
A Young Migrant's Perspective on the Transition from School to Work in Canada-Evidence from a Tri-Provincial Study

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Methodology

PHASE ONE

- Quantitative analysis of the *Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada (LSIC)*
- Canada during autumn Consists of over 7600 immigrants who arrived in 2001
- Randomly selected by Citizenship & Immigration Canada
 - Representative of major immigrant-sending countries
 - Representative of the major entrance classes (*including government/private sponsored refugees*)
 - Not representative of refugee claimants
- Wave 1 (6 months after arrival), Wave 2 (2 years after arrival), and Wave 3 (4 years after arrival)

PHASE TWO

- Qualitative, semi-structured interviews with 82 youth in *Toronto, Hamilton, Winnipeg & Vancouver*
- Similar characteristics to those in LSIC
- Special interest in comparing the trajectories for those with high school education, trade/technical school education or university education
- Extensive questions about educational and work history prior to arrival, at arrival & post-arrival

Sample: immigrant youth arriving to Canada between ages 15 and 29 years



Educational Issues Specific to Migrant Youth

- Age cap policies versus gaps in education
- Forced migrants and educational gaps
- Recognition of education attained overseas
- Multiple transitions
- Studies on schooling gaps & high school completion
 - 46-74% of all FCLS/EAL students do not finish high school
 - Are likely to finish several years 'late'
 - Mixed results: many are high achievers, other are experiencing extreme difficulties



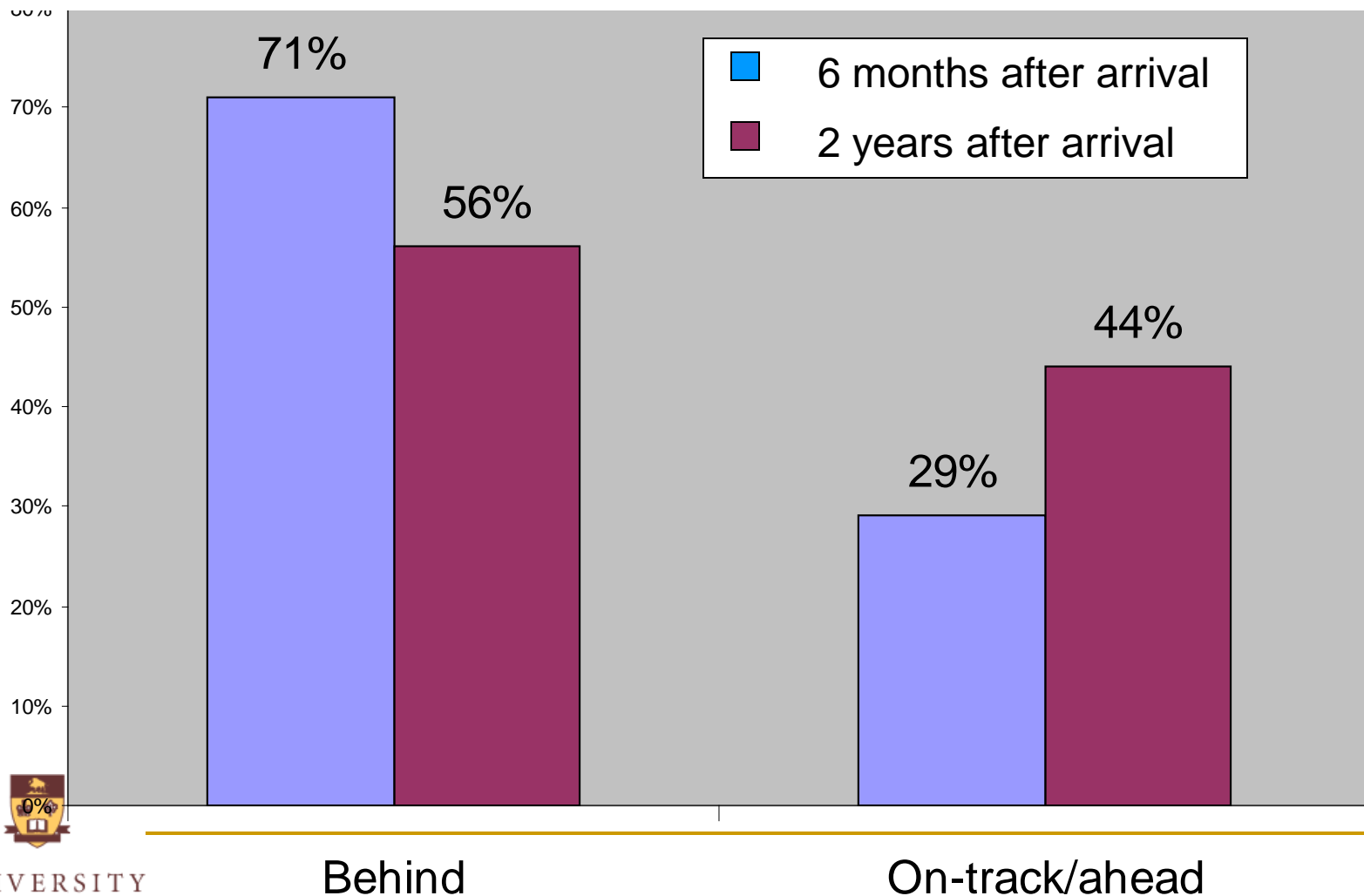
Newcomer Youth and Employment

- Over half of all migrants to developed nations are under age 29 years
 - In Canada, 57% of newcomers are under age 29 at arrival
- Finding good employment a marker of integration and the transition to adulthood
- 352,500 youth are looking for work
- Youth between the ages of 15 & 24 comprise 31.1% of all unemployed persons
 - Among youth, immigrants are the most likely to be unemployed
- Only 25% of immigrant youth have job experience by the time they are 18 years, compared with 60% of Canadian-born youth

Shields & Rahi, 2003; Perreira et al., 2007; Kunz, 2003; Omidvar & Richmond, 2003; Anisef, et al., 2007; Beaujot and Kerr, 2007; UN, 2007; Statistics Canada, 2007 & 2003; Anisef et al., 2006; Citizenship & immigration Canada, 2010; Wilkinson, 2008



High School Grade Placement by Time of Arrival, Newcomer Youth



Progression through the Education System at Arrival by Level 4 Years Later

Education 4 years after arrival

Education level at Arrival

	<u>Less than high school</u>	<u>High school diploma</u>	<u>Some post-secondary</u>	<u>Trade, Technical College Complete</u>	<u>University Complete</u>
Less than High School	81%	3%	suppressed	suppressed	3%
High School Diploma	15%	75%	4%	5%	suppressed
Some Post-secondary	suppressed	15%	89%	10%	55%
College/technical diploma, trade certificate	suppressed	suppressed	suppressed	85%	6%
University complete	5%	8%	6%	suppressed	35%

^ indicates cells have been combined to prevent identity disclosure for cells containing less than 10 cases

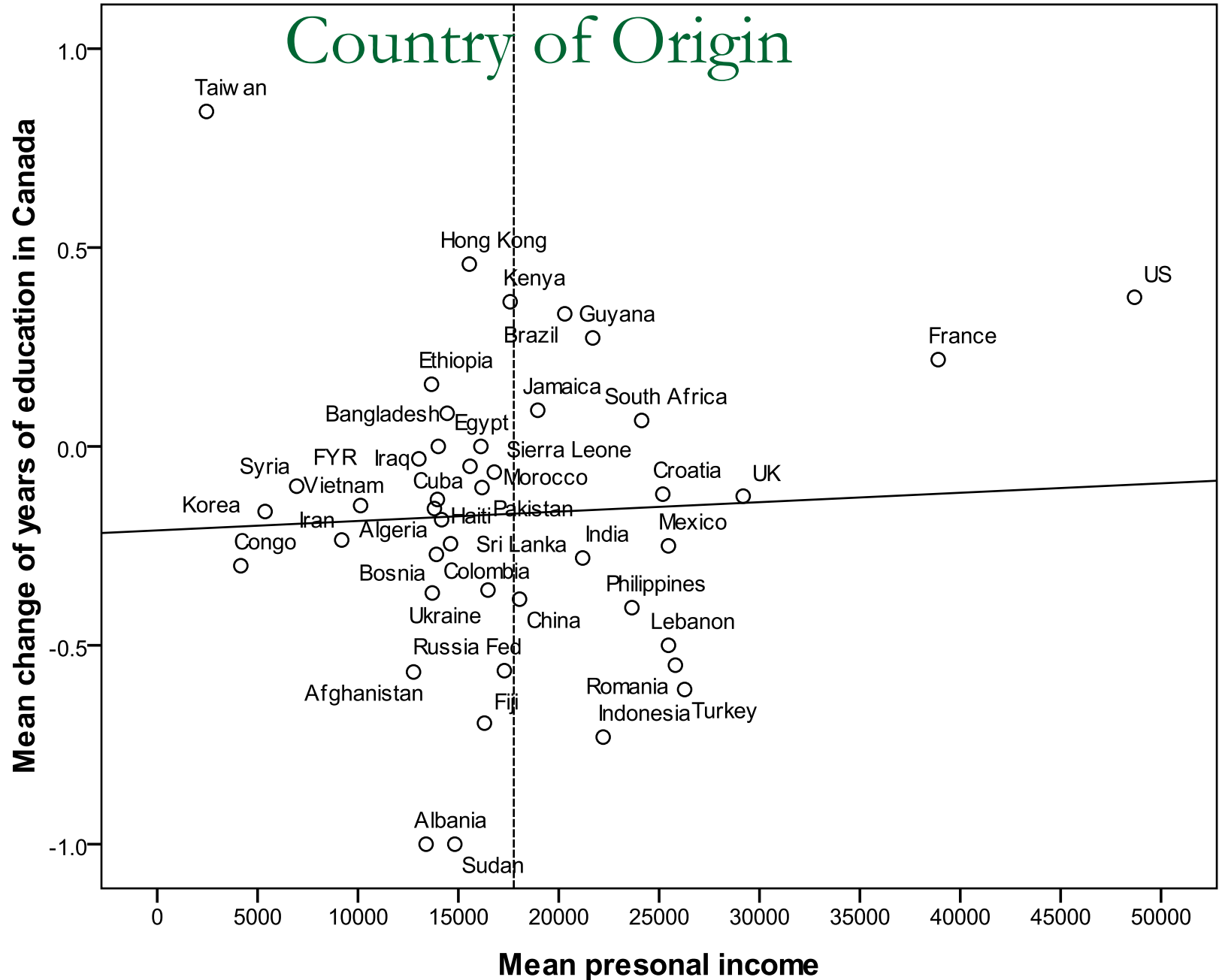


Recognition of High School Credits

- From what I can remember, it was useless. I don't remember really anything that was really helpful for me. (Male, Filipino, 20 years, Vancouver)
- "I was in my third year (of university) in Zimbabwe, now I'm doing repetition of what I have already done" (Male, Zimbabwean, Hamilton)
- They don't recognize my diploma (from high school onwards). I guess I have to go back to school and then just start ESL... that's what they told me and I basically say, you know, that I'm uh, I'm a very proud person, so I uh, again uh, basically I did not want to go back to school. (Male, Filipino, 20 years, Vancouver)



Returns to Education obtained in Canada by

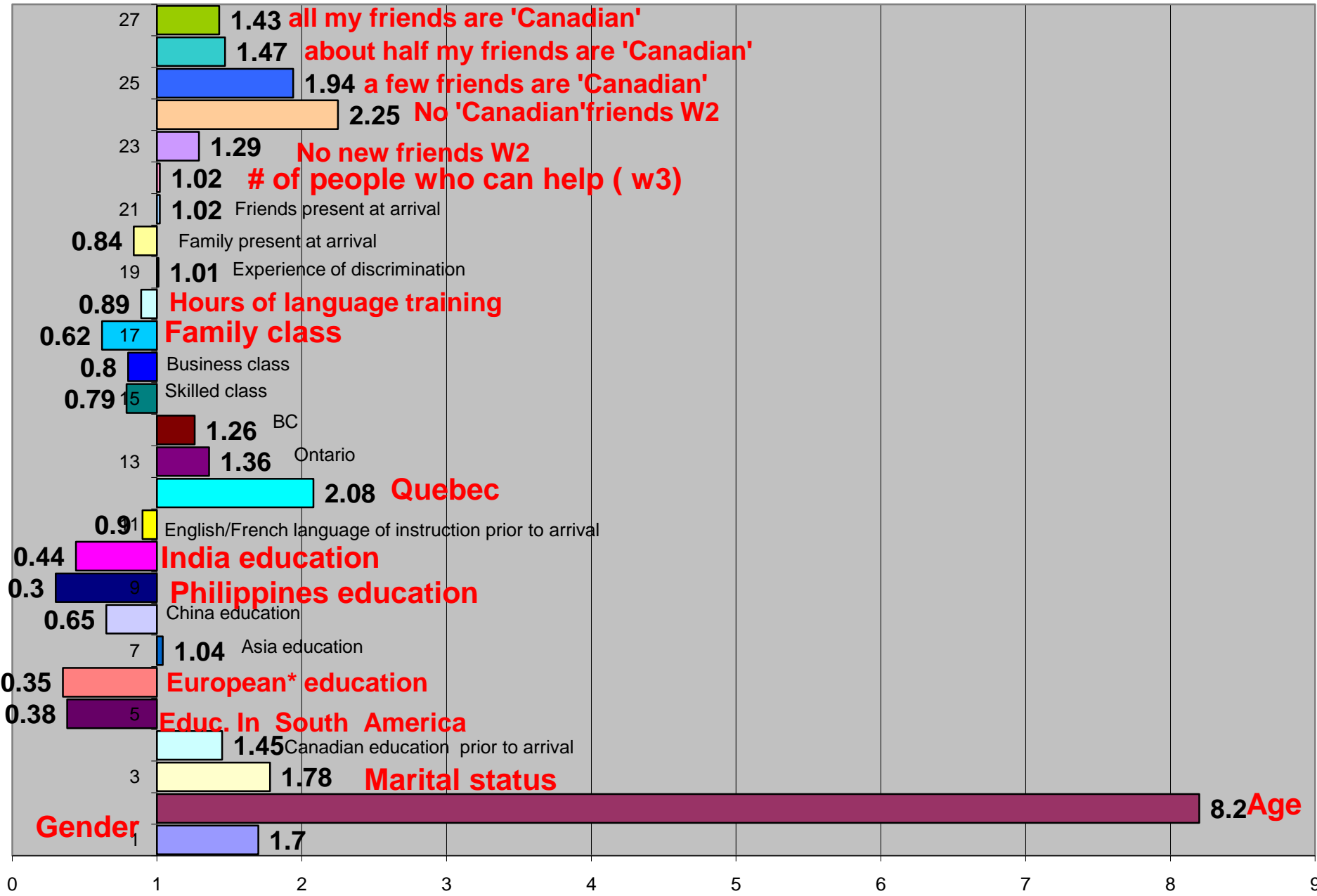


Job characteristics 4 years after arrival by age at arrival

<i>Age at Arrival</i>	<i>Number of jobs held</i>	<i>Jobless Spells</i>	<i>Employed Full-time</i>	<i>Dissatisfied or looking for work</i>
<i>15-19yrs</i>	<i>2.37</i>	<i>98.1</i>	<i>36.2</i>	<i>31.9</i>
<i>20-24yrs</i>	<i>2.50</i>	<i>94.5</i>	<i>67.5</i>	<i>31.3</i>
<i>25-29yrs</i>	<i>2.38</i>	<i>91.2</i>	<i>75.1</i>	<i>31.0</i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>2.40</i>	<i>93.7</i>	<i>63.6</i>	<i>31.3</i>



Factors influencing acquisition of work (4 years after arrival)



Successful trajectory

Hai, male, 29 years old
Chinese, migrated at age 19

China, High School
1995 – 1998

Vancouver, ESL Studies
1998 – 1999

U of M, Computer Science
2000 – 2004

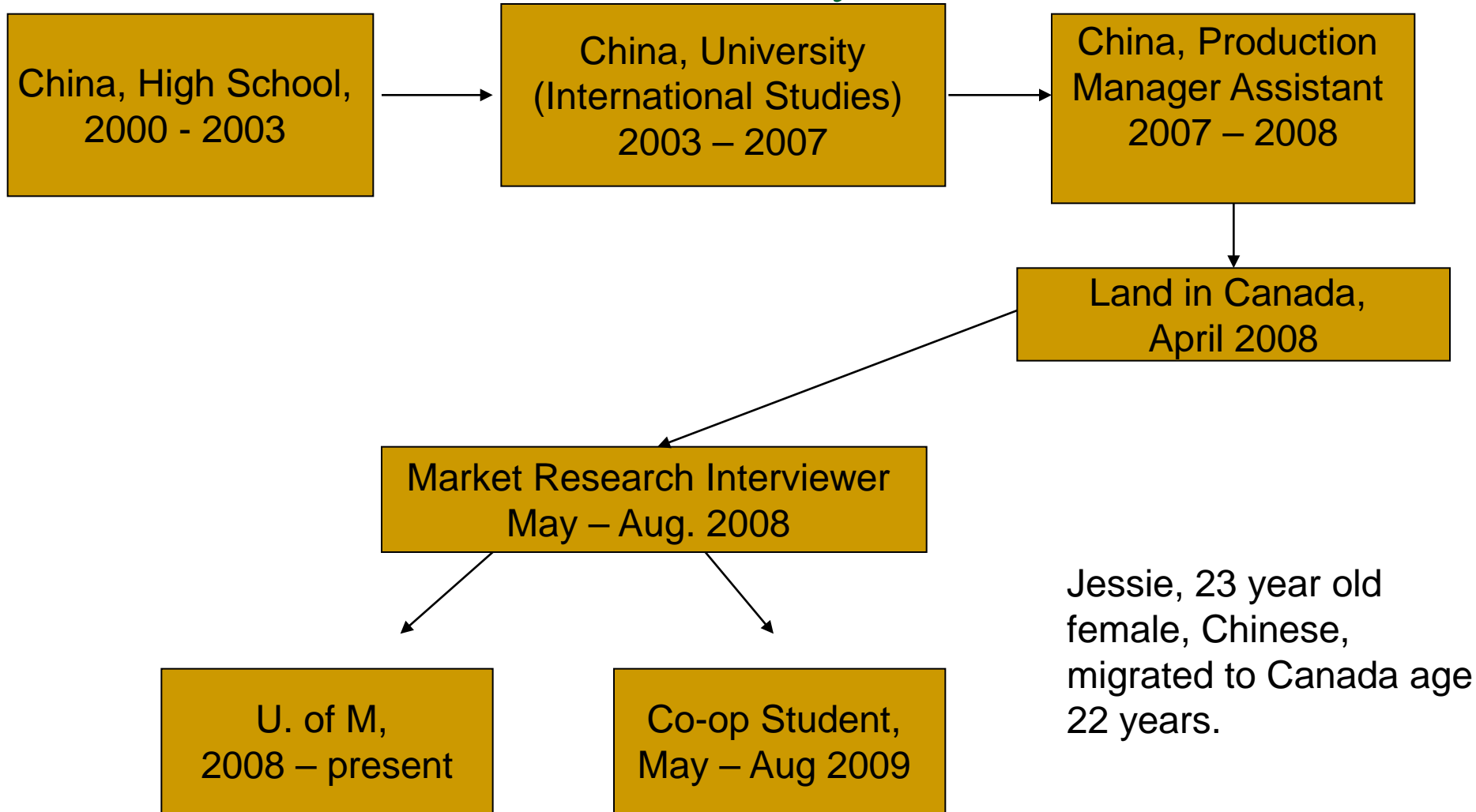
Programmer, Co-op Program
2002 – 2003

Teaching Assistant
2001 – 2004

Programmer
2004 – present



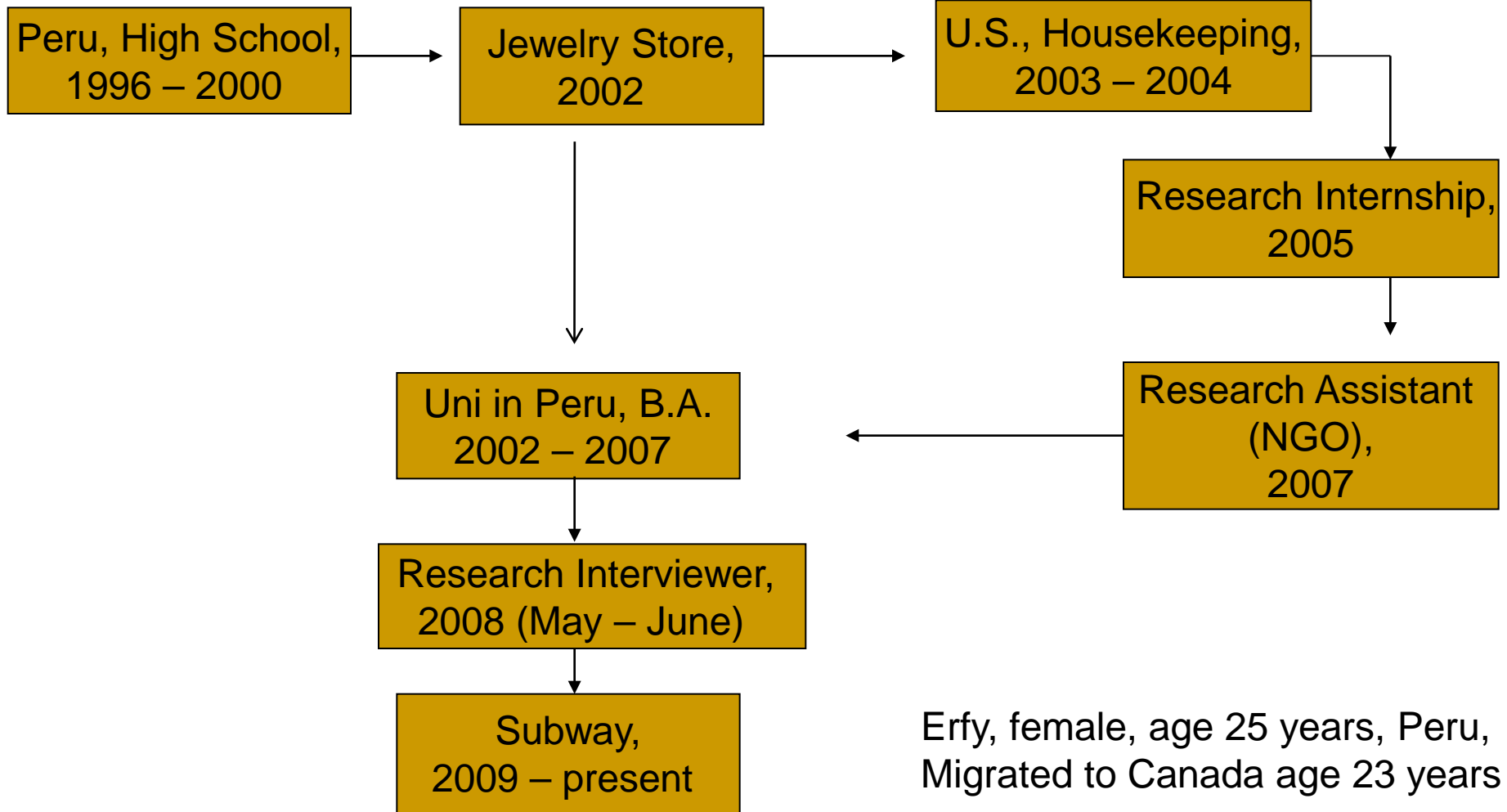
Return to school-first year in Canada



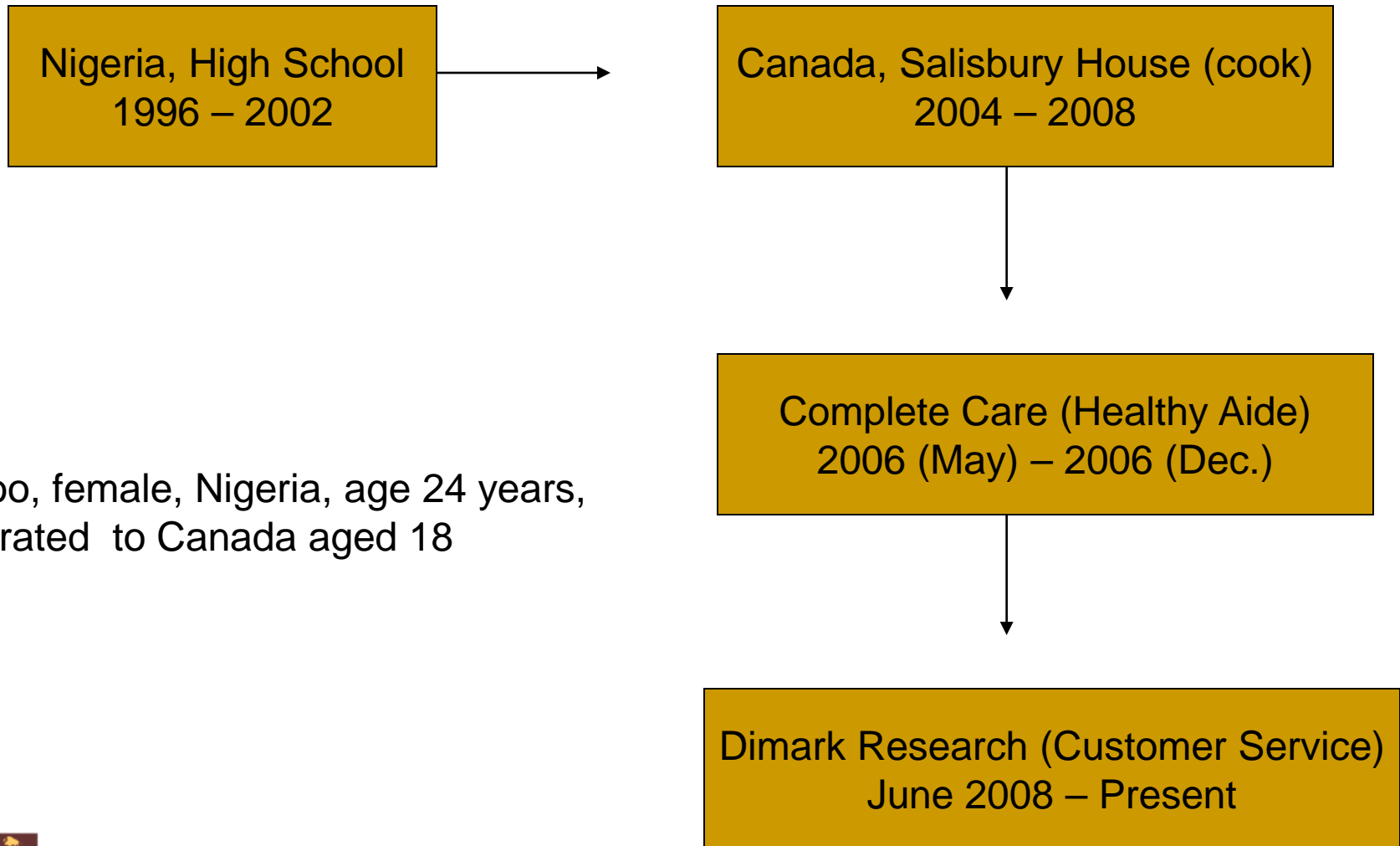
Jessie, 23 year old female, Chinese, migrated to Canada age 22 years.



Reliance on prior education-2 years after arrival



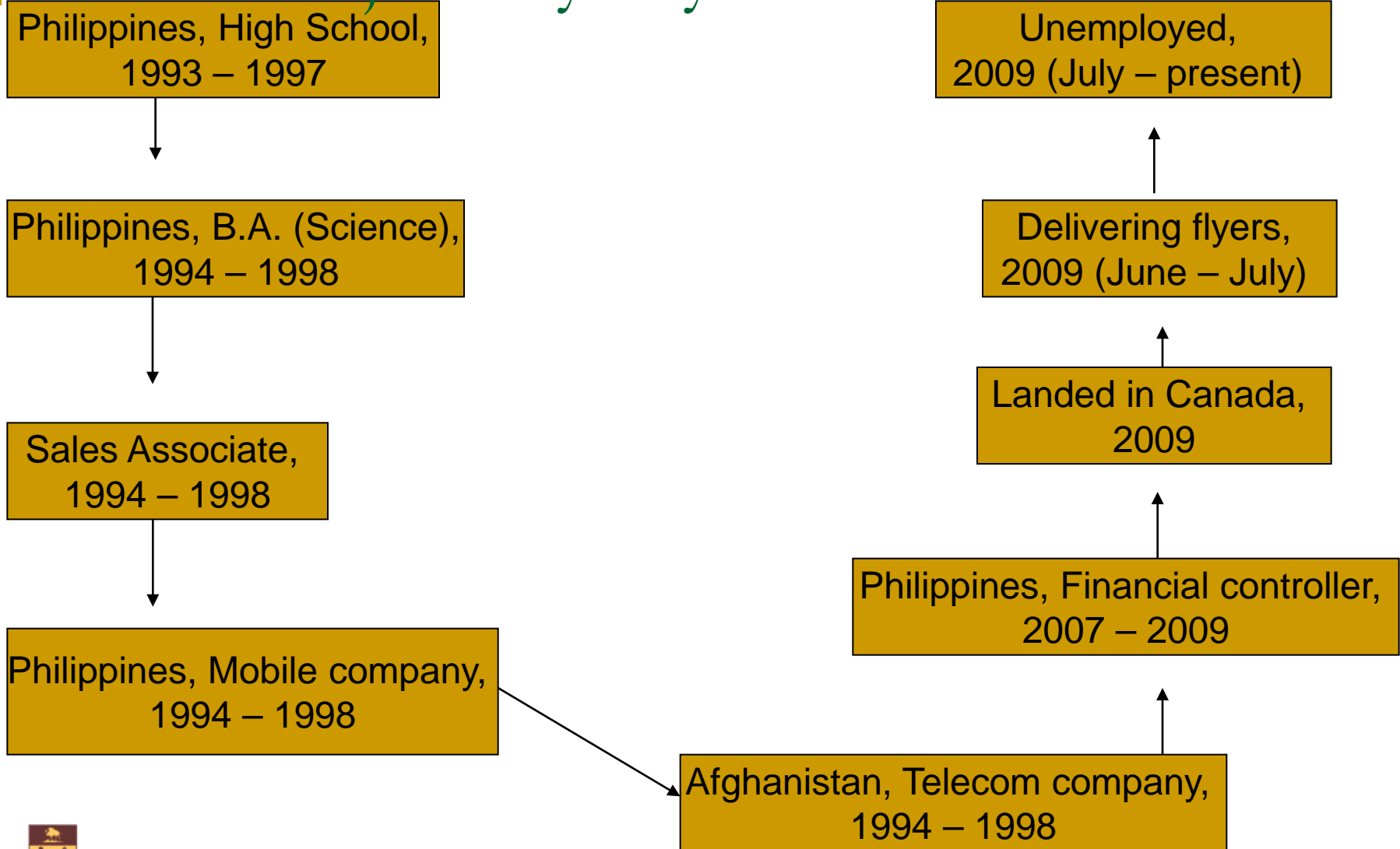
Canadian technical education trajectory-6 years later



Dgoo, female, Nigeria, age 24 years,
migrated to Canada aged 18



Varied trajectory-2 years later



Other Findings

- Volunteering and exploitation at work
- Market value of friendship and family networks in finding work are questionable
- Discrimination at work
- Accent and language acquisition factors in finding work
- Under-employed
- Agencies marginally helpful
- Transitions to work are varied and non-linear



Transnational relocation

Policy Implications

- Age cap in secondary education may be inappropriate for newcomer youth
- Need mechanisms for evaluation of high school credits earned abroad
- Ensure that parents know that college and technical training are viable options for their children
- Programs designed to meet the needs of youth and their education/job conditions
- Some may need intensive FCLS/EAL instruction prior to entering school



A Note from Statistics Canada

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- **The analysis is based on confidential microdata received from Statistics Canada and the opinions expressed do not represent the views of Statistics Canada.**



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