**Beyond 365 Days: The Economic Integration of
African Refugees in Vancouver, Canada**

by

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Declaration

I hereby declare that this research project is entirely my own work and has not been used in any previous research project, thesis, or dissertation at any other university.

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And finally, to Nowai Togba, who has been my inspiration to conduct such research in this field in the first place.

List of Acronyms

AMSSA: Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies of British Columbia

CBD: Central Business District

CIAI: Centre of Integration for African Immigrants

CIC: Citizenship and Immigration Canada

DRC: Democratic Republic of the Congo

GAR: Government Assisted Refugee

IALL: International Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey

ILP: Immigrant Loans Program

IMDB: Longitudinal Immigration Data Base

ISS: Immigrant Services Society

LICO: Low Income Cut-Off

LIDS: Landed Immigrant Data System

NGO: Non-Governmental Organization

OAU: Organization of African Unity

OECD: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

PAP: Pre-Approved Plan

PSR: Privately Sponsored Refugee

RAP: Resettlement Assistance Plan

SFU: Simon Fraser University

SOCAP IQ: Social Capital Integrated Questionnaire

UBC: University of British Columbia

UNHCR: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

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Abstract

This study focuses on the resettlement of government-assisted refugees (GARs) from Africa to Vancouver, Canada. I explore the economic integration experiences of 19 African refugees who have lived in Vancouver beyond one year. Because African refugees are resettled in relatively small numbers, and fail to develop a clear pattern of spatial concentration, their settlement experiences have been somewhat different from those who settle in larger concentrations around the Metro Vancouver district. Some of these refugees have become economically self-sufficient beyond one year of residence, which is the duration of the government sponsorship, while others still rely on state support. The study seeks to explain what accounts for these variances, specifically whether it is human capital or social capital, in achieving economic self-sufficiency beyond the first year. The main findings suggest that specific dimensions of social capital—social cohesion, networks, and trust—are essential for refugee self-sufficiency in Vancouver's environment, while human capital seems to have a diminished role. This study gives implications on how we understand migrant self-reliance by looking at the significance of social capital in livelihood strategies. It also affirms that the effects of social capital are context dependent, and assertions may only hold true in identical cases.

1. Introduction

Today, over 20 million people have been forced to move due to conflict and violence in their home countries (UNHCR, 2007). The most preferred durable solution encouraged by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and preferred by most refugees is repatriation (UNHCR, 2007). The second solution is integration into the first country of asylum. When these first two solutions are not feasible, the last option is resettlement into a third country.

Canada is one of the three largest immigrant-receiving countries in which immigration has become a fundamental cornerstone (Ley, 2007). Immigration to Canada falls into three different categories: economic migrants, family reunification, and refugees. Each year, the Canadian government undertakes the responsibility to sponsor a limited number of refugees for resettlement to Canada. Canada plays host to 7300-7500 government-assisted refugees (GARs) annually that are selected through referrals from the UNHCR who are then resettled in various locations around the country (McLean, Friesen, and Hyndman, 2006). The majority of refugees that are destined for British Columbia end up residing in Vancouver—a city with one of the highest levels of ethnic diversity in the country (Henin and Bennett, 2002). Upon landing, selected GARs are granted landed immigrant status and full rights as participating members of Canadian society. Government sponsorship extends across a one-year period, or when refugees become economically self-sufficient.

African migrants account for only 10% of immigration to Canada (CIC, 2002). Most have arrived in the past two decades (Henin and Bennett, 2002). Vancouver receives a share of these resettled refugees, however African GARs are still resettled in relatively small numbers. Because of this, no clear patterns of social organization exist and African ethnic enclaves have not developed in the way larger ethnic communities have. As a more recently arrived immigrant group, African refugees generally have lower economic status than those with established ethnic enclaves such as those from Europe and Asia, and higher poverty rates compared to the national average (Henin and Bennett, 2002).

Vancouver's current economic environment appears to be one that is actually promoting the participation of members in the workforce with job vacancies seen in all sectors of the employment industry. Still, refugees remain the most unsuccessful economic cohort in all the immigrant categories. Because some GARs still relied on state assistance beyond the first year, I look specifically at whether or not it is human capital, or social capital, that affects self-sufficiency. Considering Vancouver's current economy, and Canada's policies to support the participation of immigrants in the labour force, GARs failure to gain self-sufficiency may be attributed to a lack in different dimensions of human or social capital.

This study aims to reveal the nature of refugee self-sufficiency beyond the first year of resettlement. It is then, that deductions can be made on why some African GARs are more likely to be self-sufficient than others.

Thus, this study seeks to answer the following question:

What accounts for the difference in achieving economic self-sufficiency for government-assisted refugees from Africa beyond the first year of resettlement in Canada?

The specific objectives of this study include these tasks:

- To identify whether or not human capital or social capital is a better predictor of economic self-sufficiency.
- Among those who are unable to become self-sufficient after one year, the study will seek to explain what specific factors lead to continued reliance on state welfare programmes.

Which will also include the following hypotheses:

- Social capital is more significant than human capital when examining African refugees and their self-sufficiency in Vancouver.

The study looks at 19 government-assisted refugees from different source countries in Africa. Selected on a humanitarian basis, refugees arrive with diverse backgrounds, beliefs and histories. Some GARs have achieved economic self-sufficiency after the first year of resettlement, while others experienced a continued relied on state assistance beyond the initial year of resettlement. All GARs expressed the desire to come off state assistance as soon as possible.

This paper attempts to analyze the dimensions of both human capital, and social capital based on existing theories, in how they affect economic self-sufficiency negatively or positively. Results suggest that social capital is necessary in order to achieve self-sufficiency by acting as a set of resources to migrants to help facilitate economic integration. The settlement experiences of African GARs in Vancouver's environment will provide examples to support these claims.

This paper also attempts to disaggregate social capital into various dimensions. These various dimensions are then analyzed to see whether they yield either economic returns or non-economic returns to each individual. Although social capital seems to play a significant role in achieving economic self-sufficiency, the role that human capital plays in stimulating social capital accumulation should not be dismissed. Much of the implications from the study are already known from previous studies that centred upon investment in human and social capital.

Results from 19 separate interviews seem to illustrate that specific dimensions of social capital determine whether or not GARs will become economically self-sufficient. These dimensions include relationships and networks within and extending beyond the African community, information exchange through word-of-mouth referrals, and social cohesion and inclusion. High stocks of these were observed amongst those who have become economically self-sufficient suggesting that refugee self-sufficiency is dependent upon

the level of social capital developed in Vancouver. Consequently, a lack of such social ties and networks, along with social exclusion, has resulted in a greater reliance on social assistance for longer durations after initial arrival.

In contrast, human capital plays a minor role in determining economic self-sufficiency. GARs with varying levels of human capital undertook similar income generating activities and income levels were equally low for all GARs in the first years of resettlement. Those who arrived with high human capital (university degrees or some years of post-secondary education) still remained on state assistance beyond the first year of resettlement. Others who became economically self-sufficient beyond the first year did not necessarily have high human capital at the time the government sponsorship was removed. In fact, many of these GARs who did become economically self-sufficient beyond the first year of resettlement did not have any post-secondary education at all.

To further justify this, GARs who returned to school to gain a Canadian education, thereby increasing level of human capital, still struggled to find work in related fields. Reinvestments in education did not necessarily allow GARs to come off state assistance. If foreign credential recognition prevented job attainment initially, other factors must be considered if obtainment of education in a recognized Canadian institute results in the same consequences.

This study aims to address theoretical implications of social and human capital investments at the micro and macro level for migrants in a new host society. It also demonstrates the importance of social capital on migrant livelihood strategies. This study looks at how different social and economic environments can shape the settlement experiences of migrants and provides insight into understanding how an economy functions. The study of human and social capital helps create a better understanding of migrant behaviour, and helps understand what institutional and federal policies are premised upon and how effectively they function. Finally, it addresses the social impacts and constructs created by migration.

2. Literature Review

Canada receives 7300-7500 GARs as part of their fulfilment to humanitarian obligations (UNHCR, 2007), with 800-900 resettled in Vancouver annually (Friesen, Mclean and Hyndman, 2006). Although a modest number, Canada does receive the highest percentage of refugees in the world in proportion to the country's population (CIC, 2002). Because immigration has become such an important aspect in replenishing the population, integration strategies are high in terms of government priorities. However, refugees remain the most unsuccessful economic cohort of the immigrant groups.

Refugees have varying experiences integrating into Canadian society. Some manage to become economically self-sufficient beyond the first year of resettlement, which is the duration of government sponsorship, while others remain on state assistance for longer durations. Based on literature concerning immigrant integration, Vancouver's current economic environment, Canada's integration policies, and the diversity of Vancouver's population, there seems to be two possible explanations for the variations in economic integration: human capital, and social capital.

The purpose of this study is to contribute to discussions about human and social capital, and the impact of such capital in respect to research already done on refugee and immigrant integration and livelihoods. If one of these forms of capitals is identified as a likely predictor of successful economic integration, proper government policies and programs can be implemented or modified to ease the process of resettlement. The study will help to understand how post-arrival integration policies affect refugee economic performances and contribute towards varying explanations concerning the significance of social and human capital theory on immigrant livelihood strategies.

2.1 Canada's Integration Policy

Canada is one of the few democratic societies that has addressed the issue of cultural and linguistic pluralism, incorporated it into its definition of national identity, and formulated it as a formal state policy of multiculturalism. Canada has always been an ethnically heterogeneous society, and the view that Canada values the cultural mosaic has always held prominence. Recognition of the potential divisiveness of issues of culture and schooling led to the shift in control of education at confederation from the national to the provincial arena to allow for the expression of differences. Multiculturalism is deeply embedded in school curricula, teaching children to socialize across an open society (Ley, 2007). In fact, multiculturalism is often seen as a defining characteristic in the Canadian identity (Li, 2003 in Ley, 2007).

Canadian integration policy is based on the premise that immigration contributes to the economic and social environment; therefore there is a responsibility to the citizens to manage immigration effectively. The importance in recognizing the effectiveness of economic and social integration will show whether or not the benefits from this type of immigration are realized.

Refugees who arrive under government sponsorship have had varying experiences maintaining and achieving economic self-sufficiency. Identifying the factors that are responsible for delayed self-sufficiency, or a complete lack in self-sufficiency can create suggestions for a better integration program than the one currently implemented. Existing policies and services do attempt to ease the process of resettlement to Canada (Simich, Beiser, and Mawani, 2003). These programs and services are "designed to help newcomers become participating members of Canadian society as quickly as possible" (CIC, 2007). However, these policies are sometimes inconsistent in meeting refugees' needs, often implemented with top-down procedures at the national level, with a modest amount of settlement assistance, and little provincial autonomy (Hiebert, 2002).

Historically, foreign migrants have generally had successful integration into the Canadian economy (Shields, 2003). However, Canada's supposed neo-liberal restructuring of the state in the past twenty years now encourages less dependence on the state, reshaping the state's 'social safety net' (Shields, 2003). Under this new global economy, which is premised upon strong human capital, or a highly skilled labour force, immigrants have become especially vulnerable (Shields, 2003).

The Federal Immigrant Integration Strategy does recognize that integration is a continuum, extending beyond the early days and months after arrival (CIC, 2001). The policy, which is represented through the settlement programs, rests on some of these following principles:

> "[…] The contributions of newcomers to the economic and social fabric of Canada are valued. It is important for newcomers to become financially self-sufficient and be able to participate in the social dimensions of life in Canada. It is important for members of communities in Canada to help ensure that newcomers have opportunities to participate in and contribute to all the positive aspects of Canadian life […] Settlement and integration services will be directed at assisting newcomers to become self-sufficient as soon as possible…"(CIC, 2001).

The federal Department of Canadian Heritage also promotes cultural pluralism (Ley, 2007). Recognizing the benefits of English or French fluency, free language training in either of these languages, although basic, is also offered to all newcomers through various federal agencies (CIC, 2007).

In 1971, Canada became the first country in the world to adopt an official Multicultural Policy (Canada Heritage, 2004). In July 1988, Canada officially adopted the *Multiculturalism Act*. This act sought to assist in reducing discrimination, to enhance cultural awareness and understanding, and to promote cultural sensitivity (Statistics Canada, 2003). The Act specified to preserve, enhance, and incorporate cultural differences, but also to retain "full and equitable participation … in all aspects of Canadian society" (Statistics Canada, 2003). The Act also focused on the eradication of racism and removal of discriminatory barriers in Canada's commitment to human rights. It also recognized the need to increase minority participation in Canada's major

institutions by bringing diversity into these institutions. The concept of multiculturalism is linked with equality, a sense of identity, acceptance of diversity, ethnic understanding, and harmony, while discouraging social and spatial exclusion, bias and hatred (Ley, 2007).

Diversity benefits Canada economically and socially as well. Canada gains a competitive advantage over other nations through immigrants who have connections to nations around the world, including an increase in the number of languages spoken in order to facilitate international business and trade (Canada Heritage, 2004). The accumulated wealth of knowledge and alternative ideas promote new methods for dealing with issues in the economic, political, and social spheres (Canada Heritage, 2004).

To help newcomers contribute to Canadian society as quickly as possible, some programs are offered both pre and post-arrival, abroad and in Canada (CIC, 2001). Visa post officials also take destination requests into consideration (Simich, Beiser and Mawani, 2002). For example, during the interview process, refugees are asked whether or not they have any friends or family in Canada. Canada recognizes the importance of social support in hopes to send these refugees to a place where they can receive the support of someone they know (Simich, Beiser, and Mawani, 2002). The Host Program, sponsored by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), was created in 1985 to offer newcomers with moral support, to include them in social events, and to help direct them to contacts in different fields of work (Anisef et al., 2007).

One of the most fundamental barriers that refugees face after resettlement is racism and negative attitude (Mestheneos and Ioannidi, 2002). However, recent surveys show that Canadians are increasingly aware of Canada's multicultural policy and the majority of the population approves of it (Canadian Heritage, 2002). Respondents from these surveys felt that multiculturalism has had a positive impact on Canadian society (Canadian Heritage, 2002).

Jeffrey Reitz has done a comparative study on race relations in Canada in contrast to Britain and the United States. He found that there does seem to be less discriminatory behaviour in terms of denial of access to jobs, and other significant resources in society, based on race (Reitz, 1988). Generally, he found minorities in Britain less well off than those in Canada in terms of employment (Reitz, 1988). This does not mean that discrimination is non-existent in Canada, but perhaps more tolerated. In fact, results from behavioural data did show that discrimination does exist in employment in Canada (Reitz, 1988).

Work by Li examines the model of integration promoted by Canadian policy makers, but argues the contradiction in the Canadian governments 'commitment to diversity and tolerance' where in practise there actually seems to be intolerance in cultural specificities (2003).

Li criticizes Canada's model of integration stating,

> "…[it] is often based on a narrow understanding and a rigid expectation that treat integration solely in terms of the degree to which immigrants converge to the average performance of native-born Canadians and their normative and behavioural standards" (2003).

2.1.1 Evolution of Refugee Policy in Canada

Canada's present immigration program is based on the *Immigration Act* of 1976, which was implemented in 1978 and further amended in 1993 (CIC, 2007). It reconfirms the fundamental principles of non-discrimination and universality. Since then, the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* has replaced the *Immigration Act*, which came into effect on June 28, 2002 (CIC, 2007). The Act sets out three basic social, humanitarian, and economic goals for the immigration program:

- To foster the development of a strong, viable economy in all regions of the country;
- To facilitate the reunion in Canada of Canadian residents with close family members from abroad; and
- To fulfil Canada's legal obligations with respect to refugees and to uphold its humanitarian tradition (CIC, 2007).

The evolution of refugee policy in Canada can be highlighted in four different segments. Firstly, they adopted the UN definition of Convention refugee. Since then, through affiliations with the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the UNHCR (in which Canada is a member of) they have accepted the expanded version of refugee populations in Africa (Howard, 1981). Secondly, there was a differentiation in legislation of refugees into Convention and other "designated classes." To date, there are currently three different classes: Convention Refugee Abroad class, Country of Asylum class, and Source Country Class (CIC, 2002). Thirdly, a development of methods for sponsorship for refugees was created for all classes. The final segment involved the formulation of annual refugee plans (Lanphier, 1981). Now, the government of Canada has a number of programs available to refugees once they arrive in Canada. These include loan programs, health insurance, and language assistance programs (CIC, 2002).

Hiebert notes "Canada's integration policies are achieved through two basic elements: the encouragement of 'appropriate' people to migrate (selection), and providing adequate conditions that will ensure the immigrants' success (settlement)" (2002). Refugees are selected under humanitarian goals, regardless of skills, education, or language attainment. Studies conducted by Statistics Canada have found that education qualifications of refugees are relatively lower than those of other immigrant categories (Statistics Canada, 2003). Since many refugees do not appear to be experiencing successful economic integration, in order to achieve the latter goal stated by Hiebert, impediments towards economic self-sufficiency must first be understood. Understanding the economic

integration experiences of refugees helps determine the cost-benefits of Canada's humanitarian commitment.

2.2 Immigration to Canada

There is a modest amount of literature on immigration to Canada from Africa even though five of the top ten source countries for resettled refugees to Canada originate from Africa (CIC, 2007). Immigration to British Columbia is shifting from European settlement in the early days, to larger flows, especially from Asia, of migrants to sustain population growth. Recent immigration of Africans to Canada is fairly new and only accounts for approximately 10% of the total amount of immigrants who come to Canada (CIC, 2002).

Figure 1: Distribution of Refugees to Canada by Source Area 2004

Refugees by Source Area 2004
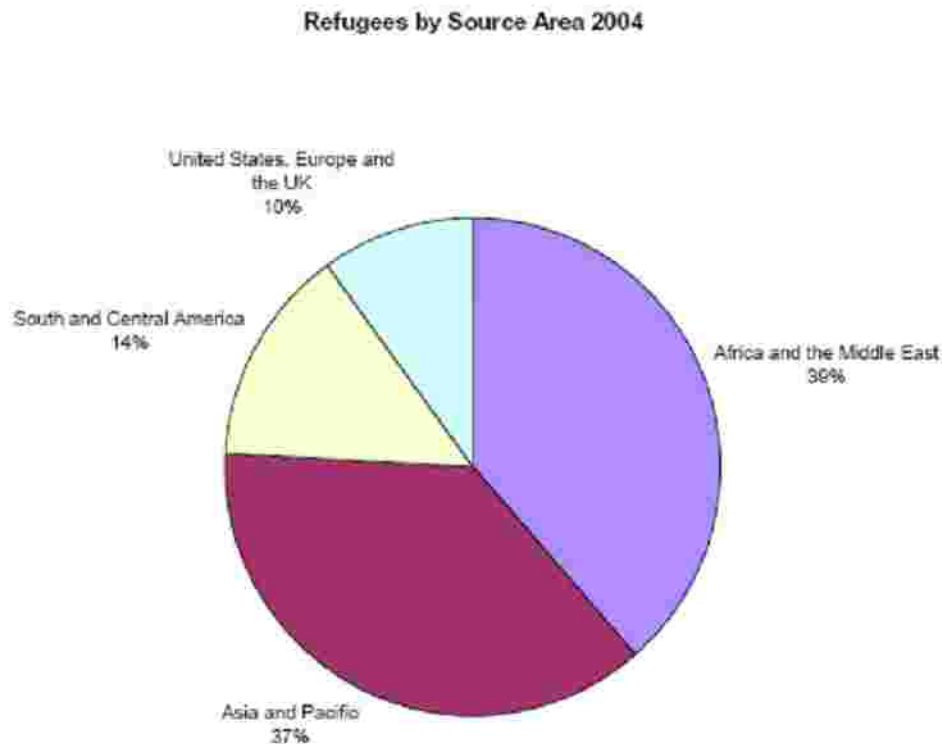
Source: CIC 2006

In addition, most literature is focused on the legal or political constraints faced by refugee applicants. Only recently, has literature emerged on the economic livelihood of resettled refugees in Canada (DeVoretz, Pivnenko, and Beiser, 2004). Because refugees are resettled in relatively small numbers worldwide, little research has been done on the livelihood strategies of those who are resettled in general. Instead, much can be found on refugee livelihoods in camps. A large amount of research is concentrated on immigration as a class on its own; however, the segregation of refugees from this category is less

prominent. Due to the unique circumstances that refugees face, a greater understanding of their integration successes or failures should be documented.

CIC does keep landing records of immigrants, stating education levels, occupation, and language ability of English or French. The Longitudinal Immigration Data Base (IMDB) attempted to track immigrant economic status by combining landing records from the Landed Immigrant Data System (LIDS) with annual tax records (DeVoretz, Pivnenko, and Beiser, 2004). However, this data is limited to those who file an income tax, inclusive of only 40-50% of arrivals (DeVoretz, Pivnenko, and Beiser, 2004), and fails to keep record of settlement services offered to immigrants or additional education or training that may improve their human capital after arrival (Hiebert, 2002). Part of this research gap can be attributed to incomplete census data.

A major indicator of integration is the acquisition and maintenance of stable work (Huminuik, 2006). The acquisition of employment by immigrants is often difficult. GARs are not an exception; they face various obstacles similar to those of any immigrant group. However, unlike most economic immigrants, GARs are not selected on a basis of their expected economic contribution to Canadian society. Rather, Canada implemented the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* of 2001 that gave refugees admission on the basis of compassion, or family reunification and fear of persecution, regardless of economic status (DeVortetz and Pivnenko, 2004; Nash, 1994 as cited by Hiebert, 2002). The first of four principles in Canada's Humanitarian Resettlement Program exemplifies, "A shift towards protection rather than the ability to establish" (CIC, 2003). Unlike other skilled migrants and economic migrants, approximately 85% of refugees enter Canada without any type of savings (Creese and Kambere, 2002), making immediate job attainment even more essential. Preliminary research has suggested that refugees are not faring as well in the labour market today as they were in the early 1980s (CIC, 2002).

Social assistance is given to those who do not have enough money to provide adequately for themselves (CIC, 2007). State assistance, often known as a 'social safety net[1],' has been a backup for those who have continuously relied on assistance because of unsuccessful participation in Vancouver's employment market. Those who qualify for social assistance do not meet the Low Income Cutoff (LICO) and are eligible for financial support through the Adjustment Assistance Program (Hiebert, 2002). The LICOs (commonly known as poverty lines) are income thresholds determined by analyzing family expenditure, dependent on income generated and number of members in a family (CIC, 2002). Payments from the RAP are generally set at provincial welfare rates, so while the majority of GARs receive assistance through the RAP, there is little transition or assistance cuts beyond the first year for those who continued to rely on state assistance beyond the first year of resettlement.

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[1] See Shields, 2003; Zimmerman and Tumlin, 1999, as examples.

Table 1: Current Income Assistance Rate Changes in BC

Expected to Work				
Category	Type	Current Rate	New Rate*	Total Increases
Single		$510	$610	$100
Couple		$827	$877	$50
Single Parent	One Child	$846	$946	$100
	Two Children	$881	$1036	$155
	Three Children	$916	$1076	$160
	Four Children	$951	$1126	$175
	Five Children	$986	$1161	$175
Two Parents	One Child	$956	$1061	$105
	Two Children	$991	$1101	$110
	Three Children	$1026	$1151	$125
	Four Children	$1061	$1186	$125
	Five children	$1096	$1221	$125

Source: Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance, 2007

Table 1 shows the current income assistance rate changes in BC. Rate increases were implemented in April of 2007, which were the first in 12 years.

The federal government also operates the Adjustment Assistance Program through the Department of Citizenship and Immigration Canada, offering income support for GARs to help pay for basic household items, and essential services including temporary accommodation (CIC, 2002). Assistance levels for food and rent are set according to provincial welfare rates (Simich, Beiser and Mawani, 2002). Income support lasts up to 12 months, or until the refugee becomes self-sufficient, whichever comes first (CIC, 2002).

Figure 2: Average Earnings of GARs by Age Group
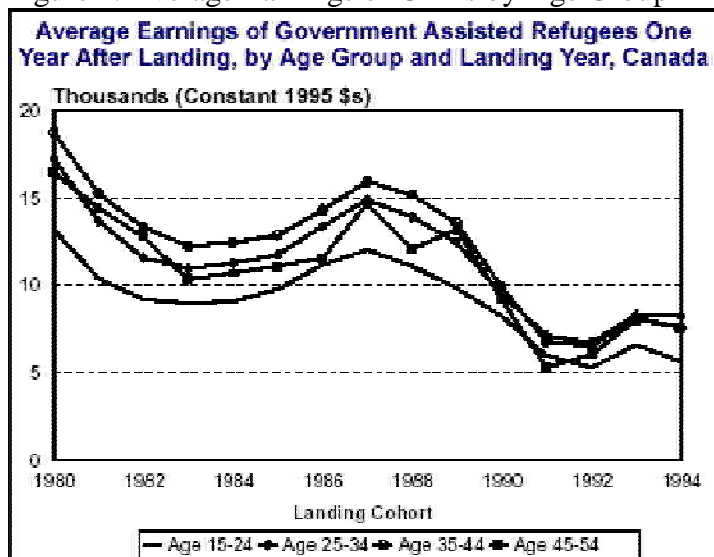
Source: CIC 2002

Figure 2 above shows the average earnings of GARs one year after landing in different age groups (age at the time of landing). Earnings seemed to drop considerably in the

more recent years, converging in the 90s. Although a census was conducted in 2006, reports from this census have not yet been made.

Figure 3: Average Earnings of GARs by Education
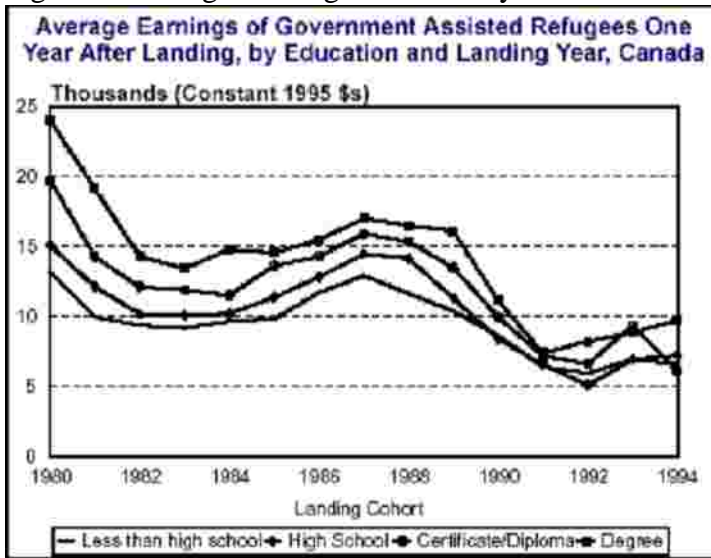
Source: CIC 2002

Figure 3 shows the average earnings of GARs one year after landing, by education and landing year. The convergence of average earnings in the 1990s is also evident in this chart.

Figure 4: Social Assistance Receipt of Refugees after Three Years
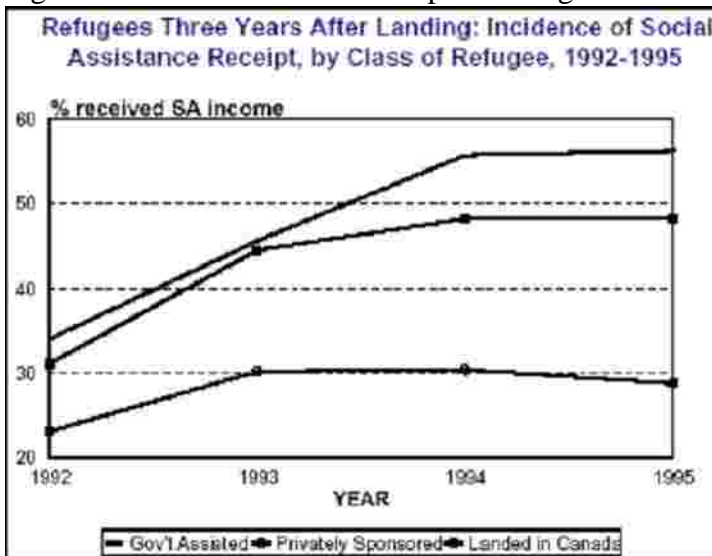
Source: CIC 2002

Figure 4 shows the social assistance utilization by refugees three years after landing. It is evident that GARs are utilizing social assistance much more relative to their privately sponsored counterparts.

Although my study looks largely at the province of British Columbia, and more specifically Vancouver, the Canadian government has not conducted any recent disaggregated data separated by province. The most recent report on refugees in British Columbia shows only the amount of refugees who have arrived in the province during the mid-1990s. In fact, a research report released by the CIC acknowledged the research gap stating that:

> While there exists a long history of research on immigration, on citizenship/identity and on experiences of visible minorities, there is an equally long-standing gap in research which has *direct* application to the Department's policy levers (1998).

They add that most research conducted in the past has been conducted at the national level, where the concentration of immigrants is much lower and much less apparent than in major urban centres like Vancouver. As a result, research at the national level often indicates less impacts from immigration than what would be reflected in urban areas which have much higher concentrations of immigrants (CIC, 1998).

There is also a discrepancy between GARs and privately sponsored refugees (PSRs). The PSR Program was also created to uphold Canada's humanitarian mandate in the resettlement of refugees, aligned with the Government of Canada and the CIC's objectives. The majority of private sponsors are faith-based organizations, ethno-cultural groups, or humanitarian organizations. A recent report filed by the CIC found that although there were no sizeable differences in incidences of employment income and employment earnings over time, a key difference was that PSRs became self-supporting far more quickly than GARs (CIC, 2007). In fact, average employment earnings for PSRs was approximately 6,000 dollars greater than that of a GAR in the first year after arrival (CIC, 2007). Private sponsors also found that they provide less direct financial support to their PSRs than the government does to GARs (CIC, 2007).

British Columbia itself has been experiencing record low rates of unemployment, dropping to a mere 3.9% as of March 2007 (Statistics Canada, 2007). March employment rates stood at 63.8% (Statistics Canada, 2007). Keynesian economists typically describe the labour market as "tight" if unemployment rates stand at 5% or less. Unemployment rates of 4% or less are often referred to as "full employment" (Solow, 1956). Despite this, refugees continue to face employment problems and depend on social assistance (Statistics Canada, 2007), representing the highest demographic group requiring social assistance out of all the immigrant categories in Canada (DeVoretz, Pivnenko, and Beiser, 2004). The "scarring effect", which illustrates the influence of the Canadian economy on a refugee's economic outcome, should not be a factor since British Columbia is actually experiencing a robust economic period (DeVoretz, Pivnenko, and Beiser, 2004). The "scarring effect" outlines the role that recessions in the economy play on job availability, also reducing the scope of learning of potential employees. This implies that other variables, besides a lack of jobs available in the economy, must be a contributing factor in refugee unemployment and difficulties faced in economic

integration. Two of the most recurring predictors of economic outcomes seen in social and economic research are human and social capital.

2.3 Predictors of Economic self-sufficiency

Economic self-sufficiency can be reviewed from many different dimensions. However, two dominating characteristics that affect the outcome of self-sufficiency will be focussed upon. The presence of human or social capital has become an especially integral asset in achieving economic self-sufficiency in the developed world. Ongoing arguments in previous literature fail to determine whether or not one form of capital is more essential to the integration process than the other, where social capital is often linked to high levels of education as well (Aizlewood and Pendakur, 2005). Because there is no single, coherent social capital theory, nor single, coherent human capital theory, the data analysis will give rise to further discussions on theories that currently exist. Additionally, social capital often takes a sociological approach, whereas human capital is explored more often in the economic world (Davern, 1997). As this creates a grey area between the two disciplines, this paper will attempt to communicate a type of economic sociology.

Both human capital, and social capital, can be seen as mutually exclusive from one another, or combined to better understand socio-economic behaviour (Davern, 1997). Both of these theories account for the action taken by individuals, in addition to the development of organizations (Coleman, 1988). Social network theory is embedded in understanding socio-economic behaviour and processes (Davern, 1997), where human capital theory is inextricably linked to human behaviour and economic sociology as well.

These discussions and debates about social capital theory and human capital theory will provide a basis to explain why some GARs in this study have successful economic integration, while others do not. Recognizing the effects that social capital and human capital have on livelihood strategies is another progressive stepping stone in understanding social and human capital theory. Conflicting ideas challenge the significance of each, and efficacy in each of their functions in both the social and economic sphere. Both social capital theory and human capital theory can be applied to circumstances far beyond the scope of this study. This further extends the importance of such research.

2.3.1 The Emergence of Social Capital

Social capital is not a new concept, and of late, has emerged in several angles of research. It was in the works of Robert Putnam's *Bowling Alone* that catapulted this concept into scholarly discourse (1995). Social capital is highly regarded as a key element in the sustainability of refugees. Several studies argue that the presence of social networks is a key determinant in locational choice, rather than economic opportunity. Literature in the economic sphere also agrees that social organizations are important for both a society and the economy (Coleman, 1988). Previous studies have emphasized the importance in rebuilding supportive networks to assure both emotional and material stability throughout resettlement (Simich, Beiser, and Mawani, 2002).

Similar references to the concept of social capital date back centuries by Chinese thinkers, known as 'guanxi (Light and Gold, 2000).' Recent translations of this refer to this concept as relationships and connections, often used to facilitate integration, later contemporised by Jane Jacobs (1961). However, her works were spontaneous, and it was not until Coleman in the late 1980s where the concept became more widespread.

Despite the rapid spread and popularization of this concept, especially after the work of Pierre Bourdieu, James Coleman, and Robert Putnam in the late 1980s and early 1990s, there is still a significant division in how the concept is envisioned (Judge, 2003). Coleman conceptualized social capital as an asset of individuals, while Putnam was more interested in how it represented a collective asset. Social capital has been a highly contested topic between sociologists, political scientists, and economists. Foley and Edwards found that political scientists and economists have a tendency to measure attitudes, norms, and "generalized social trust" at a national level (1999). This type of trust was important for generating cooperation between citizens to create democratic stability. Measuring social capital at the level of households and individuals is different from that at a country level. Political scientists and economists frequently measure social capital based on a "generalized social trust" at a national level, while social scientists measure capital within and across groups and organizations, as well as between individuals (Foley and Edwards, 1999). Trust is the main component for social capital, which is necessary for economic efficiency (Newton, 2001). The study focuses on trust at the individual level because it is a better determinant of individual economic outcomes whereas trust at the national level is more concerned with civil society and democratic stability.

Bourdieu's interest in social capital was stemmed upon his interest in social space linked with other forms of capital (Schuller, Baron and Field, 2000). He believed that social capital was not independent of economic or cultural capital, and acts as a multiplier of these other two forms (Schuller, Baron and Field, 2000). Coleman's studies drew together two disciplines: sociology and economics. To Coleman, social capital was significant only as a way of understanding educational achievement and social inequality (Schuller, Baron and Field, 2000). His notion of social capital was developed in an educational context. Unlike Bourdieu, Coleman saw the creation of social capital as a completely unintentional process and that there is often little or no direct investment in social capital (Coleman, 1994 in Schuller, Baron and Field, 2000). This is important in understanding individual investments because economic success and achievement often incorporates multiple types of capital working together simultaneously.

Coleman's work has both strongly shaped contemporary debate and has been highly criticized (Schuller, Baron and Field, 2000). Portes believed a clear line should be drawn between membership in social structures—which might be defined as social capital—and the resources acquired through such membership (Schuller, Baron and Field, 2000). Despite much criticism, however, Coleman was able to develop ways to operationalize the concept for research purposes, which has shaped much of the methods used to

measure social capital in this study. While Bourdieu focused on social capital amongst elitist groups, Coleman was able to extend that to non-elite groups as well.

Putnam is largely responsible for the popularisation of social capital (Schuller, Baron and Field, 2000). His short piece "Bowling Alone" caught the attention of many. Putnam noticed a downward trend in levels of participation of individuals with group activities taking place in the United States. Putnam used three features of social life—networks, norms, and trust—to help define social capital. It is these three features that dominate modern conceptual discussion and provide a basis for the indicators used in this study (Schuller, Baron and Field, 2000). Not flawless, Putnam, like Coleman, has been criticized for failing to address issues like power and conflict (Schuller, Baron and Field, 2000).

So why has there been an emergence of a social capital debate in the modern world? Schuller, Baron and Field try to give justifications to this question. The first suggestion is that certain segments of the population are subconsciously attracted to the concept of social capital because it is in sync with their personal circumstances (Schuller, Baron and Field, 2000). For example, a decline in social capital in the US was found to resonate in an elite professional's ability to find enough time for family and non-professional social activity. The second speculation observed was the excesses of individualism (Schuller, Baron and Field, 2000). The third idea is that concepts live in cycles, and this is just another one our world is going through. Schuller, Baron and Field's final explanation is based on a return of social relationships in political discourse after its dismissal during a time of globalized market relationships (2000). As such, a social dimension is being reintroduced into capitalism (Schuller, Baron and Field, 2000). Social capital is important in societies that "require senses of community, solidarity, and mutual obligation in order to support collective undertakings," particularly those of welfare states (Aizlewood and Pendakur, 2005). Social theory became important in welfare states, like Canada, because welfare expansion was no longer seen as a durable solution for economic development or stabilization (Quadagno, 1987).

2.3.2 A Breakdown of Social Capital

The actual meaning of social capital and its effects have accompanied the rising popularity of the concept of social capital. There are challenges in measurement because social capital is comprised of concepts such as trust, community and networks, which are difficult to quantify, all based on the subjective opinion of the respondent. In social science there are rarely precise measurements for theoretical concepts. As a result, one often measures concepts empirically (Kao, 2004). Measurement of social capital incorporates a quantitative approach to a qualitative concept.

This is followed by the issue of informal and formal membership or participation in social networks as indicators. Social capital can be very dense and interconnected, as in a group of steelworkers that go to work together everyday. However, it can also be very thin, for example, the nodding acquaintance you have with another in a supermarket. Still, these thin or nearly invisible forms of social capital should not be dismissed.

Experimental evidence has shown that if you nod at someone in the hall, they are more likely to come to your aid if you should have a heart attack or something unfit, than a complete stranger (Putnam, 2000). These different strengths of social capital can still be beneficial for individuals.

Social capital has been developed into key typologies. Gittel and Vidal describe bridging and bonding as two key forms of social capital (1998). As Michael Woolcock states, there is a distinction between bridging and bonding (Putnam, 2001). Bridging denotes the connection between groups or people not previously interacting, while bonding refers to bringing closer together people who already have an affinity with each other (Putnam, 2001). Bridging is especially important for refugees who arrive with no previous family or friends but bonding of same ethnic groups can create feelings of trust when bridging is difficult.

Gelderblom and Adams provide their own definition of networks for migrants more specific to this study, stating that migrant networks are "sets of interpersonal ties that connect migrants, former migrants, and non-migrants in origin and destination areas through kinship, friendship, and shared community origin" (2006). Its function involves channelling newcomers into occupations or opportunities with companies in destination areas (Gelderblom and Adams, 2006). It is this particular type of social capital—not exclusive to just these aforementioned—that the study recognizes as potential predictors of economic self-sufficiency.

2.3.4 A Negative Look at Social Capital

Although often providing benefits to migrants and refugees, social capital does not always have positive consequences for everyone (Putnam, 2001). Putnam's concerns lie in how social capital affects crime and health, just as some examples (2000). One tragic example that Putnam used to exemplify this is the Oklahoma City bombing. The network of people who formed this conspiracy was definitely social capital, enabling Tim McVeigh to do things he would not have otherwise been able to (Putnam, 2000). The events of September 11, 2001 also sparked policy interest in how social cohesion functions (Stanley, 2003).

Kao's argument stems from the norms, expectations, and obligations of others to negatively influence the population (2004). Kao found that social capital did not always promote educational outcomes (2004). It is in cases where social norms within families or peer groups help reinforce behaviours of negative educational performance (Kao, 2004). She adds, "social relations with others can reinforce norms that work against academic achievement" (2004). Kao provides an example where two parents may have attained financial success without educational attainment. This may provide younger generations with the idea that education is not essential for a comfortable lifestyle (Kao, 2004). Parents have the potential to both engage active participation of youth in education, or possibly disengage youth from positive schooling outcomes (Kao, 2004). Kao provides another example of the effect of race, immigrant status, and ethnicity. Because peer groups of the same race have a tendency to conglomerate together, those

from different racial or ethnic backgrounds often have different educational achievement and attainment (Kao, 2004). Thus, the youth who have access to those peers with a greater tendency for higher educational achievement may have better educational outcomes, varying with race and ethnicity (Kao, 2004).

Recent literature examines how social capital can be potentially negative especially where ethnic diversity is concerned (Aizlewood and Pendakur, 2005). Aizlewood and Pendakur's argument states, "ethnic heterogeneity negatively influences attitudes and behaviours necessary for community cohesion" (2005). Their argument was tested using data drawn from the 2000 Equality Security Community Survey. Though weak, their findings did suggest visible minorities and immigrants had affected scores on standard social capital measures (2005). Aizlewood and Pendakur add, "the answers lie in the social-psychological aspects of majority-minority societal interaction, and that the presence of diverse elements in communities inhibits trust and reduces civic and co-operative behaviour among dominant groups" (2005). The effects that stem from social exclusion in a society can greatly inhibit integration strategies of refugees.

All theories have contradictions and Letki's study on social capital and race in British Neighbourhoods nullifies Aizlewood and Pendakur's claims (2001). A diagram outlining her theory can be found in Appendix I. Regardless, social capital formation and formation of refugee or immigrant settlement patterns is an important aspect of this research because of the effects that ethnic diversity and heterogeneity can have on economic outcomes. Studies that look upon this aspect can be useful for understanding how social impacts and constructs can affect economic outcomes, particularly in Canada where high levels of immigration are creating ethnically diverse populations.

2.3.5 The Tie Between Social Capital and Economic self-sufficiency

There is also a causal argument between economic self-sufficiency and stocks of capital. Goodson and Phillimore states, "there is a close relationship between integration and employment," adding that "without work, many refugees will have few opportunities to mix with local people and to speak English" (2005). However, refugees must first use some form of capital to successfully obtain employment.

Other arguments involve the relationships between weak ties or strong ties, and the information that one can obtain. A study by Mark Granovetter showed that weak ties were more important in obtaining professional-level jobs (Ooka and Wellman, 2003). However, other scholars argued that strong or high-status ties are prime sources of information and jobs (Ooka and Wellman, 2003). Other researchers claim it is the heterogeneity of network members, and not the strength of ties that connect people to new information (Stoloff, Glanville and Bienenstock, 1999 in Ooka and Wellman, 2003). Portes also acknowledges the presence of weak ties—something in which he criticizes Coleman of neglecting—and how they may be more effective than dense ties in obtaining access to new knowledge and resources (Schuller, Baron and Field, 2000).

The Immigrant Services Society of British Columbia (ISS), funded by the federal government, try to provide essential settlement services upon arrival to Vancouver. Settlement services were put in place to act as a social capital resource for newly arrived immigrants. The government recognizes that social capital accumulation is particularly difficult for refugees because they are actually far less likely than any other immigrant class to have any family or friends settled in Canada (Friesen, Mclean and Hyndman, 2006). Studies already highlight the negative impact that a lack in social networks has on the economic integration of resettled refugees (Friesen, Mclean, and Hyndman, 2006).

Refugees who come to Canada try to achieve a balance of independence and social connectedness (Sen, 1993 from Simich, Beiser, and Mawani, 2002). In order to achieve this balance, they must both regain self-sufficiency, and recreate social relationships (Simich, Beiser, and Mawani, 2002). Livelihood rebuilding strategies emphasize the importance of both social support networks and job satisfaction in which retraining might be required to improve human capital (Huminuik, 2006). Government support is an important asset in helping refugees meet these needs; however, they often neglect the social support that refugees require (Hiebert, 2002).

Despite the Canadian government's efforts, strategic planning to help resettled refugees appears to be insufficient in recognizing the needs of African refugees. Few services are actually directed at African immigrants. General research findings show that visible minorities are subjugated to forms of discrimination in employment, housing, and social life (Henin and Bennett, 2002). Several studies have also shown that social exclusion in urban areas results in unemployment and low-paid employment. This is known as the 'new urban poverty' (Goodson, Phillimore, 2005). Social inclusion and cohesion remains a key dimension in social capital measurement. The government does recognize the benefits of social cohesion, first becoming an area of interest to the Federal Government of Canada in 1996 (Stanley, 2003), but little has been done to address the processes of social exclusion.

Because social capital can be cumulative, incorporating those in a country of origin, along with that of the destination country, this study will focus mainly on the social capital within the destination, or host, country.

2.3.6 Ethnic Organizations and Social Cohesion

Robert Park was one of the first sociologists to suggest that the cause for a development of ethnic organizations was the increase in urbanization and industrialization (Hein, 1997). He claimed that immigrants formed ethnic organizations in order to adjust to modern society (Hein, 1997). It was the creation of the welfare state that sprung an interest in how the state's role was a key determinant in ethnic boundaries and rivalries (Hein, 1997). Hein's extensive work on Indochinese populations in the United States extended to his theory surrounding how the development of ethnic organizations relates to the establishment of ethnic boundaries channelling from the state (1997).

Canadian Heritage, a Department in the Canadian government, realized the importance of social cohesion because existing paradigms were not recognizing the full role of social relationships (Stanley, 2003). Previous paradigms were based on economic perspective or neo-liberal approaches, without recognizing the full role of social relationships. A changing labour market, economic restructuring, and trade liberalization in the 90s created discussion about the role of social cohesion (Stanley, 2003).

Canadian Heritage launched the Social Cohesion Research Network, in response to a needed restructuring. They developed their own working definition of social cohesion:

> Social cohesion is the ongoing process of developing a community of shared values, shared challenges, and equal opportunity in Canada based on a sense of hope, trust, and reciprocity among Canadians (Jeannotte, 1997 in Stanley, 2003).

Because social cohesion is based on the willingness of people in a society to cooperate together, the formation and trust that lies within ethnically diverse populations is essential. Thus, it is important to stress that it is not necessarily dependent on shared values, conformity to beliefs or lifestyle, social orderliness or homogeneity, and the state must create an environment that fosters space for cohesion and a reduction in ethnic isolation.

The dimensions involved in this understanding of social cohesion also referred to economic involvement, stressing the importance of this issue (Stanley, 2003). The driving force behind the Social Cohesion Network emerged because the Canadian government recognized that the inability of a society to distribute social outcomes equitably would result in social cohesion deteriorating and social outcomes (including health results, security, economic well-being, and education) suffering (Stanley, 2003). Stanley believes that having a high degree of social cohesion contributes measurably to economic growth and investment and that it is a significant contributor to our economic and social outcomes (2003). This brings us to our next area of discussion: the importance of education and human capital.

2.3.7 The Parallel to Social Capital

In the late 1700s, Adam Smith was the first economist to include a definition of human capital (Laroche, Mérette, and Ruggeri, 1999). Approximately 40 years ago, the concept of human capital was rekindled in the works of Theodore Schultz and Gary Becker (Judge, 2003). Much human capital theories have been conceptualised and advanced by economists, given that studies on investments, benefits, and economic growth are central to economic thought (Sweetland, 1996). Human capital was seen as an engine of growth, not exclusive to just industrialized countries. By example, higher stocks in human capital may allow less developed countries to "converge more rapidly to the income levels of a developed country through increased absorption of international technologies or capacity of imitation" (Laroche, Mérette, and Ruggeri, 1999). With increasing technological changes, and globalization, there has been a shift away from resource-based economies, to knowledge-based economies (Laroche, Mérette, and Ruggeri, 1999).

Although I am attempting to isolate human capital from social capital in this study, they are often inextricably linked. Places of highly concentrated human capital centres generate social externalities as well. Laroche, Mérette, and Ruggeri express these externalities as "increased utility from living in a society with democratic institutions, freedom of thought and speech, and more varied literary expressions and means of communication," enabling members in a society to effectively live together (1999). Members in democratic societies who share common goals generally strengthen social institutions (Laroche, Mérette, and Ruggeri, 1999).

The modelling of the relationship between human capital and economic growth from a macro perspective has been controversial (Engelbrecht, 2003). Engelbrecht explains two different approaches to human capital theory. The first, what he calls the 'Nelson-Phelps approach' relates to human capital stock using two channels—directly through human capital's effect on a country's ability to innovate, and indirectly through human capital's ability to facilitate technological adoption. The second is what he calls the 'Lucas approach,' which assumes that growth is driven by human capital accumulation (Engelbrecht, 2003). These two approaches give different implications for long-term investment in human capital by governing bodies.

Recent models suggest that human capital is, in fact, a strong predictor of economic growth (Laroche, Mérette, and Ruggeri, 1999). According to a recent Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) report, human capital can be defined as the knowledge, skills, competence, and other attributes embodied in individuals that are relevant to economic activity (OECD, 1998). Using this model, the skills, knowledge, and ability for individuals to work help define the level and type of participation in the labour force (Dorais, 1991).

2.3.8 Situating Human Capital in Canada

Industrial countries, like Canada, are transforming into knowledge-based economies (Laroche, Mérette, and Ruggeri, 1999). Human capital theory suggests, "individuals and society derive economic benefits from investments in people" (Sweetland, 1996). Because analysts find such a close relationship between human capital and its implications for national strategies such as government policy frameworks and government expenditure, it has become necessary for human capital to be well understood (Laroche, Mérette, and Ruggeri, 1999). Laroche, Mérette, and Ruggeri emphasize that individuals will be more productive in environments of high human capital such as places where there are universities, and research centres, which promote further development and advancement in technology and growth (1999).

Generally, under the human capital model those who acquire greater human capital should result in an increase in economic welfare. This theory has also been confirmed in studies that show that human capital of economic migrants in Canada is higher than that of any other immigrant group, and result in more income and more employment (Hiebert, 2002). IMDB statistics also reveal a relationship between human capital levels of immigrants and their success in the labour market (Hiebert, 2002). High levels of human

capital are considered essential and critical for sustained economic growth (World Bank, 2007).

The Canadian federal-provincial taxation systems have been attempting to adjust to what is understood about human capital. Accumulation of human capital, besides the importing of skilled labour, is seen to lie in the generations of new children (Laroche, Mérette, and Ruggeri, 1999). Canada's fiscal system does provide benefits to the new generations of human capital carriers (Laroche, Mérette, and Ruggeri, 1999). Some examples of this are health-care expenses associated with birth, provided free of charge, and some financial support in the period around the childbirth (Laroche, Mérette, and Ruggeri, 1999). Other forms of support include the child tax benefit (a tax-free monthly payment made to eligible families to help them with the cost of raising children under the age of 18), and tax deductions for childcare expenses (Laroche, Mérette, and Ruggeri, 1999). Generally, small families, much like those in Canada, have growing human capital, whereas societies with large families generally invest little in each member (Becker, Murphy, and Tamura, 1990).

Tax-related benefits are given to individuals who voluntarily acquire their own forms of human capital (ie. post-secondary education). While most countries tax a foregone salary that is used towards the cost in post-secondary education, Canada exempts this amount from taxation (Laroche, Mérette, and Ruggeri, 1999). Other examples include benefits for students enrolled in post-secondary institutions. Students can claim a credit (an average of 25 percent) from the amount of tuition paid (Laroche, Mérette, and Ruggeri, 1999).

The Canadian society is constantly changing. Racism is still a concern in several cities and communities, sometimes exacerbated by conflicts around the world (Canada Heritage, 2004). A demanding labour market means that newcomers find it difficult to find new jobs, even when they are qualified in their own countries. As mentioned earlier, one key factor that distinguishes refugees from native-born citizens is that human capital may not be fully valued in the destination country (Chiswick, 1979 in Duleep and Regets, 1999). This is a growing challenge for a Canadian population where fertility has stabilized below replacement rates for the past twenty years, and where immigration will play an increasingly important role in population growth in the future (Beaujot and Matthews, 2000).

2.3.9 Breaking Down Human Capital

Similar to social capital, human capital can be situated in both an individual context, or at the country-level (Engelbrecht, 2003). Human capital is embodied in individuals, and also cumulative. Most economists generally agree that economic growth is driven by the accumulation of human capital (Engelbrecht, 2003), with much literature focussed on the channels in which human capital stimulates the progress of economic growth in a country (Laroche and Mérette, 2000). The assumption is that a society derives economic benefits from investments in people (Sweetland, 1996). However, approaches in where government funds should be invested vary from country to country. One approach might

include investment in raising basic educational levels, while more developed countries might opt for an approach more closely related to innovation and technology absorption (Engelbrecht, 2003). For the purpose of my study, however, I will focus on human capital at the individual level.

Most human capital theory frameworks are centred on investment into education as a country's strategy to stimulate economic growth. This concept of human capital is most often placed in a knowledge-based economy context, such as this one in Vancouver, (Laroche, Mérette and Ruggeri, 1999), often quantified into a stock amount (Becker, Murphy and Tamura, 1990). Because human capital concentrates in knowledge-based economies, concepts of "brain drain", or the migration of skilled human capital, are common topics of concern (Dzvimbo, 2003). Literature on human capital has grown, and most research is done to offer human resource departments a guide on how to determine the value of people to an organization (Laroche, Mérette and Ruggeri, 1998), along with results that support the education policy process (Sweetland, 1996). Little research has been done on developing nations besides the idea of "brain drain" since the value of human capital is often reduced to wealth or income. Marshall finds the notion of human capital useful only in some circumstances but not in harmony with the usage in ordinary life (Blandy, 1967).

Laroche, Mérette, and Ruggeri looked at different aspects of human capital (1999). They concluded that human capital could also be general, or specific (Laroche, Mérette, and Ruggeri, 1999). It is considered general when knowledge and abilities are easily transferred from one person to another without much loss, while specific human capital can only be used in a limited number of activities (Laroche, Mérette, and Ruggeri, 1999). Specific human capital is more costly to reinvest in if lost along the process of transference. This affects the investment decisions of individuals.

How much investment should go into human capital, however, has created much debate. Generally, rates of return on human investment are positively related to rates of investment (Becker, Murphy, and Tamura, 1990). Rates of return, however, are only high if there is a high amount of human capital available in an economy (Becker, Murphy, and Tamura, 1990). As mentioned earlier, a country's human capital is generally reduced to a stock amount. Common approaches assume that workers of a given age and education have the same human capital endowments in every country (Hendricks, 2002). This means that differences in unmeasured skills are not captured. Thus, it must be recognized that individuals with similar human capital stock are not necessarily perfect substitutes (Laroche and Mérette, 2000). This is particularly important when looking at human capital stocks of individuals obtained in different countries.

Of course, human capital has its own shortcomings. Attempts to measure human capital are often limited to educational credentials (Judge, 2003). However, there have been attempts made by various researchers to measure not only the number of years of education, but also the quality of education (Laroche and Mérette, 2000). This is partially because individuals with the same total years of schooling may not necessarily have

acquired the same knowledge formation as others (Laroche, Mérette, and Ruggeri, 1999). This leads to discussions on different educational standards set in different countries, which is used to explain the lack in foreign credential recognition.

Literature surrounding human capital theory also distinguishes between several types and means of education. This can include formal education: at primary, secondary, and higher levels, along with informal education at home, or internships and apprenticeships (Sweetland, 1996). Then there is also specialized vocational education at secondary and higher levels (Sweetland, 1996). Each different type of education has a different effect on each individual study (Sweetland, 1996). However, popular assumption is that increased education will improve economic capabilities (Sweetland, 1996).

2.3.10 Migrants and their Human Capital

Although human capital is seen as a 'non-tradable good' (Laroche, Mérette, and Ruggeri, 1999), the migration of skilled labour occurs around the globe. The standard human capital model has often been used to analyze the economic performance of immigrants (DeVoretz, Pivnenko, and Beiser, 2004). Human capital factors are frequently used as strong predictors of economic outcomes in refugee livelihoods (DeVortetz and Pivnenko, 2004).

Much debate about human capital has been focussed on whether or not it is homogeneous enough to be susceptible to aggregate measurement (Putnam, 2001), particularly when it comes to foreign credential recognition. Canada already recognizes the challenges in foreign credential recognition amongst immigrants and refugees, costing the country four to six billion dollars annually (Metropolis, 2003). This bias against foreign education creates additional hardships for immigrants (Henin and Bennett, 2002). This is not exclusive to Canada; underemployment is experienced in nearly all countries where third country resettlement occurs (Metropolis, 2003).

Because refugees are selected largely under humanitarian compassion, little consideration is given to their human capital attributes. Canada's refugee assessment contains no economic criteria for entry (DeVoretz, Pivnenko, and Beiser, 2004). Few economists have analyzed Canadian refugee economic performance to date (DeVoretz, Pivnenko, and Beiser, 2004). This study will contribute to the understanding of human capital in relation to refugees; whether it is an essential asset in successful integration of refugees to become participating members of society, which could result in more investment by the government to offer vocational training, or whether funds should be allocated elsewhere. A substantial part of human capital accumulation depends on fiscal policy, therefore it is important for governments to assess these policies as accurately as possible (Laroche and Mérette, 2000). Increasing studies are being done on migration patterns, along with livelihood strategies of migrants. With growing transnationalism and globalization occurring everyday, concerns about integration strategies have been under scrutiny by host governments at both the local and federal levels. Because federal policy is also shifting to encourage more autonomy amongst provincial jurisdictions in refugee

resettlement (DeVoretz, Pivnenko and Beiser, 2004), in-depth studies at local conditions that promote or hamper economic integration should be a higher priority.

By example, several cases have shown that inadequate English proficiency has hindered immigrants' ability to integrate into society and gain secure, stable employment. An important aspect of local integration in Vancouver includes increasing English fluency (Huminuik, 2006). In Dorais' study, insufficient knowledge of English and French hindered the ability for resettled Indochinese refugees to integrate into the Quebec labour market, who then opted to relocate to other cities in order to seek greater economic opportunity (1991). A study by Beiser and Hou confirmed that English proficiency was a significant determinant in unemployment and labour force participation of refugees (2000).

Galor and Stark offer another conflicting theory. Their studies showed that if all workers (migrants or native-born) were perfectly homogenous in skills, that migrants would often outperform the native-born in the receiving society in mean income (1990). One explanation is the possibility that migrants' performance can be directly linked to migrants' incentives and economic motivation (Galor and Stark, 1990). This study, however, concentrated on migrants who had been in the receiving country for an extended period of time (Galor and Stark, 1990). Most studies actually do show that the earnings of immigrants do assimilate to those of native workers over the course of their migration history (Dustmann, 1999).

3. Research Design

3.1 Methodology

This study is dedicated to determining the effects of social capital and human capital on economic self-sufficiency. To do so, I have conducted a study, which sought to determine why some African GARs in Vancouver reached economic self-sufficiency before other African GARs. In order to conduct this study, African refugees of various socio-economic backgrounds were selected and then located. Individual interviews were then conducted on these African GARs in order to observe these variations in economic self-sufficiency. Finally, data was analyzed to explain why such variations in economic self-sufficiency exist. Literature regarding social capital and human capital theories was drawn upon to help explain such variations.

The research method used for this case study was of a qualitative approach involving systematic collection, organization, and interpretation of textual material derived from talk or observation (Palmary, 2007). Although a quantitative approach that offers a statistical analysis of the variables was considered, the method was dismissed due to the intended size of the sample, which would not provide an accurate representation of the population.

Qualitative interviews were used to explore the reasons behind this social phenomenon through the experience of individuals in their natural context. Qualitative research methods also allow for opinions beyond the posed questions and are more flexible than quantitative surveys. Qualitative studies can be used to complement quantitative studies to gain a better understanding of the meaning and implications of the findings.

Individual interviews, rather than focus groups, were chosen for many reasons. Focus groups—considering the extreme difficulty in reaching African GARs—would have required much more coordination when both the participants and settlement workers had already articulated concerns about time constraints of GARs. As the researcher, I took the responsibility of meeting the participant at their chosen location which requires the flexibility of myself, rather than the participant. In addition, focus groups would require participants to meet at one location and problems of commute became an issue. Most of the respondents were interviewed at their home or place of work to ensure that no additional commute by the respondent would be necessary. The opportunity cost associated with the respondent meeting the researcher at a central location considering voluntary participation would have made it even more difficult to interview African GARs. This was the main reason that individual interviews were chosen. Also, power relations amongst focus groups may empower some people to speak, leaving others silenced[2].

Particular attention was paid toward anonymity and participants were reassured that data was purely for these research purposes only. Because of the political, historical, and

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[2] However, the reverse could also be noted. There are definitely instances where focus groups provide relatively 'safe spaces' (Creese and Kambere, 2002) for a collective generation of knowledge.

emotional sensitivities regarding the situations addressed in the interviews, names were not used in the data presentation or data analysis section of this report.

3.2 Site Selection/Population of Study

Vancouver was chosen as the location for this case study considering the ethnic composition of the city and economic situation. The foreign-born account for approximately 38% of Vancouver's population, in contrast to 17% of the national population (CIC, 2002), providing a unique place to look at the changing nature of the economic and social dynamics formed in this urban centre. The proportion of immigrants in Vancouver is actually much higher than that of the country overall, yet federal policies still fail to adapt to the changing environment in Canada's urban centres. Vancouver immigration also falls under federal policies that offer one year of government sponsorship to refugees, which provides a living experiment to see how well refugees actually integrate under this one-year settlement plan.

The timing of this study also influenced the site selection given that Vancouver was experiencing record low rates of unemployment resulting in high levels of job availability. Vancouver's economy is robust; therefore the variances of economic self-sufficiency should not be attributed to Vancouver's current economic situation since the situation seems favourable for successful economic integration.

Immigration to Vancouver provides an interesting platform for a study such as this one because there are even fewer studies done on African migration to this city—partly because few of those who are destined to Canada are actually resettled in Vancouver. Most studies are largely focused on the settlement of immigrants with larger concentrated ethnic communities. In Vancouver, that would generally include those from the Southeast Asian region, and Chinese-Canadian communities (Creese and Kambere, 2002).

Refugees were chosen for this study because they still remain the most unsuccessful economic cohort with high levels of unemployment and high levels of dependency on state assistance in all the immigrant categories (CIC, 1998). Refugees specifically from Africa were identified as good candidates for this case study because this group has arrived in Vancouver in consistently small numbers. There are no African countries that fall in the top ten source countries for refugees destined to British Columbia in the census conducted in 2001 (Statistics Canada, 2003). Other ethnic groups within Vancouver that are greater in absolute numbers have developed enclaves and socially cohesive groups which help ease the adjustment process. Africans fail to develop these ethnic enclaves, although groups and networks do exist between those that do manage to locate others with the same origins.

Because of the random dispersal and sprawl of the resettled African refugees, an unaccustomed Canadian population to the African accent may prove to be a greater disadvantage than those ethnic groups who have conglomerated into ethnic communities. In fact, having an African accent (referred to as extra-local) identifies this community as

"Africans/Black, immigrants, and less competent/desirable," where social exclusion and racializiation of this community in Metro Vancouver are still highly prevalent (Creese and Kambere, 2002).

The decision to choose Africa as a region rather than one single country within the continent was based upon the homogenization of such a group in Vancouver. Africans are often homogenized as one cultural group, when they in fact come from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds and languages. Creese and Kambere's study on language perception of African refugees in Vancouver further affirms the public's views of Africans as 'Black' or 'Afro-Canadian' (2002). As in Creese and Kambere's study, the participants in this study will be considered members of a single, yet clearly not homogenous, African community in the Metro Vancouver area.

Africans provide an alternative perspective to non-white and Asian refugees because they are resettled in relatively small numbers and fail to develop similar social organizational patterns (Henin and Bennett, 2002). Because the African community is small, few services offered by both non-governmental and governmental organizations are actually directed to them (Creese and Kambere, 2002). This is because the African population in Vancouver is perceived as not substantive enough to receive more attention from governmental agencies. In fact, it is hard to even call the African migration to Vancouver a 'community' because it is not concentrated and quite widely dispersed. Ethnic African enclaves are unable to develop in the urban centre, or a spatial 'centre', because most African refugees are forced to relocate to the suburban areas of the Vancouver region due to extremely high housing prices (Creese and Kambere, 2002). Thus, there is no clear pattern of a spatial concentration (Henin and Bennett, 2002). Additionally, the African community consists of a diverse amount of cultures, origins, linguistics, political histories, and socio-economic backgrounds (Creese and Kambere, 2002).

Because my study sought to look at individuals with various socio-economic backgrounds, proximity from the Central Business District (CBD) was irrelevant, along with country of residence before resettling in Canada. This is also because job opportunities are also expected in the suburbs. An important factor considered includes length of residence in Canada—those that have resided beyond one year, but less than seven years. A previous study by DeVoretz, Pivnenko, and Beiser revealed that refugees were likely to experience economic integration after a significant period of residence of approximately seven years (2004).

Countries of origin[3] of participants in the study included the following: Liberia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria and Sierra Leone. Length of residence in Vancouver of participants at the time of the interviews ranged from one year to seven years. Marital status of participants included those who arrived as single or independent, married, with siblings, and those with and without children. The age of participants at the time of the interviews ranged from 23 to 43 years of age.

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[3] The country of origin will refer to the country that the participant was born in, not the country of last residence, as many were located in refugee camps for a period of time before arriving in Canada.

To control for endogeneity that social capital will likely rise when employment is obtained, I requested that the economically self-sufficient GARs used historical reference to what they perceived to be their social and human capital at the time that they became economically self-sufficient For those who achieved economic self-sufficiency at the time the RAP was removed, the analysis will depend on the respondent's ability to recall what their social capital and human capital was in the first year of resettlement.

3.3 Data Collection

Data was collected on GARs (immigrant category CR1) that arrived in Vancouver on or before August 15, 2006 (as my study began after this date, leaving room for the one year of residence required for this study) but not limited to this one-year minimum requirement. As state assistance is given to resettled refugees up to one year, the study sought to find how many of the respondents still remained on welfare assistance beyond this one-year period, or had become self-sufficient within the year—whichever was first achieved. Permission was originally granted by three societies—ISS, MOSAIC, and UMOJA Operation Compassion Society, to post notices requesting voluntary participation from the refugees themselves. This proceeded under the advice of Professor Gillian Creese from the University of British Columbia (UBC), who has conducted several longitudinal interviews with immigrant and refugee families in Vancouver using this research method since 1997, with highly successful responses. Initially, the plan was to extend the interview process across a three-month period, with a minimum of 30 respondents.

This technique proved to be more challenging than originally thought. Unsuccessful and few responses within one month of posting notices resulted in the use of an alternative strategy, which required snowball sampling. One possible explanation for the unsuccessful responses may have been lack of incentive. No compensation was originally offered for the participation of GARs at the beginning of this study. After three months of little to no response, an incentive of ten dollars was offered for each respondent's participation through African settlement worker Ariane Kitengie from MOSAIC. Still, few interviews were arranged through Ariane. Lack of incentive was an issue, expressed by Ariane, adding, "It would be difficult to find voluntary participants without an incentive for these people because many are struggling." Nearly four months were spent locating refugees. A total of 19 participants instead of the intended 30 were included in the study due to time constraints. Six GARs that were contacted refused participation in the study because of feelings of discomfort in talking about their past history along with other personal reasons.

As mentioned earlier, my initial attempt at locating GARs within the Metro Vancouver district posed to be more challenging than expected. The reluctance and unwillingness of respondents grew to be a greater barrier than first imagined.

Over the period of three months, I attempted to locate 30 GARs living in the Metro Vancouver district. Instead, 19 participants were located and interviewed. Respondents resided in the Vancouver, Surrey, New Westminster, and Burnaby areas within Metro

Vancouver. I conducted qualitative interviews with first generation government-assisted refugees from Africa, who have been living in Vancouver for more than one year, over the course of these three months. Despite attempts to access these refugees through the ISS, MOSAIC, and UMOJA, notices posted at the various locations around the Metro Vancouver District, along with notices that were given out by settlement workers who work with the African community ended up being quite unsuccessful. All the GARs selected have been resettled in Vancouver through the Pre-Approved Plan (PAP). Secondary migrants were not included in the study.

The ISS has seven locations around the Greater Vancouver District. These include offices in Burnaby, Coquitlam, New Westminster, Richmond, Surrey, and two in downtown Vancouver. Of the seven locations, only two have resettlement assistance councillors (at the Drake location, and the Burnaby location). I began my search through the settlement worker at the Downtown location, who then referred me on to the African settlement worker in Burnaby. MOSAIC has five different locations all in the Vancouver area. UMOJA is situated in Surrey.

Four different nodes of entry for snowball sampling were used. Settlement worker, Ariane Kitengie from MOSAIC, arranged three interviews with GARs with compensation. Executive Director of the Centre of Integration for African Immigrants (CIAI) provided another node of entry. The other two nodes of entry were GARs referred to by friends, who then helped continue the process of snowballing.

One of the respondents, very active within the community, noted, "it is a very sensitive issue. Nobody wants to talk about their difficulties integrating because it is very sensitive and painful to think about it. They also don't know who you are—do you work for the government? Are you an immigration official?" Snowball sampling facilitated access to the African community by gaining trust through someone from that community (Palmary, 2007).

I would like to address the fact that my own research struggles were linked to the lack of settlement services actually directed towards African immigrants. At the time of research, all centres and organizations I had been in contact with were preparing proposals to receive further funding. It seemed that settlement workers with the societies, organizations, and centres were consumed by their funding proposals at the time. This was warranted considering the funding is crucial to the survival of such organizations. This was a contributing factor in my own research challenges.

It did not occur to me until my immense struggles in locating African GARs, that although Vancouver plays host to far more settlement services in comparison to many other places around the world, few services are actually directed to specific ethnic minorities of smaller populations, especially certain immigrant groups and newcomers in Vancouver.

MOSAIC, a multilingual non-profit organization dedicated to addressing issues that affect immigrants and refugees in the course of their settlement and integration into

Canadian society, failed to address the issues of African immigrants until just recently (November of 2007) after its initial inception in 1976. Thirty-one years after their initial inception, MOSAIC finally hired an African settlement worker. However, it is also true that African migration to Vancouver has been relatively small in numbers. MOSAIC, even with five locations around the Vancouver area, was still unknown to many participants.

The ISS, with seven locations dispersed around the Metro Vancouver area, only employ two settlement workers directed towards African immigrants. One African settlement worker is located at the Welcome House—where nearly all of the resettled refugees spend the first two weeks upon arrival to familiarize themselves with the city—while the second is located in Burnaby. Again, only recently (November of 2007), did the ISS Burnaby location, employ a second African settlement worker.

The research method undertaken in this study used a qualitative approach. I, the researcher, created the questions that were used in the interview sessions. These questions were based on selected literature that helped distinguish between the various indicators aforementioned. I referred to the World Bank SOCAP IQ Survey as a guide, which is an integrated questionnaire for the measurement of social capital covering six different dimensions (further details can be found in Appendix III). As a guide to test for human capital, I referred to the International Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey (IALL), modifying questions, and adding additional questions concerning educational attainment in both the source country and in Canada. An interview guide or general list of questions helped me explore topics during the interview, but was not restricted to just these questions.

Both surveys that were used as a reference to test for both human capital and social capital have already been pilot tested. The SOCAP IQ was previously tested in both Albania and Nigeria. The IALL was conducted in 20 different nations (World Bank, 2007). None of these 20 nations were conducted in Africa, however, and modifications for the interview were necessary for relevance. However, the surveys used as a reference deemed to be quite useful considering the study was situated in Canada where skills are highly regarded.

A semi-structured, open-ended interview was used to obtain information from respondents, which allowed for no predetermined responses and space to explore the inquiry area. Respondents were free to venture beyond the posed questions.

Because the interviews were based on semi-structured, open-ended questions, extensive pilot testing was not necessary because the format was flexible to allow for change according to what appeared to be the degree of relevance and comprehensibility from respondents. In doing so, questions were then modified and further honed during the interview process in order to be more suitable for the intended research group, and to ease the process of extrapolation. All interviews were conducted in English. No interpreter or translator was necessary.

Important areas that were recognized in the data included the date of arrival, sex, education level, country of birth, country of last permanent residence, marital status, and family status.

3.4 Sampling Method

I used the purposive sampling method for a specific group in mind. The sampling was confined to those who are originally from Africa currently residing in Vancouver. Because this population did not constitute a large group, and there was such great reluctance, I attempted to interview as many possible, which resulted in 19 GARs under time constraints. Interviews were recorded on tape for accuracy. Notes were taken in lieu of tape recordings in situations where respondents felt uncomfortable.

Given the amount of African GARs included in the study, I conducted a stratified sample of which a minimum of 8 of the 19 respondents had to be economically self-sufficient. Proportions were developed from the national percentages of GARs who receive social assistance benefits, sitting at approximately 60% (CIC, 1998). My study turned out to have nine GARs that were economically self-sufficient beyond the first year of arrival, and ten GARs who were still receiving social assistance from the government for more than one year after arrival. Stratified sampling provided a more accurate estimation of the subgroups chosen (Karmel and Jain, 1987) and ensured that I had the opportunity to assess both groups. Two cases were disregarded because immigrant status was under the refugee category, but not specifically government-assisted. Another case was disregarded because the GAR had been resettled in Victoria before migrating to Vancouver. Several other potential respondents were contacted but then refused participation because of feelings of discomfort associated with conversation about their past.

3.5 Data Analysis

After data was collected, recorded interviews were then transcribed before it was interpreted. Interviews recorded by note taking were rewritten and reformulated, then interpreted.

Decontextualizing data into units of analysis, followed by recontextualizing, or regrouping of data that are related conceptually and theoretically, were done to interpret the semi-structured open-ended interviews (Malterud, 2001).

Decontextualisation of the interviews allowed parts of the subject matter to be lifted out and investigated more closely together with other elements across the material that addresses similar issues (Malterud, 2001). I did so using Strauss and Corbin's specific procedures for data analysis, including open coding, axial coding, and selective coding (1990). This created core categories, and a main storyline as the main outcome of the analysis.

Using open coding, I looked for core themes within the sentences and paragraphs through conceptualizing rather than summarizing (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). Some labels were

categorized together, others that came up less frequently were still considered as possible indicators of social capital. Relationships between categories were also considered.

Using axial coding, I looked at what conditions may have given rise to specific categories that relate to the different dimensions of social and human capital. By looking at the context in which the categories appeared, and looking at intervening conditions, conclusions were made to justify the participant's responses. Axial coding required an in-depth look at verifications in the data, along with contradictions, and trying to understand the context and what incidences happened around them (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). This type of coding required the re-building of data to form an establishment of relationships between categories and between categories and their sub-categories (Palmary, 2007).

Selective coding was the process of relating core categories to other categories. This is the stage where theoretical implications were formed and one core category—or phenomenon—is linked with other categories (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). Recurring and common themes linked to social capital and human capital theory were used to explain variances in economic self-sufficiency.

Recontextualisation ensured that the patterns still agreed with the context from which they were collected, and is important to prevent reductionism and to maintain the connections between the field and the informants' accounts of reality (Malterud, 2001). This was done using the immersion/crystalisation (intuitive) analysis style (Malterud, 2001). The text was examined thoroughly by breaking it down into segments, and then crystallized—identifying themes or patterns in the immersion process—in order to emphasize the most important aspects (Miller and Crabtree, 1994). The regrouping of themes and categories was based upon the dimensions of social and human capital.

The analysis also took into consideration the length of time that respondents spent on each topic, the language used (description, argument, evaluation, and report), and the emotions expressed or triggered by certain themes through observed behaviour.

3.6 Limitations/Ethical Implications

3.6.1 Reflexivity

My background and position affected whom I investigated, the angle of investigation, the findings, the method used, and the framing of the conclusions. Haraway claims that the perspective of the observer is always limited to the observer's background knowledge and determines what can be seen (Malterud, 2001). A different representation of this study, however, is not a failure in reliability, but may actually contribute to an increased understanding (Malterud, 2001).

3.6.2 Interpretation and Analysis

Although a basic command of English was possessed by all GARs, there may still have been space for error during interviews for those respondents who had not acquired necessary human capital (English language skills) prior to their arrival. For those who learned English as a second language, miscommunication could have occurred. This seems rather minimal however, and miscommunication did not seem prevalent during interviews. In fact, only 9.4% of immigrants to Canada have no knowledge of either English or French (Statistics Canada Census, 2001), with 85% of African refugees having a working knowledge of English upon arrival (Creese and Kambere, 2002).

Some interviews were taken at a slower pace to accommodate those who understood English but learned it as a second language. It did not appear to hinder communication between the participant and I.

I was conducting a qualitative case study, using open-ended questions. This allowed for different interpretations of the responses collected. As a researcher, I used coding that was subject to my discretion and background.

3.6.3 Location

With Vancouver receiving only a modest amount of GARs from Africa annually and considering the urban sprawl of refugee settlement, finding respondents proved to be a great challenge. As mentioned previously, African immigrants cannot be found in one locale, and also reside in areas all around Metro Vancouver. This study is focussed on a particular group of refugees who arrived in Canada during a particular time period, so conclusions and generalizations are necessarily limited. African refugees originate from a myriad of different cultures, backgrounds, and languages, therefore generalizations about these refugees, as a whole, may be impractical.

Respondents that were accessed through service providers were often more sceptical of the researcher. However, since some respondents agreed to be participants voluntarily, the apprehension that I was researching on part of Canadian Immigration, or a government organization, was minimized. Because some respondents were given incentive, and others were not, an area of discrepancy was possible. However, results do not seem to show any type of significant bias.

Because the initial strategy proved to be quite unsuccessful and the contingency sampling strategy was applied, the respondents that remained accessible for my study may have been subject to less socio-economic variations, and less variance in spatial distribution than originally planned.

3.6.4 Endogeneity/Causal Argument

There may also be an issue of endogeneity. The method used to measure social capital is based on the assumption that social capital is a part of a household's asset that determines income and consumption.

There is a causal argument that human capital and social capital lead to economic self-sufficiency, but that economic self-sufficiency may also lead to human capital and social capital. My study was based on the assumption that human capital and/or social capital was necessary to first obtain employment, which therefore led to economic self-sufficiency. In addition, data was analyzed based on the respondent's ability to recall their human and social capital at the time stable full-time employment was secured, controlling for human and social capital that may have been gained during employment. However, validity and reliability is compromised.

3.6.5 Sampling Population

I did also consider that some GARs might choose to remain on state support rather than try to be economically self-sufficient. None expressed the desire to do so however. Some remained on state support while they sent remittances back to their countries of origin. Staying on social assistance, even in these cases, is representative of those who are not economically self-sufficient. If any had chosen to stay on state assistance, neither human capital, nor social capital, were considered a significant variable to economic self-sufficiency. Instead, it would take into account personal preference. This may give possible implications to Canada's policy framework.

Gender was considered as a potential intervening variable in what types of employment may be obtained; however, I did not expect job attainment to be compromised by gender in Vancouver because of the current economy. A common assumption is that more females generally arrive with dependents. However, this study included those who arrived with families regardless of gender. Instead of considering gender as an intervening variable, economic self-sufficiency measurements are expected to differ for those who arrive with families in contrast to independent refugees. Indicators were shifted so that economic self-sufficiency measurements mimicked those of the LICOs, which are based on estimates predicting the ability of individuals to cover the cost of basic needs. My study involved both single males and single female GARs who arrived with dependents.

A significant note about the sample population is that some participants included in the study received no compensation for their voluntary participation, while others received ten dollars for their participation. Respondents were advised that all participation was completely voluntary and confidential, giving them the choice to stop the interview at any time if there were any feelings of discomfort.

Finally, some refugees were rather sensitive to topics concerning economic status and general economic sustainability, along with past experiences in their previous country of

residence or country of origin before arrival. The study was dependent fully on the refugees' willingness to share their experiences. Questions about their current experiences which may have triggered potentially stressful situations in their life were avoided where possible.

4. Data Presentation and Discussion

This study focuses on the economic self-sufficiency of 19 African GARs and two key determinants: human capital and social capital. The study showed consistent patterns in the findings derived from these 19 separate interviews. First, I examine the role of human capital on income generation, and income generating activities. I will provide evidence that seems to show that despite variances in human capital, a reliance on state assistance is still occurring. Then I will move on to different dimensions of social capital that appear to affect the economic self-sufficiency of refugees, beginning with what emerges as the most significant factors.

Time spent on income assistance from this sample group ranged from three months to up to four years after arrival. Temporary or short-term employment that are associated with feelings of underemployment, are often reasons for low income generation, which results in an ongoing reliance of state assistance. Another external factor that affected a continued reliance on state assistance includes a return to school by one or more members of the family, which requires time away from income generating activities and loans used to finance the education.

GARs arrived with varying levels of formal education, ranging from secondary education, to university degrees. Despite these varying levels, income-generating activities were rather identical, and income generation for those with either high levels of human capital, or low levels of human capital, were quite similar. Many of those with high levels of human capital remained on state assistance beyond the first year. Successful achievement of economic self-sufficiency may be attributed to a social factor if there are no consistent outcomes using human capital measurements.

Increased group membership, networks, and social inclusion were the dominating forms of social capital. Networking and word-of-mouth referrals stood out as particularly important for achieving economic self-sufficiency. In general, social exclusion seemed to negatively affect employment security, which resulted in economic instability in the first years after arrival. Those who managed to overcome the barrier of social exclusion, expressed through feelings of social inclusivity in Vancouver's society, were more successful in achieving economic self-sufficiency.

Several dimensions of social capital were strong predictors of economic self-sufficiency for African GARs, but not every aspect was considered. Of the ones that play a significant role (groups, networks, trust, and social inclusion), these dimensions were all inextricably linked. This meant that the increase in one dimension significantly affected other dimensions of social capital. Looking at these dimensions more specifically, trust was the basis for social cohesiveness and inclusion. Increased inclusion meant an increased amount of group participation and increased networks, which facilitates more information sharing and communication. All of these dimensions that affect one another also have effects on interactions between individuals. The varying amounts of interactions determine whether or not social capital increases or decreases. By looking at these levels of social capital through amounts of interactions represented by trust, groups,

networks, social cohesion/inclusiveness, and communication and information sharing, results imply that higher levels of social capital will result in a greater probability of achieving economic self-sufficiency. Overall, each dimension mentioned above positively correlates to the other dimensions of social capital, with the inverse also holding true.

4.1 Human Capital and Economic Self-Sufficiency

African GARs who arrived with high levels of human capital made similar, if not identical, wages to those who arrived with low levels of human capital. Job obtainment was similar for GARs regardless of the level of human capital measured. Job obtainment was also equally difficult in the first year of arrival. Employment was often temporary and short-term creating unstable income generation. Time spent on income assistance also varied from individual to individual. More importantly, those with high levels of human capital did not necessarily come off state assistance before those with lower levels of human capital.

If one were to look comparatively at two participants—one with high human capital (university degree or above), along with another participant who never graduated from high school (or the equivalent in Canada)—at the same stage after arrival, both individuals appeared to face similar financial situations.

4.1.1 Experiences of Underemployment and Reliance on State Assistance

Underemployment has resulted in longer durations spent on state assistance because GARs with higher human capital are less willing to remain in low-end positions. GARs with high human capital spend years after arrival searching for jobs in related fields, but often experience periods of unemployment. During these periods of unemployment, GARs end up relying on state assistance once again. This accounts for part of the reason that GARs with high human capital actually seem less likely to become economically self-sufficient beyond the first year of resettlement.

There is evidence, although weak, which suggest that GARs with higher human capital are actually more likely to spend longer durations on state assistance. Several GARs in the study with high human capital relied on state assistance for more than three years. This is in comparison to the many GARs with lower human capital who came off state assistance within two years of arrival. The overall responses from GARs with high human capital suggest it is feelings associated with underemployment in low-end occupations that affects their decision to remain at a job. This results in unemployment and longer durations on state assistance.

Because of employment barriers, a downward trend in respondents being able to find work in areas that they were previously trained was noted. Almost all were unable to find occupations in a field related to their qualifications and experience in their home countries. GARs did attain employment; however, feelings of underemployment drove GARs out of these occupations. GARs were also generally unemployed while searching

for occupations in related fields of past experience, relying on state assistance during these periods.

GARs who came with extensive work experience in their countries of origin along with years of educational attainment also experienced problems of underemployment in Vancouver. In fact, seven of the nineteen respondents had completed an equivalent Bachelor's degree before arriving in Canada. Some who did not complete a degree had some years of post-secondary education. Yet, the most common occupations experienced by multiple respondents included custodial services, working in fast food restaurants (the most common restaurant chain was McDonalds), and factory workers.

Indicators of human capital stocks generally include years of work experience, years of formal education, and literacy (in this study, that would refer to English literacy). The following examples illustrate the challenges that were faced after arrival even with high stocks of human capital, some of which were obtained in recognized Canadian institutions.

A man from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) had 24 years of formal education in his home country, arriving with an Engineering Degree obtained in the DRC. He has had past experience as a teaching assistant in a university back in his home country and worked as a metals engineer for years as well. Even after displacement, he had found work with the United Nations, helping refugees in Zambia. His first years of employment in Vancouver were also in cleaning services—his first job opening being at the Vancouver International airport. This is a prime example of underemployment faced by well-educated GARs.

The six remaining GARs who arrived with university degrees in their home country have also experienced work in fast food restaurants in their first two years of settlement in Vancouver. Only two of these seven GARs with university degrees were economically self-sufficient beyond the first year.

A common indicator of human capital measurement is literacy. Logically, GARs who were raised speaking English should not require any further English language acquisition. Still, GARs with English fluency were unable to attain employment in related fields that require customer service skills. This is why occupations such as kitchen workers, custodians, and factory workers were most common. These are also jobs that these GARs have never worked in, in their home countries, and refuse to do so in Vancouver as well.

As a Marketing and Economics major in university, another Nigerian GAR came to Canada looking for a job related to his former work. He had spent approximately fifteen years working as a Marketing Manager for a Media Science Company, but found the situation in Vancouver rather "impossible" to get a job related to his area of expertise. He says:

It's impossible. You can't get a job here without Canadian experience. Even with lots of work experience, if it's not Canadian, then it is nothing. If you don't have Canadian experience, then you will have to do odd jobs. It was not just for me. You will find people in all types of fields. Doctors, engineers, nurses, every type of occupation.

Years of work experience are often used as indicators in human capital measurements as well. Despite extensive work experience in addition to years of education, employment opportunities still remained bleak. Most resort to low-end occupations with low-income generation. This Nigerian man says that there was a problem of foreign credential recognition for everybody regardless of colour or race. A failure to acknowledge human capital obtained outside of Canada further impedes access to higher paying jobs.

Nearly all GARs in the study had first-time employment in low-wage food services, custodial services and factory work regardless of level of education. Experiences with underemployment for those who arrived with high human capital often resulted in temporary or short-term employment, which led to longer durations on state assistance. Temporary and short-term employment, often a result of feelings of underemployment, will be discussed in the next section.

4.1.2 Short-term/Part-time or Temporary Employment and Reliance on State Assistance

Temporary employment was often linked to feelings of underemployment. Low self-esteem was also a common sentiment expressed by GARs who felt certain jobs were demeaning. This was more common for those with high human capital. Some found work through recruitment agencies, offering temporary work rather than full-time work. Temporary work and short-term work also resulted in more GARs relying on state assistance beyond the first year of resettlement because of low-income generation and unemployed periods between jobs.

Stable employment generally leads to economic self-sufficiency. It is particularly evident with GARs who often waver on and off government assistance due to temporary employment. Stable employment ensures a secure and consistent income desired by all GARs in the study. Expectations to maintain stable and long-term employment are generally assumed for GARs. Those with higher human capital expected to secure employment in a related field that meet their own personal standards. Stable employment and higher wages imply that economic self-sufficiency should be expected.

Individuals with high levels of human capital did not appear to secure stable and long-term employment in the initial years of resettlement. Nearly all GARs experienced short-term, part-time, or temporary employment at one time or another in the initial years of resettlement in Vancouver despite varying levels of human capital. Nearly all the cases of short-term employment were by choice, driven by unhappiness in the workplace and feelings of mistreatment by employers and colleagues. Some felt employers were abusing the fact that they were newly arrived immigrants by overworking them and giving additional responsibilities. Others felt taken advantage of because they were

immigrants. Those with higher human capital actually participated in a higher frequency of short-term or temporary work because of feelings of underemployment, resulting in longer durations on state assistance.

One GAR from the DRC is now an established entrepreneur, after ten years of residence in Vancouver. In the beginning, his story was very different. Job attainment was difficult and very temporary. After working as an engineer and teaching assistant in the DRC, he was only able to find employment in his early years in areas such as cleaning services. He felt the desire to quit his jobs because:

> It's like you're going low[er]. After having a good standard, after that you go low, because cleaning is not [what] you want…you have a degree, you come and you clean, this is very low.

His obtainment of stable employment came nearly five years after arrival and was hardly attributed to his level of human capital. Arriving with a total of 24 years of formal education, along with five more years of additional work experience, this GAR relied on state assistance for four years. His longest term at one occupation lasted only six months in the initial five years. This was the case for many GARs with high human capital. The desire to quit low-end jobs resulted in short-term employment and greater reliance on state assistance.

Other respondents also expressed how they chose to leave several of their jobs because of feelings experienced with underemployment. Those who arrived with high levels of human capital were more likely to express these feelings of underemployment. One respondent attempted to find work in her related field by using an employment agency called Manpower. They provided her with only seasonal work rather than permanent. These jobs sustained her feelings of underemployment, also taking jobs in cleaning services.

A Liberian GAR used the help of employment agencies. In fact, he used two different agencies within the two years he has been living in Vancouver. He adds:

> With employment agencies, it usually means you get temporary work and that you don't stay very long at the jobs they find you. Sometimes they only last two or three weeks. It's not really a good attitude to stay with temporary jobs. I mean, it is a way of making some fast money, but it's not good for your record[4]. You need something more stable for a good reputation. I just started a new job last month and hopefully I will stay there for a little bit.

It is true that wages offered through employment agencies are generally higher, but income is not steady and hours are never guaranteed. Periods between placements are often spent unemployed, which is why many GARs waver on and off state assistance.

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[4] He is referring to the bad reputation one has from switching jobs frequently, which is seen on an employment record or resume.

There were a handful of GARs who used employment agencies to find work. All expressed how work assigned to them was temporary. This is often strategically done by the employment agencies. Employment agencies generally collect a portion of the wage from the person they help employ. A contract exists between the recruiting agency and the companies that hire, stating that the employee cannot work for the company that they were assigned to beyond the fixed term without negotiating through the employment agency first. This ensures that the employment agency receives a share of the income that is generated by those who use their agency, without losing their clients to those companies that are searching for employees. For example, if the company feels happy with the work of a GAR assigned to them by an employment agency, they are not permitted to rehire the GAR full-time without using the employment agency first. This removes any potential opportunity to earn a wage at a higher rate. A reliance on recruitment agencies for temporary work results in unsteady income generation.

Yet another reason employment agencies provide mainly temporary work is because of the nature of the companies that request employment. Companies who advertise help wanted through employment agencies are often seeking temporary employees who can fill a position that is not normally necessary for the remainder of the year. This saves them labour, and provides a quick solution with employment agencies finding potential candidates to fill in the temporary positions quickly. Full-time positions are available, but many are managerial or receptionist positions that require higher human capital. The problem lies in the recruiting agencies disregarding human capital accumulated before arrival, or assumptions made about English fluency based on an extra-local accent.

Another GAR spoke of her experience in employment as constantly temporary. She explains that she often finds seasonal work—some not lasting more than a few months. Sometimes she feels that employers use temporary workers to prevent advancement in the workplace, and to keep labour costs low. Hiring temporary workers often means that few benefits, such as health or dental benefits, are offered. She manages, however, to maintain multiple jobs at a time, even though they are temporary positions, in order to generate increased cumulative income. Multiple jobs have not guaranteed economic self-sufficiency, however, and state assistance is also relied on.

There are several other participants who share similar stories. In fact, many experienced an even more unreliable source of part-time work, known as work "on-call[5]". A struggling 43-year old Liberian woman added that not only were her shifts part-time, only three times a week, but they were also on-call. "On-call" work, she explains, is inconsistent at times, and she often fears that she will not receive enough hours a week to pay her bills. Weekly income, in these cases, can vary considerably where most GARs rely on the maximum hours they can get. Those who had 'on call' work struggled to meet basic needs, and still relied on state assistance.

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[5] "On-call" work often refers to shifts that are scheduled to employees in previous weeks. If there is a lack of work to be done, on-call employees will be 'called off' work rather than come in for their scheduled shifts.

In actuality, many did manage to find some type of employment within the first year of resettlement, but the income they were earning at these low-wage part-time jobs were insufficient in meetings the needs of GARs, especially those with families or young children. A constant change in jobs was common because of the desire to earn higher wages. Another factor considered was the high propensity for GARs to have multiple jobs simultaneously, meaning that they would not suffer a great loss in income if there was frequent job movement. Simply put, as long as a GAR was holding down one or two other occupations, the dismissal of one job, in order to find another, did not have as much a pressing effect if the GAR was only holding down the one single occupation. However, having three jobs, in comparison to two jobs, did not seem to show a significant increase in income generated. This is explained by the few hours that are often scheduled to people with lower availability.

4.1.3 Human Capital Accumulation in Canada and Income Generation

The educational experiences of GARs have varied from person to person. Consideration is often made by researchers on whether or not education obtained outside of Canada should be measured considering difficulties in foreign credential recognition. Some argue that the market value of a foreign education should be counted (Li, 2000), while others claim it may as well be disregarded. Education attained in Vancouver is not contested on whether or not is constitutes human capital accumulation because it is recognized and accredited. Still, employment experiences remained stagnant for GARs and income generation did not necessarily improve after an increase in human capital stocks attained in Vancouver.

Looking at human capital accumulation in Canada gives a clearer insight into the role that human capital plays on economic performance because education in Vancouver puts GARs at par with the rest of the population. This education attainment is at the same standards as the native-born. Employers can no longer use foreign education as an excuse. The following examples outline the varied educational experiences of GARs in Vancouver, and the inability to secure higher income employment, and job security despite increased human capital.

One participant obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Marketing and Economics in Nigeria. He spent fifteen years working as a marketing manager for a Media Science Company in his home country before his arrival in Vancouver. Attempts to find employment in a field related to his degree were unsuccessful. This GAR returned to UBC for another Business Degree in Real Estate after living in Vancouver for five years, in order to have education at a recognized university. The course was taken as distance education[6] that normally spans across a one-year period. The participant was able to accelerate the course and complete the module within an eight-month period in lieu of the one-year standard. Graduates from the program are often highly successful in finding employment in a related field. In 2007, the employment rate for graduates with a Commerce Degree

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[6] Distance Education is a form of correspondence done at home, often using online assistance, offered by UBC where classroom hours are not required. It can also be accelerated or slowed to accommodate the student's needs.

was as high as 93% (Sauder School, 2007). It has been over a year since this GAR graduated from the program, and still, applications at numerous real estate companies have been unsuccessful. His employment continues in minimum wage[7] occupations. He also remains on state assistance because of the debt accumulated during his studies.

This has been the case for over half the GARs who returned to school after arrival. Programs taken by GARs offered both in-class lessons along with on-site practicum experience. Regardless of these human capital increases, employment remained unsteady and in low-end occupations. Reliance on state assistance did not change and many actually went back onto state assistance because of debt incurred during time spent in school.

In contrast, A GAR from Nigeria came to Vancouver with only a high school diploma. He has not chosen to return to school for further education in the past seven years here. He began working for a banking company in the first year of arrival, becoming a full-time employee after one year, but adds that his position did not require a minimum years of schooling requirement. He lives comfortably with his current income. This is one example of a participant with lower levels of human capital that was able to secure long-term employment. As a result, this GAR was self-sufficient after the RAP was removed.

A Congolese GAR enrolled in a Communications program at Douglas College, which was fully financed by the salary she was making as a French teacher in a Surrey private school. Previous to her move here, she had completed one year of university studying law in the DRC. She had no knowledge of English before her move here, managing day-by-day by learning it in everyday interactions in Vancouver without taking English language classes. Resettled in Vancouver four years ago, she spent her first two years on income assistance. Economic self-sufficiency was obtained before she began studying in Canada. She was able to attend school without the use of a student loan.

These are only a handful of examples that reveal that reinvestment in a Canadian education has not increased income. In fact, most GARs in this study (more than half) have received some schooling in Vancouver. The majority of GARs who reinvested in education did not improve their employment situation within the year of graduation dates. Wages remained the same and jobs were still in unrelated fields to the last area of education. Human capital theories suggest that higher human capital leads to improved economic performance. These cases show that another external factor must be affecting economic outcomes.

Another consideration that should be made is the time spent searching for work in related areas after graduation. Time often depreciates human capital meaning extended periods between human capital accumulation (the end of schooling periods) and delayed job attainment is actually devaluing the education obtained. Knowledge, abilities, and technology become outdated when new ideas emerge. Human capital deteriorates when it is unused because inactivity does not put the skills obtained into practise. This is the case for many GARs who experience lengthy periods after educational attainment

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[7] Current minimum wage in 2007 stands at $8/hour in Vancouver.

working in unrelated fields and low-end jobs. Job attainment in related fields seldom occurred for GARs immediately after the completion of an education program in Vancouver. This means that the income situation also remains unchanged and state assistance is still relied upon.

4.2 Social Capital and Economic Self-Sufficiency

Integration into a society requires acceptance by both the receiving society, and acceptance from the newly arrived immigrant. Spaces should be created to facilitate the transitions between different cultural backgrounds and lifestyles. The creation of bonds between people constructs healthier societies, increasing the sphere of interactions and diminishing the opportunity to focus on differences. Bonds built with those from the same countries of origin provide a type of emotional support and feelings of solidarity, while bonds with locals generate a sense of acceptance in a receiving society. Increasing social capital through these types of dimensions appear to help GARs achieve economic self-sufficiency.

Group membership, networks, trust, and social cohesion compose the main measurements of social capital stocks. Group membership increases social ties and interactions, providing spaces for information sharing and gathering. A combination of these factors has helped facilitate economic integration into Canadian society enabling GARs to achieve economic self-sufficiency, but the impediments of social exclusion have also hindered GARs' abilities to achieve economic self-sufficiency.

Stereotyping of visible minorities, not only of Africans, is still highly prevalent in a city that boasts multiculturalism and cultural hybridity. Those who actually feel socially inclusive in society were able to accumulate higher amounts of social capital, generating higher income in the long run. Social exclusion experienced by African GARs in this study seems to implicate lowered economic performance, and lowered income generation along with greater reliance on state assistance.

The following dimensions are listed in order of what appears to be the most significant in determining economic self-sufficiency. A description of how it increases or decreases social capital will be given, and how social capital affects economic self-sufficiency.

4.2.1 Value of Group Membership

The benefits of group affiliation in social capital accumulation are dependent on the types of group membership, size of the group, diversity of group, amount of participation, and the social interactions within the group, and outside of the group. I look at the individual variations of social capital that is affected by social group affiliations and how these variations in social capital help contribute to improvements in economic performance.

Many GARs had affiliations with organizations, groups, and associations. Group membership, in this context, refers to formal groups and organizations rather than informal gatherings. Some had membership in the early years of arrival, while others

volunteered their hours in the years after achieving economic self-sufficiency. Membership in certain groups or organizations, whether they are church affiliations, bowling leagues, or ethnic associations with one common social characteristic, helps diminish the social distance between individuals. In Glaeser, Laibson, and Sacerdote's study, they found that diminishing social distance helps create trust, loyalty, and cooperation—all of which are dimensions of social capital measurements (2002), which then help increase social capital stocks. This, in turn, helps GARs gain access to information that leads to job opportunities beyond those in custodial services, food services, and factory occupations. The security and higher income offered by better jobs then lead to economic self-sufficiency.

GARs who do not have membership in groups are generally more alienated from those who are native born. This means there are fewer opportunities to exchange information—important when it comes to job opportunity—and fewer opportunities to build trust. All types of membership in groups increased the social capital of GARs because groups were generally large in scale, and participation was frequent. This creates space for information sharing. The likelihood of a GAR coming off state assistance increased with increased group affiliation.

Participation in organizations, groups, and associations by GARs were all voluntary, motivated by the GAR's own self-interest. None were paid employment positions. All participation constituted additional hours spent outside of paid employment with a varied amount of hours dedicated to the different commitments. Participation was quite frequent because attendance was driven by self-interest. High levels of participation meant there was frequent information exchange occurring. Examples of types of membership and reasons for membership in different groups are as follows.

A female from the DRC founded the Congolese Youth Association of British Columbia in the summer of 2006. She created the Association to create spaces of networking for youth that arrive from Congo, many of whom are new and experience a "real culture shock." She says that it allows people to meet others from their own country, and the association also create and perform shows that promote their own country to encourage a sense of solidarity. She emphasizes the need to help others integrate and network, and to introduce newly arrived Congolese to people they can contact. As the former president, she attended meetings once a week. Having given up that position, she still attends monthly meetings. Economic self-sufficiency did not occur after her RAP was removed, but was achieved just before the creation of the Association. The networks and social interactions that were made before the Association was launched can partly explain the achievement of economic self-sufficiency.

Another Congolese GAR is a member of various organizations. He became a member of the French Federation a few months after arriving in Vancouver in 2000 despite the fact that he does not speak French. The French Federation brought him closer to those who were Francophone, which is a shared attribute amongst many he felt he left behind, also allowing him to meet other French-speaking Congolese. He also became a recent member of the Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Services Agencies (AMSSA), a

multicultural society designed to provide assistance to newly arrived immigrants. Asked what his main benefit was from his membership, he responds, "Networks. You network a lot." These networks of people supply information that guide GARs into different systems[8] in Vancouver. He has been financially independent of state assistance for five years now.

The intensity amongst same-ethnic groups is often greater because of shared experiences in migration and nostalgia associated with same countries of origin. Membership in these types of groups facilitates communication and often generates greater trust. For example, if one GAR babysat for another member of this group, the GAR would expect that this member would reciprocate the same favour back. Increased social connectedness arrives from membership in groups because participation is key. These same-ethnic groups are actually quite large in size, considering the limited number of immigrants that arrive from Africa. Ethnic affiliations often emphasize the importance of contact with other groups. Many interact with other ethnic affiliations outside of the group as well. These interactions lead to increased information sharing to help facilitate integration.

GARs in my study did not necessarily use same-ethnic organizations to improve their own economic performance. One possible explanation for the GARs inability to utilize these organizations for access to services to improve livelihoods is the relatively recent creation of such organizations. The strength of the networks found in organizations lie embedded in the experience of members and the group's links to other communities. Many were established in recent years, meaning that resources have not been put in place to help facilitate settlement for newcomers. Some organizations were at such an early stage in development that it was still necessary to solidify more efforts to stimulate upgrades within the associations. With the organizations in place, it still allows fellowship for those of the same background to meet together as it is customary people of the same nationality gather together. African settlement in Vancouver is relatively small and those who do reside here and who have created these recent organizations have not yet managed to create extensive networks extending from the organization. This may suggest that new members or immigrants who arrive in upcoming years will wreak the benefits of more established networks created by these relatively new same-ethnic organizations if growing numbers of Africans continue to arrive in Vancouver. This is symbolic because it represents the importance of the support that lies within group affiliations. GARs have recognized how significant networks are and while they may not have received help in integration when they arrived, they have hopes that their knowledge of the system can be transferred to future newcomers to facilitate integration.

The same benefits from same-ethnic groups generally holds true for members in a tightly knit religious group as well (Kao, 2004). A GAR originally from Liberia found a space of refuge from her stressful life in Vancouver at a local church close to her building complex. She explains, "church friends were like another family to me." She felt like she could turn to them if there was ever anything wrong, and that they were the first people that would be there for her. The social support offered and guidance into the system in the first year was crucial. Her attendance in the first year was weekly (on

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[8] This refers to housing, employment, transportation, and places to purchase consumption items.

Sundays) but she frequented the church less and less often in the second year. This GAR managed to come off state assistance within a year and a half after her first day of arrival.

Group affiliations were key for two main reasons. Firstly, it created spaces for information sharing that lead to cost reduction strategies and access to employment. It also provided GARs with a sense of support and solidarity, which increases confidence and motivation to both improve livelihood conditions and to achieve economic self-sufficiency.

4.2.2 Networks

Social interactions depend on network structures (Sobel, 2002). The creation of networks by GARs often stemmed from group membership but was also fostered in workplaces and neighbourhoods. Different types of social ties that were created provided improvements in economic performance for African GARs in Vancouver because of increased information sharing. This includes strong and weak ties, and ties within and outside the African community. The main benefit from the creation of social ties was the use of word-of-mouth referral, which only occurs when social networks are in place.

Extensive social networks increase word-of-mouth referrals—information that is exchanged between two individuals through conversation (word-of-mouth). The greatest advantages that word-of-mouth referrals provide GARs with were cost reduction strategies and ways to break through the social exclusion that existed in the labour market. GARs relied on essential information shared by other individuals regarding job opportunities, affordable housing, and groceries at reduced prices, amongst other tips on cost reduction strategies.

Cost reduction does not necessarily increase income generation, but creates a greater gross amount of income by reducing expenditure. This can dramatically affect economic self-sufficiency. Reducing expenditure has allowed many GARs to become economically self-sufficient.

Although not stated directly, responses from certain interview questions suggest that GARs feel their own welfare is based on the people they interact with and network with outside of those from Africa. Many suggest that in order to become self-sufficient financially, one must look beyond the circle of African friends that many GARs initially socialize with. This provides different nodes of entry into fields of employment. The terms "all different people" and friends from "all over" were used frequently in interviews with the GARs. GARs with very high income generation have large extensive networks within and around Metro Vancouver, not confined to one specific area. Wider and diverse networks generally create more access to different fields of employment and different sources of information.

One GAR explained that job attainment was not an obstacle. His biggest integration obstacle was meeting people after arrival in Vancouver. He adds that people that you meet in Vancouver who are already familiar with the system facilitate economic

integration. This is reflected in the respondent's high stocks of social capital in comparison to many other participants interviewed, and early achievement of economic self-sufficiency.

The benefits of employment extend beyond the income that it generates to provide basic needs for GARs. Workplaces provide spaces for discourse and networking, which is often crucial for movement within the employment sector of a competitive economy. A facilitation of social interactions is also created through mutual understandings of the work environment, and mutual colleagues or employers. Knowledge transfers between employees is common. It is often the first job obtained by GARs that help them gain a step further into integration. The first job familiarizes them with how the work industry functions, making it easier to find other jobs. It is also a meeting space for networking. However, it is often the first job that is most difficult to secure.

All respondents suggest that networking and meeting more people play an integral role in successful integration. A GAR from the DRC demonstrates the importance of social capital through his participation in various community projects both within and outside the African community. This includes volunteer work at provincial elections, participation in family events like the annual Santa Clause parade every December, and his affiliation with several associations such as AMSSA and the French Federation despite the fact that he does not speak French. Feelings associated with being an ethnic minority provided him with an increased motivation to seek networks with a wider variety of people of diverse backgrounds. He adds that the main benefit from attending these groups is:

> Networks. You network a lot. You're trying to know a lot of things. At least through networks, you are trying to get a lot of things for yourself. Networking is the most important. A lot of people network in the community. That is the most efficient, most important for integration.

His case proved to be successful in becoming economically self-sufficient. The economic pay-off from an extensive group of networks is immense. Having managed to open his own business, he attributes this success to the help and support of friends. What has separated many GARs from those who were temporarily employed, and those who secured long-term employment, were connections through friends and people met in Vancouver after arrival.

In another instance, one participant moved to Vancouver after a house fire forced him out of his former home. His first year was very difficult, and it was in the initial year of resettlement that his house burnt down. A friend that he met after arrival helped him locate adequate housing, both in his first place of residence and the one after the fire. This shows how networking is not only an important source of information for job opportunities, but in other areas that immigrants often have difficulties securing.

The main benefit from networking is the information gained through interactions. Information gained that was relevant to improved livelihood strategies involved

employment opportunities, access to affordable housing, and living cost reduction. All of these combined have led to economic self-sufficiency.

Common amongst all GARs was also the propensity for participants to create social ties with people from the same countries of origin. One participant explained, "It's because lots of people you meet across here [that are from the same continent] will help each other. It is something that we just know." Another participant adds:

> The time you come here for the first time, you ask your community because a lot of people come from the refugee camp. You know each other, the people who have come too. And through those people, you know more people. Sometimes the community helps. Sometimes the community puts you down. But they are still the first people you usually go to for help.

It seems the bond that is created by a shared nationality often becomes even stronger after migration. Research related to migration and senses of belonging and identity have been much explored in the academic sphere[9]. According to Giugni and Passy, ethnic bonds are often "recurrent and largely inexplicable and having an overpowering emotional and non-rational quality" (2006). Dialogues about "emotional belonging" (Giugni and Passy, 2006) or "stronger senses of ethnic homogeneity amongst immigrants" (Castles and Davidson, 2000) have been ongoing debates. These examples seem to confirm ongoing theories about displacement and senses of belonging. Ethnic communities seem to have a natural tendency to help one another integrate and improve chances of achieving economic self-sufficiency earlier.

Part-time work and temporary employment do give GARs the opportunity to network and build relationships, thereby increasing social capital, regardless of duration spent in one location. Short-term employment, however, severs ties that could potentially be stronger if employment periods were longer. Both weak ties, and strong ties may form between those in a shared workplace, and provide different benefits. The creation of weak ties may appear less functional, however, past studies have actually shown that workers are actually more likely to get jobs through weak ties than strong ties (Yakubovich, 2005). Granovetter's argument back in the 1970s also exemplifies the role that weak ties play in finding jobs (1973). He calls this process the building of bridges across different groups of people. Weak ties have enabled GARs to gain first-time employment. However, other theories that claim mobility decrease social capital accumulation also seem to hold some truth in this study. The high frequency of mobility that is associated with frequent changes in employment often prevents further accumulation of social capital, further advancement in the workplace, and greater reliance on state assistance.

4.2.3 Social Exclusion: Minority Views

> "Maybe I am not answering the questions right, maybe I am not giving the responses that they want to hear. Sometimes they tell me it is my lack in Canadian experience. I don't understand how I can get Canadian experience if

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[9] See Malkki, 1992; Kibreab, 2005; or Turton, 2005 as examples.

they don't hire me? Most of the time I think it is because of my black face"
(Participants' remarks, 2007).

In the metropolitan city there can be two types of inclusion or cohesion that exist: individuals living within an overarching, heterogeneous social system, and the other in smaller societies (amongst immigrants and ethnic minorities) (Metropolis, 2008). The former will be discussed in this section, while the latter on social cohesion amongst Africans as an immigrant group will be presented in the following one. Overall, perceptions of social exclusion and discrimination create a lack of unity and togetherness in Metro Vancouver as a part of a larger community. Social exclusion was the greatest impediment in securing employment. As a result, reliance on state assistance was high.

Assimilation into Canadian society is not on the country's agenda per se, but many would argue that 'fitting in' to a country that is still predominantly white with European origins is still a pressing issue on immigrants' lives. Immigration has changed the nature and identity of the population, however Canadians still generally interpret themselves as 'white' (Mercer, 1995). Although results from the most recent 2006 census show that approximately one in five (19.8%) of the total population were born outside of Canada (visible minorities), which is the highest proportion of foreign-born in Canada's population in 75 years, the remaining 80% are still predominantly white (Statistics Canada, 2006). While immigration from other countries, such as those from Central and South America, and the Caribbean, has increased, recent immigration from Africa has remained rather stagnant accounting for approximately 10% of recent immigration to Canada (Statistics Canada, 2006). Africans are a relatively new immigrant group in Vancouver and are still highly stigmatized because they are from non-traditional[10] source countries. This prevents access to employment.

Forced migration often involves elements of "cultural dislocation and economic costs" (Hyndman and Walton-Roberts, 1999). The process of uprooting from a developing country to developed country, where there is often a short period to prepare both mentally and financially, can cause great distress and culture shock. Becoming a 'visible minority' is often difficult to prepare for. In fact, the popular discourse 'visible minority' itself is an official and political form of labelling those relative to a white majority.

African immigrants do not constitute a large visible minority in Canada, let alone Vancouver. Omidvar and Richmond found that there was an, "over-representation of racial minority of family and children among those living in poverty in large cities, and the denial of access to many services by immigrant and refugee families" (2003). The immigrants' own views of social integration exaggerate the difficulties adapting to a different society. Most participants felt they were victims of prejudice in some form or another. The ignorance and racism exhibited by Canadians affect possibilities of social integration and the development of social cohesion.

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[10] Non-traditional source countries include those from Asia, African, Latin America, and the Caribbean (Ley and Smith, 2000).

Some GARs reacted negatively towards the concept of integration. This was mainly because the term 'integration' was often considered comparable to the word 'assimilation.' Some GARs felt that integration, and being accepted into the new society, meant becoming like those in the dominant culture. By doing so meant leaving behind their own culture, traditions, and way of life. Social exclusion, in this case, is by individual choice, isolating themselves from society, rather than it being caused by institutional practises that inhibit interactions. This prevented access to employment and resulted in longer durations on state assistance.

Resentment also stemmed from those who felt there were negative connotations associated with integration. These GARs felt that cultural differences should be fostered, and many gave up on social integration with those who were not from their ethnic group. This is because refugees often share the common dream of equal opportunities and equal rights, democratic participation, and the acceptance of cultural diversity without discrimination and racism (Mestheneos and Ioannidi, 2002). For some GARs, attempts to socialize outside of the African community were retreated after years of continued discrimination in Vancouver. Those who felt a sense of rejection from society, or feelings that they must assimilate to integrate, dedicated fewer time in extending social networks, decreasing their social capital. These GARs also spent longer durations on state assistance.

Of the total nineteen African GARs in the study, 16 participants felt that they had experienced some form of discrimination. Only one participant felt he experienced no discrimination, while two remaining participants felt unsure about their perceptions of discrimination. This is reason to believe that social exclusion was a major contributing factor towards unemployment in the first year of resettlement and difficulties entering the workforce.

Creese and Kambere's findings in their study "What Colour is your English" were consistent with those in my study (2002). Similar to Creese and Kambere's findings, the top three employment barriers that participants identified included foreign credential recognition, discrimination against their accent and their colour, and lacking Canadian experience (2002).

Recent immigrants from Africa are often lumped under one broad category of 'Afro-Canadian' or Black (Creese and Kambere, 2002), highlighting an emphasis on racialization in Vancouver. This also erases the specificities of each migration experience, which are independent from one another, giving a false perception of homogeneity. Individuals came with a variety of cultural backgrounds, language ability, work experience, and education, however these are often overlooked. Refugees are often negatively stereotyped as one type of immigrant group who arrive with lower abilities than the rest of the population. Negative stereotyping of GARs despite diverse backgrounds impedes access to employment.

These institutional barriers are often causes of underemployment resulting in temporary employment. Social exclusion consistently led to poor economic performance and access to only low income generating occupations.

The majority of GARs did feel discrimination affected job attainment. One participant expressed that he felt this was the specific reason he experienced such difficulty finding employment. He added that he felt this was one aspect of his everyday life that he was not always in control of. One GAR states:

> Sometimes you are not in control of the views here. Like, finding a job, you are not really in control, because they don't give you a job. Just like that. They always say you don't have Canadian experience. Maybe that is a nice way of putting it.

Another participant expressed that he felt discrimination caused failures in the workplace stating:

> My biggest obstacle was finding a job. Sure, there may have been times where I felt 'colour plated[11].' I was told once to quit my job at Superstore[12] because it was too far from my home at the time. They told me to quit since my other job was quite stable and well paying at the time. Two weeks after I quit Superstore, they recruited another person for the same position I was working. He was white. They would phone me and tell me that they didn't need me because it wasn't busy enough, even though they just hired another person and he was getting working hours.

Other participants expressed frustration with what they felt was discrimination within the workplace after being hired. Positions that were available to GARs were often demanding and labourious over long hours. It was in these positions, such as dishwashers and factory workers that some participants felt taken advantage of. One participant explained:

> Sometimes some jobs in the restaurant, they want you to do everything. Sometimes people take advantage of you because of your race. Sometimes the managers are not nice. We are in a new country, and we don't know a lot of things, so we just have to be patient. Then it becomes really insulting and then we quit. They say it is because of "seniority" that they can tell us to do everything.

It is these feelings of superiority over refugees that are sensed in everyday situations. Many GARs feel the perceptions that foreigners are less educated, less developed, and poorer are being represented in many scenarios during their experience living here. Many of the GARs themselves had actually been better off and from a more educated background in their own home countries. They face these sentiments with dismay and

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[11] He uses this term as a reference to skin colour preferences by Canadian employers.
[12] The Real Canadian Superstore is a cross-Canada grocery outlet that offers permanent discount pricing on their goods.

hurt feelings. A sense of rejection from society lowers motivation and confidence to improve employment conditions.

Of course, job seekers have their own subjective opinions about why they are unsuccessful candidates for job vacancies. Applicants are not always aware of the many factors that influence hiring decisions. Work ethic that is perceived by employers is also subjective. However, similar patterns with such frequency and regularity that emerge from so many isolated application experiences do suggest a systematic behavioural pattern in Vancouver employers—a strong reluctance to hire immigrants, and a tendency to hire immigrants in low-end occupations.

Some participants spoke of relatives that they had arrived with who have moved to other cities in order to find better employment opportunities. The most common city named for secondary migration was Toronto, where there is a "small but significant black population" (Mercer, 1995). Similarly, for those who come from former French colonies, there is sometimes a strong inclination to migrate to the province of Quebec. These cities seem to be more socially inclusive of Africans because larger populations of Africans tend to reside there. One participant saw her son leave for Toronto in February of 2007 and has yet to return. She feels that her son's economic success is a result of greater social inclusion in Toronto.

Another participant arrived in Vancouver with his brother and two children. After the initial year of resettlement, his brother decided to move to Toronto for better job prospects. His brother, in his 30s when he arrived, could not successfully secure stable employment in Vancouver despite high levels of human capital. Nine years later, he has also happily remained in Toronto, his secondary city of migration. Job security was established quickly and economic self-sufficiency was achieved with what he felt was a greater sense of social acceptance and inclusion.

Some feel that discrimination and social exclusion is characteristic of Vancouver. One participant's concerns are characteristic of many GARs:

> I face it everyday. Maybe not so much within my company, but outside of the company, wherever you go. By and large, after seven years here, I still don't feel fully integrated. I don't feel fully integrated because I still feel denied of certain things. I feel like I am getting different treatment from other people.

Different expectations from society in Vancouver exist for different ethnic groups. The social exclusion of Africans seems to be more outstanding than other ethnic groups found in Metro Vancouver. By example, large populations of Asians in recent decades have allowed the society to become accustomed to these ethnic groups, allowing them into economic and social spheres more easily. This type of racial segregation, or "hypersegregation" of Africans, as used in Bobo and Zubrinsky's study, suggest that minority groups with larger absolute numbers are less socially excluded than minority groups with smaller absolute numbers (1996). Such small numbers of Africans in

Vancouver mean the Africans still experience this "hypersegregation". This affects a sense of belonging, lowering social cohesion amongst group dynamics as a society.

One participant recognizes that foreign recognition is an obstacle for everyone who is educated outside of Canada. However, he does single out one ethnic group in a comment about acceptance of foreign credentials:

> You won't get any recognition in Canada. But this is for everybody, not just for Africans. Maybe not for the English people though, I am not sure about the English people because maybe they come from similar systems so they might have some recognition.

This holds some truth. A recent intake of over 200 nurses from the United Kingdom into British Columbia to feed a nursing shortage is an example of the social acceptance of certain ethnic groups, but not all. Recognition and access enables other ethnic groups to be more economically integrated.

Watson did a statistical study on the economic welfare of GARs in British Columbia (2006). He found that GARs from Africa were more likely to receive welfare than Europeans. Possible theories examine whether or not historical similarities between Canada and Europe mean GARs from Europe are less reliant on state assistance, or that refugees from newer source areas, such as Africa or the Middle East, are more likely to receive welfare because of dissimilarities in history and culture (Watson, 2006). Although this study did not concentrate on dissimilarities in history and culture, the example of English nurses securing employment in Vancouver suggest that this theory may hold some truth.

Lowered social capital through social exclusion has resulted in accessibility to only low-end occupations for African GARs. As a result, this trickles down to underemployment, which often results in temporary employment and low-income generation. Low-income generation and unstable work conditions result in a greater reliance on state assistance for longer periods of time. The majority of respondents did not feel a sense of social inclusion into Vancouver society, at least not initially, but social cohesiveness between Africans was very prominent.

4.2.4 Social Cohesion

Social cohesion can be identified as the level of social interaction within communities with shared values, along with social solidarity between people and a sense of belonging to place (Forrest and Kearns, 2001). These common values bind people together in different processes. This bond that is created facilitates exchanges of information between people that can provide timely advice on integration strategies.

The impacts of social cohesion as a form of social capital on economic performance vary, depending on the ways that they are either improved or reduced by the environment in which these GARs are situated. Different physical, psychological, and socio-economic

constraints embedded in each GAR challenge social capital build-up. In Vancouver, many experiences with social cohesion seem to be limited to those who are of African descent, with social exclusion seen at institutional levels, all the way to individual levels. Elements of discrimination seem to impair the accumulation of social capital for ethnic minority groups—in this case, for African GARs. This is important because a social and political environment must enable relations to develop and shape into social structures. On paper, social inclusion and cohesion is promoted and emphasized by institutions, but practise on the ground seems to be rather different.

Still, the benefits that stem from cohesion of ethnic communities can be examined. Benefits are linked back to information that is gathered on integration strategies such as access to employment, and cost reduction. The inclination for same ethnic groups to help one another creates strong bonds and trust. GARs have relied on friends of the same ethnicity for moral support and economic support.

One respondent replied that the only reason she gained access into her employment at a care aid home was because her hiring employer was also from Africa and empathized her situation. She exaggerates that a similar situation allowed her teenaged daughter to gain access into the labour market as a food services worker in a local Burger King fast food restaurant where the manager hired her daughter and several other of her African friends. This can both be seen as what Hiebert describes as "enclave economies" where groups of those from the same origins (in this case, Africa as one homogenous entity) occupy the same jobs (1999). This is an example of social cohesion playing a role in job attainment.

This form of social cohesion—specifically ethnic groups from Africa—was seen amongst most participants in the study. The majority of respondents expressed that most of their closest friends after arrival in Vancouver were also from Africa. One man, even after living in Vancouver for approximately ten years now, added that he had lots of friends from Africa, mainly Sudanese and Congolese despite his Nigerian background. Another respondent from Liberia has regular visitors—many of whom are friends of her children—but all who are from Liberian families as well. She often mingles with others from her building, but again, all originally from Liberia as well. After multiple visits to her home, visitors that had passed through during the interview were all from Africa, whether they were friends of her children, her own neighbours, or visiting friends. These friends have referred each other to employment, facilitating entry into the initial job. From there, familiarity in how the employment sector functions, and networks that can form in the workplace, allow for greater opportunities into other occupations.

Cohesion is an important asset in gaining access to employment, but individuals socialize and interact in their local environment to improve neighbourhood cohesion as well. Neighbourhood and residential cohesion is significant because it can be seen as a series of overlapping social networks (Forrest and Kearns, 2001) where routines in everyday life are building blocks for social cohesion and a sense of belonging. Neighbourhood cohesion is especially important for those who are less affluent where racial composition is often more diverse and where the physical environment is often more decayed and unattractive. Because many GARs created social ties with those within close vicinity of

their residences, the importance of neighbourhood cohesion as a resource is magnified. There still seems to be a tendency for Africans to create social ties with others within their ethnic group in the neighbourhood despite small populations of Africans in the city.

Participants reside in a wide range of living conditions and interviews took place in many participants' homes dispersed all throughout Metro Vancouver. The four general areas of residence include Vancouver, New Westminster, Surrey and Burnaby. All three municipalities outside of Vancouver (New Westminster, Surrey, and Burnaby) constitute a part of the greater Metro Vancouver area. GARs are distributed throughout Metro Vancouver, and although the distribution is quite scattered, low cost housing is particular to certain areas of the city. This means that there is still likelihood that newly arrived GARs who are not yet self-sufficient will be situated close to other GARs who rely on state assistance.

Of the 19 surveyed, seven resided in Surrey, seven resided in New Westminster, two resided in Burnaby, and the remaining three resided in Vancouver. Many expressed the troubles they faced finding affordable housing at a time where the Vancouver housing market has been so robust. Many chose to live in the suburbs (Surrey, Burnaby, and New Westminster) because housing was much more affordable. Almost all participants expressed their difficulties in finding adequate housing, including affordability and adequate living conditions considering the size of families per household. This explains residential patterns and connections that GARs had with other Africans.

Figure 5: Map of Metro Vancouver, Urban Sprawl of GARs from the Study

Figure 5 provides a snapshot of the residential distribution amongst the GARs who took part in the study. Places of residence are represented by the black dots. Some municipalities may not appear to have the total number of participants in the area. This is because some GARs reside in the same building as one another therefore the dots overlie one another. No real pattern of spatial organization or cohesion as a community geographically exists. This study looks at only 19 GARs done through snowball sampling, however, and a snapshot with a greater number of participants using a different sampling method may show more accurate spatial distribution.

One respondent explains why the African community fails to conglomerate and develop enclaves:

> Because Africa as a continent is so diverse. You have people from Sudan, they will get together. Or people from Congo. They always meet together as well. For example, the people from Sudan, they will get together and do their meetings to help each other. So the same people from the same countries get together. Everyone is dispersed everywhere because they don't own their own homes.

Another participant added:

> I find that there are a lot of Nigerians here in Vancouver. But they live all over the place, in Surrey, some in New West, some in Burnaby, depending on what they can afford. We get a chance to meet up at our monthly meetings for the Nigerian Society.

When asked why you will find this type of distribution he adds:

> The majority of Congolese, you will find in New West, many Sudanese are there as well. Some in Surrey. There aren't as many in Burnaby, this is because housing is slightly more expensive in Burnaby. The rest reside in New West and Surrey because of low rent. Very few, although you will find some, live in Vancouver because rent is very very high.

A general consensus from nearly all GARs agreed with the situation of most African GARs. Although living in Vancouver is attractive to many, it is not feasible considering high costs of rent. Because employment opportunities are available in both the CBD along with the outside municipalities, living in areas such as New Westminster and Surrey are most realistic. Those who did manage to find housing in Vancouver generate relatively high income and have extensive networks within and outside of the African community. Vancouver does not tend to be the initial district of settlement however.

For many, it is affordable housing that can accommodate differing family sizes that determines place of residence. Refugees arrive both independently and with families. Housing must accommodate different sized families, some being quite large. Housing that is designed for large families are much more limited, and much more expensive. This means that refugees who arrive with families are driven out to the suburbs in areas

of low socio-economic status with higher crime rates. Families are driven out to the suburbs because housing in Vancouver is not generally designed to meet the needs of large families. The social structures of the neighbourhoods are disregarded; many GARs express that they cannot be so selective about the neighbourhood when the main concern is finding adequate shelter. As such, neighbourhood cohesion suffers, lowering a tendency for interactions in residential areas.

One participant faces this very situation. Besides her location in Surrey, she says it is nearly impossible to find affordable housing for her and her four children to live comfortably. She adds:

> I can probably find housing in areas closer to the CBD, like in Burnaby, with similar rent, but I would be living in a two-bedroom or a one-bedroom. I need a three-bedroom apartment; my children are already sharing rooms and there would not be enough space if we moved into anything smaller than what we have right now.

A settlement services worker for the ISS, who has asked to remain anonymous, affirms much of the GARs concerns. Many GARs are forced out of the Vancouver area, into areas like Burnaby, New Westminster, and Surrey, because of the high cost in rent. Most can barely afford rent, yet alone their own property, and there are few choices for those who arrive with families. He adds that settlement workers do attempt to find affordable housing for GARs in areas such as Burnaby rather than Surrey because unhappy GARs have expressed their concerns and discontent with housing in neighbourhoods of low socio-economic status in Surrey. However, housing prices are generally higher in the Burnaby area and end up being inaccessible to many refugees. Settlement workers refer GARs to similar buildings, which can also explain the cohesion of African GARs living in close vicinity to one another. As mentioned earlier, ethnic cohesion often creates immediate bonds and tendencies to help one another.

One participant lives in a three-bedroom apartment with her four children in Whalley, Surrey. The Whalley community of Surrey is notorious for crime and violence. This participant has experienced her own incidents with crime in the area, often fearing the safety of her children. Police are often patrolling the streets in her neighbourhood, and are frequently called to the building to deal with complaints. Unhappy with her living situation, she sought accommodation elsewhere but has not managed to find affordable housing. She remains in the area, after two years in the same building. She adds:

> The ISS often refer us to areas out here because it is all we can afford. I hear the husband beating his wife all the time in the apartment under us. After they moved out, there were kids rollerblading in the apartment all the time. It was very loud and disruptive. The rent has gone up in the last year. I want to go elsewhere but I can't find another three-bedroom place at this price. So now I am okay with living here.

Africans tend to live in neighbourhoods of low socio-economic status (Hou and Milan, 2003) with high levels of racial diversity. The majority of GARs in my study did reside in neighbourhoods of low socio-economic status. This low socio-economic status tends to erode dimensions of social capital, including social cohesion within neighbours, communication between members, and social interactions. This results in low neighbourhood accumulated social capital, lowered rates of social participation, and lowered feelings of a sense of belonging. Participants who lived in neighbourhoods of low socio-economic status often had lower social capital and struggled to become economically self-sufficient in the first years after resettlement.

Subsidized housing is available for GARs who fall under the lowest income bracket. Unfortunately, subsidized housing for GARs who can only afford low rents often mean that housing locations are in the more dilapidated areas of the suburbs. These areas often house those who are socially excluded and marginalized. They are often in more violent areas of the city as well, where crime is higher. This affects the social cohesiveness of a community when general feelings of safety are not assured.

Residential stability also had effects on social cohesion. Mobility affected the social cohesiveness of ethnic groups from Africa. Changes in residences decreased communication between individuals and decreased connectedness. Those who changed residences frequently had lower social connectedness within and outside the community, and were also more likely to participate in short-term employment. Moves between residences are actually quite common for GARs. Different driving factors include increases in rent costs, neighbourhood disruptions, or changes in income. Mobility tends to decrease social capital returns, which then decreases social capital investment (Glaeser, Laibson, and Sacerdote, 2002). Because Africans are not found in all areas throughout Metro Vancouver, creating neighbourhood social cohesion after changes in residences is not always likely or accessible. This results in lower social capital accumulation for those who choose to move from one residence to another. Fewer interactions result in lowered information exchange and longer durations spent on state assistance.

During the initial years of inception after relationships were made and a greater familiarity around Vancouver grew, changes in residences were common. It was rare that the GARs in my study were perfectly happy with their first place of residence during the first year of resettlement. Discontent lied in both the type of building (some were run-down and needed repairs), while others were unhappy with neighbourhood safety. Changes in residence negatively affected social ties that were created before movement.

Mobility affects local friendship ties (participants reported that the majority of their friends were within 20 minutes walking distance) because it severs interactions and breaks cohesion as a group. The strongest predictor of social cohesion, as in Forrest and Kearns' study, was length of residence in one location: the longer the residence in one location, the more local friends you are likely to have acquired (2001). Others who experienced less mobility (only 1 or 2 changes in residences) exhibited higher levels of social capital, and therefore more income stability.

All GARs in my study did not have any property ownership at the time. Many expressed the desire to own property one day, but none have managed to do so just yet. All were still on monthly rental payments. Only a handful of GARs were living in houses rather than apartments or complexes. Those who were living in houses have had residence in Metro Vancouver for longer periods than those who are still residing in apartments and did not own the houses. Home ownership is thought to reduce mobility; generally raising social capital investment in neighbourhood accumulated social capital.

The social connections that were made amongst GARs were often dependent on whether or not others were within close vicinity of their homes. It affirms Glaeser, Laibson, and Sacerdote's study, which shows that social connections fall sharply with physical distance (2002). Travel costs reduce social connectedness because of affordability as well. In this study, social relationships were built amongst those who lived within the same neighbourhood or building where few or no travel costs would exist. In some instances, this can be explained by the snowball sampling undertaken in the study; some participants reside in the same buildings through reference from one friend to another.

Social cohesiveness amongst those with the same nationality increased social capital for many Africans. The perceptions of unity as an African group generated greater trust and willingness to help one another gain access to equal opportunity and to work together to overcome constraints. However, relationships built outside of the African community were less common and harder to maintain. Those who managed to do so had diverse networks and greater access to information.

Those who were part of ethnic associations feel growing membership and increasing numbers of immigrants arriving in Vancouver in the coming years will help the process of greater acceptance into both the social and economic spheres in Metro Vancouver. It is important for GARs to have a solid foundation of people that are also there for social support. A place of fellowship and solidarity for Africans helps generate more willingness to take action, as a collective group rather than that of an individual. The already growing number of organizations and associations that have been inducted and recognized by the government in recent years encourage many GARs that immigrants finally have a voice and are speaking up. The empowerment from group support motivates GARs to become independent and self-reliant.

Although the process of resettlement to Vancouver has created a redefined sense of self for many, it has also created opportunity for those of different political or cultural backgrounds to draw together in an unspoken shared experience. Interactions between groups of Africans with different nationalities are common, most within close vicinity of their residences. Shorter living distances facilitated interactions between those of shared nationality. Functioning together as a 'community' enabled valuable knowledge transfers that refugees used to integrate economically and socially.

4.2.5 Perceptions of Language Fluency as a Form of Social Exclusion

Language barriers are often scrutinized and criticized in migration discourse, however few studies actually look at the perceptions of language fluency, or language accent, noted in Creese and Kambere's study (2002). Most respondents from my study felt extra-local, or socially excluded at one point or another, because of their English accent, this despite having English fluency. This social exclusion is especially apparent in workplaces, impeding access to occupations that require the use of social skills. This is important when GARs are trained and educated in occupations that require the use of such social skills.

Although English literacy can be measured, and is often measured, possessing an English accent is one marker of racialization that is much less researched (Creese and Kambere, 2002). In fact, it is specifically certain accents that are negatively racialized in Vancouver. For example, those from the United Kingdom or Australia do not face the same discrimination as those from Africa. This form of social exclusion has lasting effects on access to a number of jobs, which require social skills.

The importance of this type of racialization in this study stems from the areas of work interest of participants. Examples include occupations as nurses, realtors, social workers, and long-term care aids where social skills and verbal communication are necessities. An exclusion from these areas of work, even after training in Vancouver, resulted in lowered income generation and greater time spent on state assistance. There are two explanations for a greater reliance on state assistance in this circumstance: the opportunity cost of returning to school, resulting in less time working, and the debt incurred by taking student loans to finance a Canadian education.

One respondent came from Nigeria, where English is the official language. Still, he expresses his frustration even after six years of residence in Vancouver. His frustration stems from frequent questions regarding his country of origin and the first language he spoke, as many people fall under the assumption that his African accent must mean he was not raised speaking English. His original ambition was to work in businesses networking with clients, which was where he gained his educational background. Instead, he spent years working kitchen jobs because employers turned him away again and again.

This is what Creese and Kambere refer to as 'African English', rather than 'Canadian English[13].' Employers do not have the patience to listen more intently in order to understand 'African English'. They also assume that 'African English' means lowered English fluency when this is not always the case. These assumptions create additional barriers to employment.

Under such scrutiny by the public and employers, particular types of occupations are generally more difficult to access because of extra-local accents. These include jobs

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[13] The term 'Canadian English' often refers to a localized English, or more often a 'white' English. See Creese and Kambere (2002).

where oral skills are involved and those with local accents are preferred. This is frustrating for many who are fully capable of communicating in English, both written and spoken, especially because many entry-level jobs, such as customer service, and receptionists, that are normally available in a booming economy, are suddenly unattainable. These types of occupations often allow for advancements in the workplace, unlike those in janitorial or kitchen services.

Having an accent, despite levels of education or tone of voice created disadvantages. Confidence often plays a prominent role in those who have reached economic self-sufficiency. A Congolese GAR was a confident speaker, but still found that his accent, along with being a visible minority, were two of his biggest obstacles in gaining employment when he first arrived. He adds, "You would think coming to Canada it wouldn't be so bad, but it is your accent, your this, your that."

The ability to learn a language is only one aspect of English proficiency. Few think about the perceptions of language fluency when taking English language classes, and few feel the desire to rid themselves of their accents when speaking English. In fact, many arrived as well-educated individuals who had high levels of English literacy. Creese and Kambere's findings suggest that Africans act of speech marked them as Africans/Blacks, as immigrant, and as less competent or desirable than those with local accents (2002). Similar to Creese and Kambere's findings, participants in my study found that opportunities were often limited by their accent, despite high levels of English fluency. Speech is an embodied performance and difficult to change, but also a process which may imply that an individual is an immigrant.

Most Africans do wish to be integrated into Canadian society, but many feel that they want to retain their own distinctive culture as well. Language plays a huge role; many parents who arrived with their children still intend to pass on the language of their home country to their offspring. In fact, all participants still remain in frequent contact with family and friends from their former country of residence even after lengthy periods in Vancouver. Giving up a distinct localized English accent is not desired, especially where many feel it is not the English fluency itself that is inhibiting their access to employment.

4.2.6 Trust

Trust and cooperative norms often fall under definitions that academics apply to the term social capital. In this study, the relationships between interpersonal trust, and economic performance, show how this dimension of social capital has economic effects. In Knack and Keefer's study, they found that trust is stronger in nations with higher incomes, and better-educated populations (1997). This type of trust can be tested in this case, since Canada is a nation that falls under this category. Knack and Keefer's theory also found that trust was higher in ethnically homogenous populations. This case is a good example of how trust does seem to be high amongst refugees, and particularly within the African community. The element of trust is important because the development of trust between two people increases the exchange of knowledge and information.

Trust is the basis for the development of groups and networks. Increased trust generally promotes the formation of groups and networks, along with increasing the intensity and expansion of social cohesion and inclusion. Higher levels of trust exhibited more interactions, especially beyond the African community, while lower levels of trust limited relationships to within the African community, or same-ethnic groups. Those with higher levels of trust had extensive networks and group affiliation where high levels of economic pay-off (income stability, higher levels of income, and long-term income) were generated. Lower levels of trust amongst GARs resulted in lower group membership and decreased social networks, which consequently led to longer reliance on state assistance and fewer economic returns (lower income, and short-term/temporary employment).

Trust is encompassed in different types of relationships including trust in friends, trust in the government, trust in a system, and trust in the citizens around them. Having trust in relationships built in Vancouver is an integral component in creating greater social capital that leads to economic self-sufficiency. The most significant type of trust in achieving economic self-sufficiency recognized in this study was individual trust between friends and acquaintances who also reside in Vancouver.

Those who have resided in Vancouver for longer durations generally had greater trust in all aspects aforementioned. However, scepticism about the government runs high amongst African GARs. One GAR responded that he never had any problems trusting the police, teachers, nurses or doctors, but then corrected himself and added:

> The government people, sometimes you can't trust them. And yes, sometimes I can't trust the police. And sometimes the immigration. Sometimes you trust, and give them [your] confidence. Sometimes the system is so hard to trust. People always give you, always, 'yes yes yes yes' and it's not what they mean.

Although many expressed some scepticism about the government, this did not seem to have immense effects on economic performance. Lower levels of trust in the government, and institutions of governance (doctors, police etc.), did not appear to have the same effects on economic performance as trust in individuals did. Discourse concerning trust in government is often related to civil society and democratic stability rather than economic performances. However, those who exhibit high levels of trust at the individual level, including established relationships and in strangers, and have others reciprocate the same levels of trust back, created more social ties, and increased access to services and employment.

However, those who trust all different types of people, and have trust in the police, teachers, nurses and doctors, and government officials often did have extensive networks outside of the African community. High levels of trust in all spheres are characteristic of those who feel socially accepted in society, with large networks and group participation. This is reflected in economic self-sufficiency.

Although most GARs stated that they had trust across all races and ethnicities, this was not always encapsulated in the extent of the networks and relationships actually fostered.

Because trust was acknowledged and addressed in the interviews, but not necessarily representative of the participants' behaviour, levels of trust were mainly measured through diversity of relationships and intensity of relationships since relationships are based upon a certain level of trust. Increased trust leads to increased networks, which facilitates information sharing. The benefits of information sharing and increased communication in how they affect economic outcomes will be discussed next.

4.2.7 Information and Communication

Information and communication are important elements of interactions. This is the process in which knowledge and ideas are exchanged. Information and communication builds trust and cohesion between individuals, which also fosters a sense of community. These increases in social capital create economic opportunity for GARs because of the knowledge and information transfers that take place regarding integration and livelihood strategies. Experiences of social exclusion impede the flow of information, but social inclusion and greater trust ease the process of information transfers. Social relationships are used as a resource, and fewer relationships result in less information accumulation that might help facilitate economic integration.

Nearly all participants made some attempt at information gathering through one of three methods that are independent of social interactions (newspapers, radio, or television) with many using all three resources. Many used newspaper advertisements as their primary source in search of job opportunities. Several read the newspaper on a daily basis, along with watching the television news. Fewer listened to the radio, but a significant number did use this as an information source. However, there is still a lack of information available on organizations that help refugee integration, and other primary information that can help improve economic conditions.

These methods of information gathering (newspapers, radio, and television) had minimal effects on integration strategies. These methods also seemed to provide little information on housing, language classes, and where to find integration centres. These specific types of information form the main interest of newly arrived immigrants. For example, one can find several advertisements on living accommodations, but details on advertisements fail to mention factors such as neighbourhood dynamics and safety, or what English classes are effective and accessible. This type of information is generally shared from person to person, through word-of-mouth referrals. Unless social networks existed to gain this type of information, GARs had a tendency to spend longer durations on state assistance. The advice that is given is seen as a shortcut into unfamiliar systems.

This is where a lack in efficacy of essential services plays a role. Settlement centres attempt to offer the exact resources that social networks and groups do by guiding newly arrived immigrants into this Canadian system, particularly in the first year of resettlement when new relationships may still be weak and networks are not as extensive. They are also places where social cohesion amongst same-ethnic groups can be created. Settlement services promote social capital accumulation, and access to settlement services enhances social capital by organizing and mobilizing resources.

Nearly all settlement organizations are only able to function because of the funding received from the government. Most are non-profit, and many are quite small in scale leaving little room to expand beyond one location. Founding members of integration centres attempt to find locations that are easily accessible to newly arrived immigrants— preferably close to their residences where long commutes are not necessary. Centres are still placed in varied locations around Metro Vancouver with little correlation to settlement patterns. There is a surprising amount of integration and settlement centres that are found in Vancouver considering the spatial distributions of newly arrived immigrants are actually in the suburbs during the first years of settlement. Settlement services have difficulties being geographically accessible to African migrants considering the spatial distribution and settlement patterns of Africans in the city. In this case, physical distance from integration centres and the sprawl of residential patterns of GARs also impedes access to services. These services may offer essential information regarding employment, schooling, and community events. This is particularly apparent for GARs who had access to settlement services on a consistent basis, coming off state assistance earlier than those who did not use settlement services as a resource.

Settlement centres offer answers to questions asked by immigrants. However, access to this resource is not always effortless. A Congolese man explained:

> I guess there are centres that you can go to, but you don't know where to go at first, or how to find out where these centres are. They also say the English classes are accessible, but nobody really knows where to go for the English classes. I found a place to live by luck. Somebody I met randomly in the street helped me. After I found a place to live, I discovered that it was so far from the ISS that I couldn't afford to go out there all the time. You want to ask questions about a lot of things. But you don't know who to ask. And you don't want to sound needy and desperate.

The ISS themselves exaggerate the need and importance of social capital accumulation by creating a program called the Host Volunteer program, which was designed to offer social support in various areas to newly arrived immigrants. Two years ago, the ISS expressed the disparity between those requesting a match with a Host, and how there are many more families in need of a Host than are actually available. At the time, I was told only three out of ten families are successfully matched with a Host Volunteer. Thea Fiddick, coordinator of the Host Program at the ISS refused to comment on this or release any recent statistics. Those who do find a match benefit from the networks that the Host has already made, and the information shared by a Canadian citizen who is already familiar with how systems function in Vancouver.

Communication is necessary for information sharing to occur. The Internet was an essential resource used amongst GARs and their families to facilitate information exchange. Emailing was frequent amongst the adults—many used this method of communication with others within the Vancouver area in addition to emailing those in Africa. Instant messaging, often occurring between schoolmates, was more common amongst the children of the GARs. The Internet helped increase the frequency of

connections between individuals. Increased interactions improve social capital. Many expressed how valuable a resource the Internet has become in their lives. Access to the Internet also expanded employment opportunities. This resource was not necessarily a priority to GARs initially, but results suggest that the increased amount of networking occurring between individuals in the cyber sphere provided resources that assisted economic self-sufficiency. Increased communication over the Internet also allowed more space for word-of-mouth referrals in a virtual world, which is quick and efficient requiring less coordination of time between two individuals. If the Internet was not initially a priority, it became one.

Frequencies of visits with friends, diversity of friends, participation in groups, and connectedness to other individuals through communicative devices (Internet, and telephone) were used as measurements of the level of information shared, and how much communication was utilized. Therefore, those with many group affiliations who felt social inclusion in society also experienced increased communication and information channels, which promoted economic self-sufficiency.

One example is shown by a Nigerian GAR who has membership in three formal organizations—two of which are same-ethnic groups, the other is ethnically diverse—who has extensive networks around Vancouver. The frequency in which he meets with friends, and other members of his affiliations is high. Membership in these organizations began within the year of arrival and he was able to achieve economic self-sufficiency after the initial year of arrival. The greatest benefit expressed by this GAR, amongst others, was information regarding an employment opportunity shared by another group member who was already employed at the same company, providing a gateway into a job opening.

The exchange of information happens at alarming rates and great frequency with so many different channels that promote information exchange available. The exchange that is reciprocated between people is a valuable asset to an ever-changing globalized society. Those who were highly connected to others in Vancouver with high frequencies of exchange had greater access to information related to cost-reduction strategies and employment opportunities, which are two key factors that can affect economic self-sufficiency.

4.2.8 Empowerment

Individual empowerment is defined in this study as the extent that one feels they have control over processes that directly affect their well-being. Empowerment is key, because higher levels of empowerment are related to both happiness and personal efficacy in achieving economic self-sufficiency. It allows for greater confidence in creating social ties and extending networks with members in society, which generates higher social capital. It often means greater access to information and strong social support (Spreitzer, 1996). Expected relationships between social structures in work places, and other social spheres like group membership, are key components in feelings of empowerment.

Feelings associated with disempowerment as a landed immigrant in Canada can be seen in many aspects of the interviews. These feelings may be associated with the labels attached to the type of immigrant status refugees have, the connotations associated with ethnic minorities from Africa, and general let-downs linked to economic failures and social integration obstacles, along with a loss in social status. Disempowerment leads to lowered motivation to succeed and gain economic self-sufficiency, and a greater willingness to remain in low-end occupations.

The African community is small, and those from the same countries of origin within Africa develop even smaller communities, if they can even be called that. With such small groups of African GARs within Metro Vancouver, GARs have a general feeling that there is little social support available from those who share or suffer the same trying experiences. These feelings of disempowerment lower confidence necessary to meet new people and create new networks. With fewer social interactions taking place, fewer channels for information sharing are created which begins a trickle-down effect. Decreased networks and group affiliations occur and social inclusion is not fostered. They also allow for complacent attitudes towards discrimination and low socio-economic status, thus job enrichment does not occur.

One GAR states:

> But discrimination is normal. You will find it anywhere. Vancouver is not any different from other places you will go to. This might be discrimination, this might not be. It is just something you have to deal with wherever you go.

Although many feel that they have been victims of discrimination, many accept the attitudes imposed on them. Others shared the same sentiments, explaining that they cannot feel angry at the situation because it may just as well happen elsewhere in the world as well. A general acceptance of racial stereotypes and discrimination echoed throughout many interviews with GARs. Empowerment is described as an intrinsic motivation (Spreitzer, 1996), and lowered motivation mean less inclination to increase social capital through the processes of group affiliations, networking, and information sharing and communication. Lowered feelings of empowerment mean GARs feel they have less control over processes that affect them. Several expressed that discrimination was simply a part of everyday life, and Vancouver was not an exception. This is particularly evident in workplaces where the only available occupations are in low-end jobs. Africans begin accepting these positions when motivation is decreased, reflected in each individual's work role. Therefore, the motivation to find long-term, secure employment slowly diminishes as feelings of empowerment diminish simultaneously.

A loss in social status also diminishes feelings of empowerment. Many GARs had actually come from better-educated and higher-class backgrounds in their home countries. The loss in social status that is suffered after arrival in a new country makes the integration process much more difficult than what is already a challenge. Learning new skills, by returning to school, or learning English, are attempts made to regain some of this lost social status.

A Congolese man who arrived with a Bachelor's Degree spoke of the pride that is lost when seeking jobs:

> You try to apply for the type of jobs that you had when you were back at home. But people don't even take a second look at your credentials because it is not Canadian. They don't expect us to find any other types of work except those in cleaning, or in the kitchen, or in fast food.

Low expectations created in institutional spaces such as employment, housing, training, and education become overwhelmingly frustrating for GARs because little can be done to receive acknowledgement or control these processes. The dimension of empowerment extends to the notion that individuals have some control over their own jobs. When a GAR feels disempowered by institutional practises of exclusion, they feel less in control over their employment choices. A failure to achieve economic self-sufficiency after the first year of resettlement can be linked to feelings of disempowerment in the initial years of resettlement.

Employment was a delicate issue to talk about, partially because there were many jobs that GARs felt embarrassed to discuss. Many felt reduced to very low levels, levels that they were not normally accustomed to in their own countries of origin. GARs felt that the low-end occupations that many resorted to, confirmed and sustained ongoing stereotypes in where immigrants lie in the economic ladder. This is because GARs, as the job applicants, feel they can only do so much on the application side of the process. The final decisions on whether or not an employer will hire a job applicant is beyond the applicant's control. As a result, lowered effort in applying for higher paying jobs occurred.

Empowerment actually worked for and against GARs in achieving self-sufficiency. In fact, it is the pride and yearning to prove that they are equal that prevents some GARs from reaching the employment sector. Refusals to take offers that are felt to be below their own standards were prominent for the highly educated GARs. These GARs felt that certain employment positions, such as cleaning, or kitchen jobs, were not jobs they would be involved with if they were back in their home countries; therefore there was no reason to take them here.

A Liberian mother of four became quite agitated when asked about income assistance, stating, "Why would I want to rely on someone else? I don't. I want to be able to support myself and my family. I don't want to owe anybody." With only part-time work, working Fridays through Mondays, her choice to be off state assistance has been premature, which has happened in the past as well. Her struggles are reflected in a continued reliance back on state assistance within her two years in Vancouver. This circumstance is not exclusive to just her case, many others make the premature decision to come off state assistance as well, often believing the pressure to pay bills and support themselves will force them to be more proactive in the employment sector. They often end up back on monthly welfare payments. This is another exception in which

empowerment worked against the GAR resulting in a continued reliance on state assistance.

A woman from Sierra Leone expresses a common attitude of GARs who arrived with high human capital, growing irritable from the situation:

> Sometimes it is really insulting. You are not only working jobs that you don't like, and that you wouldn't normally be doing, but they don't treat you fairly as well. They don't think we can do anything. They don't think we can be trained to do more. We get stuck doing the same low jobs because no one will give us a chance and all our Canadian work experience is in the same positions.

The transition into working low-end jobs is a degrading experience, and even embarrassing for some, making the integration process even more difficult. The decision to reinvest in school is made in hopes that it may help raise the social status that is lost when resettled to Vancouver.

However, the low expectations instilled by the host society, prevents GARs from regaining any type of social status. Status remains stagnant, as this stereotyping of refugees often prevents them from meeting people from the same socio-economic class that they came from, or prevents them from meeting those with similar educational backgrounds who can help provide them with appropriate support and friendship, or guidance into their qualified fields. This is important because work environments, and team dynamics within work environments contribute to feelings of empowerment and a general sense that they possess the ability to become economically independent of state assistance.

Foreign credential recognition is also beyond the control of the GARs. Instead of fighting for some type of recognition, GARs resort to re-education in a recognized institution that is locally situated in Vancouver. This has been an ongoing issue for decades now, ever since Canada opened its doors to immigration, especially in the skilled worker category. Rather than combating the system in place, immigrants are choosing to upgrade and change careers because foreign credential recognition is non-existent at the moment and time is working against them. Still, the choice to return to school is a proactive approach in dealing with this problem. GARs who chose to return to school were one example in how GARs were more empowered to improve their current conditions.

A sense of empowerment was necessary for all nine GARs who gained economic self-sufficiency after the initial year of resettlement. Without the belief that they could become independent and self-sustaining through their own hard work, economic success would not be achieved.

Although an overwhelming majority of GARs seemed to feel belittled and treated in a demeaning manner, there were also glimpses of empowerment amongst them as well. Each GARs' story of personal struggle, both before arrival and after resettlement, along

with the diverse and dynamic integration strategies used by each participant is recognized as a sign of empowerment. Being able to overcome such a drastic change in lifestyle and living conditions is a personal feat for all GARs. Many, despite integration challenges, feel generally happy to be living in Vancouver and would not choose to return to Africa. Those who have become economically self-sufficient have an overwhelming sense of empowerment in the decisions that concern everyday life compared to those who relied on state assistance for lengthy periods. These GARs take responsibility for their successes and failures in the way they have integrated economically.

The desire to come off state assistance was shared by all GARs. Although the feelings associated with discrimination and social exclusion often lowered confidence, some GARs were more highly motivated to become economically self-sufficient. Because many felt it was a social stereotype to see 'black' people receiving government income assistance, this provided greater incentive for some GARs to prove something to the public, along with being able to prove to themselves that they were able to maintain a sustainable livelihood. Many hoped to disprove the belief that refugees were unable to generate enough income to support themselves and their families. This motivated GARs to be more proactive, especially when it came to the employment search.

Organizational environments can have a powerful influence on feelings of empowerment. Constraints, through social exclusion and discrimination, diminish feelings of empowerment by conditioning behaviour, thereby reducing motivation to find sustainable employment. Opportunities into economic and social spheres, in turn, mean high levels of involvement, which support the transmission of information and resources. Increased information and resources lead to greater confidence and empowerment that is crucial in order to succeed economically.

4.2.9 Political Action

Participation in political action is driven by individual empowerment. The importance in political action arises from the capacity to influence local events, and broader political outcomes that can affect social and economic conditions (World Bank, 2007). These social and economic conditions can have direct effects on the livelihood of refugees because a political and social environment must enable the development of social structures.

Empowerment associated with political action was also looked upon because of the manner in which is can affect economic outcomes of immigrants. GARs voiced little opinion about any political action that they were involved in. There was no clear response about channels that GARs used to communicate and address government issues. Few paid particular attention to politics within Canada and concerns about government decisions or political moves was very minimal. Interest about Canadian politics was so low, in fact that few GARs actually voted in the federal and provincial elections. Africans, as a diverse homogenous entity, feel little will be done to change integration strategies. Many GARs felt that their concern and focus must lie in their own individual-level livelihood strategies first.

Some GARs who were forced to flee their countries of origin due to political unrest felt insecure about voicing any opinions about the government. This was typical for recent migrants who still suffer from the traumatizing events that had occurred in their pasts. Those who had their freedom of speech taken away, targeted for any opposition to the government, were reluctant to speak of government politics. In order to avoid any implication of political affiliation that could be generated from political involvement, some simply resorted to maintaining a distance between anything politically related and themselves. Words used by GARs to describe this feeling include "trapped," "dungeon," "prison," and "soldiers coming to get us." Despite this complacent attitude towards political action, relationships were still built between individuals. Social interactions did not seem to suffer from minimal to no political action.

Overall, the level of participation in political action did not appear to have a significant role in determining economic self-sufficiency. Although linked to feelings of empowerment, political action did not seem an essential component in achieving economic self-sufficiency because it did not directly affect trust in relationships between individuals.

4.3 Other considerations

The transition between life in a developing country to a developed country can be an overwhelming experience, especially for those who have spent lengthy periods in enclosed refugee camp areas. Most have not travelled beyond the continent of Africa and perceptions of Canada are based on word-of-mouth and other forms of media. Often deceptive, GARs come to Canada with nothing but big dreams, often leaving everything they have behind, including family and friends. The perceptions during pre-departure and unexpected barriers upon arrival also shape the integration experiences of refugees.

4.3.1 False Hope/Lack of Pre-departure Preparation and Debt Accumulation

Few participants had any clue what they would encounter after arrival in Canada. However, few fingers can be pointed to anyone in particular for this inadequacy. One GAR states, "You didn't know. The time you came, they just give you the book and say 'oh you're going somewhere,' but you don't really know much at all." A knowledge gap in what to really expect upon arrival affects the economic integration experiences of refugees and how refugees deal with culture shock.

Pre-arrival attitudes and its effects on integration experiences have been studied, but not extensively. Hyndman and Walton-Roberts conducted a study on Burmese refugees in Vancouver looking at the relations and power experiences of Burmese refugees before arrival in Vancouver (1999). They aim to understand how conditions of displacement are critical in understanding an immigrant's experience, priorities, and civic participation in Canadian society (Hyndman and Walton-Roberts, 1999). Most studies look at the post-migration process, excluding the experiences beforehand that shape the very attitudes, identities, and coping capabilities of migrants. These attitudes are important in predicting economic self-sufficiency.

Common misperceptions of life in Canada created the illusion that life is simple, accommodating, and that monetary accumulation was easy to come by. Because of these misperceptions, GARs often find themselves supporting not only themselves and their dependents that immigrated with them, but also those in their countries of origin in the form of remittances. This provided additional obligations and became huge expectations to fulfil—low success rates for economic integration can also be attributed to these large groups of dependents imposed upon GARs as a moral responsibility to family in their home countries. A Liberian GAR was even forced to change her home landline telephone number because of the overwhelming number of calls from family and friends from her refugee camp in Ghana. Many are reluctant to talk about the remittances that are sent home, fearing that it is some illegal form of money expenditure for the government assistance they receive. However, all respondents I interviewed still send remittances back to family or friends in Africa regardless of the duration that they have resided in Vancouver. These initial misperceptions create additional hardships in achieving economic self-sufficiency by increasing the amount of income needed to support more dependents.

Additionally, GARs are somewhat indentured immigrants when they arrive in the country. The term 'government-assisted' proved to be slightly deceiving for many GARs, only to find large debt upon arrival. From the moment they board the plane, the cost of airfare is considered a loan that must be repaid to the government. GARs come with the hope that employment is readily available and that they will be able to pay back their loans immediately—few are actually successful in doing so within the first year. Government loans through the resettlement plan that fund housing and basic living expenses often accumulate within the year, with many having difficulties actually attaining employment in the first year of resettlement. The transition from their countries of origin that is often resource-based to one that is knowledge-based is another challenge those who arrive unprepared, and with little to no savings. This distinguishes refugees from other immigrant categories. Other immigrant groups often arrive with some type of savings to aid in the transition process.

The RAP is put in place by the government of Canada to help fund temporary accommodation, basic household items and so forth, but little is ever said about the debts that GARs incur upon arrival in order to pay the government back for this initial funding. Few GARs are informed about the government expectations concerning their own contributions towards their settlement costs after arrival.

Those who arrived only to find unexpected social barriers expressed their feelings of frustration, ignorant in how to climb out of their debt. For example, little information is available in where and how to start searching for employment, or what areas in Metro Vancouver are considered safer areas of residency than others. Little assistance is given to GARs in how to combat or overcome social barriers like social exclusion and discrimination in the workplace. The list goes on concerning the lack of information passed on to newcomers. Refugees often feel more prone to failure because of the minimal information they receive about their destination country when in their home countries.

The power relations and social constructs that occur in refugee camps inhibit social capital accumulation that can occur before arrival. Some GARs interviewed had met other GARs in Vancouver from the same country of origin, only to discover after resettlement that they had been assigned to the same PAP. There was often immediate companionship and solidarity between those who came from the same country and cooperation between those from same-ethnic groups to facilitate integration together. Some even arrived only months apart from the same refugee camps. One participant stated:

> I knew this other lady in the same building complex as me. We weren't good friends back in the refugee camp but we knew each other. We are very good friends now, often visiting each other. When we are in the camps, we know that some people have been chosen, some people are leaving. We don't know who. We don't know when. It is kind of like…jealousy, something like that. Jealousy towards the ones that had been chosen to leave. That means nobody knows who to look for when you arrive in a new country, because nobody knows where they went! I arrived in Vancouver only one month before [she] did and we just happened to bump into each other and I recognized her.

These types of dynamics that are found in refugee camps prevent any type of social support from developing prior to arrival. Having some friends, or acquaintances upon arrival can provide valuable support to newcomers. Pooling resources can be a valuable asset to immigrants, even if both are newly arrived in a city. This disconnect has a negative impact on selected GARs even though benefits from pre-departed social ties can be extremely valuable.

5. Theoretical Implications

Now that the data has been presented, some theoretical implications have been derived through a reflection on how social and human capital affect economic self-sufficiency.

5.1 Social Capital Gains

All respondents in the study acknowledged some way or another, the importance that groups and networks played to secure personal benefits. The acquirement of social capital—particularly group affiliations, networks, and trust—after arrival in Vancouver translated into economic gains. Social capital facilitates transactions and agreements, strengthening when put in use rather than depreciating over time as physical capital does. As in Sobel's study, social capital use actually increases social capital stock that is available for future use because bonds generally strengthen with use (2002). The development of networks and group support through group affiliations and workplace interactions resulted in greater economic pay-offs. Additionally, social capital seems to play a factor in career choice.

Granovetter observed that weaker ties actually help individuals locate jobs (1973). This provides a conflicting idea to Coleman's claims. However, the context in which strong ties and weak ties are used differs, and theories of social capital should be looked at the specific situation. Both theories are evident in this study, depending on the context of the situation and the specificity of the intended gain. Dense social networks seem to enforce cooperation amongst individuals because of higher levels of trust. Coleman also argued that dense networks increase the quality and reliability of information (Sobel, 2002). These dense networks seem to be more important for collective action but not necessarily individual outcomes. Coleman's claims apply to GARs working as a collective group, while Granovetter's theory can be applied to individual GARs creating social ties with a wide and diverse group of networks for information sharing regarding cost reduction strategies and employment opportunities.

Respondents shared a wide variety of examples in which social capital impacted their lives after arrival in Vancouver. Many participants agreed that much economic success is dependent on the advice, financial help, and social support that a community is willing to offer. Many also found employment openings from people they had met. When asked about how employment was obtained, many replied that it was through networks, or friends. People who use this method to attain employment are sometimes referred to as "social capitalists" using connections and employee referrals as a resource (Fernandez, Castilla, and Moore, 2000). These "social capitalists" tended to have less employment turnover rates with longer durations at their jobs. Other times, African friends of the GARs would inform the GARs of local stores where African cooking ingredients could be found, or associations where those of the same nationality conglomerated. Some simply sought companionship and an unspoken mutual understanding of each other's past, and present struggles—even if the countries of origins were different. Many GARs who had arrived years earlier assisted newly arrived GARs in finding adequate housing. These ties also provide newly arrived GARs with a sense of empowerment which is

imperative in achieving economic self-sufficiency. Personal feelings of GARs that can be affected by levels of social capital is often neglected as a factor in economic integration although there are direct relations to positive attitudes or negative ones.

These examples look at the role small group interactions play. This study found small group interactions in neighbourhoods particularly relevant. It looks at how ethnic diversity affects the social cohesiveness of neighbourhoods with low socio-economic status. This is particularly significant for those who are less affluent (GARs are likely to be less affluent in the initial years of resettlement) where neighbourhood cohesion is a source of GARs' initial source of networks. Social connections with neighbours are often higher for those who live in apartment buildings, which was the type of residence for nearly all GARs in the study. Neighbourhood cohesion as a form of social capital is not a new concept. Letki's study on the eroding social cohesion in British neighbourhoods caused by diversity and low socio-economic status provide a basis for other studies, such as this one (2001).

This leads to discussions on how mobility through changes of residences, and physical distance affects social capital accumulation. This relates back to neighbourhood cohesion and the loss in connectedness through movement and longer distances. Glaeser, Laibson and Sacerdote look at the decline in social capital caused by mobility, with social connections falling with physical distance (2002). When an individual leaves a neighbourhood, investment into social capital (maintaining ties) drops. However, this theory does not necessarily seem to hold true for those who are involved with group affiliations as these group members had a greater tendency to continue networking and maintain ties despite changes in residences.

Individuals who work in occupations that require social skills (ie. customer service) often accumulate more social capital (Glaeser, Laibson, and Sacerdote, 2002). These low-end occupations do not promote the use of interpersonal skills because these occupations do not require extensive verbal interaction. Custodial services, or kitchen occupations do not necessarily require social skills in contrast to occupations that deal directly with customers. The occupations that are made available to GARs because of an employee preference make the accumulation of social capital even more difficult.

Finally, Africans resettle in such small numbers, and are a relatively new cohort in Vancouver with no apparent spatial concentration. Well-established social networks are not easy to find. Yet social cohesion within ethnic groups is still apparent despite scattered residential patterns. This study contributes to discourse on visible minority social capital where strong ethnic ties seem to provide GARs with strategies that facilitate economic integration. Regardless of when the social capital was actually attained after resettlement, positive feedback and rewards regarding the different dimensions of social capital were consistent. Ethnic relations can thus be construed as a form of social capital.

In this study, I have often referred to social capital investment as an employment resource at an individual level. However, social capital can be identified in a much broader context and in many different spheres. Social capital appears to have economic effects,

however, it is not always the primary purpose of social interaction. Social ties provide benefits for many different purposes including moral support, advice (both work, and non-work related), material support, and companionship, amongst others. Although indirectly related, they create a solid foundation for refugee livelihood strategies by providing a stable environment and support system. These aspects are often overlooked.

5.2 Human Capital Accumulation

GARs who felt language and foreign credential recognition were the greatest impediments towards integration often invested in human capital accumulation. These GARs felt a reinvestment into education in Vancouver was necessary to integrate into the employment market, which then helps build social capital. GARs who arrived in Vancouver with lower human capital generally had greater and earlier investments in human capital than those with higher human capital. Because those who arrived with lower human capital were less aware of the difficulties in foreign recognition, obtaining education in Vancouver was often seen as the most accessible form of capital that could be used to gain access to employment. Thus, there seems to be less of a lag time between the time of arrival and human capital investment (by returning to school) for GARs with lower human capital at arrival. Those with high human capital delayed reinvestment in human capital. One explanation is the ability for immigrants with high human capital to see a market value for their skills initially.

The main challenge in Canada's competitive labour market is that jobs are generally given out to applicants who not only have skills and work experience, but specifically education obtained by a recognized institution. This is not exclusive to the Canadian market: previous research done in industrialized countries showed that employers hold a bias against hiring immigrants from the developing world[14] generally because they feel they share different educational standards (Henin and Bennett, 2002). This would imply that retraining and returning to school makes a significant difference in job prospects. In Henin and Bennett's study on African immigrants in Victoria, British Columbia, one respondent commented, "Prospective immigrants should be warned that they may have to start studying again on arrival" (2002). As a result, immigrants actually invest more in human capital than those of the native-born (Duleep and Regets, 1999). Shown in this study, more than 75% of GARs enrolled in courses and programs in Vancouver, while British Columbia's participation rate in adult education and training was only at 32% in the 1990s[15] (Arrowsmith et al., 2001).

All respondents realized soon after arrival that foreign recognition was at a minimum or non-existent. This provides a greater challenge in measurement. Human capital often measures years of schooling and English literacy, but seldom regards English accents, or lack of foreign credential recognition. Years of work experience in countries of origin also appeared irrelevant in Vancouver for those who had extensive experience in areas that are normally highly regarded in Canada. These include occupations such as engineering, or teaching assistants in universities, along with government work, or years

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[14] See examples like Piguet and Wilmer, 2000; and McGown 1999.
[15] Recent reports from the 2006 and the 2001 censuses have not been done.

spent working for banking institutions. This means that results from studies, which include foreign credentials as a human capital measurement, will greatly differ from studies that do not consider foreign credentials as human capital.

Foreign credential recognition and accreditation creates additional barriers for successful economic integration, thus increasing income disparities. This is not exclusive to just Vancouver; it can be found in different contexts around the world. This results in underemployment and underutilized skilled labour. Li refers to this as human capital with lower market value, rather than lowered human capital because they have the potential to be equivalent to those with Canadian education (2001). Li looks at the market worth of education attained outside of Canada as a measurement of human capital. As such, this study took into consideration the human capital attained before arrival but found human capital attained both in Vancouver and abroad remained irrelevant in achieving economic self-sufficiency.

Time also seems to affect human capital stocks. The longer an immigrant is out of his or her profession, the harder it is to enter the related field. This is caused by a decrease in human capital when unused skills are inactive, meaning skills obtained are not put into practise. Skills and knowledge can become outdated when new skills or knowledge replace it. For older GARs, many arrived with more years of formal education than younger GARs, with several arriving with university degrees. Initial struggle finding employment is traced back to efforts made in finding higher-end jobs related to their previous employment or previous education obtained in their home countries. Longer terms of unemployment were experienced because of time spent searching for related work, and less willingness to settle for low-end jobs. Time spent unemployed results in decreasing human capital. For refugees in particular, time spent in refugee camps which can extend long periods of time, also create this interval of unused human capital, which begins deteriorating.

Human capital stock in a nation influences the habits of the citizens who live in the nation. Vancouver is a knowledge-based society in which human capital appears to increase the wealth of a society. It is important to note that Vancouver is a city that allows the GARs to pursue an education if they choose to in a wide variety of places and levels. Accessible education in Vancouver also seems to be a driving force for those choosing to return for further education. Canada is a country that tries to promote and encourage enrolment in educational institutions by making student loans available to those who fall in the low-income category. Colleges, institutes, and universities exist all around the metropolis to cater to the different needs and interests of GARs. Having the resources available, and being in a knowledge and technology-based economy increase motivation of individuals to gain human capital stocks through education.

Finally, age seemed to affect investments of human capital. Human capital seems to have a life cycle with higher returns to younger investors because there is a longer period in which they can reap the benefits from the investment. Also, earlier learning facilitates later learning (Laroche, Mérette, and Ruggeri, 1999), and younger investors in human capital also tend to be more flexible and adaptable. Being on the younger end of the

spectrum often increases hirability as well. Employers believe that younger prospects are often more adaptable, flexible, and retentive to new information or training on the job, than those who are older. Younger GARs who did return to school have capitalized more from their investment in education obtained in Vancouver, with higher success rates than the older cohort in finding jobs related to their areas of education and training, or in areas in which they had pursued after their education. This is only seen in the long run however.

Younger GARs did seem to encounter fewer obstacles in finding employment in general. In fact, many found employment within one year of resettlement, adding that they did not really have much trouble obtaining employment. The type of jobs obtained was quite homogenous, often in fast food restaurants in the kitchen, rather than the positions that required social skills with customers. Younger GARs arrived in Vancouver with either a high school diploma or an incomplete degree from their home countries. They were, however, highly motivated to obtain stable employment, patient in understanding that it would come in the future years with potential pay-offs from human capital investment.

The younger cohort was also more capable of financing any reinvestment in schooling through part-time work and savings as well. Expectations in today's society see it as quite normal to find working part-time students where low-end jobs are often seen as a temporary solution. Therefore, the willingness to maintain part-time employment during school in low-end occupations is greater, and with less inclination to drop out of studies due to the demanding needs of basic living expenses because of a general flexibility in lifestyle.

Younger GARs also seem more willing to take risky investments because there is more opportunity, along with more time concentrated on investment, to regain any type of loss. Risk management is common discourse found in the business world. While our examples look at age as a defining variable in economic integration, parts of risk management theory can be applied to these examples because of the human capital investments taken by the younger age cohorts.

In contrast, those who arrived with higher human capital tended to be older in age because of the cumulative aspect of human capital. There are implications that those with higher human capital actually experience long durations on state assistance beyond the first year of arrival. One explanation was previously mentioned in the paper regarding investment already spent on education. Greater efforts were made to find adequate employment, but this also meant an increased amount of time allocated towards searching for higher-level employment, and less time actually committed in the workplace. This proves to be especially true in the first years for those who had extensive work experience before arrival who were convinced that their higher levels of human capital would be sufficient enough to obtain an equivalent position in Vancouver.

Withdrawal rates from programs were much higher for the older cohort as well. Reasons for this included choosing work as a priority over school, along with family obligations. One reason for this is because older GARs were more likely to have dependents than

younger GARs. Investing in education meant sacrificing time that could be spent on income generation through employment, which is a high risk when there is a family to support and less time to compensate for losses. Re-education is also a high-risk investment, often meaning that a reliance on student loans and income assistance is necessary. Older GARs who returned to school also appeared to face greater difficulties finding employment related to their field of training, even after education in Vancouver. It is unknown whether or not the impediments are related to age and lowered adaptability or other external factors.

5.3 High Human Capital Resulting in High Social Capital

One dimension in my study not originally considered was the propensity for individuals with high human capital, to also possess high levels social capital as well. Both are often inextricably linked to one another in order to maintain successful integration. Laroche, Mérette, and Ruggeri state, "Human capital accumulation is a social activity" (1999).

A study done by Glaeser, Laibson and Sacerdote on individual decision-making to accumulate social capital also found that those who invest in human capital also invest in social capital (2002). There are many interpretations of this positive correlation between education and social capital. Nie *et al.* claim that higher social status increases social interaction, and that level of education is a proxy for status (Glaeser, Laibson and Sacerdote, 2002). Results seem to implicate that GARs with higher human capital do appear to feel they are higher in the social ladder (characterized by feelings of underemployment and greater confidence), increasing social interactions because of higher levels of confidence. Other studies look at connections between patience and human capital, along with patience and social capital, giving a correlation between the two (Glaeser, Laibson, and Sacerdote, 2002).

Another explanation links the relationship between social capital and human capital. Social skills are also learned and used in school, and those with high levels of human capital will generally have good language and communication skills. This means that the utility of social skills is greater (Glaeser, Laibson, and Sacerdote, 2002). Schools and institutes provide social opportunities for students to network with others. For those taking the same courses and programs, similar areas of interest can generate conversation and increase social interactions. For one Congolese GAR, this is when "her social life outside of Congo began."

Education obtained in Canada was an integral part of the integration process, expanding language capabilities, and giving GARs the opportunity to interact with other students of all ages and races. A school atmosphere provides a stimulating experience for GARs when few places to interact and socialize with others are difficult to find, especially in the first years after arrival when finding employment is challenging. Intellectual areas allow students to brainstorm, generate, criticize, and absorb different ideas and perspectives.

Participants with high human capital also participated in more everyday activities. These include visits to the library, where reading was a common hobby for many, along with

organizations that affiliated themselves with other groups of people from all over Metro Vancouver, and community events. Many exaggerate the importance in expanding knowledge, and increasing social networks, in how it plays such an integral role in successful social and economic integration.

Those with higher human capital were also more aware of where to locate other Africans, but understood the importance of meeting those beyond that scope as well. A diverse group of friends extending beyond the African community was equally important to many of the participants who had high human capital. When asked if close friendships and ties were quite exclusive to the African community, those with higher human capital often responded that they had friends from all different types of ethnic backgrounds. Generally, the respondents with higher human capital were also a part of more organizations and associations, affiliating themselves with a larger extensive group of people. These GARs felt an obligation to give back to the community and help others that face similar situations as well. More respondents with higher human capital participated in voluntary work outside of their employed work, facilitating more space for networking and information exchange. There was a clear tendency for respondents with higher human capital to seek a larger extension of diverse social networks.

Membership in different organizations was an important aspect of some participants' lives, emphasizing the importance in community participation and the importance in networking or information sharing. However, some of these respondents did not believe that membership in these community organizations helped them gain access to services such as education or training, health services, or employment. One explanation of this may be the benefits of social stability and support that organizations offer. Another possible explanation may be one's incentive and the perception of one's participation for altruistic reasons.

This study suggests that although social capital seems to be a better indicator of economic self-sufficiency than human capital, human capital still appears to stimulate the accumulation of social capital stocks. Thus, human capital has a significant role in that it helps create situations necessary for economic self-sufficiency through social capital stimulation.

5.4 High Human Capital and Trends in Personality

One quality that is driven by human capital stocks, not considered at the beginning of my study, was the level of motivation of individuals to become socially integrated (a form of empowerment that results in higher social capital), and determination to find self-sufficient, sustainable employment. This parameter proved to be a determining factor in economic success stories.

Participants' inability to find work related to previous experience cannot be attributed to laziness or lack of motivation. Many actively searched for jobs, especially in their first years of resettlement. Individuals who possessed greater human capital—having more years of formal education along with complete fluency in English—were more motivated

to utilize their human capital, even if they experienced underemployment in their first years of resettlement. This determination and confidence could account for their willingness to find stable employment in an area that was perceived to be both achievable and at higher standards. As a result, stable employment and higher income was, in fact, achieved over extended time. This refers back to Glaeser, Laibson, and Sacerdote's study on the effects that higher human capital has in creating higher social status, which in turn creates greater confidence (2002). High levels of confidence and motivation allow GARs to continue to seek advancements in the workplace over longer periods of time, rather than giving up in the early years due to disappointment.

Determination to achieve economic success translates into greater human capital investment as well. Many African GARs come from developing countries that are more resource-driven than technologically based. Canada is an industrial country with a knowledge-based economy, which invests in human capital accumulation for its population. Accessibility to education provides an attractive and feasible investment for immigrants who believe in the benefits of human capital in a knowledge-based environment.

Immigrants tend to have higher human capital investment than the native-born as well. Nearly all GARs in this study invested in a form of human capital accumulation either through language training, or investments in education at a university or college. Those who did not invest in education still contemplate the return to school. Higher motivation to succeed in a new country stimulates immigrants' decision to invest in human capital. Initial desires to move to a new country also represent that immigrants have perceptions of doing well and hope to improve living conditions from their last place of residence. Several studies[16] have shown that returns on human capital investment have actually been greater for immigrants, and earnings actually exceed those of the native-born in the long run (after many years of residence in the host country).

Galor and Stark relate this phenomenon back to the nature and characteristics of economically motivated migrants (1999). Claims that immigrants outperform the native-born if skills were perfectly homogenous are attributed to immigrants reducing expenditure more than the native-born (Galor and Stark, 1999). Rather than comparing wage-income, Galor and Stark study the patterns of migrant savings, which generate higher non-wage income. Similarly, GARs in this study used information obtained through networks on cost reduction strategies to increase non-wage income, which is one method in achieving economic self-sufficiency. Spending patterns between immigrants and the native-born tend to be very different. However, it must be noted that this convergence of income happens over an extended time in the host countries rather than in the immediate years and earnings growth for immigrants in the first years of arrival is actually very slow.

Duleep and Regets also acknowledge that immigrants have faster earnings growth than the native-born (1999). This study relates to the greater likelihood that immigrants have higher human capital investments. Earnings growth occurs after extended durations in

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[16] See Duleep and Regets, 1999; Galor and Stark, 1999; and Li, 2001 as examples.

the new receiving country because mobility from the source country to the receiving country requires a period of adaptability to change (Laroche, Mérette, and Ruggeri, 1999). Findings from this study also reflect this time period required for adaptability in order to reach economic self-sufficiency and higher income generation. GARs who achieved early economic self-sufficiency do not necessarily have higher income when compared to GARs who achieve it much later after resettlement.

Those who had university education (an equivalent of a Bachelor's Degree or higher) were more inclined to find steady, sustainable employment as well. They were also less willing to settle for service industry jobs or low-end jobs. Results also showed that respondents with higher human capital made concerted efforts to succeed after first failing even if this extended across longer periods of time. Their efforts are shown in attempts to further increase their skills by studying again, taking initiative by risking a career change, or continued pursuit in a career related to the field they are trained in despite countless rejections and long durations unemployed.

There also seemed to be a link between those who arrived with higher human capital and their coping abilities, both in the new living situation, and from traumas in the past. Those with higher levels of education seemed more able to deal with inconsistency, uncertainties, new cultures and situations, along with past traumas. They also seemed to have a more positive outlook, being more proactive and taking advantage of the situations as best they could in the new society. Attempts to use strategies that help improve settlement conditions were more successful for those with higher human capital.

A trend found amongst all economically self-sufficient GARs was willingness to speak openly about their experiences and an inclination to help others around them. This was a complement to high levels of confidence. Individuals with strong personalities— outspoken and confident—who were highly motivated to improve their standard of living, were also more inclined to give back to the community by reaching out to others who face similar struggles to the ones they encountered as a newly arrived immigrant. They are active members of the community, contributing their time voluntarily by helping others integrate at settlement centres as well. They have a general willingness to share their challenges and strategies for success with others in order to help them. They also offered support to make others feel empowered as well. One GAR expresses early on in the interview that "without the confidence that he had, it would have been much more difficult to integrate."

5.5 Human Capital/Social Capital Lifelines and Economic Outcomes

A general finding in the study suggests that GARs who had lower human capital (some secondary school education, or no post-secondary school education) also had greater investments in human capital and greater earnings growth. Lower human capital reflected low social capital as well, but investments in human capital generated higher social capital accumulation simultaneously.

Age is a variable taken into consideration for human and social capital measurements. Because both are cumulative, age can create a wide variety of divergence in capital stock measurements. Glaeser, Laibson, and Sacerdote's model on age in contrast to social capital accumulation show that social capital accumulation ascends with age, only beginning to fall around the age of retirement when employment diminishes (2002).

Figure 6: Levels of Social Capital According to Age
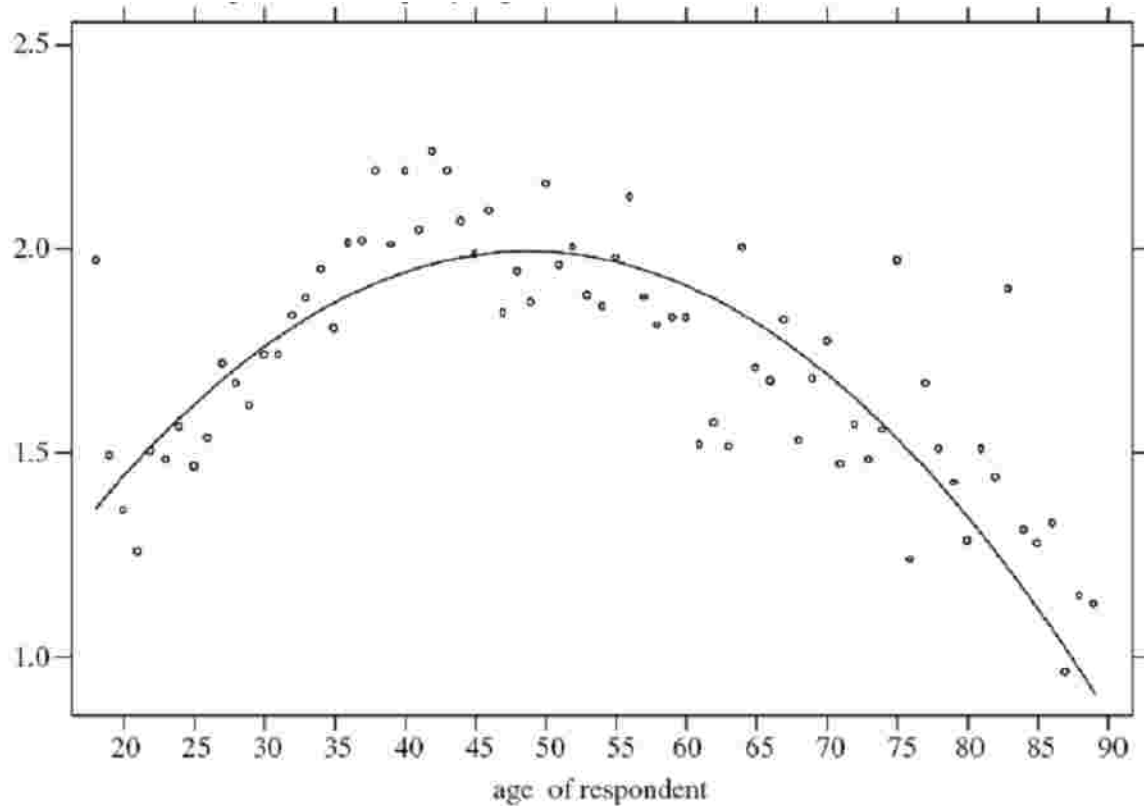
Source: Glaeser, Laibson, and Sacerdote, 2002.

Interestingly, the human capital lifeline seems to coincide with the one shown above. Human capital generally rises with age, as stocks rise according to investments in education and skills gained in workplaces. Human capital falls with age during the retirement years as well. These patterns are highlighted in Laroche, Mérette, and Ruggeri's study on human capital in Canada and the rate of depreciation (1999). The overlapping characteristics between human capital accumulation and social capital accumulation imply the positive correlation between the increase in one form of capital on the other.

Low human capital can be attributed to younger GARs in the study, but human capital investment increases considerably in the years after resettlement, as younger GARs are still in the process of reaching full human capital stock capacity. Greater investments in human capital are made because human capital stocks are lower with younger individuals. This affirms that earlier investments by younger investors have longer

periods of return. This does, however, provide a different case for older GARs who arrive with lower human capital stocks. The period of return is consequently reduced.

The study does not look at human and social capital stocks over a period of time. Interpretations of this conceived timeline of capital stocks is based on the levels of capital GARs possessed at a variety of ages. The diverse group of participants of different ages made this possible.

Income generation and refugee earnings rise with social capital accumulation. However, investments in human capital generally occur when social capital accumulation begins, but rises cumulatively as social capital does. The general trend shows that both social and human capital peak simultaneously or with a similar cycle.

6. Conclusion

Findings from this study reveal the difficulties that African GARs face after resettlement and attempt to explain why some African GARs achieve economic self-sufficiency beyond the first year of resettlement and why some do not. Human capital and social capital were used as indicators to explain this variance. Results suggest that it is in fact social capital that acts as a more reliable indicator of economic self-sufficiency beyond the initial year of resettlement. Results also suggest that economic integration is only successful when there is also successful social integration first.

Results implicate that African GARs face great difficulties achieving economic self-sufficiency in Vancouver, regardless of the level of human capital each possesses. This was determined by comparing the economic status of GARs with high human capital to those with low human capital after the initial year of resettlement. Both GARs with high human capital and GARs with low human capital had a continued reliance on state assistance beyond the first year. Reinvestment in schooling in Vancouver also resulted in low-income generation, and a continued reliance on state assistance. One interesting conclusion actually suggested a longer reliance on state assistance for those with higher human capital. This was attributed to feelings of underemployment and unwillingness to work in employment below individual standards. Results are preliminary, however, and further research into this phenomenon may uncover more conclusive results.

Although it does not appear that human capital is the building block necessary for economic self-sufficiency, it is still indirectly linked to successful integration. Human capital often stimulates different dimensions of social capital accumulation such as feelings of empowerment, coping mechanisms, and increasing social interactions. The increase in social capital helps facilitate the process of gaining economic self-sufficiency.

Two of the most accurate predictors of economic self-sufficiency from this study were social exclusion, and the function of groups and networks. Nearly all participants felt they were victims of social stereotypes and discrimination, which impeded access to employment and services. However, the main method used to alleviate this barrier in order to access the labour market included information sharing through groups and networks.

General findings from my case studies suggest that the presence of social capital in the form of networks, social cohesion, and trust, plays a significant role in GARs finding stable employment that then lead to a sustainable livelihood. Much of the social capital that is accumulated by each individual GAR result from networks that exist within the African community. Previous studies argue that social capital emerges in places where there is a high degree of homogeneity. Although the population in Vancouver is far from a homogenous, the dimensions of social capital that affect economic performance in GARs mainly exist amongst Africans—a group which is often characterized as homogenous.

All participants successfully created social ties with others from Africa after their arrival in Vancouver. There is a natural tendency for those to be drawn to others who face similar challenges. Although Africans do not look at themselves homogenously, many did recognize that the society they were immersed in categorized them similarly. This created a socially cohesive group between those from regions around Africa who now reside in Metro Vancouver. Although it remains a small community, the networking and kinships made upon landing helped African GARs find employment in similar areas of work. Hiebert calls this a development of "enclave economies" based on networks and relationships within ethnic groups (1999).

Two factors related to human capital stand out in difficulties with employment. The first is the failure to recognize degrees and education obtained in developing countries (foreign credential recognition). The second is a preference for native-English speakers with unaccented English. Studies[17] have looked at perceptions of language fluency, but none have offered any suggestions on how to address such an issue. This is where the negative effects of lowered social capital can be seen.

In Creese and Kambere's study on Africans in Vancouver, they note that immigrants who enter Canada today:

> …must negotiate a complex and changing terrain of relations between and among variously identified communities, social institutions, state policies and practices, and local discourses of citizenship, multiculturalism, and nationhood. How immigrants negotiate this terrain will depend on many factors, including immigration/citizenship status, economic resources, ethnic/racialized identities, social geography, gender and sexuality, and local and transnational networks (2002).

Despite the changing racialization of language and the struggles over who fits what category, the privileges attached to 'whiteness[18],' compared to other races, still prevails (Creese and Kambere, 2002). State practises and policies still reflect the socially constructed discourse that immigrants are people of colour (Creese and Kambere, 2002). This type of institutionalized discrimination and social exclusion has inhibited African GARs from accessing certain employment sectors, resulting in a longer reliance on state assistance.

A diverse and multicultural city like Vancouver would appear to be more tolerant of ethnic groups. However, smaller visible minority groups continue to face greater social exclusion than larger visible minority groups. This aspect has been touched upon previously, but the case of social exclusion of Africans in Vancouver may be applied to the context of any urban city where small ethnic groups exist. The social exclusion of minority groups has shown up in recent studies because of its relation to people's access to the labour market. Policies in the United Kingdom and the European Union find that

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[17] See Creese and Kambere, 2000 as an example.
[18] The definition of whiteness in North America is a changing, fluid concept illustrated in several pieces of literature over the past decades. See Keating (1995) as an example.

access to the labour market is important because the labour market is representative as a means of integration (Porter, 2000). Studies have linked social exclusion to a combination of problems such as unemployment, low incomes, poor housing, and high crime environments (Porter, 2000). However, the attitudes of visible minority groups concerning resistance, power, identity, and motivation are much less researched. Africans in Vancouver contribute to the understanding of low socio-economic status as a result of ethnic diversity.

Ley and Smith's findings support my claims that larger ethnic groups are less noticed than smaller ethnic concentrations. Their findings suggest that the 'visibility' of new immigrants is partly caused by the spatial distribution of refugees and exemplified by increasing immigration from non-traditional source countries (Ley and Smith, 2000). This seems to be a likely reason in Vancouver as well, where other ethnic groups, such as those of Asian descent, are not as 'visible' as Africans, and therefore less discriminated upon.

Thus, the economic, political, and social environment must be considered when looking at the effects of human and social capital on economic performances. Glaeser, Laibson, and Sacerdote agree that immigrants must adapt to the changing skill needs of an economy (2002). Employment market structure and an ageing population must also be taken into consideration. Many previous studies that look at human capital impacts on economic performance recognize how the changing dynamics in an economic environment can affect outcomes. Immigration levels in a city may also affect the social structures in an environment, changing the social behaviour and attitudes of citizens towards immigrants. The significance of different dimensions of social capital may also differ according to the size and scale of the study. For example, political action may give more implications in a macro-level study in comparison to the irrelevance of political action in a micro-level study such as this one.

GARs arrived in Vancouver with different attitudes towards immigration, reception, and integration. The varying attitudes that often stem from different histories, influence different methods that were practised by GARs. The majority of GARs did understand integration as a process of learning to accept and be accepted into a new society. As immigrants in a new country, livelihood strategies tend to be extremely different from those who are native-born, shown in the great dependency on social capital. Social capital may not necessarily be as significant for the native-born population. This study on social capital gives some insight in understanding migrant behaviour.

Studies on social capital have become more widely popular because of the implications it has on economic performance. Social capital and human capital are emerging as important topics to consider in knowledge-based countries in particular. If more research is done on the activities and perspectives of refugees integrating into a welfare state, a better understanding of how to facilitate the integration process can be adapted and implemented. There is contributing evidence that social capital can have an impact on development outcomes, including areas in growth, equity, and poverty alleviation. Dekker has studied the macro levels of social capital and expresses how studies can guide

economic policies (2001). He makes inferences that information sharing of social capital is very important to poverty alleviation strategies because the poor usually have limited access to certain services, and limited ability to cope with risk (Dekker, 2001). Since refugees tend to have the highest rates of poverty of the immigrant groups, the implementation of effective poverty alleviation strategies using social capital theory may create potentially significant changes in levels of poverty amongst this immigrant group.

Poverty reduction in urban areas is a growing concern for governments and development agencies (Farrington, Ramasut, and Walker, 2002). Social capital is increasingly used in poverty alleviation strategies. The World Bank has established its own measurements of social capital, stating it is "critical for … sustainable human and economic development" (World Bank, 2007). In response, the development of sustainable livelihood strategies has been used in poverty alleviation. A focus has shifted towards a very people-centred approach, and an extension of individual assets, particularly human and social capital— both deemed crucial for economic success. A major concern for resettled refugees is their ability to achieve self-sufficiency in the Canadian environment, especially when there is a lack in foreign credential recognition and an absence of friends or family members available as a resource upon arrival.

In Vancouver's case, this study provided an interesting platform to examine how effectively Canada's policy offering the one-year government sponsorship functions. It has become quite clear that despite government policies aimed to support successful economic integration of refugees in Canada, what is practised on the ground is very different from what appears on paper. Settlement services are inefficient in addressing certain issues and assisting certain immigrant groups. Local attitudes regarding discrimination in the workplace are difficult to address and transform as well. Considering the sensitivity that economic outcomes have on the local environment, federal policies may function more efficiently if more autonomy is given to provincial jurisdictions. First, a clear understanding of which dimensions are critical must be developed. Even then, methods in how to adapt such information into programs and policies may still pose a challenge since human behaviour is not always predictable and behaviour change is seldom instant.

A study done by Mestheneos and Ioannidi on refugee integration in European Member States found that agencies and federal policies were inefficient in providing sufficient support for immigrants as well (2002). They state, "It is common for many agencies to speak on behalf of refugees with the attendant danger of ignoring their lived experience" (Mestheneos and Ioannidi, 2002). Refugees come from a wide range of backgrounds and have different experiences adapting and integrating into host societies. This includes different levels of human capital and social capital that refugees arrive with, along with diverse ages, different genders, and family and kinship ties, which account for some of the differences experienced in refugee integration (Mestheneos and Ioannidi, 2002). As recognized in this study, although they have good intentions, settlement agencies in Vancouver do not seem to have the capacity to deal with such diversity just yet.

Despite the findings from this study, which support previous research, social capital should not be seen as a universal solution for economic failures or development impediments. The effects of social capital are completely dependent on the conditions that are occurring in the environment in which it is being studied. The benefits of social capital are also and often combined with other forms of capital (Dekker, 2001). As observed in this study, when levels of social capital and human capital are both high, chances of achieving economic success are greatly improved.

With little research conducted on African immigrants in Vancouver and even less known about this group of refugees, integration challenges are heightened, including barriers to the labour market, greater discrimination and low socio-economic status. Few studies available on the most unsuccessful economic immigrant cohort imply that little is also being done to address such concerns and that there is a lowered understanding of how to facilitate integration. This study was done in hopes to recognize such concerns, and to help understand the different processes that are involved in successful economic integration.

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Appendix I: Neighbourhood Social Capital

NEIGHBOURHOOD-LEVEL FACTORS:

INDIVIDUAL-LEVEL FACTORS:
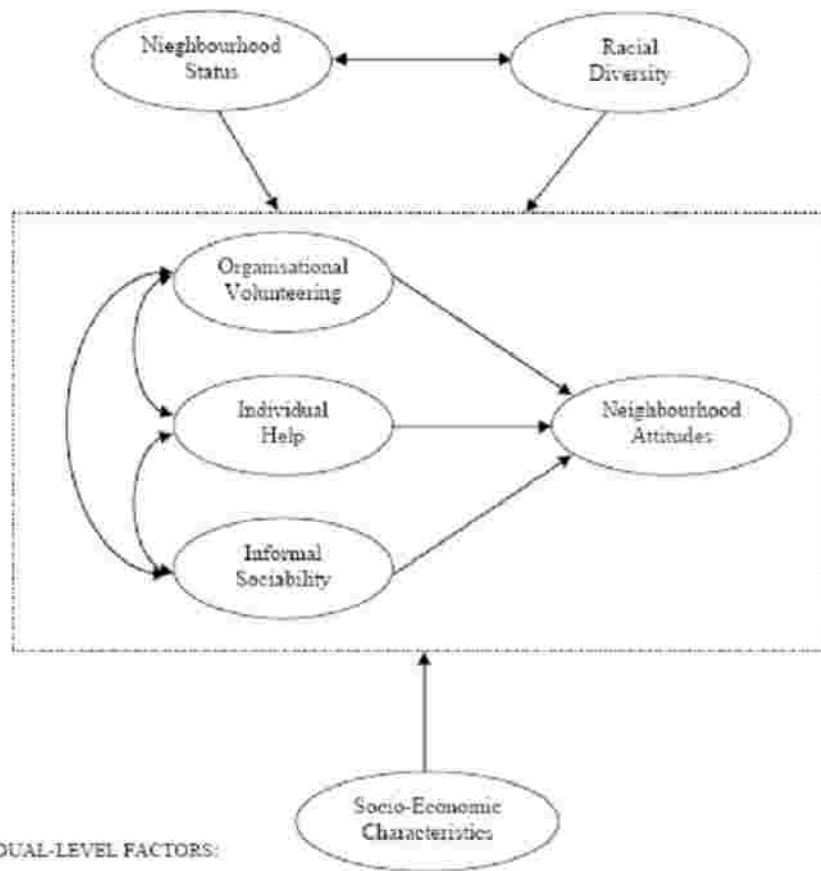
From Letki (2001).

Appendix II: Questionnaire

The following questionnaire was used only as a guideline and not all questions were asked during the interviews in the exact same way. Questions were not posed in any particular order as well, nor were they all necessarily asked during all the interviews.

General:

1. How long have you been living in Vancouver?
2. Where were you originally from?
3. Did you come with any relatives?
4. Do you have any dependents (children, grandparents)?
5. How old is the youngest child?
6. Was Vancouver assigned to you as your first city of resettlement through the Pre-approved Plan? (Vancouver was the first Canadian city you resided in)

Self-Sufficiency:

1. Are you currently on any state assistance? Eg. Do you receive welfare payments? (including employment insurance, child tax benefits)
2. Do you receive any remittances from friends or family?
3. Are you currently employed? If no, have you ever been employed? If yes, how often do you work eg. full-time, part-time?
4. How many jobs have you had in the past 12 months? What about when you got your first job?
5. What was your reason for leaving your jobs?
6. Were you previously employed in your country of origin?
7. If you have any dependents, are any of them employed?
8. Have you ever needed to borrow money from other people or sources?
9. Have you ever had a monthly shortfall?
10. Do you know what your total income is (monthly or annually?)
11. Do you ever have to sacrifice food or clothing to pay for bills?
12. Did you experience problems finding adequate housing?
13. Have you had to get loans from banks, friends or family?
14. Did you ever want to participate in other training, recreational or personal interest courses, but couldn't? Why? (time constraints, not prepared, couldn't afford, not a priority, family responsibilities, personal health)

Social Capital:

Groups
1. Are you part of any organizations, groups, networks, or associations? Eg. religious groups, fitness groups, neighbourhood committees, political groups, education groups, health groups, sports groups, ethnic-based community groups?
2. Of these groups, which do you consider most important to you?
3. How often do you participate in these group activities?

4. What do you find the main benefit of attending these group activities? Eg. Improves my household's current livelihood or access to services, important in times of emergency/in future, benefits the community, enjoyment/recreation, spiritual, social status, self-esteem?
5. Does the group help you gain access to services? Eg. education/training, health services, savings?
6. Do the groups interact with other groups?
7. Has anyone you met in these groups helped your settlement here?
8. Are you doing any volunteer work or unpaid work?

Networks

9. Did you have any friends or family prior to resettlement here in Vancouver?
10. If you ran into financial difficulty, who would you turn to? How many people could you turn to?
11. How many close friends do you have these days? These include people you feel at ease with and can talk to about private matters, or call on for help.
12. If you went away for a bit, would you trust your neighbours to take care of your kids? Who would you trust?

Trust and Solidarity

13. Can you trust the people in your neighbourhood?
14. Do you think they are willing to help you if you need it?
15. Do you trust people more who are from Africa? Who speak the same native language as you? Police? Teachers? Nurses/Doctors? Government people?
16. Do you trust people more/less than back at home?

Collective Action and Cooperation

17. Have you participated in any community projects/activities?
18. If someone in the community became very ill, or died, would people get together to try to help them out?

Information and Communication

19. How long does it take you to get to the nearest post office?
20. How often do you read the newspaper/do you read the newspaper?
21. Listen to the radio?
22. News on TV?
23. Do you often call family/friends?
24. How do you find out about what the government is doing? Name top 3. Eg. relatives, friends, neighbours; bulletin boards; local market; newspaper (Local? National?); radio/tv; associations/groups; coworkers; ngo's; internet; government agent; political associates; community leaders.
25. Top 3 sources of info about jobs and prices of goods/groceries? (same as above)

26. Did a friend/family member tell you about a job opportunity?

Social Cohesion and Inclusion

27. Do you feel close to your neighbours?
28. Do you face any problems with your neighbours? If yes, is this because of money, race, religion etc?
29. Has there ever been violence because of this?
30. Do you ever feel excluded from community activities? Why?
31. What do you think your biggest obstacle in having so much difficulty getting employment was?
32. How often do you go visit friends/family outside your home?
33. How often per month do you have visitors yourself?
34. Are these people mostly of the same ethnic background? Economic status? Religious group? Social group?
35. Do you think your neighbourhood is generally peaceful or violent?
36. Do you think there is more violence now than in the past?
37. How safe do you feel walking in the street alone at night?
38. Have you ever been a victim of assault/mugging? How many times?
39. Has your home been robbed or vandalized?

Empowerment and Political Action

40. Generally, are you happy to be here?
41. Do you feel in control of the choices you make in everyday decisions?
42. Have you ever notified the police about a problem in the neighbourhood?
43. Were you here for the last election, and did you vote?
44. Do you think the local government takes into account your concerns from you and other fellow refugees, when they make decisions?
45. Have you had to pay extra to the government to get things done?

Human Capital:

1. How many years of education did you have before you arrived here? If yes, how many years? And up to what level (is this your highest level of training)?
2. How old were you when you last attended some training/schooling? Was this in Canada?
3. Did you receive any further training upon arrival? Or are you going to school right now? How long is/was the program? Full-time, part-time?
4. What was the main reason you went to school? (job, personal interest, leisure, improve general skills)
5. Did you receive any funding/loans to go back to school?
6. What was the main reason you stopped going to school?
7. What language do you usually speak at home? At work?
8. What language do you speak the most often?
9. What was the first language you spoke?

10. Did you undertake any secondary or third languages?
11. Did you ever have problems with Canada recognizing your schooling?
12. How old were you when you first started speaking English? Do you have problems reading/writing English?
13. Did you ever have to take any special classes to help you with your English?
14. Are you able to file your own income tax returns?
15. Do you have any problems understanding bills? Eg. Phone bills, credit card bills, phone books, medications.
16. Do you have any problems filling out forms at doctor's offices, or schools, job application forms?
17. Are you having trouble receiving foreign recognition?
18. Did your job require any minimum requirement of schooling?
19. Do you do a lot of writing/reading at your job?
20. Do you ever use the library or go to the bookstore?
21. Do you have any problems understanding the news, for example, the tv news or newspaper?
22. How many hours a day would you say you watch tv?
23. How often would you say you use your cell phone, the bank machine, fax machine, computer?
24. What do you typically use your computer for?
25. Do you enjoy reading books, magazines etc? Often?

Appendix III: Concepts and Indicators

Concept	Indicator	Data Needed
Self-sufficiency (dependent variable)	- Social assistance from Canadian Government - Long-term or Short-term Employment: Individuals who enter and leave the active labour force are frequently discouraged by the lack of suitable occupations (Dorais, 1991) - Formal or Informal Employment - Underemployment: In a similar study by Dorais, underemployment was used as an indicator in his study to represent the economic integration of Indochinese refugees in Quebec City (1991) - Monthly Shortfalls	- Has filed tax returns - Has filed income tax for employment - Employment maintained for more than 6 months - Employment ensured beyond 6 months - Foreign credentials recognized in Canada - Self-employment - Any monthly shortfalls covering: food, clothing, shelter (basic needs of life).
Social Capital (independent variable)	- Groups and Networks - Trust and Solidarity - Collective action and Cooperation - Social inclusion and cohesion - Information and communication - Empowerment and Political Action	- Key Characteristics: density of group, diversity of membership, extent of democratic functioning, extent of connections to other groups. - Trust: to strangers, within established relationships and social networks, to institutions and governance - Perceptions of social unity and togetherness in community or experiences of exclusion from decision-making processes - Communication with members of community and members outside of community

Concept	Indicator	Data Needed
Human Capital (independent variable)	• Education Attainment • Literacy • Years of Work Experience	• Years of Schooling in home country • Years of Schooling recognized in Canada • Prose Literacy – knowledge and skills needed to understand text information such as news reports and fiction. • Document Literacy – knowledge and skills needed to understand documents such as timetables, application forms, maps, tables. • Quantitative Literacy – knowledge and skills needed to apply arithmetic operations such as calculating interest on a loan, balancing a chequebook, completing an order form.