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What do Sponsored Parents and Grandparents Contribute?

Abstract

Canada increasingly favours immigration policies based on human capital theory and economic outcomes. Consequently, while immigration is on the increase there is a downward trend in the number of "family class" entrants admitted to the country. The group most seriously affected is sponsored parents and/or grandparents who are also the most vulnerable to criticisms against family class immigration. The discussion is centered on the perceived lack of potential economic contributions of these immigrants. Such a focus, however, overlooks the feminized nature of this type of immigration and the many non-economic contributions these immigrants make. Using multinomial regression modeling of the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada data, we examine economic and non-economic contributions of sponsored parent and/or grandparent immigrants and compare them to immigrants of similar age migrating under other categories of immigration. We find that sponsored parents and/or grandparents make significant economic contributions to Canadian society as well as other non-economic ones that are often overlooked. We also find that their contributions increase over time and are heavily gendered, with female sponsored parents and/or grandparents making more non-economic contributions than their male counterparts or other immigrants of similar age migrating under other categories of immigration.

Résumé

Le Canada favorise de plus en plus les politiques d'immigration qui sont fondées sur la théorie du capital humain et sur ses retombées économiques. Par conséquent, alors que cette immigration est à la hausse, il y a néanmoins une tendance à la baisse du nombre d'entrées obtenues à partir du «regroupement familial». Le groupe le plus sérieusement touché est celui des parents et / ou grands-parents parrainés, qui sont aussi les plus vulnérables face aux critiques contre cette catégorie. La discussion est centrée sur le manque perçu de contributions économiques potentielles qu'ils peuvent apporter. Une telle approche, cependant, néglige la nature féminisée de ce type d'immigration et leurs nombreuses prestations non monétaires. En utilisant un modèle de régression multinominale de l'Enquête longitudinale auprès des immigrants au Canada, nous examinons ces apports et nous les comparons à ceux d'autres immigrés d'un âge similaire et provenant d'autres catégories. Nous constatons que les parents et / ou grands-parents parrainés font d'importantes contributions économiques à la société canadienne, ainsi que des non-économiques qui sont souvent négligées. Nous constatons également qu'au fil du temps leurs prestations augmentent et sont fortement sexuées, les femmes en faisant plus au niveau non monétaire que leurs homologues masculins et que les immigrés d'un âge similaire venus par l'entremise d'autres catégories d'immigration.

INTRODUCTION

Family migration has been the lifeblood of migration throughout the world (Daniel 2005; Kofman 2004). Recognizing the importance of the family to immigrant settlement and integration, most receiving countries have implemented relatively generous family reunification policies which allow for the sponsorship of relatives who did not accompany the original migrant at the time of immigration. Canada has been no exception (CIC 2000; Daniel 2005; Deshaw 2006). However, in recent years Canada has increasingly favoured a selection process informed by human capital theory privileging those with skills, paid work experience, and high potential for economic adaptability. Consequently, while immigration itself is on the increase, there is a downward trend in the number of family class entrants admitted to the country (Baker and Benjamin 2002; McLaren and Black 2005; Triadafilopoulos 2006) with over 10,000 fewer entrants in 2010 than admitted in 2006 (CIC 2010). Once one of the largest sources of immigration, family class migration for reunification now accounts for only slightly over 20% of annual immigrant intake in Canada (CIC 2010; Daniel 2005). Sponsored parents and/or grandparents are the most vulnerable to criticisms that call into question the value of family class immigration and hence, are particularly susceptible to cutbacks. As Immigration Minister Jason Kenney noted, "… there have to be practical limits to our generosity. We have to calibrate… limits based on our country's economic needs, our fiscal capacity. There is no doubt that the people who are coming who are senior citizens, they have much, much lower labour-market participation and much higher levels of utilization of the public health system" (Gunter 2011). Yet, there is little empirical evidence to justify such sentiments and the policies they drive. Consequently, it is this group within the family class that provides the focal point for our discussion.

The basis upon which Canada selects its immigrants and the appropriate balance between family class immigrants, economic immigrants (skilled workers) and refugees is an important issue in the development of Canada's immigration policies. However, in discussions on what Canada's rationale for immigration should be, the focus in recent years has been almost exclusively on skilled workers and the growth of the temporary worker category with a heavy emphasis on tracking economic indicators of integration such as employment and income in the case of the former and meeting acute labour shortages in the case of the latter. Very little attention has been paid to the integration experiences of family class immigrants, except to note their relatively poorer economic performance (Frances 2002; Stoffman 2002; Borjas 1999). Consequently, the value of family class immigration has not been addressed and any discussion on the balance of different immigrant categories is severely hampered by the absence of analysis of empirical data establishing the validity of different arguments (Rumbaut 1997).

While some of the existing literature focuses on the value of family reunification policies *in principle,* very little research examines the integration experiences of sponsored family members in general or specific categories of family such as parents and/or grandparents. The reason for this gap is in part due to the perceived marginal (and gendered) nature of the subject matter. Family immigration may be of less interest because of its connection to the social, feminine, private sphere rather than the economic sphere (Kofman 2004; Rumbaut 1997). Accompanying family members (sponsored or otherwise) are also not screened on human capital variables and are not required or expected to possess the same levels of human capital brought by principal economic class applicants. Little attention has been given to developing models to ascertain the non-economic contributions made by newcomers to Canada, or to develop more appropriate models for measuring non-standard economic contributions. Consequently, the integration outcomes of family class immigrants have not been measured in any meaningful way beyond the standard income indicators which dominate the field of immigration studies (e.g., Li 2003a, 2003b; Smith 2004).

Studies that do look at the integration outcomes for family class immigrants tend to be qualitative in nature, based on case study designs (VanderPlaat 2007). These studies are rich in interpretive data, and provide considerable insight to the potential contributions of family class immigrants, particularly parents and/or grandparents, within the family unit as well as the community. However, such studies are usually not conducted for the express purpose of measuring non-economic outcomes or developing a meaningful model for measuring the economic and non-economic contributions of parents and/or grandparents. Most important, qualitative studies focusing on family class immigrants have not been conducted in conjunction with, or successfully linked to large scale quantitative data, limiting their capacity to be policy informative. Consequently, arguments for and against family reunification tend to be highly subjective and rarely appeal to solid broad-based research.

The identification of these problems, both theoretical and methodological, does not produce an obvious solution. As one analyses the sparse literature on family class immigrants, it is apparent that the issue is a highly complex one, easily subject to "leaps of logic" and misinterpretation of data.[1] Yet, the need to understand the role of the family in the immigration experience is considered critical (Arat-Koc 2006; Ellis and Wright 2005; Kustec 2006; Jasso 1997; Nauck and Settles 2001; Rumbaut 1997). The objectives of this paper are therefore twofold: First, using data from the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants in Canada (LSIC), it explores the basic quantitative data on sponsored parents and/or grandparents to inform the discussion about what their potential contributions to Canadian society may be and how these

may be more fully explored. Second, the paper considers what factors influence different potential outcomes of sponsored parents and/or grandparents compared to other immigrants of similar age migrating under other categories of immigration. We will accomplish these goals by first providing an overview of the different perspectives on family reunification policies. We then introduce potential contributions that sponsored parents and/or grandparents make. Last, we test what factors influence different contributions of sponsored parents and/or grandparents.

COMPETING DISCOURSES

In very simplistic terms the discussion on the value of sponsoring parents and/or grandparents takes place between those who advocate a humanitarian rationale for family reunification versus those who argue against such policies from an economic perspective. As such, the debate remains at the level of values and beliefs instead of substantive arguments. The key issue is which perspective should dictate Canada's position on family immigration. Both readily dismiss the other without actually addressing the specific arguments being presented.

The position opposing large scale family reunification policies is based on an economic imperative that contends that while families may be good for the well-being of individuals, family class immigration may not be in the best economic interests of the state (Avci 1999; Borjas 1999; Collacott 2002, 2006; Frances 2002; Grubel 2005). In particular, sponsored parents and/or grandparents are viewed as potential "burdens" on Canadian society, by virtue of their diminished capacity for economic contributions and increased potential for stressing the social welfare and healthcare systems (Stoffman 2002).

The humanitarian position, by contrast, derives its moral imperative from Canada's commitment to a number of international conventions that recognize migrants' rights to join or be joined by their families. Proponents of this position include settlement sector NGO's, immigrant advocacy groups and social justice organizations among others. The humanitarian position often also argues that not only is access to family a right, it is also fundamental for the social, physical, psychological and spiritual well-being of newcomer populations (Canadian Council for Refugees 2004; Deshaw 2006; KAIROS 2005; OCASI 2005).

As Daniel (2005) notes, in its current state much of the debate between the altruistic humanitarian position and the more instrumental economic perspective is not particularly useful because it lacks a common ground for argumentation. A more fruitful platform for discussion is presented by those who argue that the notions of "contribution" and "burden" are inappropriately defined by the dominant economic and human capital constructions of integration (Lewis-Watts 2006; Li

2003a, 2003b; McLaren 2006) and there exists a strong body of feminist scholarship in support of this argument (Creese et. al. 2008; Creese et. al. 2011; Neysmith et. al. 2010). It is thus important to critically examine how the integration experiences of sponsored relatives, including parents and/or grandparents, should be interpreted and understood.

Researchers from this perspective argue that not only is the family good for the well-being of the individual, it is good for society as a whole because access to family relationships and networks can support and mitigate the settlement and integration process (Dench 2006; Deshaw 2006; Khoo 2003; Kofman 2004; Li 2003a; Pratt 2006). By providing child care and/or labour to family owned businesses, sponsored parents and/or grandparents can contribute to the overall economic well-being of the family and support the educational pursuits and labour market activities of other family members. Through volunteerism, informal networking and kinship work, sponsored parents and/or grandparents can also contribute to community cohesion and social capital formation which can be particularly important in the absence of more formal support systems and settlement services (Lewis-Watts 2006; Telegdi 2006). As Anderson (2001) points out, in some cultures grandparents also play an important intermediary role in intergenerational conflicts. In addition, the possibility of sponsoring relatives may be an important element in attracting and retaining immigrants (Deshaw 2006; Khoo 2003).[2]

The problem with the alternative contribution discourse is that what "may" or "could" happen is more or less based on speculation rather than concrete evidence. While the assumptions posited make intellectual sense, very little effort has been made to substantiate them. This is in part because most large-scale national databases do not differentiate between different types of immigrants, not to mention family class immigrants. As a result, and in absence of a well substantiated alternative discourse, the "integration" of family class immigrants continues to be narrowly defined by inappropriately applied economic-related outcomes.

It is important, however, to state that the development of an alternative contribution discourse should not dismiss economic indicators as an integration outcome for sponsored parents and/or grandparents. At issue is the establishment of appropriate economic indicators for parents and/or grandparents, indicators which, we argue, recognize the importance of the family unit in assessing integration outcomes. For example, analyses of earnings or income-tax returns hide the in-kind support parents and/or grandparents may be giving their families and communities. Likewise, the temporary strain on family wealth produced by sponsorship may have long-term benefits and, as Baker and Benjamin (2002) and Mogelonsky (1995) would suggest, this may be a very strategic decision on the part of families.

Our analysis therefore aims to expand the discourse on integration outcomes by

offering preliminary empirical evidence to critically engage the academic, policy and settlement community in assessing the value of family class immigration, particularly as it relates to sponsored parents and/or grandparents.

DATA AND METHODS

To examine different potential contributions of sponsored parents and/or grandparents, we use Statistics Canada's Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada (LSIC). It was first administered in 2001 and has results for three waves of data—six months, two years, and four years after immigrants arrive in Canada. It offers unique insight into the transitions that a cohort of immigrants experienced after migrating and unlike most surveys, the LSIC contains data on different immigrant statuses, which allow us to specifically examine family class sponsored parents and/or grandparents. We begin by conducting tabular and descriptive analysis and then run multinomial regression models of *main activity*[3] (as a proxy of different contributions) on a dummy measure of *parents and/or grandparents*[4], controlling for various demographic factors from wave 1. These include: *sex, highest level of education obtained outside of Canada, work status before arriving to Canada, area of settlement, ethnicity, official language ability, age,* and *family income*.[5] Models examine main activity in waves 2 and 3, for all immigrants 40 years and older, and uses Statistics Canada bootstraps weights to produce standard errors. We chose to look at older immigrants because they are more likely to share similar attributes to sponsored parents and/or grandparents. This analysis is followed by a comparison of probabilities of main activities in waves 2 and 3, net of controls, for parents and/or grandparents and other immigrants 40 years and older.

Because our analysis is exploratory, we remain agnostic to the direction of effects for possible influences of main activity, or contributions, and are instead interested in seeing which significantly affect different contributions and whether or not sponsored parents and/or grandparents have statistically discernible differences in their main activities compared to other immigrants of comparable age immigrating through other immigration categories.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

To offer context we begin by examining trends in family class immigration during the 2000s. As Table 1 shows, the proportion of family class immigrants to Canada has declined from about 26.6% of immigrants in 2001 to 21.5% in 2010. The table also shows that since 2001, parent and grandparent immigrants have not exceeded 10% of all immigrants and by 2010 they make up just 5.5% of immigrants arriving

TABLE 1. Family Class (%) Immigration 2001-2010

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Spouses and partners	15.7	14.9	17.9	18.8	17.3	18	19	17.9	17.4	14.5
Sons and daughters	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.3	1.2	1.1
Parents and grandparents	8.5	9.7	8.8	5.4	4.8	7.9	6.7	6.7	6.8	5.5
Others	0.8	1	1.1	1	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.6	0.4	0.4
Family class	26.6	27.2	29.4	26.4	24.2	28	28	26.5	25.9	21.5

Source: CIC Facts and Figures 2010: 7

in Canada. Although this is a small proportion of total immigrants, this category of immigrant has been the focus of much contention. As Canada begins to revamp its immigration system, sponsored parents and/or grandparents are front and centre. During the fall of 2011, the federal government announced new and unprecedented visas to make it easier for immigrants to spend time with their parents and grandparents. Yet, at the same time, it implemented a two-year moratorium on new applications for immigration under this category—effectively shutting down this mode of immigration. Relatedly, many Canadians fear that these immigrants are a drain on the economy and tax dollars.

This sentiment is reflected in comments by journalist Lorne Gunter (2011) who stated:

> Most of these older immigrants will never work or will work very little between the time they are admitted and the time of their death. That also means they will pay very few taxes to contribute toward the social services they will consume. How is that fair to taxpayers who have lived and worked here all their lives, or who moved here decades ago and have contributed tens of thousands or hundreds of thousands of tax dollars since? (*Edmonton Journal,* October 23)

Given the policy changes and strong sentiments echoed by many, one might be surprised that we are talking about such a relatively small proportion of immigrants.

When we examine how sponsored parents and/or grandparents stack up against other immigrants in Table 2, we find that there are a number of interesting differences between sponsored parents and/or grandparents and other immigrants. Some differences surely will add fuel to the fodder of critics, yet others spark the need for further investigation. Sponsored parents and/or grandparents are more likely to be women, with less education, less work experience, weaker official language skills, be less likely to be married, and are older.

Yet, they are not as "elderly" as some might expect and this could broaden the types of activities they participate in. The average age of sponsored parents and/or grandparents in the LSIC was just 60 years old. They are people who are able to continue to make valuable contributions to Canada and still have years of work potential ahead of them. The data, moreover, show that they are not living in poorer conditions than other immigrants. If you look at the family incomes between the two

TABLE 2. Descriptive statistics by Parents and/or Grandparents and Other Immigrants

(Values from Wave 1)		Parents/ Grandparents	Other Immigrants
Sex (%)			
	Male	39.0	57.7
	Female	61.0	42.3
Highest education (outside Canada) (%)			5.6
	Less than High school	46.7	
	High school	19.9	10.1
	Post Secondary	16.4	20.9
	University	17.0	63.4
Work status prior to arrival (%)			
	Full time	61.9	87.2
	Part time or not working	38.1	12.8
Area of settlement (%)			
	MTV	74.4	73.2
	Outside of MTV	25.6	26.8
Ethnicity (%)			
	European	12.8	19.9
	South Asian	43.5	21.5
	East/Southeast Asian	31.2	33.5
	Other	12.5	25.1
Language (%)			
	Speaks English or French Well	38.6	82.2
	Does not speak an official language well	61.4	17.8
Marital status (%)			
	Married	75.0	92.4
	Not married	25.0	7.6
Age (including all age group)	Mean	60.24	32.56
	Std. Dev.	8.95	8.92
Family income	Mean	23,266.8	23,742.0
	Std. Dev.	23,221.1	103,102.2
Weighted N		13,691.0	29,101.9
	Proportion	0.32	0.68

groups you find a difference of just $475. Parents and/or grandparents are no more likely to be a drain on the Canadian social welfare system than other people their age, or other immigrants.

When we examine the main activities of sponsored parents and/or grandparents further, in Table 3, and compare them against other immigrants who are 40 years

TABLE 3. Main Activity (%) by Parents and/or Grandparents

| | 40 years and older | | | | | |
| | Wave 1 | | Wave 2 | | Wave 3 | |
Main Activity	Parents/ Grandparents	Other Immigrants	Parents/ Grandparents	Other Immigrants	Parents/ Grandparents	Other Immigrants
Working	27.7	57.1	40.8	77.4	39.0	82.2
Retired	28.9	1.7	27.3	1.7	27.6	1.6
Home making	33.6	15.0	12.8	7.6	13.9	6.8
Caring for family	not available		14.8	2.1	14.2	3.0
Other	9.8	26.2	4.3	11.1	5.3	6.4
Weighted N	13,691	29,102	13,691	29,102	13,691	29,102

and older, we find that, as a whole, sponsored parents and/or grandparents are less likely to be working than other immigrants. However, at the same time, sponsored parents and/or grandparents are making a number of important contributions that are often missed in critiques against their immigration. Just after arriving, less than 30% of these immigrants reported being retired, which is what many would expect. However, the other two thirds of these immigrants were either working or self-employed or homemaking. As a result, the majority of sponsored parents and/or grandparents engage in activities that contribute to the Canadian economy and society.

When the same data are examined in the second wave of the LSIC, two years after landing in Canada, the results look somewhat different. After two years in Canada, about the same percent of sponsored parents and/or grandparents reported being retired, the proportion working increased to 40.8%, while the proportion homemaking decreased to 12.8% (in part because the second wave began asking about caring for family separately), and caring for family accounted for 14.8% of sponsored parents and/or grandparents' main activities. The roughly 13 percentage point increase in working is a very interesting finding in light of the fact that this population is now two years older.

When the data are examined at the third wave of the LSIC, four years after landing in Canada, about the same proportion of sponsored parents and/or grandparents remain retired, roughly 39% are working or self-employed, just under 14% are homemaking, and about 14% are caring for family. In other words, only a third of these immigrants are retired and the other two thirds are making important contributions to the Canadian economy and their families—not the story we hear from critics of family class migration.

To explore the data even further, we ask if there are any determinants of the different contributions of sponsored parents and/or grandparents and additionally ask whether or not their contributions are significantly different from other immigrants of comparable age entering the country through other immigrant categories. If there are systemic correlates with different outcomes and differences among immigrant

TABLE 4. Multinomial Regression of Main Activity at Wave 2, Parents and/or Grandparents and Immigrants 40 years or older

Y (ref= "Retired")	Y=1: Working			Y=2: Homemaking/ Caring for Family			Y=3: Other		
	Coef.	s.e.		Coef.	s.e.		Coef.	s.e.	
Immigrant Category: "Other Immigrants" as ref									
Parents/Grandparents	-0.6406	0.440		-1.0218	0.449	**	-1.8102	0.535	***
Sex: "Male" as ref									
Female	-0.4535	0.290		1.9995	0.378	***	-0.2017	0.313	
Highest Education before arrival: "High school" as ref									
Less than High school	0.7735	0.358	**	0.7386	0.386	*	0.7879	0.495	
Some Post secondary	0.3092	0.408		0.1504	0.432		-0.0490	0.497	
University or higher	0.2198	0.381		-0.3432	0.418		0.2174	0.448	
Work status before arrival: "Part-time/Not worked" as ref									
Working full-time	0.2417	0.312		-0.9107	0.314	***	-0.0602	0.373	
Area of residence: "outside of MTV" as ref									
MTV	-0.0434	0.261		0.6091	0.271	**	0.1883	0.300	
Ethnicity Category: "European" as ref									
South Asian	0.7178	0.402	*	0.5445	0.470		0.0446	0.484	
Southeast Asian	0.0989	0.373		0.2559	0.431		-0.4228	0.427	
Other	-0.1573	0.400		0.1144	0.457		0.3186	0.425	
Language: "Does not speak an official language well" as ref									
Speaks English or French well	0.3586	0.253		-0.3221	0.292		-0.4092	0.317	
Marital status: "Not married" as ref									
Married	-0.0795	0.337		-0.0052	0.342		-0.0647	0.428	
Age	-0.2282	0.022	***	-0.1304	0.022	***	-0.1713	0.027	***
Family income	-0.0000015	0.000		-0.0000002	0.000		-0.0000006	0.000	
constant	14.4645	1.443	***	7.3654	1.469	***	10.7284	1.613	***

Number of observation	2,130
Population size	42,793
BRR replication	1000
F(42,958)	11.76
Probability >F	0.000

Notes: Analysis includes the respondents who are 40 years or older
Two-tailed test of significance are shown at 0.1 (*), 0.05 (**), and 0.01 (***) alpha level

categories, this should be of interest to academics and policymakers alike. It is our aim to offer a preliminary snap shot of what these immigrants contribute, and why they do so, to potentially advance the debate on family class immigrants and sponsored parents and/or grandparents.

To explore these questions, we conduct a series of multinomial regression models, examining the effect of being a sponsored parent and/or grandparent on main activity, controlling for a series of other measures. In Table 4, we look at main activity in wave 2 regressed on being a parent and/or grandparent and other controls from wave 1. The reference category for main activity is retired. As we look at the constants across outcomes of main activity (Y=1 through Y=3), we see that generally immigrants in the sample, sponsored parents and/or grandparents and those 40 years or older, are far more likely to be working than retired. The same is the case of homemaking/caring for family and other activity. The story changes slightly when we look specifically at sponsored parents and/or grandparents. The outcome of working as a main activity (Y=1) shows that compared to other immigrants 40 years

TABLE 5. Multinomial Regression of Main Activity at Wave 3, Parents and/or Grandparents and Immigrants 40 years or older

Y (ref="Retired")	Y=1: Working		Y=2: Homemaking		Y=3: Caring for family		Y=4: Other	
	Coef.	s.e.	Coef.	s.e.	Coef.	s.e.	Coef.	s.e.
Immigrant Category: "Other Immigrants" as ref								
Parents/Grandparents	-0.5706	0.421	-1.2372	0.465 ***	-0.3974	0.505	-1.0897	0.531 **
Sex: "Male" as ref								
Female	-0.4917	0.285 *	1.6446	0.395 ***	1.4634	0.426 ***	-0.2888	0.344
Highest Education before arrival: "High school" as ref								
Less than High school	0.6637	0.412	0.5302	0.462	0.3758	0.465	0.1586	0.563
Some Post secondary	-0.2320	0.434	-0.6390	0.475	-1.3610	0.585 **	-0.2491	0.545
University or higher	0.0178	0.414	-0.5597	0.495	-0.8599	0.518 *	0.1824	0.517
Work status before arrival: "Part-time/Not worked" as ref								
Working full-time	0.4292	0.318	-0.5352	0.342	-0.2695	0.367	0.2037	0.403
Area of residence: "outside of MTV" as ref								
VTM	-0.1864	0.253	0.2839	0.306	0.1841	0.348	-0.0129	0.322
Ethnicity Category: "European" as ref								
South Asian	0.5178	0.401	0.2242	0.513	1.1647	0.642 *	-0.1209	0.535
Southeast Asian	0.0819	0.363	-0.0766	0.470	0.8391	0.596	-0.2296	0.447
Other	0.2308	0.405	0.4118	0.515	0.5720	0.672	0.7143	0.483
Language: "Does not speak an official language well" as ref								
Speaks English or French well	0.3000	0.266	-0.3651	0.335	-0.4049	0.356	-0.5005	0.332
Marital status: "Not married" as ref								
Married	-0.0723	0.341	0.3689	0.378	0.5275	0.430	-0.6842	0.413 *
Age	-0.2499	0.021 ***	-0.1297	0.023 ***	-0.1460	0.024 ***	-0.1542	0.027 ***
Family income	-0.0000019	0.000	-0.0000011	0.000	-0.0000027	0.000	-0.0000150	0.000 *
constant	15.9159	1.409 ***	7.5107	1.561 ***	7.1287	1.736 ***	10.3074	1.567 ***

Number of observation	2,130
Population size	42,793
BRR replication	1000
F(56,944)	9.07
Probability >F	0.000

Notes: Analysis includes the respondents who are 40 years or older
Two-tailed test of significance are shown at 0.1 (*), 0.05 (**), and 0.01 (***) alpha level

and older, they are slightly less likely to engage in working. The same is the case for the other two main activities analyzed in models Y=2 and Y=3. However, the effect of being a sponsored parent and/or grandparent on working is not statistically significant. When we examine what determines whether or not sponsored parents and/or grandparents and other immigrants 40 years and older are working, we see that only less than high school education, South Asian ethnicity, and age make a statistically discernible impact. In the case of lowest education category and being South Asian, they increase the likelihood of working and in the case of age, older age decreases the effect on working. When we look at homemaking/caring for family (Y=2), we see that more factors affect whether or not sponsored parents and/or grandparents and other immigrants 40 years and older engage in homemaking or caring for family as their main activity. In fact, being a woman and having less than high school education have a statistically significant effect in increasing doing this as a main activity, previous full-time work decreases this activity, as does age. With respect to other activity (Y=3), only age has a negative impact on these activities.

In Table 5, we examine the same relationships, but this time look at data on main activity from wave 3. Like results from wave 2 data, main activity outcomes (Y=1 through Y=4) show that for sponsored parents and/or grandparents and other immigrants 40 years and older, they are more likely to be working, homemaking, caring for family, or doing an other activity than being retired. Again, the story changes slightly when we look specifically at sponsored parents and/or grandparents compared to other immigrants 40 years and older. Here we again see that for all activities, sponsored parents and/or grandparents are less likely to engage in them compared to being retired, while also comparing them to other immigrants. Yet, these differences are not statistically significant for working or caring for family. When we examine what accounts for working as main activity (Y=1), we find that being a woman decreases the likelihood of doing this activity, as does being older. All other controls were not statistically significant. We find that being a woman increases homemaking (Y=2) as a main activity, and age decreases it. Caring for family (Y=3) offers a more complex set of relationships, with being a woman increasing caring for a family as a main activity, some post-secondary and university or higher education decreasing it, being South Asian increasing it, and age decreasing it. With other activities (Y=4), we see that being married decreases these activities, as does age.

The models presented in Tables 4 and 5 offer an interesting and mixed story about what sponsored parents and/or grandparents contribute. They show that generally retirement is likely to be a main activity of these immigrants. Models also show that there is no statistically discernible effect on the difference between sponsored parents and/or grandparents and other immigrants 40 and older with respect to working or being self-employed as well as caring for family. They likewise show that

other immigrants are more likely to engage in non-retirement activities than sponsored parents and/or grandparents. Additionally it appears that there are important gender differences in activities reported, with women being more likely to engage in homemaking and caring for family and less likely to be working or self-employed in the paid labour force. Older age, as one might expect, is also linked to decreasing engagement of non-retirement activities.

To examine the difference between main activities of sponsored parents and/or grandparents and other immigrants 40 years of older further, we look at predicted probabilities of main activity at wave 2 and wave 3, net of controls in Figures 1 and 2.[6]

Before interpreting the results, we should caution that the predicted probabilities reported are meant to show the marginal effect of being a sponsored parent and/or grandparent only. The results do not take into account potential interactions among sponsored parents and/or grandparents and other predictors, which should be the focus of future research. Here we try to only offer a preliminary sketch. In Figure 1, we see a 13 percentage point difference in the probabilities for sponsored
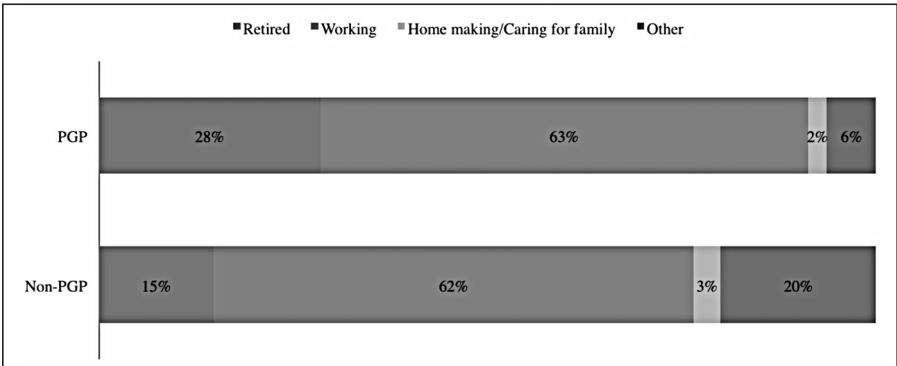

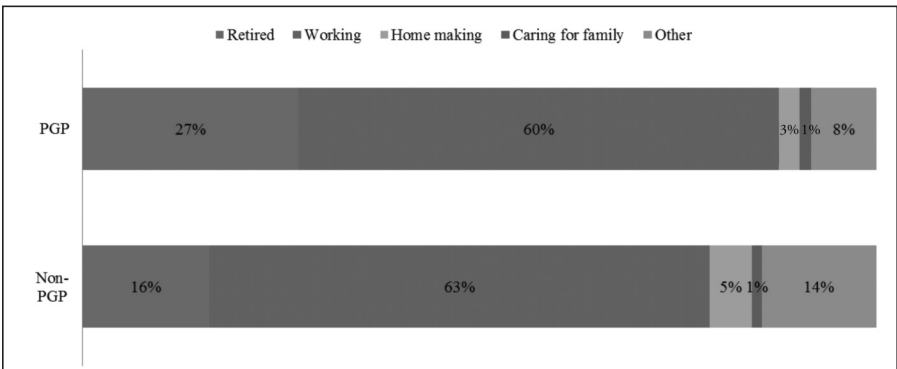Fig. 1. Predicted probabilities for main activity at wave 2

Fig. 2. Predicted probabilities for main activity at wave 3

parents and/or grandparents being retired compared to other immigrants 40 years or older. We also see a 14 percentage point difference in the probabilities of engaging in other activities between the two groups. However, at the same time, we find just a 1 percentage point difference between sponsored parents and/or grandparents and their probability to work or be self-employed two years after arriving in Canada. We see the same difference for homemaking or caring for family. When we examine the same probabilities two years later, in wave 3, we see that the retirement gap still exists but narrows by 2 percentage points. The other activity gap also remains but shrinks to just a 6 percentage point difference. With respect to working, there is just a 3 percentage point difference between sponsored parents and/or grandparents and other immigrants 40 years or older. There is a two percentage point difference in homemaking, and no difference at all for caring for family. Counter to common perceptions, sponsored parents and/or grandparents are overwhelmingly likely to make economic and non-economic contributions to Canadian society and their families.

CONCLUSION

This paper offers a preliminary examination of what the LSIC can tell us about the integration experiences of sponsored parents and/or grandparents and the extent to which there is empirical evidence to support arguments for and against the broad scale inclusion of this category of immigrant. Ultimately we hope to be able to contribute to the development of an informed discourse on the concept of "contribution" and how integration outcomes are measured. The evidence at this point is obviously quite limited and more sophisticated analysis is required to determine the intricacies of how sponsored parents and/or grandparents contribute to the well-being of immigrant families and communities. Equally important is the need for data that will allow us to model how families work together to achieve their economic, social and cultural goals. Not all of what would be required to meet this objective is available through the LSIC since the individual, not the family, is the unit of analysis. However, the LSIC does have the capacity to produce some basic findings to dispel a few of the myths attributed to this particular group. Even a basic analysis such as this provides evidence against two common misconceptions regarding age and productivity. Sponsored parents and/or grandparents are not by definition "seniors," nor are they likely to be retired (a status which does not in and of itself preclude economic and social contributions).

Moreover, we consistently find, across different main activities, that female immigrants play an important role in social realms. They were more likely than their male counterparts to report homemaking and caring for family as their main activ-

ities—all of which have indirect effects on the economic performance of other immigrants and the wider Canadian society.

These findings suggest important directions for the type of research needed to effectively inform debates around family class immigration. First is the need to recognize immigration, integration and settlement as a family experience. Family class immigrants are by definition part of a larger social unit. Hence, arguments based on their outcomes as individuals, especially those which focus on economic indicators, are grossly misleading. Researchers working in the area of women and migration have made the same argument, noting that women's integration experiences should be measured and understood within the context of their connectedness to family and household strategies (Arat-Koc 2006; Creese et al. 2008; Creese et al. 2011; Hondagneu-Sotelo 1999; Kofman 2004; Neysmith et. al. 2010). We would contend that the same theoretical framework should be applied to researching the experiences of parents and grandparents, especially in light of the gendered nature of our findings. Second, our analysis shows support for the alternative contributions argument. Sponsored parents and grandparents are active—especially in the social and cultural realm. Hence, there is evidence to support the contention that further research is warranted to establish how sponsored parents and grandparents are not only contributing to the best interests of the family but also, through their social and cultural reproductive activities, to the best interests of the state. Third, in order to make accurate projections of the contributions of family class migrants, it will be important to conduct analysis looking at the multiple intersections and interactions of their experiences.

For now, however, we have taken the first step in offering empirical evidence to the debate over sponsored parents and/or grandparents. As some critiques would readily note, they tend to have less human capital than other immigrants. They come with less education, have less work experience, have weaker official language skills, be less likely to be married, and are older than other immigrants arriving through other categories. But that is only a partial story of who they are and what they contribute. Sponsored parents and/or grandparents are not as old as many suspect, they tend to live in similar households as other immigrants and, as our analysis of their contributions suggest, they overwhelmingly—two thirds—work or are self-employed, engage in homemaking, care for family, or engage in other activities. They are active and they do make important contributions to their families.

NOTES

1. For example, arguments against the sponsoring of parents and/or grandparents often appeal to data available on immigrant seniors, an assumed equivalency that has not been validated.

2. 47 percent of immigrants who responded to the LSIC in the first wave indicated an intent to sponsor a family member relative (Statistics Canada 2005, 5)

3.   These are based on em1q049 (wave 1), em2q049x (wave 2) and em3q049x (wave 3). It should be noted that caring for family members was not measured in wave 1 but was captured in wave 2. We derive working or self-employment from the valid skip option. We acknowledge that this is a rough proxy of potential contributions, noting that theoretically they may not be mutually exclusive, and that LSIC forces respondents to choose one option over others; however, we offer these measures as an empirical starting point to open grounded debate.

4.   The measure is based on LSIC variable lr1d011.

5.   Controls, more specifically are measured by: Sex (lr1q008), Highest level of education (ed1q001), Work experience prior to arrival (em1q002), Region of destination (hh1d007), lr1g042 (Ethnicity), Official language (derived from ls1q003 and ls1q041), Marital status (derived from lr1q009 and lr2q009), Age (lr1g007), and in2d069x (Family Income).

6.   The predicted probabilities presented in Figures 1 and 2 are based on being either a sponsored parent and/or grandparent or an other immigrant 40 years and older, net of being male, having a university degree or higher, having full-time work experience before arrival, living in Montreal, Toronto, or Vancouver, being European ethnic origin, having official language abilities, being married, being 60 years old, and a family income of $23,266.

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