

Jamaican Middle-Class Immigrants in Toronto: Habitus, Capitals and Inclusion

by

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Abstract

This dissertation explores connections between the labour market experiences of skilled middle-class immigrants in Canada, and their civic engagement in both sending and receiving countries. My work expands scholarship by delving into the ways that the criteria of social distinction, such as gender, race, immigrant status, and class, and the internalized roles, values, and norms passed down over generations shape citizenship practice. I argue that there is a link between inclusion and the possibilities offered through civic engagement, in that the struggle for inclusion is also a struggle for the recognition of resources that are valued as markers of valued members of society.

This research engaged with a theoretical orientation that required synthesizing various forms of social structures that shape societies. Pierre Bourdieu's theory of practice offered an alternative perspective on the use of assets in order to retain or improve social positioning, and the use of networks and civic engagement as a form of capital that can also serve to influence one's place in society. Semi-structured interviews and participant observation were used to gather information regarding the experiences of skilled Jamaican immigrants involved in ethnic-based organizations that support economic, social, and infrastructural development projects in Jamaica and organizations that focus on the socio-economic well-being of the black community in Canada.

This research shows that the processes of migration and (re)settlement have implications for the ways ideologies and social relations shift across space. I found that historically-shaped values, ideals, and norms associated with the development of a middle-class identity informed the ways the participants responded to barriers in the labour market, and changes in socio-economic status. Responses to changed socio-economic positioning through civic engagement

were found to be based on gendered relations, the recognition and experiences of racism, and political attitude towards Jamaica, and relied on familiar strategies of the uses of social and cultural capitals to retain and/or improve their middle-class positions. This process of negotiation revealed the complex ways that middle-class(ness) is produced and reproduced across territories, and the implications for civic participation not only in Canada, but also in support of Jamaican development.

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Chapter 1. Introducing the Skilled Jamaican Immigrant: An Engagement with Diaspora and Transnationalism

The free movement of groups of skilled people from one country to another has historically not only served the economic growth needs of receiving countries, but also provided opportunities for socio-economic improvement for immigrants and their family members remaining in sending countries. More recently, the idea that sending countries can benefit by tapping into the growing number of citizens who live outside their country, but who maintain deep, active connections with their home country, has gained traction among governments in sending countries such as Jamaica that struggle to establish viable economies. While immigrants in Canada from Jamaica number only 123,420 (Ontario Immigration, n.d.), it is a significant number for the small island nation of approximately 2.4 million. The number is disquieting to Jamaican development strategists considering that as many as 85 percent of emigrants from Jamaica are tertiary-educated (Ratha, Mohapatra, and Silwal, 2011), meaning that a significant talent pool is increasingly located outside of the nation-state.

Immigration has historically served as a panacea for limited opportunities and growth in sending countries; the monetary resources acquired by migrants during the period of immigration have provided additional social and economic status upon return. However, it should be noted that the majority of immigrants from Jamaica who hold tertiary-level education also depend heavily on their educational credentials as resources that enable their individual achievements. Research shows that devaluation of the credentials held by skilled immigrants in receiving countries such as Canada has contributed to the overrepresentation of skilled immigrants in precarious, low wage, temporary, and unskilled work (Statistics Canada, 2003). In addition, discrimination and exclusionary practices faced particularly by racialized immigrants have been cited as major barriers to their upward mobility (Galabuzi, 2005; Teelucksingh and Galabuzi,

2005). Moreover, it is suggested that loss in economic stability may also affect their ability to participate fully as valued members of society (Leitner and Erkhamp, 2006), thereby reducing their chance to insert, maintain, and improve their status in their new country of residence. These challenges affect how skilled immigrant groups, who held middle-class positions in their home countries, struggle to maintain their status in their new home.

In keeping with previous research (Teelucksingh and Galabuzi, 2005; Schellenberg, 2007; Workers Action Center, 2006), I maintain that skilled immigrants hold certain expectations when they arrive in Canada, such as being able to acquire a job and income that together will contribute to a positive settlement experience. Fernando makes a further good point that steady employment will also influence immigrants' ability to participate in civic activities (2007). However, the fact that the credentials and skills of many skilled immigrants are not valued in the Canadian labour market reduces the chance for a number of immigrants to gain access to stable employment. As many as 67 percent of skilled immigrants in 2010 were admitted through the economic immigrant category,¹ which sets out skills, education, and monetary assets as major criteria for acceptance as a permanent resident (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2011). The consequent challenge in maintaining monetary assets creates a difficult settlement experience that reduces the participation of immigrants as citizens both locally and transnationally.

Recognizing that research regarding the settlement experiences of Caribbean immigrants has focussed primarily on lower skilled workers, such as domestic workers and migrant farmers, this study provides a diasporic perspective on the Caribbean skilled, middle-class immigrant. I pay particular attention to the ways that race, ethnicity, gender, and post-colonial history

1. There are 3 main permanent resident classes that potential immigrants may apply through to enter Canada: economic, family, refugee/humanitarian. The economic class is broken down into 7 programs, which are generally based on the long-term needs of the Canadian labour market.

engender certain dispositions that influence the development and obligation of civic duty both transnationally and in Canada. This research is a starting point for examining the relationship between the settlement experiences of skilled immigrants and the scope, type, and intensity of their civic participation.² I make connections between the situations that immigrants encounter and their interpretation and response to those situations. An objective of this dissertation is therefore to explore the ways that embodied, historically shaped dispositions associated with race, gender, and class positions affect how these particular skilled immigrants respond to exclusionary experiences, and consequently, to the development of their relationships with both host and home countries.

The ways that skilled immigrants respond to their experiences are also vital to understanding how they recover and maintain their assets. Therefore, an additional objective of this dissertation is to examine the ways that unsatisfactory settlement experiences, especially as they relate to labour market participation, shape strategies for socio-economic improvement through participation and membership in organized social networks. In order to accomplish this objective, I embark on a theorization of social action among racialized, skilled Caribbean immigrants to Canada.

Since 2005, Canada has maintained one of the highest annual immigrant admission rates of 240,000–265,000 persons (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2011), because of its very strong policy emphasis on targeting immigrants who bring in skills and talents that Canada needs (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2011). In 2010 alone, the total admission of permanent residents to Canada numbered 280,681; this marked an 11.3 percent increase from 2009 and the

2. By *scope*, I refer to whether participation is local or transnational. This is also what I mean by *type* of civic engagement, but I am also interested in whether activities are formal or informal. *Intensity* simply refers to how often they participate or how much time they invest in these activities.

highest admission in this category in 50 years (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2011). This dissertation focuses on the group of skilled immigrants who depend on their credentials and work experiences to act as acceptable assets that ensure ease of inclusion in society. For those who apply as economic (independent) immigrants to Canada, they must also show financial assets in the form of monetary savings—from \$11,115 to \$29,414—depending on the number of eligible family members they apply to accompany them (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2013).

The skilled immigrant for the purpose of this study is therefore an individual with work experience, tertiary-level education, and significant monetary assets. Arguably, this group could also be categorized as part of an emergent transnational capitalist class (Ong and Nonini, 1997; Sklair, 2001) that is able to “skip effortlessly between closely integrated world cities, virtually oblivious to the prevailing pattern of development that can be mapped out at the national and regional (and global) level” (Parnwell, 2005, p. 21) and thus “transcend the limits of space and the stickiness of place” (Featherstone, Phillips and Waters, 2007). However, I agree with Featherstone, Phillips, and Waters (2007) who draw attention to the fact that this characterization of the skilled migrant may be “overplayed”. They suggest that, in order to redress concerns regarding the lack of attention to the relevance of spatial distance and impact of place on social life, we must reinsert “settlement” into our studies. This is a more holistic view of the immigrant as one who encompasses both mobility and stasis.

Recognition of the settlement experience of skilled and middle-class immigrants allows for an exploration of the ways that they utilize their assets to their advantage. It also enables examination of the challenges they experience and the extent to which they remain successful in their new country of residence. These challenges influence their politics in a period where their identity as middle-class citizens is (re)interpreted and (re)shaped depending on the social and

geographical space they are located in. Most notably, research that emphasizes place in its analysis of transnationals helps in tracing the ways that social identities based on class, gender, and race are challenged as part of the settlement process, reinforcing cultural and social constructions as impacted by geography.

That being said, I recognized as I listened to the participants of this study that there was more than one theoretical framing that would support the ways that I could understand and analyze the data. Feminist understandings and recognition of the intersectional ways that race, gender, and class all work together to shape the experiences of individuals and groups are central to my understanding and explanation of skilled Jamaican settlement experiences and obligations.

I also chose to draw upon the work of French theorist, Pierre Bourdieu, particularly his conceptualization of the habitus and capitals, as the primary theoretical insight that guided my understanding and explanation for the behaviours, motivations, and aspirations of the participants in this research. Bourdieu's theorization of social action is anchored in the idea that historically shaped dispositions or habitus, associated with class positioning, reinforce and reproduce the ways that groups respond to their circumstances in their social field. This emphasis on a class-based context is useful in understanding middle-class concerns around social positioning and integration. The habitus of skilled immigrants from Jamaica is also bound up as part of the legacies of colonialism whereby the accumulation of assets in the form of education credentials are relied on as a means of ensuring upward mobility. By following Bourdieu's argument that the role of historical-cultural context on the social relations among groups strongly indicates the ways in which they practice and identify their class positions, I recognize the reliance on credentials, especially among the black population, to be a particularly essential factor in analyzing the settlement experiences of skilled immigrants from Jamaica.

According to Bourdieu, there are three main ways to accumulate suitable resources: *illusio*, *habitus*, and *capitals*. *Illusio* suggests that people invest in their lives depending on what society suggests is of worth; the more investments are made in life, the more meaningful life becomes, and the more one is willing to contribute back to society. However, the returns are only gained if society accepts the investment (Hage, 2009). Society thus controls both the production and maintenance of rules that individuals then subscribe to.

The concept of *habitus*, as developed by Bourdieu, is used to provide an explanatory framework for this seemingly contradictory aspect of society. For Bourdieu, the contradiction is observed when individuals believe they are free agents “yet base everyday decisions on assumptions about the predictable character, behavior and attitude of others” (Maton, 2008, p. 50). *Habitus* is therefore a concept that is intended to straddle what Bourdieu considers to be deep-seated dichotomies and structuring ways of thinking about the world (Maton, 2008). The *habitus*, which is performed through individuals’ dispositions, is paramount in explaining the routes taken by individuals and groups in their day-to-day lives. Dispositions are defined by Bourdieu as being what “designate[s] a way of being, a habitual state (especially of the body) and in particular, a pre-disposition, a tendency, propensity or inclination” (2011, p. 214 n.1). I find this particularly poignant for the case of adult immigrants who, upon arrival, bear symbols of investments they have made in societies particular to their home countries, but who also expect and hope to benefit from these assets in a different social and geographical space.

This analytical approach also allows for a more holistic understanding of the roles that gender, race, and class play in influencing the settlement experiences of immigrants. This is important because I support the argument that any analysis of Caribbean society must be taken up within its historically specific development as a plantation society through colonization (Best,

2005).

Although Jamaica gained independence from its colonial ruler in 1962, the legacies of social stratification and economic disadvantage along race and colour lines remain important factors influencing the practices and social-relations among groups in Jamaican society (Stone, 1976; Nettleford, 1998). However, this may not be readily apparent to society members as they ascribe to the ethic of a meritocracy in addition to multiracialism (Douglass, 1992). In Douglass' (1992) examination of the family as a cohesive group that acts as a means for elites to distinguish themselves in Jamaica, she notes that class is emphasized as the main distinguishing factor disregarding colour or race as taboo and gender as taken for granted. She contends that society would rather believe that people earn or achieve their social position through class mobility rather than class and gender inheritance or the power relations of the social order at large, regardless of the hierarchical patterns evident in most social relations in Jamaica.

Bourdieu's theory of social action helps me to delve deeper into the ways that historically shaped principles of distinction developed among a population in one nation-state, and how they are affected by and influence the ways new geographical and social spaces are negotiated by immigrants. In this dissertation, I focus on middle-class immigrants and contemplate how the nuances of their particular habitus have "real" impact on the methods that immigrants use in their struggle to be integrated and valued in a society that has differing social norms, political histories, and economic development trajectories, and where values create barriers and rules that must be learned and practiced in order to belong. It is also important to not lose sight of the relevance of the current economic system that supports the free movement of people globally and influences their strategies for socio-economic improvement.

Bourdieu uses the term "capital" to represent acquired resources that, through their

appropriate use, allow individuals to accumulate specific profits (Wacquant, 2008), such as recognition and material possessions. He names three types of capital specifically that assist individuals in maintaining or acquiring social position: economic capital, cultural capital, and social capital. An understanding of the ways that capitals are used by skilled and highly-skilled Jamaican immigrants is essential to this research, because they draw attention to the sites where social struggles are unravelled, as well as to the effectiveness of social networks in helping immigrants (re)position themselves in society.

Arranging and coordinating the use of capitals to provide the resources necessary to position oneself along an upward socio-economic trajectory is problematic because it necessitates acceptance of the rules that maintain the status quo. Therefore, employing strategies to accomplish upward mobility will not necessarily change the fundamental structures in place that perpetuate social boundaries and exclusionary practices.

Bourdieu's exploration of the nature of capitals is key to determining whether membership in social spaces such as diasporic organizations functions as a resource that helps skilled Jamaican immigrants utilize their cultural capital to maintain the value of their social status. It also reveals the contradictory outcomes of social struggles, as spaces where the struggle against one type of hegemony that excludes any group serve to reproduce another system of social structures in which the excluded group then becomes dominant. Participating in established diasporic networks may provide middle-class, highly-educated immigrants with an opportunity to acquire or retain the status or rank that they once enjoyed as middle-class citizens in Jamaica. In essence, however, they reproduce the societal structures with which they are familiar by engaging a space where middle classness is valued and legitimized for its competency and positive worth to society.

One way in which Bourdieu shows the stability of structures is through the concept of fields. Bourdieu (1986) emphasizes the importance of social space in influencing the likelihood of capital being accumulated, and in what manner. He terms the environment or structured spaces of positions that people navigate as “fields”. These fields have their own internal logic and regulatory principles that impose specific determinants on those who enter them (Wacquant, 2008). The field, as defined by Bourdieu, is comparable to the diasporic organization in that it is a social space that is valorized by its members. But fields are also conceptualized as spaces of simultaneous conflict and competition—an arena of strategy, as agents compete to gain control over resources that will be the most effective in preserving or toppling the existing distribution of resources or capital. It should be noted, though, that geographers contend that Bourdieu’s use of social space does not signify the relevance of geographical space, but that he emphasizes this concept in a metaphorical sense. Painter (2002), for instance, has called for geographers to consider the field as both a socio-spatial and socio-temporal phenomena. In this way, geographers can provide a more critical spatialized theory of practice. For the purpose of this research then, the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), Ontario (see Appendix A) can be considered a field in which immigrants navigate social practices and relations in the everyday. At the same time, Bourdieu’s concept also allows me to consider diasporic organizations as a “field”—not simply as a social network, but as a “social space” where historical and current relations provide a structured position that its members follow to succeed in other fields such as the labour market. The diasporic organization may provide a familiar space with familiar rules that its members recognize. Thus, based on their similar cultural capital, members may position themselves within this space and feel comfortable enough to externalize their internalized subjectivities or habitus within a structure that valorizes their capital.

The word “diaspora” was first associated with the forced historical movements of ethnic Jews, who, being dispersed and scattered, maintained communities based on ethnic origins. Wider applications of the term have since been used to refer particularly to a sense of displacement, and thus additional groups, such as African ethnic groups, have been characterized as diasporic (Gilroy, 1992). Safran (1991, p. 83–84) has provided a concise list of features of diaspora, including: a history of dispersal; memories of a place of origin; experience of alienation in the new country; a (possible) desire to return to the homeland; ongoing support of their homeland; and a sense of collective identity as a group.

In a recent special issue of *Feminist Review*, Camp and Thomas argue that diaspora should be analyzed as a “site of political aspiration and solidarity, and as a social, cultural, and political rubric” (2008, p. 2). Mitchell (1997), however, critiques the use of the term diaspora, not necessarily in terms of its well-defined limits but because it seems to be used universally to describe spaces of subversion. Mitchell argues that the term diaspora is popularly imagined as a liminal or third space that “exposes practices of exclusion while offering possibilities for liberation” (1997, p. 258). Using the case of Hong Kong immigrants’ fight for equal participation in public hearings regarding neighbourhood zoning in the city of Vancouver, Mitchell (1997) argues that these in-between spaces cannot always be equated with a politically progressive agenda, but that they effectively reproduce capitalist ideologies. In this particular case, the committee developed by the Hong Kong immigrants used arguments based on their individual economic freedom in relation to private property to proclaim their right to have a say in how the neighbourhood should be zoned in ways that would not exclude their architectural cultural preferences. Mitchell (1997) further argues that while the collective memory and vision of their homeland are driving forces that enable the maintenance of economic, social, and emotional

transnational exchanges, it is important to survey the ways that these spaces of subversion also reinforce individualism consistent with the norms of economic liberalism. This argument may be useful to an understanding of how diasporic spaces are used by marginalized groups to achieve or improve their socio-economic position.

Although diaspora is associated with particular groups based particularly on ethnicity, I follow Mullings' description of diaspora as being a "social space created by populations of Jamaican ancestry who have lived periods of their lives outside the territorial boundaries of the island, but whose identities connect with the people and cultural practices of the island" (2011, p. 25). Using this concept of the diasporic space, I highlight that groups, such as those of Jamaican ancestry, make social connections based on particular social spaces of mutually valued and recognized forms of cultural capital. These connections are not only esteemed, but also valuable to those who seek to find ways of acquiring capitals that are respected in the wider society or in social spaces outside their own. I thus consider the involvement of skilled Jamaican immigrants in diasporic organizations in Canada in order to understand the extent to which these networks influence participation and interest in transnational social relations, particularly in light of their experiences in the host country and their class habitus. This research will also critically analyze the complexity of these sites in terms of the ways that they serve the interests of their members.

Diasporic Transnational Activities and the Complexities of Citizenship Practice

While members of the diaspora may work towards a shared ideal in the country in which they settle, their activities also stretch into their home countries. Interestingly, the transnationalism literature speaks of immigrants in general and does not necessarily identify those who conduct transnational activities as members of a diaspora. However, the diaspora is particularly poised to make significant contributions to our understanding of relationships between local governments and the diaspora, the influence of barriers to integration on middle-

class identities, and the ways in which middle-class immigrants respond to calls to assist in the development of their homeland.

While much of the literature on immigrant transnationalism in the 1990s focused on the emotional and economic importance of transnational exchanges, few studies focused specifically on the transnational practices of skilled immigrants and the extent to which their motivations and practices diverged from that of their generally lower skilled and lower income counterparts. There is also very little research that examines linkages between the practices of skilled, middle-class, immigrant Caribbean women and men within structurally limiting labour markets in the host country, and their active participation in social spaces like diaspora or ethnic-based organizations.

A number of scholars have documented the important role that transnational practices, such as remittances, philanthropy, and participation in home associations, play in helping immigrants to create community in the places where they settle (Faist, 2000; Portes, et al., 1999; Portes, 2008). For example, Itzigsohn et al. (1999), in an analysis of transnationalism among citizens from the Dominican Republic residing in the United States, note that various forms of transnational activities occur that range from narrow to broad depending on the degree of institutionalization, degree of movement and degree of involvement among Dominicans. The authors explain that activities such as investing in infrastructure in the home country to prepare for retirement, and/or to provide for families and friends left behind, helped migrants to sustain emotional linkages with their community. Institutions such as the church also played a role in migrants being able to maintain relationships, by providing a means through which they could organize fundraising events for particular projects in the Dominican Republic. In addition, the practice of Dominican Republic politicians of seeking support from their citizens abroad

encouraged the awareness of those citizens of their economic and political importance to the development of the Dominican Republic, and hence their growing assertiveness in expressing political interest in the welfare of their local communities. It is clear therefore that migrants engage in transnational activities for various reasons other than blocked access to labour markets.

Following Levitt's (2003) claim that transnational activities can vary over time, in this study, I evaluate the extent to which the migration and settlement experiences of skilled Jamaicans shape engagement in civic activities in their home and host countries. Bloemraad (2004) points out that there is a strand of the literature on transnationalism (for example, Basch et al., 1994) that relies on case studies of Caribbean and Latino immigrants to the United States, and focuses on the narrative of poor, non-white immigrants who are particularly motivated to lead transnational lives in order to challenge their own marginal racial and social positions in the receiving country. This literature, however, suggests that their social positions in the receiving nations are a continuation of their marginal positions in their place of origin, and that they lack the ability to gain access to and utilize capitals to their advantage regardless of having migrated to a "country of opportunity". While studies such as Bloemraad's highlight the focus on poor non-white immigrants from the Caribbean, there are groups of people who migrate with skills, whose migration is determined by their ability to provide certain skills to the receiving country (Parvati, 2004; Featherstone, Phillips and Waters, 2007). These particular migrants are therefore not moving from a position of marginal socio-economic status, and their transnational activities may not necessarily be due to their need to change the status held while in their home country. For as Uzma Shakir, an advocate for immigrant and refugee rights in Canada, argues, "transnationalism is not simply about relationships; it is also a product of racism and racialization experienced by immigrants in the country of their destination" (2007, p. 68).

The variability across nationalities and the context of reception (Portes, 2001), that is influenced by and influences labour market strategies, family households, political practices, sense of community, and diasporic consciousness, offers “important challenges to inequitable and exclusionary aspects” (Stasiulis and Bakan, 2005, p. 2) of membership within the nation-state. Indeed, while research has quantified levels of civic engagement among immigrants in Canada (Hall, et al., 2009), there is little or no research that considers whether the activities performed transnationally have implications for the levels of civic engagement locally, or if the settlement experiences or habitus of migrants also influence the nature and intensity of their transnational activities.

Citizenship activities can be conducted individually or as a collective, and reasons for participation may vary. According to Best and Dustan (2006), in the case of volunteering among first-generation immigrants in Canada, the patterns are usually informed by: (1) cultural origins, (2) socio-political experiences in the country of origin, and (3) current and local circumstances of life in Canada. Regardless of the privileges that formal citizenship may bring, membership opportunities are still filled with contradictions for visible minorities and immigrants, who are encouraged to belong in a community “where the elite white male is the standard and norm” (Best and Dustan, 2006, p. 5; Isin and Wood, 1999, p. 63).

Permanent residents are unable to vote or run for political office, or hold certain jobs that have high-level security clearance requirements (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2009). These rules apply until an immigrant has successfully applied for citizenship, after which they are able to join the “membership” of Canada and enjoy the full benefits available to all Canadian citizens. Isin and Wood (1999) argue that it is therefore erroneous to legitimize and make normative the Western liberal ideal of participation as one that is practiced similarly across

groups. They suggest that this standard is only accessible to a small proportion of society, and therefore functions as part of the institutional structures that constrain the social mobility of and sense of belonging among immigrants.

With the concepts of habitus, capitals, and the field supporting my understanding of social behaviour, I focus on how settlement experiences influence the ways that individuals participate in Canadian society and maintain connections with their home country. I explore various forms of civic participation as a way of understanding how their experiences and their networks influence their sense of belonging and sense of social responsibility to both their host and home country. In doing so, I draw on the work of Longford (2005), which defines civic participation as an individual's active engagement with and involvement in their communities. These activities include: donating time and/or money to charitable organizations, belonging to and/or participating in community groups, attending public meetings, voting in elections, attending religious services, and maintaining social networks with friends, neighbours, and co-workers.

Civic engagement is conceptualized by Preston, Kobayashi, and Man (2006) as an activity that enables opportunities for economic mobility and that improves representation of interests in government decisions. In fact, they suggest that civic participation is intertwined with citizenship and exercising one's political rights. Stoll and Wong (2007) argue, however, that although civic participation models tend to focus on voting, models should expand to include migration-related factors, especially for societies that are characterized by multi-racial and multiethnic immigrants. Through this lens, civic participation can also refer to the ways that individuals and groups engage in decision-making processes that affect themselves and their communities. Thus, of prime importance to this study is the fact that civic participation is not

bound by traditional laws and regulations of nations, but by substantive and/or informal, and in some cases, organized networks (Best and Dustan, 2006; Erickson, 2007; Preston, Kobayashi and Man, 2006).

Research on the effect of gender on the expectations and experiences of Hong Kong immigrants to Canada (Preston, Kobayashi and Man, 2006) supports the assertion that the constraints of institutional structures shape decisions as they relate to what is valued as assets of citizenship. Although this research did not draw on the work of Bourdieu, many of the findings resonate with his claims. The stage in the life cycle, gender, class, and internalized perceptions of how to navigate external structures all played a role in how the research participants valued civic engagement, whether locally or transnationally. The study found that these Hong Kong immigrants placed importance on political participation in the form of their ability to vote, which was not only viewed as a symbolic privilege, but also as a way to actively affect the quality of their everyday lives in Canada. For example, it was felt that voting was necessary to offset and fight the racism that Chinese-Canadians experience. In addition, the participants placed importance on mobility, symbolized by the possession of a Canadian passport to aid in international travel. The Canadian passport acts as a form of capital that can be used to gain access to the Hong Kong labour market. The Hong Kong immigrants in this study experienced a lack of sustainable opportunities to enter the business community in Canada. This experience and the fact that business opportunities existed for them in Hong Kong were major factors determining the value placed on the Canadian passport, and by extension, Canadian citizenship. For my research, I too find it important to recognize the contextual nature of skilled immigrants' perception of citizenship values and practices, while also noting that it is not only local constraints that are influential, but also the political-economic realities of "home".

An additional example of the ways that the context of home shapes citizenship practices is shown in research provided by Kelly (2007a) on the level of integration and political participation of Filipino immigrants in Toronto, Canada. His work focuses on the roles of transnationalism and institutional barriers to economic mobility in terms of the possibilities for political participation in Canada. While recognizing that the racialization of Filipinos and their financial obligations to family members remaining in their country of origin are critical factors affecting their ability to participate in Canadian politics, Kelly (2007b) calls for a more comprehensive definition of political activism and integration. He also focussed on activism outside of the norms of electoral campaigns and voting, including activism and advocacy on behalf of marginalized groups, such as advocating for revisions to the Live-In Caregiver Program. He found that while members of the Filipino immigrant community may participate in political activism, it does not follow that they are a cohesive group; this is due to their differing attitudes based on class and internalized historical biases established in their home country.

This dissertation is therefore not simply about the transnational practices of skilled Jamaican immigrants in the Greater Toronto Area, Canada. My research utilizes the concepts of habitus, capitals, and fields to explore the interconnections and complexities of race, class, and gendered constructs among immigrants who identify as middle class. These concepts also allow me to examine the influence of middle class(ness) on strategies to retain validity and gain acceptance in new social spaces, as well as the implications for diasporic politics and influence across geographical space.

Research Methodology and Design

This research is guided by Bourdieu's theory of practice, which speaks to causal mechanisms that affect social action. I also follow Brenner's judgment that the abstract level is an essential analytical lens, as, under modern capitalism, "abstract social forms play a critical

role in mediating social interaction and historical change” (2004, p. 20). According to Bailey, “the methodological question is: How should the researcher go about finding out about social reality?” (2007, p. 51). Historical, social, political, cultural, and economic factors, as well as ethnic, racial, and gendered structures, shape social reality with uneven implications (Bailey, 2007, p. 55–56). This is especially important in research that seeks to understand the myriad spaces, both figuratively and physically, that immigrants engage with. Thus, there are two important questions to ask. First, to what extent do middle-class values passed on over generations influence expectations of and strategies employed by immigrants to retain and/or improve their socio-economic standing in their new home? And second, to what extent do their settlement experiences influence transnational civic engagement within the context of a growing reliance on middle-class emigrants as drivers of economic growth and development in developing countries? For this research, the target group is first-generation, skilled Jamaican immigrants. As part of understanding the mechanisms driving their choices, I will next reflect on the context of the influences of colonialism and capitalism on the development of social relations in the home country of the participants.

The theory and analysis that informed how I conducted this research are grounded in postcolonial feminist political economy. Postcolonial feminist political economy, while recognizing the systemic and powerful nature of social structures that act as integral mechanisms for capitalist expansion, brings attention to the impacts of these forces on the everyday lives of both men and women and the ways in which they effectively challenge systems of oppression. According to Young,

“Postcolonialism” has come to name a certain kind of interdisciplinary political, theoretical and historical academic work that sets out to serve as a transnational forum for

studies grounded in the historical context of colonialism, as well as in the political context of contemporary problems of globalization. (2006, p. 1)

As such, I am particularly interested in the ways that postcolonial feminist political economy can help us to understand how the migration experiences of Caribbean men and women are affected by racist and sexist structures. Taking a postcolonial feminist approach to examine the experiences of immigrants invariably speaks across borders, unsettling “taken-for-granted assumptions about women’s and men’s ‘places’ in societies” (Bondi and Davidson, 2005, p. 15), particularly in the context of uneven relationships between sending countries and receiving or host migrant destinations. As a result, literature is included in this study that enhances the understanding of the social manipulation and domination to which Caribbean men and women have been subjected historically. This context in which many Caribbean immigrants have been raised can be implicated in how they cope with and experience their day-to-day lives as immigrants in Canada.

Feminist methodologies are important to this research for the alternatives they offer to traditional androcentric research. They are considered to be “explanatorily powerful” (Harding, 1987, p. 6), in that they include women’s experiences from their own perspectives, as discovered by a reflexive researcher. As Staeheli and Lawson suggest, “feminist work therefore aims ‘to reduce illusion’ by exposing ‘unseen gendered power relations’” (1995, p. 323 and 335, in Rose, 1997, p. 309). The gendered nature of the experience that skilled immigrants face is a thread that links the various domains that form the foundation of this research. Black feminists have argued that not all women are equally represented in the literature as class and a patriarchal system influence how women’s issues have been addressed (Davis, 1983; Hill-Collins, 2000; Lorde, 2001). Importantly, I exposed moments of gendered power relations and thus symbolic violence

during the interviews. Symbolic violence, a term coined by Pierre Bourdieu, refers to the unwitting complicity of individuals or groups in reinforcing the very structures that maintain categories and distinctions in society (Bourdieu, 1989). It is not necessarily violence that is undertaken on purpose, but may actually be conducted as part of the everyday, such as in the taken-for-granted ways in which housework and social reproduction are “automatically” ascribed to women. It is also a complicit type of violence, however, because women in many instances agree with this normalized role that has been imposed on them, and do not necessarily want to resist the characterization that they are responsible for their families and the home (Lawler, 2005).

Bourdieu’s framework also encourages the use of reflexivity and an awareness of positionality, especially in terms of the power of the researcher in relation to the researched—a view commonly declared by feminist scholars. Mullings (1999) also speaks to the influence of the relationship between the researcher and participants on the validity of the findings in qualitative research. Thus, anxieties experienced by the researcher/author during the study are important to note; this is not only because it helps to show how the experience affects the ways in which we interpret and write our findings, but also as it highlights the vulnerability of authors. For instance, being Jamaican myself, I became aware that, in doing this research, I might be exposing the harsh realities of the Jamaican immigrant experience to the wider public. Due to this realization, during the writing process, I did experience a sense of guilt. This is important for me to point out, as it has never been my intention to depict Jamaican immigrants in an unfavourable manner. However, I found myself concerned that I may be affecting power relations and reinforcing negative stereotypes with this work.

The obligation I felt towards the research group is influenced by the fact that we have

similar backgrounds. In all cases, we are immigrants from Jamaica, and in most instances, we are of similar ages, with tertiary-level education obtained prior to arrival in Canada. We also share similar expectations regarding prospects for integrating into the Canadian labour force, and prior to immigration, considered this to be a significant way in which we would improve and maintain upward social mobility. A positive aspect of these shared traits is the fact that I was able to empathize with each interviewee (Bouma and Atkinson, 1995). Theoretically, this may be understood through the explanation of the habitus shared by social groups, whereby implicit understandings of each other that are infused in normal everyday thinking sway and influence behaviour. This characteristic assisted me in having an appreciation for interviewees' experiences, and also evoked a sense of confidence among the participants regarding my level of authenticity. Interviewing the participants in my research felt similar to looking into the mirror that Fanon speaks of, when he suggests that black people do not behave according to values that are theirs, but instead have been given a mirror that points out, in their reflection, their deep insecurities (Fanon, 1967). In my experience, that deep connection was felt during many of the interviews I conducted between May and November of 2010.

Interviews were conducted at various locations: places of work, church, coffee shops, food courts, and even in the home of a few participants. Some settings were more convenient than others in terms of the quality of audio collected. For instance, an interview conducted at a McDonald's restaurant was particularly difficult to transcribe because of the background noise, and one meeting at a home was shared with four children, including one set of twins. Overall, however, the interviews conducted were for the most part clear and caused no problems regarding the quality of the audio.

Method

My concerns based on my own experience as a recent immigrant to Canada led me to

consider that there were many Jamaicans like me who had difficulty obtaining employment in their field—Jamaicans who had entered Canada with tertiary education, and who had held positions in Jamaica corresponding with their years of experience and their education. I felt that something needed to be done to alert Jamaicans to what awaited them as permanent residents in Canada. At the same time, I was still underemployed myself, after becoming a permanent resident, and was working as a temporary employee performing data entry tasks in Toronto, Canada. In the moments of exploring how to pull myself out of what I considered a slippery downward slope on the socio-economic ladder, I decided to enter the world of academia as it would provide an environment to think through, research, and present my findings to a range of audiences, and no doubt also help me to earn respectability as an expert in my chosen field.

It did not take me long to recognize my theoretical outlook or the ways in which my ideas are framed. My outlook is framed by the particular clashes and opportunities borne out of the interactions between my own habitus as an aspiring black Jamaican immigrant woman and my exposure to the existing social order and its associated structural norms maintained in the context of a modern capitalist society.

I was unable to predict the importance of my immigrant identity on my own understanding of human behaviours and social practices. Respectability and acceptance in my chosen field took precedence as the way in which I thought I would be able to move forward in my new country of residence, and I wondered if this thinking extended to most tertiary-educated immigrants. As considered by Stuart Hall on the fluidity of identity formation,

identities are about the questions of using the resources of history, language and culture in the process of becoming rather than being: not ‘who we are’ or ‘where we came from’, so much as what we might become, how we have been represented and how that bears on

how we might represent ourselves (Hall, 1996, p. 4, in Isin and Wood, 1999, p. 16). Therefore, I wondered if a diminished position in the workforce does affect the ways in which *we* participate in society, and how this shapes the ways in which skilled Jamaican immigrants form and represent perceptions of ourselves to those in our receiving and sending countries.

Research Questions

Initially, I sought to accomplish three objectives in this research. First, I intended to evaluate the labour market experiences of skilled, tertiary-educated Jamaicans in Toronto. Next, I wanted to determine whether participation in commensurate forms of skilled employment in the Canadian labour market influences the propensity of skilled migrants to participate in transnational activities. And third, I wished to examine the effect of transnational civic and political engagement on the social positions of skilled migrants and the value they place on citizenship practice.

The focus of my approach to these objectives was to tease out nuances that in the end would contribute to improved social outcomes. My research strategy was to remain open, to enable me to investigate unexpected topics that might become apparent once my investigation began (Bouma and Atkinson, 1995). Indeed, this was the case when I realized that the participants were also keenly interested in taking active control of their lives in Canada, by utilizing their social networks through established organizations in order to develop the cultural capitals to insert themselves in sought after job positions. Therefore, as my research progressed, the opportunity arose to analyze the use of social capital as a resource through which the participants could develop their cultural capital.

My approach to collecting and analyzing the data has always been motivated by a need to go beyond the singular story of labour market exclusion, which limits our understanding of the migrant experience and the relationship between migration and settlement. Moreover, I

understand that the privileging of African ethnic stories, considered as being shared by all black immigrants, is woefully inadequate as a means of understanding the diverse groups of peoples and the ways in which they integrate in a new society. My approach also illuminates the ways in which immigrants of colour challenge systems that serve to marginalize them through their use of networks that utilize those same systems to their benefit.

Secondary Data

The Jamaican-born population in Canada numbers approximately 123,420 (Ontario Immigration, (n.d.). Of this number, as many as 109,360 Jamaican-born immigrants reside in Ontario, 79 percent of which are found in the Greater Toronto Area, making this area home to the largest Jamaican-born population in Canada. I gathered data from various census and immigrant data sets, such as the Statistics Canada 2006 census, and the Citizenship and Immigration Canada Facts and Figures digital library and annual reports. The data from these various databases provided a general socio-economic demographic profile of immigrants from Jamaica. Gathering this socio-demographic data yielded information on the status and living conditions of the Jamaican-born population, and in particular, individuals with specific combinations of education and work experience. Information gleaned from the data analysis pertinent to my research included: levels of education, categories of work, income levels, labour market activities, home ownership, number of people in the household, and number of hours spent doing unpaid work and leisure. These were cross-referenced with age, gender, and length of stay in Canada. This research provided timely information on the socio-economic positions of Jamaican immigrants overall, but was also useful when combined with data from interviews conducted during this research.

Participant Recruitment

In terms of finding and choosing participants for this research, there are a number of

Jamaican organizations in Canada, a small number of which are focussed on the development of Jamaicans in Jamaica. Most of these organizations are small, with a limited online presence. I started out with the knowledge that Jamaicans had a diasporic organization formally sanctioned by the Jamaican government that meets at the consulate office in the GTA. Churches have also traditionally been viewed as community leaders and are influential among the Jamaican populace. With some churches throughout the GTA serving a large number of Jamaican immigrants, I also considered the church as a site for recruiting a number of participants for this research. Alumni associations and not for profit organizations, such as the Shoreline Educate, were considered additional important sites that fit my criteria. The formal associations through which the participants organized their transnational activities are located in the Greater Toronto Area, and in some cases, these rely heavily on the support of the Jamaican Consulate, also located in Toronto. I obtained the list of organizations from online social networking sites, such as “Facebook”, where some organizations have an active presence, and through word of mouth. There are also organizations in the GTA that focus primarily on the settlement and integration of newcomers to Canada, such as the Progressive Jamaican Association of Canada (PROJAM) and the Jamaican Canadian Association (JCA). When I began this research, I had intended to focus particularly on organizations that had made it their mandate to assist in the economic, social, and/or political development of Jamaica. However, throughout the course of the study, it was clear that participants were spending a significant portion of their time on activities involved with organizations that were geared towards ensuring effective integration in Canadian society. Thus, I expanded my criteria for civic organizations to include those that were also focussed on improving the socio-economic trajectory of the black Canadian community.

It is important to note here that the research focus was on the settlement experiences and

the choices for civic engagement among skilled immigrants through organized associations, and was not about the organizations themselves. In following this focus, I discussed the ways social networks in the GTA were being utilized by the participants to enhance their cultural capital, and whether networks influenced their labour market experiences while simultaneously shaping their politics. Two active organizations stood out as being utilized by some participants in multiple ways, including for their core role as organizations that aim to advance the black, ethnic, and professional community in the GTA. It was clear, therefore, that my research was not going to rigidly follow the original proposal, but would also be influenced by the information received. At this point, I found solace in the wisdom of feminist researchers who have advocated for an approach to research methods that recognizes multiple viewpoints and multiple ways in which knowledges are formed and represented (Mullings, 1999), and I acknowledged the fluidity of my own research as the data revealed itself to me.

Interviews and Participant Observation

My research focussed specifically on immigrant men and women from Jamaica who held a tertiary level of education acquired in Jamaica. In finding participants, I first approached organizations that focussed on the Jamaican community, and which had a mandate that included assisting in the socio-economic development of Jamaica. Some of those interviewed were leaders of such organizations. It should be noted that my research participants all had tertiary-level education, and were not only members of a local social network, but also maintained ties with their home country (Appendix B).

I interviewed 41 persons and attended meetings over a 14-month period. The heavy emphasis on participant experiences contributed to my choice to use a largely qualitative approach, using semi-structured interviews as the primary method of data collection (see Appendix C for interview schedule), in addition to participant observation. During the data

collection phase, I met a number of persons within the Jamaican community who offered insights into their everyday experiences, as well as overall interpretations of their settlement experiences in Canada.

Due to my expected focus on the experiences of skilled Jamaican immigrants who were also members of diasporic organizations in the Greater Toronto Area. I initially sought to interview Jamaican-born immigrants who arrived with post-secondary education, and who were members of one or more organizations that supported the advancement of Jamaicans in Jamaica. The formal associations through which my participants organized their civic activities were also located in the GTA. I gained contact information for these organizations via my participants and through online searches. Initially, I had planned to limit my research to organizations that focussed on assisting the economic, social, or political development of Jamaica, through mobilizing rallies, concerts, and other activities to support institutions in Jamaica. However, over time, it became clear that participants were investing a significant part of their time on activities that fulfilled their intent of becoming more civically engaged in Canada.

At first, I sought permission from senior members of the organizations that I had identified (see Appendix D) to post invitations to members of these organizations through their websites and/or on bulletin boards at the meeting venues requesting participants for interviews. However, I soon realized this was not a feasible way to find participants because most of the organizations met on a monthly basis, and most did not have dedicated full-time staff. I therefore decided to attend organizational meetings in order to recruit directly. Thus, recruitment of participants was done mostly through personal communication.

With regards to recruitment, it was more prudent to communicate with leaders of the organizations for permission to speak to the membership at their meetings, in order to introduce

my research interest and make a call for participants in person. I also accepted names and phone numbers of individuals that the leaders thought fulfilled my criteria. To a large extent, this in-person solicitation of information worked in my favour, because the target group was more responsive to face-to-face communication and also more trusting of a researcher recommended by their leadership. Communicating through posted notices and sending emails as an unfamiliar individual would have been a much more challenging means of recruitment. In effect, I utilized a snowballing technique where participants were recruited from multi-sourced recommendations (Hay, 2010). In total, I interviewed 41 individuals (24 women and 17 men) of various ages and lengths of stay in Canada, all with varying forms of post-secondary education. My research took me to the eastern and western limits of the GTA. However, Ajax, an eastern suburb, has a relatively large number of Jamaican immigrants and was home to the majority of my participants.

Interviews

I conducted semi-structured interviews (see interview questions in Appendix C) with relative flexibility; I omitted questions that were not relevant based on the responses of the participant, and/or did not always ask interview questions in the same order. I expected that the interviews would shed light on the roles that gender and “race” play in the reproduction of labour market inequalities, and how participants’ experiences along with their social position may have shaped their strategies to utilize social networks (capitals). The differences in their experiences of accessing the labour markets in Canada and Jamaica were aspects of the participants’ everyday life that were targeted in these interviews.

In addition, through these interviews, I expected to glean information on how these skilled Jamaican immigrants initially perceived the value of the stock of capitals that they held in Canada, such as education, having English as a first language, past employment experience, and

immigrant status. This would highlight their expectations as to the ease with which they could integrate into the labour market. It would also reveal their preconceptions of what would be of value to them and their level of understanding regarding the fact that assets are not necessarily valuable across borders.

In fact, I discovered that their capitals proved to be ineffective as soon as they crossed the border into Canada. The interviews also brought out participants' interpretations of the reception of their capitals in Canadian society, namely that the ways in which their capitals were received in their new place of residence affected their strategies for being integrated into the labour market. The participants were therefore expected to speak to the particular strategy of retaining or increasing their capitals through civic engagement both in Canada and in Jamaica. The interviews also revealed whether there had been a change in participants' political practice and expectations in Canada as opposed to their previous political engagements and thinking while living in Jamaica. Information gleaned also provided insight into linkages between labour market experiences and the expectations of immigrants regarding participation in transnational civic engagement.

It was also expected that responses to the questions posed in the interviews with the leader or senior member of each organization would help answer questions regarding the motivations for the establishment of these organizations. In obtaining this information, I was able to identify any socio-political development activities undertaken transnationally.

The information gathered from the interviews provided insight into how the participants rationalized their experiences and understood linkages between these experiences and the type of civic activities they practiced (McKendrick, 1999). It was also geared toward assessing opportunities derived from membership in these groups. In addition, the interviews provided

information on how the members of the organizations fostered and maintained relations across borders (Mahler, 1998).

Participant Observation

Over the course of 14 months, I had the opportunity to attend a number of meetings and actively participate in the organization of activities of three organizations. While there are a number of Jamaican-Canadian organizations in the GTA, I initially restricted my research to associations with the specific mandate of assisting in Jamaica's development. These I organized as transnational organizations—associations that performed rallies, concerts, and additional activities to support institutions in Jamaica. With this in mind, I was pleasantly surprised to come across a flyer at a local church announcing the inaugural meeting of a church-based diasporic organization, with the motto “Bridgin the Gap”. Although I was not yet ready to start my research officially, I attended the event and introduced myself to the organizer and its pastor.

Attending that meeting provided me with the encouragement to pursue this research. I was impressed with the ways in which the experience of immigrants in Canada was used as a catalyst for unification. There were discussions around race and historical solidarity, and a clear desire to assist each other upward and away from persistent marginalization. The ways that marginalization is experienced by immigrants in Canada spurred this audience and its organizing members to look inward and contribute to the development of their own people in Jamaica. At the end of the meeting, donations were taken to aid a basic school in the organizer's rural hometown of Moneague, Jamaica. In this setting, there was no discussion as to which institution to support. Interestingly, the meeting followed the typical church program, thereby making the congregation amenable to donating to the organization's charity. The congregation was advised and they gave willingly. From my position as a member of the congregation, I thought this initiative was a success. However, it should be noted that while the auditorium was filled with

mostly Jamaicans and a few others from the Caribbean who met afterwards and expressed their satisfaction and optimism, at the time of this writing, there has not been another such gathering. This points to the fact that there may be a number of organizations with a very short lifespan—whose organizers have the will, but not the capacity to maintain or gain momentum.

While at the time of this writing, Jamaicans gathered based on religion, and other organizations embraced youth involved in the larger body of a diasporic organization. These organizations define their mission thusly:

To cause Jamaicans living in Canada to come together for the purpose of enhancing Jamaica in the areas of national security, business, education and social development; and through continuing liaison and collaboration with the Jamaican Diaspora in other nations, to impact positively the interests of Jamaicans everywhere. (JDCF FL, 2013)

As part of my preliminary information-gathering process, I first met the youth group as a volunteer, when I assisted in the organization of a one-day workshop as part of the Jamaican Diaspora conference to be held in August 2009 in Jamaica. The members were quite enthusiastic about the important contributions they could make to Jamaica's development, especially from a policy perspective. The Jamaican government has been reciprocal in their engagement with this group, having been at the forefront of attempts to woo the diaspora and their investment in the country. Like many governments of countries in the global south, the Jamaican government has developed an interest in its diaspora, and their "capacity to generate flows of knowledge and financial resources" to their home country (Mullings, 2009, p. 2).

The enthusiastic group of volunteers I worked with was hopeful that they could fulfill their mission—or at least be on the path to fulfilling it—of aiding in Jamaica's development. This is evident in the topics that we as a group chose for the workshop: (1) Education; (2)

Culture; (3) Engaging Youth in Governance; (4) Business and Entrepreneurship; (5) Mentorship; (6) Crime and Violence. For each workshop, the Jamaican government's minister responsible for that area was slated to make an address.

For myself, the involvement of the volunteers in my group begged the question as to whether their experiences in Canada had influenced their decision to be involved in Jamaica's development. This was made even clearer to me when one volunteer explained that the opportunity to have an audience with Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper and to help bring positive change to Canadian society was almost non-existent, suggesting that the extent to which she felt she could make a difference was severely limited. She was therefore filled with enormous optimism about the ways in which they could make a difference in Jamaica, in part because of her experience with the relatively easy access to those who had authority to enact change. However, it occurred to me that this was outside the scope of my present research, noting especially the fact that the volunteers were mostly second-generation Canadians. I therefore concluded that their experiences could stand on their own as a separate research project.

Another organization, on the other hand, was established as the broader organization open to all Jamaican immigrants with an interest in maintaining ties with their home country, and, as stated in their mission, enhancing Jamaica's development (JDCE, n.d.). I attended three meetings in the summer of 2010, all located in Toronto. At the time, the organization was led by a Jamaican-born attorney in Toronto; during this research, her tenure expired and she was replaced. I expected that through this group I would have access to a large number of first-generation immigrants. However, at each meeting, there were no more than 10 persons in attendance, with each group mostly composed of retired Jamaicans and some members of the

youth group. Of the small number who attended these meetings, I interviewed 4 individuals, three of whom were in leadership positions.

The meetings I attended focussed on providing the members with updates on the schedule for the upcoming annual diaspora conference to be held in Jamaica and discussing ways in which they would participate. There was also talk of repeating a visit to a low-income community in Kingston, Jamaica, but not very much was decided in terms of the ways they could assist that community. It seemed to me that there was a disconnect whereby those involved in the group only showed interest once a year—at the time of the conference—and did not seek to learn about any further developments of that community.

There was also concern expressed in the meetings that the conference would not be well supported by Jamaican Canadians. The reasons given most often for this concern were the economic crisis and the ways it was impacting the community because of job losses and/or diminished incomes. Moreover, the organization itself was not financially capable of sponsoring any members who expressed a desire to attend the conference. During this period, it was also brought to light that the Jamaican government was facing a tremendous challenge politically, due to the decisions made regarding the extradition of an alleged criminal. Areas in Kingston, Jamaica had become violent. This was of great concern to the few members who were present at the meetings in Toronto, and the consul general at the time, met with this group to speak on behalf of the government of Jamaica and answer any questions or concerns they had. It became increasingly unclear as to whether or not the conference would take place. In the end, the conference was canceled with the disturbance in Kingston, Jamaica named as the lead reason for this decision.

Overall, the association in Toronto was disorganized and lacked community support.

Members spent a lot of energy debating the group's ability to fulfill the administrative requirements of the Jamaican government, and the organization was unable to recruit and maintain new members (discussed further in chapter 7). As mentioned earlier, the meetings were mostly attended by older retired Jamaicans, who were not necessarily educated at the tertiary level. I therefore had to work further to locate tertiary-educated Jamaicans currently in the Canadian labour market.

Gathering Participants

The church and the religious-based diasporic meeting I attended became my starting points for accessing participants. Churches in Toronto tend to house large groups of persons based on their ethnicity and race, and the church I attended was no exception. I explained my research to the pastor and provided him with the official "Letter of Information". From that point on, I was able to recruit members of the congregation to participate in unstructured interviews. Fifty-four percent of the participants in this research were members of a church congregation. The membership of this church in particular consisted largely of persons from a variety of socio-economic levels from the Caribbean. The church is a centre for networking and socializing, both officially and unofficially. The official activities that the church offers through its various programs year round, along with friendships made and maintained through weekly gatherings, serve as a way to support and refresh members for the coming week.

The Black is Beautiful Association was also useful for accessing Jamaicans for this research.³ This organization is a long-standing charitable community organization that focuses on the development of the black community in Canada. It was at this point in my research that I realized I would be able to access potential participants through organizations such as these. I

3. For some organizations and participants, pseudonyms have been used to protect anonymity.

was able to interview a number of individuals with the help of the president of this association.

As time went on, I realized that the state sponsored diasporic association was not the only organization that held meetings for specific events; thus, organizations geared towards Jamaica's development would not necessarily be active throughout the research period. I had to remind myself that my purpose was to understand the ways in which the selected group of immigrants was practicing civic activities, and that my study was not necessarily going to single out the organizations on their own. It was particularly challenging for me to remain unbiased while attending meetings of these organizations, because of what I perceived to be apathy, in addition to low attendance, due to the poor organizational skills of association members.

One type of active organization through which Jamaican Canadians contribute to the development of their home country is the high school alumni association. However, making contact with the Alliance of Jamaican Alumni Associations in Toronto proved unsuccessful. This organization has been in operation since 1988 and is a charitable umbrella organization comprised of 40 Toronto-based alumni associations affiliated with education institutions in Jamaica. It functions as a network support for those involved with their own high school alumni associations, and as such their activities are mainly based on support and networking activities in Toronto.

Alumni activities, especially for high schools, were found to be very strong amongst Jamaicans during this research. Through the interviews, I discovered that a number of participants were actively involved in projects for their former high schools. Most participants credited their sense of obligation in this regard to the fact that their secondary education was, like for many individuals, obtained at a crucial, and perhaps the most insecure, period in their lives—yet it was also their most fundamental period of development. As a result, the participants in my

interviews retained strong connections with their past high school alumni at one time or another. I made many connections with persons whose transnational activities mostly took place through their alumni activities.

There were participants who also steered me towards Shoreline Educate as an organization they would most likely engage with if they were not already members. Shoreline Educate was established in 1987 as an all-women organization with the main mission of supporting basic schools in Jamaica. A basic school is a foundational and critical institution in the Jamaican landscape that provides food and basic education at the kindergarten level. However, it is also an underfunded institution, especially in rural areas. In recent times, Shoreline Educate has expanded its mandate to include the early childhood development needs of children in Canada as well. For the purposes of this research, I was able to interview a member in a leadership position in this organisation who is also a Jamaican-born Canadian citizen.

One organization that presented itself unexpectedly during my research was the Finance Co-op. During interviews with a number of the participants, reference was made to this particular organization. Although it is an organization that focuses on the development of the Jamaican community in Toronto, I was drawn to the effective use of social networks to fill the gaps members of the organization perceived as inhibitors to their success in the job market. Through this organization, I volunteered for the Junior Achievement Day to teach grade 7 students at a middle school in the Jane and Finch community in Toronto.⁴ Along with learning more about the use of social networks to aid upward mobility, through my experience with the group, I also gained insight into the fact that Jamaican immigrants had come to realize that it was as important

4. Jane and Finch is a community located in west Toronto with a population of approximately 80,000 persons, 70 percent of who identify as visible minority (City of Toronto, Jane-Finch Priority Area Profile, 2006).

to provide mentorship and examples to Jamaican youths in Toronto as it was to contribute to individuals and communities in Jamaica.

Opportunities and Constraints

The process of undertaking this research was filled with challenges as well as opportunities. On the positive side, participants were more likely to contribute because of a few factors: (1) my nationality; (2) my gender; (3) my role as a student, and as a PhD student to be more precise, as there was a sense of willingness to assist a fellow Jamaican in pursuing her career choice. For me, expressing my “true intentions” from the beginning garnered trust with interviewees, as opposed to the responses that many researchers face if they choose to be open about their role.

There were also a number of limitations that affected the way in which I carried out my research and analysis. Above, I suggested that many of the participants were willing to be open to my questions because there was automatic solidarity (Best, 2001), due to nationality, race, and, in some cases, gender. I found myself trying to reduce the chances of being in conversations where I would need to express my intentions when I attended diaspora organizational meetings or volunteered with ethnic professional associations, as there were moments when it was clear that respondents were reserved with regard to answering some of my questions. This may have been due to the fact that I am acquainted with some of the participants and they were sensitive about expressing themselves as undergoing hardship. This is significant in recognizing the complexities of relations between the researcher and participants, even if there is the feeling of being an “insider” because of the aforementioned factors. Katherine Browne (2003) explored the complexities of the relationships during her fieldwork on non-heterosexual women (sharing her sexual identity) who were, in some cases, her friends. From this experience, she understood that “levels of ‘sameness’ vary between people” in the sense that there are limits to the benefits of

familiarity (2003, p. 135). In my experience, this complexity was particularly noticeable in participants who avoided revealing their job titles or job descriptions. Restricted responses were also noticeable among some participants who chose to be interviewed as a couple. Prior to conducting my interviews with couples, I was aware that the interactions between these individuals might affect the ways in which they would express themselves. Depending on the couple, I tried to ensure that each person had the opportunity to express their opinion or experience in response to a question I had posed. Based on cues such as facial expressions and other non-verbal signals, I then teased out whether they had anything further to say.

Interestingly, I started out my research open to the fact that individuals who would self-identify as white and Asian could also be Jamaican-born citizens. However, throughout my interviews, I never had the opportunity to interview even one such individual outside of the typical black racial category. This, in one sense, does make my analysis less nuanced; at the same time, my research may prove just as useful to the majority of the Jamaican Canadian population.

There were instances where I interviewed individuals who did not fit the criteria for this research. In these instances, the interviewee was the head of an organization or recommended as a person of interest to this research because of their role in a particular organization. These number three persons.

In my attempt to gather secondary information on the number of first-generation Jamaicans residing in the GTA and their socio-economic status, there were a fair number of challenges. For example, Statistics Canada's census data tends to amalgamate certain categories; Jamaica tended to be lumped together with Latin America and the Caribbean. In instances where population data was found on Jamaicans, it included second-generation individuals, in addition

to all those with ethnic ties to Jamaica. There was not enough data to be found, therefore, on tertiary-educated Jamaican immigrants residing in the GTA. However, I was able to gather data from the public use microdata files, which gave representative figures for all Jamaican-born residents in Canada. I was able to use data from Citizenship and Immigration Canada, which provided information on the various entry categories of Jamaican immigrants.

I expected during the course of this research to use questionnaires along with interviews to gather information on tertiary-educated Jamaicans. However, this proved unsuccessful because of time constraints and challenges with the dissemination of data. It became quite clear that the Jamaican target group would not have been amenable to completing questionnaires online. Based on my experience in the field, it probably would have been more useful to have had the interviewees fill out questionnaires manually immediately following their interview, so as to provide any answers to questions they may have had; alternatively, I could have given participants the option to take a questionnaire home after setting up a specific date of return. In either instance, this was not possible within my timeline. This exercise is another opportunity for future research.

Analysis of the Data

The process of analyzing the data was not linear. It took place throughout different stages in the research process. At some interviews, I took notes while the participant spoke, regardless of whether I had been given permission to use the voice recorder. During those periods, I was able to outline key points of information and themes that I intended to understand, in order to determine if a trend was present. My analysis was conducted in the same fashion when I transcribed the participants' interviews. I decided to transcribe the documents on my own due to the fact that some participants spoke in Jamaican patois. During the lengthy process of transcription, I was able to reflect on the interviews, the tone, and the environment in which we

had our meeting, all of which contributed to my analysis of the material.

As I continued with the interviews, I also started to compile an excel sheet of participants and key characteristics and themes that came out of the interviews. This process allowed for data reduction and organization (Hay, 2010). It was mostly descriptive coding, which was useful in analyzing trends against across characteristics such as age, length of stay in Canada, or type of employment. This form of coding loosely follows the methodology of “grounded theory” developed by Anselm Strauss (Hay, 2010). I did not place the direct quotes in the spreadsheet that were relevant to the heading or theme in place, as that would have affected my ability to condense the amount of information. I allowed the themes to remain in the headings as a reminder of the issues I would analyze.

Organizing the data was a continuous process of reading transcriptions, and sometimes listening again to the tapes, in order to establish the tone with which particular statements were made. It was therefore a time of reflection that made me feel in tune with the participants. I then realized that this process was not far from how I interpret the world around me. Indeed, Cope notes that coding and interpreting is something we constantly do in our everyday lives; we “categorize, sort, prioritize, and interpret social data” (2010, p. 293). It therefore became important to me to acknowledge my positionality and the theories that guide my way of thinking. This leads me to make special mention of the fact that this process is subjective—while it may also be fair to suggest that nothing is truly objective. My subjectivity may be especially expressed through the choices I made in selecting quotes to support various ideas illustrated in the following chapters. While I tried to ensure that some interviewees were not over-represented in this dissertation, I recognize that not all voices will be heard. In an effort to counter the chances of being over-sympathetic to particular interviewees or themes, I endeavoured to

analyze the information from various angles. Therefore, one chapter focuses on the relevance of race, another chapter discusses the relevance of gender, while another speaks to civic engagement locally in the GTA, and yet another speaks to transnational civic activities. Through this method of analysis and the discussion outlined below, I hope to share the nuances that illustrate the complexities of life for immigrants, who make decisions that determine their strategies, ambitions, and politics, not only in their new country of residence, but in their home country as well.

Outline of Chapters

Chapter 1 has examined my own reasoning for taking on this topic, and some of the challenges I faced along the way, in addition to the opportunities I discovered as the author of this study. It has also outlined my research questions, methodology, and my data analysis, and shared some of my insights and observations regarding the interview process.

Chapter 2 examines the main theories that underpin this research, specifically Bourdieu's argument that the habitus of groups and the ways individuals utilize various forms of capitals to their advantage are the prime determinants of social behaviour. Throughout this chapter, I explore the usefulness of Bourdieu's theory of practice, particularly the concepts of habitus, fields, and capitals, in explaining how the dispositions of middle-class, racialized immigrants shape their settlement experiences and their strategies to overcome obstacles to social mobility in Canada. Throughout chapter 2, I also highlight an important feature of this dissertation, which is to focus on individual experiences and the extent to which there are differences even within groups (Crenshaw, 1991). Crenshaw (1991) speaks to the fact that, to understand groups, one must understand the different forms of oppression and how they interact differently, thus affecting persons within the same group in unique ways. This concept of intersectionality is used to support this research, as I show that the ways that the participants determined their own civic

action is a reflection of a number of factors that have affected each individual differently.

One of the key issues discussed throughout this dissertation is that the aspirational and ambitious feature of the middle-class habitus heavily influences expectations of and strategies to maintain or improve this status. I argue that this particular aspirational habitus shaped the ways that the participants in this research determined were best for accessing the capitals necessary to exchange for economic capital. Social capital, or the use of social networks as resources, is discussed as a necessary ingredient in the journey towards upward social mobility.

Pivotal to this dissertation is the skilled Jamaican immigrant. Chapter 3 provides a contextual discussion of the development of contemporary Jamaican society. Jamaica is a country that was colonized for over three hundred years—first by the Spanish and then the British—and, as such, the development of Jamaican societal norms and identities cannot be explained without understanding the ways that inequalities based on race and class shape identity formation and class distinctions. This chapter therefore provides a historical background of Jamaica, and outlines the ways that class, gender, and race are intertwined in this society.

Another important feature of this chapter is that it explains the importance of migration to Jamaicans, and to Jamaica as a whole. Jamaican's culture of migration can be traced to its history, particularly to the post-emancipation period when ex-slaves began the search for employment opportunities beyond the plantation and supported their families through remittances. The concept of habitus is particularly relevant in this chapter, as I illustrate the importance of context to the expectations that Jamaicans have as immigrants settling in another country. I also show how the habitus is shaped by external factors, such as social remittances or information passed on to those who remained in the home country by those who migrated. The habitus, while durable, also evolves, which is very important when analyzing the ways that the

participants in this research used networks as a resource.

Chapter 4 focuses on the ways that Jamaican immigrants recognize and interpret racism's influence on their labour market experiences and socio-economic mobility in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). This discussion reflects the importance of historical dispositions or habitus in shaping the ways that institutions and structures are understood. This is particularly useful in exploring how challenges to immigrants' social position are interpreted and the extent to which the habitus limits or accentuates their interpretation. All participants were black Jamaican immigrants, a characteristic that invariably racializes them and contributes to their marginalization in Canada.

Chapter 5 sets out to expand on an additional factor that presents particular challenges for racialized Jamaican immigrants: gender. This chapter emphasizes that the gendered, historically-internalized dispositions of Jamaican immigrants influence the ways that they respond to barriers in the labour market and the ways they contribute to society. Expectations to retain or improve class position were essential determinants of the ways that the research participants invested or participated in civic activities. In a somewhat negative revolving door, the lack of investments prevented some participants from breaking through the barriers; instead, they were particularly challenged by gendered expectations of the home. Patriarchal beliefs were retained to the benefit of the male participants, regardless of class position, and used as a pacifier as it were to quell the distress they experienced as a result of labour market barriers. These differences in responses to labour market barriers also shaped the extent of their civic engagement. While all research participants participated in voting, volunteering and transnational support was obviously informal and less organized among male disillusioned participants, compared to those who were highly motivated and were on a trajectory to improved social status. Importantly, the attributes

displayed by the participants are clearly connected and illuminate inequities in access and opportunities from the colonial era, which have implications for value systems and survivability embodied over generations.

Chapter 6 examines the role of social and cultural capitals as tools used to build capacity and enhance the possibilities for the participants to improve their socio-economic position. The tools discussed in this chapter focussed on participation in social networks to enhance cultural capital. The types of social networks, however, were also seen to be types of civic engagement amongst people of similar ethnic backgrounds with common interests that enhance civil society.

In chapter 7, I highlight the fact that immigrants' performance of civic activities may also take place transnationally. Transnational activities may be viewed as deviating from underlying expectations of assimilation; however, all participants believed these practices had no impact on the strength of their civic allegiances in Canada. While the participants in this research emphasized that transnational practices had no impact on their level of civic engagement in Canada, chapter 7 explores the ways that their transnational practices were in fact influenced by their experiences in the receiving country. This chapter also underscores the relevance of participants' dispositions or perceptions retained in their lived experiences, prior to their arrival in Canada, as important considerations in discussions of transnational ties. Participants in my research retained ties with their home country, both formally and informally, through alumnae, diasporic organizations, church, or through contact with family and friends. Perceptions shaped over time had a significant impact on the types of transnational activities Jamaicans in this study participated in. In this chapter, the limitations to government-sponsored diasporic organizations are discussed and the rise or growth of "independent" associations are highlighted.

My final chapter reviews the research findings and demonstrates their relevance to larger

debates on the role of habitus and capitals in influencing civic engagement among skilled immigrant groups. It was found that, among the research participants, gender relations, perceptions and experiences of racism, and political attitudes towards Jamaica were heavily influential in affecting their choice of civic activities.

During the course of this research, I recognized many opportunities for further research in the areas of transnational studies, the theory of practice, and civic engagement and policy. These are also presented in the final chapter, reinforcing the range of opportunities for further contributions to scholarly practice in geography.

Chapter 2. Bourdieu: Middle-Class(ness), Immigration, and the Possibilities for Inclusion

This chapter focuses on the relevance of Bourdieu's theory of practice to my research examining the relationship between the settlement experiences of skilled immigrants and the scope, type, and intensity of their civic participation. Bourdieu's theory of practice is supported by three main interrelated concepts: habitus, fields (social space), and capitals. Concepts such as symbolic violence and suffering also put forward by Bourdieu support our understanding of the consequences of uneven structural social relations and are useful in this research.

Throughout the discussion in this chapter, I will refer to scholarly critiques of Bourdieu's theory to examine: the significance of historical, social, and economic contexts in understanding middle-class identities; the social conditions that shape the experience of skilled Jamaican middle-class immigrants in Canada; and the various strategies that groups or individuals may employ to develop a sense of inclusion. I will also include theories around citizenship, race, and gender that will support my arguments. I will argue that there is a link between inclusion and civic engagement in that the struggle for inclusion is also a struggle for the recognition of resources that are valued as markers of being a distinguished member of society (James, 1994). Understanding the struggle for social location is therefore tantamount to understanding the links between the acquisition and control of resources, inclusion, and civic engagement.

Bourdieu (1984) underscores distinctions made along class lines that are exemplified through cultural consumption, where tastes are used as markers of class exhibited by the consumption of particular cultural goods. While investments in education are universally regarded as solid and as a responsible way to improve possibilities for socio-economic improvement, they may be considered of little worth in another society if the provider of that education is not valued. Indeed, Bourdieu (1986) notes that while educational qualifications

along with characteristics of the bearer reflected in their taste for and use of cultural goods brought about by their upbringing, are indicators of class, they do not function equitably as currency across groups. For Bourdieu, the diminished worth of their capitals or investments would affect individuals' everyday lives and also be a reflection of the ways in which they are valued. Educational qualifications and preferences or tastes reflected in behaviours and practices are indicators of class position. However, these indicators are very much spatialized. Immigrants, by virtue of their movement from one society to another, exemplify the complexity in understanding (re)formulations of class identity and thus positions in society. These indicators of class position are very much spatialized, particularly for immigrants. According to Skeggs (2004a), class definition is based on exchange value—that is, on the viability of assets being exchanged. As such, even a moral attribute such as respectability can function as a valuable signifier of class. Being unable to yield the expected benefits from the habitus immigrants hold, because aspects of their taste and preferences do not reflect the behaviours and ideals normalized in the social spaces they occupy in their new country of residence, also therefore results in a crisis of class identity.

For some scholars, such as Heiman, Liechty, and Freeman (2012), the middle class in general emerged as a critical site for considering the implications of globalization, whereby the middle class is particularly influenced by the rise and spread of a neoliberal logic. They argue that the practices and subjectivities of the middle class “are often imbued with affective traces of aspiration and anxiety and the desire for a feeling of security or belonging” (2012, p. 8). The precarious economic position that Jamaica has faced since the mid-twentieth century, for instance, has contributed to reinforcing post-emancipation patterns of using migration as a tool to maintain individuals' positions in the social order. The concept of the habitus is therefore useful

because it allows us to take a nuanced approach to understanding, first, how Jamaican middle-class identity is formed, and second, the stakes involved in maintaining or improving this position in the social order.

Understanding the Jamaican middle-class immigrant as having an aspirational habitus helps in further considering: (1) their expectations of migration to Canada; (2) the ways in which they intend to meet those expectations—that is, the tools they expect to rely on; and (3) the ways they themselves understand their obligations as immigrants in the host country, and even their obligations to their home country

The aspirational nature of members of the middle class is a key factor that drives the need to maintain middle-class identity. This seemingly natural but socially constituted quality or habitus adjusts to the requirements of the social and cultural games associated with particular social fields. Heiman, Liechty, and Freeman (2012) argue that the middle class, in particular, is in a contradictory position depending on whether their interests align with either the proletariat or the bourgeoisie. The experiences of middle-class immigrants may therefore be heavily dependent on the ways their assets are valued in the “host” society⁵ and on their own capacity to acquire appreciated resources. For middle-class women and men of colour, regardless of their middle-class habitus and capitals, their experience as immigrants may therefore be filled with what Bourdieu (2000) calls “suffering” due to their yearning for inclusion.

Capital is conceptualized by Bourdieu as a set of acquired resources that allow individuals to accumulate specific profits by using those resources appropriately (Wacquant,

⁵ I use the term ‘host’ societies to draw attention to the fact that the very discourse of hospitality is indicative of levels of exclusion and foreignness that immigrants, especially those who are racially marked, can never overcome. The term ‘host’ society highlights the difficulties that immigrants face in gaining access to citizenship, for as the term ‘host’ society implies, the ‘immigrant’ can never truly become ‘the citizen’ with the capacity to shape and influence the societies that they join.

2008). In his chapter, *The Forms of Capital*, Bourdieu (1986) focuses on three fundamental forms of capital – economic, social and cultural capital. He also uses the term symbolic capital to emphasize the representational nature of the three capitals that he introduces. Having acquired capital, individuals can next acquire recognition and then use it to obtain the material possessions they aspire to own. Economic capital is the acquisition of material and financial assets. Cultural capital consists of the knowledge or experience acquired over the life course that provides greater access to success than others who have a different set of knowledge or experiences. Groups that have profited the most from cultural capital are viewed as the dominant groups (Bourdieu, 1990; Wacquant, 2008). The third form of capital is social capital, which is defined as the resources accrued by virtue of membership in a group. Cultural and social capitals can be converted to economic capital. Together, these three forms of capital allow individuals to confront structures that challenge their ability to maintain or acquire the social position they seek.

Bourdieu uses the concept of cultural capital to explain how the cultural tastes and associated “judgment” of a dominant group (Bourdieu, 1990; Wacquant, 2008) come to be “presented as universal, and selectively endowed, allowing it to legitimize its domination” and the “preservation of social hierarchies” (Baron et al., 2000, p. 3). Importantly, cultural capital is convertible to economic capital not only because it consists of knowledge or experience acquired over the life course that enables an individual to succeed, but also because it offers opportunities for participation in decision-making processes. In essence, cultural capital consists of knowledge or experience acquired over the life course that provides greater access to success than for others who have acquired a different set of knowledge and experiences. For example, this form of capital allows one to be familiar with, and at ease with, using institutionalized and valued

cultural forms such as the library, theatre, and museum.

Bourdieu also identified networks and relationships as assets, or social capital, that can be transformed into other forms of capital. Social capital is referred to as a resource that provides benefits derived from group membership, institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition, and durable networks of influence and support (Baron et al., 2000). Social capital, according to Bourdieu, is “made up of social obligations (“connections”)”; this capital is “convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital” (1986, p. 4). Of all the other capitals, social capital is a personal asset that provides tangible advantages to individuals, families, or groups that are closely connected. Determinants of group membership include holding similar occupational positions, experiencing similar conditions of existence, and/or being endowed with similar dispositions (Isin and Wood, 1999), while the effects of social capital are found in the forms of “a ‘helping hand’, ‘string-pulling’, and the assistance derived from the ‘old-boy network’” (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 27).

The main advantage to be gained from the establishment of durable networks is status (Bourdieu, 1986). Status can be “earned” through membership in groups, such as through membership as a citizen (Bauder, 2008), which has traditionally entitled group members to similar rights and legal status. Networks enable individuals and groups to derive status and prestige through the relationships they cultivate. However, if capital earned through networks is not convertible to economic capital or useable in some other way to create advantage then it cannot be considered a form of social capital. In fact, not all networks have the capacity to be mobilizable (Anthias, 2007). Anthias (2007) considers all social capital as belonging to one of two categories: “positively advantaged social capital” or “negatively advantaged social capital”. Positively advantaged social capital is characterized mostly by the dominant ethnic group, who

holds a position of advantage within social hierarchies and has the power to establish boundaries that further increase their own advantage, such as having access to the best for their children and receiving further promotion in the workplace. This power also allows the dominant group to limit the access and chances of success of those in a marginalized position. Negatively advantaged social capital, on the other hand, refers to social capital that is used as a coping strategy. Groups holding this form of capital use their networks defensively in an effort to “integrate” so as to reduce the potential for further setback. For this group, then, it is important to accumulate capital that is valuable to the dominant group (Bourdieu, 1986).

Groups therefore strategically create, valorize, and endorse different forms of capital. However, there is an arbitrariness when it comes to how various forms of capital are valued. The value of capital is determined by both the holder of that capital as well as the (metaphorical) social space within which that particular holder exists (Bauder, 2008; Hage, 2009). In fact, there is nothing intrinsically valuable about any of the capitals individuals or groups accumulate, meaning that the value of various forms of capital can be diminished or accepted depending on the social space in which it is being offered. For instance, tertiary-level credentials are highly valued in Canada, but credentials from Canadian institutions are more valuable in Canada than most credentials from most other countries. Thus, for many individuals living in Canada, these particular credentials are rendered useless if they are not convertible in the Canadian context. People are therefore dependent on validation given by institutions and people in authority to recognize their particular credential as a useful resource. Otherwise, that credential is deemed to be worthless, and those who were depending on its convertibility face an uphill battle in a struggle to access appropriate forms of capitals.

While Anthias (2007) argues that not all networks or forms of social capital will be

mobilizable, immigrants do need to accumulate capitals in order to succeed. However, their reliance on networks is not necessarily geographically fixed. In fact, assets may be accumulated in one country, but positively advantaged social capital may be accessed in other countries. Ley and Kobayashi (2005) found that children of Hong Kong immigrants, who obtained tertiary education in Canada, but still experienced exclusion in the labour market, used a combination of social networks established with members in their home country and the high value placed on their Canadian education to access high level jobs in Hong Kong. All capitals work together then towards the goal of accumulation, which in turn facilitates social positioning. It is not only social capital that facilitates social positioning, but cultural and economic capital as well.

Middle-class(ness): A Bourdieusian Perspective

While Bourdieu recognizes that “official” determinants of class positions, such as income, occupation, and education level, inform society of a person or group’s social position, he focussed more on cultural practices as markers of class. Neoclassical economic theory, which is the dominant way in which economics is understood, is premised on, among other things, the idea that “every individual also has a set of preferences which determine what goods and services they like to consume.” However, “the theory does not concern itself with explaining how those preferences evolve” (Stanford, 2008, p. 55–56). For Bourdieu (1984), however, taste functions as a marker of status within class and is conflated with the socio-economic categorization of class. He shows how taste functions as a marker of class through an analysis of the relationship between social groups and social status, on the one hand, and taste in clothes, food, furniture, etc., on the other. He argues that the cultural value judgments that emerge are deeply entwined with social divisions of class, wealth, and power that are observable in the ways that members of each social group handle themselves in particular situations. This sense of culture and its associated practices among groups or individuals is called habitus.

The habitus becomes a principle of structuring activities that are reflected in a person's behaviour or dispositions. Dispositions are products of the way culture is acquired and are also an expression of our relation to culture. In other words, they reflect internalized knowledge of how to act appropriately in specific social settings. For instance, how manners are transferred across generations can be seen as a form of habitus. Habitus is a system of durable, transposable dispositions that mediates an individual's actions and the external conditions of production (Bourdieu, 1990). As a concept, habitus relies on both the internal and external impacts of the past and present on groups/individuals. It is historical in the sense that it is passed down over generations, and social in that behaviours are passed on by family members and/or through educational institutions. In other words, habitus "invokes understandings of identity premised on familial legacy and early childhood socialization" (Reay, 1997, p. 227). The concept of habitus durability refers to its rootedness in an individual over generations, to the extent that they are not able to recognize its influence on their behaviours, thus making it unconscious and not easily modified (Painter, 2002). Bourdieu argues that habitus as a form of knowledge therefore does not require consciousness or awareness of effort, ensuring the reproduction of particular class-based practices among social actors.

The lack of awareness of effort is a key component in understanding how the habitus contributes to the reinforcement of class distinctions. Behaviours, attitudes, and judgements of group choices towards food, clothes, mannerisms, and ability to communicate are used to determine the ability of people to be members of various groups. The behaviours are, however, given particular value, based on the social space in which the person is located. The social space or field, according to Bourdieu, has its own set of rules that is exclusionary—that is, it determines who is included or excluded. The habitus of individuals or groups therefore adjusts,

without them consciously seeking to do so, to the rules of the social and cultural game (Bourdieu, 1988).

Similarities in behaviours among groups in particular fields, or social spaces, give the impression of homogeneity in the dispositions associated with particular social positions among groups such as the middle class. However, categorizations such as class often elide difference within groups. The migration of groups that self-identify as middle class thus presents an opportunity to observe the ways difference is made apparent within groups. Many immigrants, for instance, are considered outsiders—not only by virtue of their citizenship status, but also by characteristics that they have no control over, such as the colour of their skin. Therefore, class as an identifier and a means of inclusion may become redundant upon entering a new country, because the assets immigrants relied on to determine their legitimacy as middle class are no longer valid. Instead, other markers become more important, in addition to the typical markers of educational credentials, such as the distinctive cultural habits and behaviours of the members of the receiving society.

Social existence means difference, and difference implies hierarchy. Where one is placed within the hierarchy is dependent on his/her endowment of capital. Capital is “any resource effective in a given social arena that enables one to appropriate the specific profits arising out of participation and contest in it” (Wacquant, 2006, p. 7).

Bourdieu’s research on the practices of groups focussed heavily on middle-class French society, where preoccupations with the way in which people consumed art acted as a distinct way of classifying groups. Bourdieu used this site to theorize the ways in which this behaviour is passed on and the conditions necessary to perpetuate the social order. He considered the practice of adding aesthetic status to the banal everyday as an important indicator of the way dominant

groups seek distinction and perpetuate their dominance in society. For Bourdieu, this practice can be applied to any behaviour practiced in society—not just art. The social conditions that distinguish groups are therefore contextual spatially as well, in that they are dependent on the historical context in which cultural practices were developed in particular countries.

Apart from class being defined by the ability of groups to consume or access goods and services (Bourdieu, 1984), “class is also performed corporeally in the sense that embodied attributes such as gender and race are implicated in class positioning” (Kelly, 2007b, p. 9). The legacies of colonialism and slavery for black Jamaicans, for example, are integral factors that determine the ways middle-class identities have been shaped over the years, and performed in keeping with limitations imposed according to race and gender during that period. The formation of the habitus among middle-class Jamaicans is therefore interwoven into the ways that gender and race in particular have shaped social relations and economic opportunities over generations.

It is therefore always important to recognize the spatial contextual nature of analysis in this research. Kelly, for instance, uses the experience of racialized Filipino immigrants in Canada within a transnational context to illustrate the influence of location on which resources are valued, in addition to the implication of location coupled with race for socio-economic class positioning. In the case of Filipina immigrants, there is a generalized association of their bodies with subordinate work as domestic helpers, which has “direct implications for how those bodies are incorporated into positional hierarchies” (Kelly, 2007b, p. 10), regardless of the high levels of credentials they hold upon their arrival in Canada. However, Kelly found that subjective understandings of class positions and class identity were not the same within this group, depending on the location of and class relationships established in families in the sending countries. By being able to send money to their families in the Philippines, these immigrants

reinvent the class relationships they maintain in the Philippines, as opposed to their class positions and relations to the means of production in Canada. In the Philippines, for instance, some individuals are able to become business owners because of investments made through remittances to the Philippines. Thus, “while they are engaged in one set of class relationships in Canada, they are engaged in quite different ones in the Philippines” (Kelly, 2007b, p. 19). Kelly suggests that, when people are perceived in a racialized or marginalized way, their class identity becomes re-defined by the dominant group. The practices of various groups, while visible to the outside observer, however, have “invisible” cultural meanings that can only be interpreted by “insiders” (Bourdieu, 1984; Hofstede, 2001). Their habitus or dispositions are represented as “unnatural” because the space is not entirely in tune with the social conditioning they are accustomed to.

Gendered Considerations

Bourdieu’s focus on the experience of groups in societies has also been found to be useful in articulating the complexity of gender (McNay, 1999). According to McNay, gender is a “constantly reiterated cultural norm that is deeply inscribed upon our bodies” (1999, p. 97). As such, it operates at every scale and locks capabilities to specific sites—that is, from the individual body all the way to the global scale. Bodies, for instance, internalize social norms influenced by the cultural and economic histories of their homelands, which are passed on generationally. Skeggs (2004a), however, emphasizes that “attributes” are valued in one field more than another, setting limits on the possibilities that could be gained by their exchange. Skeggs (2004a) gives the example of black working-class males whose inscription of being “cool” is valued highly amongst themselves from what she calls a “non-dominant symbolic perspective”. However, this same body is categorized by others as criminal, dangerous, and untrustworthy, thereby setting limits for their ability to exchange their cultural capital for

economic capital in a field where the dominant group views them negatively.

The process of misrecognition, as Skeggs (2004b) calls it, works in the interest of the powerful or dominant group as it utilizes hidden systems of inscription and classification to the detriment of the less powerful, who in this case are black working-class males. She shows how particular discourses make classed selves, through processes of exclusion, by establishing constitutive limits and by fixing attributes to particular bodies, and notes that “discerning how positioning, movement and exclusion are gendered through these systems of inscription, exchange and value is central to understanding how differences (and inequalities) are produced, lived and read” (Skeggs, 2004a, p. 4).

The habitus is therefore also heavily influenced by the limits imposed on gendered bodies. Iris Marion Young (1990a), for instance, in showing how women and men approach tasks differently, illustrates that there is a culture of fear passed on generationally to girls who then practice being fragile and expect to be protected by others. Normalized behaviours passed on over generations cause experiences to be different along gender lines, even under similar circumstances, due to cultural persuasions of how to behave and respond to those circumstances. As will be shown in chapter 5, gendered ideologies are expressed in the differential yet normalized practices of men and women in the home. These norms and expectations have had clear repercussions on gender relations among the research participants.

Changing global economic processes have also been cited by geographers as external factors that pose particular concerns for women, including the ways these factors affect their labour market participation and household dynamics (McDowell, 2006; Moghadam, 1999). Massey (1984) argues that understanding the dynamic of household and gender relations is crucial for understanding larger-scale, socio-economic changes. This is reflected in the ways that

decisions are made to migrate. With changing spatial divisions of labour, where labour has become redefined based on gendered skilled attributes (Massey, 1984), scholars have shown that women are sometimes more likely to migrate for employment opportunities. Skilled migrant women may be better able than unskilled women to utilize their privileged position within labour markets to mute gender hierarchies, particularly when there are global shortages within those labour markets. While this may be the case in areas considered to have shortages in labour supply, roles in certain sectors have become devalued by virtue of those sectors being overwhelmingly occupied by female employees (Bourdieu, 1984).

Skilled immigrant women are not only affected negatively in terms of the lack of economic opportunities and equal pay (as men from the same group), as well as the preponderance of part-time jobs with few benefits, but they also face an even tougher time improving their financial position because of the dual role expected of them as a supportive home-maker and emotional confidant (Hewlett, 2002). Cultural capital for skilled racialized immigrant women is not only diminished at the border if their credentials are not accepted, but women also face greater restrictions as they encounter increased demands to fulfill their social reproductive roles at the household level.

Parvati Raghuram's (2004) work focuses on the changing role of women in the contemporary labour market in terms of skilled labour and the ways that the shift in skills of the primary migrant reconfigures family migration. Looking into the medical labour markets in the United Kingdom (U.K.), Raghuram argued that the shift from unskilled to skilled labour migration has influenced the nature of family in the U.K. However, a 2000 report published by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) regarding globalization and women's work notes:

Downsizing affects women's home lives as well. Women experience increased stress when men lose employment, as they are forced to take on more of the financial responsibilities. In a world where men's self-worth is often tied up in their jobs, women with jobless husbands may well need to provide extra emotional support. During the Asian economic crash, "The Korean government promoted a national slogan 'Get your Husband Energized' that called on women to help offset the impact of the crisis on men, who on becoming unemployed or bankrupt were subject to depression."

As shown in the quote above, masculinity is also bound up with the contradictions of capital, with events such as global economic restructuring, high unemployment rates, and the reconfiguration of work towards "flexibility" significantly impacting the ways masculinity is practiced and experienced among men of different races and sexual orientations. For instance, Jamaican middle-class men "convince themselves" and others that they are being marginalized when they are feeling threatened by the advancement of some women (Lewis, 2003). Moghadam (1999) also notes that, on one hand, more women are employed, and as a result, are able to earn and control income, and resist gendered forms of oppression; however, most of the work that is accessible to women is low paid and precarious.

Race as a Cornerstone Identifier

Race is also a significant factor in defining the ways social groups experience the everyday and the way they are valued. Scholars argue that racialization maintains hierarchies by instilling beliefs that one group (white) is superior over the other (non-white), exploited group (Loomba, 2005). For post-colonial writers such as Fanon, whose writings focussed on the challenging social relations between powerless black colonized subjects and powerful white European colonizers, racialization is observed in the ways that black persons from once colonized places behave. The Europeanized colonial subject, Fanon points out, is "compelled to

write out a script that is not their own” (Fanon in Pile, 2000, p. 263–264). At the same time, Stuart Hall, citing anecdotal evidence, (Farred, 1996) argues that his Jamaican family’s aspirations for upward mobility in the 1950s, from lower middle class to upper middle class, were based on imitating the idealized English Victorian family. It must be noted, that race, gender, and class do not act as separate strands of social relations, but that they “mediate and intensify each other” (Bannerji, 2005. p. 144). They all work together to impress upon the individual or group the way in which they are perceived in the social world. Bannerji also emphasizes that a person’s experience in life is felt “all together and all at once” in that the various categorizations are seen, perceived, felt, and lived not “divisible separately or serially” (2005, p. 144–145).

Geographers have highlighted the importance of space and place as working together with socially produced markers of difference in making the experiences of persons different depending on their geographic location (McKittrick and Peake, 2005). This is essential to understanding the habitus as durable—that is, as similar within groups over many generations. As I will explore further in chapter 3, the habitus of marginalized groups such as colonized and post-colonial black Jamaicans is one that recognizes their own position within the social world as being based on the historical experience of low economic status, and political and social exclusion, due to severe forms of discrimination. As a result, they have developed a habitus or culture of possibility (Gladwell, 2008) that is keen on making effective use of any opportunity that may come their way. In this way, they work towards adapting their habitus to being useful depending on their spatial location and the attendant rules for improved socio-economic trajectories. Fanon, for instance, upon realizing his social position to be marginal and on the fringes after being pointed out in public by his skin colour, speaks of being “completely

dislocated”. Interestingly, he found himself yearning simply to be accepted as “a man among other men” (Fanon, 1967, p. 112). It is possible that his habitus as a descendant of slaves and ex-slaves who strived for independence, respectability, and inclusion swelled within him and charted his politics onwards. Using Bourdieu’s concept of the habitus helps me to understand how race, class, and gender constructs passed on among racialized members of post-colonial societies, such as Jamaica, influence their pursuit of inclusion in a new social space or field, where cultural assets are the preferred currency that distinguishes groups based on long-term citizenship.

Symbolic Violence, Suffering, and the Quest for Full Citizenship

Three important conclusions can be drawn from Bourdieu’s work on the way inequalities are reproduced and the material effects of inequalities in societies.

First, social order is maintained through symbolic violence, which results from the general acceptance of the status quo as normal—that is, not historically and culturally produced. With symbolic violence, agents do not recognize that their situation is manufactured. Instead, they work towards their own self-interest within the context of their own social position, and, in turn, reinforce the very structures that limit them. Bourdieu focuses his explanation of symbolic violence through class struggle as:

the form of class struggle which the dominated classes allow to be imposed on them when they accept the stakes offered by the dominant classes. It is an integrative struggle and, by virtue of the initial handicaps, a reproductive struggle, since those who enter this chase, in which they are beaten before they start, as the constancy of the gaps testifies, implicitly recognize the legitimacy of the goals pursued by those whom they pursue, by the mere fact of taking part (1984. p. 165).

Here, he suggests a tension between groups, as one group tries to narrow the gap that prevents it

from having access to the same resources that would enable equality in status and power. However, he also suggests that these gaps persist and that the dominated classes will remain in pursuit of equality, which in turn shapes their politics:

Adapting to a dominated position implies a form of acceptance of domination. The effects of political mobilization itself do not easily counterbalance the effects of the inevitable dependence of self-esteem on occupational status and income, signs of social value previously legitimated by the sanctions of the educational market. It would be easy to enumerate the features of the life-style of the dominated classes which, through the sense of incompetence, failure or cultural unworthiness, imply a form of recognition of the dominant values (1984, p. 386).

In other words, social order is maintained through symbolic violence through the ways in which groups accept standards as norms, legitimating their own position without fully recognizing their complicity in maintaining the social order.

Second, the habitus functions within the overall context of the rules embedded in a particular field or social space. The habitus is learned, passed down through generations within the context of the social order in which agents are located. Hence, groups that have been understood as marginalized, such as women and racialized minorities, function in keeping with the familiar, expected norms that they carry through generations in the form of the habitus. However, challenges or breaks that problematize “natural” behaviour may be experienced if conditions change that challenge groups to recognize that their existing habitus may not be useful in particular contexts.

Third, suffering is the tangible outcome of symbolic violence that can be seen in the actions of those who are on the fringes of society. Exclusion and the maintenance of the status

quo persist within a self-sustaining system that relies on what Bourdieu calls misrecognition—a primary feature of symbolic violence whereby groups or individuals mistakenly adhere to the idea that these beliefs are commonplace, not recognizing that instead they have been culturally and historically produced (Bourdieu, 1986). For Bourdieu, actions taken by groups within society still work towards maintaining the social order and the familiar. This occurs at every level in society, but may be particularly true of racialized persons who strive to maintain a middle-class identity because the social order is unequally stacked against racialized groups.

These conclusions highlight that members of receiving countries also function within their own rules and ideals that structure society, and in some cases these do not coordinate with the expectations of new immigrants. These conclusions are therefore relevant to socio-geographical migration studies of middle-class immigrants because they point to the inherent difficulties individuals face upon settling in another location with different rules, expectations, and values.

In *The Weight of the World*, Bourdieu argues that ordinary men and women who experience hardship in their lives have no other recourse when they have few means by which to make themselves heard, and can only “protest outside the official frameworks or remain locked in the silence of their despair” (2000, p. 648). I argue that civic engagement is a practice immigrants utilize to try to remake or reshape their habitus, in order to increase their value or distinction by making their difference indistinguishable even as racialized minorities. If one embodies a habitus that is valued by society, then it becomes a way that one can be similar. This aspect of the experiences of immigrants is captured in chapter 6, titled “Using Capitals to Earn Capitals: Insights into Processes of Civic Engagement in the GTA”, which explores the various ways that the participants in my research used organizations as a tool to ensure acquisition of

recognizable and valued capital.

Citizenship is commonly understood to be a reciprocal relationship between individuals and the state, whereby the state is obligated to provide accessibility to equal rights, fairness, opportunities, and justice (Marshall, 1950), while members of the state have responsibilities and duties. The concept of citizenship tends to be associated with the particularities of the bounded nation-state, whereby different forms and requirements for citizenship exist in different nation-states. It tends to also be understood as universal in that each person receives or has access to the same level of obligations and they are each asked to fulfill the same obligations of the state, thus implying equal opportunities for inclusion. However, these two aspects of citizenship (membership to a nation-state, and an official system of rights and obligations) have been problematized by scholars, such as Muir (1997), Young (1990b), Lister (1997), Isin and Wood (1999), Bauder (2008), and Sassen (2002), to name a few. The major concern is the fact that citizenship is not equal across groups and has in fact been exclusionary regardless of its implications for inclusivity (Lister, 1997). Muir (1997), as noted by Valentine (2003) suggests that this is particularly acute for persons who experience racial discrimination and harassment, and who, as a result, are unable to exercise their rights before the law. The assumption that members of a nation-state are homogenous has been destabilized with increased international migration and the opening of national boundaries for labour migrants. Sassen (2002), for instance, highlights the use of civic participation as a tool by undocumented migrants to argue for legitimate residency and to demonstrate social deservedness and national loyalty. Civic participation is therefore tantamount to a resource, a form of capital that is convertible to other form of capital such as citizenship.

However, adjusting the habitus in order to comply with the rules of the game in any

social field is problematic, as explained by Bourdieu (1984), as the strategies employed consistently align with the persistent struggle to be accepted and valued. Middle-class values and ideals and the reproduction of the very structures that remind immigrants of their illegitimacy are maintained in the process. Moreover, civic engagement geared towards recognition illuminates both the aspirations of and the challenges to becoming a valued asset in Canadian society. This practice results in symbolic violence perpetuating exclusionary systems and veiling the suffering experienced in private. While the recognition to be gained is confirmation or validation of the assets acquired and used as markers of class position, the suffering, in effect, is exposed in the struggle for social status—that is, to be recognized and included.

Institutionalized barriers, such as the systematic discounting of foreign credentials and state-imposed inequitable working conditions, to socio-economic upward mobility and integration are also primary determinants of immigrants' political participation in Canada (Kelly, 2007a; Fernando, 2007). The experience of moving away from one's home country may also contribute to the feeling of being out of place (Sayad, 2004). Recent academic debates on transnationalism, immigration, and citizenship, however, have largely ignored immigrants' perspectives on citizenship (Leitner and Erkhamp, 2006). I argue that relying on social networks through organizations such as the church may contribute to a sense of belonging, not only because of the welcoming nature of the institution, but also because of the homogeneity based on the ethnicity and racial identity of its membership. While civic engagement is utilized by immigrants to try to remake or reshape their habitus in order to increase value or distinction by making their differences indistinguishable, the strategy employed to accomplish this is dependent on learning cultural norms from membership within ethnic-based associations.

With this in mind, then, racialized immigrants are resisting social exclusion through civic

engagement. Sibley (1998) directs us to be more critical of the concept of social exclusion, because it suggests that efforts to integrate the majority of groups are adequate and that there are only few on the margins who are weakly connected and need help. Social exclusion, however, is an expression of unequal power relationships, whereby categorizations of groups of people not only serve to exclude groups, but also maintain areas that are homogenous and inclusive only to select groups. This process is particularly spatial as it also manifests itself in a distancing and “purification” of space. This practice, Sibley (1998, p. 120) maintains, increases the visibility of those who do not belong thereby increasing the likelihood of their exclusion. For instance, Sibley notes that, “unemployment and associated deprivations, particularly poor housing and inadequate education, can, in combination, amount to a denial of citizenship” (1998, p. 119). This, I believe, helps us to recognize that denials of equal access to the rights and opportunities afforded by citizenship are based on fluid definitions of groups and negative stereotypes that are not static and fixed on only one segment of the population. This dissertation focuses on the challenges faced by middle-class, skilled immigrants whose experience of exclusion is not based on lack of formal citizenship, but on their construction as cultural outsiders made visible by their skin colour.

In a preface to *The Suffering of the Immigrant*, by Abdelmalek Sayad (2004), Pierre Bourdieu characterizes the immigrant as “always in the wrong place and . . . as out of place in his society of origin as he is in the host society”. As a result, he continues, the immigrant provides scholars with the opportunity to “rethink completely the question of the legitimate foundations of citizenship and of relations between citizens and state, nation or nationality”. In my research, I have explored the use of organized social networks by skilled Jamaican immigrants, whether through church organizations, professional associations, or community organizations, as a form

of social capital. I have tried to understand the benefits or advantages that membership provides, and show its associations with the particular needs of this immigrant group. In doing so, I am able to make the connection to civic engagement, in that their choice of activities as a group is reflective of the “issues” they decide are worth their participation in political action. These “issues” may also reflect a response to racialization, an entrenched structural line of difference that negatively affects their communities.

As previously mentioned, scholarship has accepted the notion of the immigrant practicing transnational relationships, in which they maintain and cultivate relationships in more than one place, usually in their country of origin and their host country, simultaneously. This practice has become almost effortless due to technological advancements in communication and travel. Research tends to focus on defining these relationships and individuals’ ability to maintain them (Basch et al., 1994; Faist, 2000; Portes, 2008), the impact of these relationships on the individuals “left behind” (Levitt, 2001), and the economic and social development benefits and challenges to the country of origin due to migration (Todoroki et al., 2009). Bourdieu (Sayad, 2004) reminds us, however, that the analysis of the immigrant tends to focus on the perspective of the host society, which looks at the immigrant problem from the perspective of immigrants causing the problem. He further states that social scientists “in effect fail to ask themselves about the diversity of causes and reasons that may have determined the departures and oriented the diversity of the trajectories” of immigrants (Sayad, 2004, p. xiii). Recognizing that immigrants are also emigrants, Bourdieu suggests that the particularities associated with their origin will explain “many of the differences that can be seen in their later destinies” (Sayad, 2004, p. xiii). Thus, my next chapter will place the Jamaican middle class in context using the concept of habitus.

Chapter 3. A Contextualized Discussion of the Jamaican Middle Class

Introduction

The processes through which groups in societies are distinguished are based on value judgments (Bourdieu, 1984), but these judgments are also subject to power relations derived from historic and systemic processes of positioning. These power relations are based on, among other things, gender (Skeggs, 2004a), race, and nation (Hage, 1998). Making classed selves, according to Skeggs, is accomplished “not just through productive constitution (namely bringing the self into existence) but also through processes of exclusion by establishing constitutive limits and by fixing attributes to particular bodies” (2004a, p. 6). The conditions or rules that determine how identity groups come to be established change over time and are impacted by the socio-political conditions unique to particular settings. Class is thus a determinant of the way groups are valued, and their performance cannot be completely understood abstractly but must be placed in context.

This dissertation focuses on the experiences of skilled Jamaican immigrants and must therefore address the context within which Jamaicans have developed their value judgments, and the way in which Jamaican society is stratified. The purpose of this chapter is two-fold: first, I explore the complexity of the development of the Jamaican middle class, recognizing the dialectical nature of this process and its long-term implications for its continued transformations; I then highlight the importance of migration in (re)shaping identity and modes of obligations.

Jamaicans are a racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse group of people, whose development is anchored in the differentiated experiences of their ancestors under colonial rule, which lasted approximately three hundred and fifty years. Colonialism in the Caribbean at the beginning of the eighteenth century was meant to provide Europe with the raw ingredients to build its Empire (Richardson, 1992). The maintenance of the Caribbean colonies depended

heavily on the exploitation and subjugation of black Africans for labour, thus perpetuating long-term repercussions for race relations, socio-economic inequalities, gendered experiences, and nation building. This chapter highlights the development of the contemporary Jamaican class system within this context. Jamaica's social world, like for many post-colonial nations, has been shaped by major historical social events in the contexts of slavery, colonialism, and imperialism; it must therefore also be understood in reference to the manipulation of race and gender ideologies shaping strong distinctions along class categories (Brah, 2007; Alexander, 1977). Class divisions since emancipation have become complex—that is, barriers to improved social mobility have been exacerbated and rooted in historical alignments of race, affecting access to education, freedom to travel, land ownership and the right to exercise franchise (Alexander, 1977).

The generational, durable, and inculcative dispositions that are legacies of the colonial experience are important factors to consider when analyzing the ways in which skilled, tertiary-educated Jamaicans make sense of and respond to their experiences as immigrants. As noted by Isin and Wood, “the history of minority groups – their formation and their understanding of themselves – is integral to the development of their identity, from within and without” (1999, p. 49). This chapter therefore also emphasizes the historical process of power relations implicit in the production of immigrants' identities, and their resultant citizenship practices. It is organized in three sections that are based on significant periods in Jamaica's history: the influence of colonization on class structure (1655–1838); the post-colonial, but pre-independent Jamaica (1838–1962); and the contemporary nation-building period based on multiracialism (1962–present).

Colonialism and the “Roots” of a People

Jamaica (see Appendix E) was established as an exploitative colony—that is, it provided

for the needs of Britain from 1655–1838, through the use of African slave labour (Simmons, 2010), and was instrumental in the shaping of British modern industrialism (Beckles, 1998). Slavery, it has been argued by Williams (1964), was for the most part driven by economics. It must be noted, however, that the social order was shaped by the plantation system and the experience of slavery, indentureship, and colonization, and this has affected racial groups very differently (Best, 2001).

The development of Jamaica's social structure has been heavily influenced by its history and development as a peripheral nation that has served the needs of core countries by both being a primary producer of raw materials and a consumer of more expensive finished products. Jamaica was the largest and most important British West Indian colony, and had more than half the slaves in the entire British West Indies (Williams, 1964, p. 206). The complete domination of black Africans serving as slaves in the Caribbean to the dominant white European emergent capitalists has profoundly shaped the relationships among peoples in the post-colonial landscape. In other words, racial ideologies were indeed at work during the period of colonization and slavery, but it is important to recognize that the economic needs and priorities of the imperial colonialists were also significant contributors to social relations. The machinery in place to assert dominance was comprehensive in its exclusion of the slave in the sense that it instilled characterizations of slaves through laws and discourses of deviancy and lack of respectability. Respectability, according to Green, was “based on Eurocentric norms and values, embedded in class-color systems of stratification and promoted by white churches, European marriage and a colonial educational system” (2006, p. 9)—all of which were outlawed for slaves, but tended to be a privilege for upper-class Europeans. The racial order placed those close to or considered “authentically” white at the top of the social hierarchy—meaning that they had full access to

resources, assets, and opportunities—while the black majority, with restricted access to the means of production, was placed at the bottom of the hierarchy. Social constructions of race thus became a signifier of social position (Alexander, 1977). Whiteness became a signifier of privilege and full access to political, economic, and social power, while blackness was synonymous with disenfranchisement, marginalization, and the denial of citizenship (Beckles, 1998; Bryan, 1996). The society was characterized by a self-serving ethnic pecking order and enforced cultural difference between Europeans and the rest of humanity (Beckles, 1998).

Blackness is a signifier of inferiority that has been sustained because “the ideas built on these interests continue long after the interests have been destroyed and work their old mischief, which is all the more mischievous because the interests to which they corresponded no longer exist” (Williams, 1964, p. 211). The interest Williams speaks of refers to the British domination of trade and a reliance on the plantation economy for the development of industrial capitalism. Edmonson also argues that because trans-Atlantic slavery, with all its ramifications, simultaneously affected and was affected by dominant trends in the emerging modern international system, “its import came to be far more pervasive over time and space than that of any other system of slavery seen before or since” (1976, p. 5).

The link between colour and race was also exemplified in the social positions accorded mulattoes, or coloured, people. While blackness signified disenfranchisement, coloured people in Jamaica embodied lessons in the importance of race or colour in achieving positions of advantage, status, or esteem in the plantation society. Coloured people were descendants of black slaves and their white masters, and had access to service and commerce industries because of their access to education and limited freedoms (Alexander, 1977). Simply by being the offspring of white masters, free coloured people were guaranteed “privileges”, but still did not have access

to the full rights of a free man (Alexander, 1977). However, it should also be noted that, by 1826, due in part to their loyalty to the British government, free coloureds gained full civil liberties (Williams, 1964). This was prior even to the emancipation of slaves.

Coloured persons were oftentimes bequeathed assets from their well-off parents and were also more likely to have access to education, an asset which was distinctly inaccessible to slaves. Being coloured enabled one to live a life outside slavery, a life of opportunities, highlighting the relative power that particular intersectional identities— such as being coloured, educated, and privileged, or favoured by the dominant group over another—had over class outcomes and relationships. This proximity to whiteness became a form of cultural capital that was highly regarded in the Jamaican context, evidenced in the ways in which it influenced the social and economic trajectory of future generations. This advantage had intense implications for the regard that was placed on colour. However, while it created appreciation for slight variations in features associated with European attributes, the emphasis placed on skin colour also created and further deepened divisions within groups, which, while downplayed in a more contemporary context, resurfaces in popular culture and political discussions (Alexander, 1977; Thomas, 2004).

The extensive period of almost four hundred years of colonialism and slavery has had a major impact on various aspects of development of the Caribbean. Indeed, Goulbourne asserts that “social values, customs, cultural traits, lifestyles and so on have all been at one time or another traced back to the period of slavery” (2002, p. 59). The advantages, opportunities, and positive legacy experienced by “brown-skinned” classes in Jamaica became assets so much so that even contemporary author Malcolm Gladwell has argued for its relevance to his family’s success, calling it the “culture of possibility”, in the book *Outliers* (Gladwell, 2008). This “culture of possibility” speaks to the possibilities or opportunities that arose specifically from

being coloured or brown skinned in Jamaica. As Gladwell puts it:

By eighteen fifty, the mayor of Kingston [the Jamaican capital] was a colored person . . . And so was the founder of the *Daily Gleaner* [Jamaica's major newspaper]. These were colored people, and from very early on, they came to dominate the professional classes. The whites were involved in business or the plantation. The people who became doctors and lawyers were the colored people. These were the people running the schools. The bishop of Kingston was a classic brown man. They weren't the economic elite. But they were the cultural elite. (2008, p. 279)

Although that may be the case, Goulbourne (2002) is also quick to discourage, and rightly so, a heavy reliance on referencing colonialism as the explanation for Jamaica's social order, since it could lock us into a historical determinism, and also affect political efforts to steer a shift towards constructing an identity away from that associated with the legacies of slavery and colonialism.

However, it has been argued that mechanisms have been in place to allow for a particular socio-cultural relationship that overlooks "difference" through a discourse that suggests solidarity across racial and ethnic distinctions. The creolization discourse put forward by Brathwaite (1971), and discussed further in this chapter, speaks to a type of unplanned osmotic blending of cultural and social norms between African and Europeans in the Caribbean, thereby embracing hybridity, blending, and impurity (Hintzen, 2002). However, this entanglement was oriented towards a European aesthetic and a particular social structure that is unable to overcome and instead reinforces hierarchical, historically practiced (class) distinctions associated with race, ethnicity, and gender. Therefore, Crichlow with Northover (2009) suggest that behaviours, patterns, and social norms, and values of Caribbean society cannot be considered bounded by a

particular period in history, as creolization has ensured that there is continuity in the systems of social order as established during colonialism.

In the subsequent sections of this chapter, I show that while the period of slavery shaped Jamaican society in various ways, since the end of slavery in 1838, there have been concerted efforts made at various scales to confront structures that maintain oppression and exclusion. These efforts have also reignited the social values of equity and fairness, resolutely deepened expectations of success, and developed cultural traits of perseverance throughout society, particularly infused in emancipated slaves.

Even beyond the period of slavery, there was still a major effort on the part of colonialists to control the masses. Missionaries played the ambiguous role of cultivating values and dispositions in ex-slaves, who they believed would become lazy and apathetic and a threat to the status quo upon emancipation. This disciplining exercise set out to ensure that the ex-slaves were receptive of the western European view of the world and their position in it, socializing the population “into accepting the moral and cultural superiority of Englishness” (Thomas, 2004, p. 4). Missionaries are also believed to have encouraged, along with the Christian values of modesty and interest in marriage, an attitude of industry that assisted in the plantations’ retention of consistent labour (Thomas, 2002, p. 31). However, by 1888, 50 years after the emancipation of slaves in the British Caribbean, educated blacks, whilst retaining some “accepted” values such as having a quiet disposition and living simply, also advocated for the ability to support their families through small-scale agricultural production and the ownership of land as a means towards their own aspirations and progress.

An independent peasantry liberated from the plantation coupled with the moral, religious influence of Christianity became symbols for both freedom and community post emancipation.

In fact, ex-slaves developed the skill to “creatively build their own places of comfort, or to sustain a dwelling with power that draws upon resources embedded in torn contexts and conditions of existence” (Crichlow, 2009, p. 284). Progress was equated with becoming an independent peasantry as opposed to being itinerant estate labour. Property and literacy also qualified people to vote, and voting rights could then be utilized to assert desire for better parochial roads, more schools, and a stronger institutional infrastructure. Land ownership would not only come to be an alternative to full-time work on the plantations, but also a “chance to participate directly in civic and political life of the colony as free subjects” (Thomas, 2002, p. 32).

Post emancipation, apart from the fact that occupations were distinguished by the skills necessary to carry out particular tasks, a person’s occupation suggested the extent to which they were able to access education and make use of educational opportunities associated with their level of education. This particularly affected the likelihood that black people would be represented in higher skilled occupations as opposed to rural-based functions, including farming. By 1960, however, a small black middle class had emerged within the increasing diversity of race and ethnicity on the island, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Percentage Racial Composition of Jamaica – 1960

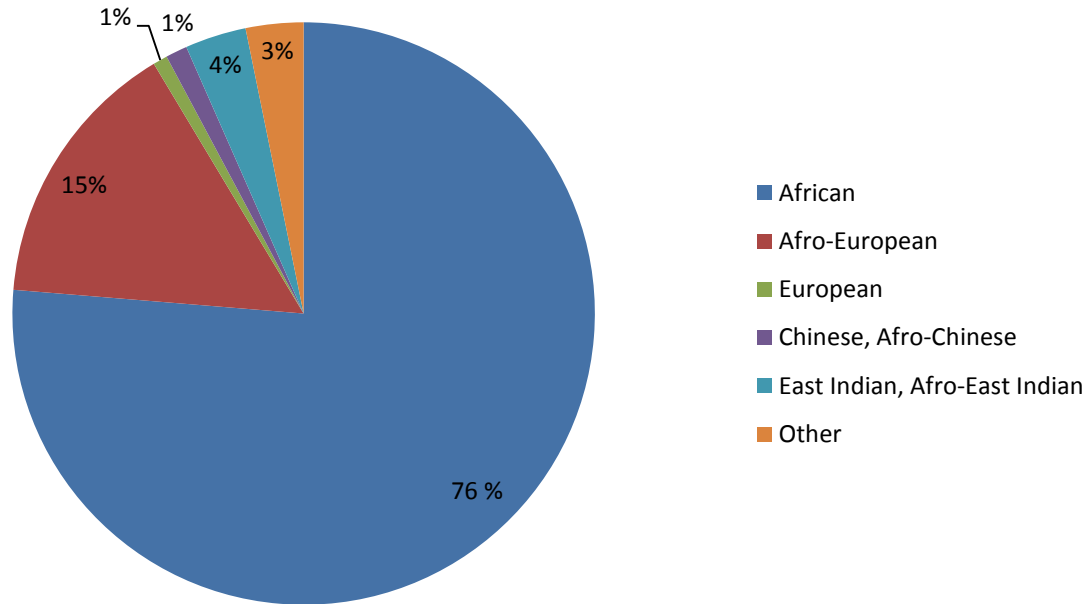


Figure 1. Percentage of racial composition in Jamaica in 1960. Adapted from ‘The Culture of Race in Middle-Class Kingston, Jamaica,’ by J. Alexander, 1977, *American Ethnologist*, vol. 4, no. 3, p. 414.

The accumulation of economic capital, while persistently influenced by proximity to whiteness, was increasingly dependent on the acquisition of cultural capital in the form of credentials. Opportunities for growth, regardless of race, increased tremendously, although there was resistance to the advancement of the black masses—in particular, through the enforcement of laws that prevented ease of ownership, political franchise, and access to respectable positions, business, and trade (Beckles, 1998, p. 784). Therefore, race was still important, especially as it related to political identity and participation in Jamaica. As shown by Alexander (1977, p. 428), the historical association of whiteness with “superior social position and superior style of life” shaped the way the aspiring middle class made sense of and strategized in order to influence their

place in society. In keeping with the legacy of colonialism, black leaders distanced themselves culturally from the less educated populace (Nettleford, 1998), and thus did not confront the socio-cultural norms that maintained stratification in post-emancipation Jamaica. The status quo remained protected by the middle class, who championed the cause for independence while promoting a Creole philosophy.

Post-emancipation Jamaican society continued to bear the social markings of colonial subjugation (Best, 2001; Lewis, 2003; Nettleford 1992). The social structure, based on the adoption of British middle-class moral values and forms of behavior as additional means of differentiation, enabled respectability and access to social and economic mobility. Essentially, social positions became secured as much by ownership of wealth as by internalized dispositions that mirrored European middle-class sensibilities. Gilroy argues that perhaps all blacks in the West “stand between (at least) two great cultural assemblages [African and European], both of which have mutated through the course of the modern world that formed them and assumed new configurations” (1996, p. 1). This realization that social behaviours and realities are an amalgamation of various processes over time is supported by Bourdieu’s (1984) conceptualization of habitus as an embodied history internalized as second nature, and as an active presence of the past. Habitus is socially produced; its outcome is embodied in gestures, bodily movements, ways of thinking, manners, and a series of very real effects. Its limits are set by the historically and socially situated conditions of its production. Gilroy, following Du Bois (2003 [1903]) calls this new configuration a double consciousness⁶, which is the ability to

⁶ W.E.B. Du Bois was the first person to coin the term “double consciousness” in his book “The Souls of Black Folk”. Du Bois speaks of the “peculiar sensation ... this sense of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of others ...” (p. 5) and the torment experienced where the Negro (American) constantly strives to be recognized as both Negro and American “without being cursed and spit upon by his fellows, without having the doors of Opportunity closed roughly in his face” (p.6).

occupy two or more identities, usually European and black, without exhausting “the subjective resources of any particular individual” (1996, p. 1).

In his study of the beliefs concerning race among middle-class Jamaicans in Kingston, Jamaica, Alexander has noted that “racial ideology is treated as creating and reinforcing a perception that colour is associated with upward mobility that informants use in making sense of their experience and in guiding their actions” (1977, p. 413). In fact, he notes that while correlation between class and race persists, the middle class is the most racially diverse of the socio-economic group. However, while the percentage of Africans is high within the middle class in Jamaica, this percentage increases as one moves down the class scale.

The Jamaican population continues to function within a context of diversity. If one takes a quick look at Jamaica’s census short form questionnaire, designed by the Statistical Institute of Jamaica, the immense diversity within the population of approximately 2.7 million people becomes immediately clear (Statistical Institute of Jamaica, 2011). There is diversity in race and/or ethnicity, and at least five options are given to reflect this: black, Chinese, mixed, East Indian, and white. This reflects the top five groups of people defined by race or ethnicity stemming from Jamaica’s colonial experience—that is, the white colonialists, black slave majority, and post-slavery East Indian and Chinese indentured servants. These groups, along with smaller numbers of Syrian/Lebanese and Jewish (mostly British) immigrants, make up the diverse ethnic group of Jamaicans. Not only are Jamaicans ethnically and/or racially diverse, but there is also a wide range of religions through which ethnic groups have developed and maintained networks and cultural practices. The diversity is not only found among Christian groups; Jamaicans are also affiliated with non-Christian religious groups, such as Judaism, Islam, the B’hai faith, and Rastafarianism. In fact, there are nineteen options available to respondents to

denote their religious affiliation. As part of the establishment of identity, Caribbean people in particular have recognized the necessity of accommodating each other—that is, sharing cultures while on the margins, especially among those sharing similar racial and ethnic characteristics.

Independence to Present

The social hierarchies established during colonialism have remained relevant in the post-independence period, but access to wealth and education has facilitated the formation of a small black middle class (Stone, 1976). Contemporarily, Jamaica's societal structure is believed to follow a "gradation associated with material well-being, place and type of residence, cultural attainments, and occupation" (Bryan, 1996, p. 284), and this is not necessarily recognized as being associated with race or gender. However, as shown previously, race as a signifier of class position is inescapable for a country such as Jamaica, although it has transitioned from a colonized member of the British Empire to an independently governed nation.

Slave cultural practices and kinship formations were never legitimated and were instead considered abnormal and taken for granted as "natural". Due to the rejection and lack of sanction for black slave ancestral traditions, customs, and beliefs, European institutions were embraced as the standard of respectability and legitimacy. Respectability then became a symbol of social acceptance and assured social ascendancy. It continues to be associated with the actions of the privileged white man (Maharaj, 2000). Jamaican middle-class respectability also became hinged on adherence to the new nationalistic ideal, which was formed around the strong leadership of the larger under-educated masses. This model of national development, according to Gilroy, was similar among the black Atlantic diaspora who held the "belief that the combination of Christianity and a nation state represents the overcoming of all antinomies" (1996, p. 35).

Another feature of the Jamaican habitus is explained by Fog Olwig (2010), who argues that slaves from their peers in Africa developed social relations with others "that could turn them

into persons of social and moral worth and thus negate their ‘socially dead’ slave status”, pointing to a particular feature of the Jamaican habitus. Fog Olwig (2010) also notes the willingness of slaves to engage the unknown and their openness to strangers as “unprecedented in human history”, arguing that this is a strong basis for their tradition of migration. Gilroy (1996) argues that nationality, exile, cultural affiliation, gender, sexuality, and male domination are all indices of differentiation. The black Atlantic diaspora—a people borne out of intercultural and transnational formations that are legacies of the forced movement and the enslavement of black Africans to the Caribbean by white Europeans—is thus generally fractured and differentiated.

Over time, Jamaicans have come to take for granted their own resilience and have formed an aptitude for adaptation through the formation of support networks wherever they reside (Thompson and Bauer, 2005). However, distinctions continue to be made along class lines that inform their perceptions of race consciousness and the ways that they navigate the structural barriers they may encounter. For despite the emergence of black conscious groups such as the Rastafari group, which advocated for the rejection of an “afro-saxon” assimilationist ethic,⁷ there has been no consensus as to what constitutes and represents an authentic expression of black cultural identity in the Caribbean. Instead, African-ness has symbolized a clean slate upon which the contradictions, failures, successes, fears, and hopes of the new society have been written (Nettleford, 1998).

In the Jamaican context, the development of the nationalist narrative was focussed on conflating citizenship with group identity. The idea of multiracialism (Nettleford, 1998) was

7. According to Maharaj, the term Afro-Saxon was introduced into Caribbean literature by Lloyd Best, and was used to describe the emerging elites in the country after independence from Britain who “adopted, absorbed and internalized the values of the White colonial masters” (2000, p. 96).

intended to inform a spirit of cultural and racial integration among the people. There is no clearer expression of this than the Jamaican motto “Out of Many, One People”. In a similar way to how Anderson (1983) speaks of the effects of the imagined community, where a sense of comradeship with each other persists regardless of differences, exploitation, and inequality, Nettleford (1998) argues that such ideals of solidarity have also encouraged the failure of the Jamaican society’s recognition of self in racial terms. However, it was felt by some scholars, from as early as the 1930s, that economic dispossession, social and political deprivation, and cultural disorientation remained especially among the working class; as a result, other perspectives in the form of Garveyism, which assumed a common ethno-cultural identity, emerged, emphasizing protest and placing prominence on race and African cultural heritage (Benn, 2004). The black consciousness movements that evolved out of the labour resistance of the 1930s made a significant impact on the development of a radical consciousness in the region.

The process of (re)making Jamaican identity, however, included what Brathwaite (1971) called the creation of a creole society, or creolization, which re-emphasized linkages between colour and status and therefore also reinforced unequal integration. Such a process began with what scholars such as Braithwaite (1971) and Nettleford (1998) describe as the forced acculturation of Africans to European norms and behaviours, and the simultaneous, albeit inadvertent, assimilation of Europeans in the West Indies to African norms, followed by the eventual unconscious and reciprocal interculturalization of one to another. African-derived cultural expressions were shunned and regarded as the practice of lower class blacks (Nettleford, 1998).

However, there is a persistent tension between historically racialized values hinged on a colonialist ethic and the play between adaptation and resistance by those most negatively affected by the results of that sustained uneven relationship. On a larger scale, Jamaicans may

consider that they are in control of a post-racial society, whereby factors that determine worth and value are not linked to race as before; and yet, as shown previously, there is a value placed on sharing a close proximity to whiteness. Margaret Hunter (2011) speaks of the consumption of racial capital among people in the African diaspora, in particular through the purchase of skin-bleaching creams or cosmetic surgeries. While her focus is on the role of consumerist regimes in encouraging the purchase of skin-lightening techniques, she brings to the fore the complexity of the discourse surrounding discrimination. Similarly, in the Jamaican context, Charles emphasizes that, in Jamaican society, the “negative representations of dark skin indicate that dark skin is devalued, whereas light skin is valued” (2009, p. 153). As a result, it has been found that groups of Jamaicans will use creams to bleach their skin for various reasons, all of which are directly linked to the idea that there is a higher value placed on having a lighter complexion. Skin colour has thus become a form of cultural capital that is useful even in the modern unified Jamaican landscape. These various practices by, among, and within groups in Jamaica also exemplify the challenge of generalizing about the Jamaican population as a whole.

Jamaican culture remains ambiguous and ill-defined, ranging from Afro-based folk traditions mostly performed through the creolized church to the total assimilation of the European cultural norms performed mostly among the middle to upper-class sectors of society. The “Black Jamaican”, according to Nettleford (1998), becomes hopeful that his child will be the best, and gains importance and respectability as symbolized in the white colonialist, but remains fully aware of his blackness, which he inwardly would prefer to be brown, thus symbolizing the nexus between class opportunities and racial characteristics. Nettleford (1998) states that it is this multifaceted contradictory black person, who emerges from the colonial past, who accepts the multiracial rhetoric and places the Black Power movement as secondary to white dominance.

This history, internalized by Jamaicans over the centuries, also affects the ways in which, as migrants, they communicate their sense of allegiance to their home country. The more recent emigrants belong to the emerging middle class, who have benefitted from the campaigns led by Jamaicans for independence from colonial rule, advocating for equality and the socio-economic improvement of the black masses between the 1930s and the 1970s. However, they are also the recipients of the ideology of multiracialism (Nettleford, 1998), intended to inform a spirit of cultural and racial integration among the people.

Migration: The Idealized Panacea

At the end of slavery, in 1838, black West Indians were for the first time given the freedom to move (Gmelch, 1992), and emigration became an additional means by which the disenfranchised could rise above their intractable position at the bottom of the social hierarchy. According to Gmelch, in the Caribbean, “young people learn early that often the quickest means of getting ahead is through emigration, although few ever intend to leave permanently” (1992, p. 3). Thomas-Hope (2005) identifies three key stages that are typical periods of movement for Caribbean people: upon completion of high school education, upon graduation from tertiary-level education without any work experience, and upon graduation from tertiary-level education with extensive work experience.

Emigration enabled the development of close-knit relationships among Jamaicans in the receiving country and the maintenance of ties to family, friends, and community in the home country. A wider range of ideas and experiences gained outside the country intensified the process underway in Jamaica. A “modern blackness”, Deborah Thomas argues, facilitated by globalization has emerged. This modern blackness is “urban, migratory, based in youth-oriented popular culture, and influenced by African American popular style” (Thomas, 2002, p. 37). The political consciousness becomes divided as dispossession and blackness no longer seems as

defined as in the past.

By the 1970s, black Jamaicans mobilized and articulated their concerns differently and were being influenced by the increased transference of ideas and narratives passed on from family members who had migrated—in keeping with the mood of the “new generation”, as Best (2001) puts it. By the late twentieth century, with ease of both communication and transport, there was a substantial influence in the ideas and practices coming from migrants residing in host countries. The size of the Jamaican diaspora is now estimated at approximately 26 percent of the total population in the Caribbean (Todoroki et al., 2009), with the majority of immigrants residing in the United States, England, or Canada.

As previously mentioned, migration is decided on at the domestic level between men and women because both groups have historically made economic contributions to the household. However, in the early periods of emigration leading up to the late twentieth century, men were more likely to migrate first and were followed by their spouse and children later. In Gmelch’s book, *Double Passage: The Lives of Caribbean Migrants Abroad and Back Home*, he summarizes Nancy Foner’s thoughts regarding the gendered nature of Caribbean migration:

. . . in most households there simply was not enough money for the whole family to emigrate together, and, since men were the principal breadwinners, it was natural that they would go first, while the women would remain behind to maintain the home and look after the children. Then if employment and housing conditions abroad were favourable and enough money could be saved for the additional fares, the women and as many children as could be afforded would be sent for. Another factor was that information about job opportunities was more readily available for men in the Caribbean than for women.

Many men migrated from Jamaica in the late 1800s, after exhausting opportunities in nearby towns away from plantations. Jamaicans sought employment outside the country in Costa Rica, Panama, Cuba, and the United States (Plaza, 2008; Thomas, 2002). They were also heavily represented in the labour force for railway construction in Central America and sugar plantations in Cuba between 1910 and the 1930s (Thomas-Hope, 2002). Between 1913 and 1924, for example, Cuba imported 217,000 labourers from Haiti, Jamaica, and Puerto Rico (Williams, 1964). At the end of the nineteenth century, black workers were brought from Barbados to the coal mines of Sydney, Nova Scotia; during World War I, several hundred were recruited throughout the British Caribbean to work the Cape Breton mines, at the end of which they moved to Montreal and Toronto, seeking employment in traditional black occupations, such as railway porters, bellhops, and maids (Walker, 1984). As shown in Table 1, emigration began as and continues to be dictated by the labour needs of receiving countries. Gmelch (1992, p. 57) also offers patterns that influence the migration of Caribbean people:

. . . movements have been in the direction of available jobs. And, not infrequently, migration was actively encouraged by foreign governments and companies . . . which directly solicited workers . . . The destinations of the migrants have also been determined by the immigration policies of the foreign governments . . . In short, West Indian migration, like migration from most Third World societies, has generally been a consequence of the dependent and underdeveloped position of the Caribbean economies vis-à-vis the wealthy metropolitan societies.

Table 1

Trends in Migration from the West Indies since Emancipation in 1838

Period	Receiving Countries	Reason Labour Required	Numbers of Immigrants from the West Indies
1830s–1880s	Other British colonies in the Caribbean	Expansion of sugarcane cultivation caused demand for labour in newer colonies such as Trinidad and British Guiana.	
1885–1920	Other British colonies in the Caribbean, as well as non-British colonies such as Cuba and the Dominican Republic; Central America	Labour needed on large sugar estates and banana plantations in Central America; Bermuda to construct a dry dock; to establish military and industrial installations in other countries.	130,000 to Panama alone, between 1880–1914
1914–1918	Britain	Served in World War I	397 officers, 15,204 men representing the British West Indies, with 10,280 (66%) coming from Jamaica
1920s–1940s	Very little out migration	Restrictive immigration policies in the United States and some Central American Republics; crash in the world price of sugar in 1921; loss of work opportunities in Panama Canal, due to Great Depression.	Persons returned to homeland to eke out a living
World War II	Canada, United States, and Britain	Workers required helping in war effort, and filling in for jobs of citizens temporarily serving in the armed forces. Some West Indians joined the military.	8,000 served in the Royal Air Force
1950–1955	Britain	Booming economy in post-war years to fill mostly neglected work during the war years. This was coupled with lack of opportunity and deteriorating economies in the islands.	1,750 in 1951 27,000 in 1955
1956–1960	Lull in migration to Britain	Credit squeeze and Suez crisis	

(continued)

Table 1 (continued)

Trends in Migration from the West Indies since Emancipation in 1838

Period	Receiving Countries	Reason Labour Required	Numbers of Immigrants from the West Indies
1960	Surge in migration to Britain again	Response to Commonwealth Immigrants Bill, which promised to restrict future immigration to the UK	100,000 from 1961–1962, and 450,000 by 1966, with Jamaica contributing approximately 60 percent of the migrants

Note. Adapted from *Double Passage: The Lives of Caribbean Migrants Abroad and Back Home*, by G. Gmelch, 1992, Ann Harbor: The University of Michigan Press, p. 41, and “The British West Indies Regiment”, *The Long, Long Trail: The British Army in the Great War of 1914-1918*, by C. Baker, 2013, available from: <http://www.1914-1918.net/britishwestindiesregiment.html>.

Migration since the 1960s has continued not only because of the prevailing historical-cultural meaning passed down over generations, but also due to the consistently poor labour market trends in Jamaica, the changing nature of work internationally, and the market-driven immigration policies of the advanced economies that readily accept eligible workers. Since the 1960s, according to Todoroki et al. (2009), the Caribbean region has become a net exporter of labour, with as much as 12 percent of the population of some Caribbean countries migrating annually. Table 2 shows the emigration rate of skilled immigrants in 2000, with as high as 85.1 percent of Jamaica’s skilled workforce emigrating in that year. This astounding number had many scholars and politicians alike concerned about the brain drain that was likely to affect the country’s economy.

Table 2

Emigration Rate of Skilled Tertiary-Educated Population by Source Country in 2000

Source Country	Emigration Rate of Tertiary-Educated Population (%)
Guyana	89
Grenada	85.1
Jamaica	85.1
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	84.5
St. Kitts and Nevis	78.5
Samoa	76.4
Tonga	75.2
St. Lucia	71.1
Cape Verde	67.5
Antigua and Barbuda	66.8

Note. Adapted from *Migration and Remittances Factbook 2011*, by D. Ratha, S. Mohapatra, and A. Silwal. Available from: www.worldbank.org/prospects/migrationandremittances.

Jamaica's colonized past has also influenced gender relations in that, although women carry the responsibilities for the home and social reproduction, they have historically shared the economic burdens as well. The participation of women in the workforce is therefore not a new phenomenon among the black working class, and aspiring middle class, and similar to the ways that education has facilitated the upward movement of men, it provides similar opportunities for women.

Economic opportunities for both men and women had been limited throughout the Caribbean since emancipation, and so migration became an enduring strategy of survival for many. In 1955, Canada introduced the West Indian Domestic Scheme immigration policy, granting easier access for domestic servants, nurses, and teachers. As a result, between 1955 and the 1970s, female immigrants to Canada consistently outnumbered males from the Caribbean region (Walker, 1984). Table 3 shows stark differences in foreign direct investments and GDP

between Jamaica and Canada, an increasingly important destination for Jamaicans. Between 1980 and 2000, for instance, Jamaica had an “average urban unemployment rate . . . around 20 percent, which is very high by both regional and global standards. In the same period, employment had grown at 1.6 percent per annum, at about the same pace as GDP, but with female participation lagging behind” (Bussolo, and Medvedev, 2007, p. 3).

Table 3

Economic Indicators for Canada and Jamaica in 2008

General	Canada	Jamaica
Population (million, 2006)	32.65	2.67
GDP (current US\$ billion, 2006)	1,272	10
Foreign Direct Investment, Net Inflows (US\$ million, 2006)	69,068	882
Official Development Assistance and Official Aid (US\$ million)	–	36.72

Note. Information gathered from the World Development Indicators (WDI) database. Adapted from *The Canada-Caribbean Remittance Corridor: Fostering Formal Remittances to Haiti and Jamaica through Effective Regulation*, by E. Todoroki, V. Matteo, and N Wameek, 2009, The World Bank, Washington, D.C.

The labour demands of receiving countries therefore account in part for the decision to migrate at one of the three life stages indicated by Thomas-Hope (2002). This heavily influences migration trends in Jamaica, which are directly linked to poor economic indicators. According to the World Bank, net migration followed a cyclical path with high growth between 1950s and 1970s, then a decline until the mid-1990s, and then more growth over the following 10 years. By the time of this 2009 report (Todoroki et al., 2009), emigration had fallen once more.

Canada has particularly benefitted from an official program that targets skilled and experienced professionals. The use of the points system initiated in 1967 has been modified to reflect the economic and long-term population goals of the country. Table 4 shows the evolution

of Canada's points system, a system of evaluation used to select applicants based on individual skills and experience. As Todoroki et al. note, "through adjustments of weights and pass marks, the system [has] provided sufficient flexibility to influence the composition of both the inflow and the level of skills of the average migrant" (2009, p. 23). Most notable is the fact that occupational demand is a criteria for eligibility. If the applicant does not meet any of the criteria, then there is no reason to calculate a pass mark based on the points system shown in Table 4.

Table 4

Points System Evolution from 1967–2012

	1967	1974	1978	1986	1993	1997	2003	2012*
Education	20	20	12	12	16	16	25	25
Experience	–	–	8	8	8	8	21	21
Specific Vocational Preparation	10	10	15	15	18	18	–	–
Occupational Demand	15	15	15	10	10	10	–	+
Age	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Arranged Employment/Designated Occupation	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Language	10	10	10	15	15	15	24	24
Personal Adaptability	15	15	10	10	10	10	10	10
Levels Adjustment	–	–	–	5	8	10	–	–
Resident Relative	5	5	5	–	–	–	–	–
Destination	5	5	5	–	–	–	–	–
Kinship Bonus	–	–	–	10/15	5	5	–	–
Total	100	100	100	95– 105/110	105– 110	107– 112	100	100
Pass Mark	50	50	50	70	70	70	67	67

Note. Adapted from *The Canada-Caribbean Remittance Corridor: Fostering Formal Remittances to Haiti and Jamaica through Effective Regulation*, by E. Todoroki, V. Matteo, and N Wameek, 2009, The World Bank, Washington, D.C., with adjustments made to include data from the Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) website.

*The Federal Skilled Worker program has a new eligibility stream that is open to international students who are pursuing or who have completed doctoral (PhD) studies at a Canadian institution.

+ Another form of eligibility is to have one year of continuous full-time paid work experience in at least one of the occupations: the occupations above are all Skill Type 0 (managerial occupations) or Skill Level A (professional occupations) or B (technical occupations and skilled trades) on the Canadian National Occupational Classification list.

Increasingly, the number of Jamaican Canadians who were born in Jamaica, have tertiary education, and have held employment in their area of specialization is rising (see Figure 2). Note that the census public use microdata file does not show the length of time that the respondents

have resided in Canada; therefore, it does not indicate whether the respondents were educated in Jamaica, Canada, or in any other country. However, it is still useful in that it shows there is a greater percentage of first-generation Jamaicans who hold a post-secondary certificate and/or diploma, and that there are comparatively close numbers who have earned various levels of degrees.

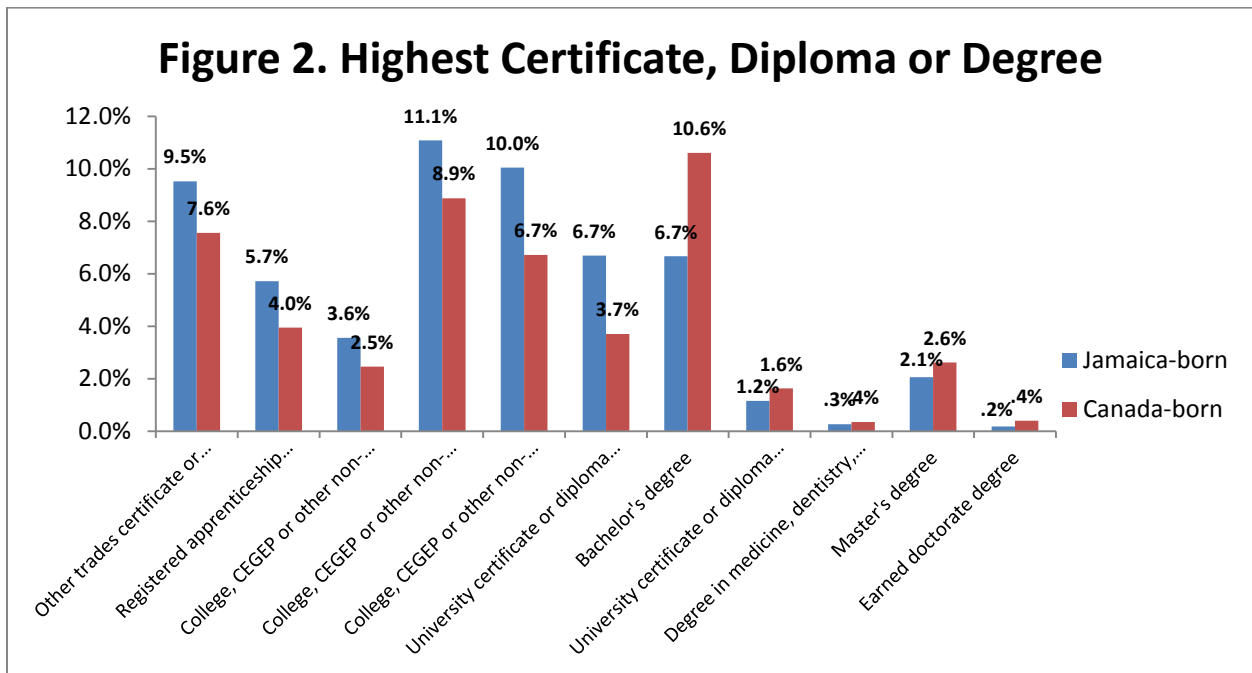


Figure 2. Author's representation of percentage of Jamaican-born and Canadian-born individuals with levels of tertiary education, based on 2006 PUMF dataset, from Statistics Canada, 2006, *2006 Public-Use Microdata File*.

As shown in Table 5, since the late twentieth century, immigrant numbers from the Caribbean to Canada, including from Jamaica, have been on the decline. This may be due to a number of factors, such as changes in requirements for applicants, limitations placed on the number of applicants being accepted into the country, and policy changes specific to the categories that are available for applicants.

Table 5

Immigrant Numbers by Place of Birth and Period of Immigration to Canada

Place of Birth	Total	Before 1991	1991–2000	1991–1995	1996–2000	2001–2006
Caribbean and Bermuda	317,765	200,735	82,045	49,255	32,785	34,985
Jamaica	123,420	84,345	29,645	18,360	11,285	9,435

Note. Author's representation based on 2006 dataset, from Statistics Canada, 2006, *2006 Census: Data Products, Topic-Based Tabulations*.

It is not surprising therefore to observe that there has been an increase in the number of Jamaican immigrants who enter Canada as independent applicants—that is, without sponsorship from a third party—as, overall, there is more emphasis being placed on accepting applicants who fit requirements for skills and experience in particular occupations or industries. As shown in Table 6, the number of permanent residents to Canada from Jamaica has fluctuated since the beginning of 2000.⁸ The numbers are certainly higher in the family category, which has immigrants sponsored by close relatives as part of the application process. The number of immigrants entering Canada through the economic class, which in most cases requires no sponsorship and is heavily biased towards those who can fill the needs of the labour market, has been on the increase.

8. A permanent resident is someone who has acquired permanent resident status by immigrating to Canada, but who is not yet a Canadian citizen. Permanent residents have certain rights and privileges in Canada, even though they remain citizens of their home country. In order to maintain permanent resident status, individuals must fulfill specified residency obligations (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2012).

Table 6

Number of Permanent Residents to Canada by Application Category

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Total
Economic Class	743	765	415	519	374	447	556	740	646	610	5,815
Family Class	2,020	1,586	1,333	1,353	1,254	963	1,242	1,233	1,398	1,391	13,773
Refugee	18	19	8	34	82	56	40	36	46	16	355
Other*	0	109	249	253	209	244	296	331	360	323	2,374
Total	2,781	2,479	2,005	2,159	1,919	1,710	2,134	2,340	2,450	2,340	22,317

Note. Adapted from Citizenship and Immigration Canada data set, “Facts and Figures”, 2010.

*Other immigrants. Permanent residents in the other immigrant category include post-determination refugee claimants in Canada, deferred removal orders, retirees (no longer designated under the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act), temporary resident permit holders, humanitarian and compassionate cases, sponsored humanitarian and compassionate cases outside the family class, and people granted permanent resident status based on public policy considerations.

Based on the requirements for the independent applicant found on the CIC website, it is logical to suggest that many Jamaican applicants from the period of 2001–2010 are also tertiary educated with skills/experience commensurate with their education levels. This conclusion is supported by data illustrated in Table 7, which shows that the highest percentage of permanent residents to enter Canada from Central and South America, including the Caribbean, are those who hold a bachelor’s degree.

Table 7

Percentage of Permanent Residents 15 Years or Older by Source Area—South and Central America⁹—and Level of Education

Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
S. and C. America	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
0 to 9 years of Schooling	5.9	5.4	5.3	5.7	5.6	6.0	5.3	5.6	5.2	6.0
10 to 12 years of schooling	18.2	18.5	18.2	15.9	16.6	17.1	15.6	16.1	16.7	17.0
13 or more years of schooling	15.7	16.2	15.6	13.0	12.0	10.8	10.7	10.6	11.5	11.6
Trade certificate	5.3	5.2	4.6	4.9	4.5	4.4	4.1	4.2	4.9	5.3
Non-university diploma	10.8	10.3	10.2	12.0	11.8	12.2	11.1	12.0	12.2	11.9
Bachelor's degree	28.0	28.5	29.7	28.7	29.8	28.7	29.3	28.6	29.2	28.7
Master's degree	11.2	11.9	11.8	13.8	13.9	14.2	16.5	16.1	14.1	13.7
Doctorate	4.8	4.1	4.5	6.0	5.9	6.7	7.5	6.8	6.2	5.8

Note. Author's representation based on Citizenship and Immigration Canada data set, "Facts and Figures", 2010.

Independent, subscribing to a liberal narrative of individualism and equal opportunity for all, and couched in the multi-racialist rhetoric of "Out of Many, One People", post-secondary or tertiary-level educated Jamaican immigrants are heavily invested in gaining employment commensurate with their education. As the 2006 census data shows (Figure 3), wage or salaried

9. Citizenship and Immigration Canada includes Jamaica under the category South and Central America (see page 121 and 122 of CIC's *Facts and Figures 2010: Immigration Overview – Permanent and Temporary Residents*, 2011).

employment is the major source of income for Jamaican-born immigrants. Jamaican immigrants are mostly located in Ontario, and dispersed mostly throughout the Greater Toronto Area (GTA).

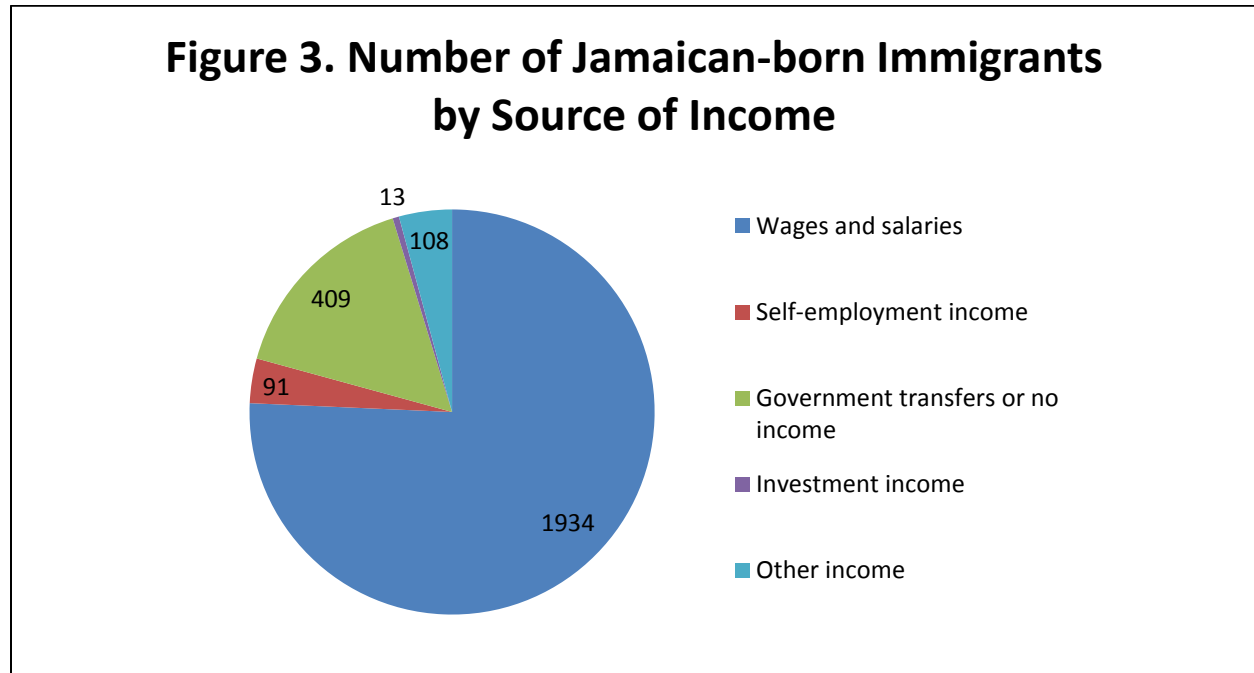


Figure 3. Author's representation of sources of income for Jamaican-born immigrants in Canada, based on sample group surveyed from 2006 PUMF dataset, from Statistics Canada, 2006, *2006 Public-Use Microdata File*.

While average incomes vary depending on length of stay in the country, labour force participation is still high compared to Canadian-born residents with a university degree. Table 8 shows the unemployment rates and participation rates of Jamaican-born immigrants in the Toronto Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) for various periods up until 2006. It is clear that with longer stay, the unemployment rate is lower and participation rate is higher. For Jamaicans, the unemployment rate jumps from 4.7 percent for those who arrived between 1991 and 2000 to 9.4 percent for those who arrived within six years of data collection in 2006. The participation rate (i.e., those working or looking for work), however, increases, which simply means that for those

who are unemployed, they are actively seeking employment even if they are engaging in other activities such as obtaining further credentials. The same is true for those from Guyana, a country which has a very high emigration rate of tertiary-educated people and whose population also relies heavily on remittances.

Table 8

Employment and Participation Rates for Immigrants with a University Degree by Period of Immigration and Top 10 Countries of Birth, Toronto CMA

	Unemployment Rate %				Participation Rate %			
	All Immigrants	1981–1990	1991–2000	2000–2006	All Immigrants	1981–1990	1991–2000	2001–2006
Jamaica	4.6	4.6	4.7	9.4	85.1	87.5	88.1	91.4
Guyana	5.3	4.1	4.6	13.0	85.8	88	91.1	93.5
India	7.9	4.6	6.2	11.2	82.7	86.3	86.1	83.8
PR China	8.2	3.4	6.6	11.7	76.8	72.3	82.8	74.8
Philippines	4.8	3.5	3.7	6.7	82.6	85.5	86.8	86.5
Hong Kong	4.8	5.2	5.8	6.5	83.5	86.2	82.8	69.7
Pakistan	9.0	4.5	7.2	12.2	74.8	79.6	80.9	68.5
Iran	9.3	5.4	8.2	13.6	76.3	77.2	78.6	73.0
Poland	4.3	3.9	4.4	12.3	81.8	87.8	85.7	74.4
Sri Lanka	8.6	6.1	7.6	15.7	80.3	78.0	81.8	78.7

Note. Includes immigrants who arrived before and after 1981. Adapted from ‘What are the Labour Market Outcomes for University-Educated Immigrants?’, V. Preston, N. Damsbaek, P. Kelly, M. Lemoine, L. Lo, J. Shields, and S. Tufts, 2010, Toronto Immigrant Employment Data Initiative (TIEDI) Analytical Report 8., York University, p. 14.

The position of most middle-class Jamaican immigrants, who rely on the narrative instilled over many generations that education is the key to improved socio-economic well-being, is affected by the length of time it takes them to insert themselves in positions that they expect to achieve. It is interesting to note that, while the figures are close in terms of the levels of

education achieved by both Jamaican and Canadian-born residents of Canada, Jamaican-born residents are heavily underrepresented in the managerial and technical and skilled trades occupations, while they show high representation in the clerical and service level jobs. These are also positions in which the Jamaican-born population is more likely to be employed when compared with Canadian-born residents. The fact that there are high percentages overall of persons employed in the clerical and service sectors may indicate that these are the occupations most likely being offered in the labour market. However, it should be noted that Canadian-born residents are more likely to be employed in various levels of management, and in technical or skilled occupations such as researchers, teachers, and professors, than Jamaican-born residents. The health care/social assistance industry and manufacturing industry are the two main industries in which Jamaican-born residents are most likely to have employment (Glennie and Chappell, 2010), most likely because of the technical skills involved in these occupations. Technical skills may also account for the significant employment of Jamaican-born residents in clerical and service-oriented occupations.

If Jamaican-born residents are less likely to be found in managerial and technical skilled trades occupations, then it is also expected that their average incomes will not be as high, even among those who are university educated. There is a stark difference in average gross incomes for Jamaican-born, university-educated immigrants compared to equally educated Canadian-born residents, who earn, on average, \$61,900.00 yearly (Preston, et al., 2010). University-educated Jamaicans earn an average of \$42,743.50 per year. In addition, it should be noted that for those who arrived between 2001 and 2006, annual income can be as low as \$28,139.20. The fact that average incomes are lower compared with Canadian-born residents, regardless of length of stay in Canada (although the propensity for improvement does increase with time), surely has

implications on the length of time immigrants take to fully integrate in Canadian society. It may also influence the ways in which they meet their obligations and maintain relationships with family and the wider community in their home countries.

Obligations and Allegiances through the Provision of Remittances

Migration is not only meant to assist those who are able to leave the country, but is also meant to assist those who remain behind. As stated above, it was and is common for one member of the family to leave and then send for the remaining family members once established; in the meantime, they also continue to support their family left behind in Jamaica. Also, most migrants never intend to remain outside of Jamaica forever, and so continue to invest in family, friends, and their community, while they save money in an effort to settle back in their home country upon their retirement later in life (Plaza, 2008).

As a result, sending remittances has also been a constant feature of the Jamaican migrant's experience. Having obligations not only to themselves, but also to those who have been "left behind" also influences the ways in which they participate in the receiving country—for example, work choices, and the number of hours worked in the receiving country. It is not surprising, therefore, that the labour force rate among Jamaicans is consistently high regardless of length of stay in the country. This is also true for Jamaican-born immigrants with a university degree, as shown earlier.

With the points system, successful applicants are allowed to bring their immediate family members with them. This is a particularly important option utilized by the more recent immigrants from Jamaica. As a result, obligations to family members left behind may be less intense, while the investments made in members of their family residing with them in their new home increase. Regardless, remittances to Jamaica remain high, with as much as approximately US\$2 billion being remitted in 2010 (World Bank) from US\$1.96 billion, 3 years earlier in 2007

(Todoroki et al., 2009). Canada ranks as the fourth originator of remittances to Jamaica, with about 7 percent of inflows in 2007. Households throughout Jamaica increasingly rely on the additional money received to supplement activities and furnish their day-to-day needs in between periods where they may receive goods shipped from abroad.

The performance of obligations transnationally, such as sending remittances, has been recognized as an important way in which immigrants maintain a connection with the members of their networks who remain in their homeland. Their social networks are not only located within their country of residence, and as such allegiances are maintained across borders. In addition, the majority of immigrants arrive at the age where their memory of their homeland and their dispositions have been molded based on the socio-economic historical context of their home setting (Basch, et al., 1994; Glick-Schiller and Fouron, 2001).

Hence, their allegiance and obligations may be derived not only from social ties, but also from the nationalist narrative “Out of Many, One People” that was meant to unite a new nation by promoting multiracialism. For more recent immigrants, whose family has migrated with them and whose intention it is to remain in Canada indefinitely, and who have invested in the process to become Canadian citizens, they may truly experience a dual allegiance. Their integration may also be complex as they try to navigate their new home while performing a habitus that may not necessarily be accepted readily by members of the host society. The maintenance of networks in their new country of residence then becomes an even more important practice that they need to nurture, in the sense that these networks may provide much needed tools that can guide them through the integration process. Immigrants gather knowledge that impacts the way they approach and plan their new lives in Canada, hence also having a significant impact on the ways that they participate in their new community.

The complex lives that immigrants lead in their new country of residence, while maintaining connections with community members in their home country, produce additional influence on those who have remained behind. As previously mentioned, according to Thomas (2002), a “modern blackness” has emerged, due to the increased connectedness facilitated by technological improvements and the increasing ease of travel. Thomas speaks specifically of the influence of African-American pop-culture on urban youths in Jamaica. The flow of ideas, practices, and even identities from immigrants to family members or community members in the home country is a significant form of social remittance that simultaneously affects politics and social norms in the sending country.

It is clear that identity formation and development are not prescribed and stable. Many different factors come into play, simultaneously creating, destroying, reinventing, and sustaining various aspects of one’s identity. Identity can be directed and shaped towards particular projects, such as nation-building, whereby whole groups are shepherded towards the adoption of a particular narrative serving the purpose of unification. In this sense, identity is expected to be permanent and sturdy and may even strengthen in the face of adversity. From the early twentieth century, this was the expectation of the development of a unified Jamaica, after the country’s experience of the distinctions of groups based on race as one aspect of the enduring legacy of slavery.

Identity can be constantly changing, however, especially on an individual scale, because of the ways that history, experiences, and connections with others in different fields can influence values, politics, and ideas that shape how a person perceives him/herself. Dependence on migration as a panacea to socio-economic stagnation since emancipation has shaped the way particular groups, especially those with access to the resources to migrate, develop their own

identity. Middle-class Jamaicans in particular may ascribe to a more macro narrative of individualism and equity in an effort to fit and blend in with groups that can assist them in meeting their socio-economic goals. This may not be much different from aspiring middle-class individuals the world over, but for post-colonial subjects, there are aspects of themselves as raced and marginalized that they persistently shed, but are constantly reminded of, especially in the role of immigrant.

Chapter 4. Racialization and the Labour Market Experiences and Strategies of Jamaican Professionals in the Greater Toronto Area, Canada

Introduction

It is well documented that immigrants to Canada experience significant challenges in accessing stable employment and have lower wages than Canadian-born workers. Research has shown that “despite substantial increases in the educational levels of immigrants, and taking account of business-cycle fluctuations in labour demand, there has been a decline of perhaps 20 percent in the average entry-level earnings of newly arriving immigrants, both men and women, and a decline also in rates of employment” in Canada (Reitz, 2007, p. 2). In general, income disparities are explained, particularly by business research institutes, as being due to changing demands for technological skills and improved technological advancements. While I do agree that technology has influenced the needs of businesses, the changing need for specific skillsets is a more recent phenomenon. Thus, long-established structures remain relevant in understanding the marginalization of groups through the operation of labour markets.

Similar to the Jamaican context, marginalization in Canada is historically and persistently linked to race and gender within the larger context of global economic restructuring. However, race, while being seminal to the historical development of social hierarchies, politics, power, and control in Jamaica, was eventually underemphasized as a key determinant to upward social mobility (Douglass, 1992). In other words, being black was no longer considered a key contributor to one’s chances for social mobility. Race was replaced by access to education and migration opportunities.

The purpose of this chapter is to explore, through information from the participants in this research, what becomes of the habitus of middle-class subjects when the subjects are (re)inserted into a society as racialized subjects. Assuming that racism is experienced differently

in Jamaica, what do people come to perceive of their experience as the result of racism in Canada? This exploration will help me to understand the impact the research participants' interpretation of their experiences has on their strategies for inclusion in Canada.

What Does the Habitus Have to do With Adjustment?

As noted in chapter 2, the habitus can become inconsistent for immigrants because the new social space in which the migrant now resides is not entirely in tune with the social conditioning they are accustomed to. Bourdieu (2011) speaks of a dissonance or discordance between the habitus and the field that occurs due to the stability and permanence of the habitus, in that the habitus does not necessarily adjust readily to changes in the social environment, creating a crisis in perception. This process he calls the hysteresis of the habitus. The habitus experiences a lag in its ability to (re)adjust. In other words, there is a delay between opportunities and the dispositions to grasp them. I suggest that the “crisis in perception” to which Bourdieu refers can be used to understand complexities related to identity formation among immigrants. Using Bourdieu’s concept of the habitus, I show that racialized immigrants retain perceptions of themselves based on long-held identities established prior to migration, which creates challenges in coming to terms with observations and experiences of new forms of exclusion. The hysteresis process is therefore responsible for changes in self-perception and, by extension, identity. This concept is also useful in understanding the persistence of the roles of gender ideology and gender relations among the research participants in influencing the ways they approach their attitude towards employment and mobility in Canada. This will be explored in the following chapter.

Similar to the ways that Carl Sauer referred to the cultural landscape as a succession of landscapes with a sequence of cultures (Winchester et al 2003), the habitus may be developed from a succession of experiences in various or particular environments. It is not just a set of dispositions, but dispositions that have influence in the everyday—in the very way of thinking

and acting—given the unique contexts of the environment in which they are historically placed.

Throughout society, there are those whose position allows for privilege and dominance, while for other groups based on characteristics that seem quite arbitrary, their experience is one of exclusion and marginalization. Post-colonial writers in particular have highlighted the relationship between culture, identity, spatiality, and place, recognizing the historical weight of the context of colonialism in influencing these relationships. Bourdieu (2000) too, expressed in the preface of *The Suffering of the Immigrant* that immigrants are ostracized in the host society, as it were, particularly because they are considered “a problem”. For Das Gupta (1996), in her book *Racism and Paid Work*, there is systemic racism and sexism throughout society affecting those considered of less value. Drawing on her work within the Canadian health care and garment manufacturing sectors, Das Gupta highlighted that “racism and gender are intrinsically woven into social relations, so that we begin to see workers, managers and owners as gendered and raced in addition to being classed” (1996, p. 4).

The Influence of Racialization on Labour Market Experiences

Studies indicate that institutionalized discrimination based on gender, race, and class positions affects the value of immigrants’ credentials and their placement in the Canadian labour markets (James, Plaza, and Jansen, 1999; Farred, 1996; Neuwirth, 1999; Teelucksingh and Galabuzi, 2005; Galabuzi, 2005; Hum and Simpson, 1999). When skilled Jamaican men and women migrate to Canada, they enter a social system where race and gender are differently constructed, carrying different implications for the way they are integrated in the labour market. In addition, these skilled immigrants are entering a labour market at a time when modes of production are constantly reshaped by improved technology systems. The labour market is also being manipulated—and has been since the mid-1970s—by what Fudge and Vosko (2001) call the “employment relationship”, in that it is moving to one where employees are relegated to

coverage under minimum standards legislation, flexible work arrangements, and increased inequality in wages, job security, and social benefits. Skilled immigrants also face a challenge in how their social and economic assets are valued, and are also challenged with interpreting the new rules of the game in their new environment. Indeed, research conducted by Hiebert and Ley (2003) of the experiences of non-European immigrants in Vancouver, Canada, indicate that “cultural retention ... does not encourage economic advancement” (p. 37). In this case, Hiebert and Ley (2003) considered residential concentration and use of language other than English and French in the home as factors that affect the ability of non-Europeans to integrate in Canadian society. The authors found that those of European origin whether born in Canada or abroad declared average incomes over 34 percent higher than those of non-European origin and incomes remained as much as 8 percent lower than those of European origin even after 10 years of residence in Vancouver. It is apparent then that the types of cultural capital that visible minority immigrants hold are not necessarily transferable across borders.

It is therefore useful to explore the experiences of the research participants in the context of the Canadian labour market in order to understand experiences of and challenges to the socio-economic mobility of the Jamaican middle-class professional. As shown in Table 9 below, unlike the typical Jamaican-born immigrant in Canada, the participants in this study were university educated, and mostly held managerial or high level positions in the business and financial sectors (see Appendix F for a breakdown of highest education among Jamaican-born residents in Canada). Many of the participants considered themselves middle-class, and defined this in terms of their ability to earn and consume material goods and services, including the ability to take family vacations.

Table 9

Summary of Interviewees' Education and Employment Compared to Average First-Generation Jamaican Immigrants

	First Generation/Jamaican-born	Research Participants
Tertiary Level Education	7% hold a Bachelor's degree	100% held at least a Bachelor's degree
Dependence on Salaried Employment	Over 70% are dependent on salaried employment as their main source of income	All participants depended on salaried employment as their main source of income
Place of Residence	Residents located throughout the GTA	Resided mostly in suburbs
Occupation	Mostly clerical occupations	Mostly managerial occupations
Industry	Mostly health care and manufacturing	Business and finance

Note. Author's representation based on 2006 PUMF dataset, from Statistics Canada, 2006, *2006 Public-Use Microdata File*.

I started out by asking whether participants had experienced race and racism in Jamaica and if that experience had affected their prospects for employment. Interestingly, most participants simply stated “no”. They generally expressed that race was not a factor as shown in the following statements of their experience in Jamaica:

. . . I was innocent to the whole race issue.

. . . these experiences [of racial discrimination] have been rare when residing in Jamaica.

. . . I never knew [some of my friends] were white until I came to Canada . . . we never looked at it from that level.

I was coming directly from Jamaica without any preconceived notion so to speak.

One participant went further by adding that, prior to migration, he thought Canada was similar to Jamaica in terms of fairness and that this was a major reason that Canada was chosen by Jamaicans as a place to settle.

The participants' expression of their experience as being devoid of racialization should not be surprising, however, considering the development of a national identity that encompasses being unified and proud to be Jamaican. It is important to note that when the participants spoke of Jamaica, it was with the conviction and assurance of people in control of their situation, which is a reflection of their own authority or power when they lived in Jamaica. As Harrell (2000, p. 43) reminds us, racism occurs in circumstances where the dominant group has the ability to exclude non-dominant groups from power, esteem, status, and/or equal access to societal resources. In terms of stratification, all participants were quick to mention that Jamaica was stratified along class lines—that is, socio-economic status. Criteria used to judge or value their position in society were home ownership, car ownership, ability to take vacations, education attainment, and level of employment. As shown earlier, participants in this research had access to tertiary-level education, and considered themselves middle class with enough surplus income for family vacations. Although there were a few participants who admitted that, at the time of this study, there remained a correlation between racial identity and class position in Jamaica, there was overall agreement that education attainment was the single most important factor in influencing their ability to access high-level jobs. Therefore, each participant, in being able to access high-income jobs when in Jamaica, regardless of race, was able to manage his/her position in the social hierarchy.

Not surprisingly, therefore, the interviewees were aware of whether or not they had experienced downward movement in their socio-economic status in Canada. Of the 41 persons interviewed, 36 persons (86 percent) noted that they believed they had been treated unfairly in the workplace or in their attempts at finding employment, because of their race or ethnicity since migrating to Canada and that this had affected their socio-economic trajectory. All participants

noted a loss in their socio-economic positions or status in society since migrating to Canada, and were acutely aware of aspects of their lifestyle that were significantly affected, such as the ability to take vacations. Moreover, all participants noted that, at the time their interviews, they had not been able to recover from these losses.

As the participants experienced less access to resources in the form of income and esteem or status based on their job positions, their sense of injustice and inequity heightened, yet it was initially difficult for them to articulate this during their interviews. During the course of the interviews, most of the participants stopped to think about whether they were racialized, and at some points appeared to feel conflicted. Throughout this research, it was quite evident that understandings of race and racism were being expressed in relational terms—that is, by life experiences within the context of Jamaican histories and culture. Participants recognized and confirmed their encounters as racist through a comparison of their Jamaican/Canadian experiences only, and/or through a combination of their own comparisons and discussions within their networks. This shaped the way that race and racism was understood or discovered in their lives. Louise, who had resided in Canada for only three years at the time of the interview, was particularly unsure as to whether or not she had experienced racism, and relied on her networks to validate her reservations. When asked how she was able to recognize racism in light of her assertion that she had never really experienced it prior to arriving in Canada, she responded:

I don't know if it is because of what I have been hearing or, you know, the experience . . .

When it happens, you will more lean towards that . . . I want to keep an open mind you know towards it, but you do have the feeling [of being racialized].

The feelings expressed by Louise reflect the hysteresis effect of the habitus, whereby early experiences produce the structures of the habitus “which become in turn the basis of

perception and appreciation of all subsequent experience” (Bourdieu, 2011, p. 78). There was uncertainty as to whether Louise could account for her experiences as racism, and she relied on what may be termed a “gut feeling” or intuition. This intuition may relate to what Bourdieu suggests is a projection of the historical past onto the present, or history made real.

The adjustment to the new social environment caused a delay in Louise’s reaction to her experiences. Her statement also reflects the complex ways that the forms of discrimination may be recognized. In this case, Louise had resided in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) for a relatively short time and was in the relatively early stages of settling down. It should be noted, however, that the number of years residing in Canada does not make interpretation less difficult. At the time of the interviews, Mario had lived in Canada for approximately 12 years. When asked if he thought that his awareness of race had increased since living in Canada, he also thought about it in relation to his personal experiences in Jamaica. He thought of his friendships with classmates in Jamaica who were white, and determined that, in Jamaica, his relationships were not expressed in the same way as they were in Canada. He noted that, in Jamaica, his experience with white people was amicable, sociable, and familiar, and in his memory, equal. As a result, he could not recall and associate discriminatory and unequal relationships during his time in Jamaica. In his interview, he did not think of racism in Jamaica as systemic or institutionalized. By explaining his understanding in this way, Mario highlighted his view of racism in Canada as being general and infused in all aspects of life, even in the way he related to people individually. He stated:

I have said this to people. I had some white friends who attended school with me, I never knew they were white until I came to Canada because . . . we never looked at it from that level . . . whites, blacks or whatever . . . we just looked [at it] that this is my classmate,

my friend . . . I went to Knox [Jamaican high school] [and my friend] Dale is white. I just never thought he was white but when I was in college there [Canadian University College] I said wait a minute Dale was white! That's when I realized . . .

The awareness that racism might be affecting everyday life for the participants in my research was perplexing to them. Mario noted the challenges he was facing, now that he was more aware that racism is a factor that affects his life in Canada:

It is sad because every decision that is now made you have to ask the question, "Did they do this because I am black? Did they do that for him because he is white?" You ask that question, you know . . . It has forced me to now evaluate almost everything with that underlying factor . . . race . . . I was coming directly from Jamaica without any preconceived notion so to speak. I mean I didn't come with a chip on my shoulder. I never had people do things to me in Ontario like some of my fellow Ontarians who are [now] living in Alberta . . . So for me it was a lot better that I came naïve. And so as result of that it was only something I learnt along the way, but I never had that negative chip on my shoulder that [will] kind of sometimes prevent you and hinder your progress.

For Sarah, who had resided in Canada for approximately 16 years, there was no doubt in her mind that race played a role in her labour market experience. However, she was not sure why:

Here I don't know what they look at cause you are qualified. You have what it takes, everything, but somehow I think they are more prone, they are more biased. They are prejudiced; they are more prone to take the whites over the black if two of you go for the job, same qualification, same everything, even if you have an edge over the next person . . . I don't know if it is that they feel more comfortable with the white person, or if they

feel threatened by the black or what . . . but it's not the same when it comes on to black and white. They are quicker to hire a white person for certain jobs, especially for the top [positions] where they feel you might be a little threat to them . . . I don't know how they sleep at night, and they expect more from you. I think they expect more from the black. You have to work hard and put out more. They still have the slavish mentality thing in them, man. Yes, it might not be so prevalent but it is there.

Sarah's reference to the relationship between white employers and black employees as being similar to holding a "slavish mentality" was in vivid terms, an expression of the inequality she felt in that environment. In her statement, she not only relied on her intuition, but also drew on her cultural history to explain the employer-employee relationship: "you have to work hard and put out more. They still have the slavish mentality thing in them . . ."

In Maria's experience, she had interviewed for a position that was posted internally at her place of work. She enquired about it after realizing that she had not been informed as to the decision made regarding the promotion. She recalled the passive response, which targeted her demeanour, but did not present effective feedback to her query: "oh you answered the question fine, but you didn't come across as wanting the job". Sarah recalled that instead of joining the accounting profession when she arrived, she could only find low paying jobs and took anything she could find. After receiving a diploma in computing at the Toronto School of Business, she was finally able to access employment in the accounting field and had since settled in that job. Her initial experience subsequently discouraged her from searching for even better paying work.

James et al. (2010) use an adaptation from Shelly Harrell to provide another understanding of the way race operates in the labour market. In speaking of situations similar to the experience of the participants mentioned above, James et al. remark: "Others experience a

more subtle type of racism that is evident only in the pattern of repeated experiences” (2010, p. 64). Sarah made several attempts to move up within her current place of work, and this was her observation:

Another thing too—to move up in an organization they are quicker to push up the whites than the black. Even when you work your butt off, a white man just get promoted and step pass you and gone. The same person who you teach the job [to] gone, leave you, and you have the same qualifications. Both of you come from university . . . Both of you need a job. You work and you work hard and you teach them what to do, and they need somebody [and say] “ah this person is more suited.” Why? They don’t have any reason.

It is not surprising then that almost all the participants suggested that the forms of discrimination they had observed or experienced were not overt, but subtle. With all the research participants, job security was a priority because of its impact on the socio-economic well-being of themselves and their families. As a result, barriers to promotion or secure employment were emotionally challenging for them. Brad held a prominent position in the financial sector in Jamaica approximately eleven years ago, prior to migrating to Canada. However, after moving to Canada, he found that he was unable to move beyond low-level positions in the Canadian banking industry:

Oh my God, it was like starting from zero. It was like, you know, if you weren’t very strong you could lose your mind! Because all of a sudden it’s almost like you are nobody, it’s almost like you didn’t even finish primary school, it’s like it doesn’t matter what is on your resume, it’s like if they are looking for people to do something then they will call you. It’s like you see people (recruiters) [who may suggest particularly low level work]. Why would I want to do a job like that? That’s insulting! It’s like, come on . . .

Brad's wife, who also held a managerial position in the same industry in Jamaica, also found it difficult to obtain a job at a level similar to what she held in Jamaica. Brad recounted one particular experience that his wife encountered that obviously troubled him, even during the interview:

When I just came here, the moment someone saw you here as a black person . . . it was like you were almost totally discounted. It was like the expectation [was] set so low, it's just ridiculous, like you could never want certain types of jobs. You know what, my wife used to work as a supervisor at a bank. She was at the highest supervisory level. At her next promotion, her title would have taken her to manager. She came here, had to start over as a teller at [a Canadian banking institution]. She did a Canadian securities course and the provincial financial management course. When she had a meeting with her boss, you know the meetings, the performance development meetings, and when she told her what she wanted to do, the woman looked [at her] and said, "Are you really looking for a job in our offices downtown?! Are you expecting to get a job in an office downtown?" She couldn't believe it . . . yes, her supervisor! If it was me, we probably would have butt heads! But yes, that's the kind of thinking that goes on here. It doesn't matter what you accomplish . . .

It may take a number of years for the marginalized and oppressed racialized immigrant to access employment opportunities to their satisfaction and that match their expectation. However, the skilled immigrant still struggles to be recognized as a valued member of society regardless of the number of years in the social space or field, because race or colour continues to act as a signifier informing social interactions among diverse peoples. As noted by Fanon, the black body in relation to the white colonialist is not given any value and is also unable to assimilate due to

the fact of its blackness. A black person is unable to pass unnoticed.

However, there were participants who did not consider racism to be a factor that influenced their labour market experiences in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). Patrick lived in England prior to migrating to Canada. He arrived in the early '80s, and recognized that his wife met some amount of resistance initially. However, he also recounted an experience he had that exemplified how past experiences influenced his interpretation of situations he then observed of the Canadian labour market:

I went for my first job interview and I was sitting in the reception area . . . the receptionist is there. There are some chairs, I am sitting there reading the company brochure and then these two white guys came out of a room and were there talking and walking slowly past the receptionist. And they are there talking and I am looking at them, and then I think he was a South Asian guy—an Indian guy—he walked out over to the two of them and started talking, and the thing that impressed me the most was that immediately both of these two white guys stopped talking and looked at him and listened attentively to what he had to say. You know, I am just like wow this doesn't happen in England . . . it is unbelievable. It's as if the guy had something important [to say]. Nothing like what I had to put up with when I was there [England].

Patrick had an instant recollection of his experiences in England in the 1970s, which informed his reaction to this scene as it played out on the day of his job interview in Toronto. He compared his experiences and observations of blatant racism and the lack of camaraderie in the workplace in England to the particular actions of this small group, and then made a judgement and projection that this new environment was better than where he had come from. Patrick, who himself emphasized the race of the colleagues he observed, was clearly fascinated and

interpreted this interaction as admirable—reflecting that his definition of that moment was directly linked to his past experience in England. Consequently, he interpreted that workplace as a friendly space where he would easily fit in. Interestingly, he too did not consider Jamaica to be challenged by racism.

Bourdieu suggests that forms of contemporary oppression and dominance are also manifested in a way that both the dominant and dominated groups misrecognize the oppressive structures in place as natural. This he calls symbolic violence, as explained in chapter 2, whereby the dominated, by virtue of attempting to resist by understanding the language of the dominant society, is actually unknowingly playing by the same rules that serve to oppress him (Noiriel, 2006). As noted by Bourdieu,

[b]ecause the dispositions durably inculcated by objective conditions . . . engender aspirations and practices objectively compatible with those objective requirements, the most improbable practices are excluded, . . . that is, to refuse what is anyway refused and love the inevitable. (2011, p. 77)

I suggest that the research participants were aware that they were experiencing racial discrimination to some degree, but they were also aware that they could in no way hide the visible characteristics that signify the negative stereotypes and low expectations shown by white employers. Acquiring capitals, such as Canadian credentials, that were acceptable by the dominant group was thus essential to the success of the research participants. They had to look past the fact that they were validating exclusionary practices and accept the general prevailing narrative of that particular field. Simone, for instance, considered the challenges an employer might face when recruiting visible minority newcomers. She explained that because Canada is a multicultural society, employers are, and *ought to be* skeptical regarding the equivalency of the

credentials of newcomers against *the Canadian standard*, and are unsure as to what they are getting into as it relates to the overall abilities of the applicants. Simone suggested that employers hesitate to make a decision regarding employment because they do not necessarily want to retrain new recruits, not necessarily in terms of job function, but in terms of social skills or effective communication among employees. The assumption that the social skills or communication of newcomers would not be at a level that the employer considers acceptable suggests that there is a view that newcomers' cultural capital is not as strong and is therefore less valued.

As previously mentioned, the culture of the workplace is very competitive and there is evidence that Canadian employers tend to overlook skills and credentials of new immigrants, creating over-qualified work spaces and little opportunities for professional development (Jackson, 2005). Simone's explanations were considered objective to her, but they reflect an interpretation of the labour market based on her experience. Prior to arriving in Toronto, Simone had established networks through her experience working summer jobs in the United States, in New York, and she retained those networks. With each summer job in North America, Simone gained knowledge in her field and also exposure to workplace culture and employee relationships outside of the Jamaican context.

Bourdieu argues that only those who can mobilize the relevant resources are able to take part in the struggles that define a field. In other words, the type of capital and the volume of capital one holds have to be relevant to the particular field in which one hopes to have those capitals accepted. The field sets the requirements and the members of that social arena act accordingly. While Crichlow declares that Jamaicans have developed the skill as a people to "creatively build their own places of comfort, or to sustain a dwelling with power that draws

upon resources embedded in torn contexts and conditions of existence” (2009, p. 284), not all immigrants have the capacity to mobilize their capitals to their benefit because these may not be valued highly outside their own social space (Skeggs, 2005). The skilled Jamaican immigrant, by virtue of being racialized, must first be able to recognize and acquire highly valued capitals that are accepted as legitimate by the dominant group. One consequence of this, however, is that the racialized immigrant participates unwittingly by the rules that serve to maintain the privilege of the dominant group.

In Simone’s experience, she received advice, support, and connections from friends in the Toronto area. Within a four-year period, she had full-time employment in a job close to her field in electrical engineering, had purchased a condominium, and had a positive outlook. Therefore, she did not necessarily recognize the structural forms of racism in relation to her own labour market experience. However, this does not mean that she was truly unaffected. Having experiences outside of Jamaica, prior to migration to Canada, definitely influenced the ways that the research participants interpreted their experiences in the labour market in Canada. Simone explained that, due to her practicality, she ensured that she used networks to improve her labour market outcomes because of the uncertainty of the labour market in Canada. She satisfied herself with employment at a restaurant as an initial starting point, regardless of the fact that she was trained as an engineer. In fact, when asked if racism influenced her labour market experience, she responded: “Personally I have not experienced race and racism, simply because I go through networking . . .” This suggests that she was aware that racism exists and therefore made attempts at strategizing in order to buffer herself from such experiences. Moreover, this foresight may have been a direct result of her experiences in North America, prior to migrating to Canada.

During my interview with two couples in their mid-thirties, Michael, who had spent

approximately 10 years in Canada at the time, surmised that one's ability to access employment is based on attitude and not necessarily on being racialized. Aiden, who received a mechanical engineering degree from the University of the West Indies in Trinidad, on the other hand, suggested that it was not simply that racism was not a factor but that there was a lack of effective strategies in challenging racism in Canada for immigrants, because of their lack of experience with this form of racism in Jamaica. He recalled a time when he was in between jobs in Canada, and had reached a point where he was desperate enough to seek employment at minimum wage and was still unsuccessful. This experience informed his understanding of discrimination in the Canadian context. Due to his experience in Canada, he was not skeptical of immigrants who suggested that racism influenced their labour market outcomes, and instead empathized with them.

Edgar, who worked in Jamaica as a teacher for approximately 13 years before migrating to Canada in 1990, had never held a job in keeping with his previous experiences and qualifications in Jamaica. He recognized racism to be so much a part of his life in Canada that he resigned himself to knowing that, if he was up for an interview, he needed to be better than all the other applicants, and “not just better but noticeably better”:

. . . say for example, a black person in a highly technical field with extraordinary abilities and intellect and what have you, you have to make sure that you can convince that person from the outset [that you are] a distinctly different person from what the general perception is of the race.

Teelucksingh and Galabuzi (2005, p. 1) suggest that there are two types of discrimination—economic and exclusionary—that have direct negative implications for visible minority immigrants. Economic discrimination refers to employers making generalized

assumptions about the worth of an employee, whereas exclusionary discrimination refers to inequalities in the way that individuals of commensurate ability are hired, paid equally, or promoted regardless of their skills or experience. Simone's understanding of the way the labour market works in terms of distinctions made regarding the ability of a potential employee to "fit in" was illustrated above. Sadie, who arrived in Canada with a Bachelor's degree and five years of corresponding work experience, expressed some amount of annoyance, but also resignation, when she described her labour market experience, and the devaluation of credentials and unequal standards by which promotions are filled:

. . . they don't give you anything in recognition of your education, that's what I realized. There is very limited respect in the workplace for it. It's just that it may be a bonus "oh yeah you are in this position AND you are qualified"—not you are qualified, so you are entitled to your position.

Due to the fact that most Jamaican immigrants expect to earn a living through education and commensurate paid work (Statistics Canada, 2006), the importance of their labour market experience is a significant factor in determining their socio-economic position. Indeed, Kelly and Lusic (2006) suggest that if the cultural capital of immigrants is not accepted in adopted countries, then immigrants will be unable to convert cultural capital into economic capital. Sadie, who changed jobs five times in nine years due to various reasons including corporate downsizing, conceded that the "workplace has just not been rewarding", not only for her, but particularly for other immigrants with Jamaican credentials:

It's hard to be considered for management positions. We tend to get senior positions, but we don't get leadership positions where we actually manage. I find that's a challenge. Person X is probably the only person I know who is a manager and person Y too, but

person Y got his education in Canada [degree] so that doesn't really count. But I am talking about like people who really come from Jamaica, and come to think of it person x studied [for a master's degree] in England! I am talking about people who go to UWI (University of the West Indies, Jamaica) and even had their master's from UWI. I have a friend who had her master's from UWI and even did the CGA since coming to Canada and [she has] no leadership role . . . She has a master's. I am not even talking about me because I still only have a first degree [undergraduate degree], but people like her [who have higher education]. And she has the desire to [accept leadership positions].

In fact, according to the Diversity Institute's third annual report on diversity among leadership positions in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA),

an analysis of the same institutions revealed that 483 of a total of 3,330 leadership positions, or 14.5%, are held by members of visible minority groups. In fact, over a three year period the number of visible minorities in positions of leadership increased from 13.4 percent in 2009 to 14 percent in 2010 to 14.5 in 2011. (Cukier, et al., 2011, p. i)

While there is an increase in the number of leadership positions held by visible minorities, it is a remarkably subtle increase given the fact that, based on 2006 Statistics Canada data, the Diversity Institute calculated that approximately 49.5 percent of the population in Toronto, Brampton, Mississauga, Markham, and Richmond Hill self-identify as being a member of the visible minority category (Cukier, et al., 2011). As shown in Table 10, the percentage of visible minorities has been increasing in each year shown (1987, 2001, 2007, and 2008), with approximately 16.6 percent in 2008 of all employees in the federally regulated private sector self-identifying as visible minorities.

Table 10

Representation of Members of Visible Minorities in the Federally Regulated Private Sector

Sector	1987		2001		2007		2008	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Banking	16,062	9.5	33,575	17.1	51,822	24.9	54,002	25.5
Communications	7,257	4.0	23,359	10.8	33,567	14.5	35,962	15.3
Transportation	5,318	2.6	13,679	7.6	19,309	9.4	20,984	10.2
Other	1,123	2.6	3,436	7.7	11,793	13.4	12,300	13.5
All Sectors	29,760	5.0	74,049	11.7	116,491	15.9	123,248	16.6

Note. Adapted from *Employment Equity Act: Annual Report 2010*, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC), 2011, p. 52. Available from: http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2012/rhdcc-hrsdc/HS21-1-2010-eng.pdf.

This low percentage of visible minorities in the federally regulated private sector persists despite the mandate of the 1986 *Employment Equity Act*: “to foster workplaces free of employment barriers for the members of four designated groups: women, Aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities and members of visible minorities” (Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, 2011, p. iii). Das Gupta (1996) and Bakan and Kobayashi (2007) have argued that there are inherent flaws in the legislation, which are the result of concessions made to guarantee avoidance of political backlash. In essence, the Act is impotent in assuring statistical improvements in incorporating the four designated groups, which include visible minorities, as the Act does not stipulate numeric targets and only requests employers to prepare annual reports “with virtually no obligations to follow up on those plans” (Bakan and Kobayashi, 2007, p. 153). The combination of a lack of accountability and no requirement for specific numeric targets have therefore reduced the potential for the Employment Equity Act to meet its mandate. This is also reflected in the statistics shown in Table 10.

Maria, for instance, resisted migrating to Canada initially because she had a comfortable

existence in Jamaica, but was soon convinced after increasing crime in Jamaica impacted their quality of life. Once in Canada, however, she struggled to access employment in her field of accounting and eventually accepted a position as a data entry clerk. She occupied that position for twelve months before being employed in a permanent position. Her movement over the years, she said upon reflection, had been “lateral”, while at the same time she had observed persons with high school diplomas being promoted to supervisory positions. As she reflected, she sighed and said she had “seen it so many times”. She therefore did not feel as if she truly belongs, but instead stated:

As an immigrant, I am more on the periphery because I do not really know the culture.

Where I worked was quite multicultural, but the people who got ahead were the smoking buddies who went downstairs and had coffee as well with them [supervisors and senior staff].

The practice of taking breaks to smoke and drink coffee as a group outdoors at least twice a day at the workplace was found to be particularly exclusionary for many participants interviewed. The typical workplace in the GTA is structured along a 7.5 hour work schedule, with a break for lunch and two “coffee breaks”. These two extra breaks are not the norm in Jamaica, and interestingly, this practice was brought up by a number of participants in this research as an activity that in their opinion provides more than just a break from the office. They suggested that these breaks enable groups to make connections and network and make significant bonds with colleagues and their supervisors. There was a sense of resentment because they felt excluded from this practice, which they suggested also influenced the mobility of their colleagues in the workplace. For example, Harvey, who at the time of the interview worked within the provincial government and who considered himself to be in a respectable position,

remarked of the practice of taking coffee breaks as a requirement to network:

. . . part of that networking requires you to . . . I don't drink coffee and I don't smoke. So none of those things I am privy to. I am a tea drinker and I have my peppermint tea in my drawer and I have my brown sugar. I put on my water in my kettle upstairs and that's it . . . it's just not my thing.

Associating these social activities as being requirements to networking suggests an awareness that this activity did indeed shape his work relationships. However, in what seemed to be a defiant move, he remarked that it was just not his thing—that is, not something he was willing to be a part of.

Labour Market Experiences on Socio-Economic Status and Inclusion

Many scholars speak to the consumerist nature of the new middle class globally, and its connection to the increasing dependence on this group to maintain the economy. The middle class is of strong political significance as the economy becomes more globalized and interdependent. It is suggested that a country's financial stability is dependent on its citizens' ability to purchase. However, much more useful to this dissertation is the way that Bourdieu conceptualizes class by problematizing the prevailing neoclassical model and suggesting an alternative way in which social groups adjust to the oppressive effects that the current model has on societies which function in a different manner (Bourdieu, 2005). The concepts of habitus and capitals, according to Bourdieu, were developed in response to his observation of the Kabilye people. These concepts were developed “as part of an attempt to account for the practices of men and women who found themselves thrown into a strange and foreign economic cosmos, imported and imposed by colonialism with cultural equipment and dispositions—particularly economic dispositions—acquired in a pre-capitalist world” (Bourdieu, 2005, p. 2).

Colonialism is significantly responsible for the creation of economic and cultural

“dispositions” that are now reflected in Jamaican society today. The development of the Jamaican middle class is therefore not only based on the use of capitals to propel members of society upward, but is also a reflection of the habitus of members of society. The concept of habitus emphasizes historical cultural factors, along with the ideas and norms consistent with one’s position in society, as important factors that contribute to class positions. For instance, throughout the interviews, participants relied on their experience in Jamaica as a reference that informed how they understood Canadian society to be structured. For example, when asked to name some criteria by which Jamaicans determine socio-economic position, almost all participants mentioned income, occupation, and education as the leading factors. This idea was complicated, however, by their labour market experience in the GTA, about which they then added that race is also a factor in determining their ability to position themselves as middle class. Brad, who gained additional credentials in Canada, and who owned a home and was relatively satisfied with his current job position at an established financial institution in Toronto, but was also still unsure of his position in Canadian society because of his racialized experience, added:

Well I think race is huge; race is huge. It doesn’t matter how accomplished you are as a minority person. Don’t think you have that status that the others/white people get. It’s almost like you always have to be proving yourself over and over again, and it’s almost, you know, almost like . . . even the position I have it’s not like any great position, but it’s like a lot of people you can see the shock on their face when you give them your business card and they see what it is that you do. It’s almost like you are not supposed to be doing a job like that. . . .

Brad was concerned about the long-term struggle he must face in order to be accepted, perceiving that his ability to insert himself within the middle class hinged on his race, which in

this case, is associated with low achievements. Sibley (1998) suggests that some groups are constructed as “dirty” or polluting, that therefore should be ostracized. He likened this to the works of psychoanalysts who argue that people create boundaries between themselves and the other from early childhood, and then, as members of society, continue to create separations based on “us” and “them” along axes of cultural difference. Because of these types of created separation, the recognition from friends, family, and peers of similar ethnicities became important to contributing to the valorization of class positions among the participants in this research. Bourdieu also notes that this valorization is achieved through networks, and although it is not tangible, it is useful in its ability to position members of the networks in social arenas where their assets may be converted into economic capital. This form of capital, which he suggests is derived through successful social networks, is lost initially for immigrants. Thus, there may be a considerable gap in their ability to reengage a similar quality of networks and gain the recognition that they enjoyed prior to migration.

There was a clear sense from the majority of my interviewees that there was a perception that they had fallen down instead of climbed the socio-economic ladder. This decline was clearly attributed to their labour market experience. This particular aspect of the conversation more often than not evoked emotions of loss and sadness from the participants as they reminisced about the lifestyle they once enjoyed in their home country. For Harvey, lack of recognition was a key factor that demonstrated a loss in his socio-economic position. While, at the time of the interviews, he held a secure job and owned a home, he also talked about the ways that he had integrated into society as an indicator of his social position.

While race is noted as a primary reason for labour market outcomes, lack of social networks, and the resultant lack of recognition, is another factor that demonstrates loss of socio-

economic position and alerts us to the importance of social networks and the associated social capital to be derived from them. Harvey felt comfortable with the choice he made to reside in Canada and re-educate himself, but also recognized that there were still limits to his adjustment based on his lack of ability to enjoy forms of social capital:

. . . if you're measuring quality of existence and your social standing, in terms of no one knowing you, no one cares about who you are, you don't know who your neighbours are . . . Recognition [of] your existence, that is the necessary ingredient. So if you want the whole package then Jamaica is the place to be. If you want the other things, the nitty gritty minus the recognition, then this is where you need to be. And throwing winter in the mix, it's not fun either.

Participants also mentioned the psychological distress and resentment that they felt because of their immigrant experience in Canada. Harvey went on to express his concern at the challenges that present themselves as a result of poor labour market experiences:

. . . it's a tragedy, because there are so many immigrants coming in now in terms of, and not only immigrants but educated immigrants . . . many are in the driveway of the Canadian labour market. They are going into psychological problems because they have left their countries with their 10 or 20,000 dollars in their pocket, and in a year *it's gone*. And I have met quite a couple because I have retrained . . . In that program I met so many brilliant immigrants from all over the world.

Depending on their length of stay, participants were more varied in their understanding of their socio-economic status in Canada. For those who had been in Canada for over 20 years, they declared they believed they were middle class. However, all other participants stated they believed themselves to be working or lower middle class, depending on their outlook based on

the job they held at the time of the interview.

Leonie's employment at the time of her interview was in the health sector, particularly close to her occupation in Jamaica. However, she was one of the many immigrants who find themselves in the precarious situation of being a temporary full time worker. As a result, she expressed that she was uncertain how to feel about her socio-economic position. Her husband was working full time as a mechanic, and together they were striving to reclaim the standard they held in Jamaica for their family. She remarked:

Now, not sure what my social standing is in Canada because although I own a home and I have cars etc., etc., I do not know what income level is considered middle class here, and *I don't feel it*. In Jamaica, I could take a vacation abroad, but here it's more paycheck to paycheck.

In interviews, participants were often fearful for their future and that of their children, especially in light of the insecurity they faced compared to the relatively stable socio-economic position they enjoyed in Jamaica. Harry lamented at his loss in terms of financial assets in Canada. Although the Jamaican currency is weak against the Canadian dollar, there are Jamaicans whose earnings enabled them to send their children abroad for higher education, or to participate in long-term financial obligations outside Jamaica. Harry explained:

I want to be able to pay my children's school fee instead of them taking loan . . . why I tek dem out of Jamaica and carry dem here. When I was in Jamaica, I could have sent dem to Canada and pay dem school fee. Now I am in Canada and cannot pay their school fee. They have to take out loan so they are going to be tied to the system too!!! And they are going to be tied to the system till I don't know when they can pay off their school loan, and so to me that is not ideal stuff. I mean unless, unless as a matter of fact, it is not

even a situation where when they finish school there is going to be some surety that they will get a good job, because dem finish university and at the same time dem end up working Tim Horton or dem working in a all kind a foolishness.

There were also participants who had sold everything prior to migrating to Canada, and with poor labour market inclusion they then had difficulties meeting their basic needs. As a result, there was growing resentment. Maria, for instance, who at the time of her interview had been residing in Canada for 14 years, spoke of arriving with reasonable monetary assets because of the sale of her possessions in Jamaica, such as her house and car. She, like Harvey, expressed recognition of additional factors outside of home and car ownership to determine her social position, such as taking vacations. However, in Canada, even 14 years later, she said she still had to plan to do these things, such as plan years in advance for a vacation, and she too was living paycheck to paycheck.

Harry was afraid for the future and genuinely concerned about his lack of economic assets in Canada due to his inability to hold a job with benefits. It was clear that the inability to convert cultural capital to economic capital affected the way in which these participants both defined and explained their experiences. Harry told his story:

. . . we both were in very good jobs; we had our own home . . . we were pretty stable financially. I work for 25 years before I come to Canada; think about all that pension that I amassed over that period, and I moved [that] money [to Canada] and it is gone. I don't start getting any pay or pension here, so when I get to retirement what is going to happen [is that] I am going to live on the system. So there is nothing for me to look forward to unless some windfall or mi get some big break out or the children come up and mek a mass of money and mek a cheque and give me or something because the system really

just block you out. Nobody can tell me that the opportunities available here are equal to where we came from and as far as I am concerned there is nothing special about this country.

Participants' Coping Strategies

Resistance to systemic discrimination, and the resultant challenges associated with self-doubt and financial instability, has to be strategic, and the players have to be knowledgeable of the rules of the game in order for their strategy to be successful. The experiences of racialized immigrants, along with their habitus as descendants of oppressed groups in the Caribbean, influence their response, and in fact provide them with insight as to how to maneuver the field to their benefit. As shown earlier, Simone utilized networks prior to her arrival in Canada, and then leveraged those networks to her benefit within four years in the GTA, holding a number of positions before her current position in her field. Similarly, Harvey planned his course of action based on the knowledge he had of the difficulties of entering the labour market:

Regarding my background, I worked in the environmental field in Jamaica. As with many immigrants, I did not come with the notion that I was going to land a job automatically. Sometimes with immigrants you have to reinvent yourself a little. I suspect if you are not prepared to re-invent yourself then quite often you can become sort of stuck, with respect to job searches, etc. . . . So I did a double re-invention: I came back and did another master's degree in Station Analysis, it was a new degree. (It was an offshoot of the geography that I had done). It was a twelve-month degree program, quite intense, but I did it. I was in a better position in my mind as I had the degree that I got in 1989 from the University of Toronto and now this degree (from a joint program between Ryerson University and the University of Toronto) in 2003/2004. So theoretically, I had something that was fairly current and cutting edge. [Also] part of the re-invention that I

did was [taking] the exam to become a registered professional planner. I am actually a member of the Canadian Institute of Professional Planners. I also did the certification to become a Canadian Certified Environmental Practitioner. [So with these two processes] I considered the re-invention of myself. I then [proceeded] to take on the job market as best as I possibly could. . . . But the other thing to figure is just the constraints that exist within the job market and the fact that Toronto has practically one of the greatest numbers of immigrants. Eventually you would have found that you had to put yourself in a position to be as competitive as possible. So it was more driven by trying to be competitive in the context of the job market more than any other reality as a new immigrant.

It must be noted though that this strategy is not applicable to every immigrant. This strategy can only be adopted by someone who already has the substantial economic assets to support this sort of endeavour. In this case, Harvey was also married with two children, and so, his family had to work together in terms of planning the ways in which they would support each other until they were comfortable with their trajectory. Harvey's family retained some assets in Jamaica. This gave them an anchor as it were, while they endured the challenges of the labour market. Harry also recognized that if he had known the challenges before migrating to Canada, he would have done things differently:

We probably would [have] come, but not the way we came. You know, like I always said we could probably pay for the documents to get the permanent residence and send our children to go to school as permanent residents and stay in Jamaica and finance their needs, but the system done transfer to you the thought that boy there are opportunities here! So when you do your entire job search and you look in the area that you have your

experience in, you see a vast amount of opportunities, but when yuh come now yuh realize seh dem block you. No, we don't want you because you don't have any experience and you not trained in Canada.

Recognizing that their credentials were not valued as highly as they thought they would be, many of the participants opted to return to school—to earn a graduate degree, such as Brad and Harvey, or complete a professional certification program, such as Donna and Sasha, or take supplemental courses to update their skills, such as in the case of Louise and Sarah, or change their profession altogether, as Maria did. Among the participants, there was also an understanding of how to adapt to the experiences. For example, Maria went to York University in 2009 and studied to be a teacher. Having lived in Canada for 14 years, she had already experienced challenges with gaining access to commensurate jobs. At the time of our interview, she had decided to embark on a new profession, but had also adjusted her expectations and plans by recognizing employment trends early on. Therefore, she expressed feeling more prepared due to having more than one option open to her upon receipt of her qualifications as a teacher.

However, for many of the participants, their strategies did not stop at only acquiring credentials; as soon as they recognized the value, they also started leveraging networks. For the interviewees who recognized the value in developing relationships with their colleagues and supervisors outside the routine of work, they made attempts at shifting their own behaviour and adjusted so as to reap any benefits they might derive. Donna, who recognized that she had hit a “glass ceiling” as it were, regarding being granted a promotion, decided to try to understand what was required. The following is her account of her situation:

I need to understand what the requirements are [here] and how I have to shift and adjust myself in order to enable me to be there . . . how could I make that difference even in the

workplace . . . I am so smart and I have all my degrees, why am I not being moved into management quickly enough? But the minute I understood I cannot sit over there in my corner and be a producer and get in all of the high performing marks, but I have to have a social life within the organization to understand who the movers and shakers are . . . I can't align with them, I don't drink, I don't smoke . . . [but] I can go and socialize without doing those things . . . So the minute I understood that and started getting involved, and get out of my corner . . . I started saying, oh yes I can do this because I am qualified and I earn it . . .

In Donna's experience, since she had made the effort to maintain social relationships with her colleagues, she had been promoted and had started earning what she thought she truly deserved. Therefore, there were those participants who were more assertive in their strategies to enter the labour market. This ability to recognize the constraints in the labour market and to make conscious efforts at strategizing took confidence and knowledge of the rules of the game, all of which is also time-dependent. For the participants who had the opportunity to understand the realities of the labour market prior to migrating to Canada, they were able to adjust their expectations and make tangible decisions that cushioned their settlement experience.

However, for the majority of participants, who endured the shock of a more aggressive and unwelcoming labour market, they experienced emotional trauma and a loss of their economic assets. For this group, effective responses took longer and sought to protect both their emotional well-being, as well as their economic security. Other research participants focussed on networks among friends and acquaintances within their own ethnic community. Leonie recognized the advantages to having a close network of friends nearby. Within the course of five years, a number of her friends from Jamaica migrated to Canada, and, at the time of the

interviews, they all resided in the same community close to each other. She remarked: “I have a network of friends with similar problems etc., where we can encourage and support each other”.

For some participants, excluding themselves from understanding themselves as a class was a better option for them. One participant, for example, thought that one’s socio-economic position was not relevant in Canada to people other than the politicians. This, I believe, is a form of resistance on the part of the participants, as a way of not being positioned at the lower rungs of the socio-economic ladder. Instead, they have re-imagined a Canada that is free of such categorizations, and as a result, have freed themselves from the tragedy of their own experience of socio-economic decline.

Interestingly, no participant in this research suggested that they could lean on the Jamaican government for support. The experiences of racism, loss in income, loss in job status, and devaluation of credentials, while recognized as challenges faced by entire groups, seemed to have been considered outside of the realm of political and public affairs. All solutions were created without the assistance of policy-makers and governmental power. This may be due to the nature of the challenges, whereby systemic discrimination has become more difficult to claim in an environment that prefers to believe the claim that racism and sexism no longer exists (Bakan and Kobayashi, 2007). It may also be due to the habitus of the middle class, as one that has ascribed to the neoliberal ethic of individual success through individual effort. However, many of the strategies employed included the use of networks. Therefore, the research participants showed they were not opposed to collective solidarity.

The choice of networks and the relationship with the state as directly related to the habitus are keys to understanding the ways that middle-class immigrants respond to challenges regarding their middle-class identity, and the ways that they shape relationships transnationally

with the state. These ideas are further explored in chapters six and seven.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that the research participants experienced a devaluation of their credentials and difficulty accessing meaningful and challenging work and promotions in keeping with their education and experience. Their socio-economic development was further compromised because, as immigrants, they were more likely to hold low paying work and thus faced an uphill battle to be promoted. The recognition that their difficulties in the labour market were due to the covert racist behaviour of potential employers was overwhelming for them, particularly as they explained that they had never had to consider racism as a factor that determined their employment in Jamaica. For some, this experience had made them bitter and caused them to lose sight of their ambitions, unable to refocus or reevaluate their situation. This was especially the case for those who had high expectations of Canada and very little experience as to the realities of the labour market. While, as one participant noted, it might take as long as five years to return to the level they were at in Jamaica, many participants had used various mechanisms to cope with their new situation. They explained that they had not only used cultural and social capital developed over time, but had also proactively used their material assets in their home country to lessen the effects of the decline in their socio-economic position in Canada. In essence, all sources of monetary assets were being spent to support themselves and their families while they persevered in the labour market.

In the following chapter, I will show that labour market experiences are also gendered, affecting both the male and female participants in this research. Women indeed face dual marginalization due to their race and gender. However, black Jamaican men, in particular, have the added pressure of constantly proving that they do not belong to the stereotypical group of black men as being irresponsible and lazy without ambition or drive.

Chapter 5. The Role of Gender in Structuring Civic Engagement of Jamaican-Canadian Immigrants

Introduction

The previous chapter explored the ways that externally imposed barriers, such as racism, affected the labour market experience of the participants in this research and their subsequent engagement in civic activities. I examined this within the context of the perceptions that the research participants had of racialization in Canada and suggested that the habitus not only influenced how they responded to racism, but also affected their ability to initially recognize racial barriers. This, in turn, shaped the ways that they determined how they would use social networks. In this chapter, I focus on the gendered ideologies and gender relations among the research participants and how these influenced their labour market participation and civic engagement.

I argue that gendered ideologies and gender relations among middle-class Jamaicans do not change with migration and/or changed labour market outcomes in the new country of residence. Instead, the constraints experienced due to androcentric values (Browne, 2000), and misinformation or half-truths that support male dominance that have been passed down over generations, are pronounced within the context of the immigrant family who struggles to maintain stability through familiar practices. Women become complicit in the reproduction of gendered constructions; this ultimately adds to the work of supporting children and/or their spouse financially even as they are marginalized as visible minorities in Canada. In addition, as shown later in this chapter, women's goals for their economic lives are a reflection of gendered commitments (Browne, 2000) that may run contrary to their initial intent to relocate for a better economic future. This chapter shows that gendered constructs persist in the receiving country, influencing the intensity of civic engagement among the women research participants.

Background – Gender Relations in Jamaica

Mainstream liberal feminists have reevaluated the concept of shared oppression for all women and embarked on more reflexive and complex analyses of gendered identities (Reay, 1997). Lawson (1998), for instance, utilizes feminist approaches for migration studies, noting that a feminist approach includes the complexity created when histories and contexts are considered. Questions relating to the relationship between gender and class have led to the inclusion of concepts such as habitus to enhance understandings of the ways in which social inequalities are experienced.

The concept of habitus has been found to be a useful tool among feminist scholars, such as Reays (1997) and Skeggs (2004b), to analyze the ways in which particular groups or individuals adapt, not only as a result of the influence of structures, but also based on dispositions passed on generationally. For the purposes of this research, it should be noted that in drawing on the historical legacies of groups, as is demanded with the use of the concept of the habitus and feminist analyses, it is imperative to expound on the particular production of gendered dispositions that developed within the Jamaican historical context.

Since Jamaica's post-independence period, an increasing number of middle-class women have used education as a path to social mobility mainly because educational competence has increasingly become a prerequisite for formal employment (Chevannes, 2002). In fact, in a recent article, the former Prime Minister of Jamaica, Edward Seaga, observed that 82 percent of graduates from the University of the West Indies (Jamaica campus) were women (Seaga, 2007). Not surprisingly, women in the Caribbean have significantly altered the historic gender order (Mullings, 2005). As they became managers, senior managers, and business partners, women began to create a "visible presence . . . in non-traditional occupations such as banking and finance and public administration" (Mullings, 2005, p. 2). However, Browne (2000) argues that

patriarchal constructs have not been eroded and that women's movement into the economy has resulted in social contradictions. Women continue to suffer disproportionately from efforts to maintain responsibility for the household (Valentine, 2001). These practices are embedded in patriarchal value systems that, according to Browne (2000), are indelibly imprinted in the consciousness of members of society. In other words, the habitus is where women will "organize their work and networks in ways that offer continuity with gendered commitments" (Browne, 2000, p. 436), regardless of their socio-economic positioning.

In the meantime, Jamaican men have the ability to maintain distance between themselves and social reproductive activities and fill more powerful positions in industries relative to their female counterparts. The gendered division of labour around the family is explained by Chevannes in this way:

[c]ooking, washing, bathing, grooming, dressing and nursing children, tidying up the house, and such the like, are chores seen as the responsibility of the females, while chores relative to the household economy, such as animal husbandry, artisan skills, farming, wage labor, and other outdoor forms of income-earning, are the responsibility of the male. (2002, p. 52)

The above-described division of labour prepares boys to associate rugged, outdoor, "male" work with being tough enough to provide for one's family. According to Chevannes, "the construction of male identity has as a principal building block the ideal of control over economic resources" (2002, p. 54); therefore, it is not surprising that, amongst Jamaican men, education is regarded as less important than access to money, especially in an environment where they mostly hold positions of power, although education is still valued. The relative importance of money may also account for the relatively low percentage of men graduating from the University of the West

Indies each year. While participants in this research study were tertiary educated, and were employed as professionals in their respective fields in Jamaica, these participants also experienced similar expectations and cultural biases about the definition of masculinity.

Overall, men continue to hold a great deal of power in the Jamaican public sphere, suggesting that social factors outside of gender—such as social class, race, ethnicity, religion, and culture—are less influential in determining how masculinity is practiced and experienced by different men (Chevannes, 2002; Lewis 2003; Kaufman 1999). Despite the profound significance of gender to individual male identities, the social relations of production and labour are also integral to the ways that femininity and masculinity are constructed (Lewis 2003), as is evident in spaces such as the workplace and the home, which construct and reinforce gender roles. Masculinity is further bound up with the contradictions of capital, with processes such as global-economic restructuring, featuring high unemployment rates and the reconfiguration of work towards “flexibility”, significantly impacting how masculinity is practiced and experienced among men of different races and sexual orientations. For instance, Jamaican middle-class men “convince themselves” and others that they are being marginalized when they are feeling threatened by the workplace advancement of some women (Lewis 2003).

However, interestingly, it has become commonplace for Jamaican media and the wider society to express alarm or concern over men’s marginalization. These concerns have become more noticeable since the obvious rise in women graduates at the University of the West Indies. However, Chevannes (2002) debunks the idea that Jamaican men are increasingly marginalized in Jamaica:

Are Jamaican males being marginalized? Certainly not, if the main factor being considered is power. Despite the increasingly larger proportions of women at the

University of the West Indies, it is the men who are elected to the seat of student power. At community level, whether the issue is dons or youth club leaders, there is no marginalization of males. And as far as the churches are concerned, women's overrepresentation in the membership and ministering groups, but under-representation are found in the leadership echelons, is well-documented. (56)

Marginalization discourses, according to Chevannes (2002), often ignore these facts. It is important to point out that, while the enrolment rate of women in tertiary institutions is approximately 41 percent and while women “outperform” men at all levels of the educational system in Jamaica, according to a 2010 study developed by the Bureau of Women’s Affairs (Gender Affairs) Kingston, Jamaica, and the Gender Advisory Committee, the female unemployment rate continues to be higher than male unemployment at 14.8 percent compared to 8.6 percent.

The unemployed male is typically more visible in society as he places himself outside of the home, which remains identified as the female domain (Chevannes, 2002). This visibility creates the impression that men are more severely marginalized than women as related to employment rates, but research has shown that women have higher unemployment rates than men regardless of the level of education (Bailey and Ricketts 2003; Seguino 2003; Statistical Institute of Jamaica, 2011). For instance, of the 1,261,600 persons in the labour force in Jamaica in January 2010, 169,900 were unemployed, with 72,300, or 43 percent, being male, and 97,600, or 57 percent, being female (Statistical Institute of Jamaica, 2011). Moreover, as shown in Table 11, at each category of examinations passed, the percentage of women unemployed was higher than the percentage of men. For a breakdown of the percentages of women and men unemployed in Jamaica, by highest education attained from January 2010 to October 2011, see Appendix G.

However, the statistics show a staggeringly high proportion of men in crisis. According to The Bureau of Women’s Affairs (Gender Affairs) Kingston, Jamaica, and The Gender Advisory Committee report in 2010, of Jamaicans incarcerated of the 98.2 percent arrested and charged for major crimes, 90.6 percent admitted to adult correctional institutions were men. Moreover, the report noted that, in 2009, as many as 60.8 percent of victims of major crimes, 68.5 percent of missing adults, and 92.6 percent of suicide victims were male. These statistics may in fact have provided the basis for the research participants to be more protective and wary of the experiences faced by black Jamaican men. The particular view of the Jamaican male’s increased marginalization endured among the research participants and was also shown to be transferred to their experience in Canada, as discussed later in this chapter.

Table 11

*Percentages of Unemployed Jamaican Labour Force by Highest Examinations Passed in 2010–2011*¹⁰

Gender	January 2010	April 2010	July 2010	October 2010	January 2011	July 2011	October 2011
Male	43	37	33	36	38	36	38
Female	57	54	53	52	58	54	56

Note. Data for October 2011 are preliminary. Adapted from data provided by a contact at the Statistical Institute of Jamaica, 2011.¹¹

Participants’ Labour Market Experiences in Jamaica

Regardless of the statistics provided above, the tertiary-level educated women in this research did not believe gender played a role in their ability to obtain a job in Jamaica. Sadie,

10. Qualification examinations completed after high school, in order to be accepted into college or university, including the basic Caribbean Examinations Council exams.

11. Attempts to obtain the complete source information have been unsuccessful to date.

who was employed with the Ministry of Finance in Jamaica for nine years as a senior programmer and then as a business analyst, believed that: “In Jamaica, women are actually leaders. I don’t think gender holds you back in Jamaica as a female. Maybe when you get to the very, very high position, but for the level I was at, gender was not a factor”. Sadie outlined additional factors she thought were more significant than gender for Jamaican women’s employment in Jamaica, such as networking and education: “I think it’s more to do with connections in Jamaica, to be honest; networking, people who know you more than anything else . . . No, I do not think . . . gender played [a] significant role”. In fact, all the women interviewed, including Sadie, believed that education played a much greater influence in one’s ability to move up the social ladder in Jamaica: “Education definitely plays a major part in Jamaica. At least it helps mobility in the workplace. The more educated you are, the more you get recognition in Jamaica”.

Barbara, when asked if her gender had affected her ability to obtain employment in Jamaica, replied: “No. Once you are qualified for the position, fine, you are suitable and they will employ you”. Another participant, Sarah, commented on how the labour market was less restrictive in Jamaica:

In Jamaica, it was much better, I think. You had more options, cause I could get a job in the accounting field [or] I could get a job in the teaching field, because, at one time, I was doing both and then I just decided to stick with the accounting . . . In Jamaica, once you have the experience, you can teach it! Here, it’s like, I don’t know, unless it’s a private organization, you have to have your teaching credentials . . . back home, to me, was much better and more open. You could choose what you want and go into any field you wish. However, for Harry and his wife Faye, when asked, “Do you believe gender played a role in your

ability to obtain a job in Jamaica?”, Harry acknowledged concerns about gender, and the ways that it affects young men and their ability to access jobs in Jamaica:

Sometimes, I had to back up . . . the guys. I must tell you . . . it was a situation where the guys seemed to exhibit less responsibility. Their level of maturity, for the most part, is usually a little bit . . . less than the ladies I usually had to fight the system, because I want to see the guys progress . . . even after an interview, I would take them back to my office and talk to them . . . tell them where they went wrong and what they should do . . . stuff like that. But I usually have to stand up for them and sometimes I get on. I have gotten guys and everybody surprised [to] see how well they did . . . But there are needs [to support male applicants in this way] . . . because my manager, my immediate manager, was a woman . . . and I think they have less problems with ladies. Guys tend to give arguments, and all that sort of thing. Sometimes employers . . . stereotype the guys; sometimes, that happened and, sometimes, you have to tell yourself, you know, that not right, you know.

Both men and women agreed that gender did not play a significant role for women to access employment opportunities in Jamaica. However, for me, there were some observed challenges that surrounded deeply ingrained stereotypes reminiscent of racialized stereotypes placed on slaves during colonization. Harry mentioned that the prevalent stereotype is that men tend to be less mature, less responsible, and employers tend to be surprised to see that they do well in the structured work environment. In addition, Harry’s comments suggest that the expectations for men are different from those of women. He said that men are also less likely to accept lower compensation and that they “give more problems” than women, as they tend to be more aggressive and disconcerted with work policies and compensation. He believed, therefore, that

Jamaican men were in need of support more so than women because they were not desirable nor considered appropriate to the typical work setting.

Interestingly, the perception of gendered bias in favour of women and less favourable toward men in Jamaica had implications for the ways Harry and Faye strategized as a family, and also their use of organizations as part of that strategy in Canada.

Gendered (Mis) Perceptions of the Labour Market Experience in Canada

While most of the research participants did not consider gender to be a factor that had implications for their job opportunities in Jamaica, both male and female participants considered that black women had a better chance of finding a job in Canada over black men. As the men experienced discrimination in the labour market, the women “shielded” their husbands and their family members from the disruption to the traditional family hierarchy and to the male ego. This was, however, done in a context that supported the idea that the women did not have as bad an experience as the men. Jessica, for example, insisted that it was more difficult for men to be employed. She went on to reinforce the stereotypes that depict women as being less threatening and the least resistant, and suggested these as primary reasons for women’s ease in the labour market.

Faye recounted how both she and her husband, Harry, had held good jobs in Jamaica:

[Harry] supervised the mortgage accounting department [at a long established financial institution in Kingston, Jamaica] and I was a mortgage manager at a credit union [in Kingston, Jamaica] and, so, we were pretty stable financially.

This couple migrated to Canada in 2005, and owned a home at the time of the interview. After undergoing re-training to receive his Ontario license, Harry was working as a financial/insurance advisor and his main task was selling financial products. Faye occupied a position in her field at a credit union in the GTA. Faye also believed that it was easier for women to gain employment

in Canada, but disregarded the fact that while her first Canadian job was in the financial sector, it was a position far below her previous position and was misaligned with her years of experience in Jamaica. When asked what job she held and what her trajectory was like in Jamaica, Faye remarked:

I think it is easier for women to get through in this system than men . . . So many of our friends . . . came [to Canada] around the same time as us [and] the wife is usually the one who gets the job first . . . Well, I am [working] kind of close to my field because I am back working in a credit union [in the GTA] and I . . . started out as an MSR [member service representative in Canada]. You have to be out front talking with the members, helping doing their transactions Then I was promoted to lending officer, so it's like starting all over again. But at least it's in an environment that I like . . . I like credit unions and I like the lending aspect of it, so I am fortunate in that way. But Harry has had a lot of struggles, a lot of different, you know, jobs through agencies . . . and only now that he has the license . . . he is trying now to build that aspect of the business. It has potential, but it is a lot of work and it takes time. . . . It takes time.

The women supported their families and/or spouse by accepting entry-level work, even outside of their field, while their spouses retrained and/or received an appropriate position in the workforce. Maria, who arrived in Canada in 1996 with a BSc. in Management Studies from the University of the West Indies (Mona Campus), made the decision to move to Canada because of increasing crime in Jamaica and her belief that this posed a growing threat to her family's safety. In Canada, her first job (as an administrative data entry clerk) was obtained through a temporary agency, and approximately one year later, she received a permanent position. She remained in that organization for twelve years. She described her movement as lateral and stated that it was

not difficult for her to find a job, but suggested, similar to Faye, that it was difficult for her husband to gain employment. Maria's husband, who had an MSc in business, obtained the Certified Management Accountant (CMA) credential while maintaining a job as a security guard because he was unable to obtain employment commensurate with his education. She continued to support him and the family, waiting for her moment to retrain as a teacher, which ended being 13 years later. This situation is similar to Browne's observation that, "more often than not, women's paths to economic advancement are riddled with compromise and juggling" (2000, p. 436). This pattern of behaviour is seen in the stories of Faye, Maria, Barbara, Sadie, and Sarah. Each of these women had held jobs that were far below their qualifications and work experience, and when observing this fact, they identified their employment decision as a sacrifice they believed they chose in the name of their family. This is a clear example of symbolic violence, which, according to Bourdieu (2011), is a form of domination where the person being dominated is not fully aware of it, and, as a result, is complicit to some degree in the process.

In fact, based on the interviews undertaken in this research, the women were just as likely as men to experience challenges in obtaining a satisfying job in their respective fields. Sarah, who was educated as an accountant and worked in her field prior to migrating to Canada in 1994, looked back at her time as a new immigrant and noted the great challenges she experienced and the impact those challenges had on shaping her priorities:

It's like you have to start from scratch. Yes, start from the bottom [with] low paying jobs, take what you can get, that type of thing. Cause if you keep on insisting and persevering and getting what you want, you'll start [to advance] . . . Well, to be frank, I kind of settled into the job I have now. I haven't been searching and seeking as much. I started out [looking for better work] and . . . I got discouraged. So I just said, I will just stay

where I am and try to move up in that organization, but there isn't that much scope for improvement. You reach the top of your salary scale and you reach the furthest you can go and, then, it's like that's it. Yeah, you stay there until you die, until retirement, or you just don't move up until somebody leaves or somebody dies, and nobody is leaving and nobody is dying. It's like everybody is stuck, unless you want to move and, if I move, I think I will have to go study again. You know, do some courses or upgrade myself, cause everyday [employees] are upgrading and doing courses and so forth, especially in the computing field. So I would have to maybe do some courses and go back. [But] with my age, I don't think anybody will want to hire people my age and . . . it's safer for me to just stay there. So it's like I am not really complacent, but . . .

For Eileen, who entered Canada as a nurse in the late 1980s, her Canadian work experience was also challenging, despite the fact that she held similar job functions in Jamaica:

Almost as soon as I came [to Canada], I started working, because even the [immigration] interviewer told us about the agencies and that's where I went to get started. Yes, a temporary agency . . . they send you to the different hospitals and, yes, [that is] what I expected. Well, I knew I had to do the [Canadian nursing] exam, but I expected to be appointed the same type of respect, or nearly what I had, before . . . That was not there . . . It was like a demoted feeling. It was quite a culture shock, when I went to the hospital . . . staff instruments were so new and, then, some of the staff were not so good at all to me . . . A number of us was having the same problem, then, you know? You had to study to do your exams and then you move up, so I was a temporary [employee] for quite a while, as a matter of fact.

Black women's over-representation in some job sectors—for example, as nurses doing shift

work—and their inability to move up the ranks is systemic and reproduces their marginalization, which in turn anchors them socially in positions that limit their access to economic growth.

In some cases, the women's experiences were even more difficult, given the unique situations they faced as women, such as attempting to re-enter the workforce after having had a child. Sadie, for instance, commented on the particular challenges she had experienced in the labour market during her time in Canada:

I was let go while I was pregnant from [company X] . . . like one of my other [Jamaican] sistren [who] was let go at the same time when [she was] about to go off on mat leave. Now, you are not in a position to job hunt at that time . . . no one hires a pregnant woman . . . There is also the reality that most of us are here without family, so you have to take care of your baby and you can't job hunt, realistically, while you are doing that, so those are issues and that's gender, because women get pregnant! [If you are pregnant,] you don't have much choice; you just have to make the decision and just try to survive.

According to Sadie, who at the time of the interview had one young child:

People's advice after [I had] my son . . . [was that I should go] back to one of those government programs . . . the advice that I was getting was that, oh, because you are out of the job market for so long you need to start back at help desk! And I was like, you know what? NO! . . . And I said absolutely not! . . . I think I can find a job. I will have to try it my way first, before, you know, you admit defeat and start from scratch again . . . It's like what that was telling me is, like, five years of experience . . . that time never count just because I was away for a year on maternity leave!

In addition, Sadie explained that, apart from her responsibilities as a wife and mother, there were challenges she faced in being both black and female in the Canadian work landscape:

I think, after [employers] hire you, they feel they have done all they need to do, like they are not racist by the fact that they hire[d] me! They don't understand that racism goes much further than that, in that they need to treat me fairly, as well, after I am hired . . . I found that disconnect [in understanding] in the workplace, especially at [company X], where I felt it was a little unbalanced. . . . It's racialized, and it's certainly immigrants versus "belongers," or whatever.

While all interviewees were educated at the tertiary level, the above women, in particular, became less enthusiastic in their employment efforts due to the significant workplace barriers they faced. This demotivation was in contrast to the previous examples of women who were employed in fields commensurate with their education and were granted opportunities for promotion.

For Sadie, the first job she got in Canada was through one of her friends. Although she did not get the job she interviewed for, she was offered another job through that connection. Since then, at the time of the interview, she had held five jobs over nine years and contrasted this experience of multiple short-term positions with the fact that she had one job in Jamaica for five and a half years.

The experiences of Sadie, Maria, and Barbara (mentioned below), are examples of participants who were unhappy with their labour market experience in Canada. This is an interesting contrast to the female participants who had held prominent positions in the workplace and who felt that family obligations had not impacted their workplace advancements.

For example, Sadie initially utilized job and settlement services that were provided for newcomers. However, she became particularly unhappy with the ease at which women were advised to return to lower levels in the workplace upon returning from maternity leave. She

believed this type of misinformation was particularly passed on to new immigrants:

In Canada I find that professionally it's very circular, because every time I leave a job I can start at a lower level to get back out there . . . In Jamaica, you would have had the job security of knowing that you will return to work. The fact is that even though you are being offered this maternity leave, in Canada, it's not guaranteed cause remember seh the guarantee is a job—not *your* job. [emphasis added]

Sadie, during her interview, made note of the fact that she was no longer as motivated as she was in Jamaica, and suggested that her present role as wife and mother were partially responsible for this decline. In addition, Sadie's interview suggested that she was simultaneously demoralized by her experience of instability in the workplace. For Sadie, opportunities to accept leadership positions were not available when she was ready to take on those added responsibilities prior to her marriage and the birth of her two children; now that she did have those added familial responsibilities, she was focussed on taking on the more gendered roles of mother, caregiver, and wife:

My expectation has changed a lot in the workplace since I have been here, mainly because of my last three jobs because I am here now nine years and . . . this is my fifth job. . . . That's terrible! In Jamaica, I had one job for five and a half years and I was at [company x] for three years, so the [Canadian jobs] are very short lived. One is six months, one was a year flat, and one was a little over a year. I go through a few periods of unemployment since I have been [in Canada], so my outlook has changed. I think in a negative way, because the expectation to be always climbing, to be upwardly mobile, has changed because . . . certain realities in my life have changed . . . Now, I have a child and I am married. I don't want the same things as probably when I was single and just wanted

to keep moving, so that has changed. The workplace has just not been that rewarding.

Stereotypes generated about black women and immigrant women in Canada typically resurface across multiple systems of oppression, from racism to state policies, and affect women's access to the labour market. Essentialized as domestic figures and caregivers with the "natural" attribute of being reproducers of the nation, many women face the responsibility of nurturing children and families, which, in turn, ensures social reproduction and a labour pool for the capitalist economy. Sadie was not alone in expressing the fact that her priorities had shifted in favour of her family. For Barbara and Eileen, their choice of whether or not to accept promotions was directly related to their role as mothers. In particular, Barbara's initial plan upon arriving in Canada was to return to school in order to be a medical doctor; however, that plan shifted, and, with the growth of her own family, was never realized:

That was what my plans were at the beginning. And then, after I stayed with my company for a couple years, I met my husband and married and we had two children. I never kept my own career because, to me, it was more important being a parent, because some of those other jobs, they were very demanding [in terms of] the time you had to be at work . . . I think of my kids in day care. My career was not that important at the time, so my husband was the one who had to double up and make the extra effort to bring in extra income. . . . I had to put my career and ambition on hold for our children. And by the time the children were old enough, [and] could be a little bit more responsible, etc., [my career] was no longer important to me. I didn't want the responsibility anymore. I didn't want the stress of those jobs anymore.

Similarly, Eileen embraced the role of caregiver to her growing family and retained temporary positions in the labour market:

(E) I could have been permanent because I was hired permanently in the early stages. But then I had a daughter who was a year and months, so, you know, it kind of wasn't working out . . . Fred got . . . a full time job and [I wasn't happy with] the day care thing, I didn't like the baby sitter thing, and [my daughter] was not accustomed to it. . . . I would go with the agency, like on weekends when he was home, and stay home with [my daughter] during the week. So I left the permanent job I had and stayed home with her and the other [child] came and I did the same thing. . . . Mainly.

(KW) Did the workplace experience influence you?

(E) It could have discouraged me, but I have never been a person to stay discouraged. So, you know, you feel it this time and I may cry, because I did cry many times, but then I am going [to work] again . . . But then, it was too much for [my daughter] and I decided that I am staying [home] and she was glad for it!

For the men, the added pressure of the role of breadwinner had further eroded their confidence and damaged their marital relationship. Harvey spoke of the challenges that many families face when men are marginalized and are not able to capitalize on the earning potential they believe they have, based on the credentials, skills, and experience they have honed over the years:

I remember a case of this guy who used to work (this wasn't recent this was a long time ago in the eighties, maybe 1990's) . . . they migrated because his wife was a nurse and she could come over here. He used to work in the private sector, in pharmaceuticals. He was the big breadwinner; he was making money in Jamaica. When he came he unfortunately had this notion that everything would work out for them just fine. Even before he landed here he would, while I was still studying [here in Toronto], write me

emails wondering how easy it is to find a car etc. So he had this land of milk and honey concept. He came and found that nobody recognized his UWI degree, and couldn't find a job. His wife, being the nurse, passed her exams and immediately found a nursing job in the late eighties and was getting on with life. So he got his role totally reversed. *He moved from chief breadwinner to totally dependent in one aircraft journey coming into another country.* And I remember one time his wife said to me, "You know, if I did not know this man for so long I would have to wonder what I am doing with him". He had started to get absent minded at one point leaving on the stove and almost burning down their little apartment. This was the guy who was full to the brim of confidence [in Jamaica].

Although both male and female participants had experienced poor labour market outcomes in Canada, one male participant, using his wife as an example of the ease with which women are able to navigate the labour market in the GTA, stated: "This society tends to be kinder and gentler to women than it is to men. She came and found a job without any problem".

The receiving nation and its histories also complicate the ways that opportunities and constraints are experienced by black women—hence the importance of placing Canada within its own historical imperialist context. Canada, having moved towards being a neoliberal state which has named its core function to be to "facilitate conditions for profitable capital accumulation" (Harvey, 2006, p. 11), plays a significant role in enabling the exploitation of women through policies and rules enacted through the state apparatus. Women generally are particularly vulnerable to employers' demands for flexible labour, and are often ghettoized into low-end jobs and low-income sectors (such as textile, light manufacturing, and service-sector jobs), while they are underrepresented in higher-paying jobs (such as legislators, supervisors, and senior

management jobs), suggesting that they are considered to be amenable to these forms of employment compared to men (Teelucksingh and Galabuzi, 2005; Galabuzi, 2005; Hum and Simpson, 1999). This becomes particularly acute for working immigrant mothers who are not able to rely on family members to act as caregivers to their children while they are at work. Ontario, for instance, a province with “more than half (54.2 percent) of Canada’s total visible minority population” (Statistics Canada 2008, p. 19), will only start to provide full day learning to all four and five year olds in September 2014 (Ontario, 2011).

The retreat of the state from social reproduction has placed women under further strain in determining how to manage work life and the care of their children. Immigrant women, in particular, are forced as it were to accept low paying jobs with flexible hours as they try to contribute to the small pool of family income while gaining Canadian work experience. Unfortunately, this also means there are difficulties in meeting the expense of daycare. For example, Maria, who once worked as an accountant and who holds a Bachelor’s degree in (Business) Management Studies at UWI, Jamaica, decided to send her children to Jamaica each summer break because of the cost of daycare. At one point, she stressed that daycare was close to what she made weekly—\$450.00/week.

Participants, therefore, also spoke to their stage in the life course as a factor that influenced their ability to access and maintain meaningful work. This was especially true for Sadie who, having arrived in Canada in her late 20s in 2001, had planned to establish herself in the workplace before settling down and starting a family. However, nine years later, married and in her mid-thirties, she found herself faced with the dilemma of making a choice between her personal interests and her career goals:

Well, for me the reality is that gender for me means that I am the one who gets

pregnant—granted we are given this privilege of a year off for maternity leave, but it's at such a reduced salary that you have to be really financially ready to consider having a child because your pay can potentially go down by more than 50 percent while you are off. And at the same time, there is no job security even though they are giving you this offer. A lot of people have trouble, because I was let go while I was pregnant from company X, and like one of my other sistren she was let go at the same time when she was about to go off on mat leave. Now you are not in a position to job hunt at that time . . . No one hires a pregnant woman and there is also the reality that most of us are here without family, so you have to take care of your baby. And you can't job hunt realistically while you are doing that, so those are issues . . . because women get pregnant! You know! You are at the time now when is baby time now [smiles]. You are just at that age you don't have much choice, you just have to make the decision and just try to survive.

This is the reality for women, regardless of the time of their immigration. The above quote was from a participant in her mid-30s who arrived in Canada in 2001. The following is an assessment from Barbara who arrived in the 1970s:

I have had several jobs and several promotions, but still I was not willing to take on some jobs because of how it would affect my family. If it would be too demanding, I had to limit myself. I can remember my boss saying I want you to apply for that job. But I didn't apply for it (I didn't want it) . . . I was given offers but I wouldn't take some of them, because for me it was just too demanding for my family for me to juggle both . . . I felt that I needed to be more attentive to looking after the home circle, whereas my husband could go out and work a little harder.

For the female participants who had young children, obligations to the home were paramount in the sense that they affected the women's interest in upward career mobility. They were willing to sacrifice more demanding employment in order to support their children. Thus, although the prevailing view is that women find employment much more easily than men, women do face limitations in the labour market because of their roles as mothers and wives. Family obligations tend to take precedence, especially in young relationships, and the possibilities for re-entry into the work force become even more difficult due to barriers and less viable options for women later in life. Further in the chapter, I show that this also impacts their choices in terms of civic engagement.

Of particular concern to black feminist thinkers is the extent to which race complicates the nature of oppression (and the response to that oppression) that black women face in the labour force. Pateman and Mills (2007) note that black women's domination by white men, white women, and non-white men have made them vulnerable to a gamut of historical incidences, such as conquest through: land expropriation, slavery, regimes of colonial forced labour, segregation, and the modern sweatshop. Highlighting the historical longevity of this exploitation, Brand (1991) notes that the foundations of sexism and patriarchy structured the earliest forms of slavery so as to exploit women and men in different ways. Concepts such as intersectionality set out to "theorise the multiple identities, particularly of the subordinated, that result when race, gender, class and sexual orientation . . . come together" (Mills, 2007, p. 131). This concept reminds us to recognize and tease out the ways that combinations of identities that tend to be understood separately are reflected in one group. In essence, there are myriad situations taking place within the group.

Katz notes that singular understandings of social identification along race or gender are,

inadequate to understand the complex power dynamic and injustices of social life. It does not mean the same to be a black woman as it does to be a white woman or a black man. Identities are not merely something one opts into and out of nor are they additive; rather being black changes what it means to be a woman and these meanings are themselves historically and geographical contingent. (2003, p. 253)

The experiences of black men are also related to more than one source of discrimination. For instance, a black man may experience marginalization based on his skin colour in relation to a white man. This may be manifested in terms of income level. However, he is still in a position of control and dominance overall by virtue of being a man and having the sense of authority and power that comes with his position as a man (Pateman and Mills, 2007). This is the power he can exert in the home as head of the household. Therefore, the male research participants, while expressing their challenges with the labour market, were expressing those challenges in terms of how it affected their position of dominance as men. The women in this research did not seem able to express their challenges simply in relation to dominance in any facet of their lives. The women participants instead, expressed willingness to negotiate and accept precarious employment options in keeping with their roles as wife, homemaker, and preserver of the family. The taken for granted-ness of gendered roles contributed to the misrecognition of oppression I observed in the interviews with many of the participants, and had also contributed significantly to the strategic decisions made as a family.

Stereotypes of Black Men and Labour Market Experience

Although slaves in Jamaica received emancipation approximately 175 years ago, in 1838, numerous researchers have suggested that the gendered design and function of the colonial slave system has not only affected black men as they have strived for autonomy since emancipation, but has also impacted the ways they are currently perceived by other ethnic groups (Thomas,

2005; Beckles, 1998). The latter, in particular, is certainly a cause for concern within black immigrant communities. The ways in which men are supported in their efforts to overcome others' racialized perceptions of them are evidenced in the discussions I had with the research participants.

According to Teelucksingh and Galabuzi (2005), racially-based economic discrimination occurs when employers make generalized assumptions about the worth of an employee; exclusionary discrimination occurs when members of racialized groups are not hired, paid equally, or promoted, regardless of their skills or experience. These forms of discrimination exacerbate the oppressive biases inherent in the Caribbean gender order, because black men, in particular, are racialized as criminals, and as unemployable, undereducated, and promiscuous (Davis, 1983; Wacquant, 2005). This characterization relegates black men to subordinate and lower-class statuses, and limits their hope for economic and/or cultural capital accumulation. There is insufficient literature that addresses the particular position of black, skilled, immigrant men, and how their self-conception as being equal and influential members of society is challenged by institutionalized discrimination in Canada (Agnew, 2007) and impacts their relationships in the home.

In Harry's case, he was unable to maintain stable employment and could only get work through temporary agencies. Although both Harry and Faye had similar difficulties in acquiring jobs commensurate with their skills and experience, there was a sense from both of them during their interview together that men face more challenges and women have an easier time/experience when looking for work. Harry, who became particularly emotional during our conversation, recounted the feelings of emasculation that he had experienced in the labour market. Harry described how he felt having held a position in Jamaica as a Senior Manager in an

international financial institution, but then working in Canada doing insecure, unstable, and non-standard work. His wife had become the main breadwinner in the family, thus contributing to his sense of loss of identity as the head of household and the provider. He remembered a time when he could provide for his family comfortably in Jamaica; however, at the time of the interview, he was dependent on his wife's income and found himself less independent:

you looking to develop yuhself and yuh family and have a good life, but the system does not cater for that. What the system does is literally . . . emasculate me as a man. That's what the system has done to me. So if I were to express myself or to tell you how I feel . . . it makes me upset because what it does is rip you of all your finances . . . and then you have to go scrape [by] in order to live. That's what the system does to you.

Harry's decision to retrain, while Faye worked, allowed him the time to position himself for a more reasonable job that was more in keeping with the position he held in Jamaica. However, Faye justified the fact that she had to take on a much lesser role as a lending officer in an organization by explaining that she preferred the credit union work environment. She empathized with her husband, who also had to start over, but who seemed to be taking a much longer time than her to find "suitable" employment, and, importantly, who was currently reaping the rewards of her persistence with the labour market. In her empathy, she downplayed her own experience, while neglecting to acknowledge that he, too, would have been employed upon arriving to Canada, if he had persevered with the low-paying jobs he initially held through employment agencies.

The emotional distress the men experienced stemmed from feeling the loss of dominance that they had enjoyed in Jamaica by making the greater portion of their family's income. Harvey noted that he was able to escape that particular source of emotional stress because he had

retained his high-paying job in Jamaica to support his wife and children when they arrived in Canada. He stayed in Jamaica to work until his wife found meaningful employment in Canada.

This couple thus ensured that both of them were never unemployed at the same time:

There was a time when she wasn't working and I was working, but I was still in Jamaica. I would always cover the expenses up here [Toronto]. So we always had this policy not to be out of a job at the same time. So when she was working and I was studying and looking for a job, she tried to ensure that she brought money into the house. She would dole out money out of her pocket or purse to give me as a big man [grown, responsible adult]. So it comes down to how the couple interacts and communicates and becomes sensitive of each other's situation and circumstances.

Significantly, several male participants insisted on the ease with which they felt women find work, and the challenges that black men face, more so than women, regardless of the experiences that the women participants may have faced in the labour market as previously shown. During his interview, Ben, who, having completed a university degree in accounting in the UK, had held jobs both in the UK and in Jamaica, and who held a position in his field in Canada, seemed confident in his assessment of the gendered nature of the Canadian labour market. Ben, an accountant, explained that he recognized that certain stereotypes distinctly associated with Jamaican men followed him, and that he had to be conscious and work hard at beating the stereotype. He considered himself a quiet person, but said it was important not to be considered laid back, although normally he would not have had a problem associating this representation with his character.

Ben's interpretation of his experience highlights the important fact that racism cannot be explained in abstraction from other social relations, as is noted by scholars such as Stuart Hall. In

understanding the ways in which racism functions, Hall suggests that “one must start, then, from the concrete historical ‘work’ which racism accomplishes under specific ‘historical’ conditions – as a set of economic, political and ideological practice, of a distinctive kind, concretely articulated with other practices in a social formation” (Hall, 1980, p. 338; Brah, 2007) Other characteristics such as being “antisocial” and untrustworthy, Ben noticed, were generally associated with black men and negatively impacted their chances of employment. Ben’s assessment of the predicament of racialized Jamaican immigrant men is in keeping with the representations of slave men meant to subdue and keep them in place. Beckles shows that slave owners coined terms such as “Quashee” to represent their ideological characterizations of black men: “docile but irresponsible, loyal but lazy, humble but chronically given to lying and stealing; [their] behavior was full of infantile silliness and [their] talk inflated by childish exaggeration” (1996, p. 9–10).

Ben was also aware that the experiences of Jamaican immigrants are not reducible to gender. Specifically, he cited the additional influences of race, the stigma attached to black male and female bodies over generations, and employers’ essentialized perceptions of the trustworthy and responsible employee as gendered. Speaking of the different racialized stereotypes associated with men and women, Ben explained:

. . . one of my observations here [in the GTA] is that women invariably have greater access to the opportunities than men . . . because . . . in a professional environment, they are willing to take a greater chance with a woman who presents herself as the authentic example of the individual they are seeking. Because the perceptions of the laid back and the other [perceptions] are somewhat negative perceptions . . . laid back is not necessarily negative, [but] it is more associated with the men than with the women. In terms of the

antisocial, first, the perception that we are associated with antisocial behaviour is more associated with black men than with black women. But generally what I have found is employers are much more willing to give a black woman an opportunity, who presents herself as supposedly having this built in attribute that you would require for a job. So they are more willing to take a chance with a black woman than they would with a black man, particularly in a situation, you know, where there is some element of responsibility and trust, they are much more willing to take the risk with a woman than a man.

Interestingly, the interview participants distinguished between race and gender-related barriers, but also saw connections between them. Despite the fact that all the men who participated in this research were tertiary educated, they all believed that women had an easier labour-market experience in Canada than men. The men in this study identified with and incorporated the conventions associated with historically based stereotypes, but more importantly, through this “knowing”, they were also able to use these conventions to their advantage. The men suggested that black women had more opportunities than black men, and that black men’s experiences were invariably more connected to stereotypes associated with being black, Jamaican, or Caribbean. However, in reality, both the men and women had made sacrifices as immigrants in the Canadian labour market.

The research participants tended to forge compromises with their spouse as to who would remain the primary breadwinner. The prevailing understanding that the women had more job opportunities than the men was also accepted by the women, who grudgingly took on menial tasks, while their husbands retrained and hoped that, in the long term, they would be able to access meaningful employment and reclaim their place as the head of the household. Harvey, for example, having acquired a home, cars, and the satisfaction that his children were settled in their

community and that his family was also secure, grudgingly conceded that he had gained material assets in Canada:

I've been fortunate—knock on wood—that I am still in the environmental field, I am still in the planning field, I am still in policy at a fairly high level . . . The individuals who are lucky and never lose focus . . . come with a little luck . . . [and] can get [their] foot in the housing market to buy a house, etc. So, in terms of material existence, my house was in Portmore before I left Jamaica; I now live in Markham, which, despite somebody who they killed a night or two ago, is still one of the relatively safe communities and a high sought-after suburban neighbourhood to live. I don't know what size house I lived in, in Westchester, but I live in a 2000 plus square foot house now. And I have a family, etc. So, in terms of your material existence, I would say the quality of your housing, for starters, is significantly improved [in Canada], although I have a mortgage now being paid. So, in that regard, I wouldn't necessarily say I was any worse off than when I was in Jamaica. Still, I have two cars. We had two cars then; we have two cars now. I have a better house now than I had in Jamaica. I live in a reasonably nice residential neighborhood. The suburban thing is what a lot of people dream about, and never had a chance at . . . you know, children playing on the street and that sort of foolishness.

Interestingly, planning for parenthood and supporting their spouses were never factors that were considered when the participants discussed issues they had encountered on their path towards full employment. In fact, in the interviews conducted, the men spoke with ease about being calculating and realistic about their expectations for Canada. They also appeared to link their success as an immigrant to their capacity to be professionals. As one male participant stated:

Part of my survival mechanism was to say [to myself] “that is in the past. I am not living in the past anymore.” Not even my manager has an admin assistant; it’s only the director, really, that has an admin assistant. It’s every man for himself. So, [those] who didn’t know how to print, merge documents, or whatever it is . . . [better be] on a fast learning curve. So, once you make that mental adjustment [of being self-reliant], that’s thinking realistically.

Patrick, Ben, Harvey, and Brad were all satisfied with their trajectory in the workplace, and approached their careers strategically. They belonged to a range of professions, including engineering, finance, accounting, and public service. Their strategic formulas, however, tended to be similar and ranged from the use of social networks to using their cultural capital gained from experience in other countries (such as the UK) to guide the ways in which they portrayed themselves to the Canadian majority.

Gendered Relations and Civic Engagement

Active forms of citizenship, according to Staeheli and Clarke, occur when “the citizenry participates not just in the formulation of laws and policies, but in the maintenance of basic economic, social and educational conditions” (2003, p. 104). Staeheli and Clarke found that many American states, during the political and economic restructuring of the late twentieth century, shifted their responsibilities for providing social rights, such as welfare, education, and health care, unto communities and households. Consequently, civic “participation may become a means of reclaiming those social rights or of compensating for the retrenchment of rights and for changed work conditions” (Staeheli and Clarke, 2003, p. 105), instead of citizens being enabled by social rights. Thus, they argue that the spheres for participation and active citizenship have shifted from the state. This shift creates greater possibilities for women, minorities, and younger citizens—who, traditionally, rely on involvement in community organizations—to have a more

prominent voice and to raise issues of concern to them. Work flexibility may also facilitate workers' involvement with grass-root organizations. Therefore, Staeheli and Clarke suggest that decisions to participate in civic activities must take into account household, workplace, locality, gender, and ethnic considerations, because "significant shifts in communities and in the workplace can both enable and constrain political and community activism" (2003, p. 105).

For immigrants, gendered understandings of labour market experiences are heavily influenced by the historical and political economic context in which the country of origin was developed. Traditionally, citizenship is conceived of as involving "claiming, exercising, and contesting rights, entitlements, and obligations (e.g., rights to vote and strike, the obligation to pay taxes) and diverse ways of engaging with the institutions (such as the state) and relations through which communities are constituted and governed" (Chouinard 2009, p. 107). Feminist geographers have, in recent years, made important contributions to rethinking relations and practices of citizenship in light of transnationalism and post-colonialism (Chouinard, 2009). Among Jamaican immigrant men and women in Canada, the practice of civic engagement must, therefore, be analyzed in the context of class and the historical embodiment of Jamaican Canadians post colonialism.

The response to a poor labour market experience not only affects the socio-economic standing of families, but also affects their motivation to become active members of society. The research participants who felt devalued in the workplace often also struggled in participating in the establishment of their communities, and, instead, retreated towards gendered roles in the home. Among the married female research participants, for instance, they tended to express their intentions and practices with reference to their children and their household duties, while the men tried to (re)claim some sense of dominance in the home. If such individuals regularly

attended church, this religious space also became a site of refuge, and some participants actively sought out and participated in church activities simply because they were being offered a sense of belonging in that context. Although all participants in this study had similar backgrounds, there were still distinct differences among them in terms of their perceptions and attitudes, both of which had implications for their civic practice.

The participants in this research were all involved in some form of civic activity, as shown in Appendix B. Women engaged in at least one category. However, the difference among women is shown based on their level of professional success and status. Those with higher levels of recognition and success in their careers, directly related to length of stay, were also more likely to be involved in civic activities through well-established organizations. Donna, Elizabeth, and Victoria were the only women in this study who did not state that gender had any impact on their labour market experience. Importantly, they also never expressed that their husbands had difficulty in accessing employment or that they did not receive support with their children. In terms of their civic engagement, they were also more involved in civic organizations, and, in fact, held leadership roles. As will be shown in subsequent chapters, Victoria and Elizabeth were extensively involved in organizations dedicated to the socio-cultural development of Jamaica. All three were also heavily involved in organizations that focus on the development of the black community in Canada. These women did not give the impression that they were limited by expectations to support their family. In addition, their interest in career development was well supported by their family. In fact, Victoria became involved in her community at the urging of her husband, a well-established attorney, when they moved to Oakville from Montreal over 30 years ago.

On the other hand, those women who were more recent immigrants, who did not regard

their labour market experience as successful and who might still have been transitioning, were less involved in high profile philanthropic forms of civic activities; these women were more likely to be engaged only in activities that were either informal or that were through their local church. Leonie, who worked as a records manager at a Jamaican hospital, observed that her Canadian career advancement had been slow. Her first Canadian job was in telemarketing, and, at the time of the interview, after a brief placement through an employment agency, she was temporarily employed in an area related to her skills. Leonie's salary in combination with that of her husband covered only their basic expenses. She had therefore decided to return to school. But, with her time divided between retraining and taking care of her family, she admitted there was not very much time left for organizational activities. She attended church regularly, but her church-related activities were limited because of her lack of free time. To compensate for this, from time to time, Leonie donated money to a particular cause. She noted that, at the time of her interview, her focus was on day-by-day monetary survival, and that, after six years in Canada, she felt that she was finally in the process of getting settled. She expressed that once she felt more situated she might become more involved in other activities. In time, she believed she would be able to contribute more to her community by volunteering in schools and hospitals.

The male participants in this research expressed that their social status was linked to their identity through work, and that, as they struggled to be employed in jobs commensurate with their skills and education, their status had been diminished in their move to Canada.

Interestingly, female participants who were satisfied with their job trajectory also noted the official recognition they had received, but focussed on its value as a means through which to leverage themselves in the workplace, instead of focusing on any symbolic value. As will be shown in subsequent chapters, the attention to creating symbolic value also drove some research

participants' interest in civic engagement, both transnationally and in the Greater Toronto Area. The men for instance, showed a deep sense of loss and emptiness in their social life upon losing their previous levels of recognition.

Fred further explained the men's reasons for connecting recognition or status to sense of self, and thus its connection to their level of involvement. In Jamaica, Fred was heavily involved in public activities surrounding the church and was also publicly recognized for his community work. He recalled being recognized by the local news media after organizing an event that brought together the community and the local police. In Canada, he had continued to be involved in the church, but stressed that, in Canada, any recognition and the extent of the gains he received through his social capital in Canada was restricted to the church field—that is, to the church and its members. However, he was still able to experience its influence on his everyday life and even on his self-esteem. This form of social capital further facilitated his ability to carry out certain functions:

I am chairman of the school board [for] two years. I am on the exec now for probably about ten to fifteen years . . . I have been [on the executive] with another organization within the church . . . organization for . . . quite a few years, I would say . . . You know, you don't have to show off but, sometimes, you have to use your position to get things done. You go anywhere and you want to get through with anything, they classify you by looking at you. I say, "My name is [Fred] and I am president of the school board," and they look at you, and [say], "Oh, yes, [Fred]" and they ready to help you . . . they know that if you are pulling [rank], but you do it to get through. Even in our organization, the church, it makes such a big difference because, if they don't know you have that clout, so to speak, they don't even say "hi" to you, you see. But I don't experience that, because

they know who I am. . . . I am [Fred], first elder . . . and it's different. . . . I am [Fred], I am [with the] school board, and it's different. . . . I am the friend of xyz, and it's different. . . . After a while, now, they know you . . . so you don't have to say that anymore . . . so it works!

Conclusion

Understanding the ways in which gendered relations and ideologies influence the decision-making of men and women in particular scenarios is complex. It calls for a contextual analysis of the present experiences of men and women that is grounded in an awareness of the influence of historically established practices and expectations. In this chapter, I showed that within the general category of tertiary-educated black Jamaican immigrants, there are appreciable differences across gender in the ways that they rationalize and respond to discrimination and challenges to their identity as middle class, and as valued members of society. While both men and women participants linked lack of access to employment to discrimination, the discrimination was based on stereotypes associated with black men, and could even be as specific as stereotypes of Jamaican black men. Discrimination, according to the research participants, was not solely associated with gender, but they had to contend with race and ethnicity-based stereotypes influencing their job opportunities. Throughout the interviews, however, I observed that they espoused a narrative that placed men's marginalization as being mutually exclusive to women's experiences. In other words, they placed themselves and their experiences as separate from and opposite to women's experiences: men had a difficult time, and women didn't. This narrative has been recently articulated in the Jamaican context as well (Bryan, 1996), regardless of the statistics that show men remain in the more powerful positions in the labour market in Jamaica. Embracing this idea in the Canadian context affected the strategies employed by couples—in particular, in terms of the extent to which they participated

in civic organizations, and also reproduced gendered relations in the home regarding the expectations of women as being in the supportive roles of wife and mother.

Within both gender groups, there were those who felt satisfied with their trajectory in their workplace (or in their larger field of work), and who had taken strategic initiatives to drive themselves forward. As will be shown in the following chapters, these initiatives often included the use of social networks or social capital. However, amongst both the men and women, there were participants whose experience had been persistently difficult and disappointing. The men tended to retain stereotypes, held from their home country that suggested that women could more readily access meaningful employment than men. The women also agreed with such stereotypes, and had resigned themselves to undertaking low-end positions to support their family.

Ultimately, these women were disappointed with their experience and positioned their children as the benefactors of their sacrifices.

The different responses to labour market barriers also shaped the extent of an individual's civic engagement. Women who spent most of their time supporting their families, due to the inability of their spouse to access jobs commensurate with his education, participated in informal and less organized activities. In the following chapter, with regard to the types of civic activities, I will discuss how the research participants showed that their participation in activities at the local level was a reflection of their own understanding of the types of discrimination they had experienced. Their participation also reflected their keen interest in developing social networks that would assist them in responding effectively to barriers in the labour market.

Chapter 6. Using Capitals to Earn Capitals: Insights into Processes of Civic Engagement in the GTA

Introduction

Canada's Multiculturalism policy was designed to help strengthen and foster "the equality of all Canadians in the economic, social, cultural and political life of Canada" (Justice Laws Wesbite Canada). However, scholars and bureaucrats alike have acknowledged that equality is elusive due to persistent practices of racism and discrimination and their effects, such as limited socio-economic integration and declining civic participation (Fernando, 2007).

Adrienne Clarkson, former Governor General of Canada and co-chair of the Institute for Canadian Citizenship, has added:

My worry is that new citizens, in the first critical ten years, are not able to quickly mount the economic ladder as they have been able to do in the past, and I worry about that gap of earnings increasing the gap that exists between our new citizens and native-born Canadians. I don't feel that we have the time to wait for a generation. (Clarkson, 2007, p. 12)

Nevertheless, skilled immigrants are considered assets because of the assumptions that the knowledge they possess will be easily invested in the local economy, and that their education will accelerate their integration (Raino and Baghdadi, 2007, p. 164).

As shown in chapter 4, however, racial discrimination affected the labour market experiences and socio-economic well-being of most of the research participants. The barriers they experienced to full employment had also affected their emotional well-being and brought a sense of both sadness and loss. Chapter 5 showed that men and women approach the labour market in different ways in that women are more likely to accept jobs that are far below their skills and credentials because of gendered expectations that they support their family unit,

including those times when the man cannot find what he deems to be suitable work. The wholesale acceptance of this idea, however, is representative of symbolic violence, and perpetuating and validating norms.

The participants' inability to maintain their class positions due to poor socio-economic outcomes also influenced their participation in civic activities. Indeed, Fernando (2007) and Kelly (2007a) indicate that the linkages between institutionalized barriers, such as the systematic discounting of foreign credentials and state-imposed inequitable working conditions, and socio-economic upward mobility and integration, are primary determinants of immigrants' political participation in Canada. It is also important to note that participation does not only depend on being accepted; participation is also a means to inclusion. Clarkson suggests:

All of us who have come from somewhere else totally different to take our place in Canada have always wanted to be included. Inclusion is the important thing in a society like ours built on new citizens. (2007, p. 10)

However, Isin and Wood acknowledge and underscore the important observation that "modern citizenship has always been allocated only to select groups, despite its universal language" (1999, p. 55).

The purpose of this chapter is to explore the ways that skilled immigrants use their capitals to improve their socio-economic mobility through organized social networks. In doing so, I will show the connections between socio-economic mobility and the development of a sense of belonging for middle-class immigrants in Canada. I also consider the benefits the participants in my research derived from membership in community, religious, and professional networks, and how membership satisfaction influenced their sense of inclusion. I focus on first-generation, middle-class, Jamaican professionals who migrated to Canada after obtaining tertiary-level

education, after being employed in Jamaica in positions commensurate with their credentials. As shown in chapter 4, many of the respondents claimed to have experienced a drop in their socio-economic position post-migration. I argue that the realization of their marginalized positions destabilizes immigrants' identity as former middle-class elites, and, while they do experience improvement in their labour market outcomes, they do not necessarily obtain the lifestyle and socio-economic privileges they expected before migrating to Canada. This experience affects immigrant civic engagement in Canada.

Through the framework provided by Bourdieu's (1986) expanded theorization of capital, which argues for the utilization of resources in the form of cultural and social capital to facilitate access to economic capital and improved socio-economic positioning, I explore the dialectical process of the participants' harnessing of particular resources. I examine specifically the forms of social and cultural capital primarily obtained in Jamaica, to accumulate valued assets in the Canadian context that might be converted to economic capital or improved socio-economic trajectories. This theoretical framework is particularly useful in demonstrating how groups use resources, such as their networks, to retain or improve their economic position. The middle-class immigrant experience, in particular, allows understanding of the use of capitals or available assets in the integration process within a context of marginalization and loss. In keeping with my approach of contextualizing the practices of the participants within a framework of history and normalized values passed on over generations, I begin this analysis by providing background into the civic engagement practices of the participants while they resided in Jamaica. As we move into an understanding of the use of social networks in supporting the participants in the GTA, we see similarities in the form of activities undertaken and the reliance on cultural capitals as assets that provide inclusivity and a sense of belonging.

Participation in Community Groups in Jamaica

All of the research participants mentioned in this chapter obtained post-secondary education prior to migrating to Canada. Their credentials ranged from post-secondary diplomas to master's degrees and also included professional designations. When asked where in the class milieu of Jamaican society they perceived themselves, they all mentioned they were middle class. Within the middle class, however, there were some variations whereby some respondents would suggest that they were "solid middle class", meaning that they placed themselves closer to upper-middle as opposed to within the working-class category due to their ability to travel and associate with elites in Jamaica. Others recognized that their idea of their own class position was affected by the fact that they were rising from humble beginnings; at the time of migration, they were on a trajectory that allowed them to consider themselves as middle class. Therefore, in their responses, they considered themselves as *becoming* middle class and would vacillate between lower middle to middle class.

Sadie, for example, is one of seven siblings raised by a single mother, in a small town on the outskirts of Kingston, Jamaica. Her completion of an undergraduate degree at the University of the West Indies (UWI), after attending a prestigious high school in Kingston, undeniably propelled Sadie up the hierarchy and into a comfortable middle-class position. This trajectory was already in progress when Sadie obtained a job in Jamaica's public sector, in middle management. She had already lived on her own, owned a vehicle, and was able to maintain savings, so much so that she could afford to migrate. These factors together allowed Sadie to consider herself middle class and to be confident in her chances of maintaining middle-class status in Canada. Interestingly, most participants, including Sadie, took some time to express at which level in the socio-economic ladder they would place themselves. Most noted that they had never thought about it much before, perhaps because the likelihood of becoming middle class

was taken for granted by individuals who held tertiary-level education and employment. Their expectations were a reflection of their confidence in their understanding of how society works in Jamaica—that is, once a person completes education above the level of high-school, opportunities are opened up and the potential to improve one’s socio-economic position is much greater. As a result, the types of civic activities the participants engaged in were also reflective of their class position.

With regard to civic engagement in Jamaica, as shown in Figure 4, as much as 51 percent of those interviewed were active in the church in Jamaica, with 34 percent active in only activities led by the church, and 17 percent involved in other activities along with those associated with the church. The second largest group, 22 percent, was mostly involved in organizations that focussed on professional development and membership groups.

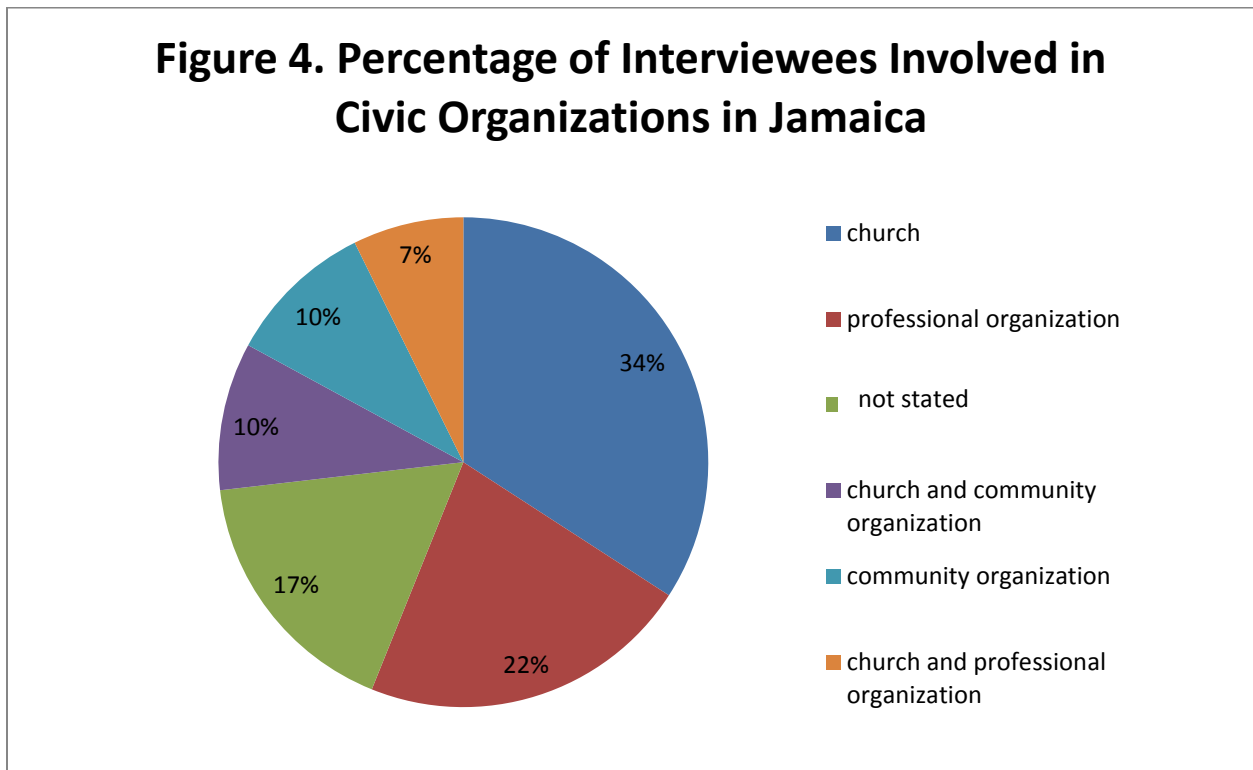


Figure 4. Author’s representation of the research respondents’ civic activities in Jamaica. Not stated refers to participants who did not state the types of activities they were involved in while they resided in Jamaica.

Community organizations in Jamaica range from alumni associations to neighbourhood safety committees. Membership in alumni associations is very common among high school graduates in Jamaica, and the schools rely heavily on sponsorship from their past students. Many participants in this research were involved in the development of their past high schools, as will be shown in chapter 7. Some who were involved in these activities were also active in the church. The church in Jamaica, as discussed in chapter 1, is associated with providing meaningful life tools for the entire family, and as a result, is considered a resource that should be utilized from an early age. Important moral values and direction in the appropriate ways to respond to and behave in challenging situations are common topics that members are “taught” weekly. Children and adults alike practice their oratory skills, through reading bible verses or performing other stories, in a space that is welcoming and empathetic. The research participants had continued this tradition and took advantage of this organization—one that is especially important in a country where there is very little funding available for after school activities for children. It is therefore at church that social bonds are formed. The church, similar to schools, is a significant institution that influences individuals’ social position in Jamaica and plays a key role in shaping middle-class identity. Further in this chapter, I show how the church continued to be an influential organization that provided social and cultural support to many of the respondents in this research once they were in Canada.

Participation in Community Groups in GTA

The fact that Jamaicans’ socio-economic outcomes are tied to the decision to migrate from Jamaica “for a better life” is particularly significant. The research participants may have held considerable financial assets from Jamaica, but their financial stability in Canada was dependent on entering the labour force and becoming paid employees, as shown in the previous chapter. Moreover, the participants hail from a country that, while considered politically stable,

struggles economically—with unemployment rates as high as 14.5 percent in 2009—and that offers limited employment opportunities for the more skilled members of the population (Glennie and Chappell, 2010). Therefore, many Jamaican immigrants do not intend to return to their home country except, perhaps, at the time of retirement. In addition, they expect to be able to convert their skills and credentials easily in the Canadian labour market, and also settle down with few obstructions, because of their perception of Canada's openness and common ideals as a fellow commonwealth nation.

However, being an immigrant is synonymous with being foreign-born (Statistics Canada, 2006), and, as such, immigrant groups remain on the periphery of social, cultural, and political discussions in the workplace among others who are long-established generationally in the country. For those who are not eligible, the inability to vote or practice full citizenship may also be considered a further reduction in their status. It is therefore not surprising that of the total individuals interviewed for this research, of those who were eligible, 100 percent voted in Canada. There was a sense from the participants that they had a strong commitment to contributing as citizens in Canada. Moreover, many of them entered Canada as skilled immigrants who had sold their physical assets in Jamaica. Their outlook was therefore more long-term and invested.

At the time of this research, all interviewees were participating in or were members of a group or organization in the GTA that focussed on outreach to members of the black community or Caribbean community in Ontario (see Figure 5). For this research, the organizations were classified into religious organizations, citizen and community associations, and job-related or professional associations, similar to the categorizations used in Statistics Canada's 2002 Ethnic Diversity Survey. Further breakdown of the organizations is as follows: the religious

organizations category refers to Christian churches with a majority membership of Caribbean immigrants; community organizations include neighbourhood committees, and charitable organizations dedicated to the Jamaican community in Canada; professional associations include voluntary committees within places of employment, and charitable organizations dedicated to the development of professionals in the black community, such as the Black is Beautiful Association and the Finance Co-op.

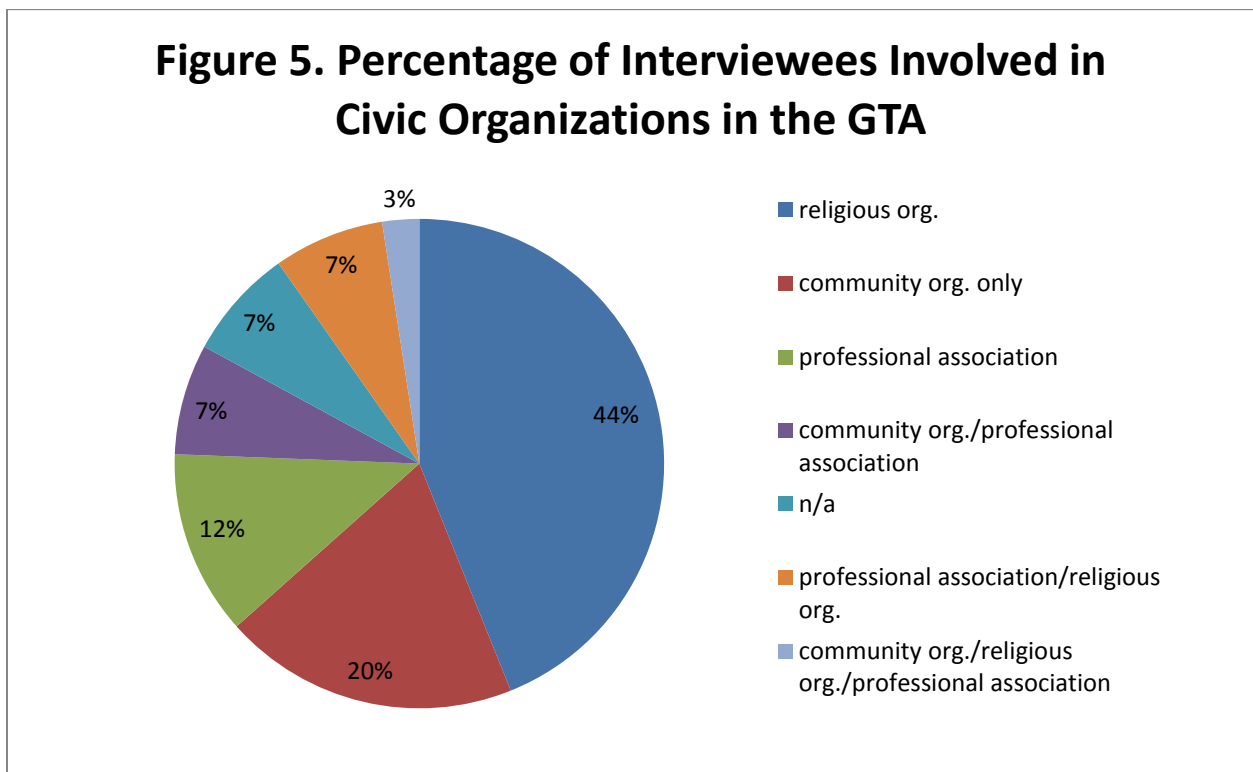


Figure 5. Author's representation of the percentage of interviewees involved in civic organizations in the GTA.

While organizations such as the church and community associations were not necessarily directed only towards ethnic communities, as in the case of professional charitable associations, their focus was expressly on the advancement of the black community. As will be shown in the following sections, the lack of confidence in how the society works in the GTA, as exemplified

in the participants' inability to easily transition to employment they believed were indicative of their skills and education, and regain the self-assurance that they were on an upward socio-economic trajectory, affected their choice of civic activities in that they all relied heavily on their embodied cultural capitals and social networks that shared their own middle-class ideals, values, and needs.

Professional Associations

The professional associations, in particular, had mandates to develop the leadership potential and financial independence of their members, as well as the wider black community. These associations also provided a space for meeting with like-minded, ambitious professionals who were interested in expanding their networks among members of the private sector. Within these spaces, research participants believed their credentials were valued and they developed a bond with the membership. Members not only had similar educational and professional backgrounds, but the majority of the membership was also of a similar ethnic background, and identified as being members of the visible minority in Canada. Activities in these organizations involved hosting guest speakers at monthly meetings who imparted knowledge in areas related to self and professional development in Canada. Frequent topics included: dressing for success, improving and marketing a curriculum vitae, ways to avoid bad credit, and how to save for retirement and a stable future in Canada. Award ceremonies to recognize members of the black community in Canada were also very important events that these associations featured annually. These events provided opportunities for members to meet people outside their everyday lives, and consequently seize opportunities to expand their network with recognized professionals who could act as members or sponsors in the future.

It was access to these social networks via their cultural capital (similarities in background) that allowed the participants to develop social capital in the form of valued

networks. Through the professional associations in particular, some interviewees sought to understand the Canadian labour market landscape in the hopes of adjusting their cultural capital to include agreed upon rules of the game that they believed were valued by those in the position to influence their socio-economic trajectory and/or increase their social network and circle of influence. In this way, they hoped to accumulate economic capital. This process took time to accomplish and required investment, especially of their time, in the organization. It took time to develop rapport and gain knowledge that improved their confidence in the labour market or places of work. As discussed in chapter 4, Bourdieu (2011) considers that there is a lag in which people are able to reshape their habitus to suit or adapt to changes in their environment. This process that the research participants engaged in draws attention to a particular experience of immigrants that exemplifies the ways in which they try to accomplish a change in their habitus through enhancing their cultural capital. This process is not straightforward. In developing relationships through these networks, the members of the organizations learn over time the tools that will give them the extra knowledge necessary to strategize and position themselves favourably in the labour market.

Harry, who held a Bachelor of Science degree, migrated to Canada in 2005, after working in Jamaica for 25 years. At the time of his interview, he was married, and had two children, who were both in secondary school when they migrated as a family. Not unlike many of the participants, Harry's family migrated to Canada without the intention of returning to Jamaica; instead, they planned to settle in Canada permanently. The intention was that the children would continue their education in Canada, and the parents would work in their respective areas of expertise—banking and financial services. There were no reservations about migrating and no doubt that their experiences would be anything but smooth. However, their experience was less

than they expected. When I interviewed him, Harry was employed in the financial services industry, but as an independent contractor without the security of consistent wages and benefits, such as health insurance and a pension savings plan. He disclosed that he had no savings and was particularly worried about his ability to contribute to college tuition for his children. However, he intended on remaining in Canada. Six years after migrating to Canada, Harry cited the following as further reasons for remaining regardless of their settlement experiences:

We are not in a position to go back, [even though] we still have our house in Jamaica. We didn't sell it so we have somewhere that we could go back to, but in terms of money there is none because every cent that we had in Jamaica came to Canada and was spent. And also because of pride, too. You don't want to go back to Jamaica like a failure. You know, you come here to make a better life for yourself and your family, and then you are going back . . . if you going back when you finish with all of this and you want to go back home [it's OK], but not to go back because things not working out here. Yeah, the main thing is pride . . .

For Harry, especially, his pride was affected because he was unable to find a job commensurate with his education and skills. Even if he would fare better in Jamaica, he felt his loss in status and the fact that, if he had to return, it would make him feel like a failure. In fact, not only did he feel like a failure in terms of job positioning, he also recognized the loss in status he had suffered through the networks he maintained as a result of his profession. During the interview, he recalled his activities outside of work and noted the important networks he had forged in Jamaica. In Jamaica, apart from his church involvement, Harry was a member of professional committees such as the Industrial Disputes Tribunal (IDT) and contributed in meetings related to staff welfare and the long-term planning of his place of work. He enjoyed

increasing his knowledge about the industry and management. As his knowledge increased, he also gained confidence, not only in his professional field, but in his social status as well. For Harry, being a part of these organizations allowed him to expand his network and have access to those considered powerful and in authority:

I had to go to the Ministry of Labour and even Industrial Disputes Tribunal (IDT) sometimes to sit in meetings and to make a contribution. I was able to meet with the organization and board members to discuss staff welfare, and not only staff welfare, but even the path that (the financial) institution should take. The truth is you learn stuff and you become aware of certain things, and it gives me this enormous amount of knowledge about certain things. And secondly, you become a little bit more aware of what is going on and you become a little bit more confident because you have all of this [knowledge] . . . sometimes you literally rub shoulders with some of those guys who are much much more influential than you are, and so it allows you to feel a little way [because] you talk to them, you can call to them, you can talk to them, you can take up your phone and call them when normally you probably wouldn't be able to . . .

The connections made through this network also influenced his perception of his own class position. Harry and his wife, Faye, also shared that the fact that Harry was associated with certain groups, created the perception that they were now in a higher middle-class position. This couple was aware of the value in being included in influential groups and of the positive social impact that good employment provided. The church they attended was also known for the influential members within its congregation, and to some extent was thus a reflection of their social status. Therefore, for Harry, the lack of opportunity in Canada was an indication of his reduced ability to retain and improve his social position; it also limited his opportunity to widen

his network and improve his social status.

Effective social networks act as a resource through which one can gain knowledge and confidence, exhibit a sense of authority, and garner respect within the community. This was the case for the research participants while they were in Jamaica. Based on Harry's explanation, however, the gains from social networking in Jamaica supplemented his social position, achieved by way of his education and accessing full-time, permanent, stable employment commensurate with his credentials. In Canada, he had not been able to access that same type of network, which influenced his social status. It is not surprising, therefore, that he sought out familiarity and networks in the host country as one way to garner support and knowledge from others based on their experience as earlier migrants.

Six years after migrating to Canada, Harry and his family were primarily involved in the church and its activities. For Harry, he noted that his labour market experience had negatively impacted his ability to be involved in a wide range of organizations comparable to his activities in Jamaica. He used his engagement with the church to help him to retain social ties with individuals of similar ethnic, educational, and professional backgrounds. More than anything else, this had helped his settlement experience because he found comfort in the familiarity of the church membership. However, networks forged in the church organization had not improved his sense of inclusion in the wider society.

Participants such as Brad were concerned about their lack of knowledge that distinguished them as immigrants, and therefore as different from their Canadian-born colleagues. Similar to Bourdieu's (1984) assertion that "legitimate" cultural taste is more valued when acquired through experience and upbringing, rather than scholastic learning, they were concerned that this lack of cultural capital in form of nuanced workplace cultural norms, would

restrict their mobility in the labour market. Immigrant networks became the tool through which they could regain the confidence necessary for advancement, because these networks were not only sites of familiarity, but were also dedicated to the professional development of their members. Brad had come to the realization that his credentials were not enough, and that he and his wife also had to prepare for the discrimination they would face based on preconceived notions of the dispositions associated with their ethnicity, as mentioned in chapter 4. This concern influenced both their level of participation in organized networks and the type of organizations they engaged with.

In order to improve his career opportunities, Brad returned to school and obtained a Master's degree in Business Administration from Queen's University, in Kingston, Ontario. At the time of the interview, Brad was also involved in a locally-organized professional association geared towards the professional and personal development of members of minority communities. This organization held regular meetings where presenters provided advice based on their own experience in the business sector in Canada. The organization provided professional development webinars to young professionals and recent graduates, and participated in annual volunteer outreach activities to benefit middle-school youths in Toronto. Members also organized a major career expo and conference featuring major players of African descent in the business arena, who gave presentations on their own experiences and shared advice regarding upward mobility in the workplace. These events assisted in promoting appreciation, trust, and hope in the possibilities that the members could also reach their goals. It was hoped that members would no longer feel that their goals were out of reach, because they would be able to relate to others who looked similar to themselves and who had similar circumstances and backgrounds. Through this organization, Brad not only had access to professional development,

but also to an expanding network of professionals who shared experiences and solutions that enhanced his personal growth and increased his knowledge of “the game”. For instance, at one meeting I attended, there was a mentorship panel of past presidents of the organization: a total of four persons, three men and one woman, all of Caribbean ethnic background. They listed their lengthy list of credentials, at which point the audience gasped in admiration. At this session, the panelists explained what success meant to them and also gave a synopsis as to their trajectory to their current positions. They also spoke of their challenges and how they dealt with them. Members of the audience were given the opportunity to ask questions, at which point many were interested in finding out more about how to position themselves for success. The panelists spoke on the importance of working hard, being on the lookout for opportunities, going above and beyond, and even developing acceptable etiquette standards for the occasional dinner meeting. At the end of the session, all members in attendance flocked the panelists to exchange business cards and make an impression, with the hope that they could capitalize on this opportunity in the near future.

In the following excerpt, Brad shares an eye-opening experience he had while speaking with colleagues in this organization. Sharing his Canadian experiences with his network allowed Brad to engage more fully with his coworkers, who were outside of his social network. He gained a deeper understanding of certain cultural nuances that were likely to improve his chances of inclusion. As a result, Brad believed he had an even greater chance of improving his economic position and gaining a sense of belonging in Canadian society. He spoke in generalized statements about the typical Canadian, who is imagined as white, male, middle-class professional, who is employed, owns a home, and takes vacations at a cottage north of Toronto:

[W]e, as West Indians, . . . will talk a lot, but some of us don't allow people to get to

know us. But the typical Canadian definitely wants to get to know us, so we wonder why they ask so much questions. It's all a part of getting to figure you out, you know. It's, "Do you play hockey? Do you go hiking, canoeing, or what do you do? Do you just sleep? Do you like sports? What do you do outside of work? We [colleagues, co-workers] want to get to know . . . are you married? Are you single? Do you live with your mother?", 'cause that's how they process. But the thing about it is that [Canadians] will tell you [about themselves, as well] if you ask them. . . . It's not like they want to find out everything about you and not share about themselves with you. They will willingly share with you. It's a two-way thing, where you are learning about them and they about you, so they get to know you and that's how they get to trust you or not to trust you. . . . They get to know you as a person and not just as a co-worker . . . Typically, we . . . never really care too much about that. We come to work, we do our work, and then we leave it at that. But these [Canadians] want to figure you out.

Interestingly, as gleaned from Brad's statement, it seems that the participants had experienced mistrust from co-workers in the workplace who were outside their ethnic community. This mistrust was exemplified in Brad's expression of the challenges faced in trying to open up to co-workers in the Canadian work setting. He explained this as being a challenge, by suggesting that some Jamaicans have difficulty allowing people to know personal information about them because they consider it intrusive, although they are generally friendly. In Brad's view, the practice also seemed suspicious and awkward to the typical Jamaican, who is approached very early in his time at the workplace and asked questions regarding his activities outside of work, especially by those who would otherwise be strangers. Being able to have discussions with other Jamaicans validated his concerns, and also provided him with an

opportunity to get advice on how to manage these unwelcomed questions. In this case, he was advised that the questions were typical and did not necessarily warrant suspicion. As a result, he was able to adjust his level of responsiveness and improve his relationships at the office. He explained his observations in terms of the reasons Jamaican immigrants might experience challenges with fitting in to Canadian society. In essence, he suggested that their temperament and expectations are limited due to a lack of understanding of the workplace norms, which makes them conspicuous as foreigners when engaging with the typical white Canadian:

When you are in a totally-Canadian environment, you are a totally different individual from when you are in an environment, say, of just Jamaicans. [In a Jamaican setting,] it's more natural . . . you don't need second thought [about] everything. It is just spontaneous, as opposed to in a Canadian setting . . . I mean, you can . . . play the [Canadian] role, but you consciously play the role . . . [In Jamaica,] you know how to play the game, you don't have to think about it, it just happens. You don't have to make a special effort to explain things the way that you know that they would understand.

Brad's position as a middle-class, racialized immigrant, with access to social spaces that allowed him insight into the behaviours and norms of his Canadian peers, had also caused him to recognize the distinction in behaviours between this group of Canadians and racialized immigrants in general. There was urgency in his voice as he spoke of his interest in enabling more racialized groups to change their routines. At the time of the interview, Brad had improved his position in the banking sector, but remained in a lower-ranked position than the one he had held in Jamaica. However, during the interview, Brad suggested that the use of social networks provided more for him than the benefit of improving his economic position; he also had found a space in which he could exercise his civic responsibilities of assisting persons who were at a

greater disadvantage and had greater needs. Although this practice was not much different from his disposition towards assisting the needy when he resided in Jamaica, his experience in Canada had heightened his awareness and channelled his focus to a particular ethnic group. A form of mentorship frequently takes place between recent and more-established immigrants, and eventually, recent immigrants are able to pass on useful strategies for accumulating cultural capital to groups they consider to be marginalized. Brad, like many of the research participants, participated in community initiatives after he had acquired stable employment and was satisfied that his career path was on an upward trajectory. It is important to note that each immigrant's unique experience with the settlement process in Canada largely shapes which community he/she will endeavour to support, and how this help will be offered. Brad shared his empathy for the everyday lives of marginalized people, and the ways in which marginalization prevents such individuals from participating fully as Canadians:

[T]hey [members of the black community who are underprivileged and financially challenged] . . . [are] living on the fringe of society . . . [This] is what they pass on to their kids . . . for me, I would say it sort of drives home the need for you to be involved in helping others in Canada . . . What I want to do here is [because] kids here . . . just don't literally see the light of day . . . Let's face it, a lot of our people who are living here have no idea what the average Canadian lifestyle is like, so they . . . really don't know what it really is to live the Canadian dream or the way Canadians live. They come here and they live the way they've always lived, but they haven't gotten the opportunity to go out and see how people in mainstream live.

For Brad, understanding and being exposed to "the way Canadians live" acted as motivation to move upward and out of marginalization. What he then envisioned was based on his habitus as a

middle-class, educated man with material aspirations. Brad explained:

That's one of the reasons why I want to get involved in associations like these: to try to help other people who are coming up to see what's really happening. First of all, I don't think our people know the importance of networking; people just hold their head down and do their own thing . . . this is a society that goes by networks, so that's how you find out what's happening; that's how you find out what's realistic.

The skilled immigrants in my research recognized the value in networks and the meaningful relationships they could foster within them, especially among like-minded individuals, irrespective of their current employment positions. This also suggests that there was awareness that class positions are not only reflected in material possessions, income levels, and credentials, but also include taking on and reproducing what they observed as Canadian values and practices in order to be recognized for promotions. Donna, an entrepreneur who had resided in Canada for approximately two decades, was aware of the necessity of being flexible and observant in order to be compatible with the expectations of the Canadian labour market. Since moving to Canada, Donna had obtained an undergraduate degree, Master's degree, and project management certification in Toronto, even though she already held a degree in education from Jamaica. Her reason for acquiring these additional Canadian credentials was to facilitate her success in business in Canada. However, while she believed that opportunities were accessible to her, she also knew that emotional and social support must be made available among the members within the ethnic community. Donna admonished the members of the community who did not understand the importance of getting to know their new cultural space in order to advance in Canadian society. She recalled her time at a well-established telecommunications company in Toronto as being one where she did well, but where she eventually hit a ceiling. She wanted to

move into a managerial role, but was passed by. Donna stated the temperament and persistence needed to pursue one's career dreams:

Are you adjustable? Can you become compatible with what the requirements are to advance? You can't advance in your own little silo over here. There are a lot of things that can impact you in terms of your advancement. How are you gonna link with those shapers of the community within your profession that will help you to advance to that next level? Because if you are not, if you don't get involved, it's not gonna happen. So the quicker we [the immigrant community] learn that and understand that the better.

Donna held a leadership role in the Black is Beautiful Association, and believed that her accomplishments were also due to her hard work and her actively seeking to develop her networks. Her career ambitions required her to learn the traits and actions necessary to ascend in the workplace: "I want to be a part of the affluent group in Canada, so I need to understand what the requirements are, and how . . . to shift and adjust myself in order to . . . be there and stop blaming and making excuses". Furthermore, Donna suggested that many immigrants tend to be "resistant to the path of success". In other words, they are not willing to take the necessary steps for success (networking, being open, bold and fearless) in the labour market. She suggested that, in her experience, most Jamaicans have a mental block due to history, parenting, peers, and dependence on credentials:

. . . okay, could you tell me a young person who really wants to get up there [and] who I can work with? Because I have no time for people who are resistant to the path of success. Because, most times, our people say, "okay, I read this" or "someone told me" . . . Listen to a person who has been there, [and] who is trying to help you to get there, if that is where you really want to be. But don't be resistant because you think, ok, my

paper (credentials) should be able to take me there. No, it's one fifth of it; networking, knowing who is who . . . if you come back here when I am out of the limelight, I can't promise you [my help] because it's who knows who. It's timing, so get it done. But they are shy and they are scared. I think it's just a block. It's a mental block because of history and what maybe parents tell them, or what their circle [tells them], because they don't know any different.

Having figured out for herself what it takes to be successful in Canada, Donna surmised that, generally speaking, those who are unsuccessful, after recognizing that their previous knowledge and strategies are not effective, are unwilling to take on the responsibility and work required to succeed. Specifically, Donna pointed to the vulnerable and timid characteristics of some immigrants, compared to others. Her religious convictions were also reflected in the way she understood not only her situation, but also that of those in her community:

We are a gifted people, and, most times, when you look at certain situations, the underdogs are . . . put in a position to go through the struggle, to become the person of promise . . . You know, to me, we are so special because our history allows us to be special, to be overcomers . . . The thing is, the pathway is set for us to overcome, but we are sitting down there, at what you call it, "ground zero," still looking at the promise and saying we can't get there. Start to make the move to get there, and try to understand how to get there. . . . Understand the principles, the requirements, and make sure to align and leverage the people around you.

Donna insisted that to be strategic means understanding the principles or the cultural capital requirements by utilizing or leveraging one's social capital. She firmly believed that familiarity with the cultural nuances of various Canadian social settings would improve through

coaching and mentoring. Donna explained that the charitable association she led at the time of the interview carried the specific mandate of facilitating the advancement of the black community:

[M]oving forward . . . I wouldn't say it's directly under my leadership, but I have done a lot of new initiatives to ensure that it is really living up to its mandate . . . to facilitate the advancement of the black community and to promote programs in pursuit of higher education, entrepreneurship, economic development, and professionalism.

It was clear that Donna believed that the black professional community, by virtue of their strong cultural capital—that is, knowledge of their own community—can communicate and understand each other's needs and provide effective solutions as a network. At the time of this research, her organization focussed on the development of the black community in the GTA and provided opportunities for networking through annual events and periodical presentations. However, she also acknowledged that it is not necessarily guaranteed that skilled immigrants will recognize the importance of these networks and commit long-term in order to realize any benefits. Donna described some of the programs her organization offered and her reasoning as to why they were not fully utilized:

Well what we do have, I don't know if we have as much as we ought to, but every year we have [a] seminar, financial seminar, and we find that it is not well attended. Young people don't attend it, and some of the older folks don't attend it and the reason for that is because they believe that they are ok and they are not, you know. When you have knowledge, that is power and our people are afraid sometimes to get knowledge. It is very unfortunate.

Among the research participants, not all found it useful to remain a member of

associations that proclaimed to assist in the settlement process for Jamaicans, but it was not necessarily because they were afraid of knowledge as Donna argued. Sadie, who arrived in Canada on her own, chose to be a member of an ethnic-based organization, but left after a while because it did not suit her needs. This association, according to its website, is an incorporated, non-profit, charitable organization. Although it strives to promote the “personal growth and professional development of its members”, Sadie found that it was not particularly helpful to her:

Well, I joined when I just came [2001] because I thought it would have services to help you settle, but I found that this wasn't the case. It's not presently focussed on the service that the organization should be providing to the community and to the people/immigrants. So I joined when I just arrived . . . It was supposed to support the community. If somebody needed an immigration lawyer, you [are] supposed to guide them. It does provide those services, you know, but I think it should have been more the focus than how they [leaders] get nominated and their constitutions. You know things like that [the constitution] shouldn't be so evident [obvious—similar to airing dirty linen in public] . . . so the ways in which [I] participated was by attending those meetings, but my intention was to find assistance with the whole settlement process.

While Donna understood the lack of engagement she saw to be due to age and lack of awareness, Sadie's experience highlights to me, that for her, it was the opposite. Sadie felt empowered to forego the time spent in organizations that did not meet her expectations. This also exemplifies the assertive, no-nonsense type of ethic that is associated with the Jamaican habitus. In a speech to students at York University in 2004, Dr. Lloyd Best, a Trinidadian academic described young adults in the Caribbean as “[t]he emerging young generation [who] has hitherto been completely turned off by the sense of stasis and stagnation”, suggesting that there is a level

of assertiveness and confidence that challenges norms and the status quo. I consider that, in my research, I encountered a range of personalities within this broader group of middle-class Jamaicans. Donna and Brad, for instance, were eager to understand and accept the status quo in order to maintain their own identity as middle-class and meet their aspirations. Sadie, on the other hand, was defiant. She moved on, and was now married with two children, and, while she had stable employment, she did not credit it to her involvement in ethnic networks. Her interest in Jamaican civic, charitable organizations was strong, but at the time of the interview, her involvement was minimal in that she was not involved in voluntary activities and was not associated with ethnic organizations. However, she continued to have an interest in Canadian politics because of the implications it might have on the opportunities for her children. She recognized the importance of voting not only for herself, but also for her child's future, and stated that she believed that the participation of citizens produces or brings about a positive impact. In other words, it was clear that unless Sadie is able to reap positive benefits from her participation in civic activities, she is less likely to be involved:

I think immigrants in general do not pay enough interest in politics, and I can tell them empirically if they study it they will see that it bears fruit . . . That is something that I do preach socially all the time to other Jamaicans, and for me that's why I take interest in the politics . . . I am interested in politics here, and I do have every intention of making my son's life as good as it can be. And for that reason I am VERY interested in politics, because he is going to get from this system what he deserves . . . I will work till I die to give him as long he deserves it. I am going to fight to make sure he gets it and voting is one of the key ways.

With a few exceptions, participants in this research utilized ethnic-based networks to

assist them in the settlement process, and sought to expand their social networks to fulfill their various ambitions. It is important to note that, despite the well-documented barriers to upward mobility, the networks forged amongst this group of skilled immigrants provided exposure to, and an understanding of, complex cultural practices that, in turn, improved their confidence and provided a greater sense of belonging in the host society. Their growing confidence often inspired them to strive for greater accomplishments in the workplace. The strategies employed were consistent with the persistent struggle to be accepted and valued, and reflected their middle-class values and ideals as community leaders of influence. However, a persistent awareness of inequality and exclusionary practices prompted some of the participants in my research to ensure that, in turn, their additional civic actions were aimed at specific marginalized groups that bore cultural significance to them. Moreover, their necessity to be involved in such ongoing civic engagement illuminates their interest in becoming valued assets in the Canadian society.

For some of the participants, as shown in the following section, the church provided a familiar space where they could honour their civic obligations to those considered less fortunate throughout the GTA. However, the familiar practices and the ethnic similarity of the membership offered opportunities for participants to easily “return to”, as it were, the fulfillment they experienced in Jamaica due to the sense of inclusion among groups. This inclusion, however, was limited to the spaces where their own habitus, the Jamaican middle class, was familiar, known, and valorized.

The Church

As shown in the previous section, the research participants found it necessary to commit to organizations that focussed on effective ways to conform to the Canadian norms—that is, to develop useful social capital—and, in doing so, derived accepted cultural capital. However, it should be noted that their previous level of engagement in Jamaica had also inspired the ways in

which they became engaged in Canada, and also helped them boost their sense of belonging in Canada. This was especially true for members of the church community. The church had become an enabling form of social capital for most of the participants interviewed.

Some of my research participants were members from the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the GTA, as Jamaica is 62.5 percent Protestant, with as much as 10.5 percent, the highest percentage of all church groups, being Seventh-day Adventists (CIA, 2011). The Ontario Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Church is well established with a substantial Jamaican congregation, especially in the GTA. The Seventh-day Adventist church is not, however, the only church organization in the GTA that has a homogenous, Caribbean, ethnic congregation. Churches are even known by their ethnic base, such as the “Light Korean Presbyterian Church” in Toronto or the First Filipino Baptist Church Toronto.

All of the participants who were also members of the Seventh-day Adventist church organization in Jamaica participated in the church in Canada regardless of whether or not they participated in other volunteer activities generally, and regardless of their length of stay. The church for them acted as a continuation of their life in Jamaica, and also provided a growing network of support in their new home—especially for those who found it particularly challenging to convert their cultural capital to economic and social status. All participants who specifically cited the church as one organization through which they volunteered their time and money, also explained the value of the church as a space of familiarity in which they could meet other members with shared ethnic identity, interests, and common experiences. Harry, for instance, whose experience has left him resentful and filled with regret, explained the importance of maintaining a relationship with his church community:

Harry: It is the single most important thing I would get involved in since I have come to

Canada . . . church . . . the fact that when you go there you see a lot of people who you and them are in a similar situation and having similar experiences . . . So the church community is very important to your sanity, to keep you in some kind of sober way so that we can keep going and hope that one day things will change and you will get what you really want—I mean get the kind of job that you looking for . . . For our experience with the church it has been really really good, very nurturing.

Interviewer: do you think that has a lot to do with the fact that it's mostly Caribbean based?

Harry: I think so, because you look around and you see people who look like yourself and they are very accepting of us . . . [Regarding] support, some [is] . . . financial, [but, it is] mostly emotional support—you know people to talk to—and they invite you out and whatever. And to be part of a congregation when you are . . . new in a country was very beneficial to us . . . A good amount of us who know each other move here right about the same time, and so the community, the association, the fellowship between us keeps us going, and you know, whether in social activities or just to talk to somebody on the phone or to see somebody who look like you or sound like you, that sort of thing helps.

As illustrated by Harry's statement, his sense of identity as a Jamaican middle-class professional was bolstered in this space. The clear feeling of acceptance was a valorization of his cultural capital. For Harry, the church became a source of stability, comfort, and encouragement. The value he placed on membership and affiliation with this organization was tremendous. He spoke of it with great respect and delight. He particularly noted how much he valued the ability to have access to shared experiences and similar cultural practices. In addition, he spoke of being among those whom he knew in Jamaica at this particular church, located in Markham, Ontario,

relatively close to his home in Ajax, Ontario. They are therefore able to share experiences, provide emotional support, and strengthen relationships so that they do not feel isolated or alone. This had helped Harry to improve his feeling of belonging in Canada, although he remained disappointed about his experience overall. For Harry, his associations/network enabled his sense of belonging and settlement in Canada, but did not necessarily improve his financial position.

The shared experiences of the participants not only influenced the type of activities they engaged in, in the church, but also continue to challenge these organizations to remain relevant to the needs of their membership. The church with a majority Caribbean membership recognizes its importance to its immigrant congregation. One Pastor of a mostly Caribbean congregation in Scarborough indicated that, although there is a basic structure that generally guides the programs of the church overall, individual churches have discretion regarding which programs are necessary, based on the needs of the congregation and the community. He did, however, acknowledge the need for more family-oriented programs, especially for adult couples, to help them cope with their experiences as immigrants in the Canadian society within the wider community:

They need training on how to survive in the twenty-first century in terms of financial plans. You just don't go and work and say, well this is for the rent, I pay the rent . . . If you don't have a structure in this society, you are dead and that's where we lack . . . A lot of men, especially today, will reach up to 65 like and have nothing in the bank [and] don't have a home . . . So you need help to structure [yourself] financially.

Therefore, similar to the programs that professional associations offer, the church has found it necessary to provide a forum for community events that deal with topics such as financial planning for the family, which assists its membership. In the wider community, the church

administers a feeding program, which particularly targets families who use nearby motels as emergency shelters. Sarah explained with a great sense of enthusiasm that her church, located in Scarborough, works diligently at providing assistance to the needy in the vicinity of the church:

[W]e go out and feed the homeless . . . we target the motels in Scarborough because those people have needs too, but everybody ignore them and go downtown [to help the homeless]. And you have homeless in Scarborough as well, but it's harder to find them, so we go to the motels [to help] those who maybe lost their home and/or refugees who come, and they don't have any homes [so] they place them in the motels temporarily . . . we give them little stuff and talk with them, and it makes life a little bit more bearable for them, let them know that someone cares . . .

Interestingly, the participants who were active in church services were more modest in describing their volunteer activities, and more likely to suggest that this was the norm for them, as it was a continuation of who they were while they lived in Jamaica. For example, Simone began volunteering at the age of 16 when she started attending church in her community in Jamaica. At the time of her interview, she held four positions in her church in Toronto, and regarded her work as a continuation of the way she was brought up in Jamaica—with a sense of obligation to assist those more needy than herself.

Regardless of their length of stay in Canada, the position they held in the church, and the extent to which they were satisfied with their settlement experience, the church was an important site for the research participants. They not only received support in the organization, but also provided counseling to others, and as a result, found purpose and inspiration in their own lives. For Ben, the motivation for participating in church activities was similar to that of other interviewees—the familiarity derived from similarities in circumstances as immigrants in

Canada. However, due to the fact that he considered himself established economically, he had a sense of obligation to the other members of his church family. According to Ben, the church for him was:

. . . a community. We are all in the same society; we are all dealing with many challenges and so forth . . . I would more see myself as one offering encouragement and nourishment for those who are there, rather than for it to be nourishing me . . .

Conclusion

The idea of the church as a “community” is akin to the concept of the field proposed by Bourdieu. In this case, the church community was a space where Ben felt in control and in a position to be helpful to others. In fact, for all the participants in this research who mentioned church as a consistent feature in their lives, the church was a space where they felt comfortable and valued as hard-working members of society because they had common histories, values, circumstances, and interests. In this space, they felt they belonged and were understood—not under-valued and patronized, as was their experience in the workplace. Being a member of the church and participating in weekly activities or volunteering to assist in their communities provided meaning and a sense of stability for many of the participants in this research.

Members of professional associations found ways to be in positions where they were being helpful as well. The participants in my research, such as Donna and Brad, not only felt included among the membership in the associations, but also derived a sense of appreciation and validation from members of their own community because of what they had to offer. Their volunteer activities displayed their cultural capital and presented them as knowledgeable and successful within their community. They were therefore able to perceive themselves as valued members of society, even if it was only within their own ethnic community. In addition, due to the added benefit of expanding their network, they were able to have access to other immigrant

professionals who would share their experiences with them. This relationship enabled them to increase their confidence and remain hopeful that they could retain middle-class positions within Canadian society. This group of research participants seemed to be the most assured of their future in Canada and the most active in volunteer activities.

However, the research participants who did not get involved in professional associations, and did not experience hope in their possibilities for improvement, still felt on the margins and felt that they would not be able to reclaim the status and comforts they had in Jamaica. The church helped them to retain a sense of identity among like-minded Jamaicans, but did not provide the added benefit of expanding their cultural capital outside of their ethnic-based network.

Bourdieu (1985) suggests that the position of a given agent within the social space can be defined by the position that agent occupies in the different fields—that is, in the distribution of the powers that are active within each of them. He also suggests that an agent's chances for success, or "aggregate chances of profit" (p. 724), are determined by the volume of cultural capital one holds. But is that really true? For immigrants, as shown earlier in this chapter, it is precisely because their chances for success are dependent on the validation of their cultural capital—in particular "social spaces"—that they are on the periphery. As a result, they do seek other spaces where their capitals are validated, although the "profits" they receive for their efforts may once again only be relevant in limited fields. In addition, the focus on adopting behaviours and mannerisms specific to groups of Canadians is problematic as it reinforces the normalization of particular activities as valued and perpetuates exclusionary practices. The participants' experiences, interpretations, and responses to their life in Canada, shown above, highlight the complexity of the everyday life of racialized middle-class immigrants with

aspirational motivations. On the one hand, they are despondent regarding the loss of value they experience upon migration and they recognize the greater structural injustice that supports their devaluation, but because their goal is geared towards overturning such losses within the rules of this field, they instead perpetuate the situation by finding alternate, but accepted, means to achieve their goals.

The various interactions the research participants performed also included transnational commitments, driven in part by the ease by which they are able to communicate due to technological improvements and their heightened awareness of the needs within their ethnic communities. However, their transnational practices were also attuned to their dispositions or perceptions of their home country. This is analyzed in relation to Bourdieu's concept of habitus, which he "understands as a set of 'dispositions' regarding perception, thought, and action that individuals acquire and retain based on their lived experiences in particular context" (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 5–8 in Simmons, 2010, p. 179). In the following chapter, I show that the extent to which participants engaged in official transnational activities was driven mainly by habitus, and therefore that this does have long-term consequences for the expectations of Jamaicans residing abroad.

Jamaican immigrants in this research showed that they use their social capital tactically in order to participate effectively and visibly in Canadian society. Participants strategically planned how they invested in inclusion, accentuating the important reality that immigrants use social capital in response to the social and ethnic inequalities they experience as Canadian immigrants. Their actions resist the idealized objective portrayed in the multicultural integration model, which leaves power and dominance in the hands of mainstream Canadian society, as they select and learn relevant societal norms and pass them on within organized group associations. This

method, employed by members within ethnic associations, is especially relevant to tertiary-educated professionals because of the connection between upward social mobility and the exhibition of valued cultural capital. Although this practice also suggests socio-cultural conformity, the research participants insisted that their commitments to home had not faded. Instead, as shown in the next chapter, it was firmly believed that transnational commitments have very little if any effect on influencing their capacity and success as Canadian citizens.

Chapter 7. The Role of Habitus in Effecting Transnational Practices Among the Jamaican-Canadian Diaspora

Introduction

Thomas-Hope (2002) criticizes judgments of migration, as a single-phase phenomenon, and the migrant, stereotypically defined as a worker in search of a job, insisting these are oversimplifications. It is problematic, she argues, to ignore the cultures and institutional frameworks influencing the choices made by individuals and families, as well as the subsequent transnational actions that are maintained. A fundamental difference between the adult immigrant and the native-born is that immigrants have memories of and obligations to family members, friends, and community members in their country of birth. They may also have responsibilities surrounding the upkeep and maintenance of material assets, such as homes and property (land). Transnational activities include sending clothing, household items, and monetary remittances (Basch et al., 1994; Horst, 2006; Mains, 2007). Thomas (2004) also speaks of the knowledges and cultural practices passed on through communication especially, and World Bank publications acknowledge the impact of monetary remittances on Jamaica's economic development. Finally, immigrants may retain allegiances to institutions that had a positive impact on their lives in their home country, such as their alma mater and/or church. However, these social, cultural, and economic ties do not constitute the only source of civic attachments to the home country. Nation-building efforts that valorize allegiance to the nation and pride in citizenship are also responsible for the maintenance of attachments to the home country. Indeed, sending country governments are, more and more, striving to capitalize on the social and moral values of national pride inculcated in their citizenry even after they have migrated (Bussolo and Medvedev, 2007).

In the previous chapter, I showed that participants in my research maintained

membership with local Canadian organizations in an attempt to compensate for losses in their capitals, such as loss or diminishment of their status in the community, or loss of cultural capital that was useful for finding job opportunities, thereby positioning them to gain improved cultural capital. In this chapter, I will explore if the same is true of membership within associations that specifically focus on the socio-economic development of Jamaica. I consider how the research participants explained or understood their own connections to their home country and how their transnational engagements were influenced both by their experiences in the host country and their perceptions of their home country.

In understanding immigrant behaviour as it relates to civic engagement, one must recognize and incorporate the fact that immigrants live in dynamically intertwined worlds (Levitt and Nyberg-Sorenson, 2004, p. 2). While these worlds are geographically independent entities, sociologists such as Levitt and Nyberg-Sorenson (2004) and Simmons (2010) suggest that the linkages forged between sending and receiving countries be analyzed as a single field. While I agree that migrants do not abandon their country of origin, and, as a result, their politics may incorporate both country of origin and country of destination, I also argue that it is necessary to maintain analytical distinctions of the immigrant based on contexts specific to their country of birth and country of destination. Taking a Bourdeusian perspective, the importance of the habitus in shaping individual or group practice is useful for understanding how the habitus shaped in one country is influenced by and/or influences practice in another. Maintaining the transnational field as one social space masks the historical, cultural, and socio-economic nuances that influence the types of transnational practices immigrants may engage in.

The concept of habitus is useful here as it can help us focus on the complex character of the immigrant, who carries with him or her feelings and norms associated with life as an

emigrant. According to Sayad,

to immigrate means to immigrate together with one's history (immigration itself being an integral part of that history), with one's traditions, ways of living, feeling, acting and thinking, with one's language, one's religion and all the other social, political and mental structures characteristic of the individual and also of society . . . or in a word, with one's culture. (2004, p. 3–4)

Understanding transnational practices is therefore not only about the types of ties immigrants have and what activities they participate in, but also about understanding their motivations and goals for engaging in such practices. The habitus is one such aspect of the immigrant that can guide us in understanding immigrant practice, as it connects the particular histories and values of the immigrant to the ancestral home. Therefore, for immigrants, their behaviours, values, norms, and expectations are linked to their country of birth, and the values and ideals that help shape their class identities. Apart from the familial and community ties that scholars such as Basch et al. (1994) and Horst (2006) have discussed, the “projects” that immigrants might invest in, back in their home country, are illustrative of their own class-based desires and outlook regarding the future of their country. Scholars such as Portes have suggested that skilled immigrants, or professionals with more than average economic resources, are particularly inclined to participate in transnational activities geared towards their home country's social and economic development (Portes, et al., 1999). However, as will be shown in this chapter, transnational civic activities may also be a means through which the middle class can (re)establish class distinctions and perpetuate norms that support established criteria of classification in their favour. In performing such activities, the diaspora may play a role in preserving modes of classification even from outside their home countries.

The habitus is similar to what Crichlow (2009) calls the mental suitcase that emigrants carry with them, which has currency in the country of origin, in that the behaviours and norms are familiar, accepted, and signify class positions, status, and even power. In another setting, which in this case is another country, the acceptance, status, and privilege experienced in the home country diminishes. Harvey, a research participant who migrated to Canada nine years ago, attributed this loss to the sheer size of the population: “When you immigrate in a society like this, you fit in a bigger population; you are not known. And unless you do something notorious or criminal, you will never literally get anywhere”. With this statement, Harvey also provided a glimpse into the complexities of the everyday for the immigrant, in describing dealing with the challenge of loss—not only in the oft-mentioned cultural and economic capital, but also in social capital. Simultaneously, Harvey faced the realization that his chances to develop this social capital might be further diminished because of structural barriers associated with racism. It is therefore no wonder that all the research participants yearned for home and maintained obligations to home, which at the very least can provide a sense of belonging. However, as shown below, there are additional factors that contribute to the maintenance of transnational commitments.

The Transnational Civic Practices of Research Participants

Apart from their involvement in local organizations in the GTA, all research participants also retained commitments to Jamaica, as shown in Table 12.

Table 12

The Number of Research Participants and the Types of Activities Engaged In

Type of Organization/Activities		Total No. of People
Alumni	High school alumni associations	9
Diasporic Association	Organization that works closely with the government of Jamaica to address issues around socio-economic and cultural development	8
Church	Projects in Jamaica	17
Informal	Commitments to family and community	41

Source: Interview Data.

The participants in this research maintained informal linkages with communities in Jamaica, even though their immediate family (spouses and/or children) resided in Toronto. As shown in the participants’ stories below, there were a number of reasons for their continued involvement with their home country, but most important of all, there seemed to be a moral obligation and sense of community consistent among the participants that were not necessarily only based on family ties. This could be defined as a sense of memory of what they left behind—in some cases, poverty or need. In the book *Georges Woke Up Laughing*, Glick Schiller notes that Georges, a Haitian immigrant residing in the United States, was like many immigrants whose memories of home, while they may be replaced with nostalgia, never weaken. Glick Schiller and Fouron emphasize that transmigrants remain connected to their home country—not only by their actions, but also by their thoughts (Glick Schiller and Fouron, 2001). For the participants in this research, then, their memories, attitudes, and obligations towards those who were left behind were reflected in their actions. There was also the understanding that regardless of their loss in status and recognition in Canada, they were financially better off than some of those they had left behind. This common understanding of themselves as stewards for those less

fortunate is also a part of the habitus passed on within middle-class families in Jamaica—in that, typically, the Jamaican families who have the privilege to receive benefits from a life lived abroad also share their gains with their community.

As part of his contribution to those he had left behind in Jamaica, Harvey would occasionally send home a barrel of goods to his mother and sister. The barrel is usually a container packed with household items, such as small appliances and accessories, along with clothing, food, and basic supplies to meet the family members' everyday needs. These items tend to last for a few months depending on the size of the household, and often provide a much-needed subsidy to family members. During the interview, it was clear that Harvey was proud to show that he was able to provide support for both his mother and sister:

Occasionally, we will send home a barrel. In fact, I just spoke with my mother (because we are sending two barrels: one for my mother, one for my sister) and they just called to say it is now on the wharf.

Harvey's ability to send a barrel of goods indicated to his family that he was doing well financially in Canada, and maintaining a standard of living that allowed him the opportunity to support his family back in Jamaica.

Sarah also acted on her obligation to the wider community within which she grew up in Jamaica, and, similar to Harvey, her commitments were informal in nature. Informal activities, such as sending a barrel of goods, are usually set to a particular time, which is dependent on the needs of family members or community members. Typical periods when the barrel is requested include the months leading up to the beginning of the children's school year. The decision to contribute a barrel of supplies is also dependent on when the contributor has amassed enough funds to acquire all the items and also to pay for the overseas transportation. As Sarah mentioned

in her statement, sometimes she would send “stuff”, meaning that this activity was not a consistent activity for her and was really performed out of concern and as a form of discretionary obligation. Her memories of what she left behind drive both her behaviour and her understanding of the importance of having the right tools to climb up and out of a life of poverty, pushing her to do what she can whenever possible.

The Jamaican middle-class habitus is one that wants to eradicate lack and allow for everyone to move upward—not only individuals. The research participants all believed that poverty and lack of access should not persist, and hoped for everyone to be as aspirational as they were. Therefore, they strived to provide the tools they believed would help their family or communities. According to Sarah:

We help them financially . . . and sometimes you send stuff for them and so forth . . . Family and people in the church and people in your community, because you left them behind and you know what their situation is like and you know the ones who are really in need, and you know the children who are ambitious and want to reach somewhere. They need books. They might need shoes. Parents don't have it, and when they ask you, you know that they really need it, so you make the sacrifice and you help them . . . They are not related to you, but same thing. Children want to move up because, you know, when the children move up they help the parents and they make their standard of living a little higher or make things better for them . . . Sometimes we come together and see how we can make things better for them.

In some cases, participants had enlisted the help of other like-minded Jamaicans they knew through their own networks in Canada. In Sarah's case, she and her brother enlisted the help of church members to assist communities in Jamaica. In that way, they were able to reach more

individuals and assist them with what Sarah and her brother hoped was a way out of poverty:

Like me and my brother, [we] send some computer[s] for them. And even at church, there too, the other day we send some stuff for barrels . . . We came together and we collected. We put them in barrels and put together [money] and send it off . . . And [in] about 2006, my husband's family did the same thing, that was more like a family thing. We were going home for a reunion, [and] got supplies for the hospitals. Yes, I do my part, and as a family we do our part. If you can't manage [financially] you ask the next one to help. You [They, generally speaking,] give you a \$50 or \$100, put it together and send for them where the need is.

Although, as shown in chapter six, research participants strived to understand and incorporate Canadian norms and values that would positively influence their careers, they also retained social and cultural memories perceived as reflective of their identity as Jamaican. The immigrant's yearnings, memories, critiques, fears, hopes, and dreams, and all perceptions, whether good or bad, are based on a particular era—that is, the period leading up to migration. The importance of place must be emphasized here, as it is not only the temporal that influences the habitus; the location offers the political context in shaping the habitus. Therefore, the immigrant, whose habitus reminds them to espouse charity and compassion because they had the opportunity to move from their community and improve themselves economically away from their humble beginnings, will not lose their sense of loyalty and support to their community. In fact, for Sarah, she recognized that engagement with her community in Jamaica went even beyond the principles that Christianity endorses:

Because [it is] not only from a Christian perspective, that is part of it, but also, you know, the need is there. I see the need and I want to help because I know where I am coming

from, especially these children who have no control over what is happening to them. The parents just don't have it. I remember when my parents did not have it and my uncle would help, and I remember too when other people who are not related to us, they would send things and I would benefit from it. They [would] send a barrel and you could go and get a pair of shoes. And you're not related to them, but they know the neighbour down the road and that their child needs a pair of shoes, and they will give it to your parents.

“Making Your Mark from the Outside” – The Support of Jamaican Educational Institutions as a Form of Transnational Civic Engagement

A similar sense of giving back or showing appreciation in tangible ways is expressed by taking part in organizations that support educational institutions. As previously discussed, the emerging Jamaican middle class relied on educational attainment as the main resource that enabled their upward economic mobility. Education helped them to meet the requirements for high-paying jobs and secure employment. Portes (2008) suggests, based on empirical research conducted among professional migrants in the United States, that there is a distinct positive relationship between educational levels and occupational security and involvement in civic and political transnationalism. The reasons for this being:

national loyalties and the weight of nostalgia . . . a sense of obligation . . . to the institutions that educated them. When on the basis of that education they achieve wealth, security and status growth, it's only natural that they try to repay their debts in some way. (Portes, 2008, p. 14)

Supporting institutions financially through membership in alumni associations is one effective way in which recipients of valuable credentials express their appreciation. However, this form of expression of gratitude also validates processes of class distinction, and in essence contributes to the wholesale acceptance of a system of stratification.

The participants in my research maintained an active relationship with their high school alumni association, especially those whose institutions maintain a strong tradition of alumni activity. Similar to Portes' findings among Latin American immigrants, they described their participation as coming out of their willingness to give back to the institution that provided the foundation for them to become upwardly mobile. Sasha, who had an upper management role in a financial institution in downtown Toronto, attended a long established high school in rural Jamaica, and then obtained her undergraduate and graduate degrees at the University of the West Indies in Jamaica, in addition to further internationally recognized professional designations in accounting. However, she noted her consistent obligation to give back to her high school. She therefore contributed to her former high school's scholarship fund.

The thinking was similar for Patrick in that his linkages with alumni organizations in Jamaica were directly related to cultural expectations that one should be able to give back to the institutions that enabled one's own upward trajectory. Patrick, who came to Canada from England as an engineer, had been employed in this field since arriving in the 1980s. He explained his allegiance to his high school in Jamaica, which has alumni chapters in major cities within the major destination countries of most Jamaican emigrants. He specifically contributed to fundraising activities that included contributions of computers, and also attended school reunions and anniversaries in Jamaica. As to why he had maintained that level of commitment, he mentioned his gratitude for the strong foundation and opportunities afforded him due to his education at that institution.

Patrick and Sasha represent many Jamaicans who identify education as the major factor in shaping their future. This particular understanding, as previously mentioned, is shaped by a habitus that is influenced by the legacy of slavery. More contemporarily, however, the value of

education has increased even more as it has become the major asset required for the changing needs of the global labour market (Isin, 1997). Education is therefore relied upon as the single most important resource one needs to access socio-economic upward mobility. The obligation to one's former high school is thus more than one of mere duty. The participants in this research spoke of their participation as if it was taken for granted, and as if it was the norm, expected and unquestionable.

The practice of giving back to educational institutions is not only done through alumni associations, but also through charitable organizations that promote the development of education for Jamaica's children. For Jamaicans, the importance placed on educational attainment is both a result of the evolution of societies and the changing importance of skills as essential criteria for thriving economies, with these skills being embraced as the effective tool against oppression. Therefore, recognizing the role of the habitus in determining the value placed on education provides a more nuanced understanding and approach as to the reasons groups choose to support and invest in particular projects in Jamaica. Their choice to participate in civic actions is more than obligation; it is about their habitus, which is a reflection of unconscious internalized history. Therefore, a person's practice or actions are informed by the ways in which history has been interpreted and passed down from generation to generation. Middle-class Jamaicans' commitment to their country's development therefore also reflects their world views. Many participants shared an interest in the well-being of children and their education. This may be linked to the overwhelming and universal belief that education is the most useful resource for changing the status quo and pulling individuals and even their families from poverty. Even informally, as shown earlier, Sarah, for instance, was keen to assist children in her community with the resources needed for school.

An organization established in Toronto, Canada, that is devoted to childhood education in Jamaica is Shoreline Educate. Shoreline Educate was established to assist children in Jamaica at the very beginning of their educational path by adopting schools at the kindergarten level. Victoria, who was actively involved in various Canadian charities and who had resided in Ontario for over 30 years, also believed in contributing to the development of early childhood education in Jamaica through Shoreline Educate

Well, I am a patron for early childhood education, and I am with it since its inception, which is 23 years ago. We have adopted over 300 schools in Jamaica, and I take pride in the fact that I can get people, even people who are not Jamaican, to adopt a school in Jamaica. And in that little area that I am involved, I can see a big difference made every so often . . . Ever so often, every year, teachers will go down there [to Jamaica]. The average person will go down there and see the schools that they have adopted, you know, and get to know some of the kids and get them to make pretty drawings for them and recite for them, or whatever. That is very fulfilling.

Similar to Sarah, Victoria solicited donations from her network. In Victoria's case, this included members outside the Jamaican diaspora. She thought of this project as worthwhile and noble because it is based on providing the foundation for a generation of Jamaicans to have the ability to be independent and provide for themselves. The Shoreline Educate organization has grown to be a widely respected philanthropic institution that receives donations to establish and maintain foundational education for children in rural Jamaica. Over the years, as Victoria's career grew, her involvement with this organization also expanded. At the time of the interview, Victoria was also actively involved in a number of organizations that focussed on Jamaica's development by increasing the sponsorship of "basic schools".

As illustrated here, the activities of the participants in my research were not just about obligation. Their activities were also in keeping with their own values and their interest in overhauling whole groups of people in their own image—the industrious, educated, high-income-earning professional, historically portrayed as the citizen most capable of significantly contributing to a prosperous Jamaica. As a result, their focus tended towards producing this type of society in Jamaica. The research participants were therefore complicit in reproducing specific values and norms in the society, even though they were physically outside of that country's borders. They did not necessarily see this as a problem. In fact, they believed this is what is needed to enhance the long-term development of Jamaica; but this misrecognition is due to their perceived favourable position in this circumstance and is an example of what Bourdieu calls symbolic violence. As noted in chapter 2, symbolic violence is used to describe situations where individuals work towards their own self-interest within the context of their own social position, and, in turn, reinforce the very structures that are regulating the social order. In the case of this study, middle-class immigrants worked towards reinforcing the idea that education is the key to socio-economic mobility and independence, when they themselves had experienced a persistent struggle for elusive acceptance and status upon migration in terms of their own education and credentials.

Educational institutions in Jamaica benefit from the above activities, performed by middle-class Jamaicans in the diaspora, whether through infrastructure renovations or assistance in the form of human capital—for example, Shoreline Educate sponsors teachers to go and volunteer time in kindergartens, to share their knowledge of teaching and learning with their colleagues in Jamaica. In Canada, the Alliance of Jamaican Alumni Associations hosts 41 high schools as members. Other schools such as St. Georges College and Immaculate Conception

High School are independent organizations. Many of these organizations develop newsletters, social media networks, and hold brunches, dinners, and various other meetings that bring together a wide variety of successful professionals under one roof. These events become networking arenas where people can also display their relative successes, usually by addressing what they have accomplished since high school. As a result, “giving back” is not only done for the sake of altruism bolstered by the habitus. These “civic duties” are also about deriving benefits, such as recognition and status among peers, by participating in these networks that are increasingly valued by Jamaican institutions.

While informal activities take place at ad hoc times, activities that are financially supported by charitable foundations, such as alumni and diasporic organized projects, tend to be more structured. Projects among alumni, for example, are not time consuming year round, as opposed to the organizations dedicated to their professional development. In fact, many transnational activities through organizations have “seasons” when the membership is most active and engaged in fundraising events, such as dinners, dance parties, or barbeques at a park, and so on. For Jamaicans, most networking and socializing activities take place in the summer, with a few fundraising parties held during the Christmas season. This reflects the new lifestyle of Jamaican immigrants, who incorporate within their schedule activities dedicated to the maintenance of a local network of friends and routes of support, that also enable them to gain recognition among their peers and, transnationally, from their high school. In this way, they maintain a feeling of significance and some level of social capital.

The Failing State-Sponsored Diasporic Organization in the Midst of Yearnings for Home

It is important not to suggest that, for the research participants, one form of diasporic activity, such as those borne out of familial obligations, was more important as a driving factor for establishing social networks than any other form of civic engagement. However, the fact that

the participants were able to draw on these networks to gain status and recognition also points to the challenges some participants faced in terms of their feelings about their experiences as a Canadian citizen.

At the time of the interview, Victoria was also working with the Jamaican government to organize the 50th anniversary celebrations of Jamaica's independence:

In my case, I am extremely involved in the whole of Canada, and, last Friday, I [was] able to open doors for Jamaica: for the people of Jamaica, and for the government of Jamaica, and what have you. A case in point, here I am, co-chairing for the 50th anniversary celebrations, and I have brought along people who would not have normally anything to do with the country. For the mere fact that I was able to tell them how I personally feel about it, and what it would do to enhance their own lives, not just Jamaicans' [lives], and even if they were non Jamaicans.

Notably, Victoria did not believe that settlement experiences impact one's propensity to be involved in transnational civic activities, but it should be noted that Victoria had resided in Canada for over thirty years and established herself professionally in Ontario. It is my view that her reasonably placed socio-economic position in Canada, as a widely respected, recognized professional who is now retired, was responsible for her level of optimism and had influenced her point of view. Victoria explained her experience after completing post-secondary education in Manchester, Jamaica:

[By] profession, I am a biochemist. This is what I studied. Chemistry and microbiology, that's why I came [to Canada] and suddenly I also had a job offer at Sunnybrook Hospital, [but] my husband said, "you can't take this job. You can't take it. You are having so much pleasure pretty much in your art form, so why would you want to?" . . . I

thought about it . . . and the decision was made that I would just continue [working as an artist]. [Then] one thing led to another by meeting people, and so on, that I realized there was a lot of need in the community and need for exposure as a people . . . I live far out of town and I travel quite often [into town] just to attend meetings [that have] nothing to do with my daily living. But there is a need, and I think I am blessed, truly blessed. . . . I don't think it is fair for me to live on this earth without making some good contribution . . . I am an immigrant. I got my citizenship when the time was right. I got married to a Canadian. My children are Canadian, this is their roots. I think it is important that, once you become a part of the Canadian family, that you throw in the lot with them; you don't do things half measured . . . I teach [my children] about where I come from and how that has made me who I am today. So, when you take that approach, it is very light heartening, very satisfying.

However, Harvey, unlike Victoria, made a distinction between his life at home and life in Canada, the latter of which he terms as just a physical existence:

So there is a social void in your existence. I'll give you the simplest example: in Jamaica, there is no day that I [would] go out on the road that I wouldn't see somebody who wouldn't honk their car horn in greeting, or shout hello or wave. It's just the nature of the place. I've been here for five years and have never seen one person who I know [would do that]. And it's painful, especially for me who is a very social individual . . . Yeah, recognition to your existence that is the necessary ingredient.

Harvey also noted that he "is always thinking of how to make a contribution back to Jamaica". This may have had to do with his feeling of the lack of recognition in Canada. Jamaica remained home for him, even if he hadn't returned in four years. He described himself as being

“emotionally, mentally and verbally there”—meaning that he speaks the local dialect and maintained connections with family and friends through this dialect. In fact, Harvey exemplified the situatedness of the habitus. He contrasted his life in Jamaica with his life in Canada, and spoke of the pain and separation associated with Canada. Therefore, maintaining linkages with Jamaica was also a way for him—and others—to experience wholeness, improvement in well-being, and a sense of satisfaction. For Harvey, there was no mistake that he had an allegiance to Jamaica; his life in Canada was a mere existence for him. Love of his new country and interest in its development were not primary in his mind. He did speak of the material possessions that he hoped to maintain in Canada. His loss of recognition, however, was the loss of the one experience he valued that he had enjoyed in Jamaica, but did not feel in Canada. This made his life in Canada less than optimal. As we continued our conversation, Harvey also made reference to the ways in which the circumstances experienced by immigrants encourage a yearning for their home country:

I think where people have difficulty is when you come and begin an instant comparison of your circumstances here as opposed to your circumstances there in Jamaica, and in very few cases do your circumstances here measure up to what your circumstances were down there . . . and it has affected a lot of people psychologically, emotionally, and even mentally in some cases, because you can't rationalize one against the other. You constantly question yourself. I don't know any immigrant who came who didn't at some junction say to themselves, “Did I make the right decision?”

Harvey's experience shows that maintaining linkages may also be borne out of the insecurity of not knowing whether or not one will, or should, return to one's home country as a result of the many challenges faced in the host country. Thus, transnational practices are

multifaceted and complex because they are rooted not only in immigrants' feelings of obligation and yearning towards their home country, but also by their experiences in the host country. Coupling the settlement experiences—and more specifically, the process of reentering the labour market in the host country—with the “knowledge” of what it takes to feel valued in the home country reveals a gap or sense of loss that feeds the immigrant's yearning for home.

Harvey's suggestion that lack of recognition is an integral component of achieving a sense of belonging among the middle class may be the missing element needed to analyze the process of civic engagement. Harvey explained that the need for recognition is something that grows even more intense upon migration. For him, the loss in symbolic capital became so obvious that he was constantly reminded of that loss regardless of his material acquisitions. He also suggested that in some cases one might feel compelled to make a choice between remaining in the host country and accumulating assets over the long term, or returning to the home country where one's satisfaction of belonging could be maintained. At the time of the interview, it seemed that he had been unable to plan for the emotional deficit that he faced in Canada. As shown in previous chapters, Harvey had planned with his wife for the challenges in finding new employment and maintaining their standard of living. However, his symbolic loss was enduring, and he connected with Jamaica through the Jamaican local newspapers each day online in order to maintain a connection with the place that represented home and belonging to him. Harvey was clearly attached to his emotional connection to home in part because of his experience in Canada.

Based on Harvey's expressed interest in contributing to Jamaica, one would expect that he would be involved in diasporic organizations that had expressly stated a mission to contribute to Jamaica's development. However, as I will explore further in this chapter, official diasporic organizations have become a platform for the Jamaican government to influence the ways in

which the diaspora can contribute to Jamaica's development. This has created challenges for the effectiveness of such organizations in maintaining membership. It also highlights the ways that transnational engagement fulfills different needs among middle-class immigrants.

Although participants were willing to assist their home country, if their perceptions and inclinations were to be distrustful of government, they then sought to provide assistance on their own terms regardless of their experiences of marginalization in the country to which they had immigrated. This was because their choice to participate in civic actions was because of more than obligation. Their choice also relied on their habitus—a reflection of their unconscious internalized history, as a person's practice or actions are informed by the ways in which history has been interpreted and passed on from generation to generation.

Interestingly, linkages to the home country through state-sponsored organizations such as the Jamaica Diaspora Canada Foundation (JDCF) were met with cynicism by those participants in this research who had been involved with the organization. The politics of the Jamaican diaspora are performed similarly to the process of the development of transnational communities outlined by Portes (2008), wherein direct lines of communication are established with members of the Jamaican Government, including the Prime Minister, in an effort to foster the participation of the diaspora in issues of national development.

A Jamaican Diaspora Board was established in 2006 to serve as an advisory body to the minister responsible for diaspora affairs¹². It consists of 12 members: three reserved for the United States and two each for Canada and the United Kingdom, while the remaining five seats are reserved for the diaspora community located in Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean. This not only reflects the relative size of the diaspora community in each region, but also the

¹² This information is taken from a PowerPoint Presentation provided by the Consul General of Jamaica in 2010.

intensity of the reciprocal relationship expected of each territory. The official push for the creation of a diaspora board and network between countries is relatively new, with the official start happening in June 2004 at the First Biennial Conference held in Jamaica. The objectives of this board surround the intent to foster a relationship between the diaspora and the home country government, and to encourage investment in Jamaica's social, economic, political, and cultural development. According to Barry¹³, the diaspora conference held every two years is "done in order to enable the government of Jamaica and the Diaspora to meet to discuss and to measure how the relationship is going". It also serves as a platform to woo the diaspora by enabling access to the government ministers and by including an official public address from the former Prime Minister indicating his appreciation for the diaspora's contribution thus far. In a recent address to members of the diaspora, former Prime Minister of Jamaica, Bruce Golding, noted:

There is something about the Jamaicans abroad that I find to be outstanding. If I were to rank countries in terms of their commitment to their homeland, the Jordanians I think would have to be included in that top rank, but a special place would have to be given to Jamaicans. (Jamaica Gleaner, June 9, 2011)

In 2004, there were approximately 250 persons in attendance at the diaspora conference, and, by 2006, that number had increased to 400. This still considered a relatively small number keeping in mind that the members in attendance hail from all three major receiving countries—England, Canada, and the United States.

With regard to members of the Jamaican diaspora in Canada, although the government tries to appeal to memory, and to a sense of pride around an "imagined community" (Anderson, 1983) woven around shared history, dreams, and aspirations, the success of the official organized

¹³ Barry is a Jamaican government official posted in Toronto, Ontario.

diasporic strategy in the GTA (to woo Jamaican emigrants) is dependent on accommodating the needs of the changing demographics of migrants from the country. There is a distinct difference at present in the immigrants coming from Jamaica to Canada, as Barry noted, compared with those who arrived leading up to and including the 1970s. According to Barry:

What you're looking at, therefore, is a population that is able to better navigate the system; to better understand the realities; to make proper analysis and choices, and in fact to better contend. And by that I mean to challenge the system where it seems to be unfair. To that extent, I think that their political disposition to become more participative is certainly more visible than those who came at first. I think those who came at first were more . . . laid back, thinking this is an advanced country. They were probably intimidated by some of it.

In this statement, Barry was comparing the more recent Jamaican immigrants that his office engages with to the immigrants who arrived in earlier decades such as the 1970s. He suggests that the more recent Jamaican Canadian has the cultural capital necessary to be more confident, and therefore more demanding and participatory, in order to meet their expectations. In his opinion, the older cohort of Jamaican immigrants relied on their imagination of Canada as a more advanced country compared to Jamaica, and therefore felt they would have to meet Canadian expectations. The idealization of Canada may have been due to the fact that they saw themselves as dependent on the strong economy and the resultant need for foreign labour, which would increase their chances to earn a living. Also, many of these earlier immigrants had no intention of remaining in Canada indefinitely. However, the more recent immigrants tend to position themselves to be inserted in the economic sectors that are at the forefront of Canada's economy, and are intentional about their interests in ensuring that they are treated equally in

Canadian society. Many also intend to reside in Canada permanently or at least until their retirement.

The recent Jamaican immigrant also relates to the Jamaican government in the same way, in that their perspective is in alignment with their long-term plans for themselves and their families. In addition, some of the more recent immigrants belong to the emerging middle class who benefitted from the campaigns led by Jamaicans for independence from colonial rule. However, they are also the recipients of the ideology of multiracialism (Nettleford, 1998) intended to inform a spirit of cultural and racial integration among the people. Through multiracialism, political consciousness becomes divided as dispossession and blackness no longer seems as defined as in the past. However, Obika Gray has asserted strongly that the Jamaican politicians have developed a new method of political management that expresses a “flexible morality and shifting definition of the politically permissible” (2007, p. 188). Gray speaks to the extra-judicial murders condoned and extra-constitutional practices upheld by successive Jamaican governments since the late twentieth century. At the same time, these governments have publicly condemned criminality and affirmed the rule of law and strong moral conduct. This is all practiced within a context of weak public opinion, uneven class formation, and economic dependence, and has resulted in Jamaicans’ increasing flight from politics.

This “recent exodus” from politics as it were is significant because of the trust that was placed on the political leaders who emerged post emancipation (Crichlow, 2009). Crichlow offers that the leaders who emerged during the post-colonial era “promoted a reconfigured Creole cultural optic of well-being and progress” to the citizenry (2009, p. 10). Traditionally, the public placed trust in the state and expected guidance out of the quagmire and stain that were legacies of the plantation economy. For both Crichlow and Gray, the failure of governments over

decades and the looming crisis Jamaica continues to experience have created a shift towards more active, open challenges to politicians by members of the population in Jamaica. More recently, Jamaicans have witnessed a reinvigorated citizen politics in the form of increasing public opinion, emboldened civic groups, and embryonic third-party formations (Gray, 2007). However, while there are some changes, this new form of civic action is also problematic based on its inability to engage members across all classes. New civic groups that speak to the lack of opportunities and injustices meted out to members of the public are widely held as limited to middle-class elites, and thus reignite the enduring skepticism of the intentions of brown middle and upper-middle-class Jamaicans.

Why then was there so much skepticism among participants in my research? They also did not consider themselves part of the historically privileged elite, now being viewed as essentially corrupt with no interest in the country's development. Harvey, for instance, identified himself as privileged because he had had the ability to save, go on vacations, own a house, work at a good job, and not worry about his finances; as a result, he was among the privileged few who could afford to make his application for permanent residency to Canada. However, he was also quick to point out the difference between himself and his identity as being middle-class, and who he considered to be an elite or "a mogul" in Jamaica:

[It's not the average person] who can lay their hands on that sort of money readily plus to buy plane tickets etc., to come into this country. . . . they know they are not a Matalon or Issa or any of the top twenty-one (or if you add Butch Stewart, twenty-two) families.

They know they were [struggling] to get assets together to come. I had to sell my vehicles and sold my house. So you were not doing too badly [if you could put the money together to come], but you weren't a mogul.

There is therefore a wide range within the middle class, and the way in which they identify themselves affects the reasons and intentions for membership in diasporic associations.

Most participants in this research, while very interested in Jamaica's development, were also very wary of the state sponsored diaspora association. The research participants who were involved with this association at one point or another suggested that the association had also lost strength and integrity because their activities were not necessarily considered to be their own initiatives as an organization. According to one participant, while in a leadership role, he was able to get the organization to interface with the Jamaican government in order to open dialogue with all the ministries and start social programs, some of which have since been discontinued.

At the time of interviews, another participant who was involved in a leadership role, noted that membership is open to all Jamaicans from all social levels, "because the Jamaican government asks for people with distinction and that could be [referring to those] of any social standing". From this viewpoint, it was considered that the organization is not exclusionary. In addition, the association has been diligent with high profile issues such as advocating to the Jamaican Parliament for political representation in Jamaica. However, in speaking of the organization, Harvey illustrated intense displeasure with political leadership in Jamaica, and by extension the diaspora that caters to them:

The other problem I find is that they seem to be driven by actions on behalf of the Jamaican government, more so than actions that they generate independently. And so to some extent, I have suspicions about their overall agenda. Because what is said is that when they go to Jamaica and they have you meet with those in charge at the conference centre, somebody talks about what contributions they can make, and politicians come and say what they want. When they come back here, there is no follow through. No one pays

them any mind. They write a letter and get no response. So right away, in my perception, there is a token figurehead arrangement, which has nothing to do with substantially, meaningfully, helping the country. It's catchy and it's the sexy thing to be involved in, but in terms of tangible results, I can't recall hearing, reading, or seeing anything [come to fruition] that the diasporic association has suggested. So I don't know if that is the mechanism to get people recognition. You come to an existence where you say "is the recognition that important?" In terms of your day-to-day existence and for you to survive on a daily basis . . . the stark answer to that is "no".

The idea of the development of an effective transnational community was challenged by the participants, with accusations of improper leadership and gross inability to organize and maintain communication with the Jamaican community. That they could gain from membership was said to be doubtful:

There has never been an effort, as far as I know, to call for membership here. Maybe I am judging them wrongly too. I have a feeling that one of the things they should try to do is tap into the talents of the individuals who are here by maybe having some established data base of who these people are and what skill set they can bring to the table—assuming everybody has something to contribute. I haven't even heard of them having a fundraiser, of them [holding] a diasporic dance or something like that.

The majority of participants in this research were not convinced of the efforts of the state sponsored diaspora organization. Donna, another participant who held leadership roles in various organizations, expressed disappointment with the negative attitude she had observed throughout the JDCF. As a result, she simply chose not play an active role as a member. The inability of the Jamaican-Canadian diaspora and the JDCF to follow through regarding the needs of their

community, for the research participants, meant that the organization was inept and incompetent, and one that they would not like to be a part of. One member of the association, Stanley, explained that the organization is seen by many as weak primarily because of the manner in which it polarizes members according to the ways in which they are associated with Jamaican politicians. Stanley, who had resided in Canada for 47 years, and made substantial contributions to the development of ethnic-based community development, expressed his impression of the JDCF as follows:

People see it outside as being very weak, and every time you mention the diaspora, it's oh they are just jokers who just set it up for this central group. Let me give you an example, they set up for the past Prime Minister of Jamaica. It was done just by that core group . . . They are not a member of Facebook. They are not all those basic things to make it expansive, to make it inclusive, and so a guy like me and say (X) and a few other people, they shut you out. You're there, but you don't know what's going on . . .

Others reiterated that this organization is basically open to the ideas of very few, and that the opportunities for growth by attending to the ideas of the membership as a whole were limited. This in effect dissuaded them from being “active” members.

The general mistrust and lack of confidence in the Jamaican government engendered cynical perceptions of those who remained aligned to the organizations associated with it. In essence, this particular association has been unable to retain new members, as the old members focus on trying to preserve linkages with high-ranking public officials in Jamaica. Interestingly, during an interview with a past member of the one of the diasporic organizations, I asked whether Jamaicans gain status through an association with the organization or participation in transnational activities. He replied:

Yes, some do it [as a] stepping stone; some for something else; some go in it for the good of the community, but most for self-aggrandizement . . .

He also remarked that Jamaicans tend to use any organization as a class-reassuring tool. He mentioned that Jamaicans may join an organization and then splinter off and form another organization to their liking, if the original one was too 'low end' for their liking, suggesting a class bias in determining the success of organizations. From his perspective, organizations may be formed with the exclusive goal of maintaining a preferred class distinction. However, based on the responses by the participants in this research, there were definite concerns that had very little to do with the maintenance of class positions. In fact, for those persons who did not remain active members, their choice simply was in keeping with whether or not the diasporic association was effective in fulfilling its mandate, and moreover, whether the organization was able to do this without pandering to the Jamaican government for recognition. To some extent, this was a reflection of their class position, but even more so it reveals the variation of habitus within the middle class. The habitus is preserved through a process that maintains particular aspects of history, ideologies, and structures as relevant, valuable, and essential to the character of individuals and groups. For these research participants, their skepticism of the Jamaican government and their doubts in terms of government officials' ability to be sincere is a reflection of the phase in Jamaica's history that has begun to reshape the habitus of the middle class, which was once engaged and respondent to the government.

However, as I will explain later in this chapter, it cannot be overstated that their disapproval of the the state-sponsored diasporicassociationd its membership also highlighted them as different and distinct from other Jamaican Canadians, and, by extension, Jamaicans in Jamaica as well. Therefore, it was incumbent on these participants to further their own interest in

improving their socio-economic position through the use of social capital derived from locally focussed organizations.

Harvey's own understanding of the need for recognition brought on by the exclusion some immigrants experience in the host country led him to express passionately how useless it was to be a part of state-sponsored diasporic activities:

The only time I hear about them is when there is a delegation going to Jamaica to meet with some minister. For starters, it seems as if once you get in you're looking to be a part of the upper echelon, because someone may sponsor your plane fare, and then you go to Jamaica as some convoluted delegate. But it's a fleeting glory. You'll be in the limelight for a couple days with the minister, but when you come back to Canada, the reality is you're just another immigrant walking around; who cares if you're diaspora etc. Some [Canadians] don't even know what the damn word means.

In my observation, within the organization, those who remained "active" were much older and had migrated to Canada in the 1970s. This group has retained memories of a different type of political action, where allegiances were forged and status was gained through social networks with politicians. While the president of the association insisted that the organization is inclusive, I observed very low attendance at meetings in the months leading up to the 2010 diaspora convention, regardless of the fact that members could dial in to the meetings via phone in addition to attending in person. The meetings I was present at with the few members in attendance focussed on preserving connections with various ministers through socializing events with visiting politicians, and members seemed to be constantly connected to their calendars. Based on my observations and interviews, I am inclined to suggest that this particular practice of transnational civic engagement will continue to drastically decline. That being said, the

diaspora's growing interest in the affairs of their home country also places pressure on the Jamaican government to assuage the concerns of the younger generation, especially at a time when their reliance on members of diaspora as agents of development grows stronger.

Conclusion

My research on the Jamaican-Canadian diaspora illustrates the limits to social capital as a resource for a country's development. This transnational community is now in a particularly critical phase in its existence, as the formalized Jamaican diaspora community in Canada struggles to maintain membership, funding, and autonomy. This, even at a time when the Jamaican government is expressing interest in being a more active partner, and the consul general is calling for a forum through which a relationship could be forged between the Jamaican-Canadian diaspora and the Jamaican government. It is clear that the Jamaican diaspora is keen on making significant contributions to Jamaicans back home. However, the diaspora's divisive nature along class lines, and its suspicion that the government wants to take control of or appropriate the work they have already accomplished, are direct consequences of Jamaica's colonial history and post-independence political history and impact the success of the state-sponsored diasporic strategy.

The complexities of Jamaica's development have become imprinted in the dispositions of its peoples, who are proud of its cultural achievements, but who are also sensitive to their position relative to other groups in Canada. The participants in this research also showed that while they were willing to maintain ties and assist their home country, they also recognized their obligations to themselves and their families as people who intended to remain in Canada. This is a very different condition than most officials are ready to admit.

It is important to note that the group of participants, who were not inclined to participate in the official diasporic organization, and who instead were aligned with other organizations they

thought were more effective at meeting their expectations, had strong views of the organization and its membership. There was a sense of “disgust” among some of the participants towards the Jamaican government and the long-standing members of the diasporic organizations, similar to the “disgust” that Lawler (2005) speaks of, where she looks into the “disgust” of middle-class whites towards working-class whites as a way of expressing and re-emphasizing middle-class identities. In emphasizing difference, the middle class places their position against an “other”, by highlighting the perceived inadequacies of the other, and consequently the limited worth of the other to society.

My thinking is that perhaps a similar, but more complex, situation was occurring among some of the participants in my research (including even myself, as mentioned in the introductory chapter), whereby they asserted their distinction against other members of the diaspora by making clear their “disgust” with their lack of competence, organizational skills, and inability to show effective results, in addition to the tendency to look towards the Jamaican government for symbolic status—characterizations that they suggested they, in fact, did *not* also hold. The factors they used to distinguish themselves were in keeping with the attributes historically assigned and associated with expectations of what high levels of education should provide them, which include provision for self-improvement based on their own merit. It is therefore possible that the “disgust” they felt was a reflection of their own desire to project versions of themselves that were of a “higher standard”.

However, these feelings were expressed while, at the same time, they themselves experienced exclusion (in another geographic space) from other groups in the Canadian labour market who devalued their abilities and worth in the workplace. Therefore, it is possible that an additional reason for their “disgust” was that there was a strategic importance felt in distancing

themselves from the very stereotypes that negatively affected their own integration in Canadian society. In doing so, the participants made the values espoused by the Canadian society the standard¹⁴ through which they legitimized their explanations for the decline in their support of official diasporic activities. Middle-class immigrants not only produce middle-classed identities by othering or differentiating themselves within the social structure associated with their homeland, but those same middle-class identities are produced by being othered. This double production did not necessarily begin with migration; but as the participants mentioned, they were not interested in a continuing relationship with people they believed to be characterized as mentioned above, and thereby they established themselves as distinct.

Focusing on the ways the participants established distance or independence between themselves and the state-sponsored diaspora organizations, it is apparent that the participants produced and redefined their middle-class identity and their class dominance outside of territorial boundaries. The implication of the dynamic development of middle-classness is that the Jamaican state must now reconsider the emphasis that it increasingly places on skilled migrants. The Jamaican government faces a middle-class group whose experience in another country (Canada) has begun to (re)shape their identity; this reshaping manifests to some extent in their civic practice or lack of interest in participating in Jamaican state-sponsored organizations.

In fact, almost all participants in this study did not intend to return to live in Jamaica, and their close family members were also Canadian residents. They ranged from young professional adults with a new family to retired professionals heavily involved with various high-level

14. I draw from Brotz' understanding of Canadian values, which he categorizes as "democratic bourgeois". As Brotz explains: "This democratic bourgeois man is a person who is tolerant of all other religions which do not violate a rational civil law (by such practices, for example, as human sacrifice); who is not a fanatic because he is primarily interested in improving his standard of living for himself and his family by working in an economy which satisfies these wants; and who has the political habits and practical common sense to support the regime which makes possible this way of life" (Brotz, 1980, p. 42).

volunteer positions. The outlook of this group of Jamaicans was mainly one that stemmed from an independent ethic—one in which they worked towards their self-advancement, and, as shown in the previous chapters, participated in activities that enabled, or had a positive influence on, their future in their country of residence. The insistence on remaining apart from the government-sponsored organizations is reflective of their habitus: a complex combination of their lived experience, perceptions, and values instilled over generations and through the exposure to influences outside Jamaica. There was still, however, the feeling of obligation that remained within these immigrants, who provided significant contributions to the maintenance of various institutions, especially educational institutions in Jamaica, whether informally or through officially organized activities. Regardless, prioritizing the historically inculcated dispositions (habitus) associated with the middle class in Jamaica as the context in understanding the maintenance and development of transnational civic engagement opens up avenues to further discuss the possibilities for state-sponsored transnational engagement.

Chapter 8. Conclusion

My intention with this study was to contribute to discussions surrounding the ways that institutional structures (values, norms, and beliefs) and relational structures (social relations) interact within a context of migration to inform social behaviour. In order to accomplish this, I examined the relationship between the settlement experiences of skilled immigrants and the scope, type, and intensity of their civic participation. I focussed specifically on skilled Jamaican immigrants and their use of civic engagements in Canada and Jamaica, as tools toward maintaining or improving their socio-economic status as middle-class individuals.

The participants in this research indicated challenges with inclusion in their workplaces in Canada, and unequal access to employment based on gender, as exclusionary experiences that affected their socio-economic position, regardless of their work history and educational credentials. I found that the responses to exclusion varied among the participants and affected the ways in which they utilized their cultural capital within established organizations. While some participants focussed on engaging in civic organizations that empowered them in the Canadian context, others utilized spaces, such as the church, which valorized their values, ideals, and norms associated with middle-class identity in Jamaica. However, it should be noted that in both cases the participants were complicit in reinforcing the very structures that create distinction and difference. Using the example of skilled immigrants from Jamaica reveals insights into the ways that both the criteria of social distinction such as gender, race, immigrant status and class and the internalized roles, values and norms passed on over generations affect groups differently.

Findings

Due to the complexity of analysis required in engaging with the experiences of migrants to understand their settlement patterns and strategies, it is important to choose a theoretical and methodological orientation that enhances the explanation of the phenomena studied (Lawson,

2000; Bernardi et al., 2007). I chose to use the theory of practice proposed by Pierre Bourdieu because it synthesizes both institutional and relational visions of social structure (Bernardi, et.al., 2007),¹⁵ in an effort to counter a deterministic understanding of human behaviour. Bourdieu's theory of practice recognizes that human/social behaviour is complex and is influenced by both objective and subjective factors. This was important to my work because to think through the strategies of middle-class, visible minority, first-generation immigrants from Jamaica to Canada, is to engage in complex analysis at various scales. For instance, immigrants maintain transnational identities, in that they preserve allegiances to more than one nation-state—in this case, the country of birth and the country of residence (Basch et al., 1994; Portes, et al., 1999; Levitt and Lamba Nieves, 2011). Moreover, immigrants' experiences are not only influenced by systematic processes of privilege and discrimination (Lawson, 2000), but also by the historically-produced, classed orientation or habitus they hold that has been passed down over generations. This study focussed on how the habitus revealed the ways that gendered relations and ideologies influence labour market experiences, and also the ways that the research participants recognized and responded to racial discrimination. This dissertation is therefore not solely a description of immigrant experiences in the country of residence, but also offers a narrative as to the complexity that is indicative of those holding allegiances, memories, and obligations to more than one nation-state.

Increasingly, scholars are being challenged to engage social theory with the growing body of transnational empirical research (Lawson, 2000). The concepts of habitus, capitals, fields, and symbolic violence within the theory of practice used to support this research enabled

15. Institutional social structure is concerned with the norms, beliefs, and values that regulate social action, while the relational perspective of social structure is based on a system of relations between class positions (Bernardi, et al., 2007).

me to conceptualize the challenges associated with transnational identities. Without discounting that class is a function of social relations, Bourdieu highlights that class and its associated distinctions are also developed and preserved through cultural values and norms passed on through institutions, such as the family and the education system, over generations. When applied to migration studies and transnational practices in particular, this theory, whether intentionally or not, exposes the importance of space. The nation-state, or various fields in a particular national context, becomes key to understanding the context of the development of those norms and beliefs that, in many cases, are gendered and racialized, and that are influential in preserving societal structures. Bourdieu's perspective helps me to contribute to migration studies by returning the nation-state to the analysis as an important context for understanding the practices of immigrant groups. The internalized and taken-for-granted attitudes, expectations, and behaviours associated with a particular class habitus expressed in various forms of capitals that are familiar and valued in one nation-state can become of little worth in another. In addition, the ways in which middle-class groups respond to such changes involve the re-establishment of their own ideals and values against an "other", and, simultaneously, an acceptance of the norms, behaviours, and values of those who "other" them. This process, in effect, is indicative of political and class struggles among and within groups that grow even more complex in the context of migration.

There were two main objectives for this dissertation: first, to explore the ways that embodied, historically-shaped dispositions associated with race, gender, and class positions affect how skilled immigrants respond to exclusionary experiences, and, consequently, to the development of their relationships to the host and home country; and second, to examine the ways that unsatisfactory settlement experiences, especially as they relate to labour market

participation, shape strategies for socio-economic improvement through participation and membership in organized social networks.

To meet my objectives for this study, I performed qualitative research, specifically the use of semi-structured interviews and participant observation, in order to gain empirical data regarding the choices made among skilled Jamaican immigrants in the GTA. Lawson (2000) suggests that this methodology is useful in drawing out pertinent and nuanced detail about the experiences of immigrants, and that it also promises to improve analysis among migration researchers.

Based on the interviews conducted, it is clear that the social relations that define class positions and the values, norms, and beliefs practiced over generations work interchangeably to influence behaviour. While it has already been established that social structures “maintain patterned, non-random relations among [elements] with a certain permanence in time and space” (Bernardi et al., 2007, p. 169), this research shows that the processes of migration and (re)settlement have implications for the ways ideologies and social relations shift across space.

All the research participants considered themselves to be middle class when they resided in Jamaica. Their perception of their class position was based on the social relations developed between classed groups over generations. Thus, their values, beliefs, self-perceptions, and social relations were all due in part to the legacy of slavery and colonialism. The black majority, since emancipation, has also (re)defined the tools necessary to become upwardly mobile within the Jamaican context. These tools no longer totally rely on nepotism, or race and colour classifications, but on access to education and ascriptions to the modernization discourse.¹⁶ With

16. Lawson states that modernization discourses “rest on the idea that migrants are incorporated into the ‘modern’ economy and place of the city and that through hard work, they can aspire to improved material life and cultural belonging to the urban, upwardly mobile social classes” (2000, p. 180).

migration, the participants in this research showed how the structures (values, norms) and the factors that influenced their class position (capitals) were challenged and deemed useless in their new country, Canada. In many cases, this was blamed on racial and gender discrimination.

Therefore, the analysis of migrant behaviour must be spatially contextual—that is, reference the historical background of the group considered. For the participants of this research, relying on their middle-class habitus, which enabled them to do what was strategic in particular circumstances without much thought, also meant reaching out to those who would be able to appreciate and be familiar with their values and beliefs. This strategy was conducted in the form of gaining membership in particular volunteer, organized networks that exposed them to Canadian norms and practices that were not “second-nature”, or that did not appear innate to them. In addition, the research participants maintained associations with their home country. In all cases, the familiarity of associating with groups who had similar experiences allowed the research participants to deal with their own challenging settlement experiences. However, it must be noted that their actions revealed the complexity with which structures are reproduced. For instance, as discussed in chapter 6, the participants noted that they tried upgrading their credentials in order to comply with the demands of the Canadian labour market.

Ironically, regardless of the fact that their experiences of exclusion in the workplace were in part due to a lack of capital in the form of being a “right fit”,¹⁷ the research participants relied heavily on both their capitals (social and cultural) and habitus, which are largely centered on knowledge attained within historical contexts specific to their country of residence. Chapter 4 showed how the habitus played a role in the (mis)recognition of racial discrimination experienced by some of the research participants. Their values, based on ideas rooted in

17. The “right fit” is used as a catch-all phrase to include interpersonal and motivational issues, including temperament, attitude, and personality (Fertig, 2013).

modernization discourses, also helped to shape their response to barriers experienced in the labour market. Some of the participants mentioned that they did not experience discrimination, and even if they did, they chose not to allow it to shape their trajectory.

For those who resisted the idea that racism could influence their path, and hence their labour market experience, they were involved in both transnational and local civic activities. Their activities were mostly through formal associations, whether at the local or transnational scale. For these participants, the social capital derived from their involvement in formal civic activities also boosted their confidence and enabled them to take greater risks in their careers, pushing them even further in leadership positions both in their careers and their voluntary activities.

It should be noted that the term gendered relations refers to a form of institutional structure that was reproduced in the daily practices of the research participants. I argued in chapter 5 that gendered ideologies and gender relations among middle-class Jamaicans did not change with migration and/or changed labour market outcomes in the new country of residence. Instead, women and men were complicit in the reproduction of ideas that misrepresented the experiences of women in the labour market. The idea that women had an advantage, in that they accessed employment more easily than men, allowed men to engage the labour market and their networks differently from the women, who were compelled to take on jobs and support their seemingly more disadvantaged spouses. The research participants explained that their conclusions regarding the ease with which women could find employment in Canada were based on their observation of discrimination against black Jamaican men in particular, both in Jamaica and in Canada. This suggests that for the research participants, discrimination was not only based on race, but was also associated with overlapping stereotypes based on ethnicity, race, and

gender. Literature that examines the complexity of experiences through the use of intersectionality tends to focus on the complex nature of the lives of black women. However, while it should be recognized that gendered responsibilities were particularly taxing on the women in this study, I also showed the ways that the black Jamaican male participants also experienced their everyday differently because of the complex interplay between their class and gendered expectations, particularly in light of the stereotypes that revolved around their gender, race, and ethnicity.

The experiences of the participants in the GTA and their perceptions of racism also influenced their civic activities. For those participants who reported having had poor experiences in the workplace, and who felt they had experienced racism in particular, there was more involvement at the transnational level. However, in many cases, it was informal engagement providing financial and material support to families, and in some cases, communities, in Jamaica. Some engaged in activities organized through churches.

Churches in the GTA also served a very stabilizing function for the research participants who faced challenges with exclusion in the labour market. In this space, as shown in chapter 6, the feelings of familiarity and inclusion kept them in tune with their Jamaican culture, and to some extent this softened or assuaged the trauma and resentment they felt towards their settlement experience in Canada. The intensity of the participants' engagement in transnational activities was moderate and depended both on the needs of their families or communities in Jamaica, and on their ability to provide for those needs. The challenge to provide support to family or friends in Jamaica was also a reflection of their socio-economic position in Canada.

Those who had lived in Canada longer and who were engaged in organized diasporic associations expressed a distinct nostalgia for Jamaica in keeping with their memories of the

middle-class ideal. Their activities tended to be more formal, and, more often than not, political—that is, through engaging with Jamaican ministers of state. Their activities were usually in keeping with Jamaican cultural holidays and events, except for a biennial conference they held in Jamaica that drew together politicians and the diaspora. However, those participants who collaborated with Jamaican institutions officially through organizations such as Shoreline Educate, along with participants who expressed “disgust” with the the state sponsored diasporic association, distinguished themselves from the state-sponsored diasporic associations as shown in chapter 7. This process of distinction (re)emphasized their middle-class identities as competent and therefore superior.

Understandings of transnationalism have begun to be problematized as researchers have begun to note that not all immigrants are only focussed on homeland ties (Viswanathan, 2007). Chapter 6 examined the role of social and cultural capitals as tools used to build capacity and enhance the possibilities for the participants in this research to improve their socio-economic position. The tools discussed in this chapter focussed on participation in social networks to enhance cultural capital. The types of social networks and activities they engaged in, however, were also acts of civic engagement. In this case, I focussed on organized activities among people of similar ethnic backgrounds with common interests that enhanced civil society. Those who had experienced challenges with converting their cultural capital to economic capital, and yet who took part in local organizations, made up the group who were engaged in order to transform their habitus and their capitals to be more valuable assets in the Canadian context. These participants were involved in mostly formal, visible, organized activities for both local and transnational activities. Their participation in local activities was intense and time-consuming compared to the seasonal events associated with the transnational activities. As mentioned in chapter 7,

transnational activities through organizations such as alumni associations were mostly conducted during the summer period. The research participants who were very active locally tended to be younger and very strategic in their choices of engagement.

Although the research participants were keen on maintaining professional networks and performing civic activities in the GTA, chapter 7 highlighted the fact that participation in transnational civic activities was nevertheless found to be an important characteristic of being an immigrant. Transnational activities may be viewed as deviating from underlying expectations of assimilation; however, all participants believed these practices had no impact on the strength of their civic allegiances in Canada. While the participants in this research emphasized that transnational practices had no impact on their level of civic engagement in Canada, chapter 7 explored the ways that their transnational practices were influenced by their experiences and resultant implications for middle-class identity formation in the receiving country. This chapter also underscored the relevance of their dispositions or perceptions retained in their lived experiences, while they resided in their country of origin prior to their arrival in Canada, as important considerations in discussions of transnational ties. Initially, I had assumed that Jamaican immigrants maintained associations with the diaspora foundation because of their poor labour market experiences and their inability to experience status and recognition. But, as shown in chapter 7, that was not the case among some of the research participants. In fact, those who were involved in official diasporic organizations were mostly retired people or young, second-generation Canadian citizens. Participants in my research retained ties with their home country both formally and informally through alumni, diasporic organizations, church, or family and friends. I also illustrated that perceptions shaped over time have a significant impact on the types of transnational activities Jamaicans participate in. In this chapter, the limitations to government-

sponsored diasporic organizations were discussed, and the rise or growth of “independent” associations was highlighted.

Understanding the experiences of the participants in this research through the lens of the habitus allowed me to reveal the many variations within middle-class immigrants. The variations in insight regarding participants’ settlement experiences and their responses to their changed socio-economic positioning through civic engagement were based on gender relations, their recognition and experiences of racism, and their political attitude towards Jamaica.

Future Research Considerations

Focusing this research on middle-class immigrants within a context of increasing dependence on this cohort of the diaspora by their home government adds to the growing research on the complexities associated with the immigrant experience and transnational civic engagement (Sayad, 2004; Bourdieu, 2000; Kobayashi & Preston, 2007; Ley, 2003; Kelly, 2003), and opens possibilities for further research surrounding the implications for the sustainable development of human capital in immigrant receiving countries such as Canada. Transnational studies in particular could further our understanding into the ways that maintenance of networks with organizations, communities, friends, and/or family in the sending country influence their welfare/well-being in the host country. Multiculturalism, for instance, has been argued both for and against by various scholars, but geographers could investigate its role in masking the effect of prejudicial actions in the workplace against those immigrants who do not comply with or conform to the valorized coded behaviours that signify Canadian-ness and Canadian values.

Alternatively, research could further investigate challenges to the idea that developing countries such as Jamaica can rely on their growing diaspora to aid in their own social and economic development. This research has shown that some members of the diaspora may not be

keen on retaining political ties to their homeland because of disapproval surrounding government policies and practices, while, simultaneously, some may in fact be trying to gain back symbolic recognition that has been lost to them in their new country of residence by retaining such ties.

This study also opened up avenues for discussions surrounding intra-class struggles, even among groups who collectively acknowledge the role of racial oppression in the receiving country in affecting their class position and sense of belonging. These struggles, as shown in this dissertation, are primarily targeted towards addressing acceptable, respectable, and effective ways of retaining middle-class status. It is clear that maintaining the distinction of being a useful and positive contributor to society is not only in keeping with normalized perceptions of being middle class, but is also necessary so that one is not identified with those who are outside of this recognized status—thus reaffirming aspirational dispositions or habitus. Therefore, research could engage questions around the production of class in a historicized, transnational context, and the role of ethnic-based civic organizations in (re)producing class interests among the middle-class diaspora.

One growing concern is that success is not uniformly assured across all second-generation groups (Boyd and Grieco, 1998; Reitz and Somerville, 2004); it is not only a concern for first-generation immigrants. The use of Bourdieu's theory of practice would also be effective in understanding the sense of inclusion and practice among the second generation.¹⁸ This would also further advance understandings of citizenship, including the purpose and interests in the practice of engaging in transnational civic activities with “countries of affiliation” of second-generation citizens. This research would provide insight into the ways that values, norms, and cultural beliefs are internalized and passed down over generations regardless of physical

18. The term second generation refers to children of immigrants of non-European origin in Canada, *cf.* Reitz and Somerville, 2004.

geography, and yet still heavily rely on the sovereignty of nation-state territories. Consequently, it would also show the role of social equity in the long-term fulfillment of “good citizenship”.

These directions for research are also important from a policy perspective. Already we see where there are concerns regarding the declining political participation rates among younger people in Canada, while there is increasing interest among the second generation in the development of their parents’ home country. Implications for inequality can be revealed in the way succeeding generations lack interest in matters of public importance. In this study, this lack of interest occurred regardless of the fact that all the research participants who were eligible to vote participated in and valued this process. Research that engages the immigrant community and contextualizes their experience with their historicized expectations, values, and ideals would serve invaluable in understanding the needs of the growing segment of the Canadian population who are recognized as foreign/immigrant. This will be very challenging, however, as it brings to the fore contradictions and political struggle in societies that place enormous value on their own norms and values, while at the same time supposedly promoting ideals of inclusivity.

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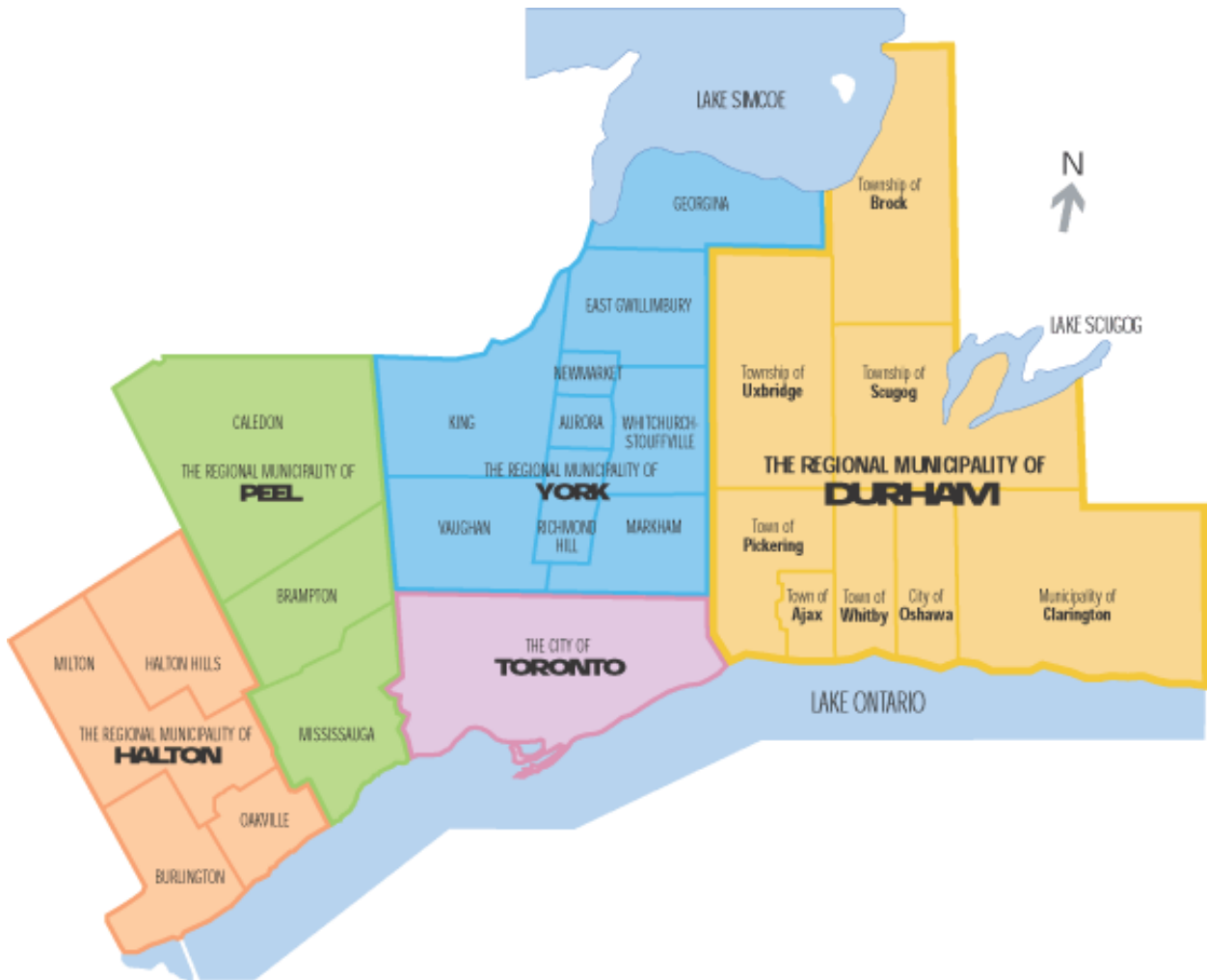
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Appendix A. Map of the Greater Toronto Area, Ontario



Source: <http://www.durham.ca/images/clerk/gtamap.gif>.

Appendix B. Table Showing Participants' Employment and Civic Activities in Jamaica and Canada

Name	Employment in Jamaica	Civic Activity in Jamaica	Employment in Canada	Civic Activity in Canada
Sadie	Business Analyst	Active-leader community organization (neighbourhood watch)	Business Analyst	Minimal: women's group
Sarah	Accountant and teaching	Church	Accounting	Church-intensive activities, both local and transnational
Victoria	n/a	Community organization	Artist, Immigration judge	Jamaican diasporic activities; involvement in philanthropic activities related to establishment of schools in Jamaica: extensive activities, both local and transnational
Elizabeth	Business management	Community organization	Senior VP banking institution; politician	Leader of philanthropic organization focussed on establishment of schools in Jamaica: extensive activities, both local and transnational

(continued)

Table (continued)

Name	Employment in Jamaica	Civic Activity in Jamaica	Employment in Canada	Civic Activity in Canada
Donna	Education	Church	Senior management Bell; business owner	Church: extensive activities, especially local
Lydia	Attorney-at law	Involved in university politics	Human Rights Attorney;	Leadership positions held in various associations; extensive activities, both local and transnational
Meghan	Attorney	Professional association	Policy advisor	Member of Municipal committee
Susan	University Lecturer	Church	At time of interview n/a	Church
Barbara	Administrative assistant	Church	(Services) Enbridge now retired	Church
Eileen	Nurse	Church	Nurse (retired)	Church
Fred	Administrator /academic dean	Church, participant of and leadership roles in community activities	Retired	Church, and extensive associations, mainly local reach
Zack	n/a	n/a	Leadership position in public role – police force	Extensive activities, both local and transnational
Harvey	Senior position in government agency	Church and Professional associations	Policy analyst public sector	Informal transnational activities/professional association
Michael	n/a	Community organization	Management position in financial sector	Intensive participation in local associations
Helen	Teacher	Church	Substitute teacher	Church

(continued)

Table (continued)

Name	Employment in Jamaica	Civic Activity in Jamaica	Employment in Canada	Civic Activity in Canada
Faye	Management position in a credit union	Church and professional associations	Middle management credit union	Church
Harry	Management position in a building society (int'l financial institution)	Church and professional memberships	(self employed) Insurance/financial management advisor	Church
Maria	Accounting	Church	Administration transitioning to education	Church
Ben	Accounting	Professional association	accounting	Church
Jessica	Business administration	Professional association	Business Management	Church
Leonie	Hospital administration	Church	Temp hospital admin	Church
Mario	Education	Church and Community	Pastor	Church
Michelle	Geologist	Professional associations	Temp-administrative	Minimal/community organization
Edgar	Teacher	Church	Sales and service	Church
Simon	Banking	Church	Sales and service	Church
Louise	Teacher	Church	Student	Church
Brad	Management	Church/community associations	Banking/finance	Professional Associations/Church
Barry	Business	Church	Government Official	n/a
Justin	n/a	n/a	Leader of diasporic association	n/a
Linda	Tax consultant	Church	Auditor	Professional association
Sasha	Accountant	Professional association	Director internal audit	Community Organization
Brian	Journalist	Professional associations	Journalist/media relations consultant/ Past leader diasporic	n/a

			association	
Stanley	Business	n/a	Business development consultant	Community organization/professional association
Ralph	Student	Church	Pastor	Church
Patrick	n/a	Professional association	Engineer	Community
Simone	Engineering	Church	Engineering	Church and professional association
Betsy	Export marketer	n/a	Strategic policy advisor to MPP	Professional organizations
Debbie	Dentistry	Religious/community	Dentistry	Community organizations
Rachel	Business	n/a	Foreign language specialist	Church
Carlene	Education	n/a	Editor- Pan-African Magazine	Professional organization
Aiden	Mechanical engineer	Professional organization	IT-technician	Religious organization

Appendix C. Semi-Structured Interview Schedule

First I would like to ask questions regarding your reasons for migrating from Jamaica and your lifestyle in Jamaica prior to migrating to Canada.

1. Tell me about yourself (looking for markers that indicate their level of cultural capital such as type of school attended and level of education obtained; their family life; ownership of house and/or car and their general activities in Jamaica).
2. What was your job experience like in Jamaica?
3. Do you believe race and gender played a role in your ability to obtain a job in Jamaica?
4. What factors do you believe have the most influence on a person's social position in Jamaica? (education, race, occupation, gender, income levels, ability to purchase a home, etc)
5. What factors do you believe have the most influence on a person's social position in Canada? (education, race, occupation, gender, income levels, ability to purchase a home, etc)
6. Were you actively involved in membership associations, volunteer activities, or any other forum in which you were able to contribute to the decision making process that could affect the wellbeing of yourself, your family or your community?
7. What effect do you believe participation in activities like voting, volunteering, charity and involvement on company, non governmental or school board (for example) have on the ability to change a person's position or status in Jamaican society?
8. Please explain why participation in these activities were/are important or not important to you

Now I would like to ask questions pertaining to your experience as an immigrant in Canada

9. What has your experience been like to find a job in Canada?
10. Do you believe race, or gender or both factors have been influential in your ability or inability to access the job of your choice?
11. In what ways do you believe race or gender played a role and how has it affected the way in which you pursue a career in Canada?
12. Are you eligible to vote in governmental elections in Canada? If yes, did you vote in the last elections?

Now I will ask a few questions more specific to your role and expectations as a member of this organization

13. How many organizations have you been a member of in Canada?
14. How did you find out about this particular organization and when did you join?
15. In what ways do you participate?
16. What are the advantages and disadvantages derived from being a member of this group?
17. Please explain why participation in these activities were/are important to you even while living in Canada.
18. To what extent do you believe the position one holds in this organization has greater influence on one's position in Jamaica?
19. To what extent do you believe the connections and occupation once held in Jamaica affect the positions and status members hold in the organization?
20. To what extent do you feel a sense of connection to the Jamaican society since being a member of this organization?

Now I will ask final set of questions regarding your level of participation in Canadian centered activities

21. Has your experience in the Canadian labour market influenced how you feel as a member of Canadian society?
22. Do you have any interest in participating in associational groups and networks that are focused on community development in Canada? Why?
23. To what extent does your experience in Canada affect your interest in participating in political or voluntary decision making sessions specific to Canada?
24. What types of civic activities or political activities would you participate in Canada?
25. To what extent are your interests influenced by your involvement in activities involving Jamaica's development?

Appendix D. Invitation Notice to Organizations to Participate in Research

Notice Board Recruitment Notice

Are you a skilled Jamaican immigrant residing in the GTA?

Graduate student Kay-Ann Williams of the Department of Geography, Queen's University under the supervision of Dr. Beverley Mullings is requesting your participation in a survey. The purpose of the survey is to know more about your experiences as immigrants to Canada including the opportunities and constraints you may have encountered while trying to settle in Canada. I am also interested in understanding whether you have maintained relationships with people or organizations in Jamaica and how these may influence your settlement experiences in Canada.

Participants in this part of the research must:

Be Jamaican born, hold post secondary education, have more than one year professional experience in the home country prior to arriving in Canada, be eligible to work in occupations which require expertise acquired through relevant qualifications or previous skilled work experience, and hold membership with any Jamaican diasporic organization.

The survey is expected to take approximately 20 minutes.

If you wish to participate in the survey please go to (web address).... Or collect a package from the office or Kay-Ann Williams at the meeting.

Please feel free to contact Kay- Ann Williams at 6kw19@queensu.ca.

Appendix E. Map of Jamaica



Source: World Atlas, <http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/namerica/caribb/jm.htm>.

Appendix F. Table: Highest Level of Education Acquired Among Jamaican-born Residents in Canada

Other trades certificate or diploma	Registered apprenticeship certificate	College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	Bachelor's degree	University certificate or diploma above bachelor level	Degree in medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine or optometry	Master's degree	Earned doctorate degree
9.5%	5.7%	24.7%	6.7%	6.7%	1.2%	.3%	2.1%	.2%
7.6%	4.0%	18.1%	3.7%	10.6%	1.6%	.4%	2.6%	.4%

Source: 2006 dataset, from Statistics Canada, 2006, *2006 Census: Data Products, Topic-Based Tabulations*.

**Appendix G. Table Showing Unemployed Labour Force by Examinations
Passed 2010–2011 – Jamaica**

Highest Examinations Passed	January 2010	April 2010	July 2010	October 2010	January 2011	July 2011	October 2011
MALE							
Total %	43	37	33	36	38	36	38
None	76	74	70	78	72	72	75
CXC Basic J.S.C. etc.	2	2	1	1	2	3	2
1 to 2 G.C.E. 'O'	4	3	3	3	5	5	4
3 to 4 G.C.E. 'O'	4	8	8	3	7	5	6
5+ G.C.E. 'O'	5	5	6	3	3	2	4
1 to 2 G.C.E. 'A'	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3 G.C.E. 'A' or more	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
Degree	3	3	4	4	2	6	3
Other	1	2	3	3	2	3	1
Not Stated	4	4	4	5	5	4	4
FEMALE							
Total %	57	54	53	52	58	54	56
None	66	64	61	60	60	64	61
CXC Basic J.S.C. etc.	4	3	2	2	5	4	3
1 to 2 G.C.E. 'O'	5	5	6	6	6	5	4
3 to 4 G.C.E. 'O'	9	11	10	10	10	8	10
5+ G.C.E. 'O'	5	3	8	8	7	7	8
1 to 2 G.C.E. 'A'	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3 G.C.E. 'A' or more	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
Degree	4	5	6	6	5	5	6
Other	2	3	4	3	3	4	3
Not Stated	4	5	2	4	4	4	5

Note. Data for October 2011 are preliminary. Data obtained from the Statistical Institute of Jamaica, 2011.

Appendix H. Clearance Letter



February 8, 2010

Ms. Kay-Ann Williams
Department of Geography
Mackintosh-Corry Hall, Room D201
Queen's University

GREB Ref #: GGEO-096-10

Title: "(Re)claiming Citizenship? Skilled Jamaican Immigrants and Transnational Civic Engagement"

OFFICE OF RESEARCH SERVICES

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Dear Ms. Williams:

The General Research Ethics Board (GREB), by means of a delegated board review, has cleared your proposal entitled "**(Re)claiming Citizenship? Skilled Jamaican Immigrants and Transnational Civic Engagement**" for ethical compliance with the Tri-Council Guidelines (TCPS) and Queen's ethics policies. In accordance with the Tri-Council Guidelines (article D.1.6) and Senate Terms of Reference (article G), your project has been cleared for one year. At the end of each year, the GREB will ask if your project has been completed and if not, what changes have occurred or will occur in the next year.

You are reminded of your obligation to advise the GREB, with a copy to your unit REB; of any adverse event(s) that occur during this one year period (details available on webpage <http://www.queensu.ca/ors/researchethics/GeneralREB/forms.html> – Adverse Event Report Form). An adverse event includes, but is not limited to, a complaint, a change or unexpected event that alters the level of risk for the researcher or participants or situation that requires a substantial change in approach to a participant(s). You are also advised that all adverse events must be reported to the GREB within 48 hours.

You are also reminded that all changes that might affect human participants must be cleared by the GREB. For example you must report changes in study procedures or implementations of new aspects into the study procedures on the Ethics Change Form that can be found at <http://www.queensu.ca/ors/researchethics/GeneralREB/forms.html> - Research Ethics Change Form. These changes must be sent to the Ethics Coordinator, Gail Irving, at the Office of Research Services or irvingg@queensu.ca prior to implementation. Mrs. Irving will forward your request for protocol changes to the appropriate GREB reviewers and / or the GREB Chair.

On behalf of the General Research Ethics Board, I wish you continued success in your research.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joan Stevenson".

Joan Stevenson, PhD
Professor and Chair
General Research Ethics Board

c.c.: Dr. Beverley Mullings, Chair, Unit REB and Faculty Advisor
Joan Knox, Dept. Admin
JS/II

Appendix I. GREB KW Letter of Information with revisions

Letter of Information (Questionnaire)

“(RE)CLAIMING CITIZENSHIP? SKILLED JAMAICAN IMMIGRANTS AND TRANSNATIONAL CIVIC ENGAGEMENT”

This research is being conducted by Kay-Ann Williams under the supervision of Dr. Beverley Mullings, in the Department of Geography at Queen’s University in Kingston, Ontario. This study has been granted clearance according to the recommended principles of Canadian ethics guidelines, and Queen’s policies.

The purpose of this research is to examine the extent to which the practice of transnational civic activities serves as a means by which skilled immigrants secure status, through the accumulation of economic, social and cultural capital, lost through the migration process; influencing and redefining their citizenship claims in the host country. I am conducting a study of the experiences of Jamaican immigrant men and women living in the Greater Toronto Area. I am interested in knowing more about your experiences as immigrants to Canada including the opportunities and constraints you may have encountered while trying to settle in Canada. I am also interested in understanding whether you have maintained relationships with people or organizations in Jamaica and how these may influence your settlement experiences in Canada.

This research entails participation in a questionnaire lasting 20 minutes. There is also a future interview component. You can sign up to be contacted for the interview at the end of the questionnaire. There are three options to complete this questionnaire: participation in an online questionnaire; completed paper questionnaire and returned in the stamped addressed envelope provided, or completed at the meeting and left in the box provided at the door.

Although it would be greatly appreciated if you would answer all material as frankly as possible, you should not feel obliged to answer any material that you find objectionable or that makes you feel uncomfortable. There is the option to “refuse to answer” for all questions. You will be asked to complete a few questions about yourself such as previous occupation held in Jamaica, your occupation in Canada, education, age, length of time you have lived in Canada, activities you participate in both in Canada and previously in Jamaica and the factors you think have affected your experience in the job market. These may be considered too sensitive or take an emotional toll. You may withdraw at any time by closing the browser, throwing away the survey, or any other means consistent with the option you choose. All incomplete questionnaires will be removed from the final data set and these responses will not be included in the study.

I will keep your responses confidential. I am the only person who will have access to this information. To help me ensure confidentiality, please place your name **at the end on the questionnaire** only if you are interested in participating in face to face interviews with me. The data may also be published in professional journals or presented at academic conferences, but any such presentations will be of general findings and will never breach individual confidentiality. Should you be interested, you are entitled to a copy of the findings.

Any questions about study participation may be directed to Kay- Ann Williams, 6kw19@queensu.ca; or project supervisor, Dr. Beverley Mullings (613-533- 6000 ext 78829); mullings@queensu.ca. Any ethical concerns about the study may be directed to Chair of the General Research Ethics Board at chair.GREB@queensu.ca or 613-533-6081.

Again, thank you. Your interest in participating in this research study is greatly appreciated.

**Letter of Information
(Interview)**

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This research entails participation in an interview lasting approximately 40 minutes. The interviews will be conducted in a public setting that we both agree on.

Although it would be greatly appreciated if you would answer all material as frankly as possible, you should not feel obliged to answer any material that you find objectionable or that makes you feel uncomfortable. The interview is more likely to contain sensitive questions relating to your employment and settlement experiences in Canada. You may withdraw at any time. I will keep your responses confidential. I am the only person who will have access to this information. The data may also be published in professional journals or presented at academic conferences, but any such presentations will be of general findings and will never breach individual confidentiality. Should you be interested, you are entitled to a copy of the findings.

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Questionnaire Consent Form
“(RE)CLAIMING CITIZENSHIP? SKILLED JAMAICAN IMMIGRANTS AND
TRANSNATIONAL CIVIC ENGAGEMENT”

- I have read the Letter of Information and have had any questions answered to my satisfaction.
- I understand that I will be participating in the study called (RE)CLAIMING CITIZENSHIP? SKILLED JAMAICAN IMMIGRANTS AND TRANSNATIONAL CIVIC ENGAGEMENT. I understand that I may also indicate my interest in participating in further face to face interviews and agree to be contacted to schedule an appointment.
- I understand that my participation in this study will take 20 minutes, is voluntary and I may withdraw at any time.
- I understand that every effort will be made to maintain the confidentiality of the data now and in the future. The data may also be published in professional journals or presented at academic conferences, but any such presentations will be of general findings and will never breach individual confidentiality. Should I be interested, I am entitled to a copy of the findings.
- I am aware that any questions about study participation may be directed to Kay- Ann Williams, 6kw19@queensu.ca; or project supervisor, Dr. Beverley Mullings (613-533- 6000 ext 78829); mullings@queensu.ca. Any ethical concerns about the study may be directed to Chair of the General Research Ethics Board at chair.GREB@queensu.ca or 613-533-6081.
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I have read the above statements and freely consent to participate in this research:

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Interviewee Consent Form
**“(RE)CLAIMING CITIZENSHIP? SKILLED JAMAICAN IMMIGRANTS AND
TRANSNATIONAL CIVIC ENGAGEMENT”**

1. I have read the Letter of Information and have had any questions answered to my satisfaction.
2. I understand that I will be participating in the study called (RE)CLAIMING CITIZENSHIP? SKILLED JAMAICAN IMMIGRANTS AND TRANSNATIONAL CIVIC ENGAGEMENT.
3. I understand that my participation in this study will take 40 minutes, is voluntary and I may withdraw at any time.
4. I understand that every effort will be made to maintain the confidentiality of the data now and in the future. The data may also be published in professional journals or presented at academic conferences, but any such presentations will be of general findings and will not breach individual confidentiality. Should I be interested, I am entitled to a copy of the findings.
5. I am aware that any questions about study participation may be directed to Kay- Ann Williams, 6kw19@queensu.ca; or project supervisor, Dr. Beverley Mullings (613-533- 6000 ext 78829); mullings@queensu.ca. Any ethical concerns about the study may be directed to Chair of the General Research Ethics Board at chair.GREB@queensu.ca or 613-533-6081.
6. I agree to have the interview audio- taped:
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

I have read the above statements and freely consent to participate in this research:

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Notice Board Recruitment Notice

Are you a skilled Jamaican immigrant residing in the GTA?

Graduate student Kay-Ann Williams of the Department of Geography, Queen's University under the supervision of Dr. Beverley Mullings is requesting your participation in a survey. The purpose of the survey is to know more about your experiences as immigrants to Canada including the opportunities and constraints you may have encountered while trying to settle in Canada. I am also interested in understanding whether you have maintained relationships with people or organizations in Jamaica and how these may influence your settlement experiences in Canada.

Participants in this part of the research must:

Be Jamaican born, hold post secondary education, have more than one year professional experience in the home country prior to arriving in Canada, be eligible to work in occupations which require expertise acquired through relevant qualifications or previous skilled work experience, and hold membership with any Jamaican diasporic organization.

The survey is expected to take approximately 20 minutes.

If you wish to participate in the survey please go to (web address)... Or collect a package from the office or Kay-Ann Williams at the meeting.

Please feel free to contact Kay- Ann Williams at 6kw19@queensu.ca.