Positive Compromise among Professional Canadian Immigrants

by

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Abstract

The current study examined retraining and career development experiences of professional Canadian immigrants. Specifically, the current study’s purpose was to determine how positive compromise influences immigrant career development. A qualitative methodology was utilized, and in-depth interviews were conducted and analyzed utilizing a grounded theory approach. Results indicated that participants engaged in various behaviours associated with positive compromise, which facilitated both retraining and career development. Common actions endorsed by participants associated with positive compromise are discussed, as well as outcomes associated with such actions. The discussion details implications of results pertaining to vocational psychology literature, professional practice in counselling, self-help, and in addition, provides suggestions for future researchers.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Throughout the past 25 years, immigration has been widely supported in Canada, as it greatly contributes to economic, social and cultural growth. It is believed that immigrants provide novel ideas, creative potential, promotion of international awareness, and essential ties to the universal economy (Belanger & Malenfant, 2005; Reitz, 2011; Reitz 2012). Due to the fact that immigration has been supported politically and by Canadian residents, migration is now occurring at an accelerated rate (Statistics Canada, 2016; Richmond, 2002). The proportion of immigrants in the Canadian population increased from 15.6% to 19.8% between 1986 and 2006. It is important that attention be paid to immigration, as the success of Canada as a nation can be largely attributed to the benefits it provides (Belanger & Malenfant, 2005; Reitz, 2011; Reitz 2012).

In order to better understand Canadian immigration, it is imperative that one has a working knowledge of the Canadian immigration policy. This policy provides guidelines for the selection of immigrants for permanent residency and has traditionally been guided by three objectives: to develop a strong economy, to reunite families, and to fulfill Canada’s humanitarian tradition (Government of Canada [GOC], 2011a). Throughout the past 25 years, 67% of Canadian immigrants have gained citizenship through the economic category, which is also known as the Skilled Worker Program (Statistics Canada 2016; Statistics Canada, 2014). When applying for permanent residency under the Skilled Worker Program, potential immigrants’ skills are evaluated based on a point system. Six categories are evaluated, and individuals are allotted points in each category: education (university graduates gain the highest number of
points), official languages (ability to write, read, listen and speak both national languages in Canada—i.e., English and/or French), age (ages 21-29 receive highest number of points), work experience (five or more years in one field secures maximum number of points), potential Canadian employment (pre-arranged position in Canada ensures greatest number of points) and adaptability (ability of the potential immigrant and his/her family to settle and live comfortably in Canada based on employment and education of spouse or dependents) (CIC, 2007). In other words, the large majority of Canadian immigrants have been selected because they are expected to succeed and provide economic growth to Canada’s job market (Statistics Canada 2016; Statistics Canada, 2014). Furthermore, research has indicated that Canada relies on immigrants to contribute to the labour force, and without such support, the Canadian economy would not be as prosperous (Belanger & Malenfant, 2005; Human Resources Development Canada, 2002). As such, professional immigrants have the perception that they will succeed, obtain meaningful work, and improve their quality of life (Grant, 2008). Professional immigrants are those that gain Canadian citizenship due to their skills and qualifications within expert fields, and are therefore likely to contribute to the Canadian economy (Statistics Canada, 2016). Unfortunately, however, despite the fact that the Skilled Worker Program is intended to address labour shortages in Canada, immigrants face many barriers that impede career development (Canada Updates, 2009; Statistics Canada, 2007b).

It is important to take such barriers into account when evaluating immigrant career development, as immigrants’ integration into the work force is largely dependent on these barriers (Heilbrunn, Kushnirovich & Zeltzer-Zubida, 2010). Some barriers that professional immigrants face include lack of recognition of foreign credentials, requiring Canadian experience (Sinacore et al., 2009), competition (Sinacore et al., 2009; Esses, Dovidio, Jackson &
Armstrong, 2001), lack of social networks, differences in work-related mentality (Birjandian, 2004), language barriers (Hakak et al. 2010; Sinacore et al., 2009; Evans & Kelly, 1991), and unfamiliarity with employment information sources (Birjandian, 2004) and prejudice (Heath & Cheung, 2007). As a result of these barriers, many immigrants face issues of underemployment and unemployment. For example, research has demonstrated that only 42% of educated immigrants secured jobs within their field of expertise during the first two years of living in Canada, and 54% of immigrants were still looking for work between two and four years after arrival (Statistics Canada, 2007b). In addition, research has shown that of those who are able to find work, 52% worked in a job that required only a high school education. This is almost double the amount of Canadian born individuals who worked in such jobs (Statistics Canada, 2009; Li, Gervais, & Duval, 2006). Similarly, the 2009 Canadian census indicated that 42% of Canadian immigrants worked in jobs that they were overqualified for, as they had more education than required for the position. In contrast, only 12% of university educated Canadian born males and 13% of Canadian born university educated females reported working in jobs of this nature (Galarneau & Morissette 2004). Such research illustrates the level of difficulty professional immigrants endure when seeking employment in Canada.

As a consequence of facing many career related barriers, immigrants may experience various negative side effects. A decline in physical and/or mental health has been most notable in the research. Mental health issues such as stress, anxiety, depression, unhappiness, worry, irritation, tension and frustration have all been associated with immigrant under/unemployment (Aroian & Norris, 2003; Dean & Wilson, 2009; Yakushko et al., 2008). In addition to mental health issues, immigrants may also experience a decline in physical health. Researchers have demonstrated that the decline in physical health is closely linked to mental health issues. For
example pain, strain, as well as increased blood pressure and weight loss are all physical health issues immigrants reported as a result of stress (Agudelo-Suarez et al., 2009; Dean & Wilson, 2009).

When faced with stressors, individuals often utilize coping techniques to mitigate difficulties associated with stressors. It has been documented that individuals utilize various techniques such as seeking social support (Lazarus 1984; Carver & Conner-Smith, 2010), religious coping (Sanchez, et al., 2012) and making positive meaning from stressors (Tennen et al., 2007) in order to counteract negative impacts. Within the context of professional immigrants, researchers have indicated that coping techniques serve to mitigate difficulties with occupational challenges. One coping method utilized by professional immigrants that has been documented within the research is retraining for the same or different occupation at the college or university level. Research has indicated that within six months, 10% of immigrants enroll in retraining, within 2 years, 33% engage in retraining and, within 4 years 44% participate in retraining (Ainsef et al, 2017).

Rationale

The purpose of the current research is to investigate how professional immigrant retraining experiences impact career development. It is important to study and understand this unique career construction experience because retraining utilized as a coping mechanism and strategy pertaining to the integral immigrants’ life-career transition experiences in the new host country. Retraining as a pathway to access a more optimal worklife is intended to facilitate vocational well-being that is of vital importance to the overall wellness of new professional immigrants. When immigrating to a new country, employment is essential to well-being, as it
provides a means of financial survival and eases the transition process. Employment also helps individuals make roots in the new country, as it facilitates the process of gaining social contacts, making friends, and learning more about the new culture and language. In other words, many immigrants depend on career to survive in their new host country and to facilitate a smooth and successful migration (Yakushko et al., 2008; Yakushko, 2006). Therefore, by identifying a mechanism (e.g., retraining) that can positively facilitate the process of obtaining a meaningful career, researchers may be able to (a) pinpoint a helpful method in which immigrants can further their career development, (b) contribute to the methods in which career-counsellors can aid immigrants’ career development and, (c) build and expand new knowledge that will inform the literature and practice for various stakeholders, promoting positive changes that bring about benefit to the general Canadian society, (i.e., a society depends heavily on attracting and utilizing human resources via immigration for its economic and social development). Given its importance, as illustrated, the current research on new professional immigrants’ career coping and construction experiences within a retraining context presents solid merit for investigation.

To achieve the research purpose and carry out the necessary research tasks, this study is organized according to the following chapters. Chapter 2 will provide a working knowledge of the Canadian immigration system, the barriers new immigrants face (e.g., discrimination, acculturation). Additionally, this chapter reviews theories of career compromise that relate to professional immigrants and career development. Lastly, this chapter presents the research questions of the current study. Chapter 3 provides a rationale for utilizing a qualitative design, as well as details of the methodology. Chapter 4 reviews the emerging themes and results that transpired from the experiences of new and professional immigrants. Lastly, Chapter 5 presents theoretical and practical implications of the findings, indicates how such findings relate to the
broader scope of research within professional immigrants’ life-career coping in general, and positive career compromise in particular. In recognizing limitations of the study, this chapter proposes possible directions for future research in the same domain.
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The current chapter will provide a literature review of background research in order to facilitate an understanding of the importance of positive compromise and retraining as they relate to immigrant career development. This chapter will review some major career-related barriers immigrants face in Canada, and the impact such barriers have on immigrant psychological and physical well-being. In addition, theories associated with career compromise as well as strategies immigrants use in order to cope with career-compromise and other career related barriers will be reviewed. In acknowledging retraining as part of career developmental tasks, the emerging theoretical framework of positive compromise is elaborated, leading to form the foundation of the research questions that guide the current study, and inform the knowledge domain of immigrant life-career development.

Immigrant Career Related Barriers and Difficulties

Lack of Recognition of Foreign Credentials & Work Experience

Many professional immigrants have reported that the primary reason for difficulty finding employment within their field of expertise is due to a lack of credential recognition (Basran & Li, 1998; Sinacore et al., 2009). This difficulty is experienced as provincial laws regulate the licensing processes of occupations, only providing licenses to individuals who meet standardized requirements of working in various occupations. In other words, occupational regulating bodies select individuals who qualify for working in specialized fields only if they meet specific criteria (Hall & Sadouzai, 2010). There are two main reasons regulating bodies
indicate that regulating occupations is necessary: (a) some professions require knowledge of the surrounding area (i.e., provincial or national), and (b) regulation of occupations ensures health and safety of Canadian residents via specific standards of competency. The number of Canadian immigrants whose credentials are unrecognized is unknown; however one study indicated that in Manitoba, 52% of immigrants that held a qualification associated with a regulated profession from outside of Canada were not recognized for this accreditation (Manitoba Culture, Heritage, and Citizenship, 1997). In addition, in another study surveying Canadian immigrants, 79% reported that their foreign credentials were not recognized. As a result, only 21% of immigrants in this study reported working in their field of expertise (Basran & Li, 1998). Additionally, according to Statistics Canada (2010), only 24% of professional immigrants are working within their field of expertise due to a lack of credential recognition. Moreover, research has indicated that only 28% of immigrants with foreign credentials received recognition for such credentials within four years of migration As such, despite qualification and much experience, professional immigrants are not eligible to work in their fields of expertise. Immigrants do have the opportunity to obtain licensure in Canada with credentials from their host country; however, this process is often arduous and expensive (Chen, 2008). Immigrants must provide proof of education, training and working experience in order to gain recognition of credentials. This process can be excessively difficult, as regulatory bodies require specific details surrounding education, training and work experience, which are often not documented as such bodies require. In addition, some records may be entirely unavailable, as they are often only kept for certain periods of time, and some immigrants request documentation many years post completion (Chen, 2008; Novak & Chen, 2013). Therefore, despite having qualifications and experience from their
host country, many immigrants are not eligible to work in their field of expertise in Canada (Boyd & Schellenberg, 2007).

Not only do regulatory bodies require certain credentials to be met, but Canadian employers often seek employees with Canadian work experience, creating even more difficulty for professional immigrants to obtain work in their fields of expertise. Despite immigrants having much work experience outside of Canada in expert fields, research has indicated that employers perceive this experience as inadequate compared to Canadian working experience. Canadian employers associate immigrant education, work experience and credentials with “bias, distrust and skepticism” (Chen, 2008, p. 21). Sinacore et al., (2009) suggested that immigrants are in a “double bind”, as they cannot gain employment due to a lack of experience and they cannot gain experience due to a lack of ability to gain employment. As such, immigrants are very negatively impacted as they face underemployment and unemployment as a result of this issue. In addition, this lack of utilization of immigrant expertise and knowledge decreases Canada’s potential to prosper economically.

**Acculturation & Integration Challenges**

Acculturation can be defined as “the adaptation process of newcomers to the sociocultural and psychological characteristics of the host society” (Berry, 2003, p.44). It is believed that one has become accustom to a new culture upon incorporation of linguistic, sociocultural and psychological norms of the new host country (Olmedo, 1979; Searle & Ward, 1990). Research has indicated that both non-professional and professional immigrants endure the difficult process of acculturation, and that competency to act in congruence with a country’s cultural norms is associated with occupational success (Flores et al., 2006; Flores & Heppner, 2002). Research has
also indicated that immigrants who are unaware of cultural norms face another barrier, as employers may perceive unfamiliarity with norms as a form of incompetency (Chen, 2008). Three difficulties, language and accent, lack of exposure to the Canadian labour market and discrimination all impact career development of professional immigrants, and will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

**Language and Accent.** Difficulties with reading, writing, and oral communication, which are known as the major language competencies, have been cited as one of the predominant reasons professional immigrants experience difficulty securing employment in Canada. (Statistics Canada, 2007; Sinacore et al., 2009; Ishiyama & Westwood, 1992; Westwood & Ishiyama, 1991). Immigrants are informed during the immigration process that proficiency within these skills, in either English or French, is sufficient to secure employment within the country. Unfortunately, however, upon searching for an occupation, many discover that this is not the case. Despite passing English and/or French speaking, reading, and writing proficiency examinations during the immigration process, higher levels of skill in these areas are required to pass competency examinations of many regulated Canadian professions (Girard & Bauder, 2005). Furthermore, many professional occupations require additional higher level English and/or French communication skills, including persuasion, negotiation, conflict resolution, presentation abilities, document and/or report writing, knowledge of occupational-specific terminology and e-mail communication (Chen, 2008). Presenting information that is grammatically incorrect or that sounds “awkward”, either within oral or written form, is perceived negatively and unprofessional (Hakak et al., 2010; Lee & Westwood, 1996). In fact, oral communication skills were ranked as the most important factor employers seek when hiring employees (Atkins & Kent, 1989). As such, if immigrants do not possess well-developed English
and or French communication skills, they are much less likely to be seen as competent by potential employers. Therefore, immigrants have difficulty obtaining employment in their area of expertise, not due to a lack of skill, but as a result of communication barriers. However, the process of improving these skills is time consuming and costly, impeding the process of career development for skilled immigrants (Sinacore & Lerner, 2013). As such, they are much more likely to face underemployment or unemployment (Hakak et al., 2010; Sinacore & Lerner, 2013).

**Lack of Exposure to the Canadian Culture.** Not only do immigrants have to face difficulties with language barriers, but also are unaware of common practices within Canadian culture and the Canadian labour market. Researchers have suggested that because professional immigrants come from a different culture, their understanding of ‘rules’ with regard to appropriate behaviour within the job market is very different than ‘rules’ within the Canadian job market (Casey, 2001; Yakushko et al., 2008). For example, research has indicated that professional immigrants tend to be unprepared for rigid regulations and obscure practices within business (Ley, 1999, 2002, 2003). In addition, professional immigrants often report being unfamiliar with the norms and conventions of the hiring process, and are unable to evaluate employers’ expectations (Bourdieu, 1984; Hakak et al., 2010). For example, within Western culture, it may be preferable to ask pose questions to superiors in an inquisitive manner, in order to avoid being perceived as incompetent. In order to understand the nature of this preference, one must have an understanding of what types of questions in Western culture may are likely to be perceived as inquisitive. An understanding of this style of communication may not be known or understood by professional immigrants. In addition, these advanced skills require a high level of competency within the communication domain, which some professional immigrants may lack. Furthermore,
immigrants have reported unfamiliarity with non-verbal communication styles, such as eye contact, body language, hand gestures, personal space turn taking and posture (Chen, 2008). Unfortunately, lack of knowledge within all of these domains may put immigrants at risk for acting in a manner that is not valued in Western culture, despite having similar levels of skill as Canadian employees. In fact, in a study conducted by Bauder (2005), one Canadian-born employer expressed that many skilled trades immigrants are more knowledgeable in the field than he is; however, he expressed that he has an advantage because he understands the Canadian ‘system’. In other words, despite equal or better skills within various fields, professional immigrants are still disadvantaged because they lack the ability to understand the Canadian employment system. As a result of this difficulty, immigrants become less competitive within their expert fields in comparison to Canadian individuals who understand the rules of the job market. As a result, employers may perceive professional immigrants to be incompetent to perform well within the occupation at hand. In turn, immigrants are at a higher risk for underemployment and unemployment (Bourdieu, 1998; Yakushko et al., 2008).

**Discrimination.** Discrimination within employment can be defined as, “negative employment decisions based on status such as birthplace or origin, rather than based solely on credentials and qualifications directly related to the potential productivity of the employee” (Reitz, 2001, p.4). Within employment, one of the major areas immigrants struggle with is the hiring process, which is greatly affected by discrimination. Research has indicated that while hiring criteria are not necessarily discriminatory, they nonetheless exclude some minority groups by virtue of the nature of their criteria. In turn, the belief that immigrants are not capable of successfully engaging in the work occurs. For example, research has indicated that a large majority of immigrants perceive that they are discriminated against due to their English language skills and
skin colour (Basran & Li, 1998; Reitz, 2001). Such immigrants indicated that this type of discrimination was a factor that influenced employers’ unfavorable evaluations of their foreign credentials (Esses et al., 2006; Purkiss et al., 2006). In addition, research has indicated that employers may not hire immigrants for fear of creating resentment among existing employees, as they may perceive immigrants as a threat. As such, Lee and Westwood (1996), suggest that employers may avoid hiring immigrants instead of risking alienating existing employees. Overall, researchers concluded that discrimination is a predominant reason professional immigrants are not hired, and as a result experience underemployment and unemployment (Basran & Li, 1998; Hakak et al., 2010; Reitz, 2001).

Not only does discrimination impact the hiring process for immigrants, but it also impacts immigrants’ opportunity to advance within the workplace (Chen, 2008; Purkiss et al., 2006). To elaborate, managers, supervisors and others in positions of authority may be hesitant to promote immigrants for various reasons. Previous studies have indicated that if employers perceive that immigrant employees are not respected among other employees within the workplace, they are less likely to promote such immigrants (Purkiss et al., 2006). In addition, research has indicated that interactions between non-immigrant employees and immigrant employees may occur less frequently than interactions of non-immigrant employees amongst themselves. It is suggested that non-immigrants may avoid interactions with immigrants, as they perceive these interactions to be superficial and burdensome. As a result of interacting less frequently with others in the workplace, especially those in supervisory positions, immigrants are less likely to become promoted (Lee & Westwood, 1996).
Underemployment, Unemployment & Career Compromise

Although Canada selects skilled immigrants with the intention to facilitate economic growth, many professional immigrants find that they must compromise, and work in jobs where their knowledge, skill and experience are not needed (Wald & Fang, 2008). In fact, 46% of Canadian immigrants hold a bachelor’s degree or a higher-level education (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2002; Statistics Canada 2010), are nearly twice as likely to hold a bachelor’s or master’s degree, and approximately four times more likely to hold a doctoral degree than Canadian born individuals (Zhao, Drew & Murray, 2000). Despite these high levels of qualification, many immigrants experience difficulty succeeding in the Canadian job market, and much research has been done to illustrate this circumstance. The following paragraph will provide examples of the difficulty professional immigrants have in the Canadian job market.

In a survey of approximately 12,000 professional immigrants, only 40% of those able to speak English or French reported being employed in their specialized fields (Statistics Canada, 2010). This research also indicated that in Canada 63% of American professional immigrants, and 68% of Australian professional immigrants were able to find jobs within their fields of expertise. In contrast, however, only 33% of Asian or Middle Eastern professional immigrants, and only 36% of Southern or Central American professional immigrants reported being employed within their expert fields. Research has also demonstrated that refugees entering Canada with professional experience have a 25% chance of obtaining a similar career to that which they held in their native born countries (Krahn et al., 2000). In addition, about 20% of visible-minority professional immigrants held professional positions in Canada (Basran & Zong, 1998; Statistics Canada, 2009), and 25% of recent Canadian immigrants who held a university degree worked in sales or service positions, whereas only 12% of Canadian born university
educated individuals worked in such positions (Badets & Howatson-Leo, 1999). Additionally, Gilmore (2009) indicated that only one third of recently-immigrated university-educated immigrants worked in an occupation that required such education. Lastly, Zietsma (2010) found that of those who were not working in their expert fields, 77% of professional immigrants held employment in a position that did not require a university degree. In comparison, only 57% of Canadian born individuals in such a circumstance worked in positions that did not require a university degree. As such, it is clear that professional immigrants face many difficulties with underemployment and unemployment in their fields of expertise.

Not only do professional immigrants face issues of underemployment, but are also compensated poorly in comparison to Canadian born individuals. For example, Reitz (2001) found that African, Caribbean, Chinese, South Asian and Filipino professional immigrants earned between 15 and 25% less than Canadian born individuals. In addition, this study suggested that in total, per year, immigrants lost 2.4 billion dollars for a lack of utilization of skill, and 12.6 billion dollars for a lack of equality of payment. This study also concluded that overall, underemployment of professional immigrants is wasteful, and new professional immigrants are more underemployed and unemployed than in the past. As a result of this underutilization of skill, the Canadian economy cannot prosper to it’s full potential, and professional immigrants suffer (Reitz, 2001).

**Physical & Mental Health Outcomes**

A plethora of research has examined the relationship between employment and health, and in general, employment has been associated with positive health outcomes. For example, employment is associated with higher levels of physical well-being, happiness, self-confidence and overall satisfaction (Lavis et al., 2001; Beland & Stoddart, 2002; Frankish et al., 2007).
Studies have indicated individuals employed on a full-time basis are less likely to experience declines in physical health and mobile functioning. Employment has also been linked to an increase in social status and social support, which in turn positively influences one’s self-esteem, happiness, and overall level of life satisfaction (Ross & Mirowsky, 1995; Frankish et al., 2007). On the other hand, unemployment has been linked to poor health outcomes such as depression, distress, anxiety, cardiovascular disease, and premature mortality (Kraut & Walld, 2003; O’Campo et al., 2004). Moreover, stress associated with unemployment is related to an increased likelihood of being admitted to a hospital for mental health reasons, and an increased risk of attempted suicide (Hamilton et al., 1993; Kraut & Walld, 2003). These research studies illustrate the strong impact employment has on both physical and mental well-being, and it is important to address how employment, and a lack of, influences professional immigrants’ health and wellness.

One study conducted by Dean & Wilson (2009) investigated the impact of under/unemployment on professional immigrants’ physical and mental health. Results indicated that mental health difficulties were most frequently reported, such as increased stress, anxiety, depression, unhappiness, worry, tension, and frustration. Mental health issues were associated with a lack of ability to secure employment within expert fields. In addition, three mechanisms by which underemployment influenced mental well-being were identified: a decline of income, a loss of competency of employment skills, and a loss of social status. Those who reported a loss of social status often also expressed feeling a loss of self-identity, as their professional status was lost. Such immigrants reported feeling unhappy, frustrated, anxious and depressed. As a result of a decrease in mental wellness, many participants also reported an increase of negative patterns within home-lives as well, such as increased shouting, and decreases in children’s moods (Dean
Research has also demonstrated that professional immigrants experience a decline in physical health as a result of under/unemployment as well. Immigrants have reported that this decline is due to both mental health stressors and strenuous working conditions associated with under/unemployment (Dean & Wilson, 2009; Jafari et al., 2010). Stress, in particular, was identified as a key mental health difficulty that impacted physical health conditions. Physical pain, strain, increased blood pressure, and weight loss were all identified as physical health difficulties that ensued as a result of stress. Working conditions that negatively impacted physical health were those that were experienced in survival jobs. Manual labour (e.g., heavy lifting), and other physically demanding jobs (e.g., standing for long periods of time, repetitive movements) were those that were associated with negative physical health impacts, such as muscle strain and weight loss (Dean & Wilson, 2009).

**Professional Immigrants and Career Compromise**

*General research on career compromise*

Career compromise can be defined as “the readiness to consider an occupational alternative despite it’s inferiority in certain aspects relative to another alternative” (Gati, 2005, p. 417). Within the process of career compromise, individuals assess their abilities, interests and opportunities, and accept or reject certain career paths as certain options for themselves (Gottfredson, 2005). However, individuals often have to compromise, as the ability to obtain one’s ideal career is often not possible. Therefore, many individuals obtain work within fields that do not meet their highest expectations (Gati, 1993). Social cognitive theory (SCT) is one theory that has alluded to the processes of compromise within its broader context. In addition,
Gati (1993) proposed that individuals make career choices based on a specific decision-theoretic framework. In order to provide a theoretical background of career compromise, SCT, as well as Gati’s (1993) framework will be discussed as they relate to career compromise. In addition, research associated with outcomes of career compromise will be reviewed.

Social cognitive career theory poses that career development centers around the interaction between one’s environment and personal factors (Lent, Brown, & Hacket, 2000; Yakushko et al., 2008). It suggests that self-efficacy is a key determinant of obtaining a career in a field of interest, as it is associated with exuding effort toward a particular goal (i.e., career of interest) and developing expectations for career goals (i.e., outcome expectations). Overall, by believing in oneself through a sense of self-efficacy, one is more likely to exert effort toward their career of choice and become successful in obtaining such a career (Lent, Brown & Hacket, 1996). This theory has alluded to career compromise, as it suggested that the migration barriers experienced by professional immigrants have a negative impact on immigrant self-efficacy and outcome expectations. Given this negative impact, immigrants must compromise career goals (Yakushko et al., 2008).

Gati (1993) proposed a framework of career compromise as well, as he suggested that everyone has an ideal image of a career, with optimal characteristics (e.g., hours, location, educational level etc). However, he believed that this ideal image does not exist in the real world of work, as no career can meet every criteria desired. As such, individuals must compromise, and he proposed a decision-theoretic framework that conceptualized this compromise categorically among three facets: (a) compromise between alternatives, (b) compromise in terms of the relative importance of the attributes or aspects relevant to the comparison between alternatives, and (c) compromise regarding preferences within each of the attributes or aspects. Within the first facet,
compromise between alternatives, one must search for an alternative that is most closely related to the ideal career image, and he suggested this alternative be named the optimal occupational alternative. This career, however, is often unattainable due to either internal (e.g., lack of education) or external (e.g., location) circumstances. In order to obtain a career most closely related to the optimal alternative, Gati (1993) suggested that individuals compare and evaluate the characteristics of different careers (e.g., location, expertise needed, salary, etc). For example, ‘career A’ might offer a high salary and require longer hours, while ‘career B’ might offer a lower salary and require fewer hours. During this stage, the individual evaluates which characteristics (e.g., salary and number of hours) are most desirable. He posed that compromise occurs when individuals choose which aspects of careers are more or less important in comparison to one another. Within this example, if an individual were to choose ‘career B’, he or she would be demonstrating career compromise, as they chose to work fewer hours, while giving up a higher salary. The final category, compromise regarding preferences within each of the attributes or aspect, is characterized by individuals’ willingness to compromise within various career characteristics. Salary, for example, is a characteristic that may be compromised by considering careers with a variety of salaries, as opposed to those with only high salaries. In this way, the individual is compromising within the characteristic of salary by considering occupations with lower salaries as well.

As previously mentioned, research has focused on outcomes associated with career compromise within the young adult population. Findings have indicated that during transition periods (e.g., from student life to adulthood), career compromising is common. However, it is often associated with distress, fear, shame, agitation and hostility, as many individuals have negative perceptions of employability during these times (Creed & Hughes, 2013; Tsaousides &
In congruence with this research, Mier et al. (1995) found that discrepancies between work and self-perception are associated with frustration and low self-esteem. In addition, research has indicated that when individuals compromise by working in undesirable careers, job satisfaction levels decrease substantially. Career seeking strategies (e.g., developing interpersonal skills, building a network of contacts, presenting oneself strategically with regard to dress and attitude), however, have been linked to experiencing lower levels of distress and increasing confidence during career compromising periods (Creed & Hughes, 2013). Despite the fact that research has focused on outcomes associated with career compromise within the young adult population, little research has attended to career compromise among the professional immigrant population. It is important to conduct such research within the professional immigrant population in order to guide career counsellors with professional immigrant clients. For example, it may be important for career counsellors to highlight and normalize that emotional difficulties, such as distress and frustration, are common when compromising and searching for a career. In addition, given that emotional difficulties are likely to ensue within the career compromising process, career counsellors may want to incorporate methods of coping within the counselling process with such individuals. Although aspects of compromise have been included within various career theories and outcomes associated with compromise have been examined, Gottfredson’s theory of circumscription and compromise is the only theory to date that has been tailored to career compromise specifically.

**Gottfredson’s Theory of Career Circumscription and Compromise**

Gottfredson’s theory of circumscription and compromise is a career development theory that conceptualizes the process of developing occupational aspirations (Gottfredson, 1981). Gottfredson’s theory highlights three integral facets that influence career compromise: gender-
job congruence, job prestige, and person-job interest congruence. She suggested that individuals
develop career aspirations that are congruent with self-image, and can be characterized by
beliefs people hold about themselves, including personality, interests, gender, and perceived
place in society. However, she suggested that individuals are not always able to obtain work
within their ideal occupation. As such, individuals must compromise. She proposed that when
compromising, individuals are most concerned with maintaining gender-job congruence than
job-prestige and job-interest congruence. As such, she suggested that when compromising,
people are most likely first give up interests, followed by prestige, and are least likely to
relinquish gender-job congruence (Gottfredson, 2005).

Gottfredson also proposed that prior to compromising, individuals go through four stages
of developing career aspirations that shape the compromising process. She suggested that these
stages are influenced by various principles, such as self-concept, circumscription, compromise
and accessibility (Gottfredson, 2005).

Gottfredson’s first stage of career development titled Orientation to Size and Power, is
categorized by children’s realization that they will eventually become adults, and have the
ability to hold an occupation. At this stage, children between the ages of 3 and 5 relinquish
notions of having “fantasy-like” careers, such as fictional characters (e.g., superhero), and are
able to picture themselves as adults. In addition, children at this stage begin to develop
perceptions of self-concept (Gottfredson, 1981).

The second stage of Gottfredson’s theory, Orientation to Sex Roles, occurs between the
ages of 6 and 8. In this stage, children begin to understand the association between gender
stereotypes and career choice, and integrate biological sex into their self-concept. In addition,
they categorize themselves into male or female occupational roles, and eliminate career alternatives that are not in line with their own gender stereotypes. This is an example of the process of circumscription, which is the process of eliminating career choices that are not in line with the self-concept (Gottfredson, 1981).

Stage three, *Orientation to Social Valuation*, occurs between the ages of 9 and 13. Gottfredson suggested that during this stage, children and adolescents gain the ability to think abstractly, and understand the concept of societal values and prestige associated with careers. In addition, individuals at this stage become aware of various levels of socioeconomic-status (SES), and integrate SES status into their self-concept. As such, individuals begin to circumscribe further with regard to their careers, and identify careers associated with their level of SES. In addition, the association between education and higher levels of prestige and salary is recognized. Therefore, individuals at this stage eliminate career options based on perception of intellectual ability as well. Gottfredson suggested that individuals eliminate the largest number of career possibilities during this stage, which may prevent exploration of interests and abilities within certain careers (Gottfredson, 2005).

The final stage, *Orientation to Internal Unique Self*, occurs when individuals are 14 years and older, and begin to integrate motivation, values and abilities into their career aspirations. At this stage, adolescents are able to describe their idealistic and realistic career aspirations, and understand the accessibility of occupations. She expressed that individuals during this stage also develop what she termed a *social space*, which is a cognitive schema involving careers that are congruent with the self-concept. Gottfredson suggested that compromise frequently occurs during this stage, as people eliminate preferred and ideal occupational alternatives for those that are more accessible and realistic. She suggested that compromise is likely to occur for various
reasons, such as limited knowledge about how to acquire certain careers, insufficient time to search for appropriate career alternatives, barriers to obtain various careers, as well as a lack of training and/or education. Overall, adolescents identify their perceived position within the social spectrum of career alternatives within this stage, and carry out actions in congruence with these perceptions for the remainder of their lives (Gottfredson, 2005).

**Modification/ Evidence for Gottfredson’s Theory**

Gottfredson’s theory of circumscription and compromise has been partially supported within research, as studies have provided findings in congruence with her suggestions. For example, research has suggested that individuals do consider gender-job congruence and prestige when developing occupational aspirations (Hannah & Kahn, 1989). In addition, research has provided support for Gottfredson’s suggestion that adolescents progress through four stages of developing career aspirations (Helwig, 2001). The notion of career compromise and circumscription has also been supported within research, as studies have provided evidence that college students engage in both processes when developing occupational aspirations (Blanchard & Lichtenberg, 2003).

Despite the fact that some research has supported Gottfredson’s theory, some has suggested that the pattern of importance with regard to the three facets (i.e., gender-job congruence, prestige and interest-job congruence) is not in line with Gottfredson’s proposal. For example, Gottfredson proposed that individuals are most likely to prioritize gender-job congruence, followed by prestige, and then job-interest congruence (Gottfredson, 2005). However, research has indicated that individuals are most likely to value interests, followed by prestige, and are least concerned with gender-job congruence (Hesketh, Elmsile & Kalor, 1990).
Empirical evidence has been somewhat conflicting in this regard, however, as research has also shown that individuals prioritize prestige before job-interest congruence (Holt, 1989). In addition, research has indicated that prestige and gender congruence are only of moderate importance within the process of developing career aspirations (Leung, 1993; Leung & Plake, 1990).

Given that various research conflicted with her original proposition, Gottfredson revised her theory. Again, she argued that when compromising, individuals are least likely to relinquish aspects most congruent with the self-concept. However, her revision suggested that importance of job-sex type, job prestige and job-interest congruence were dependent on the level of compromise being made. She suggested that greatest levels of compromise lead individuals to prioritize gender-job congruency, instead of interests or prestige. She suggested that gender congruency is most important when making such compromises, as such occupations are least likely to meet the standards of appropriate gender-congruency. Within moderate compromises, she suggested that prestige is likely to be prioritized in comparison to gender-congruency and interests, as occupations associated with such compromise levels have likely met gender-congruency expectations. When individuals must make minimal compromises, Gottfredson believed that gender-congruency and prestige have been met, and therefore, individuals are most likely to prioritize interests.

Again, research has been conducted to determine whether there is empirical evidence for Gottfredson’s revised theory. Mixed results regarding the validity of this theory have been found, as evidence suggests that prioritization type (i.e., interests, prestige, gender-congruency) differs based on the level of compromise one is making. For example, one study conducted by Blanchard and Lichtenberg (2003) indicated that those who compromised least were more likely
to prioritize interests in comparison to gender-congruence and prestige, which is in line with Gottfredson’s revised theory. However, this study suggested that moderate compromise was associated with prioritizing prestige over interests, with no difference between prioritization of prestige and gender-congruence. Larger compromises were associated with prioritizing sex types over interest, with no difference between prioritization of gender-congruence and prestige. Overall, this study concluded that interests are prioritized to the greatest degree when compromising minimally. However, when moderate large compromises are made, individuals prioritize prestige and gender-congruence equally.

A more recent study conducted by Wee (2014) also tested the validity of Gottfredson’s revised theory. In partial support with Gottfredson’s revised theory, individuals were likely to prioritize sex-type when making large compromises. However, these results were largely due to women’s choices, as both men and women were more likely to choose more feminine occupations when making larger compromises. As such, results suggested that women are more inclined to protect gender identity when making large career compromises. However, prestige was not prioritized when moderate levels of compromise were being made, which is not in line with Gottfredson’s predictions. When making minimal compromises, interest was prioritized, again, is in line with Gottfredson’s revised theory. Taken together, this study’s results suggest that both gender-congruence and prestige equally influence occupational choice and compromise. Evidence also indicated that the importance of different types of prioritization (i.e., interest, gender-congruence and interest) varied when different levels of compromise were being made, and that individuals prioritize various elements associated with career differently. Overall, such results provide partial support for Gottfredson’s revised theory (Wee, 2014).

Despite the fact that Gottfredson’s theory has only been partially supported to date, it is...
still the most widely used and respected theory of career compromise that exists today. However, more research needs to be conducted on this theory in order to determine whether all aspects of it can be used practically within real life settings, such as career counselling. In addition, given that individuals may prioritize various elements of career differently when compromising, it may be useful to research whether other individual factors influence career compromise. Individual differences, such as one’s willingness to compromise, are also important aspects of occupational compromise that need to be researched (Wee, 2014). Given the fact that Gottfredson’s theory has only been partially supported, and that research suggests individual factors may influence the process of career compromise, a theory of career compromise tailored to individual differences is needed within the literature.

Positive Compromise

As expressed by various career theorists, compromise is often encountered within the process of obtaining a career. This is usually due to the fact that both internal and external barriers prevent individuals from acquiring a career within their ideal state of work. Career theories that incorporate compromise, including Gottfredson’s theory of circumscription and compromise, have insinuated that compromise is solely a process that leads to obtaining a career less ideal than one hoped. However, a new conceptualization of career compromise, entitled positive compromise (Chen, 2004), expands upon such classic theories. According to Chen (2004), individuals are not always able to obtain work within their preferred occupational fields, positive compromise stresses that the act of compromise can be seen as a solution to a problem. Positive compromise suggests that the act of compromise is an imperative coping mechanism that individuals may use when faced with a lack of ability to obtain work within an ideal occupation. In order to facilitate an optimal compromising process and obtain a career most
closely related to one’s ideal state of work, positive compromise encourages a method of career problem solving that highlights proactive human action when compromising. In this way, individuals are encouraged to approach career compromise with a greater sense of control by displaying human agency, open mindedness, and proactive preparation. These three personal qualities are the foundation of the notion of positive compromise, and will be discussed in more detail in the following paragraphs (Chen, 2004).

**Human Agency**

The notion of human agency suggests that “through cognitive self regulation, humans can create visualized futures and act on the present; construct, evaluate and modify alternative courses of action to secure valued outcomes; and override environmental influences” (Bandura, 2006, p. 164). In other words, human agency stresses that individuals can exert control over their external circumstances by acting in congruence with behaviours that are associated with desired outcomes. The notion of human agency was first utilized within Bandura’s (1986, 1997) social cognitive theory (SCT), and was developed through the concept of self-efficacy.

Vocational psychologists suggested that the concept of human agency is closely related to that of self-efficacy, as it is associated with many of the same tenants, such as pro-action, initiative, assertiveness, and persistence. SCT also suggests that beliefs of self-efficacy facilitate one’s ability to exercise human agency (Chen, 2006). Human agency also highlights that in order to achieve desired outcomes, individuals must goal set, plan and carry out action plans, and self-reflect on the efficacy of their actions (Bandura, 2006). In addition, Cochran and Laub (1994) suggested that intention and action are two core features of human agency (Chen, 2006). These authors suggested that when in combination, intention and action allow individuals to obtain greatest vocational aspirations possible, even if they are not the most ideal aspirations. When
seeking an occupation, positive compromise suggests that individuals exert optimal efforts associated with human agency such as action planning and goal setting. In turn, this allows for greater control over environmental circumstances related to the process of career compromise (Chen, 2004). It has also been suggested that human agency is an integral aspect of career development, as those who act in congruence with the notion are more likely to solve career related difficulties (Chen, 2004; Betz & Hackett, 1987). As such, positive compromise highlights the importance of engaging in behaviours associated with human agency, even if the process will not yield obtaining one’s highest level of occupational preference (Chen, 2004).

No research has investigated the concept of human agency as it relates to educational outcomes. However, a plethora of research has assessed the connection between self-efficacy and educational outcomes (Jansen et al., 2015; Zimmerman & Kitsantis, 1999; Hackett & Betz, 1989; Multen, Brown & Lent, 1991; Lent, Brown & Larkin, 1984), and, as mentioned, it has been suggested that the ability to exercise human agency is rooted in self-efficacy beliefs. As such, one may assume that educational outcomes associated with self-efficacy may also be related to outcomes associated with human agency. Research investigating the relationship between self-efficacy and educational outcomes has suggested that there is a positive association between self-efficacy and intrinsic interests (Zimmerman & Kitsantis, 1999), academic persistence and academic performance (Choi, 2005; Jansen et al., 2015; Hackett & Betz, 1989; Multen, Brown & Lent, 1991; Lent, Brown & Larkin, 1984).

Despite the fact that research has not focused on the direct association between human agency and educational outcomes, research has looked at the connection between factors that conceptualize human agency, such as persistence, initiative and assertiveness and educational outcomes. This research has indicated that positive associations exist between these variables
and positive educational outcomes (Bandura, 1997; Multon, Brown & Lent, 1991; Jalali, & Nazari, 2009; Meece et al., 2006). Additional research has indicated that self-regulatory processes associated with human agency, such as goal-setting, self-monitoring, and self evaluation, have been linked to higher academic performance (Zimmerman & Bandura, 1994; Zimmerman & Schunk, 2012). Given that positive associations exist between the characteristics that define human agency and academic performance, it may be assumed that individuals who display human agency will achieve better academic performance as well. Extending on this, it is likely that professional immigrants who display human agency throughout retraining experiences will be more likely to succeed, and therefore, this relationship will be addressed within the current study.

**Open Mindedness**

Positive compromise also highlights the importance of keeping an open mind when searching for a career. Chen (2004) suggested that when convoluted circumstances arise during the career seeking process, flexibility is needed in order to facilitate creativity. Creativity is needed in order to consider various career alternatives that may be suitable, and ultimately, facilitate the career compromising process. Chen (2004) argues that the more flexible one is, the more successful he or she will be within the career compromising process, allowing individuals to obtain the most optimal occupation possible.

Krumboltz, Levin & Mitchell (1999) proposed a theory entitled the Planned Happenstance Theory (PHS), which, like the theory of positive compromise, highlights the importance of maintaining open-minded and optimistic attitudes. In addition, this theory emphasizes the importance of persistence, which is closely linked to human agency, another key
component of the theory of career compromise. This theory proposed that when faced with
career uncertainty, individuals should be encouraged to keep an open mind, ask questions, and
experiment. They argued that this facilitates curiosity and the opportunity to ask questions,
ultimately, allowing individuals to make better-informed career decisions. Additionally, keeping
an open mind allows individuals to create, acknowledge and seize optimal career opportunities.
In turn, individuals will be more likely to pursue occupations that allow for higher levels of
satisfaction. This theory has been supported within the research, as PHS has been associated with
higher perceptions achievement status (Ahn et al., 2015). In addition, research has indicated that
career decision-making was facilitated by factors associated with PHS, including open
mindedness. For example, Kim et al., (2014) indicated that when individuals acted in congruence
with PHS, they were less likely to have negative thoughts associated with their career. Given
such findings, the current researcher deemed it important to investigate the impact of open-
mindedness within the professional immigrant population as it relates to the theory of positive
compromise.

**Proactive Preparation**

Similar to the concept of human agency, proactive preparation encourages individuals to
engage in behaviours such as assessing pros and cons involved in the compromising process,
evaluating risks, and implementing and carrying out a realistic action plan. However, proactive
preparation involves constructing a plan of action with regard to career ahead of time based on
current information about viable career alternatives. Proactive preparation therefore also involves
developing a strategic career vision, which facilitates making plans ahead of time that will
facilitate this vision. Through these processes, it has been suggested that individuals will develop
a greater sense of open mindedness and creativity, allowing for a greater ability to obtain realistic
ideal career goals (Chen, 2006).

Behaviours associated with proactive preparation have been associated with academic success. For example, research has indicated that individuals who proactively seek information about the academic process and proactively make an effort to seek out learning opportunities are more likely to be successful within the academic setting (Zimmerman, 1990; Zimmerman & Schunk, 2012). In addition research has indicated that individuals who engaged in early career exploration and job search were more likely to feel informed when making career related decisions (Kim et al., 2014). Research has also addressed the relationship between behaviours associated with career preparation and career development. Chen (2004) suggests that proactively preparing for the future by creating a vision will allow individuals to formulate realistic action plans when dealing with career compromise. In turn, individuals will be able to compromise in the most meaningful and optimal manners.

Professional Immigrants and Retraining

General Introduction to Retraining

As previously mentioned, the primary reason many professional immigrants experience difficulty finding employment within their field of expertise is due to a lack of credential recognition (Basran & Li, 1998; Downie, 2010; Houle, 2010). As such, many professional immigrants must utilize coping mechanisms in order to facilitate the process of obtaining a career suited to their interests. One coping mechanism, retraining, has been identified as one of the primary methods utilized by immigrants to facilitate career development. Statistics Canada (2005) indicated that 45% of professional immigrants have already pursued retraining within six months of arrival in Canada, and 67% of those who had not yet engaged in retraining plan to do
so. Despite the fact that researchers have examined professional immigrant experiences upon arrival to Canada, there has been little research done to examine how retraining experiences contribute to immigrant career development. It is important to examine the implications of retraining experiences in order to gain knowledge of a helpful mechanism of advancing professional immigrant career development. This way, immigrants will be less likely to experience the negative emotional and physical distress outcomes (e.g., anxiety, stress, weight loss, etc) upon immigration to Canada. In addition, the Canadian economy will benefit, as retraining may facilitate a method of utilizing human capital to a greater degree. As such, the current study will provide some insight into the significance of retraining experiences on the career development of professional immigrants.

**Previous retraining research: Rationale & Outcomes**

Although studies have indicated that retraining programs are one of the most greatly utilized methods of facilitating career development, little research has been done to evaluate the impact of such experiences. In addition, a limited number of studies have examined experiences of professional immigrants throughout retraining experiences. One study conducted by Hongxia, (2009), however, did examine immigrant rationales for engaging in retraining. Immigrants reported that engaging in retraining was due to the desire of appearing more credible to potential employers. In addition, reports of this study indicated that practicum placements within training programs were most helpful to participants, as they reported gaining the most knowledge as a result of direct exposure to working environments. Overall, the author argued that retraining is helpful in facilitating the growth of the Canadian labour force, as an increased number of immigrants are able to obtain careers in desired fields after engaging in retraining. Another
study, conducted by Cohen-Goldner and Eckstein (2008) examined the impact of retraining on earning potential and occupational status. Results indicated that retraining within a specific occupation lead to an increase of wage, as well as an increased chance of gaining employment in the specified field. In addition, research has indicated that employers are significantly more likely to recognize professional immigrants' credentials when accredited by a Canadian licensing body. Moreover, results of this study indicated that immigrants working in expert fields were much more likely to hold a Canadian professional license (George et al., 2005). Lastly, in a study examining re-accreditation among professional immigrants, results indicated that despite many years of experience within their home country, the majority were required to engage in retraining. In addition, results suggested that immigrants perceived the retraining process as one that caused financial strain and threatened the integrity of their professional identities (Beynon, Ilieva & Dichupa, 2004).

**Professional Immigrants and Resilience**

*Overview*

It is inevitable that individuals will experience strenuous hardships throughout their lifetime that may lead to negative physical and/or emotional outcomes. Despite experiencing such difficulties, a small number of people experience major psychological illness in response (American Psychiatric Association, 2000). In order to cope with stressors and avoid psychological illness, humans have acquired adaptive characteristics that have enabled survival these during difficult circumstances. For example, optimism, high levels of self-esteem, and social skills have been identified as characteristics that facilitate coping during difficult experiences (Davydov et al., 2010). Resilience, another mechanism that facilitates coping, has
been researched widely and has been defined as “successful adaptation to life tasks in the face of social disadvantage or highly adverse conditions.” (Garmezy, 1993, p. 25). It has been suggested that those who are resilient are better able to quickly recover from negative emotional states, and are more likely to overcome the stressors of adverse events.

In addition, research has suggested that the central theme of the current study, positive compromise, is closely related to resilience. To elaborate, when experiencing difficult career related transitions, engaging in positive compromise helps individuals become more adaptable to whatever challenges they may face. Open mindedness allows individuals to widen their view in terms of potential career opportunities, which in turn enables greater resilience when facing reality (Chen, 2004). Additionally, Chen (1997) suggested that resilience fosters adaptability to career alternatives, which is necessary for individuals who are facing inevitable changes. Adaptability facilitates one’s ability to maintain a strong sense of human agency and engage in preparation for alternative careers, two central facets of positive compromise. As such, adaptability and resilience may facilitate the career compromising process, as it is closely related to positive compromise. Given this interrelatedness and interaction, it appears important and meaningful to address the relationship between resilience and career compromise within the current study, aiming to examine and better understand how resiliency pertains to the experience of positive compromise that may facilitate the coping and adaptation process of career adjustment and construction of recent and new professional immigrants.

The concept of resiliency was originally developed within both social and health sciences, and Masten (2011) proposed that research on resilience occurred in four waves. The first wave, beginning in the 1970’s, promoted a better understanding of resilience as means of
prevention of psychopathology. Researchers were inspired by the resilience of individuals, particularly children, who coped well despite being exposed to high levels of adversity. Additionally, researchers were intrigued by the variability of resilience among during during to psychopathology, trauma, poverty or disaster (Garmezy, 1985; Werner & Smith, 1982). In order to promote healthy adaptation to adverse circumstances, researchers believed it was imperative to understand the strengths of positive adaptation related to resilience, as well as the risks and pathological results of those risks due to adverse circumstances. Additionally, through this first wave of research, operationalizing resilience occurred in order to obtain basic descriptive data in order to develop relevant measurements to study the construct of human resilience. The second wave of research associated with resilience addressed the processes that contribute to resilience by observing children who had been exposed to major disasters, violence in the home, extreme poverty, and war (Garmezy, 1983, 1985). The third wave stemmed from the second wave, as researchers began to create experiments whereby processes thought to be responsible for promoting resilience were targeted, and resilience was replicated within such experiments. Through these experiments, models of resilience were proposed, including those for child maltreatment (Cicchetti & Toth, 2000), child welfare (Masten, 2006), school counselling (Akos & Galassi, 2008), and disaster (Masten & Obradovic, 2008). Throughout the first three waves of resiliency research, studies primarily focused on behaviour and social aspects of the concept within microsystems (e.g., families, schools, peers). However, a demand for the study of resilience within a variety of contexts such as biology, neuroscience and cultural systems was recognized, which gave rise to the fourth wave of resiliency research. Growing technology (e.g., tools to measure genes and brain function), as well as concerns about global threats to humanity such as climate change, flu pandemic, war, terrorism, maltreatment and natural disasters, spurred
the desire to research resilience on an integrative level. For example, recent gene-environment interaction studies have utilized technology to measure genetic polymorphisms and their association with one’s ability to act in a resilient manner throughout adverse circumstances (e.g., maltreatment). Findings indicated that a specific gene labelled 5-HTTLPR moderated the association of adverse experiences and resilience (Masten & Obradovic, 2008). Researchers deemed this necessary in order to understand, promote, and integrate resilience as well as psychological coping into plans within contexts of adverse circumstances.

Within research on resilience, two major approaches have been utilized to examine the phenomenon: the variable focused approach and the person focused approach (Masten, 2001; Masten & Coatsworth, 1998; Masten & Powell, 2003). The variable focused approach examines the association between competence, adversity and protective factors to understand the differences between the interactions individuals have within the world. Researchers have created models through the variable focused approach in order to better understand which protective factors moderate and mediate resilience. Variables such as supportive parenting, intellectual skills, and social support can mitigate the effects of adverse circumstances. The person focused approach on the other hand examines the environment and personal characteristics of individuals who meet the criteria for resiliency. Environmental factors and personal characteristics of these resilient individuals are compared to those of individuals who do not meet the criteria of resiliency, but who have been exposed to similar amounts of adversity. Often, such research is performed through case studies, which have suggested that individuals, particularly youth, have an opportunity to restructure their environment via moving, or marrying a suitable partner. In turn, resilience and competence are promoted (Werner & Smith, 1992).
As mentioned, resilience has been investigated in relation to psychological components of coping and stress. The majority of research on resilience has been conducted within the area of transitional stress, as the concept was originally recognized and derived as a result of individuals coping beyond that of expectation during adverse circumstances. Three broad categories have been researched with regard to the phenomena of resilience in the face of adversity: (a) developing well in the context of high cumulative risk for developmental problems (i.e., better than predicted development), (b) functioning well under currently adverse circumstances (i.e., stress resistance, coping), and (c) recovery to normal functioning after adverse circumstances (i.e., bouncing back). Within all of such research, two key assumptions were made: (a) adaptive behaviour must be present, and (b) risks and/or threats to development must be present (Masten, 2007). Such research focused on the environmental and personal factors that contribute to successful development. Results indicated that those with normal cognitive development, a secure attachment, agreeable personalities and a positive outlook on life were more resilient (Crawford, Wright & Masten, 2006; Masten, 2007). Additionally, achievement motivation, self-efficacy, access to education and positive associations with school/education were associated with resilience (Crawford, Wright & Masten, 2006; Masten, 2007). Given the connection between education and resilience, as well as the possible link between resilience and positive compromise, the current research attempts to study whether there is a relationship between professional immigrant educational retraining experiences, positive compromise and resilience. Specifically, the current study will attempt to uncover whether immigrants’ retraining experiences promote resilience and vice versa. Along the same line of intent and purpose, this research also endeavours to explore whether the connection between retraining and resilience contribute to the positive compromising process. While this current
research initiative is informed by the existing literature, it examines the construct of resilience from the unique lenses and scope of professional immigrants’ retraining and positive compromise for career well-being, hoping to generate new knowledge that will add to and enrich the current literature in the field.

Additionally, one longitudinal study conducted by Werner and Smith (1992), focused on the development of resiliency within children. These authors compared two groups of children equally likely to experience adverse events. At age 10, children were placed into two different groups: “resilient” and “less-resilient”. Results indicated that those in the resilient group had greater levels of parental support growing up, and that these levels of resiliency continued throughout adulthood. Additional environmental factors associated with resiliency include those such as social support from friends and family, the number of adverse events one has been exposed to, and how recent such events are to the present time. With regard to social support, researchers have suggested that it is the perceived level of social support that impacts one’s level of resiliency. To elaborate, one is more likely to experience higher levels of resilience if others provide social support, and the individual in question perceives that he or she is being provided this support. Similarly, one’s perception of the number of adverse events he or she has experienced impacts resilience. The higher number of difficult events one perceives to experience, the less likely he or she is to experience resiliency (Tusaie & Dyer, 2004).

Researchers have also focused on outcomes and benefits associated with resilience (Tusaie & Dyer, 2004). For example, resilient individuals have greater appreciation for themselves (Collins & Smyer, 2005; Masten, 1994; Wolin & Wolin, 1993), are more likely to view themselves as physically attractive, and have higher levels of conscientiousness (Campbell-
Sills et al., 2006; Werner & Smith, 1992). In addition, personal assets such as social and educational skills, as well as the utilization of a wide range of coping skills have a positive impact on resilience (Campbell-Sills et al., 2006; Masten, 1994). It has been suggested that resilient individuals not only possess resilience within themselves, but also transfer such emotions to others as well. As a result, resilient individuals are more likely to have supportive social networks, which facilitates coping (Tugade, 2004). Moreover, individuals display higher levels of resiliency when they are able to achieve success, leading to higher levels of self-efficacy and resiliency (Masten & Reed, 2002). Research has indicated that resilience is also related to the number of positive emotions one experiences (Ong et al., 2006), and that one is more likely to experience resilience when he or she possess energetic and open attitudes (Masten, 2001).

Research focusing on outcomes associated with resilience has indicated that resilience has been associated with higher levels of life satisfaction, greater psychological and social adjustment, lower levels of psychopathology, protection against long-term effects of childhood abuse (Schluz et al., 2014), positive leadership styles and higher rates of school engagement (Bethell et al., 2014). In addition, a study conducted by Losoi et al., (2015) investigated outcomes associated with higher levels of resiliency in patients with traumatic brain injuries were identified. Results indicated that resilience was associated with less fatigue and traumatic stress, lower levels of depression, less pain, fewer concussion-like symptoms and better quality of life. Chen (2016) conducted a study within the Chinese university student population investigating relationship between subjective well-being and resilience. Within this study, results indicated that resilience predicted subjective well being, and that resilience acted as a moderator between coping style and life satisfaction.
Resilience, educational training and career development

Although research has focused on resilience and outcomes within the educational process, the majority of this research has been focused on the population of school-aged children. One study conducted by Wu, Tsang & Ming (2014) investigated the impact of resilience on educational outcomes within a population of immigrant children living in adverse circumstances. Results provided strong evidence to suggest that higher levels of resilience were associated with higher levels of effort in the educational process, and aspirations to achieve higher levels of education. In addition, resilience was linked to lower probabilities of dropping out of the educational system. Nota, Soresi & Zimmerman (2004) conducted a study and found similar results, as they suggested that higher levels of resilience were associated with better high school grades, and intentions to obtain further education after high school. Additional research on this subject has indicated that higher levels of resiliency are associated with staying in school for longer periods of time, aspirations of obtaining a degree beyond that of high school, having a greater number of positively influential peers, and better academic preparedness (Martin & Marsh, 2006; Wilson-Sadberry et al., 1991).

Resilience has also been associated with fostering positive outcomes within university students. For example, research has indicated that resilience relates to students’ abilities to adapt and respond positively to adverse circumstances that may occur in the university setting (Stallman, 2011). In addition, resilience has been associated with better academic performance among university students and a greater likelihood of remaining in the university setting for longer periods of time (Allen et al., 2013; Hartley 2011, 2013; Kotze & Kleynhans, 2013). Results of the study conducted by Hartley (2011, 2013) suggested that resilience assisted students with mental health difficulties to cope more effectively with challenges in the university.
setting, and as a result improved learning capabilities and university retention. Results of a study conducted by Elizondo-Omana (2010), however, did not converge with these results as they suggested that resilience is not related to academic performance. Additionally, research has focused on the association between resilience and career related difficulties. For example, one study found that resilience was important in predicting the extent to which unemployed people spent time constructively to find or create a new job for themselves (Wolf, London, Casey, & Pufahl, 1995).

**Resilience and Professional Immigrant Transitions**

A small number of studies have recognized that despite challenges immigrants face when transitioning to Canada, some respond well. In other words, resilient immigrants are more likely to experience a successful transition processes (Aroian & Norris, 2000; Christopher & Kulig, 2000; Koert, Borgen, & Amundson, 2011). Studies have indicated that during the transition process, resiliency facilitates higher levels of psychological well being (Christopher & Kulig, 2000), lower levels of depression (Aroian & Norris, 2000), better perceptions of new workplaces (Remennick, 2005), greater success within the workplace, and greater likelihood of reaching out for social support when experiencing difficulties associated with transitions. (Koert, Borgen, & Amundson, 2011).

**Research Questions**

The prior discussion in the present chapter has provided useful information in understanding the general context of career-life adjustment of recent new professional
immigrants to Canada. It also highlights immigrants’ intention and action of retraining in the
host country as a means to improve their vocational wellbeing and career construction. While the
career problems of this target group can be tackled from various angles, the current research
study intends to focus on a very specific conceptual domain as elaborated in the previous
discussion. That is, it aims to investigate the role and function of positive compromise and
related aspects in professional immigrants’ career adjustment and retraining experiences in the
host country environment. To this end, the current study sought to address the following main
research question and two closely related secondary research questions.

The primary and main research question is:
(a) “How does positive compromise influence professional immigrants’ career development?”
Under the auspices and within the scope of the above primary and main research question, the
two secondary research questions are:
(b) “How does positive compromise influence professional immigrants’ retraining process?”
(c) “How do resilience and positive compromise interrelate to influence professional immigrants’
career development and retraining experiences?”

It is worth emphasizing that all the research questions here are intertwined, and they are
supplementary, complementary, and supportive to one another, investigating the role and
function of positive compromise in professional immigrants’ life-careers.
CHAPTER 3

METHODS

Qualitative, in depth interviews were utilized in the current study to gain an understanding of the experiences of professional immigrants’ experiences in retraining within Canada. A grounded theory approach was utilized in order to analyze this data, and the following chapter will provide a rationalization for this approach.

Rationale for Qualitative Design

General Background on Qualitative Designs

Since the nineteenth century, quantitative methodologies have been the preference of many psychological researchers. This process requires researchers to gather and analyze data based on the assumption that numerical processes provide objectified conclusions about human cognition and behaviour. Beginning in the 1960’s, however, psychological researchers who investigate the impacts of social phenomena have opted for utilizing qualitative methodologies. They have suggested that this approach allows for naturalistic, contextual and holistic understandings and perspectives of human behaviour. In other words, utilizing qualitative methodologies allows for a more in depth understanding of the meaning of human behaviour (Mertens, 2014). Additionally, qualitative research “seeks to describe and analyze the culture and behaviour of humans and their groups from the point of view of those being studied” (Bryman, 1988, p. 46). In other words, perspectives of participants are highly valued and utilized within qualitative research, allowing increased understandings of participant experiences. Qualitative methodology emphasizes a need to gain an increased understanding of how participants make meaning of their lives, contributing to a greater sense of subjective experience. It has been suggested that qualitative designs also allow for the realization of issues that may not have been
exposed prior to investigation. This due to the fact that qualitative methodology is more flexible, allowing participants to disclose various types of information, issues that may have been overlooked within quantitative designs may appear. As such, the use of qualitative methods can facilitate the ability to derive theories by gathering information that may provide insight into phenomena that may not have been present otherwise (Shein & Chen, 2011).

The purpose of the current study, to explore and describe professional immigrants’ retraining experiences, most closely aligns with a qualitative research approach. Creswell (1998) suggested that there are various reasons to conduct a qualitative study. Firstly, he suggested that there must be a need for a greater understanding of the circumstances in question, given that previous literature has not investigated the topic. The current study meets this criterion, as little research has been done to investigate the impact of retraining experiences on professional immigrant career development. Given that there is a scant amount of literature on this topic, a quantitative methodology will provide an ideal context for which the current researchers will be able to identify pertinent themes expressed by participants. In addition, Creswell (1998) suggested that further exploration should be required, allowing for further elaboration on present theories. To date, little literature has investigated the theory of positive compromise as it relates to various outcomes, such as career development. As such, the current study will elaborate on the association between these two factors. A qualitative approach is also appropriate when researchers are aiming to uncover a more detailed understanding of the circumstances in question (Creswell, 1998). Again, little research has addressed the association between retraining and career development and a detailed understanding of this relationship needs to be uncovered. In addition, by closely examining professional immigrants’ narratives via in depth interviews, the current researchers may be able to identify themes related to topics of interest that may not arise
otherwise. Moreover, given that current study will investigate notions associated with positive compromise (i.e., human agency, open-mindedness and proactive preparation), a more in depth understanding of such characteristics as they relate to the retraining process may be identified. Personal stories may also provide researchers with a greater understanding of subjective reasoning surrounding transitional difficulties, career-seeking barriers, experiences of retraining and the impact of retraining on career development. Overall, by gaining an understanding of subjective experiences in these areas, we can better comprehend how immigrants make meaning of such experiences, in turn shaping their decision making process. Ultimately, this provides knowledge regarding contributing factors that shape overall career development. Lastly, the data of the current study was collected via in depth interviews, which require the use of a qualitative analysis.

Given that vocational psychologists have supported the qualitative methodology approach, and that there is little research providing an understanding of subjective experiences of professional immigrants’ experience of retraining, the current study utilized a qualitative approach. By utilizing this approach, researchers were able to gain a better understanding of the impact of positive compromise on the retraining process, and how participants made sense of how this relationship contributed to their overall career development.

**A Grounded Theory Approach**

The current study utilized a grounded theory approach to interpret and analyze data. As opposed to formulating hypotheses prior to investigation, grounded theory suggests that researchers should first pose a question of interest, followed by an interpretation of data. As such, themes and theoretical implications that arise after data has been interpreted are then identified. This way, researchers remain open-minded and can formulate theories based on
participants’ experience, rather than developing theories based on preconceived notions of participants’ experiences (Creswell, 2013). Additionally, grounded theory suggests that individuals play a primary role in influencing difficulties encountered, by virtue of how they respond to events. As such, grounded theory highlights the importance of attending to subjective experiences through understanding how individuals respond to such events (Corbin & Strauss, 2014). By utilizing this approach, the current researcher can identify how participants’ actions impact their retraining experiences, and ultimately contribute to career development. Grounded theory also highlights the importance of deriving themes and theories after data has been collected, allowing for the researcher to discover themes that may not have become apparent otherwise. Additionally, this approach allows for the synthesis of all participants’ unique contributions to the data. This enables the resulting themes and theories developed to represent all participants’ experiences. Again, the current researcher will benefit from this technique, as it imperative to not only understand individual accounts separately, but to understand them as a whole and uncover themes that adhere to all participants. This approach will allow the current researcher flexibility, given that there is a scant amount of research pertaining to the influence of retraining on career development (Corbin & Strauss, 2014). In other words, given that the outcomes of the current study are difficult to predict due to a lack of previous research on the topic, adapting optimal designs will enable greater accuracy within the current project.

The classical Grounded theory approach, developed by Glaser and Straus (1967), emphasized an inductive approach, highlighting that theory should transpire from the data. Furthermore, to avoid acquiring any predispositions with regard to findings, it was suggested that literature reviews should not be conducted. As the theory evolved, however, Glaser and Straus began to develop differing opinions with regard to Grounded Theory methodology. In the 1970’s
and 80’s Glaser and Straus diverged, and both wrote separate expositions of Grounded Theory, (Glaser, 1978; Straus, 1987). Again, in 1990, Straus and Corbin further revised Grounded Theory, suggesting that instead of abstaining from literature prior to investigating a topic of interest, researchers should have a general sense of what has emerged within previous research. Additionally, Straus and Corbin (1990) suggested that theory should be created by the researcher, rather than allowing it to emerge from the data. Lastly, they proposed a more rigorous method of coding data, whereby word by word coding was encouraged. Given that the revised theory of Straus and Corbin (1990) allows for the revision of previous literature, the current researcher utilized this method. Revision of literature is integral to the current study in order to develop a conceptual foundation, as a plethora of data was collected for the larger CRC Professional Immigrant Retraining Study. Given the large amount of data collected for the current study, the current researcher needed a foundation from which themes could be developed. Without such a foundation, themes and theories emerging from the data could not be identified, given the extent of the size of the data set.

The process of gathering and analyzing data within a Straus and Corbin’s revised grounded theory approach consists of various procedures. With regard to gathering data, interviews, observations, memoires, and letters have all been used as a means to interpret participant experiences. For the purposes of the current study, in-depth phonological interviews were utilized. Analyzing data requires researchers to “utilize a constant comparison method, the asking of questions, and the doing of memos and diagrams” (Corbin, 2017, p. 301). Through the process of constant comparison, data are compared allowing for similarities and differences to be identified, creating the basis for category development. The process of asking questions requires that researchers consistently make inquiries about the data, such as ‘what is going on?’,” ‘how
does this factor contribute to currently identified categories?’, ‘how is this factor related to other similar or different factors?’, and ‘what additional data need to be added to the current data in order to complete the categorical process?’. Such questions lead researchers to fully develop the concepts and themes within the data that ultimately allow for understanding participant experiences as a whole. Lastly, memos and diagrams allow researchers to record and keep track of the concepts being formed. Memos also enable the recording of the relationship between various factors, contributing to overall concept development. Diagrams are utilized in order to visualize relationships between categories, and make revisions to such categories as needed (Corbin & Strauss, 2014; Corbin, 2017). Categories and themes develop after researchers closely examine the data, allowing for systematic development of categories via identifying core properties of such categories. Once this process is complete and categories and themes have been fully identified.

**Procedures**

**Data Collection**

The current study utilized archival data from Dr. Charles Chen’s Professional Immigrant Retraining project (2010). Participants responded by telephone or email to TTC advertisements, as well as online advertisements. In order to determine eligibility, potential participants were contacted via telephone to ensure all selection criteria were met. To ensure full disclosure of the nature and purpose of the study, a telephone script was utilized when conducting initial telephone calls. Such scripts detailed the nature and purpose of the study, selection criteria, confidentiality, reimbursement, length of interview, and additional matters, to maintain standardization and consistency for participants. In addition, participants were informed of the potential risks of the current study and were provided with referrals (i.e., psychological services and crisis lines) in case they found participation in the study to be distressing. Participants were
also ensured that confidentiality would be maintained and that employers would not receive any information disclosed during the interview process.

Eighty-three semi-structured in depth interviews, conducted by Dr. Chen and his research team, were completed with professional Canadian immigrants. Interviews were privately completed in the OISE Psychoeducational and Counselling Clinic at the University of Toronto. Interviews lasted between 1.5 and 2 hours, were audio-taped, and participants were compensated in the amount of $35 for completing each interview. Confidentiality was maintained, as all interview and research information was contained in a locked cabinet, in Dr. Chen’s locked research office. Only Dr. Chen and research associates had access to this office and cabinet. In order to ensure participants understood the nature and any potential risks associated with the study, interviewers reviewed the purpose, content, limits of confidentiality and anonymity at the beginning of each interview. All participants signed an informed consent form, detailing such aspects of the study. Additionally, participants provided signed consent to be audio-taped throughout the interviews. After completion of the interview, participants were provided with the compensation fee, and also signed a form acknowledging receipt of compensation.

Phenomenological interviews detailed individual narratives of professional immigrant adjustment process, career transition, and retraining experiences in Canada. Interviews contained 76 questions, and participants were asked each question throughout the interviews. Participants were asked questions that were categorized based on time period: (1) before coming to Canada, (2) after coming to Canada (initial general experience), (3) ongoing vocational adjustment and transition in Canada, (4) plans for and engagement in retraining program, (5) results of post retraining, and (6) current employment. Specific questions that focused on immigrant positive compromise and resilience included: (1) *Before coming to Canada:* (1) Did you do any
preparation for your qualifications to be transferable to Canada before coming to Canada? After coming to Canada (2) Having faced these difficulties/changes, did you develop a plan of action for your career development? Did that include plans for retraining? (3) How did your ability to cope with these changes impact your self-esteem and confidence levels? Ongoing vocational adjustment and transition in Canada: (4) What did you do to try to get a job that is related to your previous vocational and/or professional background experience from your home country? (5) How difficult or easy was your original job search? What factors made the search easier and/or more difficult? (6) What were some of the expected and unexpected events that influenced your job-seeking and vocational development experiences in Canada? And how did you respond to such events? (7) How did you plan for your retraining? Did you encounter any barriers in this process? (8) What actions did you take to make your retraining experience possible? (9) How did you find out about available retraining opportunities? (10) How did you find this new "learning" experience in Canada? Did you have to change your "learning style"? In what ways? Results of post-retraining (11) During the retraining, what did you discover about yourself? (12) What were some of the main lessons you learned from your retraining experience in Canada? (13) How important were your own actions in setting up and completing your retraining?, and Current employment (14) Overall, what factors have been the most influential in helping you to succeed in your career development within Canada? What factors have made your career life difficult? These questions allowed the researcher to gain an understanding of how participants utilized positive compromise and resilience to cope with career challenges and the retraining process.
Data Analysis

Within the first phase of data analysis, the current researcher read each individual transcript in order to gain optimal understanding of participant experiences. After gaining a thorough understanding of each participant narrative, NVIVO 11, a qualitative design software base, was utilized in order to code and organize the data into pertinent themes that emerged. With the use of NVIVO 11, each transcript was reviewed multiple times in order to ensure the researcher observed pertinent themes within the data set. It is also important to note that emergent themes associated with positive compromise and resilience as they related to retraining experiences and career development were prioritized. Given that the current study utilized 83 transcripts, data saturation occurred prior to completion of analysis of all transcripts. However, the current researcher utilized all transcripts of the Professional Immigrant Retraining study, to maintain the consistency of participant characteristics and avoid selection bias.

Recruitment

Posters advertised in the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) detailing purpose and eligibility criteria of the study, as well as online advertisements were utilized to recruit participants for the Professional Immigrant Retraining project. The advertisements detailed the purposes of the study, the selection criteria for participation, and contact information. Recruitment took place over a period of four months. Recruitment also occurred via snowball sampling, as participants provided information about the study to others.
**Selection Criteria**

The target sample for the current study was new, professional Canadian immigrants who lived in Toronto or the Greater Toronto Area. All participants were immigrants in the Toronto or Greater Toronto Areas (GTA) who: (1) were not born in Canada, (2) immigrated to Canada between the years of January 1, 1999 to December 30, 2006, (3) were at least 25 years of age or older on the date of the interview, (4) have a university degree that was earned outside of Canada, (5) worked full-time in a professional occupation in their country of origin for at least three years before coming to Canada, (6) engaged in retraining in Canada and earned a university, college or professionally certified and formal diploma, certificate, certification or accreditation (proof of this record was required to participate in the interviews), (7) have held employment in Canada (part-time or full-time) for a minimum of 1 year after completing the Canadian retraining, (8) were fluent in English, and (9) have not previously participated in any of Dr. Charles P. Chen’s research projects to date.

Criteria were implemented to recruit participants who came to Canada relatively recently, and therefore could remember re-training and career development experiences. Furthermore, criteria ensured sufficient time to search for employment, engage in a retraining program, and obtain employment for one year post-retraining. It was also important that criteria ensured participants obtained accreditation in their expert fields and had sufficient employment experience in expert fields prior to migration to Canada. Criteria also ensured participants engaged in retraining in Canada and obtained employment post-retraining for at least one year.

**Sample Size**
Researchers have indicated that obtaining an optimal number of interviews is based on the need to obtain saturation (i.e., enough data to identify pertinent themes). Various quantitative researchers have endorsed sample sizes between 20 and 30, as they claim that saturation can be reached quickly. Such sample sizes have notably been the most common within Grounded theory methodologies (Marshall, 2013). However, in cases of special interest and when the sample in question is more heterogeneous, the utilization of a larger sample may be necessary to attain saturation.

Given that the current researcher had access to all data from the Professional Immigrant Retraining Project conducted by Dr. Charles P. Chen, a sample size of n=83 was utilized. Despite the fact that this sample size is larger than that typically endorsed for a qualitative methodology, it was deemed appropriate for the current study. Utilizing all data allowed present researcher to obtain a wider rage of participant experiences who were of varying ages, ethnicities, life stages, and who had varying backgrounds with regard to their expert fields. This allowed the current sample to be more representative of the professional immigrant population in Canada, and in turn allows for greater generalization of the current study’s results. Additionally, in order to avoid selection bias, the current researcher deemed it important to utilize the entire sample from the *Professional Immigrant Retraining Study*. Lastly, according to the National Household Survey (2011), approximately 56.9% of Canadian immigrants came from Asia, making Asia Canada’s largest source of immigrants. Specifically, 10.5% of immigrants came from China, and 10.4% from India, representing Canada’s second and third largest source countries for immigrants respectively (Statistics Canada, 2013). Given that the portion of participants from each country is congruent with the current study, the current researcher deemed it important to include all participants from the *Professional Immigrant Retraining Study*. This
allowed the current sample to be more representative of the immigrant population in Canada.

**Participant Characteristics**

**Country of Origin.** Participants originated from a wide variety of countries; in total there were 30 countries represented in the study. The largest number of participants came from China (n=23), followed by India (n=14). As mentioned, this is consistent with the general trend of Canada’s source countries for immigrants. Please refer to Table 1 for a review of participant countries of origin and the number of participants whom originated from each country. Please note in Table 1 that the information in brackets under the Number of Participants column refers to number of males and females from each country, where M stands for male and F stands for female.

**Sex/Gender.** Fifty participants self-identified as male, and thirty-three self-identified as female. No participants self-identified with another gender identity. Please refer to Table 2 for a review of the number of participant gender/sex.

**Age.** The average age of participants was 43.0 years, with a range of 28-65 years. The average age of male participants was 44.0 years, with a range of 28-65 years. The average age of female participants was 44.0 years, with a range of 30-55 years. Please refer to Table 4 for a review of participant average ages and range of ages.

**Pre-Canada Educational Level.** All participants within the current study held a post-secondary credential from their host country. Participants held a wide range of credentials, such as business (e.g., finance, accounting, business management), health care (e.g., medicine, dentistry, psychology), technical fields (e.g., engineering, computer technology), law and
education. Please refer to Table 3 for a review of participant pre-Canada education levels.

**Education in Canada.** The highest levels of education completed by participants were a Law Degree by one participant, Master’s degrees for 12 participants, a Chartered Accounting credential for one participant, Certified Management Accounting credentials for two participants, Bachelor’s degrees for 22 participants, college diplomas for 27 participants, and professional/practical certifications for 20 participants. Please refer to Table 4 for a review of participants’ education in Canada.

**Length of Time in Canada.** The average time participants spent in Canada was 6.0 years, with a range of 3 to 10 years.

**Occupations in Canada.** The types of occupations held by participants at the time of interviews were in the following areas: teaching, financial analyzing, banking, accounting, business consulting, engineering, research, law and legal services, healthcare, social services, architecture, and sales/retail.

Refer to Table 1, 2, 3 and 4 for participant characteristics.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Number of Participants (M = male, F = female)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>2 (2F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>1 (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>1 (F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>1 (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>1 (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>23 (13M, 10F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>2 (2M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>1 (F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>1 (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>14 (12M, 2F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>2 (2M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israel</td>
<td>1 (F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>1 (F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>1 (F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>1 (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Philippines</td>
<td>3 (3F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>1 (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>7 (5M, 2F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbia</td>
<td>1 (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>2 (1M, 1F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>1 (F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>2 (2M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>2 (1M, 1F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>3 (1M, 2F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Arab Emirates</td>
<td>1 (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States of America</td>
<td>3 (2M, 1F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>1 (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yemen</td>
<td>1 (F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yugoslavia</td>
<td>1 (F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zimbabwe</td>
<td>1 (F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>83 (50M, 33F)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 1: Country of Origin*
### Table 2: Participant Gender/ Sex and Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender/ Sex</th>
<th>Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Males</td>
<td>Number of Females</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 2: Participant Gender/ Sex and Age*

### Table 3: Credentials Earned Pre-Canada

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credential</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate (Ph.D)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Degree</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law Degree</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s Degree</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Certification</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 3: Credentials Earned Pre-Canada*

### Table 4: Credentials Earned in Canada

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credential</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certified Management Accounting Degree</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chartered Accounting Degree</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law Degree</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s Degree</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Certification</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 4: Credentials Earned in Canada*
CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The present chapter details key themes associated with participant attitudes and behaviours related to challenges experienced, the process of retraining, the outcomes of retraining, and career outcomes. These key themes generated from the accounts of the research participants represent the findings and results pertaining to the research questions raised in the prior section. These themes describe and demonstrate the phenomena of positive compromise and resilience of participants’ experiences and are presented following the three essential facets of the concept: Human agency, open-mindedness and proactive preparation. Resilience that coincided with positive compromise in life-career adjustment and retraining processes is also distilled and illustrated within the same contexts. To do so, the current researcher identified individuals who displayed high levels of positive compromise, as well as those who lacked attitudes and behaviours of positive compromise. Similarly, participants who displayed high or low levels of resiliency were also identified as they related to retraining and career outcomes.

Proactive Preparation Pre-Migration

Similar to the concept of human agency, proactive preparation encourages individuals to engage in behaviours such as assessing pros and cons involved in the compromising process, evaluating risks, and implementing and carrying out a realistic action plan. However, proactive preparation involves constructing a plan of action with regard to career ahead of time based on current information about viable career alternatives. Proactive preparation therefore also involves developing a strategic career vision, which facilitates making plans ahead of time that will facilitate this vision. As such, the current study identified proactive preparation as future career planning involving various actions, such as evaluating risks, assessing pros and cons, assessing
various action plans, and creating and carrying out viable action plans. One of the major themes that arose within the current research was participants’ description of engaging in behaviours associated with proactive preparation in their countries of origin, before immigrating to Canada. This theme signifies that many participants anticipated difficulties with obtaining a career within their filed of expertise, and proactively created plans of action with regard to retraining to mitigate such difficulties. Participants frequently referenced three methods of proactive preparation for retraining during pre-migration: online research, obtaining proof of credentials, and English improvement preparation. In the present study, 52% of participants (n=43) reported engaging in proactive preparation prior to migration to Canada.

**Online Research**

As mentioned, many participants engaged in preparation for retraining prior to their migration to Canada. For example, P18 indicated that he knew before coming to Canada that he would have to engage in retraining, as he researched the process online:

“…on the internet, I went through different forums to read with people said about immigration to North America and Europe. I realized that I would need to be retrained right away.” (P18).

**Obtaining Proof of Credentials**

Another method of planning for retraining prior to migration commonly cited by participants involved obtaining proof of credentials, as many retraining programs in Canada require this information. For example when asked if she did any planning for retraining prior to migration to Canada, P6 described obtaining proof of her credentials, as she knew that this was integral to the process of retraining:

“In terms of architecture, I had begun my qualification assessments when I was back home. So I had my qualifications assessed from University of Toronto beforehand, when I was back there. So I had everything that they needed in terms of what they would require from back home.” (P6).
The statement illustrated by P6 indicates that she was motivated to take a proactive approach to the retraining process prior to migration to Canada, in hopes of facilitating a smoother transition and overall career development process.

**English Improvement**

Another common theme illustrated by the data indicated that participants proactively planned for both migration and retraining by engaging in English training in their home countries. For example, when asked how he prepared for his transition and retraining prior to migration, P12 expressed that English retraining was of utmost importance to career development:

“I did some preparation, which was all about English language studying. I improved my English in China to prepare for my new life. I also took an English test which was required for the admission to the college.” (P12).

This statement exemplifies a proactive method that was utilized by many participants in the current study, as they understood the importance facilitating transitional difficulties and occupational development through English language improvement.

**Positive Compromise as a response to Occupational Challenges**

Within the current study, participants reported experiencing occupational issues, such as language barriers, discrimination, and unemployment. In order to cope with such stressors, 31% of participants (n=26) reported engaging in positive compromise. In other words, 31% of participants endorsed engaging in all of the three behaviours and attitudes (i.e., human agency, open mindedness and proactive preparation) that encompass positive compromise. The following section provides details of how participants utilized each facet of positive compromise to cope with various career related challenges.
Human Agency

For purposes of the current study, human agency was identified within the survey data when participants demonstrated behaviours to “construct, evaluate and modify alternative courses of action to secure valued outcomes; and override environmental influences” (Bandura, 2006, p. 164). In other words, when participants demonstrated behaviours with the intention of increasing chances of obtaining desired occupational outcomes, human agency was identified. Bandura (2006) suggested that behaviours such as planning and carrying out actions, goal setting, constructing realistic courses of action in congruence with goals, and self reflection on efficacy of actions represent human agency. As such, the current study identified such behaviours as a display of human agency among participants. In fact, 59% (n=42) of participants endorsed engaging in behaviours associated with human agency when faced with career related challenges. In response to such difficulties, many participants demonstrated human agency. For example, when asked how she dealt with a period of unemployment, P24 insinuated that she demonstrated human agency, as she persistently applied for multiple occupations upon arrival to Canada:

“I was very persistent when applying for the job. I was spending all my time during the day, maybe 24 hours, on the computer researching websites or job openings in every hospital in Ontario. After that, I applied out of Ontario. I was spending all my time, all day to apply, and I don’t know how many resumes I sent.” (P24).

Similarly, P75 demonstrated human agency through persistence when trying to find employment during his initial transition phase by contacting his potential employer on various occasions:

“Eventually, I begged a lawyer. I sent him a resume; but he didn’t call me. So I called him and said, “Listen. I want to work for you”. He said, “Most of your experiences are those of a barrister, and I’m a solicitor. I don’t go to court, so I don’t have anything for you”. I said, “But I’m still going to need a reference letter”. He said, “Well, I could do a reference letter for you”. I said, “Well, I need a real reference letter. I want you to gauge me, to judge me”. He said, “I can’t pay you”. I said, “Okay. You’re in Scarborough, and I’m downtown. I’m
going to be taking the subway. Why don’t you just buy me a Metropass every month? Is that good?” And he said, “Yeah, that’s something I can pay”.” (P75).

In addition, when asked about the impacts of unemployment on self-esteem, many participants endorsed demonstrating behaviours associated with human agency via goal setting. For example, P4 indicated that she utilized goal-setting in order to stay determined and obtain a job:

“I’m a person who is goal-oriented… Since we decided to come over and we didn’t want to go back, we really worked hard on finding a job and doing everything that we could. I was that go, go person. I made a point to show determination, and I got a job.” (P4).

A large number of participants also reported engaging in behaviours associated with human agency by carrying out actions associated with goals. Many reported enrolling in career workshops and seeking out settlement counsellors. Participants reported that such actions enabled them to exercise more control over their future career and retraining opportunities. For example, P16 indicated that she demonstrated human agency by enrolling in a workshop that influenced the first career she obtained:

“One thing that helped me was Women’s Immigration Services. I took their workshop, and one of their counsellors reminded me to do a volunteer job, which helped me get a permanent position. The workshop really helped.” (P16)

Similarly, P11 endorsed behaviours associated with human agency by participating in a career workshop, which helped her to gain confidence with regard to the career she intended to pursue:

“I went to the workshop, and they taught us where to look depending upon our skills. It helped my confidence. I had been doing the interpretation and I thought, “Oh, okay. I can continue doing this”.” (P11).

Volunteering

When faced with difficulties associated with unemployment due to a lack of Canadian experience, many participants reported behaviours of human agency through volunteering. Participants reported that volunteering facilitated the process of obtaining an occupation. In
addition, when asked, many participants were able to reflect on the efficacy of their actions associated with volunteering. For example, P14 indicated that she strategically planned to volunteer as a means of obtaining her first job:

“I planned how to market myself, through volunteering. I was fortunate that organization where I volunteered was where I got my first job; that’s where I was hired.” (P14)

Similarly, P16 reported that she volunteered as a means of gaining Canadian experience and obtaining a job. In addition, she reflected on the impact of her volunteer experience, as she reported gaining a lot of feedback, which helped her gain employment:

“After volunteering for 3 months, I tried to search jobs related to the volunteering I had been doing, instead of searching for a career similar to what I had back home. So I got a lot of feedback from volunteering, and it also volunteer helped me lunch at my part-time job.” (P16).

Additionally, P40 as well as P7 both indicated that they displayed human agency through volunteering experiences:

“My first job was volunteering at a consulting company. At that time, my language was very bad, but I had no problem with technical reports: I just told them what they needed to do because that was an entry level job for me. And after 3 months, I got the job.” (P40).

“So I, diligently, with blinders on, volunteered until I found a job. I met people, I met the wrong type of people who love to take advantage of new people into the country. But, I also ended up finding work…”(P7).

**Networking**

Many participants also displayed human agency though networking. Networking for many participants was used as a means of carrying out an action plan in order to gain employment. For example, when asked what he did in order to gain employment related to his previous vocational/ professional background, P12 indicated that he utilized networking:

“I checked the website, I did some networking, to get to know the people who work in the industry, to try to talk to them. That’s what I did.” (P12)
Similarly, P17 indicated that maintaining a sense of agency is of great importance when searching for a career. He reported that one method of displaying agency is through networking:

“You can’t expect things to come your way unless you go out, and you go out and you ask questions, network, and you bang on doors. You need to go to libraries, to resource centres, and to HRDCs. This way you find out what needs to be done.” (P17)

**Open-Mindedness Amidst Occupational Challenges**

As Chen (2004) stated, maintaining an open attitude when coping with work life and career issues is integral to the process of one’s career development. Sustaining an open attitude is especially important in the case of professional immigrants, as many do not have the time or resources to obtain their previous professional status after immigrating to Canada. As such, maintaining an open attitude is likely to facilitate the transition process, including that of retraining and career outcomes. Within the current study, open-mindedness entails “the willingness to give up something in order to obtain a better solution along the career” and “the willingness to study and consider a range of options when forming a compromise” (Chen, 2004, p. 21). Within the current study, 55% (n=46) reported engaging in open-mindedness when experiencing occupational difficulties. In response to such challenges, participants endorsed open-minded attitudes when obtaining ‘survival’ jobs throughout initial transitions, as well as when considering possible permanent alternatives to their fields of expertise. For example, when asked how he coped with initial transitional difficulties, such as those associated with obtaining an occupation, P37 indicated maintaining an open attitude was important:

“…so, when you’re looking at different things, you have to be open-minded. For example, I worked for $6 an hour, I went through all the construction companies, bakeries, restaurants, garbage career, whatever, you name it. I did all this for first few years, I did all of those jobs.” (P37).

Similarly, P22 indicated that maintaining an open attitude facilitated a smoother initial career search:
“In terms of difficulty, it wasn’t difficult because I was ready to do anything. I was open to using my skills and talent in, whatever, which included customer service. I worked in a bank for a while because I knew some good math and computer skills, so I worked for a while at CIBC.” (P22).

When asked what factors have been influential in enabling success within career development, P6 indicated that keeping an open mind was most important:

“I would say my flexibility in terms of being ready to accept a completely new work culture, a new way of understanding structures, and pushing myself to really understand how it is done. Unless I was open to that, would have been difficult.” (P6)

In addition, as mentioned, participants reported keeping an open-minded attitude when considering alternative options to their area of expertise. For example, P17 indicated that receiving suggestions from others allowed him to become more open minded when deciding which career path to pursue:

“They said, “Toronto is the financial hub of Canada. You have a Masters in Finance, why not shift your focus into the airlines, into something which is more practical, which will allow you to earn more and help further your path?” And I agreed. This lead me to being more flexible, and being more open minded as to what my career should be.” (P17).

Additionally, P15 reported that she too was open minded when considering an alternate occupation to her field of expertise. Thus providing her with a greater number of options, and allowing for greatest satisfaction possible:

“I never saw myself a midwife. Once I started to read articles, I started thinking, “Oh, why I wouldn’t do this? It’s very close what I did: physical human load performance”. And I found that health and safety actually did resolve that. So having these different points of view gave me more options.” (P15)

Similarly, P6 indicated that maintained a very open attitude when planning for a more permanent career path, which enabled successful career development:

“I was very open to anything. I was open to a marketing job. You know, you start at the bottom. Maybe that’s the Marketing Coordinator job, or the Marketing Assistant. So I was very open to starting from the bottom, and that didn’t shame me. And now, I am happy in my career.” (P6)
**Proactive Preparation**

In addition to engaging in acts of human agency and open-mindedness when occupational challenges were present, participants also utilized proactive planning as a means of mitigating these difficulties. Within the current study 66% of participants (n=55) reported engaging in proactive preparation when faced with career related challenges. Many participants, for example, expressed that attending career workshops encouraged them to develop plans of action for their careers, as such programs provided important information about important factors of the application process. For example, P24 stated that attending a training program enabled her to plan for optimal methods of obtaining a job:

“I attended a training program that helped me plan the best ways I could get a decent job. They taught me how to prepare myself for interviews, and helped me improve my resume to make it more professional. This was important because the process of job application is different here than it is at home.” (P24)

Similarly, P9 described that attending a career workshop allowed him to plan for his future career:

“I went to a workshop where they have action plans for the new immigrants. Then I had some kind of action plan.” (P9)

In addition, many participants reported self directed planning as a method of coping with career related challenges. For example, P30 indicated that he tried to overcome career related barriers by planning:

“I dealt with difficulties by doing some preparation by myself. I knew I could plan. For example, I made appointment maybe 2 weeks ago, and I didn’t want the time with the consultant to be wasted. So I prepared questions and did some research to ask him.” (P30)

In addition, some participants endorsed proactive preparation as an important lesson they had learned after reflecting on the importance of these actions when experiencing career related
challenges. For example, P17 stated that being proactive is of utmost importance when seeking a
career in Canada, otherwise positive career development will not occur:

“The first lesson that I have learned is that you have to be pro-active yourself. You can’t expect things to come your way unless you go out, and ask questions, network, bang on doors, go to libraries, go to resource centres, go to HRDCs. You find out what needs to be done.” (P17)

Positive Compromise Throughout Retraining

Not only did participants engage in positive compromise when faced with career related
difficulties, but also endorsed many behaviours and attitudes associated with positive
compromise throughout the retraining process. The following section will discuss participants’
expression of human agency, open-mindedness and positive compromise throughout retraining.

Human Agency

During the retaining process, many participants reported engaging in behaviours
associated with human agency. A total of 49% (n=41) reported engaging in acts of human
agency throughout retraining. Goal setting, persistence, dedication and self-reflection, were most
often reported. For example, when asked how he coped with the compromise he had to make for
retraining, P10 inferred that he utilized goal setting in order to facilitate discipline and dedication
throughout retraining:

“I’ve coped with this compromise with discipline, knowing that my goal is in the future: my business will run in such a way that will allow me more free time, and financially I’ll be in better shape. Five years from now, I’ll be able to spend much more time with my family.” (P10).

Many participants also felt as though their own actions, such as dedication and persistence,
allowed for successful retraining experiences. For example, when asked how important his own
actions were with regard to completing retraining, P10 expressed that his actions were necessary,
as he had to stay dedicated and disciplined throughout the program:
“My own actions were extremely important because they defined when I was going to do it and the amount of time I needed to dedicate to make it happen. And then knowing what was going to happen after I made that move; just having that discipline of not giving up, I guess.” (P10).

When asked the same question, P17 responded similarly, as she agreed that her own actions were integral to a successful retraining experience:

“My own actions were very important. You’re totally responsible for yourself: Your timetable, what you’re going to be studying, when you’re going to be studying, your targets, when you are to complete a course, and if you need to extend a course. You’re totally responsible.” (P17).

P24 also expressed that carrying out his actions was an important aspect of succeeding within the retraining, allowing him to achieve his desired outcomes:

“I was very persistent with my decision, and with my goal. I didn’t find anything impossible. I did what I wanted and then the result was success.” (P24).

Participants also expressed dedication to their retraining through studying. For example, when asked how she made her retraining experience possible, P16 indicated that studying was crucial:

“I studied hard. My actions were important: You study the language hard, and study the subject of the program.” (P16).

Similarly, P32 expressed that he put his best foot forward by studying, in order to develop his skills as a professional:

“I knew how many hours I needed to spend studying different subjects. I studied so, so hard, which helped me learn and become a good professional.” (P32).

Additionally, participants demonstrated human agency through self-reflection of their actions. For example, when asked to reflect on the main lessons learned through retraining, P39 indicated that persistence and hard work were keys to success of retraining:

“The main lesson is anything is possible, you just have to keep on trying. That is the main message. Anything is possible, you just have to keep on trying.” (P39).
P46 also demonstrated human agency through reflection of her actions, as she indicated that she learned that hard work is conducive to success:

“I know it’s going sound very motherhood apple pie, but I learned that hard work actually pays off. I came with absolutely no connections, and I was able to land a fantastic job. For me, working hard was huge. If you work really really hard, you can get what you want in this environment.” (P46).

Open-Mindedness

Not only were participants open minded about the types of careers, which they pursued, but also maintained such attitudes when seeking retraining. Participants demonstrated open-minded attitudes toward various types of retraining, learning, and balancing difficult circumstances such as work and school. Forty-eight percent of participants (n=40) demonstrated open-minded attitudes when seeking retraining. The following section will detail participants’ open-minded attitudes with regard to retraining.

As mentioned, many participants sustained open-minds when considering which type of retraining they were interested in. For example, when asked how she felt about having to engage in retraining, P22 indicated that she enrolled in a program that differed from the training in her field of expertise; however, saw it as an opportunity as it allowed her to obtain a desired career:

“First of all, it was essential, so I did it. Secondly it was a new field that I entered. It was not new in terms of the actual nursing part of it, but it was in the human field and it was in a hospital or a nursing home, which was all new to me. It was not like that at home. It was an opportunity as well as a challenge. It was training to be had. I had to train to obtain the career I wanted.” (P22).

P28 also saw her retraining experience as an opportunity, and was open and willing to engage in novel retraining that differed from previous training in her expert field:

“Yeah, I felt like it was more of an opportunity, and I wanted to take it. I really like accounting. It’s given me a lot of new ideas. Back home, I didn’t know anything about accounting, but now I really like it. I like to work with numbers, all of that stuff.” (P28)
In addition, participants were also open to new learning experiences when enrolled in retraining.

For example, P23 stated that it was important to maintain an open-mind toward retraining, and that he was open to the learning experience:

“Yes, I did. I knew that no one would be interested in my Russian diploma. Everything is different and technologies and knowledge and equipment. So, I was pretty open and just ready and willing to learn.” (P23).

In addition, P1 indicated that she maintained an open attitude, which facilitated her ability to learn throughout retraining:

“Some professors I really loved, and some professors I really didn’t because of their opinions, or the way they evaluated our work. But I have learned how to take everything positively. I can learn anything from any situation.” (P1).

P58 also reported maintaining an open attitude toward learning, allowing her to gain an increased number of opportunities and help from others:

“I am open minded, and I feel as long as you want to learn you can always get new opportunities. And also if you feel you’re open minded people are actually really helpful.” (P58)

Some participants endorsed open-minded attitudes surrounding the balance of work-school throughout retraining. For example, when asked how she felt about balancing the two, P16 expressed that she saw it as an opportunity to gain more communication skills and building networks:

“Balancing both was a good experience. It’s a very busy time schedule, but it helped financially. Also it was good because you have the opportunity to gain more communication skills, through talking to people. So I think doing both helped, yeah.” (P16).

**Proactive Preparation**

Prior to engaging in retraining, many participants ensured adequate preparation. In fact, 39% of participants (n=32) reported engaging in acts of proactive preparation prior to engaging
in retraining. The most commonly cited methods of preparation for retraining included gaining knowledge from others, online research, and ensuring financial stability.

As mentioned, participants often obtained knowledge and advice from others about retraining experiences prior to engaging in retraining. Participants reported that gaining such knowledge enabled participants to make informed decisions, optimizing career development. For example, P17 indicated that he planned for retraining by acquiring knowledge from colleagues in the workplace, ultimately facilitating his career development:

“I planned for my retraining based on what my bosses and my colleagues told me at work. This helped improve my career path because it gave me knowledge about what was best.” (P17)

In addition, participants reported obtaining knowledge from others about specific elements of the program in order to facilitate success. For example, when asked how she made her retraining experience possible, P10 indicated that she asked others about exam expectations:

“Talking to other State Farm agents helped because every other State Farm agent is an owner. So talking to a couple of them about their experience and what to expect during the exams, and what to expect during the career helped a lot.” (P10).

In addition to seeking knowledge from others, participants often reported engaging in proactive preparation for retraining by gathering knowledge from the Internet. Participants expressed that obtaining knowledge from the Internet enabled an informed decision making process. For example, P46 indicated that he utilized both the Internet and knowledge from others in order to select the best retraining program to facilitate his career development:

“It was a lot of reading up on websites, rankings, reviews, talking to a bunch of people, LinkedIn, and the European equivalent of that. At the time, the European equivalent was just starting, so it wasn’t as robust as it is now. But it was a source where I touched base with a few people. Once I knew which 3 schools I wanted to focus on, I flew in from Edmonton, took campus tours, and talked to students.” (P46).
Similarly, P14 indicated that she prepared for retraining by utilizing the Internet and gaining information from others about requirements of each program. She insinuated that this information provided her some confidence to pursue retraining:

“Mostly online, which helps you gain information about what each program requires. Then you tend to find out, okay, “So, how can I get that?” Or some people you’re working with, you ask them, “What qualifications do you have?” And then I thought, “Maybe I can do that, too”. (P10).

Additionally, participants reported that retraining included planning financially as well, given that many had to support themselves, and some had to support family throughout this time period. For example, P25 indicated that her plan included Canadian retraining; however, in order to ensure she could afford it, she planned to work and save financially beforehand:

“I thought, “okay, I’m going to work maybe a few years, and I’m going to save some money, and pay for the courses, and then it will be easier”. I had that plan.” (P25).

Furthermore, when asked how he planned for retraining, P4 indicated that substantial financial planning was involved, given that he had to support his family and maintain a work-life-study balance:

“Basically my planning was more on “How can I be financially supported?” and also, “Can I work and study at the same time?” My time with the family will definitely be affected, and how will I balance work-life, study-life.” (P4).

P43 also endorsed ensuring retraining was possible by saving and budgeting financially:

“Money, yes, for over a year, I had to budget for tuition fees. Also, it’s a challenge if you are working, because you need to pay for your education and you are also in school.” (P43).

**Resilience throughout Career Related Challenges and Retraining**

Resilience can be defined as “successful adaptation to life tasks in the face of social disadvantage or highly adverse conditions.” (Garmezy, 1993, p. 48). Research has indicated that resilience mitigates the impact of stressors when individuals are in the midst of adverse circumstances, and
also enables the development of better coping strategies as a result of experiencing such
difficulties (Tusaie & Dyer, 2004; Davydov et al., 2010). Additionally, it has been suggested that
resilience is closely linked to positive compromise, as open mindedness facilitates resilience
(Chen, 2004). Moreover, adaptability allows individuals to maintain a strong sense of human
agency and engage in preparation for when facing career compromise (Chen, 1997). Resilience
has also been linked to positive educational attitudes (Masten, 2007), and within the current
study, many participants displayed resilience when coping with career related challenges and
when engaging in educational retraining. Forty-one percent of participants (n=34) displayed
resilience when coping with career challenges, and 37% of participants (n=31) displayed
resilience throughout retraining. Resilience manifested in various forms, as participants reported
positive outcomes in response to strenuous events that occurred throughout career related
challenges and throughout retraining. Participants commonly expressed resilience when working
in survival jobs and commonly endorsed associations between human agency and resilient
attitudes, enabling positive career outcomes.

Many participants experienced career related challenges as a result of their immigration
to Canada; however, commonly endorsed resilient attitudes despite such difficulties.
Additionally, resilient attitudes were commonly linked to behaviours of human agency,
ultimately facilitating career related challenges. For example, despite working in an occupation
that required little education, P2 indicated that he displayed open mindedness and human agency,
as well as resilient attitude, as he was ‘happy’ working in such occupations:

“All job I could grab, I would take it. You know, I told you – I worked in the factory, not
every day, once or twice a week. But I was really smiling, and happy. People would
say, “You’re working the factory. How can you be happy?”’” (P2).
Additionally, when asked how he coped with career related challenges, P24 indicated that with persistence, he was able to survive, which in turn facilitated resilience, as he became ‘stronger’. Overall this allowed him to achieve his career goal:

“I think that I can say I am a very persistent person with what I want, and am a very strong person. This helped me survive with job challenges because it made me stronger, and encouraged me to try again, or get more education in order to achieve my goal.” (P24).

P3 also indicated that in the face of career challenges, he was ‘mentally strong’, which allowed for him to persevere throughout such difficulties:

“Truly, to me, like I said, I’m fairly thick skinned. I’m mentally strong, yes, there are times you go up and down, but overall, you know what, you punch, I punch back. I’m not scared, I’m not running away, I’m going to fight my way through. You do it with a smile, you do it with your competencies, you don’t have to make a fuss about anything more than that.” (P3).

P28 also displayed resilience, as he expressed that despite having to work in occupations that required less education than he had, he was able to gain confidence within his field, which in turn, allowed him to be successful within his current occupation:

“All of them gave me a lot of experience about the accounting field, and made me more confident about my career. So right now, I could say whatever I’m doing, I understand all of it, so I can survive in my career right now.” (P28).

Resilience throughout Retraining

As mentioned, despite the fact that retraining programs required the development of new learning techniques, many participants reported that this was not strenuous. Participants reported positive relationships to new forms of learning, displayed optimistic attitudes toward busy schedules, and reported developing a stronger sense of self as a result of managing difficulties throughout retraining. Additionally, many endorsed resilience in combination with human
agency, a key facet of positive compromise. For example, when asked he felt about new forms of learning, P11 suggested that maintaining positive attitude toward retraining promoted resilience:

“Once you are used to doing things a certain way, and then you come here and see how things are done, and how you have to handle those things in a different way, you say “this is a cookie for me”. It was really easy to adapt to a new life and a new way of learning.” (P11).

Not only did participants experience a lack of difficulty with this learning transition, but also expressed that an increased amount of work in comparison to expectations and new methods of learning were motivational. For example P22 indicated “New methods of learning and having to do more work than I anticipated spurred me on.” (P22).

When asked if she had to change her learning style for purposes of retraining, P23 endorsed both resilience and human agency, as she persevered despite low achievement, which enabled a positive learning outcome:

“I was very frustrated to have C mark, but now I understand if I fail it is not the end of the world. So, now I’m doing it again, and I’m doing it again… Just like a kid learn how to walk, right?” (P23).

Similarly, P62 expressed difficulty with learning throughout retraining as all materials were in English. However, like P23, she adapted to this new way of learning with human agency (i.e., perseverance), enabling success within retraining, and in turn building confidence:

“Well I didn't know what how to speak English well. But the training was in English, all the materials were in English. So I'd go home and try to make sense of it all, speak to my colleague, to my roommate and to the other roommate. You know, at some point, I passed the exam easily. So little successes like that built confidence slowly, you know. And at some point I'm like, sure, this is a challenge, but I can make it work. It's actually exciting.” (62)

Participants also displayed both human agency and resilience when balancing the demands of work, life and school. For example, P16 reported that he was very busy throughout retraining, as he was working and going to school. However, he displayed resilience, perceiving retraining in a
positive light, and saw it as an opportunity to develop communication skills and gain a stronger social network:

“Going to school and working, I would say, is good. It’s a very busy time schedule, but it helps you with financial balance. And, as I said, maybe you earn pocket money. Also it’s good because you have the opportunity to develop communication skills, because you need to talk to the people. So I think this helped, yeah.” (P16).

Similarly, P65 expressed that despite having a taxing work-school schedule, she was able to perceive this experience positively, as she proved to herself how capable she was:

“I was like working from 8:30 to 4:30, and then I’m home at 5:30. After I studied until around 11 or 12 at night. And you do that every day, and then after a while you see how tough you can be if you really want this, and have a goal. So I think that’s a good experience.” (P65).

P44 also displayed resilience, as she expressed that despite experiencing difficulties throughout retraining, perceived it as a worthwhile experience that made her stronger, and as a result, obtained a meaningful career:

“I think, you know, what doesn’t kill you makes you stronger. It made me stronger, and gave me good experience. Now, looking back on it, this was a great experience because it allowed me to now teach people that are in the same position that I was.” (P44).
CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

This chapter reviews the findings of the present study and discusses the various implications derived from these findings in relation to professional immigrants’ life-career transition in general, and re-training experiences in Canada in particular. Focusing on the lived experiences of the research participants, the essential role and function of positive compromise are elaborated and demonstrated through theoretical and conceptual implications, as well as implications for professional helping and self-helping of recent professional immigrants in a Canadian social and societal context. The chapter concludes to recognize the limitations of the present study, proposing direction for future research with similar intention and purposes.

**Theoretical Implications**

In the present study, participants utilized positive compromise throughout challenging circumstances. Positive compromise is conceptualized as a solution to a problem, as individuals give something up (i.e., an ideal state of work) in order to maintain or gain something (i.e., a more realistic state of work) (Chen, 2004). It has been suggested that three key human qualities, namely human agency, open mindedness and proactive preparation encompass positive compromise and allow individuals to approach career compromise with enhanced control over their career development. Participants in the current study utilized all three facets of positive compromise when coping with career related challenges and difficulties throughout retraining.

Human agency can be defined as behaviours to “construct, evaluate and modify alternative courses of action to secure valued outcomes; and override environmental influences” (Bandura, 2006, p. 164). In the present study, human agency was exemplified through action
taking and goal setting, which are two core features of human agency (Cochran & Laub, 1994; Chen, 2006). Action taking was most commonly demonstrated through volunteering, networking and acts of persistence. Such actions directly facilitated participants’ ability to gain employment, and develop plans of action. Goal setting, another integral facet of human agency, facilitated participants’ determination and motivation when dealing with career related challenges. Such implications address the current study’s primary research question, as it suggests how human agency facilitates career development of professional immigrants.

Human agency was commonly endorsed throughout retraining as well. Goal setting, persistence, dedication and self-reflection, were most often reported. Such actions encouraged discipline and dedication to the retraining process, which ultimately facilitated success. The fact that many participants utilized human agency as a method of coping with both career and retraining challenges speaks to the fact that participants often coped with challenges in a practical manner. Additionally, these actions represent the fact that participants still put their best foot forward despite being unsure of whether such actions would lead to most ideal outcomes (Chen, 2004). This finding also demonstrates that participants were willing to take risks through human agency, facilitating greater control over career development. This is in line with suggestions of previous research suggesting that human agency is an integral facet of positive compromise that aids individuals’ ability to overcome career related challenges (Chen, 2006). These implications address one of the current study’s secondary research questions, as it provides information about the relationship between human agency and professional immigrant retraining.

Not only did participants engage in human agency, but also commonly endorsed open mindedness as a means of dealing with career related difficulties. For purposes of the current
study, open-mindedness was defined as, “the willingness to give up something in order to obtain a better solution along the career” and “the willingness to study and consider a range of options when forming a compromise” (Chen, 2004, p. 21). Within the current study, participants endorsed open-minded attitudes when obtaining survival jobs and when considering alternative occupations to their field of expertise. Participants expressed that maintaining open-minded attitudes mitigated the difficulty of initially finding employment in Canada, which in turn facilitated a smoother initial transition. Participants also reported that suggestions from other sources (e.g., people, public information) encouraged open mindedness when considering alternative paths to fields of expertise. Maintaining open-minded attitudes exemplifies that participants maintained a sense of practicality when making career related decisions, which is essential for successful career development (Chen, 2004). Within the current study, such practicality did seem to facilitate career development. Additionally, in congruence with previous research, open-minded attitudes demonstrated participants’ willingness to give up something (i.e., a more ideal state of work) in order to obtain better solutions (i.e., a more practical state of work) (Chen, 2004). These implications address the current study’s primary research question, as it suggests open-mindedness facilitates career development of professional immigrants.

Throughout retraining, participants commonly endorsed open mindedness as well. Open-minded attitudes toward types of retraining, learning, and balancing difficult circumstances such as work and school were endorsed. Being open minded enabled participants to perceive retraining as an opportunity as opposed to a burden, which in turn facilitated dedication within retraining and, ultimately career development. As suggested by Chen (2004), open-mindedness may represent a method of coping with certain hurdles within the ‘real world of work’. It may be the case that such attitudes were the product of a lack of ability or means to overcome certain
barriers (i.e., lack of credential recognition, restrictions and process of regaining credentials). Therefore, by ‘thinking wider’, and more ‘realistically’, participants were likely able to work around hurdles, as opposed to completely overcoming them, facilitating career development. Overall, again, this exemplifies the willingness to give up a more ideal state of work in order to facilitate a more realistic career development (Chen, 2004). These implications address one of the current study’s secondary research questions, as it provides information about the relationship between open-mindedness and professional immigrant retraining.

Lastly, participants also commonly endorsed proactive preparation when coping with career related challenges. Proactive preparation involves constructing a plan of action with regard to career ahead of time based on current information about viable career alternatives. It also involves developing a strategic vision, which facilitates making plans ahead of time to facilitate this vision. Through these processes, it has been suggested that individuals will develop a greater sense of open mindedness and creativity, allowing for a greater ability to obtain realistic ideal career goals (Chen, 2006). Within the current study, participants endorsed proactive preparation prior to migration to Canada, and when coping with career related difficulties. In order to prepare for career related challenges pre-migration, participants most often reported doing online research, obtaining proof of credentials from host countries and engaging in English improvement classes. All of these actions facilitated the retraining process, as it provided participants with knowledge regarding the necessity of retraining. In addition, such actions allowed participants to obtain necessary documentation and pre-requisites required for entry into retraining. In turn, participants expressed feeling more prepared for overall migration to Canada, which facilitated a smoother initial transition process. When coping with career related challenges, participants often reported attending career workshops and engaging in self-directed
planning. Such actions facilitated career development, as they assisted in the process of job applications, and the development of action plans. These implications address the current study’s primary research question, as it suggests how proactive preparation facilitates career development of professional immigrants.

Proactive preparation was also commonly utilized throughout and prior to retraining. Gaining knowledge from others, online research, and ensuring financial stability were most commonly cited. In line with the proposed theory of positive compromise, these results may suggest that participants were planning for future careers based on current information and observations (Chen, 2004). Additionally, it is possible that participants were envisioning the future in order to develop viable plans for career compromise (Peavy, 1993). In congruence with previous research, results suggest that through proactive preparation, participants were able to make better, more informed decisions with regard to career planning and decision making (Chen, 2004). Additionally, proactive preparation demonstrated participants’ abilities to maintain an open mind and a sense of agency throughout the career compromising process (Chen, 2004). These implications address one of the current study’s secondary research questions, as it provides information about the relationship between proactive preparation and professional immigrant retraining.

The results of the current study also extend to the greater notion of the theory of positive compromise. This theory suggests that simultaneously engaging in all three facets of positive compromise facilitates most optimal and realistic career development. The theory suggests that when focused on maintaining an open attitude toward change, and demonstrating action in congruence with career goals, an optimal compromise will occur (Chen, 2004). Within the current study, participants often endorsed engaging in both human agency and open-mindedness.
Given suggestions by Chen (2004), it may be the case that engaging in open-mindedness as well as human agency allowed for optimal career development. Open-mindedness allows for individuals to envision a wide range of creative career opportunities, while human agency allows for action upon such opportunities, increasing chances of positive career development. Considering that two common themes in the current study were open-mindedness and human agency, it may be the case that participants endorsed both successful career development and retraining due to engagement in both of these facets.

Not only do the results of the current study have implications for professional immigrants, but may also generalize to other populations as well. Given that the results of the current study suggested that positive outcomes exist between positive compromise and retraining experiences, it is likely that other students, outside of the professional immigrant population, may benefit from engaging in positive compromise as well. For example, it is possible that native-born Canadian students may also benefit from engaging in positive compromise in order to become more successful throughout educational training. This suggestion is in line with previous research indicating that positive educational outcomes, such as higher academic performance, are linked with the three facets of positive compromise (Multen, Brown & Lent, 1991; Zimmerman, 1990; Zimmerman & Bandura, 1994). Additionally, results of the current study may be beneficial for educational systems as a whole in order to promote success within educational programs. For example, universities or colleges may promote students’ engagement in positive compromise in order to increase chances of success through workshops or counselling.

Results of the current study also demonstrated the importance of resilience as it relates to positive compromise. Results suggested that participants commonly endorsed both open
mindedness and human agency, two key facets of positive compromise, in association with resilience. Participants insinuated that throughout career related challenges, persistence facilitated a ‘stronger mindset’, and that mental strength facilitated persistence as well. In addition, results of the current study indicated that resilience was associated with actions of human agency throughout retraining, such as motivation and persistence to obtain higher grades. In other words, in line with previous research, participants commonly expressed that acts of human agency facilitated resilience and vice versa (Chen, 1997). In line with research of Crawford, Wright and Masten (2006) as well as Masten (2007), the results of the current study suggest that participants’ positive attitudes toward retraining and education promoted resilience. In turn, participants were more likely to adapt to the new environment, reach educational goals and maintain open-minded attitudes. To extend on this, participants’ open-minded attitudes often translated to positive perceptions of retraining, which in turn facilitated resilience as well. In other words, participants were more likely to engage in positive compromise when they perceived retraining as a positive experience, and maintained their open-minded attitudes. As a result, positive career outcomes, such as obtaining career goals, survival within careers, and confidence ensued. This finding speaks to the fact that resilience and open-minded attitudes are closely linked, allowing greater success within retraining and overall career development. In general, findings suggest that resilience is linked to the central theme of the current study, namely, positive compromise. Specifically, open minded attitudes promoting positive perceptions of retraining, as well as engagement in human agency, fostered resilience. This correlation is demonstrated and supported by the evidence that individuals with higher levels of resiliency were more willing to compromise in a positive manner. It appears to indicate that the human quality of resilience may be an important aspect of compromise and act as a means of
engaging in positive compromise, in turn leading to a more successful career development. The three key constructs of positive compromise, i.e., human agency, open attitude, and proactive preparation, present the quality of resilience as they function collectively in individuals’ life-careers. In other words, resilience is an integral part and indicator of positive compromise, and vice versa. As such, a continuing effort in studying the active and dynamic coexistence of positive compromise and resilience is warranted and promising because it will inform the scope and enrich the contents of the positive compromise framework. While recognizing the correlation between resilience and positive compromise as a unique life-career phenomenon of professional immigrants in the context of the current study, implications surrounding this correlation may yield relevant and heuristic insights to contemplate, describe, and comprehend life-career experiences of individuals in similar or different situations. As such, the current study contributes to knowledge building on both topics of resilience and positive compromise, especially with regard to the dynamic correlation between the two, in a meaningful and timely manner.

These results may extend to provide partial explanations for findings of previous research suggesting that resilient attitudes are associated with positive career outcomes, such as increased career confidence, positive perceptions of the workplace, and the ability to achieve career goals (Remennick, 2005). It is possible that resilient attitudes facilitated acts of positive compromise, which in turn facilitated positive career outcomes. These implications address one of the current study’s secondary research questions, as it indicates how resilience impacts professional immigrant career development.

Implications for Professional Practise in Counselling
The current study’s aim was to uncover the role of positive compromise as it related to professional immigrants’ career development and retraining processes. Behaviours and attitudes representing positive compromise were identified, and the impacts of positive compromise on both professional immigrant career development and the retraining process were identified as well. Not only do the current findings provide support for the theory of positive compromise, but also have valuable practical implications for counsellors who are providing support and guidance to professional immigrants.

The findings of the present study can be helpful to career counsellors who intend to help facilitate both career development and retraining progress for professional immigrants. The current study identified specific behaviours utilized by professional immigrants that are associated with positive compromise, which facilitated career development and retraining success. With regard to human agency, various behaviours were identified that facilitated career development and retraining success. Persistently applying for jobs, setting goals to obtain jobs, engaging in volunteering related to career goals, enrolling in occupational workshops, and networking were all endorsed in order to cope with career related challenges. Participants reported that these actions were directly related to obtaining employment, building occupational confidence, and improving language skills. Previous literature has indicated that career counselors should encourage clients to “take ownership of their career decision making and act” (Chen, 2004, p. 24). Given the findings of the current study, it is important that the counselors not only encourage action, but encourage specific action associated with findings of the current study. For example, it may be advisable that counselors encourage clients to engage in acts of human agency such as persistence when applying for jobs, or volunteering in areas related to career interests. Throughout retraining, participants commonly endorsed goal setting, dedication,
persistence, and self-reflection and reported that these actions facilitated learning, success and recognition of positive life-lessons. Again, it may be helpful for counselors to encourage professional immigrants to engage in specific actions throughout retraining that are more likely to facilitate positive outcomes. For example, counselors may encourage clients to goal-set and engage in self-reflection of efficacy of actions in order to promote a successful retraining experience.

Not only are counselors encouraged to promote human action within the career compromising process, but also to promote the importance of maintaining an open mind during this process as well. It has been suggested that by maintaining an open mind, individuals are better able to make the changes necessary when facing a career compromise. As such, it is advisable that career counselors educate their clients about the importance of maintaining an open mind (Chen, 2004). Given that counselors are encouraged to educate clients on this topic, and that the current study identified positive outcomes associated with maintaining an open attitude, it may be helpful to review the current study’s findings with clients in order to encourage open-mindedness. For example, counselors may relay to clients that previous professional immigrants who have kept an open mind expressed having a greater number of career alternatives and were more satisfied with their current occupations. In addition, when counseling new professional immigrants who are searching for temporary survival jobs, it may be helpful to communicate that maintaining an open mind facilitates the initial career search. In addition to encouraging open-mindedness throughout career compromise, it may also be helpful for counselors to highlight the importance of maintaining an open mind throughout retraining as well. Within the current study, participants expressed that maintaining an open-minded attitude throughout retraining was related to obtaining desired careers, recognizing interests, and having
positive outlooks on both the retraining experience and balancing both work and school. By relaying such information to clients, counselors may foster the desire and ability to maintain an open mind.

Chen (2004) also highlighted the importance of the career counselor’s responsibility to ensure clients engage in proactive preparation. In order to do so, it is suggested that counselors help clients envision future possibilities to cope with career related difficulties. The results of the current study support this suggestion, as participants indicated that proactive preparation facilitated the development of action plans, which facilitated career development. Given these results, counselors should act in congruence with suggestions made by Chen (2004). In addition, the current study suggested that many participants engaged in proactive preparation as a result of encouragement to develop action plans within career workshops. For example, workshops helped develop action plans for the process of job application by encouraging interview preparation, and resume improvement. Given these results, it may be helpful for counselors to encourage clients to engage in career workshops in order to facilitate proactive preparation, and ultimately career development. Proactive preparation was also endorsed within the current study as a means of preparing for the retraining process. Participants associated gaining knowledge from others, online research, and financial planning with confidence to pursue retraining, as well as retraining success. In turn, this facilitated career development. As such, it is important that counselors encourage clients to engage in such acts of pro-action, such as seeking knowledge from others and financial planning, in order to encourage retraining success and facilitate career development.

Not only is it important to consider the implications of the current study’s findings as they relate to positive compromise, but also to consider the implications of findings associated
with resilience. Given that the current study’s results indicated that professional immigrants linked resilience to human agency (i.e., motivation throughout retraining, persistence to obtain higher grades), and various positive outcomes, (i.e., development of communication skills, success throughout retraining, and current occupational satisfaction), it is important that career counsellors foster an environment that promotes resilience in combination with human agency. In order to do so, counsellors may encourage clients to act in congruence with behaviours reported in the current study that are representative of resilience. For example, endorsing positive associations to new forms of learning, displaying optimistic attitudes toward busy schedules, and reporting a stronger sense of self as a result of managing difficulties throughout retraining are behaviours representative of resilience that counsellors may encourage clients to act on. Additionally, participants commonly endorsed the notion that human agency facilitated resilience and vice versa, which in turn enabled positive career and retraining outcomes. As such, it may be advisable for career counsellors to encourage clients to demonstrate both human agency and resilience in order to strengthen both of these notions, and overall facilitate career development. Overall, by encouraging professional immigrants to engage in behaviours associated with resilience, greater likelihood of positive career development will ensue.

**Implications for Self-Help**

Given that some professional immigrants may not have the ability to seek professional counseling for various reasons, such as financial or time constraints, it is important to address how the current study’s findings can facilitate self-help. For example, given the findings of the current study, participants may choose to engage in specific behaviours and attitudes associated with positive compromise in order to facilitate career development. For example, one may wish to engage in volunteering or occupational workshops, as such behaviours associated with
positive compromise have facilitated retraining and career development. In addition, given that participants in the current study engaged in proactive preparation in order to develop realistic plans of action for future career development, professional immigrants may want to utilize this knowledge and prepare before migration to Canada as well.

Limitations

Despite the fact that the results of the current study have important implications for career development of professional immigrants’ within Canada, it is possible that various limitations were present. It is essential to address such limitations, and acknowledge how they may impact the results of the current study. Firstly, participants in the current study were likely partially motivated to participate in order to help facilitate the improvement of career development of professional Canadian immigrants. As such, it is possible that the participants within this sample are more motivated in general with regard to career development. Additionally, the criteria to participate within the current study required that participants held an occupation for at least a year post retraining. As such, it is possible that those who participated in the current study had more successful retraining experiences that enabled them to gain employment afterward. Therefore, these participants likely represent a population that experienced more positive retraining events. Furthermore, it may be worth noting that the original research interview questions were framed in a more general and inclusive manner, and they were not all aiming at the specificity of positive compromise and resilience, although there were ample meanings of both positive compromise and resilience expressed and mirrored in the narrative accounts of the participants. This could lead to gaps and discrepancies in meaning interpretation at times. Lastly, it is possible that participants felt the need to please the interviewers, and/ or shed a positive light on their retraining and career development experiences to present a positive image. Therefore, it
is possible that not all participants answered questions with complete honesty, causing the current data to lack accurate representation of professional immigrant experiences.

**Future Directions**

The current study is one of the few that has addressed the impact of positive compromise on career development. In addition, it is the only study known to the current researcher that has addressed positive compromise as it relates to professional immigrant retraining experiences in Canada. However, as mentioned, the current study did not pose questions that directly mirrored definitions of positive compromise. As such, it may be important for future researchers to conduct similar in-depth interviews that directly address the notion of positive compromise as it relates to retraining and overall career development. Additionally, given that results indicate positive associations between both positive compromise and retraining as well as positive compromise and career development, it may be helpful to conduct research in the area of career counseling as it relates to positive compromise, resilience and professional immigrant career development. Given such positive associations, it would be helpful for counselors to encourage clients to act in congruence with positive compromise and resilience. As such, future researchers could focus on specific methods in which counselors can best implement this encouragement within the counseling setting.

**Conclusions**

The results of the current study indicate that both positive compromise and resilience are positively associated with professional immigrant career development and retraining. Immigrants reported that utilizing human agency, open-mindedness and proactive preparation facilitated
career development and successful retraining. Human agency was endorsed by participants via persistence throughout job search, goal setting, carrying out actions in congruence with goals, and self-reflection throughout retraining. Participants demonstrated open-mindedness when searching for initial careers, and considering permanent alternatives to their expert fields. Furthermore, open-minded attitudes were demonstrated when considering various types of retraining, learning, and balancing work and school. Those who entered career workshops commonly endorsed proactive preparation; as such participants reported preparing for job-application process. Additionally, many participants engaged in proactive preparation in order to facilitate retraining success by gaining knowledge from others, online research, and financial planning. Professional immigrants within the current study asserted that such behaviours were related to positive career development and retraining outcomes. As such, it is important that professional immigrants aspire to demonstrate positive compromise throughout both retraining and when considering a multitude of career directions. Career counselors may aid this process by encouraging professional immigrants to act in congruence with positive compromise and resilience in order to facilitate career development. Overall, the current study’s results indicating that positive associations exist between positive compromise and career development may serve as a means to facilitate the career development of future professional Canadian immigrants. Thus, aspiring to enable an overall enhanced, career development experience for all professional immigrants.
REFERENCES


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Citizenship and Multiculturalism Division, Immigrant Credentials and Labour Market Branch.


APPENDIX A: Recruitment Advertisement/Poster

RECRUITMENT ADVERTISEMENT RE: How retraining affects re-entry: Immigrants' vocational well-being

The recruitment poster will contain the following information:

RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS WANTED for a study of the CAREER RETRAINING EXPERIENCES OF IMMIGRANT PROFESSIONALS IN CANADA

- You came to Canada as an immigrant within the timeframe of January 1, 1999 to December 30, 2006
- You have a university degree that was earned outside of Canada
- You worked full-time in a professional occupation in your country of origin for at least three-years before coming to Canada
- You have held employment in Canada (full-time or part-time), for a minimum of 1 year after completing your Canadian retraining
- You engaged in retraining in Canada and earned a university, college or professionally certified and formal diploma, certificate, certification or accreditation (records/proof of retraining/educational program completion required)
- You are at least 25 years of age and older

If all of the above applies, please contact:
416.978.0725
careerstudy.oise@utoronto.ca

Interviews conducted in English – Fluency is required

FINANCIALLY COMPENSATED $35

The interviews are part of a research project lead by Dr. Charles Chen in Counselling Psychology at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto. You must not have previously participated in any of Dr. Charles Chen’s research projects to date in order to be eligible to participate.
APPENDIX B: Telephone Script

TELEPHONE SCRIPT (or LETTER) OF INITIAL CONTACT RE: How retraining affects re-entry: Immigrants' vocational well-being

Thank you very much for calling, and we really appreciate your interest in our research project. First I would like to tell you a bit about the study. Then you can take some time to consider whether you would like to participate in this project or not. If you have questions, please feel free to interrupt me at any time and ask them.

You are cordially invited to attend this interview. The interview questions are designed to examine the career retraining and worklife adjustment experiences of new immigrant professionals. It is expected that the results from this study will lead to a better understanding of immigrant professionals' career retraining experiences and needs, and of the specific barriers and opportunities present for immigrant professionals in their vocational life transition in Canada. The interview questions will cover information about your recent retraining experiences, your current life career goals, possibilities for career planning and development, relevant demographic information, and about the people and events in your life that affect your effort in rebuilding your vocational life in Canada.

There are no foreseeable risks in completing this interview. We hope that you will benefit from the interview process with an increased self-awareness on issues related to career retraining, career exploration, and planning. We also hope that you would find the exploring nature of the study an interesting process from which you might learn something. However, even if the study does not benefit you directly, we hope that it will assist us in developing career counselling programs that will be beneficial to many other new immigrant professional workers arriving in this country every year. We really appreciate your interest, and we are very grateful to your participation.

To follow the nature and purpose of the study stated above, research participants in this study will include a total of 90 to 120 recent immigrant professionals who have completed retraining in Canada. All participants selected will be 25 years of age and older. Each participant is invited to complete an audiotaped interview that will last for about 2 hours. The interview will take place in a meeting room at OISE/University of Toronto. As part of the interview, you will be asked to complete and return a 2-page Participant Information Sheet that contains your contact information and basic demographic information relevant to this research project.
The term "new immigrant professionals who have completed retraining in Canada" in this study refers to a person who meets the following criteria:

1. You are at least 25 years of age and older.

2. You came to Canada as an immigrant within the timeframe of January 1, 1999 to December 30, 2006.

3. You have a university degree that was earned outside of Canada. (4) You worked full-time in a professional occupation in your country of origin for at least three years before coming to Canada. (5) You engaged in retraining in Canada and earned a university, college or professionally certified and formal diploma, certificate, certification or accreditation (records/proof of retraining/educational program completion required).

6. You have held employment in Canada, either on a full-time or part-time basis, for a minimum of 1 year after completing your Canadian retraining.

7. You are fluent in English (interviews are conducted in English). (8) You must not have previously participated in any of Dr. Charles P. Chen’s research projects to date.

As one of the participants, your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You are under no obligation to complete the study, even if you finish a portion of it and then decide that you do not wish to continue. You may choose to refuse to answer any particular question or questions posed to you and still complete the interview. You may also refuse to participate or withdraw from the study, at any time, without any negative consequences to your personal life, academic standing, and other career prospects later. Your employer(s) will NOT be informed either of your involvement in the study or of any aspects of the interview discussion.

In recognition of the time and effort you have given to participate in this research project, we would like to offer you an honorarium of $35 if you agree to participate and complete the interview process.

While we will be making an audiotape of this interview, your responses to this interview will be kept completely anonymous. Your results will be assigned to a code number to protect your identity. Any information that could lead to identify you (e.g., name) will be removed from the data while the interviews are transcribed into written data, i.e., written transcripts of the interview session. You will be assigned a pseudonym in the interview, as well as throughout the entire research process, including in the data analysis, final research report(s), and other related
presentations and publications. Any possible identifying information about you will be replaced by a code during the research process. Your contact information, such as your name, phone numbers and email address, will be coded and kept separately from other files. All written and audiotaped data will be kept in secured files and in a locked cabinet to which only the researcher and his research assistants have access. The data will be kept for 5 years starting from the completion date of the research project. After this 5-year time period, all the data including the audiotapes will be destroyed and/or erased. In the event that, during the interview, you express an intention to harm yourself or harm others, it is our duty to break confidentiality and report this content to the authority.

The results of this study may be used again in another study. However, they will only be used by Dr. Chen and his assistants for research related to immigrant professionals' vocational and career development and retraining issues. These research results may be presented in public settings such as professional and/or academic conferences, and other public forums. Reports and articles based on the research may also be published in academic and/or professional journals. Under such circumstances, your identity will remain strictly confidential, and only your pseudonym and coded information may be utilized.

We will be very glad to provide you with a summary of the current study’s results if you wish to receive such a summary report when this research project is completed.

If you have any questions, please feel free to ask either Dr. Chen, or his research assistant(s) (name of the prospective research assistants).

If you need more time to think about your option, please feel free to do so. You may contact me in a later time if you are interested in arranging an interview schedule with me.

If you are sure that you want to participate in this research, I can set up a time schedule with you now for the research interview.

Whether you will participate in the interview or not, I really appreciate your interest. Again, thank you very much for your time, and your inquiry about our research project!
APPENDIX C: Consent Form
(Printed on the letterhead of OISE/University of Toronto)

CONSENT FORM

RE: How retraining affects re-entry: Immigrants' vocational well-being

You are cordially invited to attend this interview. The interview is part of a research project being conducted by Dr. Charles Chen, a Professor of Counselling Psychology at Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto (OISE, UT), and his research assistants. The interview questions are designed to examine the career retraining and worklife adjustment experiences of new immigrant professionals. It is expected that the results from this study will lead to a better understanding of immigrant professionals' career retraining experiences and needs, and of the specific barriers and opportunities present for immigrant professionals in their vocational life transition in Canada. The interview questions will cover information about your recent retraining experiences, your current life career goals, possibilities for career planning and development, relevant demographic information, and about the people and events in your life that affect your effort in rebuilding your vocational life in Canada.

There are no foreseeable risks in completing this interview. We hope that you will benefit from the interview process with an increased self-awareness on issues related to career retraining, career exploration, and planning. We also hope that you would find the exploring nature of the study an interesting process from which you might learn something. However, even if the study does not benefit you directly, we hope that it will assist us in developing career counselling programs that will be beneficial to many other new immigrant professional workers arriving in this country every year. We really appreciate your interest, and we are very grateful to your participation.

To follow the nature and purpose of the study stated above, research participants in this study will include a total of 90 to 120 recent immigrant professionals who have completed retraining in Canada. All participants selected will be 25 years of age and older. Each participant is invited to complete an audiotaped interview that will last for about 2 hours. The interview will take place in a meeting room at OISE/University of Toronto. As part of the interview, you will be asked to complete and return a 2-page Participant Information Sheet that contains your contact information and basic demographic information relevant to this research project.

The term "new immigrant professionals who have completed retraining in Canada" in this study refers to a person who meets the following criteria:

(1) You are at least 25 years of age and older.

(2) You came to Canada as an immigrant within the timeframe of January 1, 1999 to December 30, 2006.

(3) You have a university degree that was earned outside of Canada. (4) You worked full-time in a professional occupation in your country of origin for at least three years before coming to Canada. (5) You engaged in retraining in Canada and earned a university, college or
professionally certified and formal diploma, certificate, certification or accreditation (records/proof of retraining/educational program completion required).

(6) You have held employment in Canada, either on a full-time or part-time basis, for a minimum of 3 years after completing your Canadian retraining.

(7) You are fluent in English (interviews are conducted in English). (8) You must not have previously participated in any of Dr. Charles P. Chen’s research projects to date.

As one of the participants, your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You are under no obligation to complete the study, even if you finish a portion of it and then decide that you do not wish to continue. You may choose to refuse to answer any particular question or questions posed to you and still complete the interview. You may also refuse to participate or withdraw from the study, at any time, without any negative consequences to your personal life, academic standing, and other career prospects later. Your employer(s) will NOT be informed either of your involvement in the study or of any aspects of the interview discussion.

In recognition of the time and effort you have given to participate in this research project, we would like to offer you an honorarium of $35 if you agree to participate and complete the interview process.

While we will be making an audiotape of this interview, your responses to this interview will be kept completely anonymous. Your results will be assigned to a code number to protect your identity. Any information that could lead to identify you (e.g., name) will be removed from the data while the interviews are transcribed into written data, i.e., written transcripts of the interview session. You will be assigned a pseudonym in the interview, as well as throughout the entire research process, including in the data analysis, final research report(s), and other related presentations and publications. Any possible identifying information about you will be replaced by a code during the research process. Your contact information, such as your name, phone numbers and email address, will be coded and kept separately from other files. All written and audiotaped data will be kept in secured files and in a locked cabinet to which only the researcher and his research assistants have access. The data will be kept for 5 years starting from the completion date of the research project. After this 5-year time period, all the data including the audiotapes will be destroyed and/or erased. In the event that, during the interview, you express an intention to harm yourself or harm others, it is our duty to break confidentiality and report this content to the authority.

The results of this study may be used again in another study. However, they will only be used by the Principal Investigator and his assistants for research related to immigrant professionals' vocational and career development and retraining issues. These research results may be presented in public settings such as professional and/or academic conferences, and other public forums. Reports and articles based on the research may also be published in academic and/or professional journals. Under such circumstances, your identity will remain strictly confidential, and only your pseudonym and coded information may be utilized.

We will be very glad to provide you with a summary of the current study’s results if you wish to receive such a summary report when this research project is completed.
If you have any questions, please feel free to ask either the Principal Investigator, or his research assistant(s) (name of the prospective research assistants). Signing the bottom of this form will constitute your consent to this interview, as well as your consent to participate in this research project.

Thank you very much for your time and valuable cooperation.

Name of Principal Investigator
Professor
Canada Research Chair
Counselling Psychology Program
Department of Adult Education
And Counselling Psychology
OISE, University of Toronto

Name of the Research Assistant(s)
Counselling Psychology Program
Department of Adult Education
OISE, University of Toronto
Tel.: Email:

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I understand the above information and voluntarily consent to participate in the research project described above. I have been offered a copy of this consent form for my own reference.

______________________________________________________________
(Print: First and Last Names of Research Participant)

________________________________________ ________________________
(Signature of Research Participant) (Date)
APPENDIX D: Interview Questions

THEME QUESTIONS FOR THE INTERVIEW

RE: How retraining affects re-entry: Immigrants' vocational well-being

Demographic Information.

1. Gender:
2. Age (in years):
3. Month and Year arriving in Canada:
   From – home country ___________________________ Immigrated with:
   Spouse ___ Family ___
   Close contact in Canada prior to immigrating? (state relationship: e.g., friend, cousin, etc.) ________________________________
4. Level of Education obtained before coming to Canada (e.g., college education, bachelor's degree, professional certificate, etc.): ________________________________
5. Please specify the Major/Discipline of your education from your home country (i.e., arts, science, engineering, commerce, etc): ________________________________
   Degree or type of retraining completed after coming to Canada:
   -Institution ________________________________
   -Program length ________________________________
   -Type of qualification/credential ________________________________
   -Type of document (Diploma/certificate/degree) ________________________________
6. Please indicate your professional and/or vocational title before coming to Canada (e.g., teacher, nurse, engineer, accountant, etc.): ________________________________
7. Please indicate your industry: ________________________________
   Please specify your workplace setting in your home country (i.e., school, hospital, factory, accounting firm, etc): ________________________________
8. Please indicate the job title and/or the employment you are currently holding in Canada:

Please specify how long you have been working in this employment:
Date of interview: ________________________________

Questions: I. Before Coming to Canada

(1) I’d like to ask you about your education experience.
   a) What was the name of your degree?
   b) How many years was your degree?
   c) Was there a practical component to your degree?
   d) Was there a registration component to your profession?

(2) I’m going to ask you some questions about your life and work experiences before coming to Canada.
   a) What was your job like before you came to Canada?
   b) How satisfied were you with your career prior to coming to Canada?
   c) Things you liked and didn’t like?
   d) How central was your career to your sense of self?

(3) Why did you want to come to Canada, and how did you make this decision to come? -- Reason(s), and main purpose.
   -- Events and experiences and information that triggered your decision

(4) (If not answered already) Was employment and worklife involved in your decision of immigration? (and how) What were your expectations for employment in Canada? (if not already answered) How confident did you feel about finding work in your profession? Did you do any preparation for your qualifications to be transferable to Canada before coming to Canada? -- (If not already answered) Can you tell me about your preparation and planning for employment in Canada?

(5) How much control did you feel you would have in Canada over employment decisions?

(6) Did you anticipate or plan on having to do retraining once you arrived in Canada?

(7) If yes, did you do any planning for your retraining prior to coming to Canada? What planning did you do?
(8) What were your expectations of the retraining process? What did you think the experience would be like?

II. After Coming to Canada: Initial General Experience

(9) How did you feel when you initially came to Canada? (Were things different than your expectations/what you expected?)

(10) What were the most significant changes and difficulties you experienced when you first came to Canada?

   a) How did you cope with the changes and difficulties in life?

   b) What was most helpful, least helpful for coping with these changes?

   c) How did these experiences impact your well-being? (mental and physical health), and the well-being of your family?

(11) How did your ability to cope with these changes impact your self-esteem and confidence levels?

(12) Did you search for help or resources? If so, what were they?

(13) Having faced these difficulties/changes, did you develop a plan of action for your career development? Did that include plans for retraining?

III. Ongoing Vocational Adjustment and Transition in Canada

(14) How important was it for you to find a job when you first came to Canada? Which kind of jobs did you intend to find to get your worklife restarted in Canada?

(15) (If not already answered, Cover all of these points) What were the major factors you had to consider when you were trying to find employment in Canada?

   --Concerns for financial survival.

   --Gain Canadian experience.

   --Some relevancy to previous educational and professional background experience.

(16) What did you do to try to get a job that is related to your previous vocational and/or
professional background experience from your home country? (Use discretion). -if applicable.

(17) Could you tell me briefly in sequential order the main jobs you have held since coming to this country, and your experiences with these jobs?

(18) Was there a period of time during which you were unemployed after coming to Canada? For how long? How did this affect you?

(19) How difficult or easy was your original job search? What factors made the search easier and/or more difficult?

(20) What were some of the expected and unexpected events that influenced your job-seeking and vocational development experiences in Canada? And how did you respond to such events?

--Opportunities/people that led you to a vocational choice

--Anticipated or unanticipated barriers.

a) What was most helpful, least helpful to you?

(21) What were some of the supports you found in your job search in Canada? Could you give me some specific examples?

(22) In your job-search in Canada, how useful was your work experience from your home country?

(23) Were your qualifications and training from your home country useful in getting work?

(24) How long after you came to Canada did you decide to pursue retraining/ further education? What led to that decision? What factors influenced this decision? Did anyone influence your decision?

(25) What had you hoped your retraining or education in Canada would lead to?

(26) How did you plan for your retraining? Did you encounter any barriers in this process?

(27) What actions did you take to make your retraining experience possible? -- What resources did you seek out? Did anyone help you?

(28) (If not already answered) How did you find out about available retraining opportunities? (career centre, internet, social network, job etc...)

(29) What form of retraining or professional training did you do once you arrived in Canada? -- Did you try to regain your pre-Canada professional qualification/designation?

(30) In what field was your retraining? How did you choose the program/field? -- Why did you stay in the same field? OR Why did you change fields? -- If you changed fields, how did you come to the decision to change?

(31) How did you find this new "learning" experience in Canada? Did you have to change your "learning style"? In what ways?

(32) Could you describe your general impression and feeling about this training experience?

-- Things you enjoyed the most.

-- Things you enjoyed the least.

(33) How did the retraining compare to your original training back home?

(34) Did the retraining experience differ from what you expected it would be like?

(35) If different how did it affect you? How did you cope?

(36) (If not already touched on) Were there any unexpected or chance events that occurred prior to, during, and after your retraining? -- Any unexpected events that occurred that led you to take the training program? -- Any unexpected learning experiences?

-- Any unexpected benefits or costs from retraining?

(37) How much control (or lack of control) did you feel you had in terms of your retraining experience? (ref for interviewer e.g. choice of institute, choice of certificate, ability to re-accredit in your old field vs. being forced to retrain for something completely new, limitations of funding sources or finances for training, etc...).

a) What led to this feeling and what did you do in response to it?

(38) Thinking about your pre-Canada skills and abilities, how did you think you would perform in the retraining? (interviewer: thinking about self-efficacy)

(39) How did you feel about having to take this retraining? (e.g. resentment for the necessity of retraining vs. framing it as a new opportunity, positive chance for growth vs. feeling lucky that
retraining was a possibility...)-interviewer give both sides of possibility.

(40) What were some sources of support for you during your retraining experience? (e.g. family, classmates, mentors, friends, etc...)

(41) What was the role of your interests or hobbies in coping with your retraining experience? How do these activities help you cope? (e.g. losing yourself, engaging)

(42) Were you employed during your retraining experience? Which role? What was it like having to balance both? Do you feel it impacted your retraining?

IV. Results of Post-Retraining

(43) How important and useful was your Canadian retraining experience to your employment opportunities in this country?

--Leading to employment that was similar or close to your background experience. --Leading to new vocational choice and opportunity.

--Leading to no beneficial outcome for employment.

(44) What is your understanding of why it became necessary for you to pursue retraining in Canada?

(45) (For those of you who re-trained in your original career), do you agree that the retraining was necessary for you to be competent in your profession after arriving here in Canada?

(46) How did you feel about your skills and abilities after the training program? (Did you feel better or discouraged about yourself, the same?)

(47) How did the process of retraining affect (or not affect) your sense of "career identity"? (Sense of yourself or experience of yourself as ___profession)

a) Did your sense of identity evolve during your retraining experience (identity at the beginning vs. middle vs. end)?

b) What impact does this experience have on your perception of self-worthiness as a new Canadian?

(48) Has your career taken on a different role in your life as a result of your retraining
experience?

-- Has your career identity changed as a result of your retraining experience?

(49) During the retraining, what did you discover about yourself? (Prompt: Self-discovery and meaning on a personal career-related level)

(50) Did your retraining lead you to be more encouraged or discouraged to pursue your desired career? How come?

(51) How did the retraining program impact the factors that motivate you within your career? Did your career-related values change? (e.g. enjoyment of work and interest in professional activities vs. importance of prestige, salary, promotion) If so, how so?

(52) Is there anything else that you feel you gained or lost through retraining?

(53) What were some of the main lessons you learned from your retraining experience in Canada?

(54) Was the retraining what you expected it to be? If not, how did it differ? What issues did this raise? How did you feel about those issues? What did you do about those issues?

(55) How did any difference in expectations versus the reality of your retraining affect your sense of identity or value as a person, your confidence levels, and feelings in terms of your career?

(56) What were the major compromises you made when approaching retraining opportunities in Canada? How did you decide what to do when you had to make a compromise in your retraining? (Joint action - family, mentor, community)

(57) How did you feel when you had to make a compromise for your retraining choice?

(58) In general, how has your retraining impacted your experience as a new worker in Canada?

(59) How important were your own actions in setting up and completing your retraining?

(60) After your retraining, what did you do to build your career in Canada? (Steps toward current employment... see next section)

V. Current Employment.
(61) Could you tell me about the circumstances that led you to your present work life? --The nature of your employment.

(62) How do you feel about your current job? Could you tell me the things you like and/or dislike about your current employment?

(63) How does the employment you hold now compare to the employment you held prior to moving to Canada?

(64) How important is your vocational life in your total new life in Canada? How does your work life affect your personal and family life here?

(65) Do you feel a sense of vocational and career identity from your current employment experience in Canada? Why or why not?

(66) Do you feel that some of your qualifications (e.g., hard and soft skills) or strengths are not being used in your work-life? For example, do you have skills that are not used in your job? What needs to change for your skills to be better utilized? (e.g. actions you can take, actions your employer or the system can take)

(67) Overall, what factors have been the most influential in helping you to succeed in your career development within Canada? What factors have made your career life difficult?

(68) Have any factors challenged your beliefs that you could succeed in your career/work-life?
(69) How satisfied do you feel about your career/work-life experience in Canada? (70) Consider your life as it has turned out until now, how much of an element of choice has there been? For example, is the job you do a chosen vocation or more or less the result of a series of chance events? Are there any aspects of your life that are the result of a considered choice?

(71) What has the role of chance been in your life and career in Canada? What did you do in response to chance events?

a) How do you feel about the chance events in your life?

(72) What are some of your main concerns and needs about your future worklife in Canada? How do you feel about your future vocational development prospects in Canada, and why do you feel this way?

(73) Do you intend or expect to pursue any additional retraining in the future? Why or why not?
What type?

(74) What will you intend to do to improve the quality of your work-life and to enhance your career development in Canada?

(75) Anticipate your vocational direction 5 years from now. a) How have your career priorities changed?

(76) What are some of the most important career-related lessons you learned and looking back, is there anything that you would have done differently?