

The status of immigrant women in Canada*

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A partir des données du recensement de 1971 et de celles du ministère de la Main d'Oeuvre et de l'Immigration, les caractéristiques professionnelles des immigrantes récentes sont comparées à celles des immigrants et des Canadiennes nées au Canada. L'analyse révèle que la position des immigrantes dans la société canadienne est sous l'effet d'un double fardeau: elles sont fréquemment classifiées comme dépendantes à leur arrivée au Canada alors que de fait elles contribuent de façon substantielle à la force du travail; et lorsqu'elles travaillent, elles sont plus susceptibles que les hommes immigrants de se trouver dans des professions à prédominance féminine et plus susceptibles que les femmes nées au Canada de se trouver dans des professions 'collets bleus.'

Using data from the 1971 census and Manpower and Immigration statistics between 1961 and 1971, the occupational characteristics of recent female immigrants are compared to those observed for male immigrants and native-born female Canadians. The data analysis indicates that immigrant women bear a double burden with respect to their status in Canadian society: they are frequently classified as dependents upon entering Canada when de facto they make substantial labour force contributions; and, when they work, they are likely to find themselves in the predominantly female occupations, compared to male immigrants, and in 'blue collar' occupations, compared to native-born women.

The charge that North American social scientists have constructed a sociology based largely on male behaviour is familiar (see Acker, 1973). Although considerable research on women has been done in the last decade, much of this research still appears only in courses on women and has yet to be incorporated into the larger body of sociological literature (see Eichler, 1973a). Further, much of the research focuses on women as a single group and neglects additional ascriptive dimensions of their over-all status, such as age, race, ethnicity, and nativity. In this regard, immigrant women are a particularly neglected subject of study by many social scientists.

The lack of attention paid to the status of immigrant women in Canada is surprising in

view of their numbers and socioeconomic characteristics. One and a half million Canadians over the age of 14 in 1971 were foreign-born females. As noted in earlier research (Kalbach, 1970; Davis and Gupta, 1968), immigrant women have smaller families and higher rates of labour force participation than do native-born women. Recent data confirm these findings. In 1971, not only did foreign-born women of all ages have lower fertility rates than native-born women (Canada, Statistics Canada, 1974: Table 29) but 1971 census data and Manpower and Immigration entry data on persons immigrating to Canada between 1961 and 1971 also show a continuation of the contributions made by female immigrants to the Canadian economy. Yet little attention is paid to immigrant women.

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Demographers frequently ignore female immigrants except in considering the family formation or reunification aspects of international migration. Economists, concerned with the labour costs and benefits which are associated with immigrant entry into the labour force, seldom examine work patterns of female immigrants. And the problems of the immigrant housewife in adapting to a new community are rarely studied by students of ethnic relations and adaptation (but see Ferguson, 1970, and Hawkins, 1970).

The above abbreviated list of 'benign neglect' indicates the need for increased attention to immigrant women. Such a focus seems particularly relevant given two major sociological topics of inquiry: the treatment of female status as dependent upon that of the male and the pattern of female labour force participation. It will be shown in this paper that the entry status accorded many immigrant women clearly exemplifies the societal and sociological tendency to view female status as tied to that of males. Further, the paper reaffirms the importance of gender as a basis of the allocation of occupational positions by showing that immigrant women, like native-born Canadian women, are usually in occupations that contain a high proportion of female workers and are less prestigious than those held by males.

THE ENTRY STATUS OF IMMIGRANT WOMEN

The sociological treatment of women as dependents of their husbands or fathers is well noted in stratification research. As Acker remarks (1973:937), research often assumes that (1) the family is the unit of analysis, (2) the social position of the family is determined by the status of the male head of the household, and (3) women determine their own status only when they are not attached to a man. In addition to social research, these assumptions aptly characterize much of the current Canadian policy on taxation, citizenship, and other legal rights of women (Royal Commission on the Status of Women, 1970). The treatment of women as dependents also affects the entry status of immigrant women and minimizes the attention paid to the economic contribution of female immigrants in Canada.

The treatment of female immigrants as dependents and the ensuing male-female discrepancies in entry status are closely tied to the composition of Canadian immigration. As

pointed out in demographic studies of immigration, adults predominate in international movements of people. Canada is no exception: between 1961 and 1971, over three-fourths of all immigrants (76 per cent of males and 78 per cent of females) were 15 years of age and over. However, unlike previous immigration streams to North America in which men outnumbered women, recent immigration to Canada also involves a great deal of family migration, defined either as families immigrating together or as some members rejoining others of the immediate family residing in Canada. As a result, between 1961 and 1971, the sex ratio of immigrants entering Canada who were 15 and older was 100, indicating that the number of women equalled the number of men. Within this age group, however, there are substantial differences in marital status. As revealed by Figure 1, a greater proportion of women immigrants (hereafter defined as age 15 and over) are married, widowed, or divorced compared to male immigrants. Conversely, a much higher proportion, 46.5 per cent, of male immigrants are single relative to 35.7 per cent of the women immigrants.

The difference in marital status between male and female immigrants has important implications for the entry status of immigrant women. While published data on the entry status of recent female immigrants is not available, past research (Parai, 1965) suggests that most women enter as dependents. Married women are particularly prone to this classification. It appears that in many cases even if the wife has the qualifications and the desire to be admitted as an independent immigrant, she will be admitted only as a dependent of her spouse. In this regard, the Royal Commission on the Status of Women (1970:360) observed: 'We have been informed that when a husband and wife both seek admission as independent applicants, it is fairly common practice to consider only the husband's application, presumably on the assumption that his wife will enter the country as a member of his immediate family. Actually a wife will sometimes be better qualified than her husband to become successfully established and the couple should have the opportunity to come to Canada on the basis of her qualifications.'

There are several implications arising from this practice by the Department of Manpower and Immigration. In addition to the psychological stigma, which some women may perceive as

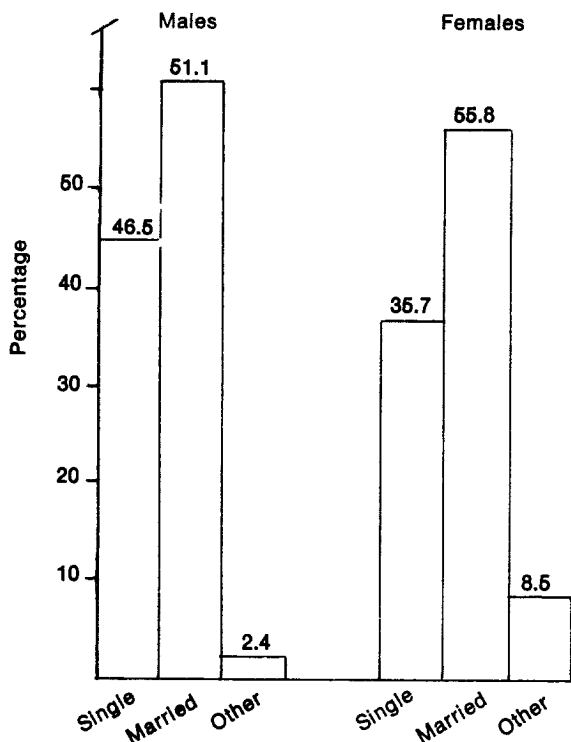


FIGURE 1 Marital status of immigrants to Canada, 1961-71, aged 15 years and over, by sex

attached to a dependent classification, the assumption that a wife is a dependent may disenfranchise a female immigrant while she is in Canada and not yet a Canadian citizen. Specifically, if she enters Canada as a dependent, even though she may be qualified for admission on her own as an independent immigrant, and if her husband is deported, she may (subject to appeal) be deported with him (Royal Commission on the Status of Women, 1970:301).

Another difficulty associated with the tendency to classify married immigrant women as dependents is the subsequent underestimation of their contribution to the Canadian economy. While this underestimation is corrected by results from special labour force surveys and census reports, such underestimation cannot help but reinforce the ongoing immigration policy of classifying immigrant women as dependents. For example, the tabulation of only a small proportion of immigrant women as destined for the labour force (the remainder being treated as dependents) reinforces the existing impression that more detailed knowledge of the status of immigrant women is neither needed nor important for immigration policy purposes. Hence,

changes in female immigrant status are not likely to be incorporated in policy changes.

The most clearcut support of this vicious circle argument is given by the 1974 changes in immigration regulations to more closely reflect the demands of the labour market (Office of the Minister of Manpower and Immigration, 1974a; 1974b) and by the recommendations of the Green Paper. The policy recommendation volume of the Green Paper (1974a) is silent on the question of the entry status of female immigrants. Although one aspect of the Green Paper (1974b) is devoted to the social and economic adjustment of a sample of immigrants in 1969, the analysis of female immigrants is not only cursory but also severely handicapped by the exclusion from the four-panel survey of single immigrant women once they married. The study illustrates the continuation in social science research of the conceptualization of women as dependents, for the deletion of these women from the sample was based on the assumption that the unit of analysis was the household, of which only the male was head.

Over-all, it appears that neither the recent regulations nor proposals in the Green Paper would dissociate the entry status of women im-

TABLE I

OCCUPATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS BY SEX FOR IMMIGRANTS TO CANADA, 1961-71

| <i>Occupational characteristics</i> | <i>Male</i> | <i>Female</i> |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| Total <i>N</i> | 766,066 | 765,461 |
| Percentage workers* | 69.7 | 33.0 |
| Percentage non-workers | 30.3 | 67.0 |
| Wives | — | 31.1 |
| Children | 26.1 | 24.4 |
| Other | 4.3 | 6.6 |
| Workers*, <i>N</i> | 533,973 | 252,384 |
| Manager | 4.0 | 0.5 |
| Professional | 24.6 | 28.3 |
| Clerical | 6.1 | 31.1 |
| Transportation | 1.5 | † |
| Communication | 0.2 | 0.7 |
| Commercial | 3.2 | 2.8 |
| Financial | 0.6 | 0.1 |
| Service | 5.6 | 20.6 |
| Agriculture | 5.0 | 0.3 |
| Fishing | 0.3 | † |
| Mining | 0.5 | † |
| Construction, manufacturing | 39.3 | 11.7 |
| Labour | 8.2 | 1.5 |
| Not stated | 1.0 | 1.5 |

* Refers to immigrants expressing an intent to enter the labour force

† Less than 0.1 per cent

SOURCE: Canada: Yearbook, 1964-1972. Data for 1971 was supplied by the Department of Manpower and Immigration

migrants from that of their husbands. Yet such a dissociation would be in keeping with a major goal of current immigration policy, which is to make immigration more responsive to Canadian manpower needs. However, such changes may be forthcoming as a result of efforts associated with the Status of Women task force rather than with the Department of Manpower and Immigration. On 7 October 1974 a bill was introduced in the House of Commons by Health Minister Lalonde; among other things it would modify the 1965 Immigration Act to enable either a husband or a wife to apply as the main breadwinner in the family when seeking landed immigrant status. In addition, a woman would be permitted to stay in Canada if her husband were deported.

INTENDED LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION

As a result of the reported tendency of immigration officers to classify female immigrants as dependents regardless of their occupational skills, immigration data indicate that only a small proportion and number of immigrant

women intend to enter the Canadian labour force compared to their male and native-born female counterparts. The discrepancy between immigration records and census figures on the labour force participation rate of women may be discounted as reflecting a woman's prerogative to change her mind and subsequently enter the labour force. While this could be a factor, the artificial categorization of female immigrants as dependents also explains the discrepancy.

Data appearing in Table I confirm the argument that classification of female immigrants as dependents upon entry to Canada depresses their representation in the intended work categories. Between 1961 and 1971, only one-third of all females entering Canada were classified as destined for the labour force compared to over two-thirds of the male immigrants. A nearly equal proportion (31 per cent) of the females were classified as wives. In numerical figures, this later category represents 275,977 women. This figure differs from the actual number of married immigrant women (331,999) by 56,022 women. Thus, it appears that only 56,022 married women (or 17 per cent) appear in the worker tabulations of Table I. The

actual labour force participation rates of married women is much higher (Labour Canada, 1971, Table 11), with 1961 data showing that 35 per cent of the wives of postwar immigrants are in the labour force compared to 19 per cent of wives of native-born heads of families (Kalbach, 1970: 324-5). Given this data, the figure of only 17 per cent of married immigrant women intending to enter the labour force seems artificially low.

If the above argument is correct, occupational data tabulated by the Department of Manpower and Immigration appear to be selective of single, widowed, or divorced women in comparison to that occupational data collected on immigrant men, regardless of their marital status. Thus, in terms of magnitudes, or absolute figures, entry data on female immigrants should be used with caution. However, even if married women are numerically underreported, their actual occupational distribution may not differ greatly from a distribution based on single, widowed, divorced, and a few married women. This is not to deny that there is undoubtedly some discrepancy, partially caused by the different age distributions of the various marital groups, but the data still may be used to crudely compare the occupational status of male and female immigrants upon arrival in Canada.

INTENDED OCCUPATION

Such a comparison is warranted because it augments material for the current inquiry into the status of women who participate in the Canadian economic sector. This inquiry, which assesses the status of women relative to men (Knudsen, 1969), has shown that gender is extremely important in the allocation of occupational roles. Recent studies (Armstrong and Armstrong, 1975; Siltanen, 1974) point to the persistence over time of occupational sex segregation, defined as gender specific patterns of concentrating in selected occupations. Such patterns of sex segregation or concentration suggest that men and women operate in different economic markets (Oppenheimer, 1970) and have different and unequal opportunities to attain positions of power and rewards. In this regard, Canadian research indicates that women who are wage earners are underrepresented in occupations of high prestige, power, and financial remuneration and, within each occupational category, occupy the lower posi-

tions (Armstrong and Armstrong, 1975; Eichler, 1973b).

A comparison of the intended occupational statuses of male and female immigrants upon arrival in Canada reaffirms the importance of gender in the allocation of occupational positions. As shown in Table 1, women immigrants to Canada during 1961-71 were concentrated heavily in the clerical and service occupations. Among the white collar occupational categories, they were underrepresented in the managerial and financial occupations when compared to men. Although the proportion of women immigrants declaring an intent to work in professional occupations slightly exceeds that of immigrant men during 1961-71, the actual type of work intended differs greatly by gender as shown by data in Table 11. Because of slight changes in classifications of occupations during the early 1960s, Table 11 presents occupation-specific information only for those immigrants who entered Canada after the 1967 Immigration Act and who intended a professional occupation.

Table 11 shows that, compared to male immigrant professionals, proportionately fewer female immigrant professionals enter Canada as potential workers in the fields of engineering, physical and biological sciences, law, and religion. Relative to men, a higher proportion of women immigrant professionals enter Canada intending to work in the teaching and health professions. However, detailed breakdowns of these two occupational categories reveal that women occupy less prestigious positions within these categories. Thus within the teaching professions, male immigrants concentrate in the professor and principal categories while female immigrants enter primarily as school teachers. Similarly, slightly over half of the male health professionals are physicians whereas very few (numerically and proportionately) female immigrants are physicians. The majority of women in the health professions intend to work as nurses. One finds similar examples of male and female immigrants concentrating in different occupations when detailed occupational breakdowns for the residual 'other' category are examined. Proportionately more women than men intend to work as dietitians, social workers, and librarians while the reverse holds for such occupations as architects, draughtsmen, surveyors, actuaries, economists, computer programmers, accountants, and science technicians. Furthermore, the occupations in

TABLE II

INTENDED PROFESSIONAL OCCUPATION BY SEX FOR IMMIGRANTS TO CANADA 1968-71

| <i>Professional occupation</i> | <i>Male</i> | <i>Female</i> |
|--------------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| Professionals, <i>N</i> | 62,854 | 31,953 |
| Percentage | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Engineers | 14.7 | 0.7 |
| Physical scientists | 5.4 | 1.0 |
| Biological | 2.9 | 1.3 |
| Teachers | 25.8 | 33.7 |
| Professors, principals | 10.9 | 3.4 |
| School teachers | 14.3 | 29.1 |
| Other | 0.6 | 1.1 |
| Health Professionals | 11.4 | 44.1 |
| Physicians | 6.4 | 2.1 |
| Dentists | 0.4 | 0.1 |
| Graduate nurses | 0.7 | 29.7 |
| Therapists | 0.2 | 1.3 |
| Pharmacists | 0.4 | 0.4 |
| Medical, dental technicians | 2.8 | 6.4 |
| Other | 0.5 | 4.5 |
| Law | 0.4 | 0.1 |
| Religion | 2.1 | 0.3 |
| Artists, writers | 3.9 | 3.2 |
| Other | 33.5 | 15.6 |
| Architects | 1.0 | 0.2 |
| Draughtsmen | 6.8 | 1.6 |
| Surveyors | 0.9 | * |
| Actuaries | 2.0 | 0.9 |
| Economists | 1.7 | 0.6 |
| Computer programmers | 0.1 | * |
| Auditors, accountants | 2.8 | 0.4 |
| Dieticians | 0.1 | 0.6 |
| Social Workers | 1.2 | 2.7 |
| Librarians | 0.4 | 1.4 |
| Interior decorators | 0.5 | 0.5 |
| Photographers | 0.9 | 0.2 |
| Science technicians | 10.9 | 3.0 |
| Miscellaneous | 4.3 | 3.6 |

* Less than 0.1 per cent

SOURCE: Same as Table I

which immigrant women concentrate are normatively prescribed for women and the incumbents of these occupations are disproportionately female (Armstrong and Armstrong, 1975; Merton in Epstein, 1970). Thus, many women entering Canada between 1961 and 1971 intended to hold female or sex-typed occupations.

In addition to the earlier suggestion that the contribution of recent female immigrants to the Canadian labour force is underestimated by Department of Manpower and Immigration reports, analysis of occupational data suggests that women immigrant workers are concentrated in less prestigious and/or sex-typed occupations compared to male immigrants. As such, the findings on occupational characteris-

tics parallel results of other studies on Canadian men and women. Nevertheless, the pattern of intended occupations of women immigrants certainly serves to reinforce the Canadian occupational structure with its differential allocation mechanisms and opportunities for men and women.

1971 OCCUPATIONAL STATUS

The above discussion is based on intended occupation of immigrants. As students of migration are aware, there may be considerable slippage between intended and actual occupation obtained by immigrants (Kalbach, 1970:258-63). Optimally, then, the actual occupations held by immigrant women should be examined

TABLE III

1971 OCCUPATIONS OF THE FOREIGN BORN, IMMIGRATING TO CANADA BETWEEN 1961-71 BY SEX

| Occupation | <i>Born outside of Canada immigrated 1961-1971</i> | |
|------------------------------------|--|---------------|
| | <i>Male</i> | <i>Female</i> |
| Total: reported <i>N</i> * | 324,795 | 188,420 |
| Managerial | 4.1 | 1.3 |
| Science and engineering | 8.7 | 1.6 |
| Social sciences | 0.9 | 1.1 |
| Religion | 0.4 | 0.1 |
| Teaching | 5.3 | 6.3 |
| Medicine | 3.1 | 11.1 |
| Art, literature, recreation | 1.6 | 1.0 |
| Clerical | 6.1 | 27.6 |
| Sales | 6.7 | 5.3 |
| Service | 11.4 | 18.3 |
| Farming, fishing, forestry, mining | 3.1 | 1.5 |
| Processing | 5.5 | 3.2 |
| Machining | 8.5 | 1.1 |
| Production | 12.7 | 15.4 |
| Construction | 13.1 | 0.3 |
| Transport | 2.3 | 0.1 |
| Materials handling | 2.1 | 2.6 |
| Other crafts | 1.3 | 0.6 |
| Other, unclassified | 3.1 | 1.6 |

* Excludes occupations not stated. For persons immigrating between 1961-71, 5.3 and 8.1 per cent of males and females, respectively, did not report occupations. Percentages are computed from the sum of occupations, rather than from the reported *N*. Rounding procedures used by Statistics Canada cause minor deviations (5-20 persons range) of totals actually reported from the totals computed by adding occupational categories.

SOURCE: Canada. Statistics Canada. 1975. 1971 Census of Canada: Occupation by Sex Showing Birthplace, Period of Immigration and Ethnic Group for Canada and Regions. Volume III, Part 3, Table 4

as an indicator of their over-all status. Analysis of 1961 data by Kalbach as part of his monograph on international migration to Canada anticipates such findings with respect to differences between actual occupations of male and female immigrants. Kalbach (1970:219) notes that in 1961 a much larger proportion of postwar female immigrants held clerical, service, or recreational occupations and a smaller proportion than males held craftsmen and production process occupations. He also notes the selectivity of certain professional occupations, notably teaching and health, for females among postwar immigrants (222). The data on intended occupations presented above indicate that the occupational selectivity that exists with respect to immigrant women has been perpetuated by inter-censal (1962-71) immigration. Thus, 1971 census data should show little change between 1961 and 1971 in occupational distribution of female immigrants.

Unfortunately, the different occupational classification used in the 1971 census prevents

direct comparison of the 1971 occupational status of immigrant women with that found in 1961. Although such comparisons would be problematic because of the processes of mortality, out-migration, and aging, the 1971 classification scheme also prohibits comparison with the intended occupation of immigrants upon entry to Canada. However, the 1971 census data do show the persistence of sex-specific occupational distributions for male and female immigrants who entered Canada between 1961 and 1971 and who were still residing in Canada in 1971. Compared to male immigrants, female immigrants are overrepresented in teaching, medicine, clerical, service, and production occupations (Table III).

As is the case with teaching, clerical, and service occupations in 1971, the overrepresentation of female immigrants who entered Canada between 1961 and 1971 in the field of medicine corresponds to the overrepresentation of women intending to enter female health professions upon entry to Canada (Tables I and

TABLE IV

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION WITHIN SELECTED 1971 OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES FOR FOREIGN-BORN IMMIGRATING TO CANADA BETWEEN 1961-71, BY SEX

| <i>Selected occupational categories</i> | <i>Born outside of Canada, immigrated 1961-71</i> | |
|--|---|---------------|
| | <i>Male</i> | <i>Female</i> |
| Teaching and related occupations, reported <i>N</i> | 17,070 | 11,885 |
| University teaching | 42.0 | 10.6 |
| Elementary and secondary teaching | 43.4 | 75.3 |
| Other teaching and related occupations | 14.7 | 14.1 |
| Occupations in medicine and health, reported <i>N</i> | 10,200 | 20,980 |
| Health diagnosing (physicians, dentists, veterinarians, etc.) | 51.3 | 4.6 |
| Nursing, therapy | 28.5 | 80.8 |
| Other | 20.2 | 14.5 |
| Clerical and related occupations, reported <i>N</i> | 19,965 | 52,100 |
| Stenographic, typing | 2.7 | 38.1 |
| Bookeeping, accounting | 26.1 | 26.3 |
| Office machine, electronic data processing | 5.0 | 7.3 |
| Material recording, scheduling, and distributing | 31.9 | 3.6 |
| Library, filing, correspondence | 3.2 | 4.8 |
| Receptionists and information, mail and message distribution | 7.2 | 6.9 |
| Service occupations, reported <i>N</i> | 37,110 | 34,425 |
| Protective service | 8.2 | 0.5 |
| Food and beverage preparators | 39.3 | 26.5 |
| Lodging and accommodation | 3.4 | 9.6 |
| Personal service | 9.0 | 25.2 |
| Apparel and furnishings (laundry, pressing, etc.) | 3.7 | 8.4 |
| Other | 36.4 | 29.5 |

SOURCE: Canada. Statistics Canada. 1975. 1971 Census of Canada: Occupation by Sex Showing Birthplace, Period of Immigration and Ethnic Group for Canada and Regions. Volume III, Part 3, Table 4

ii). As was also the case with intended occupation, a closer examination of occupational distribution of male and female immigrants reveals that the majority (81 per cent) of immigrant women who entered Canada during 1961-71 and who are in medicine are in nursing rather than in health diagnosing occupations (Table IV). More specifically, in medical fields 46 per cent of the male immigrants are physicians compared to 45 per cent of the female immigrants who are graduate nurses.

As shown by Table IV, the sex typing of occupations persists not only within medicine but also within teaching, clerical, and service occupations. Within the teaching category, male immigrants tend to be professors (37 per cent) and female immigrants tend to work predominantly in elementary school positions (75 per cent). Within clerical occupations, female immigrants are disproportionately found in secretarial positions. Similarly, for those immigrants who entered Canada between 1961 and

1971 and were in service occupations in 1971, the data shows that proportionately more men are engaged in protective services, food and beverage preparations (largely as supervisors, cooks, and bartenders), and other service occupations, while women concentrate in lodging, laundry, and personal service occupations. Throughout all of the above occupational categories a high proportion of male compared to female immigrants are found in supervisory positions.

Over one-half (55 per cent) of female immigrants entering Canada between 1961 and 1971 hold what may be described as white collar occupations (managerial through sales) compared to 37 per cent of their male counterparts. However, in other occupations, a larger proportion of female compared to male immigrants are found in service, production, and material handling occupations. The concentration of female immigrants in production occupations reflects the predominance of immigrant women

TABLE V

1971 OCCUPATIONS OF NATIVE-BORN AND FOREIGN-BORN RESIDENTS IN CANADA, BY SEX

| Occupations | Native-born | | Foreign-born | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|--------------|-----------|
| | Female | Male | Female | Male |
| Total, reported <i>N</i> * | 2,102,395 | 4,156,835 | 539,545 | 1,146,535 |
| Managerial | 2.3 | 6.1 | 1.9 | 5.5 |
| Science and engineering | 0.5 | 3.6 | 1.1 | 6.1 |
| Social sciences | 1.1 | 1.0 | 1.1 | 0.8 |
| Religion | 0.2 | 0.4 | 0.1 | 0.4 |
| Teaching | 8.6 | 2.5 | 5.4 | 3.0 |
| Medicine | 9.4 | 1.5 | 8.5 | 2.0 |
| Art, literature, recreation | 0.8 | 1.1 | 1.0 | 1.4 |
| Clerical | 37.1 | 8.7 | 29.8 | 6.6 |
| Sales | 9.6 | 11.3 | 8.7 | 8.8 |
| Service | 16.3 | 9.5 | 19.6 | 11.8 |
| Farming, fishing, forestry, mining | 4.3 | 11.6 | 3.4 | 6.7 |
| Processing | 2.1 | 5.2 | 2.9 | 5.5 |
| Machining | 0.4 | 3.7 | 0.8 | 6.6 |
| Production | 4.2 | 8.6 | 11.3 | 11.4 |
| Construction | 0.2 | 10.2 | 0.3 | 12.9 |
| Transport | 0.3 | 7.1 | 0.2 | 3.3 |
| Materials handling | 1.4 | 3.3 | 2.2 | 2.5 |
| Other crafts | 0.5 | 1.9 | 0.6 | 1.6 |
| Other, unclassified | 0.7 | 2.7 | 1.2 | 2.9 |

* See footnote to Table III. The proportion not stating occupation was 11.3 and 8.7 per cent for native-born and foreign-born females respectively, and 8.0 and 4.8 per cent for native-born and foreign-born males.

SOURCE: Canada. Statistics Canada. 1975. 1971 Census of Canada: Occupation by Sex Showing Birthplace, Period of Immigration and Ethnic Group for Canada and Regions. Volume III, Part 3, Table 4

in the garment industries. Of those immigrants holding production occupations in 1971, 16 per cent of the males and 77 per cent of the females who entered Canada between 1961 and 1971 were involved in the fabrication, assembly, and repairing of textiles, fur, and leather products (Canada. Statistics Canada, 1971: Table 4).

Thus far, comparisons have been made between the occupational statuses of the male and female foreign born who immigrated to Canada between 1961 and 1971. While such comparisons point to the persistent concentration of female immigrants in traditionally female occupations, they do not provide insight into the status of female immigrants vis-à-vis native-born women. Unfortunately, the much younger age distribution of females immigrating to Canada between 1961 and 1971 prevents a direct comparison of their occupational status with that of the native born female population. In the absence of occupational data specific to age, any comparisons of the occupational statuses of Canadian women by nativity are based on the total populations of foreign- and

native-born women who reported occupations in 1971. Such a comparison is also affected by differences in the age composition for the two nativity groups, but a similar analysis of United States age, gender, and nativity specific occupational data suggests that the bias due to differing age composition is not large.

Data presented in Table v show that foreign-born women compared to native-born women are proportionately underrepresented in the managerial, professional, clerical, and sales occupations. Instead, foreign-born females hold service, production and a variety of other processing and materials-handling occupations.

Over-all, female immigrants compared to their native-born counterparts are less likely to be found in what are probably either the higher status or more economically rewarded occupations. Over two-fifths of the foreign-born women in Canada in 1971 hold occupations described as 'service' through 'other crafts' (Table v) compared to less than one-third of the native-born women. Of the women in production, immigrants are more likely to be in occu-

pations related to the Canadian garment industry than are native-born Canadians (75 versus 61 per cent respectively).

The differences in 'white collar' versus 'blue collar' occupational standings of native-born and foreign-born females contrast with comparisons made between native-born and foreign-born males. Table v reveals that the proportion of workers in white collar positions from manager to sales is virtually identical for foreign-born and immigrant males. Moreover, a higher percentage (19 percent) of foreign-born males than native-born males (16 per cent) holds managerial or professional ('science and engineering' through 'art, literature, and recreation') occupations. The reverse is observed for females where foreign-born women are less likely to found in white collar positions relative to native-born women. Thus, the data suggest that immigrant women hold less-skilled occupations compared to either native-born women or foreign-born men.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the analysis of immigration to Canada during the intercensal years (1961-71) provides two important insights into the status of immigrant women in Canada. First, the over-all economic contribution of female immigrants upon entry to Canada tends to be underestimated since most married women appear to be classified as dependents. While this orientation on the part of immigration officials is in keeping with a general societal dismissal of a married woman as 'just a housewife' and a refusal to fully assess her economic contribution, the resultant underenumeration of women as destined for the Canadian labour force cannot help but reinforce the ongoing policy of virtually ignoring immigrant women. Additionally, such a continued practice may be psychologically distasteful to many female immigrants and it may result in effectively disenfranchising a female whose husband, or head of the household, faces deportation.

The data analysis also suggests that not only are female immigrants (particularly married immigrant women) subject to a sexist immigration coding procedure at the border, but also that their own occupational skills reinforce the differences in the Canadian occupational structure between men and women. It thus appears that immigrant women bear a double burden with respect to their status in Canadian society:

they are frequently classified as dependents at the border when de facto they may make substantial labour force contributions; and when they work, they are likely to find themselves in the predominantly female and less-rewarded occupations compared to those of their male and native born counterparts, respectively.

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