

Foreign Educated Teachers in Canada:  
Paralyzed Human Resource

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## **Foreign Educated Teachers in Canada: Paralyzed Human Resource**

### **Introduction:**

Immigration has been part of Canadian culture for many years. Every year, large numbers of immigrants arrive in Canada, among them many foreign-educated teachers, come into this country in the hopes of a better life and career advancement. Despite their initial optimism, they soon discover that the local labor market tends to undervalue their qualifications and experience. As a result, the country fails to capitalize on skilled human resources that are essential to the school system. This paper addresses the major challenges facing foreign-educated teachers in Canada in general, drawing in particular on my personal experience in the Manitoba school system.

### **Background**

Canada is a multicultural society, home to diverse groups originating from different parts of the world. Since the first European explorers reached the east coast of the country early in the 1660s, significant numbers of immigrants have continued to enter the country in search of a better life and professional advancement. Between 1896 and 1905, for example, the settlement of the West with an offer of free land resulted in larger numbers of immigrants from the United Kingdom, other parts of Europe and the United States and in 1913, about 400,000 immigrants arrived in Canada (Facts and Figures: Immigration overview Permanent and Temporary Residents, 2005,p.4). This trend of immigration has generally been of benefit to Canada and has enhanced the development of the country. Canada is now receiving immigrants from all over the world. However, in the words of Mackenzie (2005): “The not so good news is that many immigrants are experiencing difficulties with

both the process and outcomes of labor market integration, resulting in an underutilization of skills and experience”. Therefore, there is a need to revise the existing trend of low utilization of skilled immigrant in Canadian labor market.

To explore the reasons for this situation, we must first examine how immigrants come to Canada and with what status.

The authority responsible for the flow of immigrants to Canada is Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), which receives and processes potential immigrants’ applications. According to Citizenship and Immigration of Canada official publication, Facts and Figures 2005, immigrants can come into Canada through one of the three main categories: Economic Class, Family Class and Refugee Class. Refugee class immigrants refer to people who fled their home country due to persecution, and/or other socio-economic and political problems and have fear returning to their country of nationality or residence. Family class includes people, who come to Canada to join their immediate families. Economic class immigrants are people (and their dependents) who are selected by Citizenship and Immigration Canada on the basis of their skills and educational experiences suitable to the Canadian labor markets. (Facts and Figures, 2005)

Settlement in Canada is only the first phase of immigration; for the immigration process to be a success story, integration must follow. In this regard, the 2005 Annual Report of Citizenship and Immigration Canada states: “In order to maximize the economic, social and cultural benefits of immigration, newcomers must be able to participate fully in Canadian

society and have access to the same quality of life that Canadians enjoy”. However, full integration of immigrants in Canadian socio-economic activities has many difficulties, both explainable and unexplainable. Even the media have reported the suffering of professional immigrants in Canada since the middle of the 1990s The *Winnipeg Free Press* for instance reports that skilled immigrants are “(a) great waste of potential: Many immigrant professionals forced to subsist on low-wage jobs, welfare.” (*Winnipeg Free Press*, January 14, 1995).

According to Citizenship and Immigration Canada Annual Report (2006), a total number of 262,236 permanent residents were admitted to Canada in the year 2005, of which 156,310 admissions (60% of the total) were in the Economic Class and 105,926 admissions (40% of the total) were in the non-economic class. Although economic class of immigrant includes people who have basic skills and training for the Canadian labor market, it did not automatically imply that skilled immigrants would be able to access employment in their area of expertise in Canada. This is a very frustrating experience for those with education and experience who find themselves unable to use their skills. Their high expectations of Canada, which include career opportunities and a better life, thus become mere illusions.

However, recent records indicate that the economic status of working class immigrants is declining alarmingly indicating an increase in their levels of poverty and under-employment. For example, according to Canada’s Immigration Program [CIP], 2004, data from the 2001 census shows that the gap between the earnings of recently arrived immigrants working full-time and their Canadian-born counterparts has widened in the last 20 years. This research, quoting Statistics Canada’s research paper entitled “Will they ever

converge? Earnings of immigrant and Canadian-born workers over the last two decades”, also discloses the fact that between 1980 and 2000, the real earnings of recent male immigrants (defined as immigrants who had arrived in the five previous years) not only decreased by 7% on average, but the gap between their earnings and those of their Canadian-born counterparts more than doubled (from 17% lower in 1980 to 40% lower in 2000). It further indicates that the gap between the earnings of recently arrived female immigrants and those of Canadian-born women went from 23% to 45% between 1980 and 2000, although their incomes did not decline in real terms. On the contrary, the low-income rate of the Canadian-born population was declining (from 17.2% in 1980 to 14.3% in 2000), while the low-income rate of recent immigrants (that is, those in Canada less than five years) increased from 24.6% to 35.8%, peaking at 47% in 1995. This research does not give a breakdown of the increasing low-income rate in terms of age, family type, language, or education, although immigrants from Africa and Asia were more affected. However, the report did conclude that foreign work experience does not bring the economic returns that might be expected in Canada (CIP, 2004).

The Immigrant Job Seekers Public & Private Sector Managers report (2002) identified two major barriers for skilled immigrants to enter the Canadian work force: lack of Canadian work experience and lack of proficiency in the official languages. As a result, skilled immigrants are often pushed to join the low-wage work force on their arrival. This is also true for foreign-educated teachers in Canada. For example, the annual report of the Ontario College of Teachers (2004) indicates that skilled immigrant teachers experience a lower rate of employment as compared to newly certified teachers with no teaching experience.

This trend of marginalizing internationally trained teachers from the Canadian work force contradicts the country's reputation and its continuous efforts to include multi-cultural values in Canadian school system.

The Canadian school system is in need of greater diversity in the teaching force as the "baby boomers" are now retiring and high numbers of immigrant students are entering the education system. Integrating skilled immigrant teachers into Canadian schools can be one solution to respond to these demands. Besides increasing the cultural diversity in schools, the inclusion of immigrant teachers in schools can add tremendous educational value and experience the Canadian public can benefit from. Moreover, immigrant students receive an additional advantage from being taught by immigrant teachers due to the similarity in socio-cultural background. Immigrant teachers are potentially very positive role models for adolescents who may not have many other examples of adults of the same background to look up to. Using skilled immigrants in the school system can in turn encourage newcomers to quickly integrate within mainstream Canadian society and participate fully in building a strong economy in Canada. Therefore, it is contended that policy makers and local stakeholders should better use the many skilled immigrant teachers in this country who have relevant educational and school experiences that are transferable to the Canadian school system.

Foreign-educated teachers are the most under-represented professionals in public schools in Canada. Getting a teaching position in Canadian public school is like a closed circle: "No Canadian experience equals no job (Frank McIntyre and Brian Jamieson, 2006). In

Manitoba, the University of Manitoba (through the Internationally Educated Teachers program) has been developing programs that assist foreign-educated teachers with their professional journey to Manitoban public schools. Although this pilot program is still in progress, there is no publicized support from most school divisions in Manitoba. Rather, they continue to be ethnocentric in their job advertisements and hiring practices, which reveals their apathy to their foreign partners.

While this trend may favor the native-born and recent graduates in the teaching profession, in some way, it is harmful to the promotion of multiculturalism across Canada. As Hall and Pedersen (2005:18) have pointed out, “(i)f Canada is to benefit from immigration and if immigrants are going to feel their skills are valued as promised, facilitating the successful integration of immigrants must remain a priority for Canada”. To this end, an effective and inclusive approach is crucial to assist foreign-educated teachers into Canadian classrooms today.

To examine what happens in practice, I believe it is helpful to consider my own personal experience in attempting to re-enter the classroom as a teacher in Winnipeg.

### **My Personal Experience as an Immigrant Teacher in Canada**

I am an immigrant teacher originally from Ethiopia. I came to Canada with six years of teaching experience and five years of post-secondary education from my home country. Even with a letter of recognition of my credentials from Labor and Immigration of

Manitoba, I could not find any teaching employment consistent with my work experience in any public schools in Manitoba.

After receiving advice from Canadian teachers in public schools, I applied for a Professional Teaching Certificate at Russell, Manitoba. However, I was required to pay an application fee of \$90 (CND) to proceed with my application. This was a very frustrating experience as I could not at that time afford the payment, as a new immigrant with no resources. The expense remains a source of some indignation to me; it still seems somewhat excessive merely to have an application processed. I was very keen to offer my skills to the Canadian school system, and I had expected a rather warmer welcome. I can appreciate that there are costs involved in processing foreign documents, particularly when it is necessary to go into some detail to evaluate the discrepancies between local and foreign educational standards. On the other hand, I believe it should be possible to take into account the lack of means of many newly arrived immigrants. As a minimum, the fee could potentially be waived for refugee class immigrants, who often come with little or no economic assets. In my case, I came to Canada directly from a refugee camp in Nairobi, Kenya in Africa, where I was literally dependent on humanitarian agencies just for livelihood. I had only \$ 13 loose dollars in my pocket when I arrived in Canada on September 11, 2002.

Despite my economic difficulties, I had (and indeed still have) a deep interest in teaching and helping students in public schools, and so I managed to garner the required application fee and waited for the reply. More than two months later, I was still waiting. I called the

office to enquire about the delay, and was informed that it would take more time to do the evaluation as the office was working on many open files. In one regard, I was encouraged by the response: it seemed that many immigrants were would-be teachers and were applying for teaching certification in Manitoba. I began to look forward to meeting quite a few immigrant teachers at public school.

Despite this moment of optimism, the delay eventually became such a problem that I decided to move to another province to improve my financial status. In late April 2003, I left for a small town called Brooks in Alberta and applied to Tyson's Meat Processing Company as a daily laborer. Although I believe that I had a lot to offer to the schools of Manitoba, I was effectively blocked from contributing my energy and experience to this environment.

After news of mad cow disease broke in Alberta in 2003, I then moved to Calgary and tried once more to gain employment in Calgarian school system. Once again I was asked to produce a teaching certificate in Alberta too. There were no opportunities such as bridging programs for internationally trained teachers. I resigned myself for the immediate future to working in 7- eleven companies and Quality Case Plastic Factory in Calgary to survive in my new country, Canada.

Regardless of these setbacks, I was still determined to continue in the teaching profession. I repeatedly phoned the teaching certification office in Russell, Manitoba to find out the outcome of my assessment. Finally, in late July 2003, I received a letter with the results of

my assessment. In the response, I was told that I was not eligible to teach in Manitoba public school division on the basis of my existing credentials, but that the office would consider my application for the teaching certificate if I completed 12 credit hours of second teachable courses and 15 credit hours of educational courses which includes curriculum and instruction coursework related to the second teachable course and student teaching.

I found this evaluation very discouraging for three reasons. First, the letter did not specify the suggested educational courses by name or course number and did not indicate where I could take them. Secondly, despite the fact that I indicated in my application that I could teach more than one subject, namely, Electronics, Mathematics, Physics, General Science, Metalwork, and Woodwork technology, the evaluation focused only on one of the subjects, which was Math and therefore did not take into account my full range of competences. Thirdly, the response did not say anything about my past teaching experience. Although the university in which I received my education may not compare well to Canadian universities, I still believe that credit should be given for the actual teaching experience outside of Canada.

Despite my disappointment with the Manitoba Professional Certification unit's response, I decided to take some of the courses recommended to me by consulting the Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba. I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to the Faculty of Education, and in particular to two individuals who encouraged me to continue taking courses towards my teaching certificate, namely Dr. Jonathan Young, now Acting Associate Dean of Graduate Programs and Research, and at the time the Head of the

Department of Educational Administration, Psychology and Foundation, and Rosanna Caruso, Education Student Counselor at the Faculty of Education. These two people went out of their way (and beyond their working hours too) to help me to identify appropriate teachable courses, as there was no specific educational support unit for immigrant teachers in the university at that time.

However, lack of student aid programs, such as student loan, applicable to this teaching certification program has become a great barrier for me to continue working towards my teaching certification process. In the face of these difficulties, I abandoned the idea of working courses towards my teaching certificate and registered for other relevant courses in the faculty of education for which I am eligible to get student assistance from the government.

Halfway through my first term at the faculty of education, I encountered some professors and teachers from university and public school, who were able to suggest several ideas to help me to succeed with my journey to be a teacher in Manitoba.

### **Volunteering at the Salvation Army Centre**

One suggestion that proved helpful was to volunteer as a teacher at Salvation Army Centre, at Morrow Centre in Winnipeg. This organization had just launched a new program to help recent immigrants from war-affected countries to adjust to their new life and to encourage their integration in Canadian society. I was responsible for tutoring young immigrants in

Basic English as a Second Language, mathematics skills, life skills and job-related safety skills. I found it fascinating to work with new immigrants from countries such as Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Somalia, Sudan, Rwanda, Eritrea, and Ethiopia, and it was a great opportunity to return to the classroom. Besides teaching, I also took part in a field trip activity organized for these immigrant students.

### **Teaching Assistant Position**

After completing my contract with the Salvation Army centre, I applied to Winnipeg School Division One for a substitute Teaching Assistant (TA) position. Soon after my application, I was called for an interview and start working as a substitute TA the following day. It was a small surprised for me to be a substitute TA very fast. The main duty of a substitute TA, as it is shown on my letter of employment, is to assist the regular teacher inside and outside of the classroom. Moreover, the assignment is made on the understanding of casual day-to-day employment and does not guarantee a minimum number of working hours or other kind of benefits like a regular teacher.

This experience was unique and somewhat interesting at the very beginning. I worked at different inner city high schools and junior high schools in Winnipeg and with a diverse group of students. I found the Canadian-born students to be very welcoming; indeed, I was amazed by their unconditional acceptance in their schools and classrooms. This gave me energy to add some courses that are significant to my teaching certification. Although I came to Canada as an immigrant and encountered new rules within the context of Canadian

schools, I could also build on my existing experience, which obviously had many similarities.

After working at different schools for a while, I was appointed at one inner high school for a term-length TA position. It was exciting news for me and for fellow immigrants who noticed my quick move into the Canadian school system. Unfortunately, however, after working at this school for more than two months; I was told informally by one teacher and one support staff at this school that I couldn't continue working in this TA position, although they did urge me, again informally, to work with students with mental and psychological problems (behavioral students, as they usually call them). When I explained that I don't have the necessary training to help these students, the two individuals tried to convince me, arguing the benefits of a relatively high wage rate and the fact that I would not be required to do much beyond being present with these students. I was shocked, and couldn't believe that such suggestions could be made by professionally trained Canadians in Canadian public schools. A few days later, as I was helping students in a classroom, the principal told me that I no longer hold the TA position, as there was a lady who deserved the post. I could either work with the behavioral students or leave the school by Friday. I left the school with a heavy heart.

While there were many positive aspects to working as a TA, there were also issues that I was not happy about at this school specifically. One, although the student body was very diverse and the school in theory promoted multiculturalism, I was shocked by the unfriendly and unprofessional attitude of some staff members. I felt they were dismissive of

my assistance in front of the students, a sharp divergence from the learning approaches that we teachers should absorb during our training.

Secondly, TAs are moved around at will – the will being that of the principal and regular teachers and not of the TA. I felt uncomfortable when some regular teachers and principals would ask the person I was working with “can I borrow him?” (their exact words). It felt as if TAs were considered to have a subordinate status. Most of the time, I was sent to classrooms that were perceived to be very difficult and challenging for someone with an immigrant background. While I enjoy working with students from all backgrounds, I also noticed that there is a tendency in some schools (in general) to keep immigrant teachers away from the more academic areas and to assign them to other areas such as disciplinary problems, coaching, dealing with handicapped and mentally slow students, and serving at lunch duties. Sometimes this tendency was quite blatant both in formal and informal interactions among teachers and staff.

My renewed enthusiasm and encouragement left me once more. I was on the School Division’s TA roster and during that winter of 2005 I worked for short periods in various schools. I was always there to offer my help. But, I did not feel that I was helping students for two reasons. Firstly, it seemed me that most students and regular teachers considered TAs (appointed on a temporary and ad hoc basis) as outsiders, inadequate helpers for “real teachers’ who were seen as more important and knowledgeable. On my entry into a school, I would be asked, “Who are you for?” (with the unspoken rider “I know you are not a teacher”). I felt that I had been downgraded, and had a lesser respect than a teacher in the

classroom. Secondly, I was never in a position to prepare and make a decision when to work and not to work, as I was always sent to any school on short phone notice irregularly (like a laborer). I could not apply my mind to the art of teaching. I could provide no input of my own, merely following someone else's orders. I was just an echo, meaningless for both the school and for the students. On the return of the "real" teacher, the students would revise the topics I had helped them with to ensure they were covered properly. What was the point of being a TA for lifetime? Nothing! The fact of getting paid was not my priority in schools: I wanted to feel that I was really help students' learning, really a part of the school industry, with an open opportunity to contribute my own perspective of teaching philosophy in the processes of learning for the benefit of students and multicultural society I am living in.

Bitter though it was, this experience helped me understand the working of the school system in general and the fate of immigrant teachers in particular. Schools will take substitute TA teachers from anywhere, but only to the extent that they have immediate needs that cannot otherwise be met. It is a painful realization for immigrants like me that the school division is fully entitled to call on and make use of one's skills and energy whenever convenient (such as in cases of emergency and illness), but there is no mechanism to properly integrate skilled immigrants/others with the "real" workforce.

Faced with this situation, I decided to try another tack, and focus on a different dimension of education.

### **Post-Baccalaureate Diploma and Masters in Adult Education**

Despite throwing all my energies into the teaching profession, I felt that I had received no real encouragement. A change of strategy seemed in order. Apart from the teaching certificate, I decided that I needed to seek further educational and work experience in Canada.

One area I decided to explore was that of adult education. There were several reasons for this choice. The first was that given my own physical age and my attempts to further my education, I believed I could communicate well with adult learners. Secondly, it is part of my own personal and professional philosophy to identify with disadvantaged adult groups rather than the privileged. I come from a very poor country on the planet, where social status strongly influences people's achievement at school especially, at early age. In my case had my beloved grand mother (Emuye) not been helped me thoroughly in my schooling since my childhood, I wouldn't have been the person I am today. I know what it is to feel marginalized and unaccepted. Even in a society where resources and life achievements were supposed to be fair for all citizens, it always bothers me to see the suffering of adults. Every unpleasant and malfunctioning adult in any society is a victim of irresponsible parents, exclusive organizational structures and reluctant state behind him or her. Unable to meet the systematically designed merits of societal or institutional standards is not one's weakness by itself but of others who put up the merits without considering all into account. I came across adults, who have been neglected based on their social status, way of life, school criteria, past educational work, language incompetence and poor skills. It is possible to turn these groups into functional citizens. Thus, helping disadvantaged

groups is a way of giving meaning to my experience, beliefs and the educational philosophy I have developed over the years. Perhaps most importantly of all, I was profoundly interested in moving from the pedagogical aspect of teaching and learning methodology to the andragogical aspect, in which adult learners have more choice and freedom in their acquisition of skills, knowledge and attitudes as part of their life-long learning process.

In their popular book, *The Foundation of Adult Education in Canada* (1991), Selman and Dampier, quoted one of the four assumptions of Knowles Malcolm of andragogy: “(a)ults are aware of specific learning needs generated by real life tasks or problems. Adult education programs therefore should be organized around ‘life application’ categories and sequenced according to learners’ readiness to learn.” I felt that acting, as an adult education facilitator as opposed to a content-based instructor could be a valuable new role for me in Canadian society.

After going through this process of reflection, I took courses specifically in adult education areas at the Faculty of Education and completed my post-baccalaureate diploma in 2005. Some of my past university credits were transferred towards this program. That gave me an extra enthusiasm to my study. The program has significantly improved not only my knowledge and understanding of adult education and the craft of teaching, but also my general learning interactions in the Canadian school environment. In addition to this, it has strengthened my spirit of inquiry and interest in working with disadvantaged and less represented groups in Canada or elsewhere. More importantly, this program has given me

valuable understanding of adult education as it relates to the international oppressed community, feminist pedagogy and social movements as a whole.

Studying the influential and famous works of Paulo Freire, the “*Pedagogy of the Oppressed*”, for example, made me to explore a new outlook on education and the whys of learning in adulthood. I felt my inner- “thirsty”-self filled up with Freire’s thoughts and moved high beyond the merits and qualifications of higher educations and decided to learn “for a meaning”. It is also true that most of the scenes in Freire’s work were very similar to the social-political turmoil I have gone through in Ethiopia. I suffered under this dictatorial regime in Ethiopia now since I was at Teachers’ College in early 1990s.

In 1992, as a second year college student, I joined a massive student demonstration against the government’s inhuman action on rural peasants in the northern part of Ethiopia to Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, former Secretary-General of the United Nations on his first visit to the capital. I witnessed the atrocities of the Ethiopian government against university students, on which several college students were killed indiscriminately in the street and subsequent dismissal of 42 professors from Addis Ababa University for writing a letter protesting against the government's violent reaction to this student demonstration. Between the years 1993 to 1998, I was actively involved as a member of the Ethiopian Teachers Association (ETA) and opposed the government’s discriminatory educational policies in schools and injustice actions on active leaders of Ethiopian Teachers’ association, including Dr. Taye Woldesemayat. This only cost me deduction of salary, demotion, and refusal of any local and international scholarship in

my field. In late 1998, I got a scholarship to study at Addis Ababa University. Nevertheless, on September 1999, my letter of approval rejected by the Ministry of Education. I lead a lead a demonstration and spoke out about the teachers' academic rights to Ministry of Education, the Parliament and even to the Prime Minister's office representing 150 teachers from remote high schools in Ethiopia. Then, we admitted to the department of Educational Administration in by late October, 1999. Six years ago, in April 2001, as a third year student, I wrote up and spoke out a statement on students' academic freedom and basic human right at Addis Ababa University and lead a massive student movement to demand our rights. Our demand responded by the killing of 40 university students by the same totalitarian government in Ethiopia. I survived this massacre and spoke to international Medias but only to find myself under misery of torture and to be thrown to exile. Learning from these experiences, I consider giving care and support to adult learners as one aspect of learning because adults can be victims of weakness of a society or higher responsible bodies in a country.

Examining the features of various adult education programs both locally and from international perspectives raised my ambition further to pursue my studies at the Master's level in Adult and Post- Secondary Education. The experience of graduate school has opened up possibilities beyond being a schoolteacher locally to working in a broader capacity in adult learning support. However, I have continued to take courses towards my Provincial teaching certificate parallel to my current graduate course studies.

During my teaching practicum weeks in 2006, I gained tremendous teaching and classroom experience with the help of Canadian teachers. It was useful to be back to teaching in front of a class, as by now my actual teaching experience had been interrupted for several years. Yet again, however, once the school experience was over, there was no other way for me to put into practice the experience I had gained. I still could not find a teaching position in Winnipeg. To date, I am continuing with my Masters degree. My efforts to date have taken more than three years and have left me with major student debt. The outcome remains to be seen.

### **Educational Values and Promises**

To the non-immigrant, educational credentials are generally the gateway to good job opportunities and higher personal income. For would-be immigrants, a good educational background is often a pre-requisite for being selected for entry into a country. For most skilled immigrants to Canada, their home country educational experience often helped to expedite the immigration process. The moment of immigration is an exciting one, when it seems as if the immigrant's aspirations for the future may all come true. For many people, however, including myself, this moment of excitement does not last for long. Sooner or later, we realize the welcome extended to us is in many ways is illusory. We want to work, and pay taxes, and play our part in this society. This process is much harder than it needs to be. When skilled immigrants are systematically segregated from labor market, immigrant teachers are not the only losers: the children we are ready and willing to teach lose too, and so does Canadian society as a whole.

I have dealt with my experience in some detail, not because it is unique, but because it is all too typical. It is not hard to identify other would-be teachers who have struggled in a similar fashion.

One Iranian refugee has spent thirteen years fighting merely to have her teaching credentials evaluated in Ottawa. In January 2007, Fatima Siadat, who fled Iran in 1990, won a 13-year legal battle to have the Ontario College of Teachers consider her application for a hearing to evaluate her qualifications to teach. Officials had deemed her few documents insufficient to judge her abilities to teach and had refused her requests for a personal interview or to develop alternate means to evaluate her abilities.

It was hardly surprising that she had little formal documentation from her home country: she was forced to flee after falling afoul of the education authorities by teaching high school students that authors had a right to freedom of expression. At that stage, she had already been a teacher for 16 years. The Iranian government not only threatened her life, but also deliberately withheld her official documents to prevent her from ever teaching again. She had only a teacher's identification card and handwritten copy of her university course transcripts, photocopies of her Bachelor's degree and her employment order from the education ministry. These were not acceptable, the college ruled, and it refused to meet her or to explore ways to assess her credentials that did not rely on official documents. A Toronto court finally ruled that such a lack of flexibility was not appropriate on the part of the college.

Inspiring as Ms. Siadat's perseverance is, it is immensely frustrating that such experience, ability and dedication can so easily be wasted simply because it presents an administrative challenge to the authorities in charge of checking credentials. Not many would-be teachers may be willing and able to struggle as long and hard as Ms. Siadat did.

## **Conclusion**

Generally speaking, immigrant teachers are valuable but under-used human capital for the Canadian economy and society. Their personal and educational values can promote diversity and better social justice. It is contended that Citizenship and Immigration Canada and local stakeholders should play a significant role in integrating skilled immigrant teachers into local schools.

When immigrant teachers are not integrated into local school systems, it is not only immigrant teachers who are disadvantaged, but also Canadians as a whole - everyone desirous of the progress and advancement of all people in this land. Exclusion of immigrant teachers from the mainstream workforce can only have a negative impact on Canada's leading role and reputation in introducing multiculturalism and respecting the rights and privileges benefits of its citizen without bias. It is good to concenter that "violence is initiated by those who oppress, who exploit, who fail to recognize others as persons--not by those who are oppressed, exploited and unrecognized (Freire, 1970, p.41).

Skilled immigrant, who chose Canada to be their home should deserve a better treatment and welcome, for Canada is now their future, not a dream for their future. Immigrants are not of yesterday anymore; they are part of this society for today and tomorrow, and our

tomorrow starts today! There is no better time to considering our skills and potential than now. Immigrant teachers can contribute for the better advancement of this nation and the world by integrating fully with Canadian economy first, with our skills and potentials being considered.

Ratna Omidvar of Toronto's Maytree Foundation said in her interview with Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (Feb.17, 2004), "Y'know, we're bringing in more and more highly skilled immigrants. It's taking them longer and longer to catch up with the average Canadian wages. So what's wrong? Something is seriously very wrong in this whole picture."

The irregular practices concerning internationally trained teachers are the source of much dissatisfaction, loss of professional identity and continuous economic disadvantage in Canadian society. As one step towards dealing with this waste of human capital, Citizenship and Immigration Canada and local school systems can and should work together to provide meaningful support for the inclusion of immigrant teachers in the Canadian school system.

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