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THE RBC IMMIGRANT,
DIVERSITY AND
INCLUSION PROJECT AT
RYERSON UNIVERSITY

Employer Recruitment Strategies, Newcomer Employment & Resilience

November 10, 2021

Background

- Research conducted **September - November 2020**
- Exploratory Study – examining **end to end recruitment process** including technology use
- **In-depth interviews** with Talent Acquisition leaders
- **Private sector organizations** across Canada, varied industries
- **177 Talent Acquisition leaders contacted**
- 26 responded & **11 agreed to participate**

Objectives

- **Understand employer recruitment strategies** in relation to the hiring of mid-career immigrant professionals & managers
- Understand **how employer practices do or do not promote newcomer recruitment & skill commensurate employment**
- **Identify & share employer best practices**
- Support **policy and program development**

Employer Practices & Social Resilience

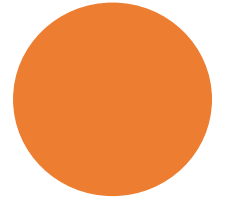
- **Social resilience:** dynamic process - newcomers overcome settlement challenges & secure a future of material, physical & psychological well-being (Hall & Lamont, 2013; BMRC, 2021)
- **Market participation is important:**
 - Material dimension
 - Critical social resources (Kymlicka, 2013)
 - Occupational identities & self-esteem (Wilson-Forsber, 2014)
 - Social determinants of health (Deana & Wilson, 2008)
- **Employer practices are more consequential with the shift to temporary and two-step migration**

Findings

- Significant variability in employer practices
- Potential for positive or negative impact
- Talent acquisition processes are not neutral
- Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) strategies are often narrowly defined
- Technology use ubiquitous

Technology & Recruitment

- **Technology dominates sourcing**
 - Career websites & digital platforms
 - Applicant tracking system use
 - On-demand video interviewing
 - AI recruitment algorithms for screening
- Technology provides **access to pre-arrival services, job fairs**
- **Potential for disparate impact**
 - Social media presence & job taxonomies
 - Structured data fields & non-standard work histories (Ajunwa & Greene, 2018)
 - Historic training data & AI screening



Practices that create barriers

- Job postings privileging local product/institutional knowledge
- Reliance on social capital (e.g., referrals)
- “Canadian experience” & “overqualified”
- D&I strategies omit intersectionality & newcomer specific barriers
- Skills demonstration techniques not used or cover a small % of roles
- Absence of training: interviewing, cross-cultural, combined with focus on “soft skills”
- Decentralized nature of hiring decisions
- Lack of measurement to understand impact of process on newcomers



Practices supporting Newcomer resilience

- Focus on transferrable skills
- Outreach programs for candidate sourcing
- Structured interview process
- Diverse hiring committee
- Mandatory interviewer training
- Excluding vague selection criteria
- Incorporating skills assessments, testing
- Measuring & refining processes to promote inclusion
- Active engagement with ISAs & newcomer communities

Implications

- **ISA programs work but scale-up is required**
 - Pathways matter - Pre-arrival & early post-arrival programs
 - Employer outreach programs & the active involvement of employers at scale
- **Employer Engagement & Process Modification**
 - Treating newcomers fairly/equitably necessitates treating newcomers differently
 - Intersectional lens on D&I strategies
 - Organization wide initiatives/senior leadership involvement
 - Role of Talent Acquisition
- **Government intervention is needed**
 - Ontario's 2013 Human Rights Act amendments – need for further education, compliance & nation-wide legislation
 - Government action on regulated professions



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Thank you