Unheard Voices: Transformative Workplace Learning and Support Experiences of Racialized Migrant Women English Instructors in Ontario Higher Education in Canada

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ABSTRACT

Racialized migrant women English instructors in higher education have been an underrepresented minority group of teaching professionals in Ontario, Canada. This study investigates highly experienced racialized migrant women English instructors' workplace learning and support experiences. It aims to reveal how transformative their professional learning experiences are and how transformative their workplaces are in including them as newcomer community members. This article provides the literature review to demonstrate why this study was necessary and preliminary findings answering two research questions to display how equitable and inclusive Ontario higher education workplaces are to these understudied teaching professionals in Ontario. The study findings suggest that online professional communities can create a learning and development space for them by serving their unfulfilled needs in the workplace.

Keywords: Canadian Higher Education, EDI (Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion), English Teacher Education, Migrant Women English Instructors, Ontario Workplace, Transformative Learning

INTRODUCTION

This arts-informed collaborative case study research investigates transformative workplace learning and support experiences of racialized Migrant Women English Instructors (MWEIs) in Ontario higher education in Canada in order to discover their workplace cultures. The literature review in this article holds space for presenting new research territory that this study creates and fills in the teacher education field. The preliminary findings answer two research questions: (1) What are racialized MWEIs' workplace learning experiences? (2) What are racialized MWEIs' workplace support experiences? By answering these questions, this study aims to reveal how transformative and equitable Canadian workplaces are in including racialized MWEIs in post-secondary institutions in Ontario.

   The literature review illustrates the following salient points: (1) how the scholarship about migrant English instructors is changing and where this study stands, (2) what the literature reveals about conventional teacher education programs in Ontario that have been the only opportunity for migrant English instructors to access and learn about career outlook, (3) what the current literature argues on migrant professionals' workplace experiences, and particularly (4) what it reports about highly skilled migrant women professionals' workplace experiences. This study fills multiple gaps in the literature: this study (1) reveals how racialized MWEIs who are highly experienced English instructors in Ontario are integrated into its higher education workplaces, (2) describes individual and cultural assets they can contribute to Canadian institutions, differently than in the studies emphasizing their linguistic deficiencies as "non-native English-speaking teachers" (Moussu & Llurda, 2008), and (3) demonstrates that a virtual teacher learning and development community can become an inclusive teacher support space, responding to the studies problematizing conventional teacher education programs with a lack of equitability (Bouhali, 2019; Marom, 2017; Marom & Ilieva, 2016).

   This article briefly discusses the theoretical framework for this study, research methods that have been used for data collection, and data analysis methods. The data are currently being analyzed. Hence, this article reports the preliminary findings of Research Questions 1 and 2. Due to the sparseness of the literature on racialized MWEIs' workplace experiences, the study findings will certainly contribute to English teacher education and professional development fields. This study also suggests that a strong online Community of Practice (Wenger, 1998) can serve the target minority group of English instructors in Ontario, Canada, meeting their unmet needs

and online collaborative professional communities can be an alternative form of teacher education programs.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Changing Perspectives about Migrant English Instructors
Non-Native English-Speaking Teachers (NNESTs): Deficit-Based Perspectives

Researchers have investigated migrant English teachers addressing them as *Non-Native English Speaking Teachers (NNESTs)* (Braine, 2010; Dogancay-Aktuna, 2008; Kim, 2011; Medgyes, 2000; Moussu, 2006; Moussu & Llurda, 2008). One concept that has divided English language teachers into two categories is "*Native-speakerism*" (Holliday, 2006). Holliday defines *Native-speakerism* as a pervasive ideology in the English language teaching field, believing that *Native English Speaking Teachers* (*NESTs*) represent a "Western culture" embodying the ideal English language and English language teaching methodology (Holliday, 2006, p. 385). Although scholars like Medgyes (1994) attempted to challenge the binary notion of *NESTs* and *NNESTs,* the term *NNESTs* still imply deficit-based perspectives toward migrant English teachers. As Zhang (2016) mentioned, *NESTs* and *NNESTs* were considered as "two different species" who differed in terms of language proficiency and teaching practices for several decades (p. 322). Researchers' deficit-based perspectives about migrant English teachers result in negative interpretations of their skills and practices. For instance, Tang (1997) argued that *NESTs* were superior to migrant English teachers due to their language skills. Dogancay-Aktuna (2008) reported that English language skills crucially differentiated language teachers' self-perceptions that influence their teaching performance. Faez's (2010) pedagogical suggestions for migrant teachers focused on supplementing the lack of language skills and cultural knowledge rather than supporting them to strengthen their multilingual resources and transcultural assets.

This tendency of binary visions continued to spread until the mid-2000s. Amin (2000, 2005; Amin & Kubota, 2004) identifies these perspectives as "colonialist ideologies of white native speakers as 'owning' English" (Amin, 2005, p. 200). She argues that these deficit-based perspectives intersect with racism and sexism, picturing **"non-white immigrant women"** as **"permanent Others"** (Amin, 2005, p. 200). Some scholars also argue that these traditional perspectives of othering and negatively labelling different people are "undemocratic" and "unthinking" (Holliday, 2005, p. 19, 2006, p. 386; Kubota, 2001; Pennycook, 2002).

Kerekes (2017) supports this argument stating that the native speaker model is obsolete in today's diverse workplaces, and the "White-Anglo-Christian-Middle-Class prototype" represents the hegemony of the society (p. 417). Jenkins (2000) also endorses the argument by affirming that terms such as *NNESTs* are no longer viable in the language teaching field (pp. 8-9). Other scholars (Canagarajah, 1999; Kubota, 2001; Pennycook, 1994) agreed that using the dichotomized terms would encourage political inequalities. According to Holliday (2006), the undoing of *native-speakerism* is unquestionably necessary for all school communities to eradicate embedded prejudices and ideologies. He argues that all stakeholders can understand "the meanings and realities of students and colleagues from outside the English-speaking West" (Holliday, 2006, p. 386). This study never uses these binary terms reflecting researchers' deep-rooted deficit-based perspectives.

Internationally Educated Teachers (IETs): Asset-Based Perspectives

Rudolph et al. (2015) problematized dichotomic lenses such as *native-speakerism* and the *native speaker fallacy* in research differentiating understanding of *NESTs'* and *NNESTs'* experiences (p. 42). Instead, they applied postmodern and poststructural approaches to address inequality in the English language teaching field and cultivate inclusivity. This *NNEST* movement is a professional movement advocating more participatory, democratic, collaborative, and inclusive practices in the TESOL (Teaching English to the Speakers of Other Languages) field by institutionalizing discourses of multilingualism, multiethnic and multiculturalism (Braine & Selvi, 2018). While scholars in the field request the diversification of voices and empowerment of underrepresented language teachers, they have also recognized systemic obstacles preventing migrant teachers from exerting their resources and assets (Marom, 2019; Pollock, 2015; Pollock, 2010; Ryan et al., 2009). Schmidt and other scholars (Schmidt, 2010; Schmidt et al., 2010; Schmidt & Block, 2010; Schmidt & Gagné, 2015; Schmidt & Janusch, 2016) have investigated and reported inequitable educational policies and programming as systemic barriers resulting in the marginalization of migrant teachers in Manitoba and Ontario. Walsh and Brigham (Brigham, 2011; Walsh, 2008; Walsh & Brigham, 2007; Walsh et al., 2011) have revealed how neoliberalism dominates teaching markets and how migrant women teachers are underserved and marginalized while transitioning from teacher education programs to employments in the Canadian market system. The preliminary findings of this study support these arguments. Racialized MWEIs testify that they have factually

experienced inequitable educational policies and practices in their workplaces. Also, neoliberalism-driven competitions are pervasive in some institutions. Colleagues do not share resources and ideas, the toxic working environment causes migrant instructors to burn out, and some of the instructors did not survive in those institutions.

Scholars started arguing that they needed different perspectives to understand "different facets of the complex nature and processes of (language) teacher identity" (Varghese et al., 2005, p. 38). As a result of the shifts in perspectives, the term *NNESTs* has been gradually replaced by *Internationally Educated Teachers (IET).* Prominent scholars in the English language field generally welcome this new term (Marom, 2019, p. 85). Researchers' approaches to investigating migrant teachers and their professional experiences have been moving away from deficit-based perspectives toward asset-based perspectives. This study is strongly rooted in the latter advocating that employers and teacher educators should acknowledge and value migrant instructors' assets, viewing them as multicompetent language users rather than deficient natives (Cook, 2016, p. 187).

As researchers started exploring migrant language teachers' assets and resources rather than their linguistic and cultural deficiencies, they have applied diverse insights to understanding migrant teachers' professional experiences. Some scholars (Danielewicz, 2001; White & Ding, 2009) noted the importance of the socio-cultural and political context. A group of scholars (Beijaard et al., 2004; De Costa & Norton, 2017; Deters, 2009; Kerekes, 2017; Parkinson, 2008; Sfard & Prusak, 2005; Varghese et al., 2005) highlighted migrant teachers' agency as their strategy to cope with their professional challenges. The preliminary findings of this study also support this argument. Some others (Braine, 2005; Fithriani, 2018; Schmidt, 2010; Selvi, 2018; Soheili-Mehr, 2018; Zhang, 2016) have investigated discrimination issues in migrant instructors' employment and workplace integration. This study also support that these issues still exist. The existing inequalities at work affect both domestic and migrant instructors (Tajeddin & Adeh, 2016, p. 37).

Consequently, this study centers on the researcher's asset-based perspectives toward migrant English instructors aiming to uncover their contributions to Canadian institutions rather than their deficient gaps in linguistic and cultural skills that are perceived to be filled by teacher educators and colleagues from the dominant culture who use English as their dominant language.

Supporting Alternatives for Migrant English Instructors in Ontario

Teacher education programs often become the first educational environment that migrant teachers access and learn about Canadian working culture as immigrant professionals in Canada. They are bridging programs and TESL (Teaching English as a Second Language) programs.

In Ontario, a federal government funded bridging program served migrant English instructors pursuing adult teaching in the province (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2008). The researcher was the instructor and the manager of the program between 2013 and 2017. However, the government discontinued the program in 2017 like most other bridging programs in Canada "before the longitudinal impact could be documented" (Schmidt & Janusch, 2016, p. 139). Thus, the literature does not sufficiently support the importance of those bridging programs and their impact on migrant teachers' professional journey. In British Columbia, several scholars have emphasized offering migrant teachers bridging programs in Canada is crucial (Bouhali, 2019; Marom, 2017, 2019; Wimmer et al., 2019). However, no such study has yet been conducted in Ontario. This research is the first study of its kind in the province. All the research participants in the study are the graduates of bridging programs and conventional teacher education programs (TESL programs). They request the government to revive a bridging program for migrant English teachers with no or low cost in Ontario. They attest that their bridging programs critically helped them develop their transcultural understandings of employment and the workplace to pursue their teaching career in Canada and become better prepared for higher education teaching environments.

Scarce literature discusses the influences of bridging programs and TESL programs in Ontario on migrant teachers. However, this literature review manifests that (1) non-existent government support for migrant English instructors results in no support for this minority group of English instructors falling in the crack within the Canadian employment system and (2) the TESL programs which are the only other option for them to access in the province are questioned concerning Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) issues. These instructors are presently left alone in the system. This research portrays how difficult it is for them to individually fight against the systemic barriers and inequitable treatments from colleagues and managers. New supporting alternatives for currently working migrant English instructors should be considered because of their different needs. In the findings section, this research suggests an online collaborative professional development community as an alternative form of teacher education program, which is unconventional but necessary for migrant English

instructors in Ontario higher education. The following review summarizes the literature on bridging programs and TESL programs in Ontario.

Bridging Programs

In the mid-2000s, the Canadian government started offering numerous bridging programs for internationally educated teachers. Most of the bridging programs were provided in cooperation with universities, school boards, provincial and federal agencies to respond to the increasing number of migrant professionals in the Canadian employment market and simultaneously improve a teacher shortage in Ontario declared by 2007 (Janusch, 2015; Schmidt et al., 2010; Schmidt & Janusch, 2016). However, as the English teaching market was rapidly saturated with an oversupply of English teachers, employment opportunities for migrant teachers quickly decreased. The governments then began discontinuing these bridging programs in the late 2000s.

In Manitoba, Schmidt et al. (2010) reported that the government policies caused systematic inequities and inefficiencies in implementing a bridging program for migrant teachers. The scholars manifested the evidence of systemic barriers such as resistance from the faculty members of well-established teacher education programs, school departments, and the government departments relevant to funding issues (Schmidt et al., 2010, p. 450). These scholars problematized immigrant education agendas based on immediate economic gains, deficit perspectives of hiring authorities, and inequitable and insensible school communities, eventually underserving migrant teachers systemically (Schmidt et al., 2010, p. 450). Schmidt and Janusch (2016) were critical of "neoliberal assimilationist policies" and the tendency to regard employment rates as the most valued indicator of the success of bridging programs (pp. 139, 149). As a result, educational policies centered around economic perspectives and the resistance from well-established teacher education programs became systemic barriers to migrant teachers.

Migrant teachers highly value teaching practicum experiences in bridging programs as the opportunities to learn Canadian ways of teaching, culture, and classroom management (Beynon et al., 2004; Cruickshank, 2004; Myles et al., 2006; Shervey & O'Byrne, 2006; S. Walsh & Brigham, 2007). Janusch's study (2015) reiterates the value of a teaching practicum in a bridging program preparing migrant teachers for their real workplace experiences. Yet, Deters (2015) highlights that only a few migrant teachers could benefit from bridging programs, eventually marginalizing those who could not access these programs as well (p. 428). Deters (2015) also warns

that no funding for bridging programs is offered when the market experiences an over-supply of teachers (p. 428). As a result, the Canadian governments' discontinuing bridging programs has magnified the systemic marginalization of migrant teachers.

TESL Programs

TESL Canada and TESL Ontario programs play the most significant role in educating migrant English instructors teaching adults in Ontario. These programs function as re-credentialing pathways to employment for migrant instructors. For this reason, many teacher educators in the TESL field and career advisors in settlement agencies often recommend that migrant English instructors enroll in these certification programs to transition their teaching careers successfully. However, many scholars agree that the teacher certifying process is only the beginning of multiple layers of obstacles and challenges for migrant teachers until they are acknowledged and valued as qualified and legitimate language teachers in Canada (Benyon et al., 2004; Bouhali, 2019; Cho, 2010; Cruickshank, 2004; Deters, 2015; Marom, 2017; Marom & Ilieva, 2016; Mwebi & Brigham, 2009; Niyubahwe et al., 2013; Phillion, 2003; Schmidt, 2010; Soheili-Mehr, 2018; Walsh et al., 2011; Wimmer et al., 2019; Zhao, 2012). Scholars also advocate that teacher education programs need transformation to be more inclusive and equitable for migrant teachers (Benyon et al., 2004; Bouhali, 2019; Cho, 2010; Marom, 2017; Marom & Ilieva, 2016; Phillion, 2003).

Zhao (2012) discovered that migrant teachers experienced genuinely multifaceted challenges and multifold strategies with the implications of racism and discrimination issues in teacher education programs. Soheili-Mehr (2018) has also verified this finding in his study. Soheili-Mehr (2018) reports that migrant instructors' overseas credentials and their teaching experiences are not valued in the teacher credentialing processes (p. 283). Moreover, most participants reported their experiences of unequal treatment in the certifying institutions or by the hiring authorities (pp. 273-277). His findings describe de-professionalizing (pp. 314-315) and gatekeeping discourses (pp. 314-316) in the TESL programs that impede migrant instructors' professional integration. The research reveals that migrant instructors are forced to conform to the new standards, negotiating their well-established professional identities, while their assets are merely acknowledged or valued (p. 312). However, the instructors often considered learning in the TESL accreditation programs as the only way to gain recognition, acceptance, and legitimacy in their profession in the mainstream professional society. The research participants of this study

highly valued the bridging programs they attended rather than the TESL programs because of the practical cultural knowledge and experience they could learn and apply to their current workplaces.

Migrant Professionals' Workplace Experiences

Rare studies discuss migrant English instructors' workplace experiences in higher education. Nevertheless, the current literature informs the findings on the working environment for migrant teachers and professionals: (1) the neoliberalism-driven Canadian employment market and contingent employment arrangements have caused migrant teachers to experience consequential professional challenges and workplace stressors (Deters, 2009, 2011, 2015; Janusch, 2015; Kerekes, 2017; Marom, 2019; Phillion, 2003; Pollock, 2006, 2010; Ryan et al., 2009; Schmidt, 2010; Schmidt & Block, 2010; Schmidt & Gagné, 2015; Schmidt & Janusch, 2016; Walsh, 2008; Walsh & Brigham, 2007; Walsh et al., 2011; Zhao, 2012); (2) discrimination and racism have been major professional stressors that migrant teachers face when integrating into Canadian workplaces (Deters, 2015; Fotovatian, 2012, 2015; Guo, 2013; Pollock, 2010; Schmidt, 2010; Shan & Guo, 2013); (3) mentorship can work as an excellent method of supporting migrant professionals; and (4) what Canadian workplace culture implies but Canadian workplaces do not truly demonstrate in actual practice.

Barriers in the Employment Market

Walsh, Brigham, and Wang (2011) critically analyzed the neoliberalism-driven employment market feeding the existing inequities toward "internationally educated female teachers" in the labour market (pp. 659-661). Their significant arguments include that teacher education is closely tied to "economic production function" (Walsh et al., 2011, p. 659). Researchers identified the following barriers for migrant teachers in the employment market: (1) blocks to gaining Canadian teaching certifications due to competency-oriented criteria (Henley & Young, 2009); (2) obstacles to teaching experiences resulting from administrators' unmitigated control over teachers' work arrangements (Grimmett, 2009); and (3) racial and language-based discrimination in the hiring process and workplace (Walsh et al., 2011, p. 658). Schmidt and her colleagues (Schmidt, 2010; Schmidt et al., 2010; Schmidt & Block, 2010; Schmidt & Gagné, 2015; Schmidt & Janusch, 2016) critique neoliberalism deeply penetrated in the stakeholders' minds such as policymakers implementing educational policies, teacher educators designing courses, and even migrant teacher themselves striving

to gain full-time employment as the evidence of their successful integration. Olsen (2015) reiterates Giroux's (2004) argument on how deeply economic perspectives operate in the English teaching community within the framework of "market fundamentalism" (Olsen, 2015, p. 313). While employers hire and support migrant instructors according to their economic capital, those who do not "fit in the system" with "low or unrecognized capital" are marginalized in the employment system (Marom, 2019, p. 92).

Due to non-standard work arrangements (Connelly & Gallagher, 2004, p. 962), migrant teachers experience high degrees of uncertainty (Boyce et al., 2007, p. 6), the improbability of establishing rapport with colleagues, administrators, school staff, and students, and the sense of powerlessness inside and outside of the classroom (Pollock, 2015, pp. 102-103). Pollock's study (2015) explicitly discusses migrant teachers' professional challenges due to their non-standard work arrangements, such as substitute teachers in the workplace. The study findings are highly relevant to the realities of migrant English instructors working with adults. One crucial insight that Pollock (2015) shares is that **the already established continuing professional development model** (Day & Sachs, 2004, p. 3) **is not appropriate** for occasional teachers (Pollock, 2015, p. 104) due to the contingency of their supply and seasonal work arrangements. Instead, Hodkinson (2009) and other scholars conclude that **informal and ongoing professional learning** is a viable option for migrant teachers with diverse needs and work arrangements (Pollock, 2015, p. 104).

The most stressful factor for migrant teachers while transitioning from teacher education programs to Canadian workplaces was employment search (Zhao, 2012, p. 128). Underemployment and unemployment were substantial stressors to migrant teachers, coupled with disadvantageous hiring policies and practices (Zhao, 2012, p. 241). Conflicts and tensions with teacher educators, mentors, and colleagues and the heavy workload were also critical to migrant teachers, contributing to their workplace stressors besides their financial constraints (Zhao, 2012, pp. 241-242). Zhao's findings (2012) display no definite patterns in migrant instructors' professional challenges, stressors, and coping strategies because the complex job market implies different types of obstacles depending on migrant instructors' differing backgrounds, such as career stages, professional experiences, and teaching environments (pp. 238-243, pp. 252-253). Deters (2015) also reports migrant teachers' various professional difficulties and strategies diversified by their individually experienced social, institutional, intercultural, personal, and systemic challenges.

Challenges in Workplace Integration

The researcher's professional experience has demonstrated that migrant instructors with no professional network and personal relationships with local references in Ontario, can easily face professional challenges in their workplace integration. For this reason, part-time and supply teaching, volunteering, teaching in private schools, and attending bridging courses have been the strategies for migrant instructors to develop their professional network (Bascia & Jacka, 2001; Deters, 2009, 2015, p. 427; Pollock, 2010; Ryan et al., 2009; Soheili-Mehr, 2018; Zhao, 2012). Shan and Guo (2013) argue that "immigrants' professional identity is highly contingent on institutional recognition," crucially affecting their employment, promotion, and professional learning (p. 38). The dominant culture and credentials that the "host societies" impose shape migrant professionals' self-perception and workplace learning (Shan & Guo, 2013, p. 38). Deters (2015) emphasized the importance of the receiving community's attitudes (p. 428). Employers, hirers, and administrators can immensely influence migrant teachers' successful professional integration if they embrace diversity and practice inclusivity by actively hiring migrant teachers (Deters, 2015, p. 428). Guo (2013) specifically researched "the glass ceiling" effects (Pendakur & Woodcock, 2010; Wong & Wong, 2006) that "prevent immigrants from moving up to management positions" (p. 112). Besides, **visible minorities experience "racialized disparities"** in their earnings and working conditions due to their ethnic and cultural differences (Guo, 2013, pp. 95, 112). Pendakur and Pendakur (2007) argue that a glass ceiling is genuinely present and **"older and more educated visible minority" participants experience limited access to high-wage jobs,** compared to their "white" counterparts in Canada (p. 58). Fotovatian (2015) asserts that Guo's (2013) 'triple glass effect' is factual in Canadian higher education: "a glass gate blocking entrance to professional jobs, a glass door denying access to high-waged firms, and a glass ceiling to the potential promotion of immigrants to managerial positions" (Fotovatian, 2015, p. 232).

Bascia (1996) examined racialized minority teachers' workplace satisfaction and frustration in Ontario to testify the racism and disparity issues existing in the educational field as policies are put into practice (p. 15). The scholar advocated "changes in administrative and organizational conditions" so that minority teachers and students can be explicitly valued and encouraged to engage in school communities with trust (p. 163). Now, Schmidt (2010) attests that discriminatory structures still exist in Canadian schools, university contexts, the job market, and the salary, prohibiting migrant teachers' inclusion in the system (p. 238). Schmidt's study (2010) is

significant because of the following reasons: (1) it problematizes the "neoliberal view" (Giroux, 2004) that migrant teachers' successful workplace integration is solely the individual's responsibility (Schmidt, 2010, p. 235); (2) it challenges school community members' perception of "difference as deficit" (Cummins, 2003); (3) it highlights the existing "systemic discrimination" not actively including migrant teachers in the Canadian education systems (Schmidt, 2010, p. 235); and (4) it urges social and public responsibility with which all the stakeholders should engage in migrant teachers' labour market and workplace issues in Canada. These findings are highly relevant to the preliminary findings of this study. The preliminary findings also manifest that racialized MWEIs in Ontario higher education strongly request **co-responsibility from their colleagues and managers** and their appreciation of the diversity that MWEIs bring to their institutions.

Equity issues are common findings about migrant teachers' workplace integration challenges, such as a lack of ethnocultural equity in educational policies and policy implementation (Schmidt & Block, 2010, p. 18), systematic marginalization of migrant teachers in workplaces by pressing them to accept various temporary work arrangements including unpaid work and inaccessibility to professional development opportunities (Pollock, 2010), and "*NNESTs*" who have always been discriminated and marginalized in English teaching employments (Fithriani, 2018, p. 741). Many migrant instructors strive to overcome their workplace challenges with their persistence and agency. However, their personal agency alone cannot overcome all the constraints resulting from structural and systemic barriers (Deters, 2015, p. 428).

Workplace Learning & Mentorship

Scholars in organizational learning studies identify three factors facilitating workplace learning (Barrette et al., 2007): (1) whether the organization has an organizational learning culture; (2) whether individual employees have the control and decisional latitude over their work; and (3) whether **supportive supervisor communication** is in place. Deters' research in the education field (2006) also displays that when migrant English teachers work with supportive and welcoming supervisors and colleagues, they tend to successfully learn professional language and culture in Ontario while being valued for their diverse and different cultures (pp. 9-16). The preliminary findings of this study re-affirm this finding. Working with open-minded colleagues and supportive managers facilitated more transformative learning experiences for racialized MWEIs, fostered positive

workplace experiences for development, and cultivated their sense of belonging.

Scholars in organizational culture studies argue that one way of enhancing organizational culture is to incorporate migrant professionals' intellectual resources into the overall organizational *Intellectual Capital* (Nazari et al., 2011, p. 241). In a similar vein, Canadian organizations have been asked to **engage currently underrepresented women and visible minorities more effectively** in the organizational decision-making processes to eliminate glass ceilings for them (Jain et al., 2012, p. 15). Scholars in organizational learning culture have argued that **interactional leadership** is necessary in higher education if post-secondary institutions aim to promote an organizational learning culture, learner autonomy, and a structural change (Knight & Trowler, 2010, pp. 80-82). Smith and Ingersoll (2004) also suggest **collaborative and interactive teacher support activities** such as workshops, collaborations, support systems, seminars, and mentoring. Besides, Oloo's (2012) study on migrant teachers in Saskatchewan recommends **on-going learning opportunities** for migrant teachers in the workplace to meet their unique needs. Each school may have its own organizational culture and unique demands (Doerger, 2003). Likewise, individual teachers may have unique needs (Oloo, 2012). Both parties' unique needs should conjunctively coincide in a constructive form of instructor learning and support (Oloo, 2012, p. 231). Consequently, the literature supports that ongoing mentorship and interactional professional development programs in the workplace can create substantial learning opportunities for migrant professionals. This argument also applies to racialized MWEIs who are underserved in the system.

Canadian Workplace Culture

It is hard to define Canadian workplace culture and what migrant English instructors learn about it. There is not sufficient literature on this topic. In a broader sense, Canadian culture implies multiculturalism (Courchene, 1996). However, many scholars still question the perceived Canadian values of diversity and multiculturalism recognizing the gaps between educational policies and school practices (Schmidt, 2010; Schmidt et al., 2010; Schmidt & Block, 2010; Schmidt & Gagné, 2015; Schmidt & Janusch, 2016). Some migrant teachers consider a linguistically and culturally diverse community that accepts differences as an aspect of Canadian workplace culture but literature also states that not all school communities welcome migrant teachers as colleagues (Deters, 2006, pp. 10-12). Moreover, Ramjattan (2019) reports that Canadian-born English

instructors who are racialized also experience white native-speakerism and inequality regimes toward them in Canadian English language institutions in Toronto. Therefore, community members' collaborative efforts are required to implement a more inclusive and dialectic workplace culture (Deters, 2006). The current movement of *Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion* reflects this long-standing argument.

In business and organization fields, scholars have asserted that inequality and discriminatory practices against professionally qualified immigrants still exist in Canadian workplaces and the hidden discourses of "integration" and "insider-insider device" marginalize migrant professionals from gaining workplace opportunities (Hilde & Mills, 2015, p. 181). Also, the professional labour markets in Ontario, Canada, are culturally regulated to the disadvantage of migrant professionals and Canadian regulating bodies operate licensing processes inequitably resulting in institutionalized cultural marginalization (Girard & Bauder, 2007, p. 35). Thus, Canadian institutional culture marginalizes migrant professionals by limiting their access to appropriate professions compared to Canadian-born and Canadian-trained professionals (Girard & Bauder, 2007, pp. 43-44). Regarding this argument, Soheili-Mehr (2018) in the English teacher education field, has also critiqued that the institutions in Ontario do not recognize or value migrant English instructors' foreign credentials (pp. 17, 48, 259).

Racialized Migrant Women English Instructors

Nova Scotia-based two feminist scholars, Walsh and Brigham (Brigham, 2011; Mwebi & Brigham, 2009; Walsh, 2008, 2017; Walsh & Brigham, 2007; Walsh et al., 2011), have studied visible minority migrant women teaching professionals and their significant professional challenges. The scholars argue that migrant women teachers' position in the teaching market is apparently gendered and highly racialized in the way that their differences are heightened, such as ethnicity and languages (Walsh et al., 2011, p. 663). As Soheili-Mehr (2018) highlighted the discourses of "de-professionalization" in the TESL programs in Ontario (p. 283), these scholars draw attention to migrant women teachers' experiences of "deskilling" in the certifying process, "neoliberal discourses," and the subsequent marginalization that the teacher education programs were reproducing in Maritime provinces (Walsh et al., 2011, p. 663). An anti-racist feminist activist and researcher, Amin (1999, 2000, 2001, 2005, 2011; Amin & Kubota, 2004), also argues that "colonialist ideologies of white English native speakers" consequently discriminate visible minority women teachers from the third world living in the first world as the "speakers of

non-standard English" in this English teaching field (Amin, 2005, p. 200). Amin asserts that the binary divisions are the actual reality in this field in Canada and the native-speaker concept is a gendered phenomenon. Amin has disseminated counter-hegemonic and anti-imperialist knowledges relevant to the challenges of minority migrant women English teachers (Amin, 2005, p. 201).

Highly skilled migrant women professionals' career experiences have remained hidden in the international management literature (Al Ariss & Crowley-Henry, 2013) and they have been an under-researched group of professionals in the global mobility study field as well (Colakoglu et al., 2018, p. 276) although they are becoming a rapidly growing global workforce. Gender has been a more significant barrier than their immigrant status limiting their professional advancement beyond the mid-management level (Colakoglu et al., 2018, p. 275). Specific gender-related challenges include discrimination during the job search (Al Ariss, 2010), the probability of accepting underemployment (Liversage, 2009; Meares, 2010), and a double earning penalty (Lopez, 2012; Purkayastha, 2005). Simultaneously, migrant women professionals' domestic responsibilities also obstructed their social network and employment opportunities (Colakoglu et al., 2018, p. 275). Several studies report that HR departments' support appears critical for women professionals to access the workforce (Cerdin et al., 2014; Colakoglu et al., 2018, p. 261). This result is in line with the importance of mentors, experienced colleagues, and administrators who are open to integrating newcomer skilled professionals (Barrette et al., 2007; Beynon et al., 2004; Cruickshank, 2004; Deters, 2006, pp. 9-12; Knight & Trowler, 2010, p. 80; Myles et al., 2006; Shervey & O'Byrne, 2006; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004; Walsh & Brigham, 2007). Although these findings are from the studies in other fields, the preliminary findings of this study also manifest that racialized MWEIs' family responsibilities restricted their employment arrangements and social engagements, and the relationships with HR managers crucially affected their work assignments and successful performance.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Teacher learning inevitably entails Transformative Learning (Mezirow, 1978). Transformative learning occurs when adults as new community members: (1) learn that their perspectives conflict with existing community members' perspectives; (2) start critically reflecting on emerging perspectives in the specific contextual environment; and (3) critically assess these new perspectives through the social interactions and

discourses among the community members. Consequently, the new community members experience "perspective transformation" (Mezirow, 1978, pp. 100-110). Mezirow's Transformative Learning Theory (Mezirow, 2000, 2003, 2009) has informed this study to examine how transformative racialized MWEIs' workplace learning experiences have been and their workplaces are. The theory has also impacted the research methods. Research participants critically reflected on the given research questions and co-constructed their critical discourses about those reflections in the collaboratively constructed Professional Development (PD) workshops virtually offered every month for four months.

DATA COLLECTION & ANALYSIS

Five racialized MWEIs have participated in the study to collaboratively develop a case study. They were recruited among the graduates from Ontario teacher education programs who could corroborate their transformative learning experiences shaping them over time. They interactively facilitated four monthly online PD workshops in collaboration. Each workshop addressed one research question. All participants created artworks after critically reflecting on each research question and its sub-questions. Artworks were used to access unverbalized meanings (Brigham, 2011). Each workshop consisted of two parts: (1) participants' artwork presentations and (2) collaborative interpretations of the presentations and artworks. For the final workshop, participants completed two self-assessment tools examining intercultural interaction competencies and an online survey that the researcher created and customized for this research. Participants then interpreted their own results and, as a group, interpreted other participants' results. The discourses crucially displayed research participants' personal and professional transformations. Thus, the data sources include workshop recordings, researcher's journals, field notes, artworks, self-assessment results, an online survey result, and all the follow-up electronic correspondence. Additionally, initial interviews and a questionnaire provided a detailed profile of each participant. Lastly, participants interviewed the researcher, manifesting the transformations that the researcher had experienced as one of racialized MWEIs and as a researcher. Currently, all the data are being analyzed using inductive and deductive thematic analysis (Nowell et al., 2017). The next section discusses the preliminary findings of the PD workshops 2 and 3, answering research questions 1 and 2.

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

Research Question 1

Research Question 1 inquires about the workplace learning experiences of racialized MWEIs in Ontario higher education: ***What are racialized MWEIs' workplace learning experiences in Ontario higher education?*** Research participants reflected on two sub-questions and described the learning experiences they had experienced while interacting with their colleagues and managers. The following is the summary of the preliminary findings answering Research Question 1, Sub-question 1: ***What have they learned about their workplace culture?***

1. Canadian workplace culture is not fixed or definitive, but dynamic and continuously changing. And I am part of the Canadian workplace culture.
2. Each institution has its own institutional workplace culture.
3. Diversity:
   a. I am different from them (Canadian-born, domestically educated, unracialized instructors).
   b. I accept I am different. I choose my work to shine and get along with my colleagues.
   c. My voices are unheard. I am different and insignificant.
   d. My difference is not accepted in the Canadian workplace.
4. My home language use at work is not accepted. It is viewed negatively.
5. Collaboration:
   a. Collaboration is not part of the workplace culture in some Canadian institutions. Competition is pervasive in those institutions.
   b. I have developed diverse languaging strategies to survive in this competitive working environment and to gain the information I need to perform my work.
6. Speaking up is part of the Canadian workplace culture which I am not used to practicing.
7. English instructors in higher education are expected to:
   a. be resourceful
   b. have excellent communication skills (e.g., Applying active listening skills, finding the best ways to communicate with each colleague and each manager, making transparent communications, filling the cultural knowledge gap, overtly asking for support and help)
   c. be flexible

8. Informal communication styles are common with which I still experience challenges at times, not because of my language but due to other reasons.

The following is the summary of the preliminary findings answering Research Question 1, Sub-question 2: ***How do they describe their workplace learning experiences?***

1. From frustration to acceptance: I was frustrated about being different at first but have gradually accepted the fact that I am different. Thus, I am at a better place now.
2. I apply positive approaches to learning from all the experiences in the workplace, positive or negative.
3. Differences always exist. I focus on the common goals at work.
4. Self-care: I have experienced burnout. Then, I made conscious decisions to take better care of myself and my family. It helped me perform better in the workplace.
5. The diversity of the faculty group matters: I feel more comfortable working in a linguistically and culturally diverse workplace than in a workplace with the colleagues and managers from the dominant culture speaking the dominant language alone.
6. Positive experiences are gained when safe and supportive interactions are facilitated at work.
7. Negative experiences are gained when no support from colleagues and managers are offered and no communication among colleagues are shared despite a heavy workload.
8. I have developed strategies to survive in my workplace over time:
   a. Excellent work performance is the best way to survive in the Canadian workplace.
   b. Languaging strategies are useful.
   c. Honesty and sincerity always work.
   d. Focusing on the common goals helps.
   e. Respecting colleagues' needs and differences – I respect my colleagues' different needs and differences. In the same way, I would like my colleagues to respect my needs and differences.
9. Learning while working: Working is the best PD.

10. I have become a precedent for the second racialized MWEI who is also a visible minority individual – It has been two years since I started working in the current workplace. Another visible Muslim colleague joined. Now, my colleagues do not stare at her as they did at me continuously for the first three months. She is highly welcomed at wok now. I am very happy about that.

These learning experiences that all the research participants shared were transformative, impacting their understanding of their workplace cultures. Their learning experiences were often associated with their feelings and emotions. The findings that stood out among the preliminary findings were (1) racialized MWEIs' agentive strategies to transform negative experiences into positive learning opportunities and (2) their strong commitment to learning while working. In other words, as they teach more than five years in Ontario, they have actively and proactively engaged in multiple forms of learning, including: (1) learning new working cultures and information from diverse sources such as human and material resources; (2) unlearning unilateral ways of teaching; and (3) re-learning professionally useful skills to apply to working with colleagues from diverse backgrounds in the online and hybrid teaching environment. They have emphasized that working is the best professional development opportunity because they learn most efficiently and effectively when the learning is relevant to their present needs. Besides, they were able to gain a sense of belonging when their needs are met through the workplace support from their colleagues and managers but when not, they feel disconnected from their institutions.

Research Question 2

Research Question 2 inquires about the workplace support experiences of racialized MWEIs in Ontario higher education: ***What are racialized MWEIs' workplace support experiences in Ontario higher education?*** Research participants reflected on three sub-questions and shared their workplace support experiences in the current institutions, particularly about the support from their colleagues and managers. The following is the summary of the preliminary findings answering Research Question 2, Sub-question 1: ***Which supports have been valuable to them?***

1. Needs-based leadership: Leadership caring about and serving racialized MWEIs' needs
2. Supportive managers who are approachable, empathetic, patient, positive, and ready to listen and support
3. Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion initiatives

4. Open-minded colleagues who willingly share new resources and information
5. Institutional support: technology and student support
6. Stable employment
7. Online teaching environment with diverse PD opportunities

The preliminary findings of Research Question 2, Sub-question 2, display the workplace supports that have not been much helpful to racialized MWEIs for their professional learning and development: *Which supports have not been very helpful to them?*

1. Inequitable policies and practices (e.g., PD opportunities and research funding unavailable to contracted faculty members)
2. No institutional support
3. Unhelpful working conditions (e.g., The precarious nature of work for partial-load faculty members)
4. Managers with unhelpful communication styles
5. Unsupportive managers who do not acknowledge and/or value instructors' individual values and teaching abilities
6. Costly PD opportunities in the TESL communities
7. Discouraging colleagues in the matter of promotion or assignment opportunities

Racialized MWEIs in this study have expressed the changes in the workplace supports that they request, reflecting on their workplace support experiences. The following is the preliminary findings of Research Question 2, Sub-question 3: *What changes in the workplace support would they like to see?*

1. Leadership led by the managers with educational background rather than business background who understand instructors' work and recognize their contributions and dedication
2. Institutional support (e.g., Fixed working hours, Community-building activities)
3. Needs-based workplace support: When I receive help and support when I need them at work, I gain a sense of belonging. When not, I feel disconnected and alone.
4. Ongoing EDI (Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion) initiatives: My colleagues' attitudes are changing, especially those from the dominant culture.
5. A safe and supportive professional community: It is what this research has offered me.
6. Colleagues' and managers' co-responsibility to include migrant instructors: I have felt alone thinking that it is my

own responsibility striving to adjust to this new working cultural environment. However, I have realized during this research that my colleagues and managers should also share the responsibility with newcomer instructors facilitating more equitable workplace culture.

The research participants have stressed how crucial and valuable needs-based support is for their professional growth. This finding suggests that workplace support should be considered as another form of teacher education because those transformative learning moments have been the most helpful teaching moments to the migrant English instructors, which they have not experienced in conventional teacher education programs in Ontario. Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) initiatives have impacted changing the attitudes of their colleagues from the dominant language and culture. Hence, they request on-going EDI practices in the workplace. Supportive and open-minded managers and colleagues have made a big difference in their contributions to their institutions and their sense of belonging. Inequitable policies and practices were highlighted as systemic barriers. While they request colleagues' and managers' co-responsibility to include migrant English instructors in their institutions, they also report that they need a safe and supportive community at work. This study suggests that online professional communities can provide the currently missing space that migrant English instructors need for their professional growth.

CONCLUSION & IMPLICATIONS

This study investigates the assets of migrant English instructors as resources, firmly grounded upon asset-based perspectives toward them. Since the federal government closed a bridging program for this minority group of instructors in the province and conventional teacher education programs have not served them as much as they needed in order to be prepared for the current higher education workplaces, migrant English instructors must find other sources to get help and support they need as they work. This study reports that a more customized and needs-based workplace support can work as an alternative form of teacher education that migrant English instructors seek. Responding to the research participants' unheard voices, this study also reports that the online professional community that the research participants collaboratively developed has widely opened the door for them to use it as a space for their learning and professional growth, particularly in this post-pandemic teaching and learning environment. Many more virtual communities like this strong Community of Practice (Wenger, 1998) can be possible in Canada and in other countries. Their voices inform

that Ontario post-secondary institutions have the power to transform their workplace cultures to an environment where managers and colleagues welcome and value the differences and diversity that migrant instructors bring, give equal learning and development opportunities to all instructors whether they are contracted or tenured, and take co-responsibility to include them as their community members. EDI initiatives are necessary to transform the Ontario higher education working environment more equitable and inclusive. With their agentic approaches, racialized MWEIs have made positive transformations in their personal and professional lives, and they continue contributing to their institutions. Their contributions are worth acknowledging and honoring in the current Ontario higher education workplaces in Canada.

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