrated how the meaning of going/being overseas for personal happiness is both gendered and classed. Kato (2013) also found that most of the participants found their jobs in Japan unfulfilling or physically and emotionally demanding. In the study, Kato (2013) calls her participants "self-searching migrants" (p. 20), who are searching for 'what they really want to do" (p. 22) with their lives through transnational mobility. Moreover, in another study, Ono (2015) examined the transnational mobility of Japanese young men as lifestyle migrants in Thailand. Ono (2015) examined how and to what extent mobility liberates Japanese men from the male-centered corporate culture or Salaryman masculinity in Japan. Ono (2015) found that Japanese men in his study seek a less materialistic and a more carefree life in Thailand while trying to liberate themselves from the normative gender roles as Japanese men (p. 249). The ethnographic accounts of this study revealed that, from the perspectives of the participants, their migration to Thailand has brought self-affirmation, not downward social mobility (Ono, 2015, p.261); for these men, migration to Thailand has been a way to resist dominant masculine values in Japan (Ono, 2015, p. 261). As demonstrated above, recent literature on transnational mobility of Japanese single men demonstrate how Japanese men use migration as a way to negotiate their gender roles and liberate themselves from the gender constraints in Japanese society (Ono, 2015, p. 261). These studies show the way in which transnational mobility is both gendered and classed (Ono, 2015; Kato, 2013).

2.3.3. Lifestyle Migrants

For the past two decades, this new phenomenon of international lifestyle migration has been expanding its scale globally. As opposed to the conventional migrant groups such as economic migrants, political migrants and refugees, whose reasons for migration have been identified as macro factors such as economic, political or religious issues, which encouraged or forced them to leave their country of origin, lifestyle migrants move across borders to improve the quality of their lives. As Knowles and Harper (2009) define it, lifestyle migration is 'where aesthetic qualities including quality of life are prioritized over economic factors like job advancement and income (p.11)'. In sum, lifestyle migration represents transnational relocation of skilled/privileged people searching for better way of life (Benson & O'Reilly, 2009).

As the body of research in the field of lifestyle migration suggest, lifestyle migrants are relatively affluent individuals whose economic and structural privileges, such as economic power and citizenship of powerful nation-state, allow them to cross borders with ease (Benson & O'Reilly, 2016; Benson & Osbaldiston, 2014). Benson and O'Reilly (2009) defines lifestyle migration as 'relatively affluent individuals, moving either part time or full-time, permanently or temporary, to places which, for various reasons, signify for the migrants something loosely defined as quality of life' (p621). Thus, they make migratory decisions around their individual independence and their subjective sense of well-being. Theoretical and conceptual framework around lifestyle migration focus on examining the migrants' subjective imaginings of ideal lifestyle and destination within their subjective realities of transnational movements (Benson & O'Reilly, 2016; Benson & Osbaldiston, 2014). Lifestyle migration thus is conceptualized by researchers as a *process* of transformative search for a better life, rather than an act (Benson & O'Reilly, 2016). And lifestyle migrants' decision to migrate is predominantly presented and understood within their discourse as a lifestyle choice which is a process, stretching from before migration into settlement (Benson & O'Reilly, 2016; Knowles & Harper, 2009).

Migration journeys of lifestyle migrants are sought and taken place within the wider social structure of privileges, power and institutional forces (Benson & O'Reilly, 2016). Social, political and economic forces operate in local, national, global, and transnational levels and influence the life choices, social imaginings of places, and lives

of lifestyle migrants (Benson, 2011). Korpela (2014) writes that "lifestyle migration is often described as an individual's search for a better way of life abroad and lifestyle migrants often present themselves as active agents who have improved their lives by way of their own unmediated choice; they have taken their destiny into their own hands by escaping unsatisfactory circumstances and do not expect others (or societies) to act on their behalf (p. 27)". Many studies found that lifestyle migrants present their narratives of the decision to migrate as innovative, brave, adventurous, and pioneering while often disregarding the structural components of lifestyle migration (Benson & O'Reilly, 2009; Benson, 2011).

Contrary to the conventional model of international migration driven by the desire for economic opportunities, recent transnational migration of Japanese people can be characterized as lifestyle migration involving journeys of self-exploration and self-fulfillment (Aoyama, 2015a). The rise of Japanese lifestyle migration and leisure-oriented transnational movement has been seen since the late 1980s (Aoyama, 2015b). Aoyama (2015) claims that the transnational movement of Japanese people fall under Benson and O'Reilly's label of lifestyle migration. At the same time, Benson and O'Reilly's conceptualization of lifestyle migration situate itself around the study of Westerners, who seek more comfortable lifestyles in Europe and America. To differentiate the conceptualization of lifestyle migration of westerners and that of Japanese nationals, it is important to note that Japanese lifestyle migration includes mobility by those who cross national borders "to escape the stresses of Japanese society to start alternative lives in countries where they are freer from obligations and pressures than they were in Japan" (Ono, 2015, p. 250). Aoyama (2015b) points out that some stress is caused by gender marginalisation. Specifically, the framework of what Connell has termed "hegemonic masculinity" (Connell, 1995) works to discriminate both men and women who do not have qualities of mainstream masculinity (Aoyama, 2015b). Similarly, Sugimoto (1993) observes (as cited in Ono, 2015) that this type of movement has many variations. For example, there are "corporate escape" migrants who move overseas to escape harsh working conditions and to achieve work-life balance, and "educational escape" migrants who seeks alternative education styles in overseas (Sugimoto 1993, p. 77 as cited in Ono, 2015).

One of the most popular destinations for lifestyle migration by Japanese people is Australia. Sato (2001) conducted ethnographic research on Japanese residents in

Australia with more than 200 interviewees. The majority of her participants characterized Japanese society to be "too rigid and regimented (Sato, 2001, p. 13)"; participants sought a new, freer environment in Australia (Sato, 2001). In another study, Nagamoto (2008) found that the push factor of a hectic lifestyle in Japan and the pull factor of the appeal of a balanced lifestyle and the attractiveness of the mild climate in Australia contributed to the decision making of Japanese transnational migrants in Australia.

2.4. Japanese Immigrants in Canada

In May 1877, a 22-year old sailor, Manzo Nagano landed in New Westminster, British Colombia as the first Japanese person in Canada (Library and Archives Canada [LAC], 2020). After his arrival in BC, the first wave of Japanese immigrants, Issei (first generation) came to Canada and the majority of them settled on the Pacific coast, in the Fraser Valley and the suburbs and Vancouver and Victoria (Japanese Association of Japanese Canadians, n.d. [JAJC]). The 1901 Census shows that there were 4,738 Japanese people living in Canada at that time (LAC, 2020). Most of them were blue-collar wage workers such as farmers, fishers, and miners since they were unable to vote and were barred from professional jobs (LAC, 2020). By 1911, the Japanese Canadian population had doubled to nearly 10,000 (JAJC, n.d.).

Despite the anti-Asian sentiments among the local Canadians during both the First World War and Second World War, Issei (first generation) and Nisei (second generation) volunteered to fight in the wars for Canada (JAJC, n.d.). However, following the Pearl Harbor attack, more than 20,000 persons of Japanese ancestry were sent to civilian and Prisoners of War internment camps in interior British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba and Ontario (LAC, 2020). Even after the war, Japanese Canadians were not permitted to return to the west coast until 1949, the year that they were given full citizenship rights, including the right to vote in provincial and federal elections (LAC, 2020). In reality, Japanese Canadian communities in BC was virtually non-existent (Ward, 1982). Ward (1982) argues that Japanese Canadian at the time lacked social and cultural unity as a result of displacement.

In the year 1967, the first new Japanese immigrants in 50years arrived from Japan as a result of changes in immigration laws (LAC, 2020). For the period from 1967 to 2015, a total of 42,461 Japanese immigrated to Canada. They were called 'Shin Imin',

new immigrants, in the Japanese Canadian community. New immigrant families make up about half of Japanese Canadians (Ohki, 2017). From 2006 to 2015, 11,684 new permanent residents from Japan landed in Canada (The Canadian Magazine of Immigration [CMI], 2020). In 2016, 121,485 Japanese immigrants resided in Canada, which was 0.35% of the population of Canada, and 90% of them lived in three provinces: British Columbia (48%), Ontario (31%) and Alberta (11%) (CMI, 2020; Statistics Canada, 2016). In 2016, 12,765 people with Japanese origin resided in Vancouver, out of which 7,655 people (60%) were female (Statistics Canada, 2016). This number is relatively higher than the percentage of women in BC which is 51%. This data shows that there are more women of Japanese origin than men in Vancouver. This trend is similar to the feminization of oversea travel by Japanese people. An annual report of statistics on Japanese nationals overseas by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs shows that there were 1,390,370 Japanese nationals who lived overseas in 2018, out of which 876,620 live overseas with long-term visas and 513,750 held permanent residency (PR) of their countries of residence (Ministry of Foreign Affairs [MFA], 2018). Out of those with PR, 319,303 people (62%) were female (MFA, 2018).

Regarding the educational level of Canadians with Japanese origins, they are almost twice as likely as the rest of the Canadian populations to have a university degree (Statistics Canada, 2007). However, Canadians of Japanese origin are slightly less likely to be employed than the rest of the population. In 2001, 58% of Japanese Canadians aged 15 and over were part of the paid work force, compared with 62% of all Canadian adults (Statistics Canada, 2007). These data indicate that Japanese residents in Canada are skilled but are less successful in the mainstream labour market. These issues of unemployment and under-employment are not limited to people of Japanese origin or to Japanese immigrants in Canada. Other visible minority groups and skilled immigrants experience similar employment issues (Reitz et al., 2014).

2.4.1. Structural Issues of Underemployment of Skilled Immigrants in Canada

Globalization and increase in international migration have resulted in intensified migration of highly educated and skilled workers (Thomas & Jain, 2004; Goldberg, 2006; Lyons, 2006 as cited in Danso, 2009). Developed countries, such as Canada, employ selective immigration policies to attract highly educated skilled immigrants to maintain an

economic advantage in the global economy (Man, 2004; Danso, 2009). In the context of Canadian immigration policies, immigrants with high human capital are assumed to be best suited for Canada from an economic standpoint (Bauder, 2003; Buzdugan & Halli, 2009). Human capital is mainly measured in terms of internationally recognized qualifications and quantifiable talent. Theorists around human capital assume that with all the necessary information, employers in the host society can evaluate the human capital of an immigrant job seeker. Also, policy makers assume that superior skills and qualifications will fetch higher status jobs, and foreign trained professionals can progress in the Canadian labour market as the immigrant workers did abroad, and that women and men with equivalent credentials and experiences will earn the same amount (Salaff & Greve, 2003).

Despite newcomers' high educational attainment, their foreign credentials and professional experiences are often devalued in the Canadian labour market. Research shows that for recent skilled immigrant cohorts, their mean earnings are not converging into that of Canadian-born counterparts (Kustec et al., 2007; Picot, 2004; Sweetman & Grant, 2004). Previous research findings suggest three possible reasonings for deteriorating employment outcomes of recent skilled immigrants in Canada: devaluation of foreign credentials, discrimination, and institutional context (Reitz et al., 2014). Specifically, employers often require 'Canadian experience', which ignores any foreign professional working experience skilled immigrant workers may have, creating discriminatory structural barriers within employment policies and practices (Bauder, 2003; Dean & Wilson, 2009; Y. Guo, 2009; Picot, 2004). Non-recognition of foreign credentials causes deskilling, loss of professional identity, and downward social mobility of skilled immigrants (Guo, 2009). As a result, many are forced to take on "survival jobs" or remain unemployed (Creese & Wiebe, 2012; Dean & Wilson, 2009).

In particular, within the context of highly gendered and racialized institutionalized labour practices, immigrant women and racialized groups face greater challenges (Creese & Wiebe, 2012; Danso, 2009; S. Guo, 2015; Man, 2004; Zaman, 2010). Recent immigrant cohorts comprise more visible minority groups than previous cohorts (Sweetman & Grant, 2004). Sweetman and Grant (2004) claim that because of this, new immigrants face greater discrimination in the labor market. Moreover, immigrant women are forced into a position of choosing between housework/childcare and their professional work, which often result in prioritizing professional careers of their

husbands. Even before skilled immigrant women start the process of integrating into the host society, structural barriers are already present that can limit their integration success. Despite the high educational and professional experience, many immigrant women professionals do not enter Canada under the "skilled worker" category, because in many cases, they enter as dependents of their husband who are the principal applicants of their permanent resident applications. While integrating into Canadian society, women's household and childcare responsibilities prevent them from engaging in full-time positions and deter them from taking English language classes required for accreditation.

Studies revealed that women's education and credentials are undervalued (Man, 2004; Salaff & Greve, 2003; Zaman, 2010). Zaman's (2010) research on the lived experiences of Pakistani skilled and educated immigrant women in British Columbia, found that the accreditation experiences of women was individualized, isolated, and alienating, and all the women she interviewed answered that they miss their former comfortable lives in Pakistan. Moreover, Canadian employment practices are often gendered. Research by Salaff and Greve (2003) found that among Chinese immigrants who were engineers in China, men are more likely to become engineers again in Canada than women. Likewise, those who were formerly doctors, it was easier for women to enter the feminized sector of medical technicians than men; however, many of those women became nurses (Salaff & Greve, 2003). Moreover, Creese and Wiebe (2012) conducted qualitative research on well-educated immigrants from countries in sub-Saharan Africa living in the Greater Vancouver area. Their research focus was specifically on the gendered process that produce weak economic integration in Canada. Overall, the elements of the processes of deskilling included: discrimination against those who speaks with African-English; settlement programs charged with aiding integration that systematically channel newcomers into low wage "survival work"; the gendered labour market that limits women's access to jobs; and very limited government commitment to anti-racist or equity programs in employment (Creese & Wiebe, 2012). Creese and Wiebe (2012) concluded that integration cannot be measured solely through income, but "meaningful integration implies a serious and broadly-based commitment to fostering equality in all aspects of economy and civil society (p.71)".

2.5. Conclusion

As the existing literatures show, there are various factors contributing to reasons why Japanese people are migrating from Japan to overseas. Firstly, exploitative employment practices such as long working hours, extreme stress and gender segregations in workplaces are causing problems such as *Karoshi* and *Karo-jisatsu*. Cases of death and suicide from overworking indicates that Japanese workers face serious occupational challenges daily. Moreover, gender expectations at workplaces for both men and women marginalize those who are unable to meet those expectations and alienate some workers both socially and economically. These occupational challenges and alienation at work cause some workers to consider migrating to overseas for better way of life. Moreover, existing studies on transnational migration of Japanese people indicate that many Japanese people immigrate overseas to escape from such working conditions. Scholars claim that they can be categorized as 'lifestyle migrants', because their main purpose of migration is to search for 'better way of life'. In addition, studies on Japanese immigrants in Canada indicates that recent immigrants in Canada from Japan are more likely to be educated than overall population of Canada but are less likely to employed. Issues of unemployment and underemployment are experienced by many visible minority skilled immigrants in Canada. Their occupational challenges include non-recognition, devaluation of foreign credentials and deskilling; structural barriers to employment, such as requirement for Canadian work experience also hinder skilled immigrants from getting a job that is equivalent to their professional experience. Japanese immigrant women have the added burden of gender discrimination that can negatively affect their settlement overseas.

Chapter 3.   Theory and Method

3.1. Introduction

This chapter outlines the theoretical framework and research methods that shape the findings of this research. In the first section, I summarize the scholarly literature on social theories of gender that has influenced my investigation of how Japanese skilled immigrants negotiate gender relations in the process of immigration and settlement in Canadian society. Specifically, I seek to contextualize my research within the concept of undoing gender, Kandiyoti's (1988) concept of patriarchal bargaining and Connell's (1995) hegemonic masculinity. The first section outlines how these theories complement each other to frame my thesis project. The second section of this chapter offers insight into the methodology and the research methods used for this project.

3.2. Theoretical Framework

3.2.1. Social Theories of Gender

This study conceptualizes gender as a system of inequality embedded in *all* aspects of society (Connell, 2013; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Lorber, 1996; Risman, 2004), and utilizes this concept as an analytical lens to analyze the migration of Japanese skilled immigrants. To clarify the concept of gender, in this section, I am going to explain how the theoretical framework of this thesis understands the concept of gender at the individual, interpersonal and institutional level.

Gender is constructed at an interactional level. With particular focus on the importance of social interactions in constructing gender, West and Zimmerman (1987) first wrote "doing gender" in the 1980s, triggering a paradigm shift in feminist social sciences. It emphasizes gender as performance, what people *do* in social interaction, rather than what one *is* or one's *role* prescribed within one's sex (West and Zimmerman, 1987). According to West and Zimmerman (1987), by adhering to prescribed gender norms, symbolizing masculinity or femininity, people's daily actions are considered socially *accountable.* That is, being a man or woman is not a result of one's biological markings but a result of people *doing gender* by self-regulating their daily actions in accordance with normative conceptions of men and women (West and Zimmerman

1987). For my research participants, the whole process of migration, from deciding to migrate to settling into a new country, provides social occasions for Japanese skilled immigrants to engage in a self-regulating process of doing gender.

Furthermore, gender inequality embedded within institutions and structures of society determines technical, occupational, and geographical aspects of migration (Boyed M & Grieco E, 2003; Mahler & Pessar, 2003). Connell (1987) defines gender as a process of institutionalization and claims that gender relations are present in all types of institutions, including kinship, family, state, and even migration. To Connell, people's participation in gender construction form the core of institutions. Gender divisions, norms, and expectations govern individual behaviors and are built into major social institutions such as marriage, work, economy, politics, religions, arts and other cultural productions such as languages (Connell, 2013; Martin, 2004; Risman, 2009a). With that in mind, within the context of family and work, the sexual division of labour is supported by the ideologies of masculine authority, established within patriarchal cultures (Connell, 1987). This is particularly important because participants of this research come from a patriarchal society and divisions of labour play a significant role in their lives. For Connell (1987), gender means practices organized into multiple categories of femininities and masculinities in relation to the reproductive division of people into male and female (Connell, 1987). Connell (1987) states that 'all forms of femininity in this society are constructed in the overall subordination of women to men (p.187)', and that all femininity is organized as an adaption to men's power, which emphasizes compliance, nurturance and empathy (Connell, 1987). Therefore, construction of the contrast between masculine men and feminine women promotes the subordination of women to men (Connell, 1987). The construction of gender and gender categories involves constantly negotiating gender relations within the gender hierarchy (Connell, 2013).

3.2.2. Undoing Gender

I incorporate the concept of undoing gender into my theoretical framework to highlight how my research participants engage in undoing gender by resisting and challenging conventional Japanese gender norms through migrating from Japan to Canada. Before going into the discussion of the concept of undoing gender, it is necessary to talk about the concept of doing gender because the two concepts are interrelated. Both concepts complement each other within this theoretical framework to

highlight both the moments when skilled Japanese immigrants comply and resist gender norms in the context of migration to show the complexity of gender relations and gender hierarchy.

"Doing Gender" by West and Zimmerman (1987) was a conceptual breakthrough at the time of its publication because it highlighted the importance of everyday interaction for understanding the persistence of gender inequality (Deutsch, 2007). Methodologically, its ethnomethodological approach to gender illuminates the socially constructed nature/disposition of gender (Messerschmidt, 2009). Moreover, its emphasis on the interrelationships between structure and human agency within construction of gender implies the possibility of dismantling gender inequality (Anderson, 2005). Deutsch (2007) suggests that the notion of socially constructed nature of gender implies "gendered institutions can be changed, and the social interactions that support them can be undone" (p.108). This perspective opens up new possibilities of deconstructing gendered structures within societies. In addition, focusing on this aspect of gender and human agency frames this research to focus on participants' resistance and negotiations of gender norms and relations.

However, Risman (2009) claims that this aspect of the concept is being undermined in its recent applications of the theory and the wording of "doing gender" in many works (Deutsch, 2007; Risman, 2009b). Risman (2009) suggests that the wording of 'doing gender' is often misused without examination and some scholars use this theory to justify gender roles. Ubiquitous use of the concept resulted in some authors using the concept to justify gender roles and show how gender relations are maintained, without mentioning how they can be challenged (Risman, 2009). Deutsch (2007) argues that the theory of doing gender has become a theory of conformity and gender conventionality by some authors ignoring the links between social interaction and social change.

Nevertheless, West and Zimmerman (2009) still claim that gender cannot be undone unless the category of gender loses its importance in our society (West and Zimmerman, 2009). West and Zimmerman (2009) write "undoing (gender) implies abandonment – that sex category is no longer something to which we are accountable. That implication is one consequence of drawing from the concept of doing gender, without seeing that accountability sits at its core" (p.117). They suggest gender is always

relevant and that change can only come when the category itself loses its importance (West and Zimmerman, 2009).

On the other hand, scholars are advocating for studying and documenting social processes that underlie resistance against conventional gender relations (Deutsch, 2007; Risman 2009; Lorber, 2000). Judith Lorber (2000) states,

> It is the ubiquitous division of people into two unequally valued categories that undergirds the continually reappearing instances of gender inequality. I argue that it is this gendering that needs to be challenged by feminists, with the long-term goal of doing away with binary gender divisions altogether. To this end, I call for a feminist degendering movement. (p.80)

As the quote indicates, it is essential for my research to engage in this degendering movement by showing when and how my participants negotiate and resist traditional gender roles and norms to highlight when and how changes in gender structures occur. Therefore, for this thesis, it is essential to use not only the theory of doing gender, but more importantly the theory of undoing gender.

Consequently, scholars have started looking at how gender can be undone. The concept of "undoing gender" was first introduced by Butler (2004). Butler (2004) affirms that undoing gender is possible through people's transformative attitude towards gender and by challenging the gender binary, such as cross-gender and transgender positions. She notes that these transformative actions still comply with the gender norms but disturb them. Thus, undoing gender by doing gender differently, exposes the constructedness and unnaturalness of a supposedly natural gender binary (Butler, 2004). According to Butler (2004), this process leads to pluralization of gendered beings. In sum, by documenting my research participants' engagements in doing and undoing gender, this research aims to contribute to destabilizing and denaturizing the gender binary system.

Similar to the arguments of Butler (2004), Deutsch (2007) claims research on gender should focus on examining various ways people undo gender by resisting and questioning normative gender norms that may drive institutional change (Deutsch, 2007). She claims this kind of research informs "a feminist consciousness that propels a feminist movement (p.121)" and that feminist informed research ought to be examining if and when individuals challenge boundaries by resisting conventional gendered behavior

in ongoing social interactions (Deutsch, 2007). Thus, she stresses the importance of using the phrase "undoing gender", instead of "doing gender" because the former evokes resistance and the latter evokes conformity (Deutsch, 2007). Building on these arguments by Deutsch (2007), Risman (2009) adds that Giddens's (1984) structuration theory is a useful framework to understand the effects of feminist movement. Structuration refers to the notion that social structure both constrains behaviour and is constrained by it (Gidden, 1984). It implies that social structure of gender binary system does *not* have to constrain the actions of people and that people's actions have the potential to transform institutional structures.

In the same token, the whole process of migration from deciding to migrate to settling into a new country, provides social occasions for Japanese skilled immigrants to engage in the processes of *doing gender* and *undoing gender*. Decisions to migrate, including physical movement, cultural assimilation, and career acquisition is gendered and experienced differently between men and women (Man, 2004; Zaman, 2006). Therefore, when studying the lives of Japanese skilled immigrants, understanding social theories of gender is critical because these Japanese immigrants are constantly negotiating gender relations. Moreover, it is important to consider and highlight how participants *undo* gender to emphasize the interrelationship between structure and human agency within their negotiations of gender relations through migration.

3.2.3. Patriarchal Bargaining

This study explores settlement experiences of skilled Japanese men and women. As it was discussed in the previous sections, gender affects men and women differently in the process of migration and settlement. For this reason, this thesis utilizes two different theories, patriarchal bargaining and hegemonic masculinity to help understand the situation of male and female participants in my study. For skilled Japanese women this thesis utilizes the theory of patriarchal bargaining by Kandiyoti (1988) to analyze how patriarchy influences their decision-makings within households and the effects of those decisions on their professional career development. In the first section, I discuss the theory of patriarchal bargaining brought by Kandiyoti (1988) and in the second section, I discuss the theory of hegemonic masculinity by Connell (2005).

In my investigation into the transnational movement of skilled Japanese women, my female informants reported growing up in a Japanese society where a system of patriarchy is heavily ingrained within its culture and traditions. Thus, it is important to consider the effects of patriarchy within their decisions to migrate, negotiate gender within household and career development, using the theory of patriarchal bargaining. When studying women in patriarchal systems, some research fails to recognize them as active agents, and instead, their willingness to conform to patriarchy may be portrayed as being submissive or passive (Gallagher, 2007). For this reason, it is essential to examine women's strategies of negotiating patriarchal orders to shed light on the dynamics of change in gender relations (Kibria, 1990). Especially, within the context of migration, through these kind of negotiations, patriarchal social orders from previous culture may come into question and undergo change (Kibria, 1990). The same can be said about the female participants in my study.

Kandiyoti (1988) argues that in any given society, some women use strategies of compromise, bargaining, and resistance to maximize personal financial security and life options, while navigating through a patriarchal system. Kandiyoti (1988) calls this "patriarchal bargain", tactics in which women consciously *choose* to adhere to patriarchal gender norms and roles, which disadvantage them overall but in exchange increase their security and power within a patriarchal system. By bargaining within a patriarchy, women are able to manipulate the system, while leaving the system intact, thus, accepting a patriarchal power inequality and reinforcing patriarchal orders (Kandiyoti, 1988). In her writing, Kandiyoti (1988) identifies a system of patriarchy relevant to the patriarchal system present in Japan, namely, "the classical patriarchy". She explains the classical patriarchy as "the operations of the patrilocally extended households, associated with peasantry in agrarian societies" (Kandiyoti, 1988, p.111). Within the system of classical patriarchy, as seen in Japan, senior men hold absolute authority over everyone, including younger men, and it is a strong traditional ideal that men should be breadwinners of households. Furthermore, the domination of younger men by older men and the shelter of women in the domestic sphere where husbands typically bring in the majority of household income forces women to bargain patriarchy with submissiveness and propriety in exchange for economic protection provided by their husbands (Kandiyoti 1988). Women in classical patriarchal societies often cannot afford to lose financial protections from their husbands because the range of options for paid work available to

women in these societies are very limited (Kandiyoti, 1988). Kandiyoti (1988) argues that for this reason, some women in classical patriarchal systems resist changes of patriarchy and try to maintain a system of male responsibility as a form of protection.

Different patriarchal systems present women with distinct constraints and require different survival strategies (Kandiyoti, 1988). Lan (2006) claims that using the framework of patriarchal bargaining to examine women's survival mechanisms "pluralizes patriarchy to localize the configuration of gender domination and women's agency (p.95)", instead of assuming a universal patriarchal arrangement in all family and socio-legal contexts. For instance, other studies have used the theory of patriarchal bargaining to examine various ways women negotiate gender roles to optimize their options within patriarchal systems.

Using the framework of patriarchal bargaining, Chaudhuri, Morash, and Yingling (2014) conducted a study on South Asian women's migration to the United States. Their study reveals that South Asian women consider immigrating to United States for marriage because of patriarchal constraints. In their study, they interviewed two groups of South Asian women who immigrated to United States with their husbands, one with recent histories of abuse and one without. Their inquiries into both groups of women reveal different forms of patriarchal bargaining arrangements. Chaudhuri et al. (2014) successfully discovered different tactics women use to escape from patriarchal male orders, in the context of migration.

Lan (2006) also used the theory of patriarchal bargaining to examine the ways middle- and upper-class Taiwanese women negotiate household duties by hiring migrant domestic workers to do their gendered duties as mother, wife, and daughter-in-law. In Taiwanese society, the social meanings of domestic labour are strongly related to the cultural construction of womanhood. Lan (2006) claims that by purchasing the help of domestic workers, Taiwanese women are mindful of how they are perceived when they determine what duties are socially appropriate to transfer to domestic migrant workers without harming their own status in the family. By hiring the domestic workers to do housework, these women avoid the gender battle with their husband over housework. In sum, analysis of patriarchal communities using the framework of patriarchal bargaining leads to a better understanding of which strategies lead to women's marginalization and which strategies result in successful bargaining (Hutson, 2001). In the same token, using

the theory of patriarchal bargaining in my research can discover the ways Japanese skilled immigrant women engage in bargaining in the context of migration.

3.2.4. Hegemonic Masculinity

As a part of the theoretical framework, this thesis also uses the theory of hegemonic masculinity developed by Connell (2005) to understand the social pressures associated with ideal gender images for Japanese men. Among the varieties of masculinities in a society, Connell (2005) theorized that hegemonic masculinity is the most powerful and accepted form of masculinity. This concept aligns well with those culturally and traditionally valued forms of masculinities, considered ideal gender images for men in Japanese society (e.g. being a Salaryman, being *Daikokubashira*, breadwinner of a family, etc. mentioned in the previous chapter). Research on skilled Japanese emigrants reveal that societal pressures to conform to those images of gender ideals have prompted Japanese men to emigrate from Japan (Aoyama, 2015; Kato, 2010, 2015; Ono, 2015).

Connell (2005) defines the concept of hegemonic masculinity as the embodiment of "currently the most honored way of being a man, which requires all other men to position themselves in relation to it, and ideologically legitimates the global subordination of women to men" (Connell, 2005, p.832). Since the theory of hegemonic masculinity concerns dynamics of multiple masculinities, hegemonic masculinity does not represent qualities of what powerful men are (Connell, 2005). Rather, it represents socially accepted and desirable form of masculinity and states of hegemony, and masculine qualities that sustain powerful men's social power and cultural dominance, which large number of men are inclined to support (Connell, 2005). Connell (1987) defines this hegemony as a social dominance achieved within a context of power struggles of different social groups among various masculinities and femininities. In this case, dominance achieved by coercive method such as threat or physical force is not included (Connell, 1987). Rather, qualities of hegemonic masculinity are supported by cultural practices, traditional norms, religious doctrine, and societal structures. In sum, hegemonic masculinity maintains its hegemony by preventing other subordinated masculinities from achieving social recognition and cultural definition.

Strategies of subordination take different forms, such as economic discrimination, social exclusion and social stigma (Connell, 1987). The cultural expression of hegemonic masculinity does not necessarily imply men's aggression towards women, but often contains misogyny and attraction towards heterosexual complementarity (Connell 2013). In fact, Connell (1987) explains that the most important feature of contemporary hegemonic masculinity is that it is heterosexual and that it is closely related to the institution of marriage. This feature clearly subordinates other forms of masculinities such as homosexuality. Although the concept of hegemonic masculinity concerns masculinity, not femininity, the fundamental basis for Connell's (2005) theory of hegemonic masculinity is that men as a social categorical group benefit from the oppression of women (Connell, 1987).

Struggles between social groups for hegemony is continuous. Thus, it is possible for more humane, less oppressive means of being a man that ultimately would lead to an abolition of gender hierarchies (Connell, 2005). Therefore, the possibility of deconstructing existing power structures of gender relations and patriarchy should be acknowledged (Connell, 2005). This illustrates that social structures around gender hierarchies among multiple masculinities and femininities are never static. This perspective helps to frame gender hierarchy as something dynamic and negotiable within this project's theoretical framework.

Many scholars have used the framework of hegemonic masculinity to examine the immigration of Japanese men (Aoyama, 2015; Ono, 2015; Suzuki, 2015). In the last two decades, some Japanese men have begun to opt for a life overseas, embarking on non-normative life path outside the structures of masculinities most highly prized in Japan (Naka, Maeda, & Ishida, 2013). Ono (2015) examined the transnational mobility of Japanese young men in Thailand, who immigrated to Thailand for a change of lifestyle. Her participants abandoned their careers, social statuses, and economic stability in Japan in order to have alternative lifestyles with more flexibility and freedom in Thailand. Her research reveals that Japanese young males envision migration as a way to negotiate Japanese gender roles and liberate themselves from normative gender roles for men in Japanese society (Ono, 2015). Her participants conceptualized their migration as a way to resist prevalent masculine value in Japan (Ono, 2015). Ono's (2015) research demonstrates that not only Japanese women, but also Japanese men use migration to negotiate gender roles. In another study, Suzuki (2015) conducted research

on transnational Japanese men who lived in Dublin on temporary visas. She examined how her participants reacted to and adapted the salaryman ideal through migration. Her research reveals that the participants see the static lifestyle of the salaryman to be undesirable (Suzuki, 2015). Within the context of migration, Suzuki (2015) claims that Japanese young men in Dublin engage in transnational moves as expressions of their resistance to the expected life course of a salaryman.

To conclude, the theory of hegemonic masculinity can be used to explore the ways Japanese men use migration to negotiate gender roles associated with hegemonic masculinity in Japan. I apply Connell's theory to further explore how gender ideals in Japanese society subordinates and marginalizes men who fail to fit culturally within expected ideal types of men. This is important because the problems of subordination and marginalization strongly influence many skilled Japanese men to leave Japan (Aoyama, 2015; Ono, 2015; Suzuki, 2015).

3.3. Research Method

This thesis employs a qualitative research methodology to explore the gendered settlement experiences of skilled Japanese immigrants who have experienced employment struggles after immigrating to Canada. This section begins with a discussion on qualitative methodology and how it relates to the research focus of this thesis.

3.3.1. Methodology

This thesis employs a qualitative research approach to study the lives of skilled Japanese immigrants in Vancouver. As this thesis research is exploratory in nature, a qualitative research approach is best suited as opposed to other research methodologies such as quantitative methodology. My thesis focuses on investigating how my participants comprehend their experiences. From examining the narratives of my participants, I intend to capture how they interpret and understand their settlement experiences of moving from Japan to Canada.

A strength of qualitative research is its ability to provide a contextual, nuanced, and detailed insight into the human experiences of a particular research topic (Mason,

2002). Moreover, it aims to produce rounded and contextual understandings on the basis of nuanced and detailed data that are sensitive to the social context in which the data is produced (Mason, 2002). Using semi-structured interview method, this thesis aims to be sensitive and flexible to the social context of the experiences of my research participants. I chose to use semi-structured interview method because it offers a balance between the flexibility of an open-ended interview and the focus of a structured interview questions. Throughout the research process, from the data collection to construction of my thesis, my participants are considered expert on the topic and I consider myself as a student learning about their reality (Mack, 2005).

The position of 'I'

Upon the data collection and interpretation process of this thesis, I tried to be as reflective as I can about how my positionality as a young Japanese female graduate student affects the relationships with my participants and their narratives during interviews. Primeau (2003) claims that reflexivity allows researchers to be mindful about how their positions and interests affects all stages of the research process. Moreover, being reflective allows a researcher to address the subjective and interactive nature of knowledge construction within qualitative research methodologies (Mason, 2002). Being aware of the interactive process of knowledge construction prompted me to be more careful with my choice of words and my demeanor when interacting with my participants. Dowling (2006) suggests that during the process of social research, it is important for researchers to "engage in continuous self-critique and self-appraisal and explain how his or her own experience has or has not influenced the stages of the research process through reflexive act (p.8)". During this thesis research, that included thinking critically about why I am conducting this research, how my backgrounds such as my gender, age, and ethnicity influence the narratives of the participants during the interviews, and my own assumptions about the topic and the participants. In addition, after each interview, I wrote an analytical memo focusing on my observations about the interview and the participant. I reflected on where the interview took place, anything I noticed about the behaviors of participants, and things I want to improve about the interview for the next scheduled interview. After every two or three interviews, I reviewed those notes and looked for patterns, main ideas, and new ideas.

3.3.2. Methods

This thesis employed a snowball sampling method to select and contact interview participants for the interviews. For the interviews, semi-structured interview method was used given the exploratory nature of this thesis research. Advantages of using qualitative methods, specifically a semi-structured interview method in exploratory research is the use of open-ended questions (Mack, 2005). It allows for participants to come up with their own narratives and topics, that may not be anticipated by researchers. Thus, use of open-ended questions in an interview allows for new concepts to emerge. This element of semi-structured interview method allows the data to be meaningful and culturally salient to the participants (Mack, 2005). In essence, using semi-structured interview method ensured that all the participants are asked the same questions, maintaining a framework for interview questions, while allowing my participants to elaborate on important topics.

Recruitment

This study specifically looks at immigration of skilled Japanese immigrants emigrating from Japan to Canada, who have experienced or are currently experiencing underemployment or unemployment. There are several recruitment criteria for this interview research. First, they should be Japanese persons who immigrated to Canada from Japan. They should be aged between 19 to 65 who have citizenship or permanent residency of Canada. They should have several years of work experience in Japan prior to migration. They should reside in greater Vancouver area at the time of the interview. Also, to be qualified as a skilled immigrant, they should have at least a degree from a four-year university.

Recruitment for this project began during August 2017. To recruit participants, I posted recruitment flyers in various public social sites such as the Nikkei National Museum, Japanese Community Volunteers Association, and other community centers across Greater Vancouver area. I also posted a digital version of the recruitment flyer on Facebook, specifically on a private Facebook page called 'a page for Japanese people who lives in Vancouver'. It is a private Facebook page, operated by some Japanese residents in Vancouver. This page is not available to the general public and only accessible to people with permission.

To immerse myself in local Japanese communities in Greater Vancouver area, I volunteered at the Japanese Community Volunteers Association every week as a receptionist for eight months from June 2017 till January 2018. In addition, I worked as a full-time intern at the cultural section of the Consulate General of Japan in Vancouver from October 2017 till March 2018. Through these community activities, I met many Japanese community leaders and community organizers who helped me to recruit participants for this study.

To gather participants for this thesis research, I asked some Japanese community leaders and community organizers if they know anyone who might be interested in participating in my study. Out of the twelve interview participants, two participants were referred to me by workers at the Japanese Community Volunteer Association. Two participants were recruited from the Vancouver Japanese Gospel Church at New Westminster at the time of the poster dissemination. Six participants were recruited from a Facebook post. They saw the post on Facebook and contacted me through Facebook's messaging service. Moreover, snowball sampling technique was used to gain more participants. After each interview, participants were asked if they know anyone who might fit into the recruitment criteria for this research. Four participants were recruited through snowball sampling. In total, twelve skilled Japanese immigrants participated in in-depth interviews for this research. Table 1 provides further insight into the age, gender, and their occupational information of all the participants.

Table 1:   Participant Information

Name	Gender	Age	Educational Qualification in Japan	Additional Schooling in Canada	Past Occupation in Japan	Occupation in Canada
Noriko	F	50s	BA	Diploma in Special Education Assistant	High School English Teacher	Special Education Assistant
Kazuko	F	60s	MD	Renewed Highschool Diploma	Biomedical Researcher at a National Institute of Japan	Elderly Care-home Worker
Saki	F	40s	MD	Renewed Highschool Diploma	Medical Doctor	Unemployed
Miki	F	40s	Masters in Sports Science	Diploma in Rehabilitation Assistant	Sports Trainer	Rehabilitation Assistant
Wako	F	50s	BA		Municipal Office Worker	Part-time worker at a flower shop
Nako	F	40s	BA	Med in Teaching English as an Additional Language	Assistant English Teacher	Administration worker at travel agency
Eri	F	30s	BA	MBA	White Collar Worker at a pharmaceutical company	Unemployed
Keio	M	50s	BA		Professional Photographer	Retail shop worker
Gaigo	M	30s	BA	MBA	An accountant	Truck driver
Toshi	M	40s	BA		Welder	A masseur
Asahi	M	50s	MS in Biochemical Engineering		Biochemical Researcher	Office worker
Kenji	M	50s	BA	BA from SFU	White Collar Worker at an insurance firm	An accountant

Data Collection

Data collection occurred between August 2017 and January 2018 and adhered to the guideline for ethical research as required by the Simon Fraser University Research Ethics Board. For this project, all participants were required to sign a consent form before their interviews. For the data collection, I conducted in person, one-on-one in-depth semi-structured interviews that were approximately one hour in length with twelve Japanese immigrants in Vancouver.

All the interviews were conducted in Japanese, which is the mother tongue of all the participants. Interviews were conducted at places and time selected by the participants. All the participants were given a Tim Hortons or Starbucks ten-dollar gift card as a token of appreciation at the end of interview. In the beginning of each interview, participants were asked to answer a questionnaire with questions such as their sex and age to help the interview proceed smoothly. A general interview guide was used (see Appendix D for interview guide) with interview questions to ensure that all participants were asked the same questions. Questions ranged from skilled Japanese migrants' employment statutes both in Japan and in Canada, their involvement within Japanese communities in Vancouver, and their settlement experiences. At the same time, depending on their answers, some participants were asked to elaborate on their answers in some questions. In this respect, participants were encouraged to expand on their narratives and speak freely. This unstructured nature of the interview style used for this thesis research encouraged the participants to freely expand on topics that are more important for them.

Data Analysis

All the interviews were recorded and supplemented with field notes taken during the data collection. These field notes included commenting on the email or text conversations between the participants and I while setting up the interviews, the demeanor of participants during the interviews, and my personal reactions and questions evoked by participants' responses and comments before, during and after the interviews. All the interview were conducted and transcribed in Japanese. Pseudonyms were used in all the transcripts and field notes. All the transcriptions of the interviews were digitized and then uploaded into NVivo - a qualitative data analysis program in Japanese.

To ensure the anonymity of the participants, pseudonyms were used in all stages of data collection, data analysis in all the transcripts and field notes. In addition, I only disclosed information, such as participants' previous occupations, age, gender and marital status, which were necessary to accurately tell participants' stories and present rich detailed accounts of their social life. At the same time, to protect the anonymity of the participants to the best of my ability, some information, such as participants' place of residence and details about participants' current occupation were kept private.

To organize the transcribed data into a manageable size, the data was first categorized according to the interview questions. Then, I engaged in open coding where I read each set of responses for each question closely and generated as many as codes as possible. Then, I classified those codes into general themes. These themes were then added to the lists of predetermined themes created from the interview questions. In the second phase of coding, more comprehensive coding was conducted. Drawing on the predetermined themes and emergent themes from the initial coding, I continued to look for key themes and patterns throughout the interview transcript. Any new emergent themes were added to the existing themes. I continued this process till there was no more emerging themes. In the final phase of the coding, all the themes were grouped into major themes to identify key conceptual patterns and translated into English. Also, I selected some interview quotes to include in the thesis and translated them into English.

3.3.3. Constraints and Strength

Since I was born and raised in Japan and have working experience in Japan, I am well-versed in Japanese cultural norms and traditional expectations. It was useful to use my background knowledge of the Japanese work environment and gender expectations for men and women to navigate the interview process and conduct the data analysis. Despite my status as an international student, sharing the same identity as a recent migrant to Vancouver helped me as a researcher to build rapport with my participants. Participants assumed that I understood and went through similar difficulties with moving from Japan to Canada. Having a strong rapport with interviewer was helpful for participants to easily open-up during the interviews. Moreover, my positionality as a Japanese person made it easier for me to engage with several Japanese community organizers and organizations. Most of them were very welcoming of my research project and my engagement with their community and community members.

There were some constraints in my research as well. Regarding the participant profiles, the date of entry to Canada varies among participants. This means they experienced immigration during different socio-economic conditions in Japan and in Canada. Therefore, different social factors might have influenced their migration decisions. Also, since the participants' age varies, they grew up in different socio-political environments. This may mean that their ideas and attitudes towards gender norms and traditional ideas will vary. This also relates to my relationships with the participants. I am much younger than all the participants and did not experience the economic recession in Japan which had a negative influence on the participants' job prospects in Japan. Not going through this time period, myself, I might have limited knowledge and understanding of how it was like to live in that time period. To combat this limitation, I read extensive literatures on the economic conditions in Japan in the 1990s.

Japanese communities in Vancouver is small. It is very common for Japanese residents in Vancouver to know each other. So, it is possible that participants might have been uncomfortable sharing some information with me because of confidentiality concerns. Sometimes, I noticed some older male participants had a hard time opening up about their struggles and hardships during the interview because of our age and gender difference. In many patriarchal societies, it is uncommon for older males to talk about their feelings and hardships to younger women.

Chapter 4.   Reasons for Migrating to Canada

4.1. Introduction

Scholars in the field of migration studies claim that migration is the result of the interplay between various factors at both ends of the migratory movement. These factors include political, social, economic, cultural, environmental, health, legal, historical, cultural and educational issues (Kainth, 2009; Kline, 2003; Thet, 2014). In this thesis, I present the contributing factors to explain Japanese migration to Canada in two parts – 'push' and 'pull' factors. This chapter begins by presenting the 'push' factors, focusing on demonstrating how harsh working conditions in Japan prompted the participants to leave Japan. Next, the 'pull' factors including lifestyle reasons and gender relations regarding marriage are presented.

Migration is the movement of people from one location to another. In the case of the participants of this study, it involved permanently moving to a place of residence outside of their national border. In the discourse on migration, push factors are those factors that compel a person, for various reasons, to leave the place of their origin and migrate to some other place. For instance, unemployment, underemployment, poor economic conditions, political uncertainties, lack of opportunities for advancement, gender segregations, discriminations, and poor working conditions may compel people to leave one place in search of somewhere better (Kainth, 2009). On the other hand, pull factors refer to those elements that attract immigrants to an area, such as higher wages, better working conditions, milder weather, political and economic stability, or higher standards of living (Kainth, 2009). Thet (2004) claims that there are five main categories of pull factors which motivate people to move. They are economic factors, demographic factors, socio-cultural factors, political factors and miscellaneous factors (Thet, 2004, p.3).

4.2. Push Factors

4.2.1. Harsh Working Environment in Japan

For the "push" factors, the working culture in Japan was the main theme in the interview data. My participants suffered from working in harsh working environments in

Japan prior to migrating to Canada. Ten out of twelve participants, all of whom are skilled immigrants, identified this experience as one of the main reasons they immigrated to Canada. All the participants graduated from a four-year university, some with graduate degrees as well. A majority of them graduated from first-rate universities in Japan. The high educational background of the participants indicates their high economic and social status in Japan prior to migration. Ten of the twelve participants migrating to Vancouver held full-time jobs prior to their departures. Their previous occupations ranged from being a high school teacher, government biochemical researcher, medical doctor, municipal city office worker, professional photographer/journalist, white-collar salespersons, accountant, welder, and a biochemical researcher. Two other participants were a part-time English teacher and a tutor.

At the beginning of the interview, I asked the participants why they abandoned their careers in Japan and immigrated to Canada. The majority of them said that they wanted to escape the unbearable working conditions in Japanese companies. Interviews with participants revealed that they suffered from long working hours, physical and emotional exhaustion, and despair of continuing to work under harsh conditions.

Physical Exhaustion caused by Overworking

During the interview, participants were asked to describe the working conditions in Japan. In their narratives, overworking was one of the major themes. In the case of Kenji, he graduated from an elite university and got a job at a Japanese insurance firm. He worked in Japan for a few years before immigrating to Canada. Regarding his working experience in Japan, he explained, "In Japan, I worked from 8am to 8pm every single day, sometimes even until 10 pm, throughout the year, many weeks without any weekend. I really could not do that for the rest of my life, mentally and physically." Another male participant Keio also shared similar circumstances. Keio graduated from an elite Japanese university and worked in a major broadcasting company as a journalist/photographer. Nevertheless, he described the unbearable working conditions he suffered:

> The job itself was very good and interesting. But just extremely stressful! In my broadcasting team, we had to stay in the office 24/7. Everyone was chain-smokers and addicted to caffeine. Also, as

> journalists, we had to see some gruesome crime scenes... anyways, it
> was very stressful. (Keio)

These cases are not exceptional. A survey conducted by Asahi newspaper, a major news agency in Japan, found that among the companies listed within the first section of the Tokyo Stock Exchange, more than 70 percent acknowledged that the majority of their employees work more than 80 hours of overtime every month (McCurry, 2017b). This indicates the scale of the problem of overworking in Japan.

Moreover, physical exhaustion from overworking is a major factor identified in the secondary literature and in my research findings. My participants identified it as a major occupational challenge and at least two of them reported becoming ill from working more than 10 hours daily and enduring stress. This comes as no surprise as the negative effects of working long hours on workers' mental and physical health are some of the many significant labour issues in Japanese society (Kajikawa, 2008). Two participants shared their experiences:

> So as the economy became worse, there were so many jobs that was
> very physically demanding. I was probably working too much and I
> became very ill. At that time, I was not even sure if I can continue
> working like that for the rest of my life. (Toshi)

> I had a fiancé back then. But because I was too busy and had no time
> for her, she ended the relationship. At the end, because of all the stress,
> I became ill and could not continue working. (Keio)

As discussed in Chapter 1, health problems associated with overwork constitute the most common problem among Japanese workers today. In fact, several incidents of death by overwork have made newspaper headlines in Japan recently, receiving considerable attention and criticism both nationally and internationally. One of the incidents of suicide from overwork include the death of 24-year-old female worker, Matsuri Takahashi, who committed suicide on Christmas Day in 2015 (McCurry, 2017a). She was forced to work 100 hours of overtime in the month leading up to her suicide. Another victim, Miwa Sado, a 31-year-old journalist, logged 159 hours of overtime and took only 2 days off in the month leading up to her death from heart failure in July 2013 (McCurry, 2017b). These incidents of death by overwork confirms the significance of the problem. My data reinforces these findings on health issues associated with overwork and illustrates that working conditions in Japanese society need to improve to ensure the safety and well-being of Japanese workers.

Feelings of Doubt

My research also revealed that as a result of physical and emotional exhaustion, participants experienced declining mental health. They reported feelings of doubt and despair regarding their future. Asahi has a PhD in chemistry and used to work at a well-known chemistry lab in Japan. Asahi and others stated in their interviews:

> I had a great career, but if I was satisfied with that, I would not have immigrated to Canada. When I was working in Japan, I kept asking myself, is working everything? And I could not see my future. (Asahi)

> I guess I was ok with the hardships at work. But when I thought about the future, I could not see myself working in such conditions. That is when I started considering moving to overseas. (Gaigo)

Asahi and Gaigo's responses illustrate how mental and physical exhaustion from overwork had a significant impact on how they viewed their future working life in Japan. Similar to my research findings here, Maruyama and Morimoto (1996) conducted research on the effects of long working hours on Japanese workers' lifestyle, subjective stress and quality of life. Their research found that long working hours are associated with poorer lifestyle, higher stress, and low quality of life among Japanese workers. Similarly, Nagatomo's (2014) research on Japanese immigrants in Australia found the most common push factor behind the Japanese migration to Australia is the hectic lifestyle in Japanese companies.

My research findings lend support to the scholarly literature which suggests that harsh working conditions are negatively affecting Japanese workers physically and mentally. My findings also confirm previous research on Japanese emigrants that shows how harsh working conditions are a key reason for why many Japanese people immigrate. This body of research demonstrates how the transnational migration pattern of Japanese people is an effort to escape the company-oriented lifestyle they find themselves trapped in. If Japan wants to keep its workers, its working culture needs major reforms to ensure the safety and well-being of its workers.

4.2.2. Gender Roles in Workplaces

Prior to migrating to Vancouver, both men and women in my study were faced with a dilemma about gender expectations in Japanese workplaces. Many felt confined by pressure to conform to gender roles and this pressure significantly affected their

wellbeing. As a result, to escape from this kind of pressure, they chose to leave Japan and looked for new environment in Canada, where they thought that the working environment is more relaxed and gender equal.

Women's Struggles between Work and Family

Prior to migration, majority of the female participants worked full-time. During that time, as shown in previous research on working women in Japan, my research revealed that they struggled to balance their time between work and their personal lives. Their personal lives were jeopardized by having to spend most of their time working. Notably, their responses were different from male participants. When talking about the negative effects of overworking, female participants' discussion focused on struggles to get married while working full-time since they did not have time to socialize outside of work.

During the interview, two female participants talked about their dilemma with continuing to work while trying to have a family. Kazuko came to Vancouver in her late 30s when she married a Japanese man who was working in Vancouver. She has a PhD in Medicine and was employed with the Japanese government as a biomedical researcher. When asked about why she was willing to quit her job and move to Vancouver, she talked about her struggles with continuing to work while trying to have a family:

> I married late in life because of my work. I was just too busy to even find anyone. The working culture is definitely different between Japan and Canada. That is why I quit working in Japan and came to Vancouver to live with my ex-husband who was living in Vancouver at the time of our marriage. In America, if you want to go home at 5pm, you can. If I did not see that culture, when I went to New York for a research fellowship, maybe I would not have quit my job in Japan and moved to Canada. I realized that the system in Japan will not change while I am alive. Especially for women, the age that we build our career is also when we get married and raise a family. So in Japan, we have to pick one. But in North America, women can do both. I thought about becoming a single mother with sperm donation in Japan but I was too busy with work. And plus, my family would disown me if I did that. (Kazuko)

Kazuko's comment emphasizes the reality Japanese women face that they are pressured to get married at a socially appropriate age. These expectations may interfere or prevent them from developing a career because of social pressure and stigma associated with unmarried mature women.

Similarly, in Eri's case, she came to Vancouver in her early 30s when she married a Canadian man who lived in Vancouver. She has an MBA and a bachelor's degree in biochemistry. In Japan, she worked for an acclaimed pharmaceutical company as a white-collar worker but decided to quit working when she got married. Eri shared a similar narrative about marriage and work for women in Japan:

> When I came to Canada, I was not very worried. I knew I would not be able to work like I did in Japan, but I was ok with that. On the other hand, I did not want to keep working in Japan and not get married. I wanted to get married and have a family. In Japan, if I chose to focus on my career, I would have ended up with nothing, just my career. (Eri)

These findings support previous research which argue that because of gendered divisions of labour at home and at work, it is challenging for women to fulfill both personal and professional aspirations. This challenge led the female participants to leave Japan and move to Canada where they imagined gender expectations and segregation is less severe, as illustrated in Kazuko's quote. As mentioned briefly in the Chapter 1, gender segregation at work discriminates against women in the Japanese work environment. Nemoto (2016) conducted a study on links between the culture of long working hours and organizational gender segregation in Japanese companies. Citing the work of Collinson and Collinson (2004), Nemoto (2016) claims that working long hours is a way of constructing and fulfilling masculine and heroic reputation. Commitment, endurance, and toughness associated with working overtime provides one with confirmation of masculine identity (Collinson & Collinson, 2004). However, it is difficult for women to work overtime while having a family because gendered divisions of labour at home require women to perform certain household duties. Conversely, Nemoto (2016) argues that a culture of working long hours negatively influences female workers' career aspirations and they eventually quit their jobs. The participants of this study also suffered from a similar dilemma of choosing between work and home.

Female participants in my study thought they should be able to "have it all". That is, they wanted both a family and a successful career, but the working culture and gender expectations/norms prevalent in Japanese society do not allow them to have it all. As a result, leaving the country becomes the best option for possibly having both a career and family. Moreover, although these women follow conventional gender norms by quitting their careers in order to immigrate with their husbands, Kazuko's comment illustrates that they were hoping to get a job in Canada because she thought that

working in Canada is much more flexible. Therefore, their decision to move to Canada at the time of their marriage can be interpreted as their efforts to bargain with the patriarchy. While following some patriarchal orders, these women are actively trying to navigate through gender norms and expectations to negotiate their gender roles and work.

Salarymen Masculinity

It is not only female participants who struggle with the pressure to conform to gender roles and expectations constructed around work in Japan. Male participants also expressed their struggles with conforming to a Salaryman image. As mentioned in Chapter 1, 'Salaryman' is defined as being a white-collar employee of a private-sector organizations and it has become the embodiment of hegemonic masculinity in post-war Japanese society (Dasgupta, 2003). At the same time, all of the male informants rejected this salarymen lifestyle as a desirable way of life. Many male participants talked negatively about their experiences of living the salaryman lifestyle in Japan and how they questioned such way of living:

> In Japan, because of strict seniority systems in companies, I felt that unless I work in a same company until I become 50 years old, I don't really have a chance to get promoted. I did not want what kind of lifestyle of going to work every day, day after day for the rest of my life. (Kenji)

> I think, if I continued working in the Japanese company, I would have just devoted all my time to work and I would not have been able to have wife and kids… that would have been sad. (Asahi)

Kenji and Toshi's negative portrayals of the salaryman lifestyle reveal that, despite the economic stability and social status attached to salarymen masculinity, they did not see the value of remaining in such a static lifestyle.

These findings align with other studies on the emigration of Japanese men. Studies revealed that, in the last two decades, some Japanese men have begun to emigrate from Japan for a life overseas, embarking on non-normative career path outside the structures of hegemonic masculinities in Japan (Naka, Maeda, & Ishida, 2013). Ono (2015) examined the transnational mobility of Japanese young men in Thailand, focusing on the ways her participants abandoned their career, status, and stability in Japan in order to have an alternative lifestyle with more flexibility and

freedom. Ono's research (2015) revealed that despite some economic struggles, Japanese young men in Thailand conceptualize their migration to Thailand as "a self-affirmation, not a downward mobility" and "a way to resist prevalent masculine values in Japan" (Ono, 2015 p. 261). She concluded that "those men used migration as a way to negotiate Japanese gender roles and liberate themselves from the normative gender roles for men in Japanese society" (Ono, 2015 p.261). Suzuki (2015) also conducted research on transnational migration of Japanese men in Dublin, looking at how they reacted to and adapted the salaryman ideal through migration. It revealed that these men saw the static lifestyle of the salarymen to be "undesirable" (Suzuki, 2015). Within the context of migration, Suzuki (2015) claims that young Japanese men in Dublin engaged in transnational moves as "an expression of their resistance to the expected life course of a salaryman" (p. 244). Existing research on emigration of Japanese male migrants suggest that their migration pattern often revolve around an attempt to negotiate gender roles associated with the hegemonic masculinity in Japan.

Likewise, male participants of this study also engaged in negotiating gender roles through migration to Vancouver. For them, migrating to Canada is an act of rejecting gender ideals which they felt confined to throughout their lives. Their migration can be interpreted as their attempt to 'undo' gender and reconstruct gender roles for themselves. In the case of Toshi, even prior to considering emigrating from Japan, he refused to follow the path of becoming a salaryman, despite being pressured by his parents:

> I didn't even want to go to college. But my parents forced me to go. After graduating from college, I felt the pressure to follow the typical salaryman way of life. But I didn't want to follow that. That's when I started to question and disagree with the norm. I didn't just want to work the corporate life until I die. That is why I became a welder and chose to have some skills that I can use, anywhere. A welder is an occupation for non-college graduates. I know, and my parents didn't like it. But I didn't just want to follow what is normal or accepted. (Toshi)

For Toshi, although his parents pressured him to follow the path of becoming a Salaryman, he became a welder instead, which is socio-culturally considered a blue-collar occupation in Japan. This was his way of resisting and negotiating cultural and gender ideals.

Previous studies suggest Toshi's choice is not uncommon. Hidaka's (2010) study on Japanese men demonstrates that despite the hegemonic masculinity of Japanese salaryman being fundamentally and consistently built around work and sense of responsibility as breadwinners, in recent years, the priority of life pathway of Japanese men has changed from work and family to individual self-fulfillment. Moreover, Newman (2008) suggests that the salaryman model of working life has started to be seen as questionable given the rise of social issues such as work-related mental health issues and death by overwork.

The data confirms these results from these studies and suggest that Japanese men are staring to reject the idea of salaryman lifestyle as an ideal way of life. By immigrating to Canada, the participants are trying to negotiate their roles outside of the conventional gender ideals in Japanese society. Moreover, as stated in Chapter 2, Connell (1987) claims that hegemonic masculinity subordinates and marginalizes men who fail to fit culturally within expected ideal types of being a man. This subordination takes various forms such as social exclusion and social stigma (Connell, 1987). The findings confirm this theory and suggest that Japanese men who do not fit the criteria of salarymen are socially subordinated and economically marginalized in Japanese society. This subordination and marginalization strongly influenced male participants' decision to emigrate from Japan to Canada.

4.3. Pull Factors

Together with the push factors which prompted the participants to leave Japan, there are some pull factors that attracted them to immigrate to Vancouver, Canada. The findings show two overarching themes. First, the participants were seeking a change of lifestyle. They were attracted to Vancouver because of its relaxed working culture and slow-paced lifestyle. Secondly, for women, international marriage was a common reason for migrating to Vancouver. Five out of seven female participants immigrated to Vancouver as spouses of Canadian citizens, permanent residents or a Japanese person who resided in Vancouver at the time of marriage.

4.3.1. Starting Fresh

For the participants, Vancouver was an attractive destination to immigrate because of its relaxed working culture and lifestyle. Most notably, many described their migration as their attempts to 'start fresh', hoping for a new start in life. When asked about the reasons for choosing Vancouver as a destination to immigrate, participants identified its relaxed lifestyle and beautiful nature as primary reasons. Miki has traveled to Vancouver several times before immigration. In the interview, she described Vancouver as "less stressful, has beautiful nature, and not too rural." For these reasons, she thought, "in Vancouver I can enjoy my life more". Another female participant Eri, immigrated to Canada for similar reasons. She described her motive for immigrating to Vancouver:

> So in Japan, I felt like I was living and working in a small bubble, where everyone acts the same and thinks the same. I came to Canada to break off that kind of cultural burden. So coming to Canada for me felt like a fresh start. I can be more relaxed and meet people from around the world. I was very excited about it. (Eri)

As illustrated in Eri's comment above, prior to migrating to Canada, the majority of participants imagined their lives in Vancouver as a new chapter without the pressure of strict Japanese social norms. The role of these social imaginings and cultural construction about the destination within lifestyle migration discourse is important, as they are central to what 'the good life' means to the lifestyle migrants (Benson, 2015). According to scholars in the field of lifestyle migration, places becomes valued because of what they are perceived as offering to the migrants rather than the place itself (O'Reilly & Benson, 2009). The participants imagined Vancouver as a place without strict social norms where they can begin a new chapter of their lives; this cultural and social imagining of Vancouver is what made the destination special to the participants. This finding corresponds with other research studies on Japanese transnational migrants. According to an ethnographic research on Japanese residents in Australia by Sato (2001), the majority of her participants found Japanese society to be "too rigid and regimented (p.13)", just as Eri described Japan as "a small bubble"；Japanese immigrants in Sato's (2001) study imagined Australia to be a place that offers them a new, freer environment. Moreover, research by Thang, Sone and Toyota (2012) on transnational migration of Japanese women in Western Australia and Thailand found that their participants were motivated by "the search for freedom" in their decision to

migrate out of Japan. When their participants mentioned 'escaping from Japan', they described feeling suffocated in a society and having to live up to various social expectations for women (Thang et al., 2012). The data supports these findings and confirms that the narrative of "escaping Japan for freedom" is a major theme among research studies on Japanese transnational migrants including my participants (Ono, 2015; Thang, MacLachlan & Goda, 2002).

In addition, participants' tourism experiences in Vancouver before the migration had a significant influence on participants' positive perceptions of Vancouver. In fact, only three participants had permanent residency at the time of their arrival in Vancouver. For their first visit to Vancouver, four participants came with a student visa, three came on a working holiday visa, and two came as tourists. They all experienced living in Vancouver for some period of time before deciding to immigrate to Vancouver. In Asahi's case, he worked as biochemical researcher in Japan for five years. Being tired from working relentlessly, he quit his job and initially traveled to Whistler as a sky guide through the Working Holiday Visa. After working in Whistler for a few years, Asahi obtained his permanent residency through the skilled immigration system, taking advantage of his educational and working experiences in Japan. He talked about what triggered him to travel to Whistler and eventually immigrate to Vancouver:

> I was not really worried about jobs when I came to Whistler. I was just so excited about doing skiing as my job. Initially, I went to Banff to see what Canada is all about, just like a tourist. I was instantly fascinated with its nature and its lifestyle. I also wanted to learn English. (Asahi)

This finding of transitioning from tourist to immigrant aligns with a study on Japanese transnational migrants in Australia by Nagamoto (2008). Nagamoto (2008) found that this is a common process for Japanese migrants in Australia. They first visit Australia as tourists to escape from their busy everyday life. Some were impressed by the Australian lifestyle during their visit and started to think about migration to Australia by "realising the gap between the image of balanced lifestyle in Australia and the hectic lifestyle in Japanese everyday life (Nagamoto, 2008, p.5)." When my participants left home, they had a plan to return home when their visas expired. Instead, as illustrated in the quotes above, they were fascinated by the lifestyle and beautiful nature of Vancouver and decided to apply for permanent residency as skilled immigrants. Kato (2013) also claims that this is "a typical sliding migration pattern among Japanese temporary residents in Vancouver (p.31)". According to Kato (2013), many Japanese youth come to Vancouver

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as a tourist and realize the gap between the two cultures regarding work, lifestyle, and leisure and decide to immigrate. Similarly, for my participants, their positive perceptions about the city prompted them to immigrate to Vancouver permanently.

4.3.2. Lifestyle Migration

In addition, Asahi's response above illustrates that his motivation for immigration centers around leisure and self-fulfillment. These are common themes amongst other research findings on Japanese transnational migrants and lifestyle migrants. For example, research studies have found that Japanese transnational migrants engage in various activities in their host countries for the purpose of self-fulfillment (Thang et al., 2012; Thang et al., 2002; Kato, 2013). These activities include learning English, going back to school, spending time on hobbies (Ono, 2015). My participants also shared similar narratives about 'doing what I always wanted to do' by immigrating to Canada. For example, Nako worked several part-time English Teaching jobs in Japan before immigrating to Canada with her husband and her child. For her, the act of immigration served as a self-fulfillment, almost as a dream-come-true:

> I could not see my future in Japan… I wanted to keep practicing English while working as a English teacher. But it was difficult. Also, I always wanted to live abroad. I just like using English. Living abroad has been my dream. (Nako)

Kenji shared similar accounts:

> I got a pretty good job in Japan but I could not forget my dream of living abroad. I have traveled to places but never lived abroad. I wanted try working and living in Vancouver. So I just came here without any plans. (Kenji)

Within the broader literature on the transnational movements of Japanese people, many studies have identified them as lifestyle migrants (Hamano, 2011; Igarashi, 2015; Nagamoto, 2008; Ono, 2015; Sato, 2001). As explained in chapter 1, lifestyle migration represents transnational relocation of skilled/privileged people searching for better way of life (Benson & O'Reilly, 2009). Knowles and Harper (2009) explain that within lifestyle migration, aesthetic qualities including quality of life are prioritized over economic factors such as job advancement and income when migrants decide to immigrate. Moreover, within migrants' discourses on their journeys, these imaginings and cultural constructions of locations are presented as authentic (Benson &

O'Rilly 2009; Benson, 2011). This authenticity to particular places is important as lifestyle migrants gives values to moving to particular places in search of self-authenticity and it offers them possibility of remaking of the self (Benson, 2015).

The migration patterns of my participants correspond with these descriptions of lifestyle migration. As demonstrated above, participants of this research emigrate from Japan for personal and lifestyle reasons, not for economic or political reasons. Throughout their narratives on the process of their immigration, the participants prioritize the need to fulfill their quest for independence and subjective sense of well-being. Moreover, their discourse of 'doing what I always wanted to do' and 'chasing one's dream' illustrate how participants imagine migration as a process of transformation for a better life, as if migration offers the possibility of remaking one's self. Also, the discourse of 'fulfilling one's dream' presents their migration as authentic. Moreover, the contrast between their narrative of hectic working life in Japan and relaxing life in Vancouver illustrates that Vancouver is imagined to provide them with an escape from the previous lifestyle of overworking. This overlaps with another component of lifestyle migration. Benson and O'Reilly (2009) claims that within narrative accounts of lifestyle migrants in general, the presented advantages of life in the desired destination are often romanticized, and one's life after migration is presented as the antithesis of their life before migration. In sum, the participants' migration to Vancouver is strongly interrelated to what the place means and how Vancouver is imagined among the participants of this research.

4.3.3. Marriage for Women

At the time of the interview, all seven female participants were married. Five of the seven female participants immigrated to Canada when they married non-Japanese husbands who have either Canadian citizenship or permanent residency. Similar to the situation in Canada, foreign nationals in Japan, including immigrants and temporary workers, often experience downward social mobility. In many industries, foreign nationals are treated unfairly because of deep rooted xenophobia in Japanese society (Yamaguchi, 2013). Also, it is hard for foreign nationals to socio-culturally integrate into Japanese society because of systematic segregations such as strict visa regulations and employment barriers. For these reasons, many Japanese women who marry non-Japanese persons migrate overseas to avoid both sociocultural and economic

integration struggles for their partners. Likewise, female participants in my study also immigrated to Canada to improve their husbands' job prospects. Saki, a former medical doctor, explained why she decided to move to Canada with her husband:

> My husband is Chinese, and he has permanent residency in Canada. Japan is very closed to foreigners, so we wanted to get him a Canadian citizenship. That is the primary reason we came to Canada. His Japanese is very good, but it is like a discrimination … even if he tries to get a decent job in Japan, it is almost impossible because he is not Japanese…all the restrictions with age, nationality... He could have just worked in corner store or something but … you know ? In Canada, it is a lot easier for him to get a decent job. He likes Japan but working there is another story. We could live in Japan and I could work full-time but ... I did not want to create that kind of environment. And you know, I got married so, I should at least do what a married person would do. (Saki)

In the quote above, by saying 'that kind of environment', she meant a home where a mother works as a breadwinner of the family and a husband stays home to take care of their children. Her comment hints at how she considers female breadwinners to be problematic. This reveals her belief that it is best to follow the traditional gender roles of female caregivers and male breadwinners in households and avoid the unconventional arrangement of a female breadwinner. Moreover, at the end of the quote she said, 'I should at least do what a married person would do'. Here, she is referring to a gender norm in Japan that women should prioritize their family and the needs of their husbands once they are married. Embodying this gender ideal, Saki decided to sacrifice her career as a doctor and immigrate to Vancouver where there are better job prospects for her husband, but not for her. This finding reveals the pressure of gender norms and its effects on married women and their social and economic mobility.

During the interview, participants were asked how they obtained their permanent residency in Canada. Considering their high levels of education and occupational background, the express entry system is the fastest and most efficient way for all my participants to apply for their PR. All male informants and one female informant applied through the express entry system as skilled immigrants using their educational and professional background from Japan. However, six other women chose to apply for PR through a spousal visa even though they had enough educational and occupational experiences to apply through express entry. They were asked why they did not apply individually as a skilled immigrant. Kazuko candidly discussed her reasonings:

> When I was planning to apply for permanent residency, my lawyer told me that the processing time will be faster if I apply as a primary applicant as a skilled immigrant. Two lawyers actually. But I came to Canada to marry my ex-husband. So, you know? I have always been a working person. I thought people would question why would I be working in Canada too. I could have been a primary applicant. That way, I could have been able to get PR and start working as soon as possible. But I was uncomfortable to do that. Our hierarchical relationship (relationships between wife and husband) will be reversed. I thought that would ruin our marriage. That is why, even if it takes longer, I thought making him the primary applicant will be better for us as a married couple. (Kazuko)

As illustrated above, female participants in my study conceptualize marriage according to patriarchal ideals, which support the idea that marriage should be a hierarchical relationship where the husband is the primary breadwinner. My findings suggest that it was unimaginable for majority of the female participants to be the primary applicant on their Visa application and work while their husbands stayed at home as a spouse until his PR application is processed. For the female participants, the stability of their marriage was more important than their job prospects, and this is reflected in which immigration path they chose to pursue. This finding aligns with other research findings on immigration pattern of skilled immigrants in Canada. As mentioned in the chapter 1, previous research point out that despite the high educational and professional experience, many immigrant women professionals do not enter Canada under the 'skilled worker' category. In many cases, they enter as dependents of their husbands who are the principal applicants of their permanent resident applications (Guo, 2009).

For the female participants, marriage changed their mindsets regarding priorities in their life. When asked about what she expected from migrating to Canada, Kazuko continued:

> After getting married, for me, the priority was to a life with him, not my independent life. That is why I let him be the primary applicant. I just wanted to coexist as a couple… if I earn more money, I thought I will be stronger than him at home. I grew up in a household where my mother stayed home and my father worked… so I thought, at least inside the house, it should be that way.

As illustrated above, Kazuko conceptualizes marriage as a unit, where a wife supports her husband. Her comment illustrates that she thinks when a wife advances ahead of her husband economically, the gender hierarchy in their marriage reverses and a hierarchical balance between a wife and a husband collapse. She thinks this may lead to

an unhappy marriage. Similarly, in the case of Saki, a former medical doctor, she quit her job in Japan and moved to Vancouver for her non-Japanese husband because he had permanent residency in Canada. She said during the interview, "I should at least get married and do what people normally do". By saying, "do what people normally do", she meant getting married and following her husband to Vancouver which is what she imagines a proper wife doing. Regarding work, other participants had similar accounts. Noriko stated in the interview:

> When I immigrated to Vancouver, I really was not thinking a lot about work. For me, the feeling of getting married, getting pregnant, and caring for my family was so strong (Noriko).

Previous research on transnational migration of Japanese women to Canada caused by international marriage does not inquire into the reasons they chose to live in Canada as opposed to Japan. This may indicate that previous research overlooked the reasons of their migration and assumed their willingness to migrate as voluntary. My data suggests that patriarchal ideals heavily influenced my female participants' decisions regarding migration. As mentioned in chapter 2, Connell (1987) claims that gender divisions are present in all types of institutions, including marriage. And that within the context of family and work, the sexual division of labour is supported by the ideologies of masculine authority, established within patriarchal cultures (Connell, 1987). Moreover, the theory of patriarchal bargaining by Kandiyoti (1988) suggests that women may use varying strategies to maximise power and options within patriarchal structures. Regarding the four women in this study, if they stayed in Japan and kept advancing their careers, their social and economic status would have surpassed that of their husband. That would have reversed the gender hierarchy between a wife and a husband and disrupted their marital relationships. To prevent this, the participants immigrated to Vancouver where their husbands have better job prospects. In other words, using migration as a bargaining strategy, these women stabilised their marriage by quitting their career and restoring the patriarchal family order of husband and wife by moving to a place where their husbands enjoy better job prospects.

4.4. Conclusion

My inquiry into reasons skilled Japanese immigrants emigrated from Japan to Canada revealed two broad forces – push and pull factors. Push factors stemmed from

harsh working environment and gender expectations in Japanese workplaces. The majority of participants suffered exhaustion, both mentally and physically, as a result of overworking. Moreover, pressure to follow ideal gender images associated with work caused dilemma for both men and women when they worked in Japanese corporations. Women had a difficult time fulfilling gender expectations, such as getting married at an appropriate age, while also fulfilling their professional aspirations. They were often judged for prioritizing work over personal life, such as marriage and having children. For men, many felt dissatisfied with living the 'Salarymen lifestyle'. They engaged in 'undoing gender' by rejecting traditional gender roles and seek to liberate themselves from strict social norms and gender expectations by emigrating from Japan.

In addition, pull factors are categorized into three themes. Firstly, participants seek a new start in life; they chose Vancouver as a destination because it provided them with a fresh start away from Japanese strict social norms. Secondly, my participants' migration can be categorized as lifestyle migration. Participants were motivated by the idea of searching for a better way of life, focused on leisure and self-fulfillment. Lastly, many women migrated to Canada in an effort to advance their husband's career even if that meant terminating their professional career as a result of moving out of Japan; they used migration as a strategy of patriarchal bargaining to stabilize their marriage by maintaining the traditional gender order.

The next chapter focuses on examining the experiences of my research participants after arriving in Vancouver as a permanent resident. Both positive and negative aspects of their settlement experience are examined with regards to their perspectives on lifestyle and gender roles.

Chapter 5.   Settlement Experience

5.1. Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss participants' settlement experiences after immigrating to Vancouver. This chapter begins by discussing participants' perspective of their 'ideal lifestyle' and its influence on their settlement experiences. Then I examine issues associated with underemployment and participants' involvement with Japanese communities in Vancouver. Finally, the chapter explores participants' experiences with trying to conform to gender norms/roles and the struggles they experienced along the way.

5.2. Relaxed Lifestyle

My research revealed that the interview participants are relatively satisfied with their current employment status despite being overqualified for their occupations. This is because many appreciate the relaxed working style found in their Canadian workplaces. As mentioned in Chapter 3, the majority of the participants emigrated from Japan to escape unbearable working conditions such as long working hours and high stress. For this reason, many participants were pleased that their workplaces in Canada are much more relaxed and they work shorter hours. Eri and Maki said during the interview:

> In Japan, I had a very high paying job, but with much more responsibilities and mental stress. When I decided to move to Canada, I was ok to give up the social status and high salary in exchange for living a more peaceful and relaxed lifestyle. (Eri)

> Taking everything into account, I am more satisfied with my life in Vancouver than in Japan. I am feeling much more relaxed in general. I had a lot on my plate when I was in Japan. I worked so much and I could not even get any days off even if I wanted to. But here, taking days off is not a taboo. If I am sick or I need a day off, I can take days off without feeling guilty or being blamed by colleagues. Also, I can go home at 5pm most of the days and there is no overtime. (Maki)

For my participants, occupational factors such as flexible working hours and relaxed working environment are more important than social status and high salary when choosing an occupation. Their negative experiences in Japanese workplaces influenced participants' occupational and lifestyle preferences after immigration.

In Vancouver, they enjoyed having more time for leisure and spending more time with family. During the interview, many participants talked about how amazing it is to finish work at 5:00pm and go home which allowed them to spend time with their kids and their partners.

> You know, I really like the balance between my personal life and work in Vancouver. In Japan, it was the complete opposite. When my first child was born, my husband could not come home until 11pm every day. We could not spend any time together as a family because of his long working hours. But, now, he comes home every day at 7p.m. Our time together as a family drastically increased and it is amazing. More than anything, that is the best part about living in Vancouver. It is so important for my children that both mother and father are present in their daily life. (Nako)

> I love living in Vancouver. I never work the way I did in Japan. We do not have kids, so we as a couple have so much time together and we have enough money to enjoy our lives. Also, I really like that on the weekends, I have time and energy to go hiking and do some outdoor activities. When I was in Japan, I was either working or was too exhausted to do anything on the weekends. (Kenji)

Regarding societal expectations for men's occupations, male participants described that they felt obligated to have while-collar jobs in Japan. On the contrary, being in Canada allowed them to be free from the societal expectations regarding one's occupation.

> My pay is as half as what I used to make in Japan. But I have more time for myself and I feel happier and more relaxed. I only do things that I like. I like that I do not feel pressured by others to do certain jobs that are socially respected. I am happy that no one here complains about how I live my life. In Vancouver, I work as a freelancer masseuse. So my hours are very flexible. I really like the freedom of having more time to myself without any pressure from others. (Toshi)

In Japanese society, men's social status is defined by their stable contribution to the society as a worker and their devotion to one's family as a husband and a father (Suzuki, 2015). Tom did not satisfy either of these components in Japan because he worked as a welder and being a welder is not respected in Japanese society. This occupational choice resulted in backlash from his family. For this reason, he felt an enormous pressure to change his occupation. However, instead of changing his occupation, he decided to move to Canada.

This type of immigration pattern is becoming common amongst Japanese men. Research findings suggest that some Japanese men have begun to opt for a life

overseas, embarking on non-normative life paths outside the structures of masculinities most highly prized in Japan (Naka, Maeda & Ishida, 2013; Ono, 2015). Even though my participants' occupational status suggests downward social mobility after migration, this was not a concern for them. Their main purpose of immigration was a change of lifestyle and they are satisfied with lower-paying jobs as long as it is less stressful and less time consuming.

5.3. Underemployment and Deskilling

One of the recruitment criteria for participating in this research was that the participants immigrated to Canada as skilled immigrants (or having equal or more educational and professional background prior to immigration) and they have experienced underemployment in Vancouver. Being underemployed implies that the participants have advanced post-secondary training and held a job that required a high level of skill prior to emigrating, but upon immigrating to Canada, they were unable to obtain equivalent work.

The participants in this study held a variety of professional occupations in Japan such as medical doctor, biochemical researcher, medical researcher, sports trainer, professional photographer, and an officer at a municipal government. On the other hand, their current occupations in Vancouver ranges from being a Shiatsu masseuse, truck driver, sales associate at a local store, and caregiver; the majority of them are low-paid blue-collar occupations. Despite having professional credentials, they were channeled into part-time insecure positions. In the interview, many acknowledged non-recognition of foreign credentials and deskilling as major challenges.

These incidents of non-recognition of foreign professional experiences are very common amongst skilled immigrants in Canada. Previous research suggests that even though skilled immigrants tend to be trained in prestigious professions such as engineering, physical sciences, and commerce (Anisef, Sweet & Frempong, 2003), they are mostly underpaid relative to native-born Canadians because of the devaluation of foreign credentials and work experience (Grant & Sweetman 2004; Li 2003; Picot 2004). Picot and Hou (2003) found that having a university degree did not protect recent immigrants from the increased likelihood of being low-income, regardless of their field of profession. As similarly reported in my study, Kustec, Thompson, and Xue (2007) found

that 24 percent of all highly skilled migrants report that "qualifications or work experience [from] outside Canada [were] not accepted (p.29)".

Research findings suggest that there are two issues contributing to this issue. First, employers may have limited information on the immigrants' credentials, especially when the candidates' country of origins are non-European or non-American (Kustec *et al*., 2007). Second, under the point system, immigrants' admission to Canada is determined by the federal government which recognizes foreign credentials. However, upon landing, their economic integration and performance in the Canadian labour market becomes the jurisdiction of the province which often do not recognize foreign credentials (Somerville & Walsworth 2009). Some scholars blame the skilled immigrants for having high expectations and hopes about their job prospects upon landing. Somerville and Walsworth (2009) writes that "they arrive in Canada with illusions of an abundance of economic and employment opportunities" (p153). However, many suggest otherwise. Li (2003) argues that "the ideological preferences and biases of Canadians and their social construct of immigrants play a role in influencing how immigrants are evaluated and ultimately how they are incorporated into Canadian society" (p.39).

Many scholars stress the importance of recognizing that the notion of immigrants is socially and politically constructed (Li, 2003; Guo, 2009). Guo (2009) points out that descendants of early European settlers, now long-term Canadians, no longer think of themselves as immigrants and that today, the social construction of immigrants uses skin-color as the basis for social markings. Moreover, immigrants are often blamed for social welfare issues and racial tensions and rarely acknowledged for their contributions for population and economic growth and cultural diversity in Canadian society (Guo, 2009). In fact, racialized Canadians with foreign training tends to be more underpaid than those of European and North American origin (Anisef et al., 2003). Guo (2009) suggest that root of non-recognition is people's 'belief that knowledge held by immigrant professionals, particularly those from Third World countries is deficient, incompatible and inferior, hence invalid (p.37)'. In addition to undervaluation of their credentials, they earn less compared to Canadian born workers as a result of discrimination, with more women being adversely affected (Li, 2003; Reitz 2001). Research by Grand and Nadin (2007) revealed that one of the barriers to developing a strong Canadian identity is the lack of recognition and the undervaluing of foreign credentials and professional experience.

Non-recognition of foreign credentials prevents skilled immigrants from accessing professional jobs, which often leads to deskilling and downward social mobility. For example, among Indo- and Chinese Canadian immigrant professionals in Vancouver, only 18.8% of the surveyed worked within their professional fields after immigrating to Canada (Basran & Zong, 1998). In comparison, more than 60% of immigrants of American origins and 68% of immigrants of Australian and New Zealand origins were successful in finding employment in their occupational groups (Guo, 2009). This contrast reveals that deskilling and downward social mobility affects certain groups of immigrants, albeit racialized immigrants, more adversely. As a result, many immigrants are forced to take on jobs that are relatively low-skilled positions in sales, services, and manufacturing, mostly jobs that underutilizes their human capital.

5.3.1. Lack of English Proficiency

Numerous studies have found that lack of English language proficiency is a major acculturation barrier for recent immigrants (Guerrero & Rothstein, 2012; Creese & Kambere, 2003) and my participants were not any different as many faced barriers to employment due to weak English language skills. Many of them were required to go through additional schooling before they could renew their professional credentials in Canada. If the participants' English proficiency was particularly low, they were required to take secondary school level English courses such as English 12 to renew their high school diploma, despite holding graduate degrees from Japan. Without a valid high school diploma, they were not eligible to apply for post-secondary and certificate programs for accreditation. In the case of Miki, she has a master's degree in sports science and worked as a sports trainer in Japan prior to migration. She applied to a rehabilitation assistant diploma program at Capilano University. When she applied for the program, she was told because of her low English proficiency, she had to redo her English 12 course. As a result, she spent one year at Vancouver Community College taking English language classes. In the case of Kazuko, a former medical doctor in Japan, she also had to retake her English 12 course before she was eligible to apply for a nursing program. As a result, she decided not to pursue nursing.

Previous research found that not only the level of proficiency but also one's foreign accent may prevent skilled immigrants from accessing professional jobs. As mentioned before, racialized immigrants experience greater likelihood of having their

skills devalued. Guo (2015) claims that racism in the labocur market may manifest itself in the form of framing racialized immigrants' foreign accents as a lack of communication skill. Drawing on research with African immigrant women in Vancouver, Creese and Kambere (2015) found that an 'African Accent' is frequently named as a reason for not being hired in the Canadian labour market, although the majority of their participants had post-secondary degrees from institutions where English was the dominant language and are from English-speaking African countries. Regardless, they were perceived to have low English-language competency. One of their research participants noted, 'When you don't have their own accent, they don't want to accept you in areas where you have to speak like receptionist, teacher of English, customer service. It is a big barrier' (p.569). Creese and Kambere (2003) claim that discrimination associated with foreign accents has a symbolic effect on immigrants' perception of belonging in Canada. Through the African accent and their skin color, participants in their study were marked as immigrants and treated as 'Other'. Creese and Kambere (2003) concluded that evaluation of English proficiency of immigrants is practiced as a way of preventing immigrant from integrating into mainstream Canadian society. Creese and Kambere (2003) conclude that 'It is not, after all, about communication [but] it is about power and exclusion, marginalization and "Othering", racism and discrimination (p.571)'.

5.3.2. Lack of Canadian Work Experiences

Another barrier for skilled immigrants attempting to secure employment is the lack of Canadian work experience. Despite having one or more graduate degrees and professional work experience in Japan, my participants were denied jobs due to their lack of Canadian work experience. Many were told by prospective employers that they should engage in volunteering activities to gain hands-on Canadian experience. As a result, similar to other research findings on employment struggles among skilled immigrants in Canada (Grand & Nadin, 2007), the majority of my participants share a norm that volunteering is a natural phase that every immigrant goes through to obtain a job. Wako stated:

> When I was pregnant, a family friend who runs a college told me that I should volunteer at his college to get some Canadian experiences. Another time, when I brought my kids to a community center, a staff there told me to volunteer there to gain experience. She also said that she will be my reference in the future. Maybe they were just under-

staffed and needed some volunteers, but I received those advice often. I think it's important to volunteer.

In some cases, participants continued to struggle to secure an employment even after receiving a diploma or a certificate from Canadian institutions due to their lack of Canadian work experience. Noriko explained that even after she got her certificate as a Special Education Assistant, she was turned down at interviews several times. To gain Canadian experience, she had taken on some private contract jobs which put her in vulnerable situations. Some employers took advantage of her situation. Noriko shared her experience in the interview:

> I did not have any experiences in working with kids with disabilities. So to get some experiences, I had to do a lot of things with horrible working conditions. People exploited me. People knew I needed experiences so sometimes they did not pay me even though they said they would pay in the beginning. Some people cancelled on me last minute and made me work without pay. But I could not say anything because I felt inferior and I needed the experience so badly.

My participants' experiences with employment struggles illustrate the vulnerability of unemployed immigrants in Canada, where Canadian experience and Canadian credentials are valued (Creese & Wiebe, 2012). Not having Canadian experience is linked to high levels of underemployment and disproportionate poverty levels that racialized immigrants face in Canada (Sakamoto *et al*., 2013). Moreover, employers' requirement for Canadian experience structurally marginalizes skilled immigrants (Man, 2004; Bauder, 2003). Such unfair practices are embedded within various institutions such as state policies and professional accreditation system. Bauder (2003) argues that professional associations and the state actively exclude immigrant labour from the most highly desired occupations in order to reserve these occupations for Canadian-born and Canadian-educated workers. Bauder (2003) claims that "the non-recognition of foreign credentials amounts to the systematic exclusion of immigrant workers from the upper segments of the labour market" (p.699). He suggests that institutionalized processes of cultural distinction contribute to segmentation of immigrant labour, ultimately causing substantial under-utilization of skilled immigrants, often referred as 'brain waste' (Bauder, 2003). Sakamoto et al., (2013) argues the importance of raising "the question of why "Canadian Experience", despite numerous critiques and after more than four decades of "universal" immigration selection criteria, retains such a stranglehold over skilled immigrants and discourses about them"(p.20).

Sakamoto et al. (2013) argue that the normalization of expectation of Canadian experience can be a phenomenon described by Henry and Tator (1994) as "democratic racism." According to Henry and Tator (1994), democratic racism is an ideology that permits and justifies the maintenance of two conflicting sets of values, "one set consists of a commitment to a democratic society motivated by egalitarian values of fairness, justice and equality, and another set of attitudes and behaviours includes negative feelings about people of colour that carry the potential for differential treatment or discrimination, while rejecting the possibility of racism in society" (p.1). Using this concept, Sakamoto et al., (2013) argues that democratic racism makes it difficult to recognize this system as racist by making the requirement of Canadian experience a neutral arbiter of what people expect of newcomers.

As a result, the requirement for Canadian work experience contributes to high levels of underemployment as noted earlier, as members of visible minorities and women suffer considerable downward mobility upon their arrival in Canada (Grant & Nadin, 2007). They are often forced to take on manual labour that is physically demanding (Mojab, 1999). Some of my participants shared their concerns about continuing in these jobs as they get older. One male participant, Gaigo, worked as an accountant in Japan. Currently, he is working as a driver to deliver foods to local Japanese restaurants. He said during the interview:

> I do not mind working as a driver because it is not too stressful. Working in Japan was hell, so it is better here (in Vancouver) for sure. But I am thinking of getting a new job because the current job is physically too demanding. I need to deliver bags of rice and soy sauce that is more than 20kg. Now is ok, but in 10 years, I will not be able do this job and I do not want to get injured. (Gaigo)

Other participants shared similar narratives and expressed their concerns about working in physically demanding jobs due to their lack of Canadian work experience. These findings suggest that institutional marginalization, such as non-recognition of foreign educational attainment and the requirement of Canadian work experiences places skilled racialized immigrants with foreign credentials in vulnerable positions. My findings indicate that the participants' intellectual capacity has been undermined in Canada as their skills are not valued and their previous work experiences are not acknowledged.

5.4. Japanese Communities

5.4.1. Working in Japanese Communities

As mentioned in Chapter 3, the majority of participants found Japanese corporate culture to be confining and undesirable. Many participants immigrated to Canada to escape the hectic corporate lifestyles in Japan. Nevertheless, at the time of the interviews, six out of twelve participants were working jobs that require fluency in Japanese and knowledge of Japanese culture. Some worked in companies that target Japanese immigrants and Nikkei residents in Vancouver. Nako explained her circumstances:

> I really did not want to work for Japanese companies. I came to Canada to get away from the Japanese corporate society. The 'Japanese way' of working style really did not work for me. That is why I have always dreamed of living abroad. So after I completed TESL, I looked for jobs in Educational sector but I had no luck. I got several interviews, but I did not get any offers. I did not get anything until mid-August and I have already registered for my daughter's afterschool program, so I really needed a job from September. That is when I started to apply for jobs at Japanese-owned companies. It was so quick. I applied for a job at Japanese travel agency and got the interview the next day and got hired the next, next day. Everything was in Japanese. (Nako)

Faced with employment struggles associated with their foreign professional backgrounds, my participants sought jobs in Japanese businesses as their last resort. To gain Canadian experience, some participants worked as a Japanese language teacher or a tutor at the beginning of their working life in Canada. Naoko explained in the interview,

> I had about one year of unemployment after getting my certificate in special needs education. During that time, I worked as a Japanese language teacher. It was of course to earn money, but more importantly I needed to get some confidence back.

Naoko stated that after being unemployed for some time, she started to feel depressed and not confident about her ability as a worker. Her narrative highlights the lack of confidence and mental decline that can be associated with deskilling – common issues among unemployed and underemployed skilled immigrants. A study by Dean and Wilson (2009) examined the health impacts of under/unemployed skilled immigrants in Ontario, Canada. Their study confirmed that as a result of unemployment and deskilling, skilled

immigrants experienced negative health impacts such as mental health problems due to lack of confidence, loss of employment-related skills, loss of social status and family pressures (Dean & Wilson, 2009). My findings confirm this and suggest that some Japanese skilled immigrants accepted Japanese-related jobs in order to gain confidence as a reaction to the negative mental impact of deskilling.

Several participants found recruitment information from communicating with other Japanese residents in Vancouver who share similar settlement struggles. Naoko said that she was introduced to the job from a friend who knew a person who worked at a Japanese language school and was looking for a teacher who can teach Japanese. All the participants shared similar experiences of being introduced to a job that requires Japanese language proficiency from another Japanese immigrant in Vancouver. Naoko shared how she was introduced to a job as a Japanese language teacher,

> We have several Japanese communities in Vancouver and I go to a Japanese church. We all connect there. Like when there is a new Japanese person in the community, we all talk and know. So I was asked by a friend of my friend in the church. These connections are so important for Japanese people in Vancouver who are not very good at English. (Naoko)

Other participants shared similar experiences. In the case of Asahi, after immigrating to Canada, he was only able to find employment with Japanese companies in Vancouver. These jobs were acquired through recruitment information from colleagues and friends within the Vancouver Japanese communities. Moreover, some participants mentioned that they frequently used JP Canada, a website for Japanese people in Canada to exchange information, to find recruitment information for jobs. JP Canada is very similar to Craigslist, but the website is operated in Japanese. Some participants also used this website to advertise their services to other Japanese people in Vancouver as in the case of Toshi, who works as a shiatsu masseuse and runs his own business. When asked about his business he answered, "I only market my business in Japanese to Japanese people in Vancouver". My findings suggest that when faced with difficulties finding employment in the mainstream labour market, skilled Japanese immigrants often turn to online Japanese communities and Japanese companies in Vancouver for employment opportunities, especially during the early phase of their settlement. Some continue working within Japanese communities, and some use the work experience gained in Japanese communities to secure employment in mainstream Canadian communities.

A study by Statistics Canada suggests that recent immigrants' cohorts' labour market performance has deteriorated in recent decades for both men and women (Warman, 2007). Warman (2007) suggests that their poor economic performance may be related to the fact that recent immigrant groups tend to cluster in enclaves in urban centres. Warman (2007) claims that residing and working in ethnic enclaves prohibits immigrants from acquiring skills such as English language proficiency which is necessary for labour market success. Moreover, Warman (2007) claims that skills present within the enclaves will be less transferable to the Canadian labour market. However, my findings suggest otherwise. With several of my participants, they were able to advance their careers in non-Japanese environment after first gaining Canadian working experience in a predominantly Japanese workplace environment. My findings suggest that Japanese communities and the Japanese economy in Vancouver provides a safe haven for recent Japanese immigrants to gain Canadian experience and eventually move on to find employment in the 'mainstream' labour market.

5.4.2. Reluctance to Interact with other Japanese Residents

The majority of female participants were reluctant to interact with other Japanese residents in Vancouver. They avoided participating in Japanese community activities where they feel 'Japanese-ness' is strongly present. A female participant Saki expressed reluctance to associate with other Japanese immigrants in Vancouver:

> There are some Japanese mothers who like to hang out together just because they are Japanese. But I do not like to join them. You know? I do not choose my friends based on their ethnicities. I have more Chinese friends actually. Like... I tend to avoid other Japanese people in Vancouver ... It is hard to explain... but umm... yeah something like that. (Saki)

Another participant Miki strongly expressed her dislike of interacting with Japanese residents in Vancouver.

> I prefer not to interact with other Japanese immigrants or Nikkei residents in Vancouver. Japanese people are so troublesome. Maintaining relationships with them takes so much effort. They like to gather all the time, and when you do not attend their gatherings, they ask for an explanation. It is too troublesome for me. (Miki)

These responses reflect a sentiment that is commonplace among the research participants. Likewise, previous research on Japanese emigrants share similar findings.

A study on Japanese lifestyle migrants in Australia by Nagamoto (2011) revealed that "more recent Japanese lifestyle migrants display a tendency to maintain distance from 'Japanese-ness', as well as from Japanese ethnic organizations (p.434)". Japanese lifestyle migrants in Nagamoto's (2011) study migrated to Australia to escape the pressure of Japanese corporate society. Thus, for them, Japanese community organizations strongly evoked the hierarchies and organizational constraints of the society they have sought to leave behind (Nagamoto, 2011). Moreover, similar to other research findings on Japanese immigrants (Nagamoto, 2011), my field observation and interview inquiries revealed that there is no physical focal point for Japanese newcomers in Vancouver in a way that other ethnic groups have political, economic or social centers. Such communities include Lonsdale Avenue in North Vancouver for Iranians, North Road in Lougheed for Koreans and Richmond for Chinese people. For Nikkei (people of Japanese descent) residents, Powell Street had been the heart of Japanese residents in Vancouver, until the entire community were forcibly removed by the Canadian government during WW2. This lack of a Japanese community centre may be explained by the attitude of social distancing among recent Japanese immigrants displayed by my participants.

For some participants, the desire to completely avoid any interactions with other Japanese immigrants in Vancouver was deliberate and intentional. Eri and Nako shared their narratives:

> I do not belong to any Japanese community here. I don't even want to. Japanese people here are like old people in Japan. Not like Japanese people now. Even now, there is a gap between my views on things than how they (Japanese people) do things in Japan. Older Japanese people are even more old-fashioned and outdated. I left Japan and immigrated to Canada to break off that kind of culture … so…(Eri)

> I don't have any relationships with Japanese communities here… Still.. I resent it … Old men gather at Ofukai club and there are some groups but I prefer not to join. (Nako)

For those who left Japan to escape from rigid social norms and hectic business lifestyle, interacting with other Japanese residents and being involved in ethnic communities meant going back to the cultural environment that they found confining, reminding them of the world they sought to leave behind. A study by Thang and others (2012) on female Japanese immigrants in Thailand found that respondents shared similar desire to "avoid Japan", and deliberately stayed out of Japanese associations and clubs in their host

society. Instead, these Japanese migrant women sought to make friends with the locals and other non-Japanese internationals. They had a few close Japanese friends who they described as a typical Japanese (Thang, Sone & Toyota, 2012). Another study by Thang, MacLachlam and Goda (2002) investigated single female migrants in Singapore and their lives. Their study revealed that these women feel that being in Singapore offers disengagement from Japanese society which provides them with freedom from being outside of Japanese social networks, away from the pressure to conform to social norms (Thang, MacLachlam & Goda, 2002).

It is noteworthy that the female participants expressed greater reluctance with joining a Japanese community in Vancouver than the male participants in this study. In the quotes above, Eri and Nako mentioned that they do not like to join any Japanese communities because of old Japanese patriarchal values shared among the older community members. As mentioned in Chapter 2, Connell (1987) defines gender as a process of institutionalization and claims that gender relations are present in all types of institutions, including Japanese communities in Vancouver. Kobayashi (2002) claims that Japanese female immigrants leave Japan to 'reject the specific ways in which Japanese patriarchy is manifested (p.207)'. Moreover, Connell (1987) states that 'all forms of femininity in this society are constructed in the overall subordination of women to men (p.187)', and that all femininity is organized as an adaption to men's power, which emphasizes compliance, nurturance and empathy. My findings confirm these theories around gender and suggest that Japanese migrant women feel reluctant to join Japanese organizations in Vancouver because of patriarchal gender norms present in these communities.

5.5. Gender Roles

5.5.1. Household and Childcare Responsibilities

As mentioned in Chapter 3, the majority of skilled Japanese women in my study immigrated to Canada as spouses. Even though many of them held professional occupations, they were listed as dependent spouses on their immigration application and their husbands were the principal applicants. Similar to this finding, previous studies have found that women are more likely to immigrate as dependents rather than as principal applicants on their immigration applications (Iredale, 2005; Kofman &

Raghuram, 2006). For this reason, their skills were not considered, and they also are not eligible to access to settlement services (Iredale, 2005). Some scholars have pointed out that not enough attention has been paid to the immigration experiences of spousal migrants, particularly when they decide to enter the Canadian labour market (Meares, 2010; Kofman, 2004). Social research tends to overlook female spousal migrants and the fact that they immigrate to Canada with professional experiences and high educational attainment. Just like principal applicants of skilled immigration, spousal migrants have challenges, which are unique to their immigration status as a spouse, when they try to access the labour market (Purkayastha, 2005).

After migrating to Canada, female participants in this study struggled to advance their careers because of household and childcare responsibilities at home. Out of the seven female participants in this study, five of them had young children at the time of the interview. Three of them gave birth to their children in Canada and two of them immigrated to Canada with their children. All five participants talked about their experiences as a mother and how it hindered their ability to find paid work. Women in my study echoed the difficulty of fulfilling the childcare responsibilities while trying to work full time or go back to school to renew their credentials. Nako explained in the interview that it is very difficult for her to find work because her children finish school at 3pm and there are not many full-time jobs that finishes before 3pm. Similarly, Saki immigrated to Canada with her husband and two children. She worked as a medical doctor in Japan prior to the immigration. She explained why she did not pursue a path to become a doctor or a nurse in Canada:

> I thought about becoming a nurse but I cannot go to school full time. I need to pick up my kids at 3pm. So I don't think I can work full-time before my kids go to universities. I could go back to school to become a doctor in Canada but, I need to focus on my kids. It is not the time to focus on me. My kids are my priority (Saki).

All five women were restricted from working or attending classes because they had to pick up their children from school. This was a significant barrier for these women because this deterred them from going back to school full-time to renew their certificate in order to work. For this reason, Saki decided to obtain a Shiatsu certificate instead of going back to school to become a nurse or a doctor:

> I found a Shiatsu certificate course at the Japanese Volunteer association. The course was held during the time that my kids were in

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school and the price was not expensive. Organizer understood the time constraints of mothers and scheduled the course only once a week from 10am to 2pm. When I found the course, I thought that was it (Saki).

Moreover, some women explained that they could not hire a nanny or use childcare services because their husband strongly felt it was not appropriate. Saki and Wako explained why they did not use daycare or a nanny when their children were small.

I have kids so I cannot go to school. And we do not have any other family members in Canada. It is not like we have grandparents that we can rely on. My husband prefers to raise our kids ourselves, especially because it is not our own country (Saki).

When my kids were younger, like until 3years old, I had to take care of them fulltime. Back then, I thought I can start working when they start pre-school. But when pre-school started, it was only twice a week for two hours and a half in the morning. When they became four, it was three times a week. And I also wanted them to learn Japanese so my kids were going to both Japanese and English pre-schools. Then I need to bring them there and pick them up. My husband was very opposed to hiring a nanny, so I had to take care of them before my kids went to elementary school (Wako).

My findings suggest that between my female participants and their husbands, childcare responsibilities were assumed to be women's role. As illustrated in the quotes above, some of the female participants and their husbands did not even question the expected gender roles. This illustrated how unconsciously prescribed gender roles determine a person's actions. As a result, these women failed to engage in full-time paid positions, and some were deterred from going back to school for accreditation. Many research studies have found that skilled women often sacrifice their own careers for the sake of their family or may be disadvantaged in the process by gender bias (Iredale, 2005).

On the other hand, some female participants had psychological hardships with the dilemma of conforming to the expected gender role of being a devoted mother or a housewife. Since their previous lifestyles in Japan mainly consisted of working outside of the home, some women had difficulty transitioning into being a housewife. Wako expressed her dilemma:

Right after I immigrated here with my husband, I had a baby. There has always been a dilemma. I always ask myself, is raising children all there is in my life? I used to work at a city hall, I wanted to do something in Canada as well. Kids will grow up. When they leave me, I wanted to be economically independent, I still do. I do not want to say my kids are obstruction. But they restrict me (Wako).

Saki also shared similar accounts:

> I never worked outside of home when my kids were young in Canada. It was very boring. I am not the housewife type, like those women who like to clean, do gardening, cooking and always look so nice. I would rather go out to do something than to clean the house. I do not even mind a messy house. So It was hard. And in Canada, you cannot leave your children at home. You always have to accompany them (Saki).

These narratives show that for my female participants who had successful professional lives in Japan, being a stay-at-home-mom is challenging. They suffered psychologically from deskilling and downward social mobility. Among my female participants, Kazuko had the most challenging settlement experience. Kazuko came to Canada in the year 2000, when she married her ex-husband who lived in Vancouver at the time of their marriage. Looking back at her settlement experience, she said:

> I came to Canada in the year 2000. For a year, I could not work because I was waiting to get a PR through a spouse visa. It was ok for me to be home alone, but I had to make dinner every day for my husband. I have always worked so I never cooked every day. It was a huge burden. And then my mother got sick and I started travelling back and forth between Japan and Canada. That is when the relationship between my ex-husband and I became bad. And then we started living separately. To tell you the truth, I have been suffering from depression for such a long time. It started when I started to think about divorce. I have been depressed from 2004 until last year (2016). I just got out of it. So, in Canada, I have only worked as a care-worker at a Japanese senior home from 2013. When I first got married, I thought if I worked outside of home, that would lead to a divorce. But it was the opposite. If I applied to skilled worker's visa, and started working right away, I would not have suffered like this probably. (Kazuko)

As the above quote illustrates, it was alienating for Kazuko to perform daily household chores to fulfill expected gender role as a devoted wife because it was far from the professional lifestyle she had before immigrating to Canada. Unable to challenge the patriarchal gender norms while being married to her ex-husband, Kazuko did not work for almost 10 years, which led to deskilling, the loss of her professional identity, and caused her depression.

These challenges are common among immigrant women. Strong attachment to a patriarchal tradition where the social meanings of domestic labour are strongly related to the cultural construction of traditional womanhood (Lan, 2006) may prevent women from challenging gender inequality at home (Lim, 1997). Moreover, research has shown that

most contemporary immigrant groups experience marital tensions and conflicts caused by the discrepancy between women's desire for an economic role and men's insistence on traditional gender roles for their spouses (Min, 2001), which is similar to Kazuko's case. For Kazuko, pressure to conform to gender ideals created tension and led the couple to divorce. In other cases, previous research has shown that some women use tactics of patriarchal bargaining and conform to traditional expectations of wives to maintain a peaceful family life (Chaudhuri et al., 2014), which may be applicable to the case of Wako and Saki. Even though they underwent a personal dilemma choosing between their career prospects and familial obligations of childcare, they both decided to prioritize a peaceful family life and meet the gendered responsibilities at home, which can be interpreted as a way of patriarchal bargaining.

Other research shows that more immigrant women are working outside of home (Min 2001). Min (2001) writes that where immigrant women's economic role has increased, it is not because of their feminist consciousness of increasing their marital power and social status, but to survive economically in the host country. One positive outcome of this is that immigrant women's bargaining power has increased. Despite this change, immigrant men tend to adhere to traditional patriarchal gender norms, not ready to give up the patriarchal authority in household. Not surprisingly, the increase in immigrant wives' economic role with no significant change in their husbands' gender role attitude can lead to marital conflict and tension (Min, 2001).

The female participants in my study are aware of the unfair division of labour in the household and how it affects their professional careers. Specifically, looking at Kazuko's case, initially she tried to subscribe to the expected gender role of a devoted wife, but realized how unhappy it made her. She then decided to divorce her husband to escape the confining gender role of a wife. This demonstrates that individual agency may break the pattern of social structure of the gender binary system and engage in 'undoing gender'. As mentioned in Chapter 2, West and Zimmerman (1987) claim that being a man or a woman is not a result of one's biological markings but a result of people 'doing gender' by self-regulating their daily actions in accordance with normative conception of men and women. My findings support this claim and demonstrate that skilled Japanese women consciously make efforts to subscribe to normative gender norms, even if this is challenging and alienating. At the same time, as demonstrated by the case of Kazuko, my findings also suggest that skilled Japanese immigrant women

regularly exercise their agency and engage in 'undoing gender' as well. Deutsch (2007) suggests that the notion of socially constructed nature of gender implies "gendered institution can be changed, and the social interaction that supports them can be undone". Deutsch (2007) claims that gender can be undone by resisting and questioning normative gender norms which then may drive institutional change. In the case of Kazuko, despite going through depression, she was able to unsubscribe from the normative gender roles by divorcing her ex-husband. This finding shows the possibility of institutional change at the individual level of undoing gender.

5.5.2. Unable to find Romantic Partners for Marriage

In my study, three out of the five male participants were single at the time of their interviews. A major theme of these interviews was their struggle to find a romantic partner for marriage. They said that despite their eagerness to get married and have a family, it was challenging to find a suitable spouse. Toshi and Keio expressed their concerns during the interview:

> I am about to turn 40 and I think it is time for me to get married. I have tried before to get to know some women, but their expectations seem to be so high. I feel like I am not what they are looking for. They all seem to want to get married, have children, and at the same time do not want to lower the quality of their everyday living. But I think once you have children, it is natural to start saving some money. I thought unless I am as rich as someone who can afford helpers around the house, I will never be enough for them. (Toshi)

> I want a family so badly. I feel like without a family, I have nowhere to come back to. I even tried matchmaking, like forty times! But they all want money, and I do not have a lot of money, so I feel like they do not want me. (Keio)

As shown above, their narratives about marriage center around what women want in their ideal male partner and how they do not live up to those ideals. The quotes demonstrate that my participants imagine an ideal male partner to be financially independent and capable of supporting one's family. As mentioned in Chapter 1, in Japanese society, one of the expected gender roles for men is to become a "*daikokubashira*" of a family. This masculine image of "*daikokubashira*" is interconnected with heteronormativity, embodying an archetypal heterosexual husband, a father and a provider (Dasgupta, 2013). The social pressure to adhere to these ideas of hegemonic masculinity causes socio-cultural marginalization among lower class men in Japanese

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society as they are unable to achieve these expectations (Aoyama, 2015). Kato's (2015) research examined the settlement experiences of Japanese migrant men in Canada. Her research revealed that many migrant Japanese men who quit their jobs in Japan to move to Canada or Australia experienced feeling insufficiently qualified to be a spouse (Kato, 2015). Some of Kato's participants believed that only men with stable jobs are qualified to marry. They also believed that doing the job they like is not sufficient if it does not support a family financially (Kato, 2015). My research findings align with Kato's (2015) work and other research on hegemonic masculinities in Japanese society. The male participants' quotes indicate that they experience high levels of insecurity and lack confidence as potential spouses because they believe they do not fulfill some of the gender roles/expectations of a husband and father. My research illustrates how strongly their behaviors and attitudes towards marriage are influenced by the gender ideology in their country of origin.

5.5.3. Sense of Shame

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the majority of participants are satisfied with their overall lives in Vancouver. At the same time, almost all male participants stated that they are ashamed of sharing their current employment circumstances with friends and families in Japan. They fear that their friends and relatives in Japan will judge their employment situation negatively, especially if they are experiencing underemployment. Some even said that they have never even gone back to Japan for a visit for over 10 years due to these concerns. Keio and Asahi shared his thoughts on going back to Japan:

> Some people say that I should go back to Japan if I cannot find a good job here. But it is not that easy. Japan is such a vertically structured society. Once you get out, there will be no more place for you, unless you become very successful. Like you create your own company and become CEO. I am not successful at all in that sense. I would like to visit Japan but I cannot. I am ashamed to meet my friends and family. If you are young, it is ok. But I am old now, so I need to worry about what people might think of me. So It is not that easy to visit Japan. What if I go back to Japan without telling anyone and meet friends by accidents? That would be bad, so I have never gone back for a visit. (Keio)
>
> I have never thought about going back to Japan…. Well I wanted to at least ... succeed in something? You know what I mean? I do not want

my friends and family in Japan to treat me like a loser. Also, even if I go back to Japan, it will be very hard to get a good job anyways. (Asahi)

In addition to the feeling of shame due to underemployment, they shared their pessimism about reintegrating into Japanese society both socially and economically.

Kato (2010) claims that social norms in Japan consider men who quit their jobs and/or leave Japan as 'escapers' or 'underachievers'. Japanese society tends to consider quitting a job as characteristics of someone who lacks diligence, perseverance or social responsibility (Kato, 2015). As mentioned in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3, patriarchy dominates Japanese workplaces. Failing to conform to prescribed gender norms in the workplace marginalizes both male and female workers. Taga (2006) comments that the "institutional system in Japanese workplace marginalizes most of women, who cannot work "like men", and those men who cannot work in a "manly" manner" (p.119). Moreover, in Japan, a person's educational background, especially the name of the school, plays an important role in deciding her/his future and social status. Skilled Japanese immigrant men in my study struggle with the gap between others' expectations and the reality in Canada, because of their higher educational status and previous professional experiences in Japan. My male participants were relatively satisfied with their overall lifestyle despite being underemployed. However, the stigma associated with underemployment in Japanese society caused them to feel a sense of shame.

Chapter 6.　　Conclusion

This final chapter provides a summary of the findings, discusses the limitations of the approach, and considers future research on the topic of international migration of skilled Japanese people. I concluded that the harsh working environment in Japan is a primary reason for Japanese skilled immigrants to migrate to Vancouver, Canada and that they choose to settle in Vancouver for lifestyle reasons.

6.1.　Summary of findings

Skilled Japanese immigrants in this study raised lifestyle reasons as the main factor for immigrating to Canada from Japan. Prior to immigrating to Vancouver, all participants experienced harsh working condition such as long working hours and stressful working environments in Japan. As a result, they suffered from physical and mental exhaustion and feelings of despair and doubts about their future. Women, in particular, struggled to balance work with responsibilities at home. Men, on the other hand, struggled with conforming to the gender expectation of being a 'good husband who provides for the family'. In sum, both men and women struggled with conforming to gender roles and societal expectations both at work and at home in Japan prior to their migration. These factors associated with work and gender expectations acted as a main push factor that led them to emigrate from Japan.

In addition, there are pull factors that prompted the participants to choose Canada as a destination. The majority of my participants traveled to Vancouver for the first time as a student or as a working holiday participant, seeking a short escape from their hectic lives in Japan. Others visited Canada for the first time as a tourist and became fond of the beautiful natural environment and the relaxed lifestyle of the people and the city. For the majority of my participants, lifestyle factors were more important than economic or political factors when choosing a place to immigrate. More specifically, my participants were seeking 'a better way of life', conceptualizing their migration as a fresh start away from their hectic working life in Japan. Their ideas around 'better way of life' and 'relaxed lifestyle' were interconnected with their perception of Canadian culture around work. Moreover, their decision to migrate was shaped by their negative experiences of working in Japan. Therefore, upon arriving in Canada, they looked for

jobs that were less stressful and less time constraining. In contrast to research findings on skilled immigrants of other ethnicities, skilled Japanese immigrants in my study were not too concerned with securing jobs within their field of specialties. As long as the job was not too stressful, my participants were satisfied with their employment situations. These sentiments were more common among male participants. Female participants struggled with underemployment and deskilling more than male participants as a result of gender stratification at home which hindered their job prospects.

Out of seven female participants, five of them came to Canada as a spouse of a permanent resident or a citizen of Canada. Others came to Canada as a student or a tourist and married locals or other Japanese migrants which lead them to permanently settle in Vancouver. These women intended to continue working in their profession in Canada after migrating. However, despite having high educational attainment and professional experience from Japan, their professional development in Canada was often hindered by taking on roles and responsibilities at home. Women often felt obligated to perform household chores as wives. Their husbands also assumed their wives would take on primary caregiver roles for their children. Taking on these gendered responsibilities prevented them from working full time and going back to school for accreditation to renew their credentials from Japan due to the lack of time. Moreover, deskilling and loss of professional identity caused depression for some of the women participants.

It is not only women that struggled with gender expectations. Male participants often struggled with gender ideals around what constitutes an ideal male partner for heterosexual marriage. In my study, three out of five male participants were not married at the time of the interview despite their desire to have a family. They were unable to marry because they did not consider themselves as an ideal male partner, since their income and social status associated with their occupation was low, as a result of underemployment. They conceptualized an ideal male partner to be someone with high social status and economic power. This led them to believe that they do not fit the criteria for an ideal male partner and are not qualified to be married. Their conceptualization is strongly influenced by hegemonic masculinity in Japanese society. This finding illustrates how strongly my participants' behaviors and gender ideals are influenced by the gender expectations in their country of origin even after migration.

This research contributes to the growing body of research in the field of lifestyle migration and skilled immigration of Japanese people. Research on lifestyle migration by Japanese people is a newly emerging field of study. Moreover, there is little studies on transnational migration of skilled Japanese people, especially in Vancouver, Canada. There has been only four research on new Japanese immigrants in Vancouver and these studies focus on the topic of sojourning and identity around international migration in the field of cultural anthropology (Kato, 2004, 2010, 2013, 2015). To the best of my knowledge, this research is the first to investigate the settlement experiences of skilled Japanese immigrants in Vancouver. This shows my research is original and innovative.

6.2. Limitations of Approach

There were limitations to this research. Regarding the methodological issues, to recruit participants for this research, I posted recruitment flyers in several public social sites where Japanese migrants use for community gatherings. I also posted the PDF version of the flyers on social media cites. Moreover, a snowball sampling method was also used. Due to the random nature of these sampling method, my participants were from various age groups. This meant that the social, cultural and historical background of these participants were all different due to their age. They all immigrated to Canada from Japan during different social and economic periods. This might have influenced their decision making around migration. Despite these differences, all the interview data from these participants were analyzed equally. This might have affected the generalizability of the findings. Moreover, this research interviewed both men and women. For both gender groups, same interview questions were used. As explained in detail in chapter 2, men and women experience the social world differently due to their different social positions. This also might have affected the generalizability of the findings.

In addition, this research looked at the immigration journeys of twelve Japanese skilled immigrants. Since I am also from Japan, the interviews were conducted in Japanese. Using their native language allowed the participants to be more comfortable with answering the interview questions. At the same time, since I am also a Japanese person residing in Vancouver at the time of the interview, I was also a part of Japanese communities in Vancouver. This might have had some effect on how participants answered the questions regarding their experiences with and impressions of Japanese

communities of Vancouver. In other words, since my research participants and I were both part of Japanese communities in Vancouver, this may have prevented my participants from sharing more personal information and stories due to concerns about confidentiality.

6.3. Directions for future research

The topic of lifestyle migration amongst skilled Japanese migrants is a newly emerging field. Except for places such as Australia, Singapore, Thailand, and Vancouver, there is close to no empirical research on this topic at the moment. Specifically, no research has focused on immigrants' employment struggles. More research needs be done on this topic because the issues of underemployment of skilled immigrants is a serious issue globally. To determine the scale of this social phenomenon, future research can consider employing qualitative methods such as large-scale surveys. Moreover, further investigation on immigrants' preferences of destination can reveal the relationship between their reasons for migrating and their choice of destinations. Furthermore, future research can consider recruiting participants in similar age groups to further investigate how the sociocultural and economical background of a specific time period may influence the decisions of skilled immigrants to emigrate.

6.4. Reflections on Research

This research captured the complexities of skilled Japanese immigrants' experiences of migration. Their experiences cannot be simply categorized into good or bad. Their migration journeys were full of unexpected events, feelings of contradictions and tensions. Despite going through uncertainty and hardships with their job prospects, they found a sense of happiness in living in Canada. Canada provides them a safe place away from Japanese strict social norms and gender expectations. This illustrates the severity of structural demands of Japanese working life. Japan's labour system needs reform to further ensure that workers' both mental and physical health are protected.

Moreover, my attempt to capture the instances of 'undoing gender' in participants' narratives illustrates that changing gender norms (undoing gender) does not happen overnight. Challenging gender norms is a slow and difficult process. Even after

leaving one's home country, my research revealed how much gender ideals from one's cultural upbringings can influence immigrants' actions. Challenging gender norms is uncomfortable and often involves tensions and backlash from those who benefit from patriarchy. This study documented incidents of Inter-relational conflicts between a husband and a wife. This suggests the importance of studying the dilemma and household tensions, which immigrants experience, not only in the Canadian labour market but also within their household.

Also, this research uncovered vulnerable positions that immigrants face when entering the Canadian labour market without Canadian work experience. They are forced to volunteer their time to gain Canadian experiences. In these situations, employers have more advantage over the working conditions especially when workers desperately need working experiences. There should be more regulations on the use of volunteers to protect immigrants from exploitation. In addition, unfair treatment of foreign work experiences should be regulated by law and employers should be required to recognize foreign work experiences as legitimate experiences towards employment.

Women and men struggle with issues that are specific to their gender. My research revealed that married women often apply for PR through sponsor application and they struggle to advance their careers because they have to fulfill household and childcare responsibilities at home. This means that women's economic power is weak, and they are sometimes financially dependent on their husband. In fact, in Vancouver, there is an issue that is affecting Japanese immigrant women. Some Japanese women who are married to Canadian husbands are forced to stay in abusive marriages, especially when children are involved. They feel inferior to their Canadian husband because of their immigrant status and are pessimistic about getting a divorce fearing that obtaining custody of their children would be challenging. In some worst cases, they leave Canada with their children and settle back in Japan without their husband's knowledge. This leads to unlawful separation between husbands and children. In other cases, some women cannot divorce their husband because of financial dependence. When they have the courage to leave, some become homeless and need help from women's shelters. Settlement organizations and integration programs should focus their services on protecting these women's rights and safety at home. Services can provide women with legal aids and vocational training to ensure their financial independence. In sum, this research revealed various issues that affect Japanese immigrants in Japan

and Canada. Findings of this research can help to propose solutions and suggestions that can improve the lives of Japanese and other immigrants in Vancouver.

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Appendix A. Flyer to recruit participants

Are you from Japan living in Vancouver as a PR?

Have you ever experienced any employment hardships in Canada? Interested in sharing your story for research?

My name is **Momoka Yamagata**. I am a Master's student in Sociology at Simon Fraser University I am conducting a research about settlement experiences of underemployed/unemployed Japanese skilled immigrants in Vancouver, Canada. I am interested in gathering information about your experiences when you moved to Canada and perhaps, the challenges you had finding employment. Everyone is invited to participate in this research!

If you would like to participate in my research, I would love to have a conversation with you. Our conversation and your identity will be confidential.

Questions? Interested? Thank you!

Call or message me.

Appendix B. A Facebook post to recruit participants for semi-structured interview

Hello everyone,

My name is Momoka Yamagata, and I am a Master's student at Simon Fraser University in the department of Sociology and Anthropology. As a part of the Master's program, I am conducting a research about settlement experiences of underemployed/unemployed Japanese skilled immigrants in Vancouver, Canada. In particular, I am interested in gathering information about your experiences when you moved to Canada and what issues and challenges you had finding employment with your previous experiences and education from Japan.

The interviews will be approximately 1 – 1.5 hours in person and take place at a location and time that is mutually convenient. All the interviews will be conducted in Japanese or English. This project is entirely voluntary; therefore, you may withdraw from the research at any given time without any negative consequences. Your identity will be kept confidential.

If you are interested in participating in the research or if you would like to ask any questions about the research, please contact me through Facebook messenger. I am looking forward to hearing from you!

Best regards, Momoka Yamagata

Appendix C. Informed Consent Form

Research Title: Settlement Experiences of Skilled Japanese Immigrants in Vancouver, Canada: Navigating Employment Hardships

Who is involved in this research: Principal Investigator: Momoka Yamagata, Master of Sociology, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Faculty of Arts, Simon Fraser University, Faculty Supervisor: Processor Wendy Chan, Department of Sociology and Anthropology

Sponsor: This research is being funded by JASSO (Japan Student Service Organization)

Description of research:

The project seeks to explore skilled Japanese immigrants' settlement experiences of seeking employment, job satisfaction, and challenges with employment in Canada. I will be asking participants about the ways they are attempting or have attempted to overcome employment hardships using various social relationships (e.g. friendships, family relations, acquaintanceships). The significance of ethnic ties within a Japanese community when skilled Japanese immigrants seek for employment opportunities and recruitment information will also be explored.

Your participation is voluntary:

This project is entirely voluntary; therefore, you may withdraw from the research at any given time without any negative consequences. During the interview process, if there are questions that make you uncomfortable, you may also withdraw or choose not to answer without any negative consequences. Your identity will remain confidential and only codes will be used in any publication or documents created based on the interview data.

What happens if you say "Yes, I want to be in the research"?

You will participate in an in-depth semi-structured interview, which will be approximately 1 - 1.5 hours in person, and take place at a location and time that is mutually convenient. All the interviews will be conducted in Japanese or English, whichever language you prefer. In principle, you will take part in one interview with the principal investigator. You may be asked to participate in a second interview, where you will be asked to talk about topics related to the first interview. Some of the interview questions may seem sensitive or personal. During the interview process, if there are questions that make you

uncomfortable, you may also withdraw or choose not to answer without any negative consequences. With your consent, the interview will be audio-recorded. The audio recording of the interview will be transcribed within one week from the interview and will be destroyed immediately after the transcription. The pseudonym of the participant will be used in the transcript instead of your legal name to protect your confidentiality. Only the principal investigator will have the access to your transcript.

Any risks involved by participating in this research:

The principal investigator and her supervisor do not believe that there is anything in this research that could harm you physically, psychologically or in any other forms. Since some of the interview questions may seem sensitive or personal, and those questions may upset you, prior to the interview, the principal investigator will give you an information sheet with a list of free counseling services and immigrant settlement organizations in the community.

Benefits of participating in this research:

There may not be any direct benefits to you from participating. You will potentially benefit by having an opportunity to reflect on your experiences and share your stories. Your contribution to the research will help raise awareness about the challenges and settlement experiences of skilled Japanese immigrants. The results or interpretations from this research, will also benefit the wider community and the state of knowledge related to Japanese immigrants in Vancouver.

Compensation:

As a token of appreciation for participating in the interview research, participants will receive $10 gift card to Tim Hortons or Starbucks at the end of the interview.

Measures of Confidentiality:

Your confidentiality will be respected during all research process, including the data gathering process, transcription, data analysis, and destruction and dissemination of the data. Any information that identifies your identity will be kept private and confidential. Information that may disclose your identity will not be released without your consent, unless required by law. The principal investigator in this research will be the only one who have access to the research and the contact information provided by the research participants. The consent forms and documents with the contact information of the

participants, which links your legal name and your pseudonym will be scanned and digitalized, and all the other research data including the transcription of the interview will be digitalized and securely stored on SFU Vault during and after the research. Once the principal investigator leaves Simon Fraser University, stored data on SFU Vault will be stripped of any information that could identify participants (e.g., names, email address) to ensure confidentiality and will be transferred to SFU RADAR to be preserved for future use in open access initiatives.

There are limitations to the confidentiality of the participants in this research. The limitations include when the participant has been referred to the research by someone they know or may have referred someone themselves. In this case, they may be aware of each other's participation. As well, if the participants invite the principal investigator to join them in an activity, the principal investigator may need to disclose her identity and information about the research to those around her, potentially revealing the participant's involvement in the research. Also, if the principal investigator is requested to reveal information by subpoena, the principal investigator may reveal your identity and other information you disclose to the principal investigator during the course of this research to the authorities.

Research Results and future use of the participant data:
The principal investigator of this research will include all the data generated through the research in the dissertation. At the present moment, there is no foreseeable need to use the collected data beyond the conclusion of this MA research project. There is a possibility that the data gathered in this research may be used for journal articles, conference presentations, and other educational purposes.

Who to contact if you have questions or complaints:
If you would like additional information or have any concerns about this research, please feel free to contact Momoka Yamagata, the principal investigator at any time.

You can also contact my senior supervisor, Dr. Wendy Chan, Professor of Sociology at Simon Fraser University, at any time.

If you have any concerns about your rights as a research participant and/or your experiences while participating in this research, you may contact Dr. Jeffrey Toward, Director, Office of Research Ethics at any time.

Please check the appropriate boxes that apply:

☐ I wish for my legal name and identity to remain confidential.

☐ I have received a copy of the information letter and consent form for my own records.

☐ I am willing to have the interview audio recorded.

☐ I am willing to have my words reproduced in the principal investigator's dissertation and used or journal articles, conference presentations, and other educational purposes.

☐ I am willing to allow the principal investigator of this research to keep my contact information so that she can contact me regarding future research projects. If at any time, I would like to opt out of these emails, I can do so by letting her know in writing vie email.

I hereby provide by consent;

Name of Participant (Print): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix D. Interview Guide

Approximate time: 1 - 1.5 hours in person

This sheet includes themes and discussion questions which may be used as a guide to the recorded interview. Before the interview begins, a participant will be given a questionnaire form with several questions to answer. These questions will include:

    a) Gender (optional)
    b) Age
    c) The year of a participant acquired PR
    d) Immigration status at the time of your entry as a PR to Canada
    e) Current occupation in Canada
    f) Past occupations in Japan (all)
    g) Educational attainment in Japan
    h) Credentials from Japan and Canada

The information acquired from this questionnaire will be used to guide the interview.

Background Information:

This section of questions will focus on collecting demographical and background information about the participants.

- Where were you born?
- Which university did you attend in Japan?
  - What did you study in the university?
  - What was your aspiration when you graduated university?
- Where else have you lived?
- Which part of Japan did you move from?
- Where do you live now?
  - Who do you live with?

Immigration to Canada:

This section of questions will focus on collecting information about the reasons participants immigrated to Canada.

- When did you move to Canada?
- How long have been living in Canada?
- Who did you move to Canada with?
- Why did you move to Canada?
  - Did you want to move to Canada?
    - If yes, why? If not, why?
  - Whose decision was it?
    - Why did she/he/you make the decision to immigrate?
    - Where or from who did she/he/you get the information about immigration to Canada?
- What were your expectations when you moved to Canada?

- Are you satisfied with your life in Canada?
  - What do you like about living in Canada?
  - What do you dislike about living in Canada?
- What are the challenges that you experienced since moving to Canada?
- How much having a great job important to you in Canada? Was having a great job important factor in your life in Japan?
- Looking back at your journey from Japan to Canada, would you do anything differently?
- What does 'meaningful settlement' mean to you?

Previous Employment in Japan

This section of questions will focus on collecting information about participants' employment situation and professional experiences in Japan and abroad. Various meanings and professional identities attached to working will be explored.

- What was your role?
- How long did you work there?
- Were you satisfied with the job?
  - Were you satisfied with the salary?
  - Were your family satisfied with your job situation?
- What did it mean for you to work there?
- Why did you change your occupation? (if participants have experiences with working in different companies or industries)
- How did you feel to quit your job to immigrate to Canada?
- What did job mean to you when you were living in Japan?

Current Employment situation in Canada

This section of questions will explore the ways participants' have overcame or are overcoming employment hardships using various sources such as social relationships and settlement organizations. Their satisfaction with their current occupation in Canada will also be explored.

- Before moving to Canada, did you have any plans to work?
  - If yes, how were you going to get a job? Which job were you planning to do?
- When you first arrived in Canada, what was the first thing that you did to get a job?
  - What were the difficulties then?
  - Was there anything unexpected about job hunting in Canada?
- What did you do to get a job?
- Who helped you the most in the process of job hunting?
- Did you seek help at any immigrant settlement organization?
- How did you get your current occupation?
- What is your role as a (insert participants' occupation)?
- Are you satisfied with the job?

- o Do you consider this job as something that you enjoy doing? Or is it something that you are doing until you find better opportunities?
- o Are you satisfied with the salary?
    - ▪ Did your living standard change compared to when you and your family lived in Japan?
    - ▪ Are your family satisfied with your employment situation? Is the salary enough for your family to live?
- Do you feel pressured by your family to improve your employment situation?
    - o If so, in what ways?
- Do you feel that you are making use of your professional experiences and knowledge in your current occupation? Or do you feel that those experiences and knowledge are being wasted?
- Do you feel that your foreign credentials and experiences are being devalued? How does this situation make you feel as an immigrant?
- Would you consider moving back to Japan if this situation continues?

Support from a Japanese community in Vancouver

This section of questions will focus on collecting information about participants'

involvement with a Japanese community in Vancouver. The significance of social

relationships within a Japanese community when Japanese skilled immigrants seek

employment opportunities and obtain recruitment information will be explored.

- Do you belong to a Japanese community in Vancouver?
    - o If yes, what are the main activities that people do within the community?
    - o If not, why not?
- What does it mean for you to belong to a Japanese community in Vancouver?
    - o What makes you keep participating in the activities within the community?
    - o Did you make any friends within a Japanese community?
- Do you meet those friends outside of the community?
- Is it easier for you to make friends within Japanese community than outside of the community?
- Do people in a Japanese community help one another?
    - o Can you give some examples of incidences when people help one another? (What do people do for each other?)
- Did you seek help within Japanese communities when you were looking for employment opportunities?
    - o If yes, how did people help you? Was the information helpful?
    - o If not, why not?
- Do Japanese people do business with one another? Is there such thing as Japanese economy in Vancouver?