



Title: Immigrant Category, Social Networks and Ethnic Workplaces Over Time: A Longitudinal Analysis of Immigrants' Economic Integration in Canada

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Research Question:

This paper examines how the choice of ethnic or non-ethnic workplace influences the ethnic composition of social networks, how these factors impact immigrants' economic success, and how these patterns differ across immigrant categories.

Importance:

Immigrants who arrive under economic, family, and refugee immigration categories differ in terms of their resources, their forms of capital, and their perceived suitability for contributing to a particular economy. Immigration policies largely sort them into distinct pathways of incorporation and, as such, it is critical to understand the impact on immigrant integration.

Research Findings:

Our study shows that immigrant categories, or the different types of immigrants selected by contemporary immigration policies, need to be factored into considerations of the economic benefits of the ethnic economy. It is not simply a matter of whether "immigrants" can achieve mobility through their ethnic communities to avoid the structural barriers in the primary labor market, or if the open economy provides them with greater advantages in the long term. Rather, certain immigrants face penalties in parts of the economy that other immigrants do not. Real structural barriers exist, preventing family immigrants who work in the non-ethnic economy from receiving the same returns to their human capital as economic immigrants.

Implications:

Immigrant policies, by sorting immigrants into different visa categories based on their resources and economic suitability, help to create these segmented trajectories of incorporation.