



Final Report

Renew NWQ

2023

This report was produced as part of a project funded by the Future Skills Centre (FSC), with financial support from the Government of Canada's Future Skills Program.

FSC is a forward-thinking centre for research and collaboration dedicated to preparing Canadians for employment success. We believe Canadians should feel confident about the skills they have to succeed in a changing workforce. As a pan-Canadian community, we are collaborating to rigorously identify, test, measure, and share innovative approaches to assessing and developing the skills Canadians need to thrive in the days and years ahead. The Future Skills Centre was founded by a consortium whose members are Toronto Metropolitan University, Blueprint ADE, and The Conference Board of Canada

The opinions and interpretations in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect those of the Future Skills Centre or the Government of Canada.





Authors

Dr. Kathy Sanderson

Project Lead

Faculty of Business Administration, Lakehead University

Dr. Claudio Pousa

Research Partner

Faculty of Business Administration, Lakehead University

Julia Whitney

Research Assistant / Marketing & Knowledge Mobilization Specialist

Faculty of Business Administration, Lakehead University

Ryan Hron

Research Assistant

Faculty of Business Administration, Lakehead University

Huiqi Ye

Research Assistant

Faculty of Business Administration, Lakehead University



Lakehead
UNIVERSITY

Faculty of
**Business
Administration**



AACSB
ACCREDITED

Project Partners

Our project would not have been possible without the help and support of our partners. Thank you!



**Thunder Bay
Multicultural Association**



**Local Immigration
Partnership N.W.O.**



CIER

**Center for Innovation and
Entrepreneurship Research**

Contents

| | |
|----|-------------------------------------|
| 5 | Key Findings |
| 7 | Key Comparisons |
| 8 | New Ways Forward for Newcomer Women |
| 10 | Introduction |
| | Qualitative Overview |
| 12 | Year 1 Interviews |
| 15 | Year 2 Interviews |
| | Quantitative Overview |
| 19 | Year 1 Survey |
| 22 | Year 2 Survey |
| 27 | Two Year Comparison |
| 28 | Appendix |

Key Findings

A pivotal discovery from this project pertains to the pervasive survival mentality exhibited by new immigrant women across different societal contexts.

Year One Survival

During the first year of study, COVID-19 was a prominent concern for newcomer women, and was heavily reflected in the findings.

- Concern for safety of family in Canada and abroad from COVID-19
- Over-represented in COVID-facing roles
- Extreme financial pressure and overworking
- Continuous skills development

Year Two Survival

During the second year of study, new challenges arose with respect to employment demands.

- Necessity of primary and secondary jobs to meet inflationary demands
- Short-term focus on obtaining employment
- Survival jobs characterized by limited career options or progression

Year One & Two Overlap

- Lack of familiarity with employment rights and protections
- Unsure of Canadian workplace norms and culture



Key Findings

This research project has uncovered several obstacles to the employment, promotion, career advancement, as well as personal and financial stability of newcomer women. Challenges exist in the acquisition of proficient language skills, and the complexities surrounding the recognition of international credentials within the Canadian context. Newcomer women encounter difficulties in accessing essential employment support systems, including transportation, housing, and childcare. Many of these findings align with existing research. However, a critical finding relates to the 'survival mode enacted by newcomer women following their relocation.

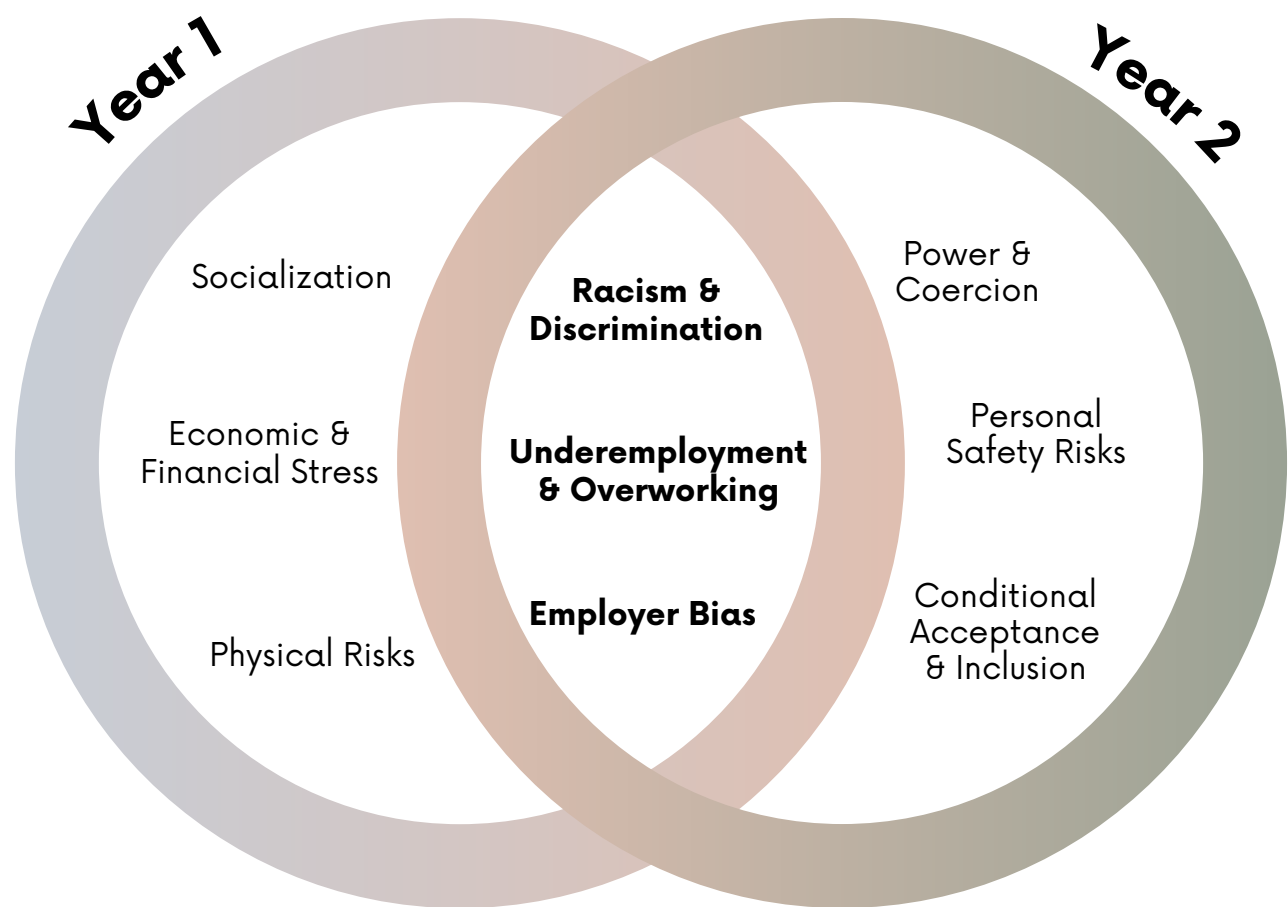
Within this survival mode, during the first year of our study, Covid-19 was a prominent concern for newcomer women. This revolved around the safety and well-being of their families, particularly their children and extended family members who live outside of Canada. The women were overburdened by employment in COVID-facing roles as an attempt to fulfill their immediate financial necessities for survival. Concurrently, they engaged in a substantial amount of continuous skill development, including job-specific training. Even after the immediate health concerns related to COVID-19 wane, the challenges stemming from the labor market and global financial circumstances continue to compel newcomer women to persist in this survival mode.

Although employment opportunities have become more abundant, the women frequently take on multiple jobs and prioritize short-term financial provision and survival in Canada over long-term career prospects. This emphasis on survival compromises their ability to advance professionally and secure employment that offers a livable wage, as newcomer women earn considerably less than their Canadian counterparts. Consequently, the preoccupation with survival diminishes the likelihood of newcomer women advancing their careers, as the available jobs often have limited potential for growth and promotion.

Another salient finding of this study centers on the competence of newcomer women in developing technical and job-specific skills, juxtaposed with their deficiency in what are commonly referred to as "soft skills" and those specifically relevant to the Canadian employment landscape. A majority of the participants lack familiarity with Canadian labor laws, occupational health and safety regulations, employee rights, and human rights in the workplace. They also require additional training in integrating into Canadian workplaces as engaged and inclusive members. Moreover, newcomer women need support in enhancing their communication skills at work, understanding Canadian workplace norms, and developing networking abilities that would enable them to more fully participate in the labor force.

Key Comparisons

Newcomer Women's Survival



New Ways Forward for Newcomer Women

Recommendations for Skills Development

Virtual Training on Canadian Workplace Norms and Protections

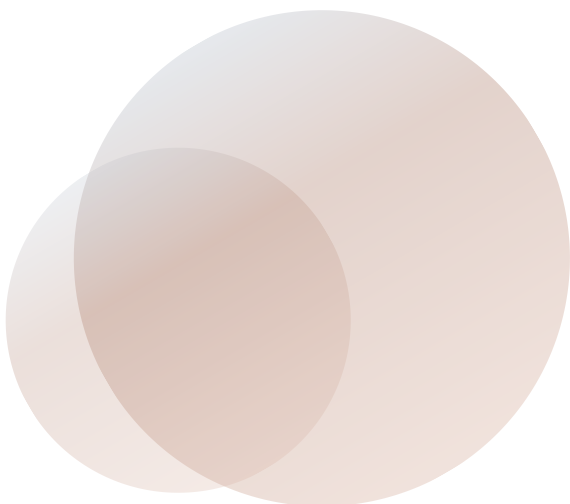
Newcomer women require information and training on Canadian workplace culture, norms, communication styles, and relationship development. They also need opportunities to network with other women who were born in Canada. This could be accomplished virtually with an online community that provides webinars, discussions, virtual events, and engagement with local communities. Building these skills will increase belonging, workplace soft skills, and be accessible in rural and remote areas.

Newcomer Specific Career Planning Services

newcomer women consistently work in occupations below their skill set and in fields unrelated to their previous training or education. Many of these positions lack growth opportunities and as a result, women stay in these types of positions as they are not developing additional skills to progress in their employment. Career planning services which are informed by immigrant and women's realities could help to facilitate long term labor participation which capitalizes upon the extensive skills and abilities the women already possess.

Supports for Entrepreneurship

Newcomer women are very interested in being business owners, whether on a part time or full time basis. Additional education, funding and support services for newcomer women and easy access to information on business ownership in plain language would facilitate newcomer women creating their own employment.



New Ways Forward for Newcomer Women

Recommendations for Employers

Awareness of Newcomer Women Realities

Employers appear to treat all new employees as a homogeneous group overlooking the key challenges experienced by newcomer women. Employers require additional awareness of immigration requirements and limitations, the complex nature of the survival concerns that newcomer women are facing, and an understanding of the differences that exist between workplaces in Canada and other places in the world.

Comprehensive Onboarding

A comprehensive onboarding program would include training on workplace health and safety, and employee rights and responsibilities including human rights. This recommendation would assist newcomer women in feeling more welcomed in the workplace as additional orientation in these areas was shown to decrease feelings of discrimination and increased perceived organizational supports.



* Consistently throughout this research project it was identified that to significantly increase the meaningful labor participation of newcomer women, additional opportunities to build language skills through conversation and the transference of international work qualifications to Canadian occupations is required. While these are well known issues within immigration literature, it should be recognized that these are two of the largest barriers to full labour participation for newcomer women.

Renew NWO is studying the impacts that the COVID-19 pandemic had on newcomer women in the region of Northwestern Ontario.

Introduction & Background

The COVID-19 crisis has resulted in women's employment and well-being disproportionately affected (Hupkau & Petrongolo, 2020, Alon et al., 2020), with immigrant women suffering the most. Compared to 24% of their Canadian counterparts, 31% of newcomer women suffered notable employment losses (Scott, 2021).

The unique factors of the pandemic, such as quarantines and social distancing, have resulted in service sectors taking the hardest hit (Alon et al., 2020). These sectors are overrepresented by female and newcomer female employees (Alon et al., 2020). In fact, 90% of nurses, 75% of respiratory therapists, 80% of medical lab technicians and 90% of personal support workers are women (Scott, 2021).



Newcomer women also experienced other challenges such as lost productivity at work due to family responsibilities and limited support/resources (Nardon et al., 2022), and increased racism (Lightman, 2021). The pandemic also exacerbated anxiety, depression (Wister et al., 2022) and social isolation (Ornelas et al., 2021) among newcomer women.

Women with families often experienced fear of infecting their loved ones, increased care responsibilities and pressure to manage their family. Stay at home mothers experienced oppression, boredom, loneliness, and a loss of independence and purpose as a result of lockdown restrictions (Guruge et al., 2021).

This paper explores findings from 66 interviews with newcomer women and over 5000 survey responses from residents of Northwestern Ontario. An overview of both qualitative and quantitative data collection will be presented followed by a comparison between each year.

Qualitative Results

Year 1 & Year 2



Year 1 Interviews

Overview

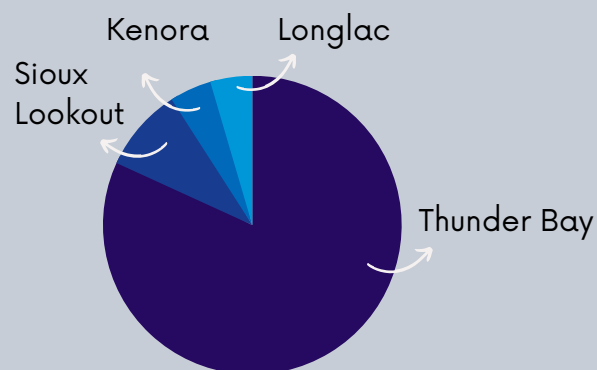
22 newcomer women participated in interviews.

Interviewees included newcomer women who were employed in jobs that were in high demand due to COVID-19, found employment as a result of COVID-19, were laid off, had reduced hours, were unable to work due to COVID-19, or chose not to work.

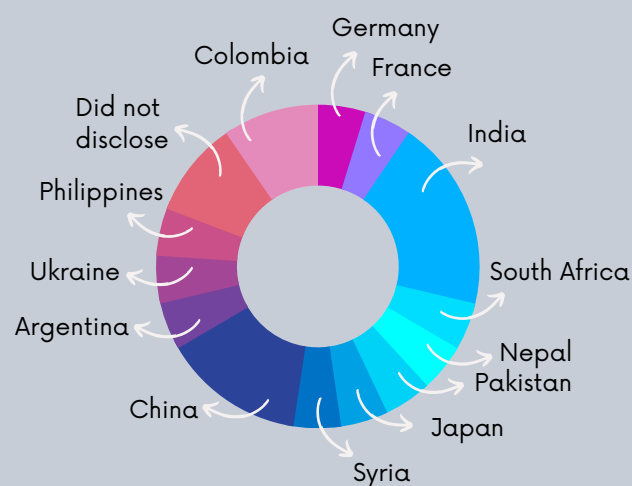
Interview questions explored how the pandemic affected all parts of their lives, as well as their transition to Northwestern Ontario. Ways of coping with challenges were also discussed.

Participant Demographics

Community of Residence



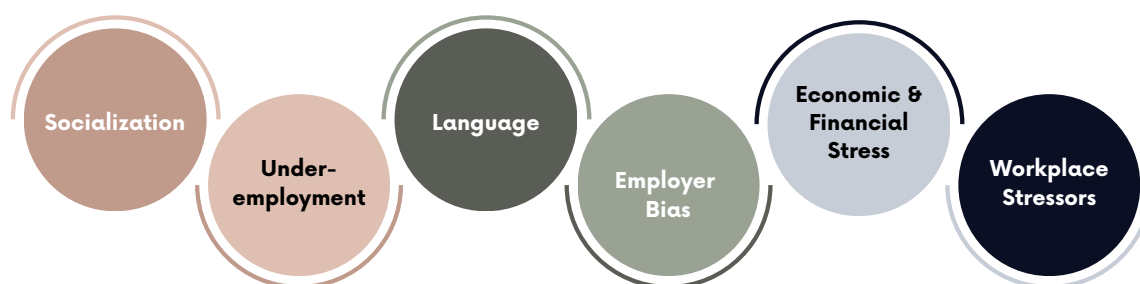
Country of Origin



"Newcomer" was defined as any woman residing in Canada (regardless of status) who has lived in Northwestern Ontario (the region west of Wawa, Ontario to the Manitoba border) for less than 5 years.

Year 1 Interview Results

Thematic Analysis



Theme 1: Socialization

Newcomer women identified the social structure in Northwestern Ontario as tight knit and difficult to break into. Most participants mentioned that community members were friendly, but many struggled to form bonds that went beyond situational friendships. Those who were employed appeared to have an easier time making friends. For those who arrived during the pandemic, making friends and socializing was nearly impossible.

"They kind of all just have their own little bubble."

Theme 2: Workplace Stressors

Key areas of employment stress include overworking to compensate for staff shortages, health and safety concerns/incidents, being taken advantage of, not understanding job tasks, insufficient support, and racism.

The pandemic also created unique stressors such as health concerns, job uncertainty and increased workloads.

"It was one of the [people] I work with. [My co-worker] wasn't very nice to me and [they were] kind of targeting [my home country]. That wasn't a good experience."

"I had some episodes of panic attacks. And once I couldn't breathe....I couldn't get air into my lungs. It was just seconds but I didn't want to go to work, but at the same time, I couldn't miss my work."

Theme 3: Employer Bias

Bias in the workplace was seen as a barrier to adjustment and overall job satisfaction. The women shared their experiences being compensated less than other employees, struggling to find work due to their immigration status or lack of 'Canadian experience', and needing local connections to obtain employment. Many of these experiences presented as a bias towards immigrants in general, but some women shared gender-related bias in the workplace.

"My co workers who are male, they have more money than you. [They are] making more money than females. I don't know why it's happened but maybe they asked."

"The permanent residence thing is confusing to employers... they don't want to take the risk of training somebody, preparing somebody for a role and then they don't have that person for a long time."

Year 1 Interview Results

Thematic Analysis

Theme 4: Language

Lack of language proficiency resulted in stress and confusion understanding job tasks, frustration from coworkers, barriers to jobs they were otherwise qualified for, and difficulty socializing. Women who were working seemed to have an easier time learning English than those who were not employed. Although some took formal language classes, many learned informally which appeared to be more stressful and time consuming.

"I feel bad with some co-workers because I don't speak English... my co-worker is screaming [at me]."

Theme 5: Underemployment

The women consistently shared narratives related to underemployment. This manifested through part-time or casual work, and employment in positions well below one's qualifications. The women expressed their desire for employment within their field of study or experience.

"I was a nurse back then [in home country]... here I cannot directly be a nurse. So I have to start working as a personal support worker."

"I'm really struggling to get a job in my field... And so my employment goals now are very different to what I was qualified for in [home country]."

Theme 6: Economic & Financial Stressors

COVID-19 seemed to have a profound impact on stress levels related to finances. Several women were laid off or lost work due to the pandemic, leaving them without a steady income. Others endured a career change as a result of an industry shift or collapse during the pandemic. Overall, COVID-19 appeared to increase financial stress levels for nearly all women.

Newcomer women also experienced financial challenges unrelated to the pandemic. The immigration process was viewed as costly and delays within the system prohibited some participants from working at all. Further, some statuses (e.g. student) had restrictions on employment hours, leaving many without a living wage.

"I always have financial stress because we are newcomers."

"I was a full time when COVID started. Then I have to face a financial burden because I can't work that much... And moreover, most of the workplaces shut down because of COVID. But I try my best to manage and to overcome my financial burden."



Year 2 Interviews

Overview

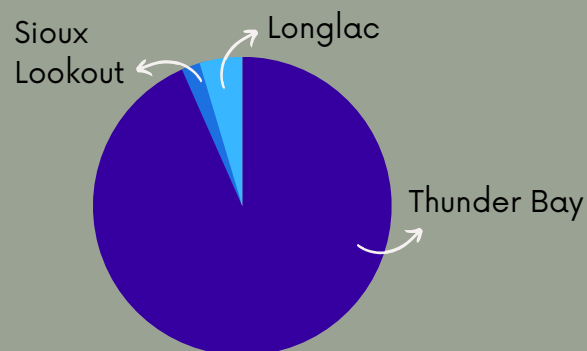
43 newcomer women participated in interviews.

Almost all participants were employed, however some chose not to work or were looking for work. Many participants from year one were interviewed again to provide updates and new information about their lives and employment.

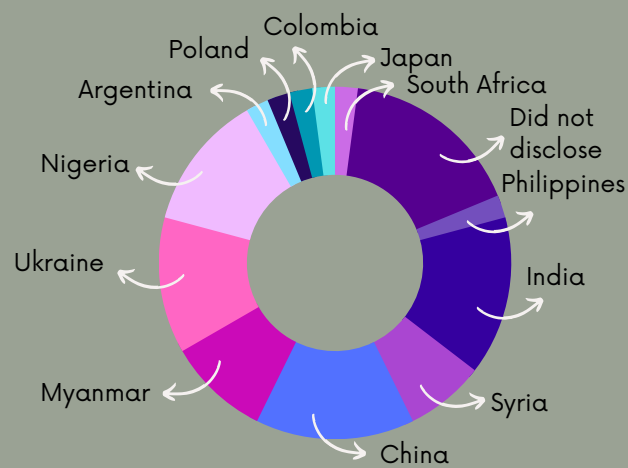
Interview questions explored employment experiences, life and family stressors, employment supports, experiences starting a new job, and career goals.

Participant Demographics

Community of Residence



Country of Origin



Year 2 Interview Results

Thematic Analysis



Theme 1: Power & Coercion

It often appeared that employers held absolute power and that newcomer women felt they had no choice but to obey. This may be due to the importance of a steady income and job security. The women expressed they have no choice but to accept mistreatment as the alternative could leave them/their families in a precarious situation. These factors positioned employers to take advantage of the women.

"I told her [manager] I have to go and eat, she'll be like, no, finish your service and then eat."

"They didn't give me a policy... After one month, she [supervisor] told me 'you worked really hard, take a break'. I worked between four to six hours without food or anything."

Some employers also used direct forms of coercive power. The women mentioned more subtle or indirect forms of coercive power including promoting messaging such as 'clients always come first', which sometimes resulted in the women feeling forced to accept mistreatment from customers.

"When I was leaving [quitting] that store, he [employer] didn't want me to leave. He tries to threaten me, literally. He even told me that he can do anything to me. 'You don't know me. I can finish your future, your career, your future. I can do anything. You don't have any idea.'"

Theme 2: Racism & Discrimination

The women shared stories of blatant racism as well as more subtle forms such as microaggressions.

"The customers abuse us. They are racist. One time I was told to go back to my country - 'This is my country! Go back to your country!'. They get rude and angry."

"A lot of people would be like, 'oh, there's no way you're an immigrant' or saying, 'oh, your English is so good' thinking that it's to compliment. Not understanding that just brings out the bias that immigrants don't speak good English. When I try to explain to people, they're like 'oh no, that's not what I meant'."

The women also experienced gender-based discrimination within their workplace. Some women refrained from disclosing their parental status during the hiring process.

"Some employers feel when you're an immigrant, especially when you're a woman, they feel the necessity of asking certain questions that they would not be asking otherwise. When you try to stand up and say 'excuse me, it is illegal to ask these questions' people act kind of baffled and say, 'Oh no, that's not what I meant. You misunderstood me'. They continue with this bias as if you're not being able to comprehend properly."

Year 2 Interview Results

Thematic Analysis

Theme 3: Underemployment & Overworking

The women consistently described their employment as well below their qualifications, skills, and experiences. Due to this, they also had to work more hours, and often a second job, in order to support themselves/their families. This left little to no time personal time or opportunities for self care.

"My first priority will be my field... So I will continue wanting to be in that field...I was a software developer. I am going into housekeeping. My parents will definitely be sad... But, you know, if the situation asked me to be there, I have no choice, I guess."

"I wake up everyday by 6:30 in the morning...I go to work from 9am to 5pm. I come back home and I have a business so I open from 6pm to 10pm."

Finally, newcomer women often found themselves in a position where they were expected to be grateful for the opportunities that their host country or employment provides.

"I was just grateful that I already had a job."

"We try to do everything ourselves. We were hesitant to ask for help."

Theme 4: Conditional Acceptance & Inclusion

Cultural differences described by the women led to struggles with fitting in and feeling welcome. The women also expressed the value of local connections. Having an 'in' with local networks greatly increased the likelihood of securing employment and social connections.

"It's not nice to feel you are different."

"Once you start making connections and you start showing interest and putting some roots down, this town really does welcome you. But you needed to find the people first."

"One day I was walking around and I met a lady outside...She was asking me what I do for a living. I answered her and said I'm working, but I'm still looking for a full time job. She asked me if I wanted to go work in [health facility]? And I said 'yeah, sure'. Then she talked with the manager and everything and I got a job."



Quantitative Results

Year 1 & Year 2



Year 1 Survey

Overview

The year 1 survey, open to all residents of Northwestern Ontario, received over 3000 useable records. Of these 1235 were completed by women.

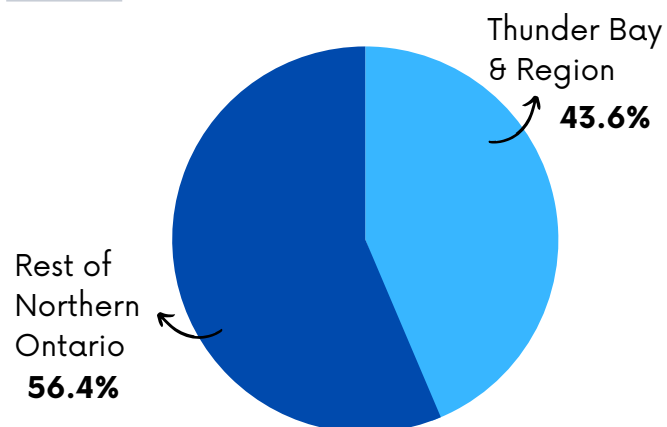
The survey captured topics such as organizational support, perceived over qualification, covid impacts on employment, barriers to labour participation, and discrimination.

This analysis focused on newcomer women.

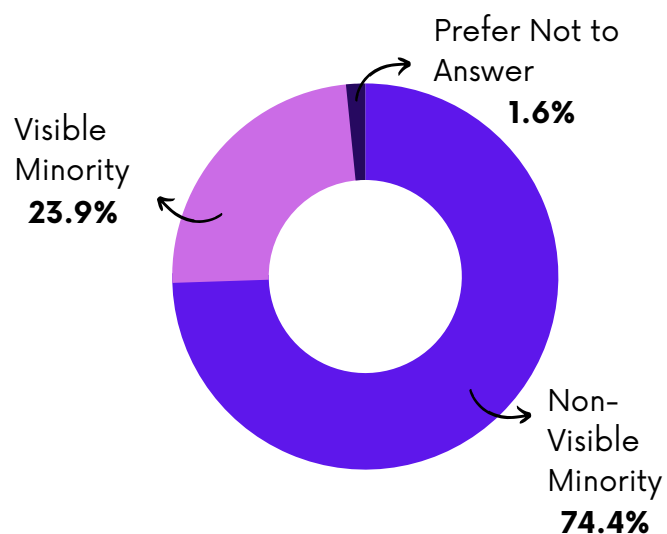
Canadian Residency Classification



Area of Residence

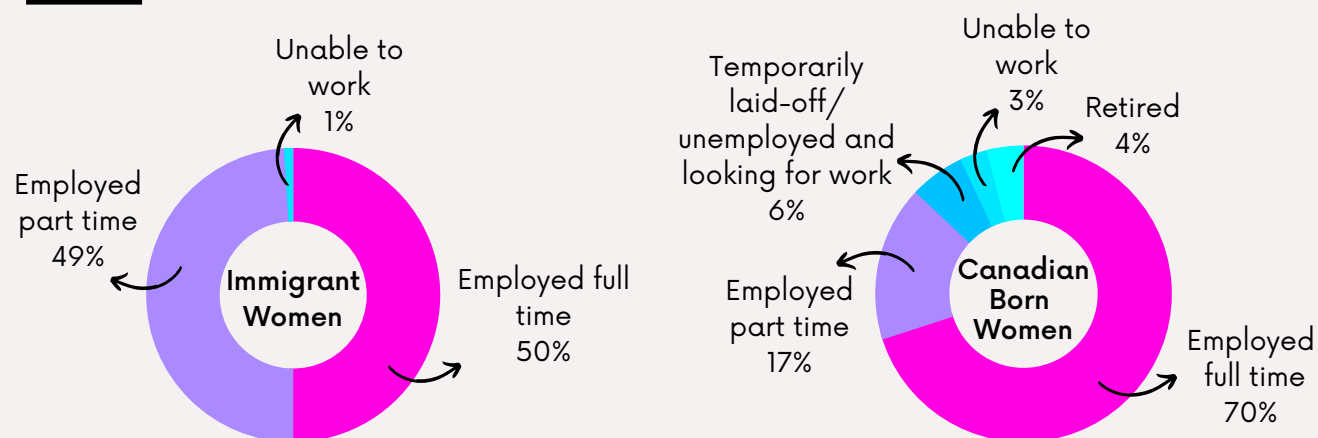


Visible Minority Status



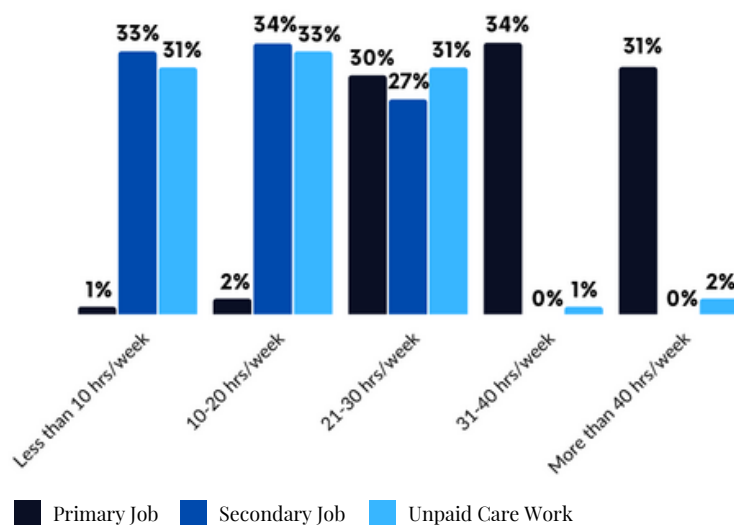
Year 1 Survey Results

Employment Status

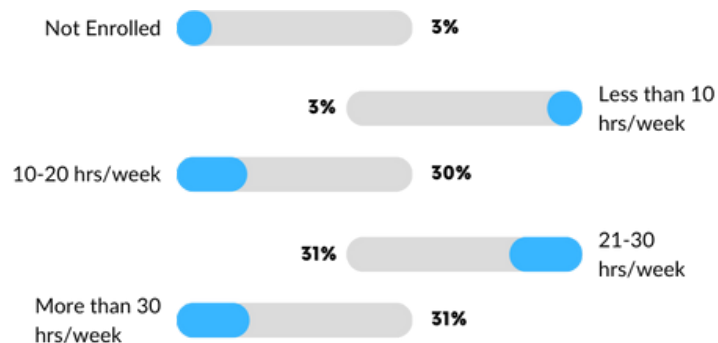


Total Working Hours: Newcomer Women

Overworking was apparent. Nearly one third of newcomer women respondents were working more than 40 hours per week at their primary job, 21-30 hours of unpaid care work, and 27% were also working 21-30 hours at a secondary job.



Hours Spent in School/Training: Newcomer Women

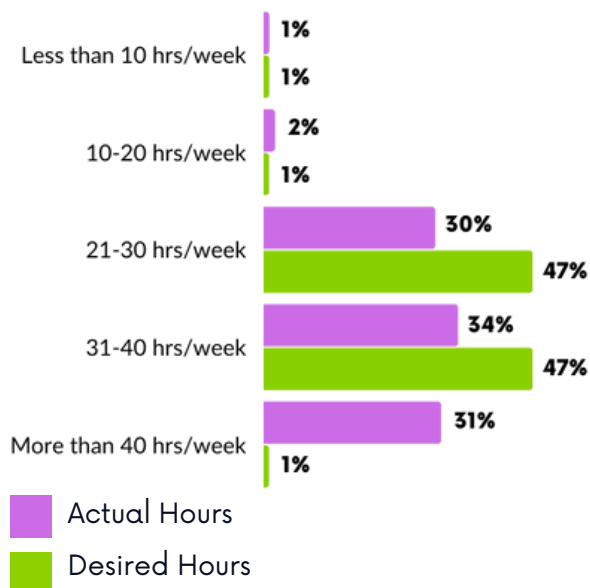


Nearly all newcomer women respondents were also spending between 10-30+ hours per week furthering their education or skills.

Year 1 Survey Results

Newcomer Women Working Hours: Reality Vs Desire

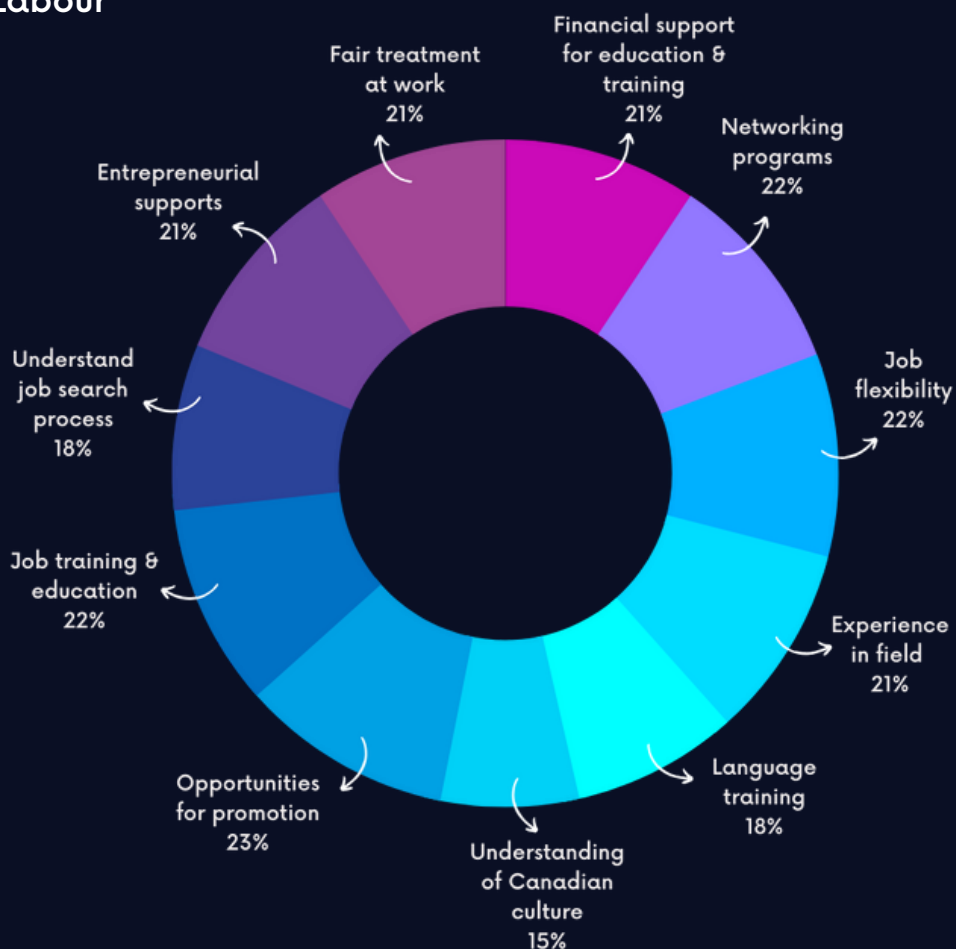
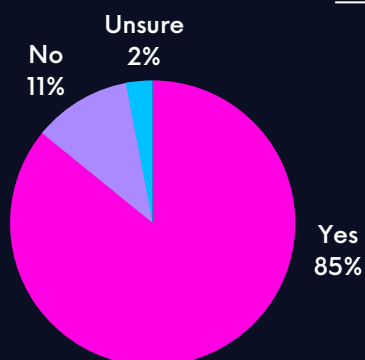
Primary Job



Skills Development For Full Labour Participation

Newcomer women participants identified several barriers to full labour participation. Many of these presented as skills development gaps.

Intentions to Re-Train or Return to School



Year 2 Survey

Overview

The year 2 survey, open to all residents of Northwestern Ontario, received over 2000 useable records.

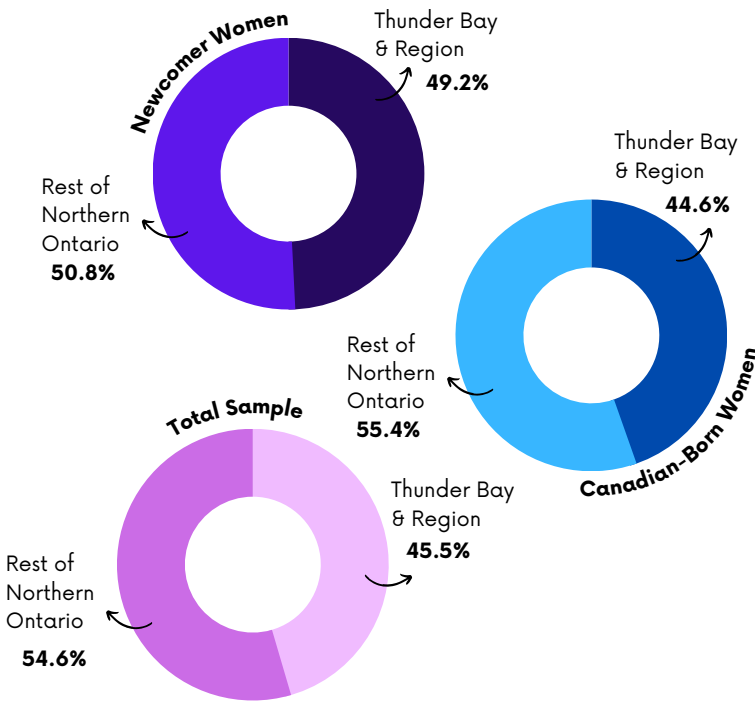
Of the 796 women who completed the survey, 65 were newcomers.

The year 2 survey captured topics such as advancing one’s career, workplace experiences, employment stressors, and training.

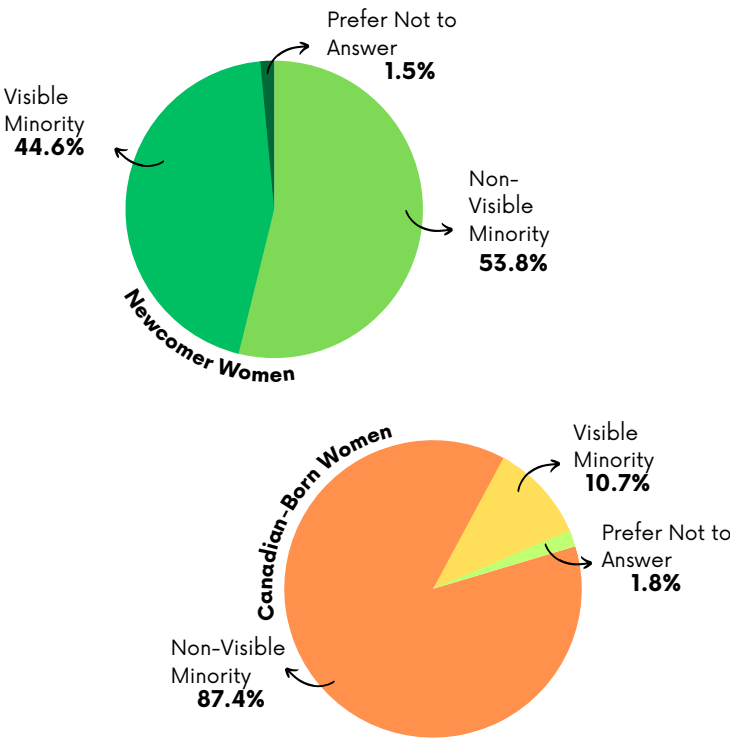
Year 2 placed much less emphasis on COVID-19 related topics as the pandemic recovery was well underway at the time of data collection. When asked about the degree to which the COVID-19 pandemic is affecting their health, family and employment, the vast majority of all women identified little to no concern.

The following analysis focuses on newcomer women.

Area of Residence

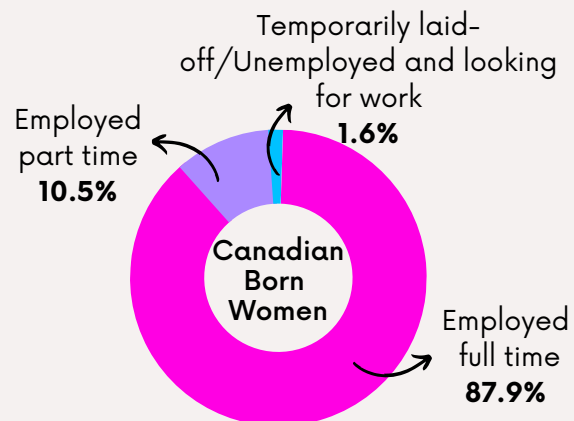
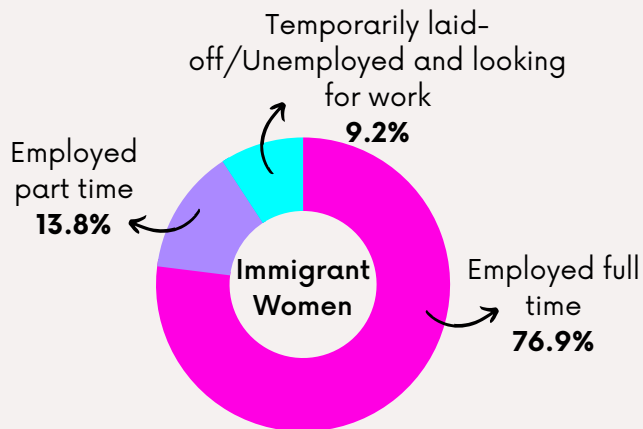


Visible Minority Status



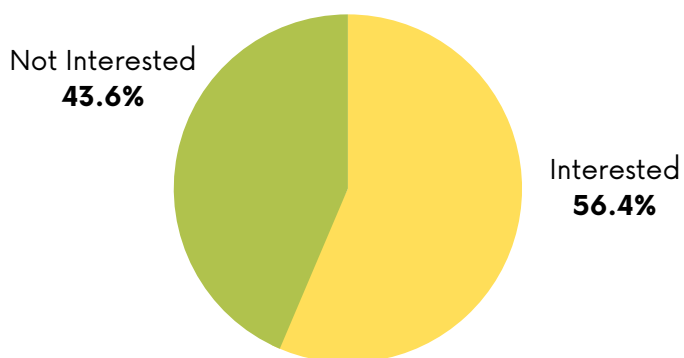
Year 2 Survey Results

Employment Status

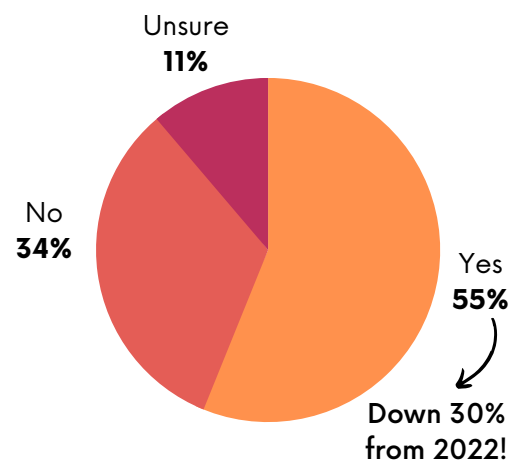


Newcomer Women & Training

Interest in Canadian Cultural & Workplace Norms Training



Intentions to Re-Train or Return to School



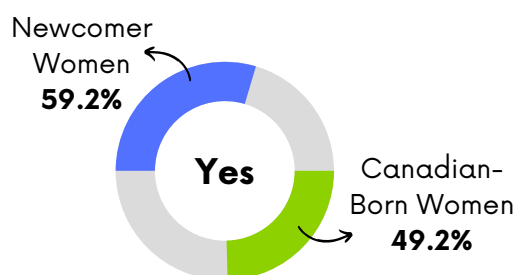
Year 2 Survey Results

Employment

Safety At Work

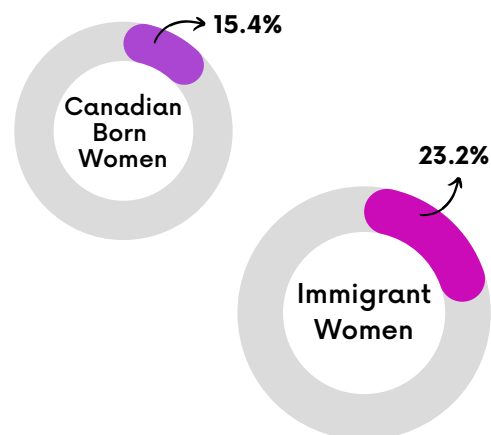
Compared to 6.2% of Canadian-born women, **7.8% of newcomer women do not feel safe at work.**

Secondary Income



Entrepreneurship

Own or co-own a side business or trying to start one



Employment Hours

Average Hours Per Week

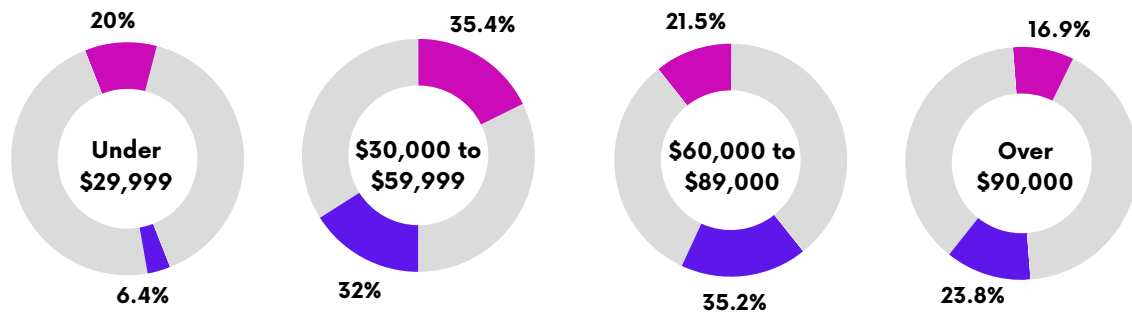


Canadian-born women identified higher average working hours per week than newcomer women. This finding is surprising, given the prominent theme of overworking among interview participants. One reason for this is that **Canadian-born women are working full-time jobs at a higher rate compared to newcomer women** (87.9% and 76.9%, respectively). **Newcomer women are also working more part-time jobs** (13.8% compared to 10.5% of Canadian-born women) and **have much higher rates of unemployment** (9.2% compared to 1.6% of Canadian-born women).

Year 2 Survey Results

Annual Income Disparity

NEWCOMER WOMEN

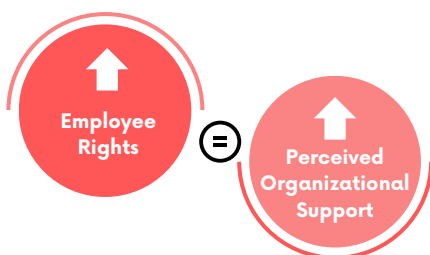


CANADIAN-BORN WOMEN

Overall, Canadian-born women have higher representation in higher income ranges, while newcomer women are more represented in lower income ranges. The differences between these demographics are statistically significant.

Workplace Realities

- ✓ **Employees report less discrimination** the more they receive information about internal rules, how to perform their jobs, and information from their coworkers about how to adjust to the organization.
- ✓ **Employees report less discrimination** the more an organization has health and safety programs in place, leaders provide a healthy work environment, and employees are encouraged to voice their concerns.



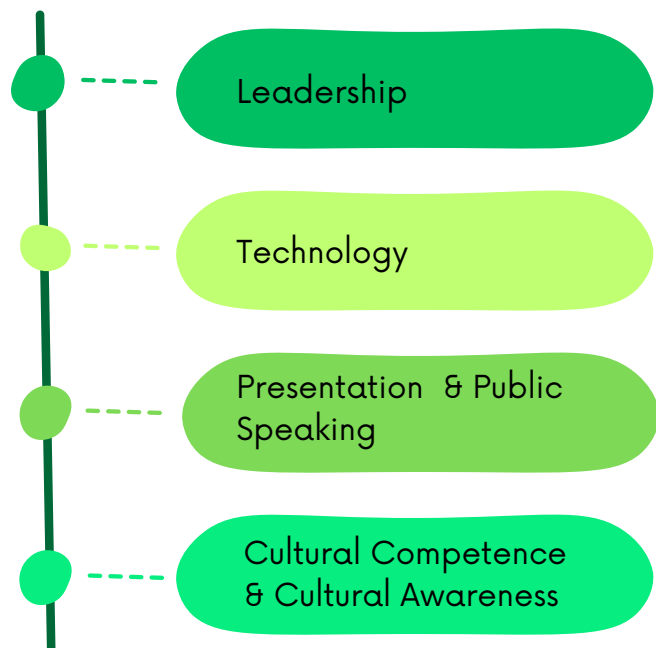
The more employees receive information about internal rules, how to perform their jobs, and information from their coworkers about how to adjust to the workplace, the more supported they feel by their organization.

Year 2 Survey Results

Skills Development

Confidence in Workplace Skills

Areas of Least Confidence for Newcomer Women



Most Important Factors For Newcomer Women's Career Advancement





Two Year Comparison

A comparative analysis of the key findings from year one and year two insights unveiled a multifaceted experience characterized by resilience, challenges, and evolving workplace dynamics. In year one of our research, we gain valuable insights into the initial challenges that newcomer women encounter during the pandemic. The initial challenges presented by the COVID 19 pandemic strongly influenced employment and training opportunities that the women participated in. Year two of the study brought a deeper understanding into the ongoing challenges and systemic issues encountered by newcomer women.

Similarities in Year 1 & Year 2

One striking similarity between Year 1 and Year 2 was the pervasive issue of racism & discrimination. In Year 1, newcomer women reported instances of bias against their home countries, gender-related bias, and gender pay gaps. Year 2 echoed these concerns, with stories of blatant racism, microaggressions, and gender-based workplace discrimination. Discrimination remained a significant barrier to adjustment and job satisfaction, reflecting a deep-seated issue that requires targeted interventions.

The theme of underemployment & overworking continued to haunt newcomer women in both years. Year 1 highlighted their struggles in finding work due to immigration status and the burdens of overworking to compensate for staff shortages. Year 2 painted a similar picture, emphasizing the chronic mismatch between skills and job opportunities, with language proficiency playing a crucial role. The vicious cycle of accepting survival jobs at the cost of career ambitions persisted, posing a significant challenge to their well-being.

Employer bias was a recurring issue in both years, affecting newcomer women's job satisfaction and labor force participation. In Year 1, some women reported being compensated less than colleagues, while others felt the need for local connections to secure employment opportunities. Year 2 added nuances to this theme, with employers appearing to wield more coercive power, exploiting newcomer women's vulnerability.

Differences in Year 1 & Year 2

While year one provided initial insights into employment struggles as a result of COVID-19, the majority of these concerns were resolved in year two. And as a result, we were able to delve deeper into the complex workplace experiences for newcomer women.

Year 2 introduced a significant focus on health and safety concerns in the workplace. Participants reported a lack of occupational health and safety training, which raised concerns about mental and physical well-being. Staffing levels were also a safety concern, with understaffing leading to difficulties in fulfilling job responsibilities. This theme was not as prominent in Year 1, indicating that the pandemic had brought new safety challenges to the forefront.

Year 2 placed a greater emphasis on the expectations newcomer women had when relocating to Canada. These expectations included career advancement, further education, recognition of foreign credentials, and equal opportunities. However, the reality often fell short, leading to frustration and disappointment. Year 2 also highlighted the lack of support for newcomer women in navigating the complex systems of Canada, with professionals often lacking an understanding of their unique challenges. This theme emphasized the need for better support systems and guidance.

Appendix

Appendix 1: Knowledge Mobilization

Presentations

| Name/Description | Date | Audience Type |
|--|-----------------------|---|
| Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship Research (CIER) Fall 2022 Meeting | November 18, 2022 | Research centre, community partners |
| Research & Innovation Week, Lakehead University- Research spotlight | February 27, 2023 | Lakehead University community |
| Prevention, Knowledge Exchange Group (PKEG) Meeting | March 3, 2023 | Ministry and provincial work and health organizations |
| Enhancing the Prevention of Injury and Disability at Work (EPID @ Work) Talks- Spotlight presentation | April 14, 2023 | Research centre, community members, employers |
| Administrative Sciences Association of Canada (ASAC) 2023 Conference- Oral Presentation | June 3 - June 5, 2023 | International researchers |

Best paper award in Gender and Diversity in Organizations Division!



Appendix

Appendix 1: Knowledge Mobilization

Presentations

| Name | Date | Audience Type |
|---|-----------------------|--|
| Community-College-University Exposition (C2U Expo) - Oral presentation and poster presentation | June 5 - June 8, 2023 | International researchers, Lakehead University community |
| Research Into Action Conference - Presentation with community partners | October 17, 2023 | Researcher and community employers |
| Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship Research (CIER) Fall 2023 Meeting | TBD | Research centre and community partners |
| EDI Journal - Paper submission (invited to apply) | November 2023 | Researchers, academics |

Appendix 1: Knowledge Mobilization

Facebook Paid Advertisements



Link Clicks: 1,335

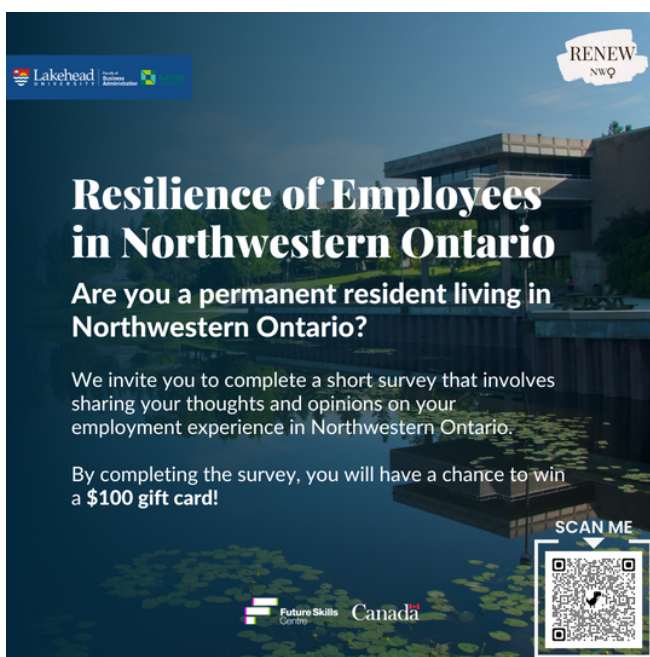
Reach: 33,624

Impressions: 139,976



Reach: 4,312

Impressions: 5,991



Link Clicks: 680

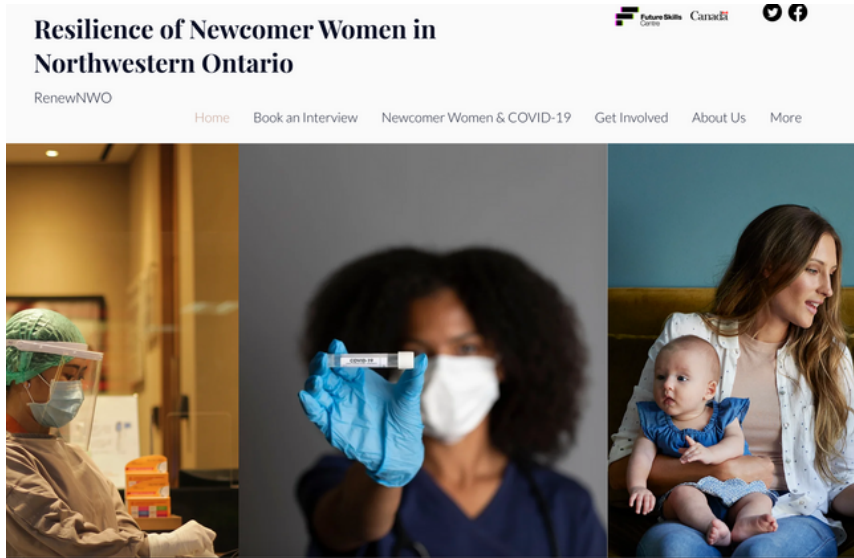
Reach: 25,871

Impressions: 73,036

Appendix 1: Knowledge Mobilization

Website

1,395 unique site visits since 2021.



We are a research project studying the impacts that the COVID-19 pandemic had on newcomer women in the region of Northwestern Ontario.

The COVID-19 crisis has resulted in women's employment and well-being disproportionately affected (Hupkau & Petrongolo, 2020; Alon et al., 2020), with immigrant women suffering the most. In fact, 44.9 percent of immigrant women are unemployed compared to 40.1 percent of their Canadian counterparts (Atputharajah et al., 2020).

Our research aims to build knowledge, and provide recommendations for skills innovation, recovery, and new ways forward for newcomer women in the face of economic shock due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We will address the desperate needs of the hardest hit population, in one of the hardest hit regions, who provide services in some of the most demanding sectors in Canada. By examining both the rural and urban effects of COVID-19 on newcomer women, this project will produce meaningful results that can be applied across the country.

Effects of COVID-19 on Newcomer Women

Canada has historically taken ground-breaking steps towards employment equality, however the COVID-19 pandemic has presented novel and unique challenges. Many provinces have seen a significant collapse of their labour market. Ontario has had the biggest shock, with a decline of 66 million aggregate weekly hours worked in the first month of the COVID-19 crisis alone (Lemieux, Milligan, Schirle, & Skuterud, 2020).

Newcomer women in particular have been disproportionately affected.

Quick Facts

- 81% of the Canada's healthcare workforce is made up of women
- Young women experienced the most dramatic change in employment rates and hours worked since the beginning of the pandemic (Milligan et al., 2020)
- The burden on women with children under the age of 12 has increased significantly, with schools and daycare centres closed and outside family members discouraged from taking on childcare duties (Qian & Fuller, 2020)



Interviews with Renew NWO

What is the purpose of the interview?

To explore how the pandemic has affected all parts of your life, as well as your transition to Northwestern Ontario.

As a participant, you would take part in a **confidential virtual or telephone interview**. Interviews take **no longer than one hour** and occur at a convenient time and date. You will be asked questions related to your experiences coping with the pandemic.

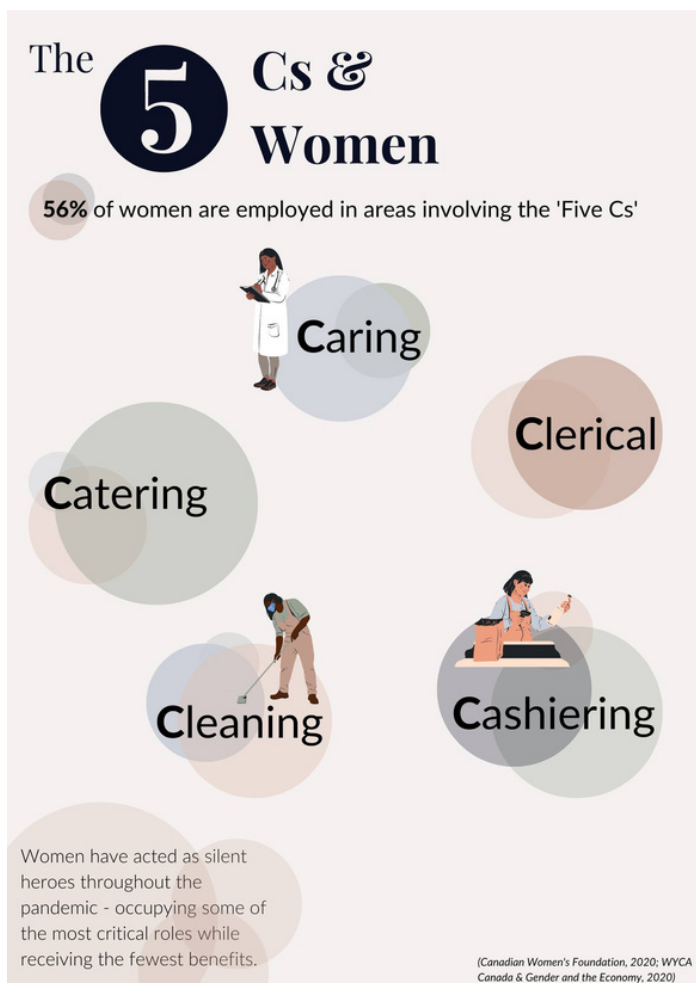
What is expected of me as a participant?

Why should I participate?

The benefit of participating in this interview is to contribute to the knowledge about newcomer women and the pandemic and the opportunities for economic and personal recovery. All interview participants will receive a **\$30 gift card** to thank you for your contributions and time.

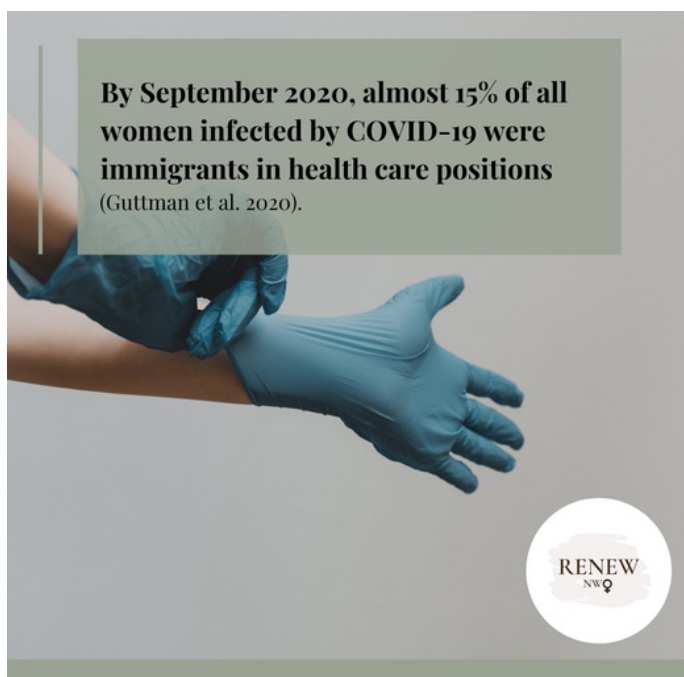
Appendix 1: Knowledge Mobilization

Infographics



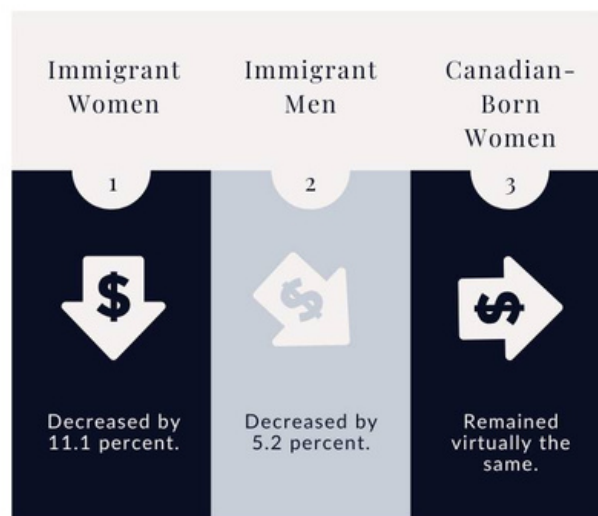
Employment Conditions

Immigrant Women & Covid-19



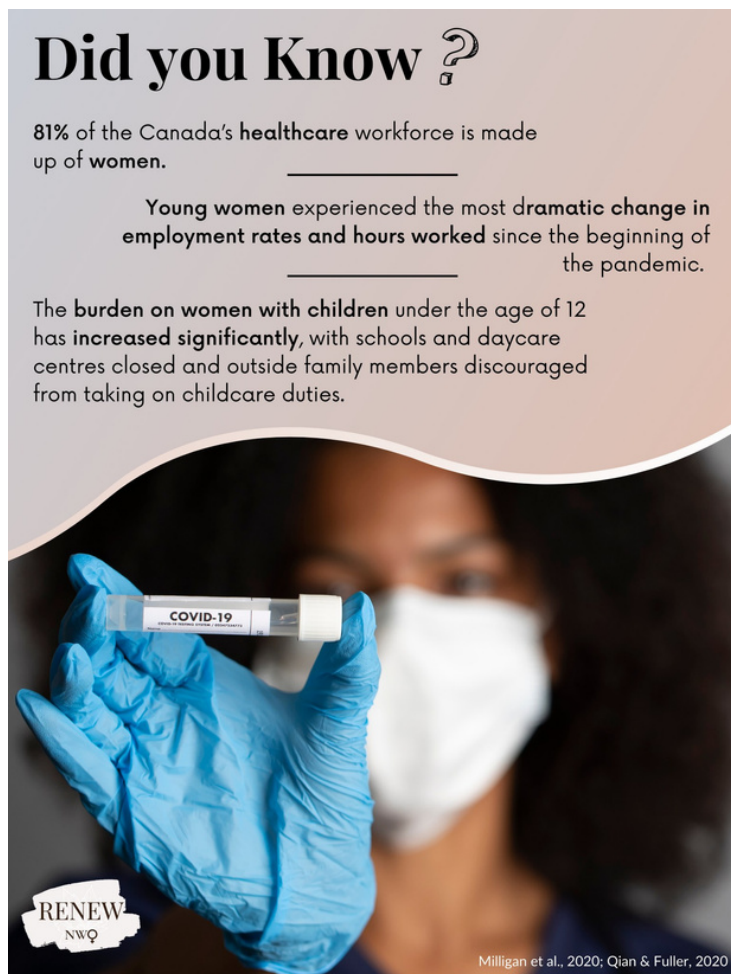
COVID-19 IMPACTS

Average Median Entry Wage

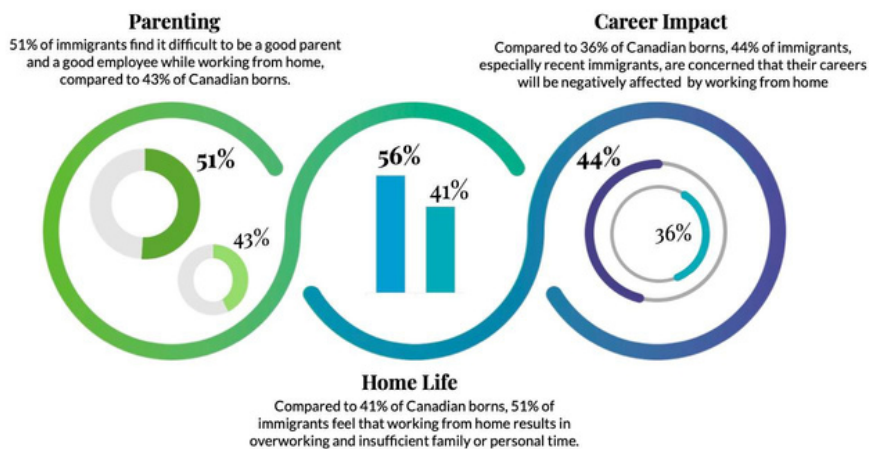


Appendix 1: Knowledge Mobilization

Infographics



Immigrant Experiences Working From Home



Appendix 1: Knowledge Mobilization

Print Marketing






Newcomer Women: Share your Story.

We want to hear your experience:

- Starting a new job
- Learning about the organization and job
- Adjusting to the new job and organization
- Meeting friends / socializing at work
- Training at work

All participants will be **compensated with \$30 in cash**. Participation is **100% confidential**.

Email Renew.nwo@lakeheadu.ca to learn more.

 **RenewNWO.ca**

Scan me to visit our website and book an interview









Share Your Opinion.

Tell us about your experience working in Northwestern Ontario in an online survey.



By completing the survey, you will have a chance to win a **\$100 gift card!**

What questions will I be asked?



You will be asked your opinion on topics such as organizational support, treatment at work, diversity, and workplace skills.

Is it anonymous?

Yes! Your responses are anonymous. Any identifying information will be removed, anonymized, and will not be revealed in any materials. This survey will not impact your employment.



How can I complete the survey?

RenewNWO.ca



*The survey will take approximately 15 minutes.