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Perceptions of career success among Black immigrant women in Quebec

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To my mother,
who planted a seed,
religiously watered her garden,
and faithfully nurtured her plant.
Mommy, I will love you forever.

Abstract

As increasing numbers of immigrants integrate the labour market in Quebec, there is growing interest in understanding the factors that influence their career success. Existing research examining the antecedents of career success shows that organizations play a key role in the process not only because they provide the context in which careers unfold but especially because they can, though various organizational career management (OCM) practices and policies, actively promote the career development of their employees (Bagdadli and Gianecchini, 2019). In addition to OCM practices, which may take various forms, research has also shown that factors related to an individuals' social identity can influence their career outcomes as well. Among the different facets of an individual's social identity researchers have identified race, gender, and immigration status as some of the factors that are most likely to influence individuals' career outcomes. In this exploratory research, which focused on Black immigrant women in Quebec, we examined their perceptions of career success as well as investigated the perceived role of OCM practices and social identity factors in their career outcomes. While our study found that some women benefitted from OCM practices that contributed to their career success, for the most part, the women faced important barriers to their career success, which can linked to the different facets of their social identity. These findings are important from both an organizational and institutional standpoint as they provide useful information regarding the impact of existing practices on this category of employees as well point towards possible solutions that are geared towards minimizing or removing existing barriers and their effects.

KEYWORDS: career success, organizational career management (OCM) practices, race, gender, immigration status, Black immigrant women

Résumé

Alors que de plus en plus d'immigrants intègrent le marché de travail au Québec, il y a un intérêt grandissant pour comprendre les facteurs qui influent leur succès de carrière. Des études actuelles qui focalisent sur les antécédents de succès de carrière montrent que les organisations sont au cœur de ce processus non seulement parce qu'elles forment le contexte dans lequel évoluent les carrières mais surtout parce qu'elles ont la capacité de mettre en place des pratiques et des politiques organisationnelles qui peuvent promouvoir de façon active le succès de carrière chez les employé(e)s (Bagdadli and Gianecchini, 2019). Outre ces pratiques et politiques organisationnelles, des recherches ont montré que des facteurs sociodémographiques, tels la race, le genre et le statut d'immigrant des individus peuvent aussi avoir un impact sur le succès de carrière des individus. Dans le cadre de cette étude exploratoire, nous nous sommes penchés sur le sentiment de réussite de carrière des femmes noires d'origine immigrante au Québec. Nous nous sommes intéressés tout particulièrement à leurs perceptions de leur succès de carrière ainsi qu'à ses déterminants. Nous avons examiné à la fois l'influence des facteurs organisationnels et celle de leur identité de femme noire immigrante sur leur succès de carrière. Bien que nos résultats montrent que certaines femmes ont pu bénéficier des pratiques organisationnelles qui visent à promouvoir le développement de leurs carrières, la plupart ont indiqué qu'elles ont dû faire face à d'importantes barrières en lien avec leur identité sociale. Ces barrières ont eu une influence négative sur leurs perceptions de leur succès de carrière. Les résultats de notre recherche sont importants du point de vue organisationnel et institutionnel car ils jettent un regard critique sur l'impact des pratiques et politiques qui sont en place dans les organisations au Québec et pointent dans la direction des solutions afin de réduire ou d'enrayer les barrières existantes et leurs effets auprès des femmes noires immigrantes.

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Introduction

Over the last few decades, an important number of immigrants have been admitted to Quebec as successive provincial governments turned to immigration as a means of mitigating certain demographic and economic challenges in the province such as declining birth rates and labour shortages (Boudarbat and Grenier, 2017). Between 2001 and 2017, for example, annual admission rates doubled the natural birth rate in each year (*Ministère de l'Immigration, de la Diversité et de l'Inclusion*, 2019) and immigrants became a significant source of labour market growth, accounting for over one-half of the labour market growth rate between 2006 and 2017 (Demers, 2018). Among Quebec's growing immigrant population, a significant proportion are Black women. Of the 151,700 immigrants admitted between 2011 and 2016 who identified as a visible minority, 52,935 or 34.9% identified as Black and about one-half of this number were women (Statistics Canada, 2017). Furthermore, in terms of the labour force participation rate of core-aged Black women who are immigrants, according to the 2016 census, this exceeded the participation rate of women from all other visible minority groups, except for Filipino women who mainly immigrate under the special caregiver program (Statistics Canada, 2016).

Whereas an increasing proportion of Black immigrant women have integrated the labour market in Quebec, surprisingly little research has focused on examining their career success. For the most part, existing studies have been concerned with questions relating to their labour market access, including barriers to labour market access (see, for example, Bellemare, 2015; Boudarbat and Boulet, 2007; Boudarbat and Connolly, 2013; Boulet, 2012, 2016; Chicha, 2009; Chicha and Charest, 2008; Eid, 2012). Yet understanding the factors that contribute to individuals' career success is important not only from an individual perspective but from an organizational perspective

as well. In addition to leading to individuals' economic and social well-being (Esses, Dietz and Bhardwaj, 2006; Ng et al., 2005), the successful management of employees' careers can contribute to organizations achieving competitive advantages from within (Garavan and Coolahan, 1996; Jiang et al. 2012), including increased productivity and engagement (Berg, 1999; Peluchette, 1993; Poon, 2004) and the attainment of certain business outcomes such as customer satisfaction, loyalty, profitability, and low employee turnover (Baruch, 2006; Ellinger et al., 2002; Harter, Schmidt and Hayes, 2002).

The present study proposes to address the current dearth in organizational research in Quebec by examining the perceptions of career success among Black immigrant women in the province and is situated in the wider context of critical industrial relations scholarship (Lee and Tapia, 2021), which aims to bring to the fore the voices and experiences of individuals who have been largely subsumed under the category of the abstract ideal worker, who has no body and therefore no gender, colour, age and nationality (Acker, 1992 cited in Benschop, 2001). Career success scholarship has found that organizational career management practices as well as human capital and motivational factors are important determinants of career success, whether measured objectively or subjectively. Additionally, a rather extensive body of research has found that career success is influenced by different facets of an individual's social identity such as race, gender, and immigration status. Our study's focus on Black immigrant women's perceptions of career success will attempt to unpack the individual as well as collective influence of these different factors on the career outcomes of these women.

Our study is divided into five main sections. The first chapter presents the theoretical structure that frames the rest of our study and examines various organizational- and individual-level factors that play a role in determining the career outcomes of individuals. As a prelude to the

presentation of the various theoretical perspectives, we also present an overview of current research regarding the immigrant population in Quebec and Black immigrant women, in particular. Chapter 2 of our study builds on the framework presented in Chapter 1 and presents our research questions as well as the model that guided the empirical research that was conducted. In Chapter 3, we present our methodological framework and discuss the implementation of the empirical work described in Chapter 2. In the fourth chapter, we present the findings of our research and an analysis of the data that was gathered. In the fifth and final chapter, we discuss the findings of our study, address issues related to contribution as well as implications, and, finally, present a critical evaluation of the study.

Chapter 1: Literature Review

This first chapter, which aims to provide an overview of extant research concerning immigrants to Quebec as well as career success, is divided into three main sections. The first section will examine trends in immigration in Quebec especially after 1991, which is generally viewed as a watershed year for immigration in the province. It will specifically present data concerning the characteristics of recent immigrants to the province as well as provide an overview of research relating to their labour market integration. The second section of the chapter will focus on defining key concepts relating to our research, particularly the construct of career success. Finally, in the third section, we will examine theoretical approaches that analyze the determinants of career success and also look at some of the barriers that affect the career success of racialized women who are immigrants.

1.1 Portrait of immigration in Quebec

Since the signing of the Canada-Quebec Accord[1] in 1991, which granted the province full responsibility for the selection of immigrants wishing to immigrate under the "Independent Immigrant Class" later renamed "Economic Class", as well as determine the level or volume of

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[1] Three other agreements between the federal and provincial governments predated the Canada-Quebec Accord of 1991. These include the Cloutier-Lang agreement signed in 1971, the Andras-Bienvenue agreement signed in 1975, and the Couture-Cullen agreement that was signed in 1978. The first two agreements provided Quebec with a limited role in the selection of immigrants to the province. However, with the signing of the Couture-Cullen agreement, Quebec was able to define certain selection criteria for prospective immigrants, which were integrated in the federal point system. The agreement between both governments was that Quebec would be responsible for defining and applying 55 points out of the total 100 and that the federal government would be responsible for the remaining 45 points.

immigrants admitted to the province[2], immigration in the province has been the setting of a number of changes. Boudarbat and Grenier (2017) have noted that in the last few decades Quebec, like the rest of Canada, has adopted a dynamic approach to public policies relating to immigration. Essentially, Quebec's (and Canada's) immigration policies have vacillated between promoting short-term market goals while fostering long-term demographic and economic objectives (Boudarbat and Grenier, 2017). These goals have not only impacted immigration levels, but they have significantly influenced the types of immigrants admitted to the province as well (Beach, Green and Worswick, 2011; Boudarbat and Grenier, 2017; Ferrer, Picot and Riddell, 2014; Green and Green, 2004; Reitz, 2013).

1.1.1   Highly educated immigrants

As it pertains to the qualifications of the new immigrant population, data show that an important proportion of these hold university-level degrees. In 2011, for example, 39.1% of immigrants in Quebec reported having a university degree (Boudarbat and Grenier, 2014). This was 17.6% higher than the native-born population in the province. By 2018, the proportion of Quebec's immigrant population that reported having a university degree reached 58.9% (*Ministère de l'Immigration, de la Diversité et de l'Inclusion*, 2019). For very recent immigrants, that is those who arrived 5 or less years earlier, the proportion that reported having a university degree was 66.3% (Ibid.). For recent immigrants (those arriving 5 to 10 years earlier), the proportion that reported having a university degree was 65.0% and for those who arrived 10 or more years earlier,

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[2] Based on its demographic size within the rest of Canada, Quebec obtained the right to welcome up to 25% of the total number of immigrants to Canada each year. For the same reasons, the province is able to surpass this amount by up to 5%. However, to date these objectives have never been met (Bégin, 2009; Barette, Gaudet and Lemay, 1993).

the proportion was 53.2% (Ibid.). As would be expected, the vast majority of Quebec's immigrant population that report holding a university degree was admitted under the Economic Class category. Between 2009 and 2018, for example, as many as 70.7% of the immigrants admitted under the Economic Class category reported holding a bachelor's degree (*Ministère de l'Immigration, de la Diversité et de l'Inclusion*, 2019).

In terms of the sex distribution of Quebec's qualified immigrant population, existing data show that a significant proportion of the females admitted to the province possess high levels of education. In fact, data show that females are just as likely as males to possess a bachelor's degree or higher at admission. Between 2009 and 2018, for example, 70.8% of males admitted under the Economic Class category reported holding a bachelor's degree while for females, the proportion was 70.7% (Ibid.). Although a greater percentage of the highly educated female immigrant population in Quebec was admitted under the Economic Class category, a non-negligeable number of females admitted under the Family Class and Refugee categories also reported having 14 years or more of education. Of the total number of females admitted to the province between 2009 and 2018 under the Family Class category, 43.9% reported having a bachelor's degree or higher while 31.0% of the females admitted under the Refugee category reported having similar number of years of education.

1.1.2 Young, working age immigrants

Since the early 2000s, the number of core-working-age immigrants (25 to 54 years of age) admitted to the province has been on the rise. In 2001, over one half of the very recent immigrants admitted to the province was between 25 and 44 years of age (Citizenship and Immigration

Canada, 2005) and by 2011, 66.2% or two-thirds of the very recent immigrants admitted were between 25 and 64 years (Statistics Canada, 2016). Roughly two-thirds of those admitted between 2009 and 2018 were between 25 and 64 years, with over a half of these (55.8%) ranging in age between 25 and 44 years ((*Ministère de l'Immigration, de la Diversité et de l'Inclusion*, 2019).

1.1.3   Important number of Francophones

Owing to the critical role that language considerations play in the points system introduced in Quebec especially after 2006[3] (Boudarbat and Grenier, 2017), immigrants to the province are likely to report important levels of language competencies in French. Of the 514,281 immigrants admitted between 2009 and 2018, 305,501 or 59.4% reported knowing French[4] (*Ministère de l'Immigration, de la Diversité et de l'Inclusion*, 2019). Admittedly, immigrants who were granted admission under the Economic Class category are more likely to report knowing French than the percentage of those admitted under the Family Class or Refugees. Of the total number of immigrants admitted under the Economic Class category between 2009 and 2018, 66.1% reported knowing French while 51.8% of those admitted under the Family Class and 34.1% of Refugees reported knowing French. In terms of the percentage of women who reported knowing French, almost 60% (58.4%) of those admitted during the period 2009 to 2018 reported having

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[3] It was notably in 2006 that Quebec modified the points system initially introduced in 1996. In the 2006 iteration of the points scale, '*connaissances linguistiques*' was second after '*adaptabilité*' in terms of the number of points that can accrue to applicants during the application process. Based on the 1996 scale, applicants were able to receive 15 points for knowledge of French (reading, writing, verbal and comprehension skills), 6 points for English (comprehension and verbal skills) and 2 points if they studied in French at the secondary or post-secondary levels. For both the 2006 and 2009 scales, a total of 22 points were given for language skills- 16 points for French and 6 points for English.

[4] Immigrants categorized as '*knowing French*' include those who know French only as well as those who report knowing both French and English.

competencies in the language compared to 60.5% of men, for example. Finally, as it pertains to Quebec's Black population, 81.1% reported having French as their first official language spoken versus 18.1% that reported that English was their first official language spoken (Statistics Canada, 2019). In fact, French is an official language in the top six countries of birth of Black immigrants in the province, which include Haiti, Cameroon, The Democratic Republic of Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal and France (Statistics Canada, 2019).

1.1.4   Important visible minority population

In addition to their qualifications, new immigrants to Quebec also stand out by virtue of their visible minority status. Whereas during previous waves of immigration a majority of immigrants to Quebec were from Europe, notably from Italy, Germany, and Belgium, and the Americas, particularly from the United States, by 2006, only about one-third of the immigrants to the province were from Europe, and by 2016, this proportion had decreased to around a quarter (Statistics Canada, 2016). Concurrently, the number of immigrants from other regions of the world has been on the rise. As the figure below shows, immigrants from outside of the European continent currently outnumber the number of immigrants from European countries. Furthermore, among Quebec's new cohort of non-European immigrants, the vast majority identifies as Black. Of the 151,700 immigrants admitted between 2011 and 2016 who identified as a visible minority, 52,935 or 34.9% identified as Blacks. This was 15,125 more than the number of Arab immigrants admitted during the period and 33,040 more than the number of immigrants from Latin America admitted during the same period (Statistics Canada, 2016).

Figure 1: **Number of immigrants admitted to Quebec by region of birth, 2009-2018**
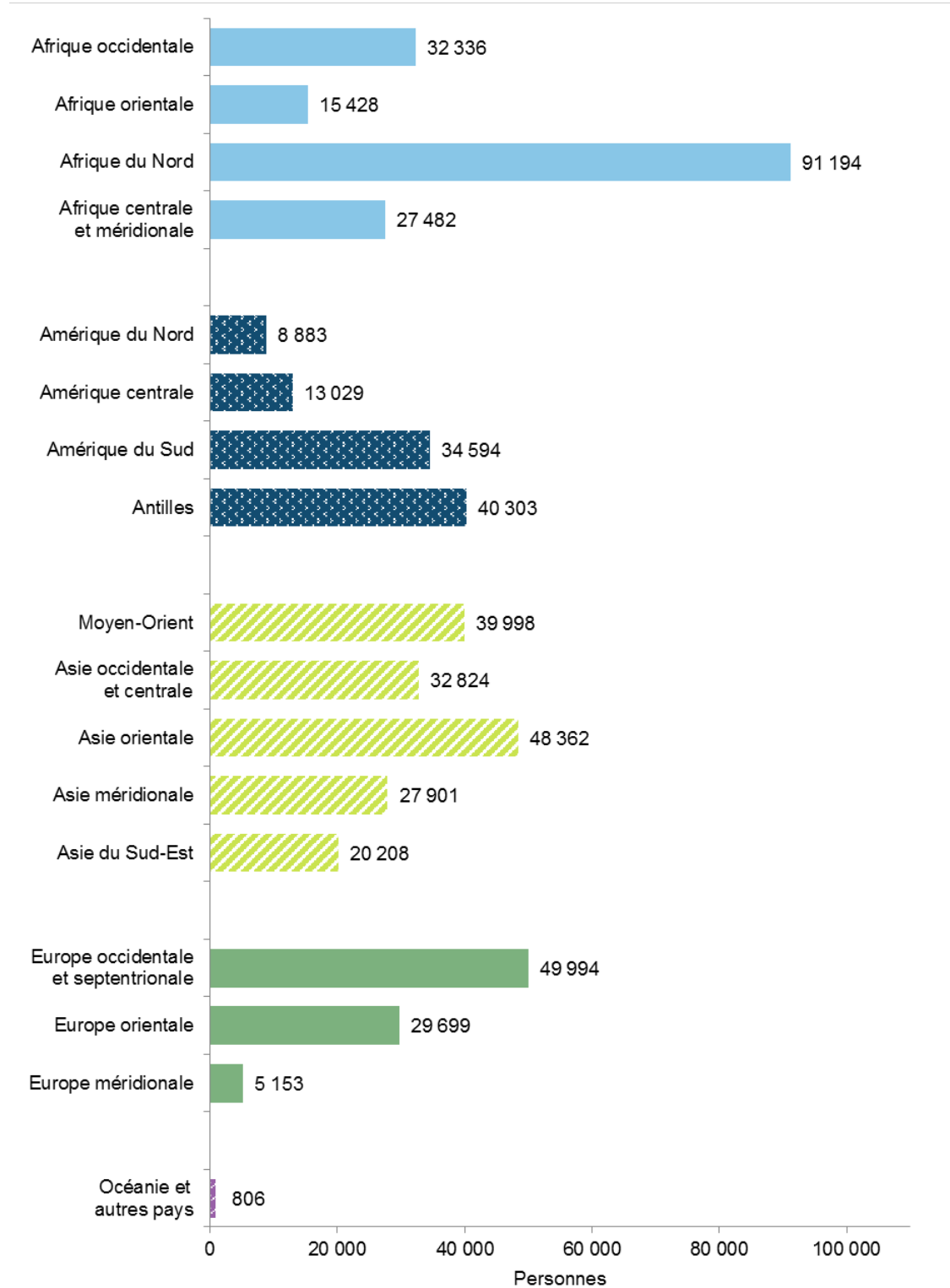
Source: *Ministère de l'Immigration, de la Diversité et de l'Inclusion*, 2019.

1.2 Immigrant labour market integration in Quebec

With immigrants' high levels of education and other characteristics such as age and language competencies, it is expected that they would integrate the labour market without much difficulty. Afterall, as Boudarbat and Grenier (2017) and Gauthier (2016) have pointed out, these individuals were selected because it was determined that their human capital is consistent with immigration policy's short- and long-term goals (Gauthier, 2016; Boudarbat and Grenier, 2017). However, existing research has found that, overall, Quebec's new immigrants experience poor labour market outcomes. For many, labour market access and integration are a persistent challenge (Boudarbat and Boulet, 2007; Boudarbat and Connolly, 2013; Boudarbat and Grenier, 2017; Boulet, 2012; Lacroix, 2013; Yssaad and Fields, 2018). For certain groups of immigrants such as Black women, data show that their labour market experiences vis-à-vis other immigrant groups, is worse (Statistics Canada, 2016).

1.2.1   Employment rate of immigrants in Quebec

Data for 2006 to 2015 show that the employment rate of core-working-age (25 to 54 years) immigrants in the province averaged 71.8% (Boudarbat and Grenier, 2017). There was some noticeable improvement after 2016 as average employment rate reached 76.0% and then climbed to 77.8% in 2017 (Yssaad and Fields, 2018). However, while there were these improvements for the overall group, for Black immigrant women, the employment rate remained below 70%, reaching only 69.1% in 2016 for women aged between 25 and 64 years (Statistics Canada, 2016).

1.2.2 Unemployment rate of immigrants in Quebec

As it pertains to the unemployment rate, between 2006 and 2015, immigrant unemployment rates averaged 11.2%, which was almost two-times the average unemployment rate of the native-born population that stood at 5.8% (Boudarbat and Grenier, 2017). There was also some noticeable improvement after 2015, as the average unemployment rate for the immigrant population aged 15 and older fell to 9.9% in 2016 and then 6.1% in 2017, the lowest rate in three decades (Yssaad and Fields, 2018). For core-aged immigrants, the unemployment rate also trended downwards, falling below double-digit figures for the first time in 2016 (9.0%) and continuing the following year to attain 8.7% (Yssaad and Fields, 2018). For Black women in the province however the situation was a less positive one.

In 2016, the unemployment rate of Black women aged 25 to 64 years who are immigrants in the province was almost 4 percentage points higher than the unemployment rate of non-visible minority immigrant women, at 11.4% (Statistics Canada, 2016). Educational attainment was not a significant determinant of labour market outcomes, as the unemployment rate of Black women with a degree at the bachelor level or above was 11.0%, a mere 0.4% lower than the unemployment rate of all Black immigrant women combined (Statistics Canada, 2016). Although time since immigration, which some authors suggest moderates the labour market outcomes of immigrants (Crossman, Hou and Picot, 2021; Ng and Gagnon, 2020), was an important consideration, the unemployment rate of Black women who are immigrants remained notably high. For Black women who immigrated between 2001 and 2005, for example, the unemployment rate in 2016 was 8.6%. For those who immigrated between 2006 and 2010, the unemployment rate in 2016 was 7.6% while the unemployment rate of more recent immigrants, those who immigrated between 2011 and

2016, was 21.0%, which was more than two times the average unemployment rate of all immigrants during the period (Statistics Canada, 2016).

1.2.3   Immigrant earnings in Quebec

Researchers interested in understanding the labour market outcomes of immigrants have also focused on the question of earnings. In the main, these studies have found that immigrants tend to earn less than all other groups present in the labour market (Anisef, Sweet and Frempong, 2003; Boudarbat and Boulet, 2007, 2010; Boudarbat and Lemieux, 2014; Kaushal and Lu, 2015). Studies such as Boudarbat and Boulet (2007) that compare the entry-level earnings of immigrants in Quebec with, on the one hand, the non-immigrant population and, on the other hand, immigrants from other provinces, found that immigrants tend to have lower earnings than all other groups. Boudarbat and Boulet (2010) who analyzed the low-income rate of immigrants in Quebec, also found evidence to suggest that new immigrants to the province experienced lower labour market outcomes than all other groups in the labour market. In one study that compares earnings between racial minority immigrants and racial minority non-immigrants and non-immigrant White women, researchers found that average earnings of racial minority immigrant women were about $24,267, which is about $1,000 less than the average for non-immigrant racial minority women and about $5,000 less than for non-immigrant White women (Anisef, Sweet and Frempong, 2003).

Other studies such as Boudarbat and Connolly (2013) and Boulet (2012) focus on the prevalence of over-qualification among immigrants, or in the case of Chicha (2009), the prevalence of *déqualification* among highly qualified female immigrants in the province. Overall, what these

studies have found is that the rate of over-qualification or *déqualification*[5]*,* which measures the degree to which an employee's qualifications match the minimum qualifications required to occupy a position, among Quebec's immigrant population has been on the rise, especially since 2006 (Boudarbat and Connolly, 2013). Between 2006 and 2012, for example, the rate of over-qualification among Quebec's immigrant population rose from 46.3% in 2006 to 50.8% in 2012 (Ibid.). Furthermore, in her study that specifically examines over-qualification among visible minority immigrants in Quebec, Boulet (2012) finds that this trend is more prevalent among visible minority immigrant women than other comparative groups. These findings are similar to those of Chicha (2009) that found that highly qualified female immigrants in Quebec and especially highly qualified visible minority female immigrants, face important levels of *déqualification* in the labour market in the province.

After this brief presentation on recent trends in immigration in Quebec including the changing face of immigration to the province, we now turn to examining extant literature that focuses on understanding the concept of career success and investigating the different factors, situated at either the organizational- or individual-level, that impact career success.

1.3 Career success: Definition

As the number of immigrants to integrate Quebec's labour market increases, interest in understanding the factors that contribute to their career success is naturally prompted. In organizational studies, career success has long been a matter of interest to researchers, practitioners, and individuals alike (Heslin, 2005). From an organizational standpoint, interest in

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[5] According to Chicha (2009, p. 20), the terms *déqualification*, *suréducation*, *surqualification* or *déclassement* have been variously used by the academic community to describe the same phenomenon.

understanding the factors that lead to career success stems from a recognition that the successful management of employees' careers can significantly contribute to an organization achieving competitive advantages from within (Garavan and Coolahan, 1996). Previous studies by Berg (1999), Peluchette (1993) and Poon (2004), for example, found linkages between perceived career success and productivity and engagement while studies by Baruch (2006), Ellinger et al. (2002) and Harter, Schmidt and Hayes (2002), found that perceived career success is associated with a number of business outcomes such as customer satisfaction, loyalty, profitability and low employee turnover. From an individual perspective, understanding the antecedents of career success mainly derives from an awareness that career success can be linked to economic and social well-being (Esses, Dietz and Bhardwaj, 2006; Ng et al., 2005).

Before examining the concept of career success, it is apt to begin with a definition of the term "career". An established definition of "career" is that it is the "evolving sequence of a person's work experience over time" (Arthur et al., 1989 p. 8). According to Arthur and colleagues (2005), time rather than work arrangements is the operative term in this definition. By focusing on the notion of time rather than on the idea that careers are an "ordered sequence" of work experience (Wilensky, 1964 cited in Garavan and Coolahan, 1996, p. 31), Arthur and colleagues (2005) note that the definition accommodates the view that career success might entail different forms of mobility, including upward, horizontal, or in some cases downward mobility[6]. Moreover, they mention that by focusing on time the definition remains adaptable to contemporary forms of career orientation and development that are not confined to a single organization but may span multiple organizations over time (Ibid).

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[6] Garavan and Coolahan (1996) have pointed out that in many organizations, individuals do not move to the next hierarchical level ad seriatim as horizontal or lateral moves are encouraged so that employees can acquire the necessary broad experience before moving from a specialist to a more generalist management position.

As it relates to the concept of career success, Judge and colleagues (1995) furnish a definition that is widely used in extant literature. According to these authors, career success is, "the positive psychological or work-related outcomes or achievements one has accumulated as a result of one's work experiences" (Judge et al., 1995, p. 486). Researchers agree that career success is an evaluative concept and not merely a descriptive one (Abele, Spurk and Volmer, 2011; Jaskolka and Beyer, 1985; Judge et al., 1995; Shockley et al., 2016). Judgment of what constitutes career success therefore depends on who is doing the judging.

When success is judged by others and on the basis of observable, measurable and verifiable criteria, this is referred to as *objective* career success. Salary, salary growth, status/prestige, occupational responsibility and promotions, or occupational progression are the most widely used indicators of objective career success in extant literature. By contrast, when success is measured in terms of an individual's feelings with reference to certain intrinsic indices, this type of career success is referred to as *subjective* career success. Job satisfaction, which refers to the affect resulting from evaluating one's current working conditions, and career satisfaction, which is related to the evaluation of one's occupational development over time, are most commonly used to operationalize subjective career success in extant literature[7].

Still on the matter of subjective career success, with a view to improving measurement of the construct, Heslin (2003, 2005) argues that it is important to also distinguish between a "self-referent" standard of success and a "other-referent" standard of success. In self-referent subjective success, individuals compare their careers to their own career-related standards and aspirations

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[7] More recently, Shockley et al. (2016) have argued in favor of expanding the number of indicators used to operationalize subjective career success. In their study, these authors find that factors such as authenticity, defined as the ability to shape the direction of one's career according to one's personal needs and preferences, and growth and development, are also important indicators of subjective career success, and that these take on more salience in contemporary contexts where many individuals have adopted a protean career orientation.

such as when an individual who prefers social stimulation benefits from this in their employment context or when an employee reaches an objective career goal such as earning a salary of at least $100,000 by age 30. By contrast, in other-referent subjective success, an individual compares his/her career achievements to a social standard such as a reference group, a reference person or a social norm. Citing Festinger's (1954) social comparison theory, Heslin (2003) in his study of 71 part-time MBA students at a Canadian university found that individuals are not only motivated to evaluate the outcomes that they achieve, but that they do so by comparing their actions and outcomes to those of other people.

While researchers tend to agree that there is an inherent duality to the concept career success, competing perspectives exist as it pertains to the relationship between objective career success and subjective career success. A rather prevalent body of research argues that objective career success influences subjective career success. Authors such as Nicholson and De Waal-Andrews (2005) and Stumpf and Tymon Jnr (2012) go even further in their analysis and argue that subjective success is "secondary" to objective success, a by-product of objective utilities such as material success (wealth, property earning capacity) and status and rank (hierarchical position). Gattiker and Larwood (1986), for example, found that income and promotions predict job and career attitudes. Armstrong-Stassen and Ursel (2009), De Vos, De Hauw and Van der Heijden (2011), Martins, Eddelston and Veiga (2002), Richardsen, Mikkelsen and Burke (1997), Schneer and Reitman (1993), Seibert and Kraimer (2001) and Wayne et al. (1999) for their part found that income, status and promotions predict career satisfaction, and Raabe, Frese and Beehr (2007) and Schneer and Reitman (1997) found that income predicts changes in career satisfaction in 6-year intervals and 12-month intervals respectively. With respect to the specific relationship between objective success and job satisfaction, Abele and Spurk (2009) note that research findings are

equivocal. Judge et al. (1995) and Richardsen et al. (1997), for example, found no relationship between objective success and job satisfaction while Judge et al. (1999) and Cable and DeRue (2002) found a positive relationship. Citing Altimus and Tersine (1973) and Lee and Wilbur (1985), Abele and Spurk (2009) note that the impact of objective career success on job satisfaction may be moderated by age and career stage.

Other studies submit that subjective career success drives objective career success. Generally fewer in number[8], these studies posit that the reverse direction of influence is conceivable (Abele and Spurk, 2009; Hall et al., 2005). In the main, these studies assert that perceptions of subjective success could make a person self-confident and could enhance motivation and goal-striving, and that these motivational effects could lead to more objective success over time (Abele and Spurk, 2009). Anchored in developments in positive psychology, researchers show that positive experiences and dispositional affect lead to processes that "broaden" an individual's perspectives and action repertoire and ultimately "build" their resources, ranging from physical resources to intellectual resources to social resources[9] (Boehm and Lyubomirsky, 2008; Diener et al., 2002; Frederickson, 1998; Salmela-Aro and Nurmi, 2007; Seibert et al., 1999; Seibert and Kramer, 2001). In their study of the determinants and consequences of well-being among four cohorts of Australian youth, Marks and Fleming (1999) find for instance that subjective well-being predicts income. Furthermore, Hall and Chandler (2005) propose that in particular circumstances such as when an individual is enacting a career '*calling*'[10], subjective experiences of success can lead to objective outcomes.

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[8] Arthur et al. (2005) studied extant literature on career success. Among the 68 articles examined, they found that only 19% identified reverse causality, that is, that subjective perceptions drive objective outcomes.

[9] For more on the 'broaden and build' theory, see Fredrickson (1998).

[10] Citing Bellah and colleagues (1996), Hall and Chandler note that, "a calling orientation describes those who work for the fulfillment of doing so and, in addition, believe that their work impacts society in some way" (Hall and Chandler, 2005; 161).

Finally, an increasing body of research rejects the proposition that influence is only uni-directional, that is, that objective success drives subjective success or that subjective success leads to objective success, and instead hypothesizes that subjective and objective success are interdependent (Abele and Spurk, 2009; Arthur et al., 2005). For instance, Abele and Spurk (2009), in their longitudinal study of professionals working in different occupational fields, found that initial objective success had a positive influence on initial other-referent success (two phases were identified in relation to time: a career entry phase (initial) and a career growth phase). No influence was however found between initial objective success and initial self-referent success. On the other hand, they found that both self-referent and other-referent subjective success influenced changes in objective success over time. Other-referent subjective success had a large and positive impact on the development of objective success. To summarize this idea that objective success and subjective success are inter-connected, Abele and Spurk (2009) have noted that "people experience objective reality, create understandings and evaluations about what constitutes career success, and then individually act on these understandings and evaluations. Based on their actions they attain certain outcomes, which lead to modified understandings and evaluations, respective behaviors follow, and so forth" (Abele and Spurk, 2009, p. 805).

1.4 Factors influencing career success: Theoretical frameworks

According to existing research, the upward mobility approach provides an apposite framework for examining career success (Ng et al., 2005). Two normative modes of upward mobility have been used in extant literature: the sponsored-mobility norm and the contest-mobility norm. According to the sponsored-mobility perspective, individual achievements arise from

organizational investment in "chosen" individuals. It is the organization's investments in these selected employees that convert into their individual achievements over time and that act as both a springboard for further career development and the basis for selection of those who will advance into the corporate hierarchy (Bagdadli and Gianecchini, 2019; Cable and Murray, 1999;; Wayne et al., 1999). Contrary to the sponsored-mobility norm, the contest-mobility perspective argues that individual achievements result from their abilities and investments in their human capital, including education and training (Bagdadli and Gianecchini, 2019; Cable and Murray, 1999; Wayne et al., 1999). From this perspective, there are no barriers to career mobility as individuals are in full control of the investments that will later determine their career outcomes (Bagdadli and Gianecchini, 2019).

1.4.1 Organizational sponsorship and career success

Studies that have examined the association between organizational sponsorship and career success have mainly focused on organizational career management (OCM) practices. OCM practices refer to a variety of programs and interventions (De Vos et al., 2008) and functional activities and processes (Doyle, 2000) "deliberately established by organizations, to improve the career effectiveness of their employee, establishing what employees want from their careers, providing appropriate career opportunities for employees, identifying which employees deserve the opportunities and then providing them" (Orpen, 1994, p. 28, cited in Bagdadli and Gianecchini, 2019, p. 336). In a systematic review of studies that examine the relationship between organizational career management (OCM) practices and career success, Bagdadli and Gianecchini (2019) identify three clusters of OCM practices that influence career success, particularly objective

career success[11]. These include practices that enhance competencies, practices that affect relationships and practices that provide information.

1.4.1.1 OCM practices that enhance competencies

Extant literature has shown that organizational support for competency development may take a variety of forms. Researchers have variously focused on broad practices such as formal, institutionalized procedures and policies (Orpen, 1994), or on more specific practices such as on-the-job learning (Van der Sluis and Poell, 2003) and on-the-job training (Sheridan, Slocum Jr, and Buda, 1997), or on courses, workshops, seminars, and assignments, including international assignments (Noe and Wilkzietsma, 1993), or a combination of these (Ellstrom and Kock, 2008). According to human capital theory, investments in individuals' education and skills will increase their competency development which, in turn, enhances future job performance (Barrett et al., 2013; Cavanaugh and Noe, 1999; Ellstrom and Kock, 2008; Melero, 2010; Sheridan, Slocum Jr. and Buda, 1997). As employees' job performance improves, organizations will likely reward them with salary increases since enhanced performance contributes to an organization achieving competitive advantage from within (Baruch, 2006; Ellinger et al., 2002; Garavan and Coolahan, 1996; Lyau and Pucel, 1995). Training[12] will also increase the likelihood of promotion for those employees who are selected to participate in such developmental activities as it allows them to

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[11] Bagdadli and Gianecchini (2019) assert that the primary purpose of OCM practices is to increase employees' productivity and professional development. Given this orientation, organizations, from their standpoint, view subjective career success as a by-product of objective career success.

[12] Researchers distinguish between firm-specific or idiosyncratic training and training of a more general type (Pil and Leana, 2000). Although it has been suggested that firms prefer sponsorship of idiosyncratic training activities (Becker, 1964; Strober, 1990; Pennings, Lee and van Witteloostuijn, 1998), researchers generally agree that employees who benefit from training activities, whether idiosyncratic or general, are more likely to achieve career success than those who do not.

acquire new skills and also improve on those needed to assume specific responsibilities in higher-level jobs (Bagdadli and Gianecchini, 2019).

In addition to training activities, research has also highlighted the benefits of developmental assignments, including international assignments, and lateral moves on career success. According to Lyness and Thompson (2000), developmental assignments that require employees to accomplish new and challenging tasks enable them to acquire important skills that will be useful when making mobility decisions in the future. In a similar vein, Suutari (2003) citing research that was carried out among US and British repatriates, show that the latter experience career success in the form of promotions owing in large part to the skills acquired during their international assignments. Lazarova and Caligiuri (2001) also suggest that international assignments increase employees' marketability which, in turn, contribute to their career success. Since these individuals possess skills that are not merely organization-specific, they are more likely to receive rewards in the form of salary growth or promotions as their unique, value-added characteristics will likely enhance the competitive advantage of firms (Day, 2005).

1.4.1.2 OCM practices that affect relationships

OCM practices that support the formation of mentoring relationships or that encourage the creation of developmental networks enhance employees' career success as they provide the latter with the support and visibility of their managers and peers (Bagdadli and Gianecchini, 2019).

There is a prevailing belief in career research that "mentoring matters" (Eby et al., 2008) and that "everyone who makes it has a mentor" (Collins and Scott, 1978 cited in Singh, Ragins and Tharenou, 2009). Traditional and contemporary views of mentoring hold that the relationship

between mentor and mentee make a unique and independent contribution to the latter's career success, above and beyond that accounted for by other variables such as a protégés' existing skills, talents and abilities (Allen et al., 2004; Gong, Chen and Yang, 2014; Metz and Tharenou, 2001; Ouerdian, Malek and Dali, 2018; Singh, Ragins and Tharenou, 2009). According to mentoring theory, mentoring [13] involves the establishment of a dyadic relationship between a less experienced individual (the protégé or mentee) and a more experienced person (the mentor) (Kram, 1985). In the mentoring relationship, mentors perform two main functions, a career-related function and a psychosocial function[14] (Eby, Rhodes and Allen, 2007; Kram, 1985; Noe et al., 2002; Scandura and Pellegrini, 2007).

In providing career-related support, mentors provide mentees with human capital enhancement opportunities and links to powerful individuals in the organization through sponsorship, exposure, visibility, coaching and protection, as well as by assigning mentees with challenging tasks (Eby, Rhodes and Allen, 2007; Fagenson, 1988; Kammeyer-Mueller and Judge, 2008). Research has found that mentoring relationships enhance the promotion prospects of mentees and also their rewards in the form of salary increases as mentors provide them with targeted career-related advice and also provide "inside" information about the organizational culture and protocols, which allows mentees to respond rapidly to performance expectations and improve upon their performance (Bagdadli and Gianecchini, 2019). They also help protégés navigate their work environments (Eby, Rhodes and Allen, 2007). Moreover, mentors provide their

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[13] Some authors such as Chao et al., 1992; Russell and Adams, 1997 argue that we can distinguish between a 'traditional' form of mentoring and 'contemporary' form of mentoring. Traditional mentorship involves the formation of a relationship between two individuals, a mentor and a mentee, that is sanctioned by the organization. Contemporary forms of mentoring are less dyadic in nature and may be between peers or between a supervisor and multiple subordinates.

[14] Scandura (1992) and Scandura and Ragins (1993) identified role modeling as a third function. However, extant theoretical and empirical research tend to coalesce around the view that career and psychosocial functions serve as primary operationalizations of mentoring (Allen et al., 2004; Scandura and Pellegrini, 2007).

protégés with psychosocial support by engaging in activities such as counseling, role modeling as well as by providing friendship to protégés and acceptance and confirmation (Eby, Rhodes and Allen, 2007; Kammeyer-Mueller and Judge, 2008). Taken together, these activities help mentees develop a sense of competence and identity as a professional (Eby, Rhodes and Allen, 2007).

In addition to mentoring relationships, OCM practices that support networks or that promote networking behavior among employees have been found to enhance the objective career success of individuals. Social capital inheres in social networks that tie actors together (Adler and Kwon, 2002; Seibert, Kraimer and Liden, 2001) and, according to Seibert, Kraimer and Liden (2001), is best understood as "*both* the different network structures that facilitate (or impede) access to social resources *and* the nature of the social resources embedded in the network"[15] (Seibert, Kraimer and Liden, 2001, p. 221). Within the organizational context, networks comprise a "constellation" of actors (Kram, 1985), which may include individuals who occupy different job functions and who have different work statuses such as peers who have equal status, leaders who have higher statuses, or subordinates who have lower statuses.

Social networks[16] can provide greater and timelier access to information, greater access to financial or material resources, and visibility, legitimacy, or sponsorship to individuals, which each contribute to the achievement of specific work outcomes (Ibarra, 1993; Langford, 2000; Michael and Yukl, 1993; Seibert, Kraimer and Liden, 2001). In networks that comprise individuals who work in different functional units and groups for example, members may obtain access to information and resources not available to non-members. Access to this information and to resources should enhance individual work performance and improved performance and the ability to add value should contribute to the achievement of specific work outcomes (Burt, 1997; Seibert,

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[15] Emphasis in the original.
[16] We use the term 'social network' to encompass networking behavior and network structure.

Kraimer and Liden, 2001). Furthermore, Seibert, Kraimer and Liden (2001) argue that greater access to information and resources will increase an individual's organizational reputation and perceived power and influence. These perceptions can enable individuals to secure valuable organizational rewards independent of their performance (Ibid.).

Finally, in addition to mentoring and networking relationships, researchers have also found that relationships between leaders/supervisors and employees directly impact the career outcomes of the latter. Although these relationships are not "sponsored" *per se*, that is, that they are officially encouraged and formally supported by organizations much like mentoring relationships or formal networking, the leader-member dyad between the supervisor and subordinate has been found to also influence career success.

LMX theory posits that through a role-making process (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995 cited in Kraimer, Seibert and Astrove, 2015), subordinates and superiors develop unique relationships with each other. The dyadic interaction between leaders and members results in the development of two types of exchange relationships: a high-quality ("in-group") relationship and a low-quality ("out-group") relationship (Liden, Sparrowe and Wayne, 1997; Sherman et al., 2012). Relationships deemed of high-quality are characterized by a high degree of mutual trust, respect, loyalty, and obligation (Dienesch and Liden, 1986; Ilies, Nahrgang and Morgenson, 2007; Kraimer, Seibert and Astrove, 2015). Furthermore, subordinates in these relationships are more likely to be assigned challenging tasks (Harris and Kacmar, 2005), receive performance feedback from their supervisors (Grestner and Day, 1997), gain access to their leaders' social networks (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995; Sparrowe and Liden, 1997) and be provided with emotional and instrumental support necessary to achieve positive career outcomes (Deluga, 1994; Sparrowe and Liden, 1997; Wayne, Shore and Liden, 1997). Low-quality relationships, on the other hand, are more transactional, and rarely

develop beyond the requirements of the basic employment contract (Kraimer, Seibert and Astrove, 2015; Sparrowe and Liden, 1997).

Underlying the LMX framework is the assumption that benefits are provided to others with the expectation of some form of reciprocation (Liden, Sparrowe and Wayne, 1997; Sherman et al., 2012). "Each party must offer something the other party sees as valuable and each party must see the exchange as reasonably equitable or fair" (Graen and Scandura, 1987, p. 182 cited in Wayne et al., 1997). In the LMX developmental process, initial signalling comes from the leader (Liden, Sparrowe and Wayne, 1997). Assuming a "role-taking" posture, leaders may, for example, offer positional resources such as task assignments, information and support as well as mediate the visibility of members with other superiors (Kraimer, Seibert and Astrove, 2015). After initial transmission by the leader members will react, thereby providing feedback to the leader. This is the second phase of the process or the "role-making phase". Where members find that the resources are sufficiently attractive, they may reciprocate with greater than required expenditures of time and energy, assumption of greater responsibility and risk, and concern for the organization (Ibid.). If the leader, in turn, finds these efforts sufficiently attractive, then he/she may engage a high-quality exchange relationship with the member (Sherman et al., 2012). In this final phase of the relationship referred to as the "role routinization" phase, leader-member behaviors become interlocked and typically remain stable over time (Liden, Sparrowe and Wayne, 1997).

LMX provides a relevant theoretical framework for explaining career success from the sponsored-mobility perspective. Like the sponsored-mobility norm, leader-member exchange theory posits that it is neither efficient nor possible to sponsor all subordinates. High-quality exchange relationships are therefore developed with only a privileged few, and selection of this "in-group" is based on attributes other than merit and performance (Kraimer, Seibert and Astrove,

2015). Although the importance of members' initial performance, ability and competence in the role-making phase of the process is generally recognized, Liden, Sparrowe and Wayne (1997) argue that other nonperformance related factors such as members' upward influence behaviors, member and leader individual characteristics as well as contextual variables are important determinants of LMX. Similarly, Dulebohn and colleagues (2012) in their meta-analysis of the antecedents of LMX explain that competence is important only insofar as task assignment is concerned. An important number of nonperformance variables have been shown to be determine the dyadic interaction between leader and subordinate.

Empirical studies have confirmed the link between members' high-quality exchange relationships and positive career outcomes. Wayne and colleagues (1999), for instance, in their empirical study of a sample of technical and professional staff in a US-based company found that member-rated leader-member exchange relationships were positively related to future salary increases. Similarly, in a sample of US and Hong Kong tellers working in the same multinational bank, Lam, Yik and Schaubroeck (2002) found that tellers who reported having high-quality leader-exchange relationships experienced positive career outcomes in the form of promotions. With regard to the influence of LMX on subjective career success, Wayne et al. (1999) in their study show that leader-member exchange is significantly related to career satisfaction. In addition, Liden, Wayne and Sparrowe (2000) suggest that high-quality relationships are positively related to subordinates' job satisfaction because in these types of relationships subordinates may be granted negotiation rights and freedoms to design their own jobs, which leads to perceptions of control and personal significance in the workplace.

1.4.1.3 OCM practices that provide information

OCM practices that provide career-related information to the organization about employees and that also provide information to employees about their performance will impact the career success of these individuals (Bagdadli and Gianecchini, 2019). For employees, feedback can improve and maintain performance by allowing them to modify their behaviors where necessary. These behavioural changes can increase chances of goal attainment and motivate individuals towards higher performance (Roberson and Block, 2001), which will, ultimately, impact their career outcomes. In general, organizations use a number of different career management practices at different employment stages to obtain information about the value and contribution of employees (Bagdadli and Gianecchini, 2019Suazo, Martinez and Sandoval, 2009; Suazo, Martinez and Sandoval, 2011). These may include practices such as assessment centers, performance management, training, and international assignments (Bagdadli and Gianecchini, 2019).

Bagdadli and Gianecchini (2019) mention that signaling theory provides an apposite theoretical framework for explaining the association between OCM practices that provide information and career success. According to Spence (2002), signaling theory is based on the idea that "there are attributes of potential employees that the employer cannot observe and that affect the individual's subsequent productivity and, hence, value to the employer on the job" (Spence, 2002, p. 436 cited in Suazo, Martinez and Sandoval, 2009, p. 160). In the absence of full information during the pre-employment phase and also post-employment, organizations rely on certain signals or cues to make decisions that will impact employees' future work outcomes. Similarly, employees use signals and cues from organizations to help them adjust to performance

expectations which, in turn, enhance the likelihood of achieving career success (Bagdadli and Gianecchini, 2019; Suazo, Martinez and Sandoval, 2009).

Information that organizations obtain from assessment centers about individuals' skills and abilities help them identify those who have managerial and leadership potential and those who are likely to contribute to organizational performance (Bagdadli and Gianecchini, 2019). In a similar manner, through performance appraisals which can either serve developmental or evaluative goals (Boswell and Boudreau, 2002), organizations receive signals or cues about employees' strengths (and weaknesses) as well as their performance vis-à-vis other employees or a set standard (Boswell and Boudreau, 2002; Suazo, Martinez and Sandoval, 2009). Employees who meet or surpass performance expectations or who are found to possess skills and abilities that are of value to the organization and that will promote organizational goals, will more likely benefit from promotions or receive rewards in the form of salary increases (Bagdadli and Gianecchini, 2019; Boswell and Boudreau, 2002). Finally, information obtained through training activities can promote career success as these activities allow organizations to identify individuals who have the requisite skills to fit the next job in the hierarchy (Dekker, De Grip and Heijke, 2002).

1.4.2   Individual achievement and motivation and career success

As mentioned previously, the contest-mobility norm of upward mobility has been used to examine career success from an individual-level perspective. According to the contest-mobility perspective, human capital factors are the most important determinants of careers success. It posits that individuals compete in an open and fair competition and winners are those who prove that they are most deserving of the upward mobility prize (Cable and Murray, 1999; Wayne et al.,

1999). In addition to human capital factors, research suggests that an individual's motivational state is also an important determinant of career success (Eby, Butts and Lockwood, 2003; Wayne et al., 1999). Each of these factors will be discussed in more detail below.

1.4.2.1 Human capital

The predominant theoretical approach used to examine the association between human capital and career success is the human capital theory. Human capital, according to Becker (1964, cited in Ng et al., 2005), relates to an individual's educational, professional and personal experiences. In its simplest form, human capital theory argues that educational level is correlated with career outcomes (Ballout, 2007; Strober, 1990). As an individual's education level rises, their skills increase and this will, in turn, increase productivity, which is later rewarded with higher earnings and career advancement (Ballout, 2007; Burt, 1997; Seibert, Kraimer and Liden, 2001; Sheridan, Slocum Jnr. and Buda, 1997; Strober, 1990; Tharenou, Latimer and Conroy, 1994; Stroh, Brett and Reilly, 1992). Using the main assumptions of the theoretical framework, Judge and colleagues (1995) argue that educational content, and not just level, is an important determinant of career success as well. According to this perspective, education content is an indicator of skills and abilities; organizations will therefore reward individuals with degrees in "complex" fields such as business, law, and engineering over and above individuals who pursue degrees in other educational fields.

Human capital theory further advances that career success is not only contingent on education but that an individual's experiences are of consequence as well (Fugate, Kinicki and Ashforth, 2004). Studies by Cox and Harquail (1991), Judge et al. (1995), Powell and Butterfield

(1994, 1997) and Whitely, Dougherty and Dreher (1991) find a positive relationship between experience and career success. According to this perspective, experience, which is operationalized as age or seniority, allows an individual to develop varying levels of proficiency and tacit knowledge (Lubit, 2001). Employees with more seniority or older employees are therefore more likely to receive higher earnings or obtain promotions because they have more knowledge and skills and therefore higher levels of productivity (Strober, 1990; Tharenou, 1997). A number of other studies including Biemann and Braakmann (2013), Lyness and Thompson (2000) and Suutari (2003), also suggest that the type of experience that individuals accumulate over time is important. Specifically, these studies highlight the importance of international work experience and conclude that individuals with such experience are more likely than individuals with only domestic experience to achieve career success.

Human capital factors have also been found to directly and indirectly relate to subjective measures of career success. For example, Eby, Butts and Lockwood (2003) found that individuals with extensive skill sets and a propensity to seek out new learning experiences were more likely to report career satisfaction while Wayne et al. (1999) found that individuals who received more company-sponsored training were more satisfied with their careers. Judge and colleagues (1995), for their part, found that executives who developed their human capital were more likely to achieve objective career success and that objective career success was related to reports of career satisfaction.

1.4.2.2 Motivation

Like human capital, motivation has also been identified as an individual-level factor that impacts career success. The expectancy-valence theory has been used to explain the relationship between motivation and career success. According to Wayne and colleagues (1999), in an employment context, employees are motivated to put forth more effort in performing their tasks if they believe that this will lead to them obtaining both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. A number of studies have tested this theory by using variables such as hours worked and work centrality, which is defined as the degree of importance that working has to the identity of an individual (England and Whitely, 1990 cited by Judge et al., 1995) to represent 'effort', and expected salary and promotions to represent desired outcomes or rewards. In their empirical work, Whitely, Dougherty and Dreher (1991) found that both hours worked and work centrality predict compensation, although predictions were much stronger for hours worked. Similarly, Judge and colleagues (1995) found that a number of other indicators representing effort such as evenings worked per month, hours worked per week, hours of work desired, ambition and work centrality also positively predict compensation.

Orpen (1994) and Wayne et al. (1999) identify career planning as another motivational variable that predicts career success. Gould (1979 cited in Aryee and Debrah, 1993) developed a career planning model, which is based on Hall and Foster's (1977 cited in Aryee and Debrah, 1993) psychological success model of goal setting (Aryee and Debrah, 1993; Wayne et al., 1999). According to this model, planning career goals involves a process of identifying what one wants from one's career, assessing one's strengths and weaknesses in relation to these goals and deciding what steps need to be taken in order to realize these goals (Orpen, 1994). It is predicated on the

assumption that goals regulate human behavior and attitudes and therefore represent a motivational mechanism (Aryee and Debrah, 1993). Applied to the employment context, the model suggests that employees who plan their careers and set goals will undertake efforts to implement these plans, thereby leading to higher career performance and career involvement (Abele and Wiese (2008), Aryee and Debrah (1993),. Steffy and Jones (1988), and Wayne et al. (1999) have found support for the hypothesis that career planning positively influences career success. Steffy and Jones (1988), for instance, found a positive association between career planning and income level while Abele and Wiese (2008) for their part, found that career planning was positively related to objective career success and more specifically to income and occupational responsibility as well as to self-referent and other-referent career success.

1.5 Barriers to the career success of immigrants

While there is consensus in existing career success literature that organizational sponsorship, which, as we have seen, can take several forms, and human capital and motivational factors are determinant, a growing body of research has pointed out that individuals do not all possess equal opportunities to achieve career success. In fact, some authors such as Nkomo (1992) have argued that organizational scholarship has been principally focused on the workplace experiences of the dominant few, that is, the White male, and as such, has largely ignored key factors that influence career outcomes for other groups of individuals.

In the section that follows, we examine research that focuses on the impact of sociodemographic factors such as race, gender, and immigration status on individuals' workplace experiences. Whereas for the purposes of this study each of these factors will be examined

individually, we recognize that individuals' career success may be impacted by the convergence or interaction of multiple identities, such as is the case with racialized women who are immigrants.

1.5.1   Race[17] and career success

Research examining the impact of race on career success has found that this can negatively influence individuals' career outcomes. Mainly based on the experiences of Blacks who are non-immigrants in organizations in the USA, although not exclusively so, empirical research by Baldi and McBrier (1997), Francesconi (2001), James (2000), Maume (1999, 2004), Jones, Jr. (1986), Pergamit and Veum (1999), Powell and Butterfield (1997) and Yap and Konrad (2009) found evidence to suggest that these individuals face important disadvantages with regard to promotional opportunities and rates. Anderson and Shapiro (1996), Barnum, Liden and DiTomaso (1995), Durden and Gaynor (1998), Holzer (1998) and Juhn (2003) for their parts, found important disparities in the compensation of Blacks relative to Whites. Yap and colleagues (2010, 2013), who focused on the career outcomes of racial minorities in a Canadian context, also found that race impacts perceptions of career success, especially perceptions of career satisfaction.

Extant literature has identified factors at both the individual and organizational levels to explain the impact of race on career success. According to a number of researchers, the disparities witnessed in the levels of career success attained by Blacks stem from the differences in human

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[17] Although 'race' and 'ethnicity' have been used interchangeably in organizational research (Kamenou, 2002; Byrd, 2018), in this study we adopt a historical and political approach such that 'race' denotes a group of people who share certain physical characteristics such as skin color, hair texture, facial features etc. and who have a common historical background (Fitzgerald, 2017 cited in Scott and McClain, 2018). Historically, and politically, 'race' has been treated in binary terms- and individual is classified as either 'black' or 'white' (Banon, 2000; Byrd, 2018)-, and this categorization is pre-determined (Proudford an Nkomo, 2006; Scott and McClain, 2018).

capital that Black workers bring to the organization (Baldi and McBrier, 1997). For example, Baldi and McBrier (1997) posit that Black workers experience poor career outcomes because their job performance has generally been lower than that of White workers. Historically, Blacks have been disadvantaged in terms of access to and quality of education and training (Farley and Allen, 1987 and Jaynes and Williams, 1989 cited in Baldi and McBrier, 1997; Maxwell, 1994; Rivkin, 1995). From a human capital perspective, low investments in education will inhibit future rewards because workers do not possess the requisite skills that will enhance performance which will, in turn, translate into positive career outcomes (James, 2000). Furthermore, owing to their lower educational and skill levels, Black workers tend to be concentrated in a secondary labour market where jobs are poorly paid or are of a precarious nature (Baldi and McBrier, 1997). Given the "location" of these jobs, the advantages associated with bureaucratization or participation in the primary labour market such as returns to education and experience as well as career prospects, remain at best minimal and at worst non-existent (Baldi and McBrier, 1997).

A second stream of research has looked beyond individual level factors to explain the differences in career outcomes experienced by racialized groups. Essentially, this research has rejected claims that the unequal outcomes experienced by Blacks result from human capital deficiencies and has instead pointed to the existence of social closure practices and opportunity hoarding in organizations (Baldi and McBrier, 1997; Cox and Nkomo, 1991; Greenhaus, Parasuraman and Wormley, 1990; Nkomo and Cox Jr., 1990; Thomas and Alderfer, 1989; Skaggs and DiTomaso, 2004; Weeden, 2002). In the view of these researchers, racialized groups' limited access to or exclusion from important resources such as instrumental relationships in organizations limit opportunities to achieve career success.

Organizational research has shown that people tend to interact with similar others (Ashforth and Mael, 1989; Ragins and Gonzalez, 2003). In the workplace, homophilous ties largely exist across race lines (Dreher and Cox, 1996; Thomas, 1990). Within the organizational context, research has consistently shown that social capital in the form of networks is important because these have a proclivity to lead to desirable organizational outcomes by allocating resources that are essential for job performance and career advancement as well as providing expressive benefits such as friendship and social support (Combs, 2003; Ibarra, 1993, 1995; James, 2000; O'Reilly, Caldwell and Barnett, 1989; Tsui, Egan and O'Reilly, 1992). However, owing to Blacks' numerical minority status, including among power elites, in many organizations, the purported benefits of same-race relationships within departmental subunits or across units, have been found to be limited (Cox and Nkomo, 1991; James, 2000; Thomas, 1990).

In addition, research has identified Blacks' limited number of "strong tie" (Granovetter, 1973 cited in James, 2000) relationships either owing to their limited representation in organizations or the difficulties that they face in establishing effective cross-race relationships, as another barrier to their career success (Cox and Nkomo, 1991; Ibarra, 1993; James, 2000; Thomas, 1990; Thomas and Alderfer, 1989). Unlike "weak tie" relationships that are essentially loose in nature (Burt, 1998; Ibarra, 1993; James, 2000), strong tie relationships are characterized by strong bonds that link people of similar backgrounds (Ibarra, 1993; James, 2000). Existing research has shown that "strong tie" relationships, which are not exclusive to the mentoring relationship but may encompass relationships with peers and subordinates as well, provide the context for career-related and psychosocial support, which are essential for career success (Ibid.). Studies by Dreher and Ash (1990), Nkomo and Cox (1990), Ragins (1994) and Tsui and O'Reilly (1989) for instance, find evidence that strong ties between Black employees and their superiors aid in internal

promotion decisions, compensation attainment and other positive career outcomes such as career satisfaction. James (2000) also suggests that strong ties to peers and subordinates can impact advancement decisions, as this is demonstrative of an ability to effectively interact with and/or manage others.

In addition to the more overt forms of discrimination based on race that individuals are likely to encounter in organizations, researchers such as Sue, Lin and Rivera (2009) have identified more covert forms of discrimination in the form racial microaggressions. Racial microaggressions are everyday forms of racism that are subtle and usually outside of the level of awareness of the perpetrator (Sue et al., 2007 cited in Sue Lin and Rivera, 2009). They are generally conveyed verbally, nonverbally, or environmentally and can be manifested as a subtle snub, dismissive looks, slighting gestures or remarks, trivializing tones, or a hostile climate. These authors further remark that identification of the act is particularly problematic for the recipients because the biased comments or acts are often excused or explained away as being innocent or misinterpretations.

Researchers concur that racial microaggressions can negatively influence perceptions of objective and subjective career success in the workplace. According to Sue, Lin and Rivera (2009), perpetrators of racial microaggressions generally adopt a "superiority-inferiority" or "inclusion-exclusion" worldview which feeds into hiring, evaluation/retention, and promotion decisions, and these, in turn, impact individuals' experiences of career success. More concretely, for many in the workplace, being Black may be associated with attitudes of laziness, incompetence, or aggressivity, and these negative stereotypes will ultimately influence the relationships that racialized employees have with their peers, superiors, or mentors, as well as their perceptions of opportunity structure in organizations (Constantine and Sue, 2007; Offermann et al., 2014; Sue Lin and Rivera, 2009). Furthermore, Sue, Lin and Rivera (2009) note that racial microaggressions

have been found to affect individuals' self-esteem and cognitive functioning and constant exposure may increase the likelihood that individuals develop psychological impairments such as depression, anxiety, substance abuse, psychosis and anger issues. The psychological impairments that result will not only affect individuals' productivity levels and their overall performance, which will, in turn, influence perceptions of objective career success but they will influence perceptions of job and career satisfaction as well.

1.5.2   Gender and career success

Like race, research has also found that gender and more specifically being a woman, is a barrier to carrier success. Studies by Cannings (1991), DiPrete and Soule (1986), Eagly, Makhijani and Klonsy (1992), Ng et al. (2005), Padavic, Ely and Reid, 2019, Schneer and Reitman (1995) and Stroh, Brett and Reilly (1992), which have primarily focused on American organizations, found evidence to suggest that women are less likely than men to achieve success in the form of career advancement or compensation attainment. In Quebec, which is often hailed as a North American exception because of the progressive public policies that have been developed by state and organizational actors (Genin, Laroche and Marchadour, 2022), studies have also found that women are under-represented in management and senior leadership positions (Boulet 2014 cited in Genin, Laroche and Marchadour, 2022; Diversity Leads, 2013; 2015). Individual and organizational level explanations have been employed to account for the negative association observed in extant literature between gender and career success.

At the individual level, researchers have focused on the effects of family on women's careers. Extant literature has identified family structures including marriage, childbearing,

childrearing, and family size, as important determinants of the career success of women (Kirchmeyer, 2006; Loughran and Zissimopoulos, 2009; Tharenou, 1999; Valcour and Ladge, 2008; Valcour and Tolber, 2003; Waldfogel, 1998). Research specifically focusing on the correlation between marriage and career success has consistently found that marriage positively relates to the career success of men while the opposite rings true for women (Kirchmeyer, 1998; 2002; Korenman and Neumark, 1991; Loh, 1996). Loh sums up the "male marriage premium" (Korenman and Neumark, 1991) most aptly when he states that, "marriage is a boon, if not a crucial ingredient, to men climbing the upper-management career ladder" (Loh, 1996, p. 567-568). For women, however, family structures in general and marriage in particular, have been found to impose certain "penalties" on their career success (Budig and England, 2001; Anderson, Binder and Krause, 2003; Cukrowska-Torzewska and Matysiak, 2018). Chicha (2009) further suggests that the "penalties" may be greater for certain groups of women as cultural norms often dictate whose career will be prioritized in a marriage.

According to authors such as Ely, Stone and Ammerman (2014), Landau and Arthur (1992), Lyness and Thompson (1997) and Ramarajan, McGinn and Kolb (2012) who examined the impact of gender on career success, women's family obligations will notably reduce women's personal resources of time, energy, and commitment available for work. From a human capital perspective, where such work-life conflict exists, women's performance will suffer, and this will, in turn, influence their ability to earn promotions and financial rewards (Kirchmeyer, 2006).

Several researchers have rejected the gendered division of labour argument, which, according to Lincoln (2008) and Padavic, Ely and Reid (2019), is ubiquitous and culturally endorsed in many areas, that purports the view that women do not achieve career success because of the "burdens" of family responsibilities or because of human capital deficiencies, and have

instead drawn attention to the role of organizational factors in fostering positive career outcomes (Metz and Tharenou, 2001; Schneer and Reitman, 1995). According to these researchers, social capital is a more important determinant of women's advancement, especially to higher managerial levels (Metz and Tharenou, 2001; Tharenou, Latimer and Conroy, 1994). Much like the discussion in the previous section concerning race, women's under-representation or numerical minority in organizations as a whole or in certain organizational settings in particular, has been found to inhibit opportunities for career advancement or compensation attainment because this limits their ability to access important task advice, develop valued personal relationships with similar others and influence the content and quality of decisions (Combs, 2003, Ibarra, 1997; Mehra, Kilduff and Brass, 1998; Podolny and Baron, 1997).). In instances where race and gender converge or intersect in organizations such as is the case with Black women, researchers suggest that these women find themselves in a "double-bind" (Seron, 2016) whereby barriers are amplified or compounded because of the dual source of distinctiveness (Acker, 2006; Combs, 2003; Cox and Nkomo, 1991; Dreher and Cox, 1996; Mehra, Kilduff and Brass, 1998; Podolny and Baron, 1997; Prasad, D'Abate and Prasad, 2007; Seron, 2016; Thomas, 1990, 1993; Yap and Konrad, 2009).

In addition, a number of studies have pointed to the existence of gender-based biases relating to women's abilities and competencies for task or role fulfillment and the effects that these have on their career advancement. According to research by Eagly and Karau (2002) and Heilman (2012), in many organizations, there is a perceived dissimilarity between the female gender role and conceptions of the managerial role. To the extent that individuals believe that there is incongruity or a "lack of fit" (Heilman, 2012) between the two roles, women will face prejudice or bias insofar as their career advancement is concerned (Eagly and Karau, 2002; Heilman, 2012).

An important number of studies have found evidence that support the view that women are less likely than men to advance in their careers because perceivers believe that they do not possess the requisite attributes or characteristics to assume leadership positions (Antal and Izraeli, 1993; Butterfield and Grinnell, 1999; Schein, 2007; Schein et al., 1996; Schein and Mueller, 1992;). With regard to women's "lack of fit" specifically for leadership positions, studies have found that women are believed to lack agentic attributes[18] such as assertiveness, controlling, and confident tendency, which are more typically associated with men and are also believed to be required for success at upper-level positions (Schein, 2007). The close association between masculinity and the manager role has given rise to the "think manager, think male" (Schein, 1973, 1975 cited in Schein et al., 1996) idea that, according to several authors, continues to hold true in societies and contemporary working contexts (Duehr and Bono, 2006; Groeneveld, Bakker, Schmidt, 2020). The pervasive and enduring under-representation of females especially in senior management and executive positions in organizations (Heilman, 2012; Metz and Tharenou, 2001) that has resulted from existing biases and prejudices, has given rise to the idea that women face a "glass-ceiling" in today's workplace. For Black women who, according to Bell and Nkomo (1999 cited in Prasad, D'Abate and Prasad, 2007), are more susceptible to career stagnation, the metaphor of "concrete roof" or "rock ceiling" (Sherman, 2002 cited Prasad, D'Abate and Prasad, 2007) seems more pertinent, which suggests a certain level of durability insofar as the prejudices and biases are concerned, as well as impermeability and unattainability of certain levels of career success.

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[18] Women, it is argued, mainly exhibit communal attributes, which primarily describe a concern with the welfare of other people. These characteristics include being affectionate, helpful, find, sympathetic, interpersonally sensitive, nurturant and gentle (Eagly and Karau, 2002).

1.5.3 Immigration and career success

Finally, much of the research that has been conducted in the past three or so decades on immigrants to Canada and Quebec identified immigration status as a barrier to career success. Much like the discussions concerning race and gender above, individual and organizational factors have been cited to explain the relatively lower levels of career success observed among immigrants in organizations.

At the individual level, researchers have identified certain "gaps" in immigrants' human capital to account for their relatively lower career outcomes. For example, in their studies Picot (2004) and Aydemir and Skuterud (2004) show how lack of knowledge and use of official languages imposes constraints on immigrants' upward mobility. With specific reference to the case of immigrants in Quebec and specifically in Montreal, Arcand (2009) shows how French-speaking immigrants' lack of knowledge of English hinders career success, as knowledge of both French and English are prerequisites to labour market integration and career advancement in the metropole. Furthermore, with regard to linguistic ability, certain authors such as Scassa (1994) suggest that in many organizations in Canada, it is not just a question of language competence, but that foreign accents of speech are equally as important in determining career outcomes. Research by Creese and Kambere (2003) among African immigrant women who are fluent in English in Vancouver also find evidence of this, as accents were perceived to be a basis of job assignment in the workplace, which, in turn, influences individuals' career success (Baldi and McBrier, 1997).

In addition to language competencies, researchers have focused on the "quality" of immigrants' foreign degrees and the transferability of skills to explain the differences in career outcomes. Research by Borjas (1994), Ferrer and Riddell (2008), Friedberg (2000), Reitz (2007a.,

2007b.), Sweetman (2003), and Zeng and Xie (2004)and, for instance, find that immigrants' poor career outcomes result from origin-country human capital being less valued or valuable in the host country. In Canada, Sweetman (2004) finds that there is a correlation between the quality of educational qualifications and source country and minority status such that Blacks' and other visible minority immigrants' educational qualifications are less valued in the Canadian labour market. According to the argument that underlies the stratification, unlike talents and motivation that are context independent, knowledge and skills are context specific, and therefore of limited transferability and value in host countries (Kanas and van Tubergen, 2009; Lancee and Bol, 2017). Since knowledge and skills influence performance, and according to human capital theory, performance is positively associated with career success, it is expected that immigrants who do not possess relevant host country education and work experience are less likely to achieve career success[19].

At the other end of the spectrum, researchers have identified immigrants' limited access to instrumental network ties (Arcand, Lenoir-Achdjian and Helly, 2009; Gauthier, 2016; Hakak, Holzinger and Zicik, 2010; Malik and Manroop, 2017; Nakhaie, 2007; Nakhaie and Kazemipour, 2013) as an important obstacle to their career success. Nakhaie and Kazemipour (2013 citing Lin, 2001) postulate that social networks are embedded with resources that are instrumental in helping individuals "get ahead" in organizations. Social networks help diffuse information and reduce transaction costs, exert influence on recruiters such as employers or supervisors by "putting in a good word" in favor of a potential employee, "stand behind" employees by certifying their

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[19] Researchers who support the position that immigrants who possess origin-country human capital only are less likely to achieve career success because of the difficult transferability of their skills have substantiated their arguments with findings from empirical studies that show that immigrants who acquire host-country qualifications earn higher salaries than those who do not and are also more likely to advance in their careers. See, for example, Boudarbat and Boulet (2010); Gilmore and Le Petit (2008); Storen and Wiers-Jenssen (2010); Friedberg (2000) and Zeng and Xie (2004).

credentials, and help reinforce and recognize an employee's identity (Ibid.). Empirical research has found evidence to suggest that social networks enhance immigrants' opportunities for career success. Boxman, De Graaf and Flap (1991) and Lamba (2003) found that social capital can help improve the earnings of immigrants and visible minorities. Friedman and Krackhardt (1997) also found that it is essentially via social capital attainments that immigrants, especially highly skilled immigrants, manage to transform their education into workplace gains in host countries. However, research by Arcand, Lenoir-Achdjian and Helly (2009), Hakak, Holzinger and Zikic (2010), Hou and Picot (2003), Nakhaie (2007) and Nakhaie and Kazemipour (2013), specifically relating to immigrants in Canada found that, in general, they tend to lack the network ties that are crucial to helping them get ahead in organizations.

A number of authors have noted that in host societies immigrants tend to form social networks with family, friends and other ethnic ties (Arcand, Lenoir-Achdjian and Helly, 2009; Nakhaie, 2007; Nakhaie and Kazemipour, 2013;Sanders, Nee and Sernau, 2002). This penchant, researchers contend, is shaped by the characteristics of immigrants as well as by structural conditions in the host society and are embedded in emergent forms of social organization that reflect immigrants' efforts to deal with the new circumstances that they encounter in their new contexts (Sanders, Nee and Sernau, 2002). While immigrants are perhaps "forced" to form homophilous, ethnic ties that may help with finding a job (Aguilera and Massey, 2003; Arcand, Lenoir-Achdjian and Helly, 2009), and therefore with "getting by" (Nakhaie and Kazemipour, 2013), many agree that they are not endowed with the resources deemed indispensable for achieving career success (Nakhaie and Kazemipour, 2013; Sanders, Nee and Sernau, 2002). In fact, for certain groups of immigrants such as Black immigrants, research has shown that they are more disadvantaged from having network ties with family and friends (Evra and Kazemipour,

2019; Hou and Picot, 200). As one author puts it, "[Individuals who are] embedded in a firm network of ethnic relations [will lose out on] higher opportunities" (Wiley, 1967, p. 151 cited in Nakhaie and Kazemipour, 2013, p. 433).

Conversely, research by Arcand, Lenoir-Achdjian and Helly (2009), Gauthier (2016), Hakak, Holzinger and Zikic (2010), Nakhaie (2007) and Nakhaie and Kazemipour (2013), suggests that in order for immigrants to achieve career success, it is more important for them to form vertical inter-ethnic "weak ties" with dominant groups in organizations. "Weak ties", it has been argued, are important sources of information to individuals as they serve as "bridges" to other networks that provide non-redundant information (Burt, 1998; Davern, 1999; Ibarra, 1993). For immigrants, weak tie networks can become important sources of information on lucrative job opportunities (Behtoui, 2008), including in contexts such as those in Quebec where it has been found that an important number of employees, whether in the public or private sectors, are recruited "through the grapevine" (Dubé, 2015). Additionally, "weak tie" relationships can provide useful information relating to cultural norms and practices within professions and organizations in the host country, which are indispensable for career advancement (Gauthier, 2016). However, owing to existing group-based stereotypes and prejudices among dominant groups in organizations, extant literature suggests that immigrants are largely excluded from networks that can enhance their opportunities to achieve career success (Arcand, Lenoir-Achdjian and Helly, 2009; Bell, Kwesiga and Berry, 2010; Gauthier, 2016; Grenier and Nadeau, 2011; Mighty, 1997).

In addition to immigrants' limited access to or exclusion from instrumental network ties that can enhance their career success, research has also shown that licensing requirements and the non-recognition of diplomas and degrees by employers are major obstacles to their career success (Banerjee and Phan, 2014; Boyd and Schellenberg, 2007; Boyd and Thomas, 2001; Esses, Dietz

and Bhardwaj, 2006; Frank, 2013; Li, 2001; Man, 2004; Salaff, Greve and Xu Li Ping, 2002; Zietsma, 2010).

In Canada, about 20 percent of occupations are regulated by a licensing body that generally sets its own standards and practices (Banerjee and Phan, 2014). A widely recognized advantage of licensing is that those who work in regulated occupations tend to earn higher rewards relative to those who are unlicensed, whether in the form of compensation or prestige (Bauder, 2003; Law and Kim, 2005; Weeden, 2002). Yet while the chances of obtaining work in a regulated profession remain high for non-immigrant groups, for immigrants, the experience has been quite different (Banerjee and Phan, 2014; Boyd and Schellenberg, 2007; Girard and Smith, 2012; Man, 2004). Research by Zietsma (2010), for example, found that in Canada only 24 percent of immigrants with pre-immigration training in regulated occupations were working in their professions. Provincial estimates suggest that less than half of the immigrants in regulated professions manage to obtain Canadian accreditation post-immigration, and among foreign-trained physicians, the proportion is as low 5 percent (Bauder, 2003).

Research has shown that occupational licensing and credentialing criteria negatively impact opportunities for achieving career success. According to various studies, the high costs[20] and length of time associated with licensing, as well as the requirement to understand subtle social and cultural norms, effectively foreclose opportunities for immigrants to access high status and well-remunerated professions (Banerjee and Phan, 2014; Bauder, 2003). Some authors have likened this situation to what Weber (1968 cited in Frank, 2013) describes as social closure, whereby, in an attempt to maintain dominant group privilege and social position, the latter

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[20] Bauder (2003), for example, highlights the disparate treatment that immigrants receive from certain licensing board insofar as the cost of licensing is concerned. Whereas the Canadian Architectural Accreditation Board charges graduates Canadian $300 for assessment of their professional credentials, for foreign-trained professionals, the cost is $1000.

excludes other groups from accessing scarce and valued resources (Weeden, 2002; Frank, 2013; Bauder, 2003).

Finally, with regards to immigrants with training in non-regulated professions, research has also shown that they too face challenges to the achievement of career success in the form of "skill discounting" (Esses, Dietz and Bhardwaj, 2006; Li, 2001; Li and Li, 2008). Skill discounting, according to Esses, Dietz and Bhardwaj (2006), may involve the devaluation of pre-immigration education, professional training, work experience, and other work-related skills. Frank (2013) examined the rate of obtaining a job match between previous or intended occupations and found that immigrants to Canada with a Bachelor's degree only were at a disadvantage, although those with higher degrees were likely to find a job match. Previous research by Reitz (2003) also found evidence to suggest that Bachelor's degrees are less recognized by employers. In Quebec, a number of studies have also highlighted a widespread tendency towards skill discounting. For example, Boudarbat and Boulet (2010) and Boulet (2012) found that immigrants were more likely to be overqualified for their jobs than non-immigrants. Chicha (2009), in her study of highly qualified women in Montreal, found similar patterns. Furthermore, in-group comparisons of immigrants show that visible minority immigrants face higher levels of skill discounting in Canada and Quebec (Boulet, 2012; Chicha, 2009; Frank, 2013; Reitz, 2003, 2005; Swidinsky and Swidinsky, 2002).

Like the licensing and credentialing process, skill discounting has also been found to create barriers to immigrants' career success. Since immigrants' human capital is not recognized, many are forced to turn or are consigned to low status or "survival jobs" often located in the secondary labour market where degrees and diplomas are not necessary and where the oft-cited requirement of having "Canadian experience" does not exist (Banerjee and Phan, 2014; Bauder, 2003; Chicha,

2009; Malik and Manroop, 2017). As previously mentioned, because of the location of these jobs, the advantages associated with participation in the primary labour market such as career advancement and returns to education, are minimal (Ibid.). In addition to impacting objective measures of career success, research by Yap et al. (2010) and Yap et al. (2013) also found that skill discounting negatively impacts subjective career success, especially among visible minority immigrants.

1.5.4 Intersectional identities and career success

In addition to the various studies cited above that examine the influence of specific aspects of an individual's social identity on their career outcomes, a number of studies have also discussed the impact of multiple and intersecting social identities such as race, gender and immigration status, on the career experiences and outcomes of individuals. For example, Mighty (1997), who examined the impact of demographic diversity on the work experiences and career outcomes of racialized immigrant women in Canada, found that these women face a situation of "triple jeopardy" in organizations where race, gender, and immigration status intersect and interact to seriously constrain opportunities to achieve career success. Similarly, Chicha (2009, 2012) who examined the deskilling phenomenon among immigrants in Quebec found that the multiple social identities of visible minority female immigrants in the province combined to cause a unique set of experiences for these individuals in the labour market.

Unlike the "monist" approach that positions a single inequality as foundational to others (King, 1988 cited in Harnois, 2015), the intersectional approach argues that individuals with multiple minority statuses often experience treatment that stems from multiple, interconnected

systems of inequality (Browne and Misra, 2003; Crenshaw, 1989, 1991; Harnois, 2015; McBride, Hebson and Holgate, 2015; Zanoni et al., 2010). Applied to the experiences of Black - immigrant - women who are the focus of our study, an intersectional approach or analysis therefore suggests that the effects of each individual point of inequality are not simply additive, but that they may be multiplicative, resulting into more significant and profound experiences of discrimination and oppression for these individuals (Harnois, 2015).

Table 1: Summary of extant literature on the factors that influence career success

Themes	References
Organizational career management practices	
- **Practices that enhance competencies**	Van der Sluis and Poell (2003); Sheridan, Slocum Jnr and Buda (1997); Noe and Wilkzietsma (1993); Pil and Leana (2000); Pennings, Lee and van Witteloostuijn (1998); Melero (2010); Lyness and Thompson (2000); Suutari (2003); Lazarova and Caligiur (2001); Capelli (2004); Zikic, J. (2015)
- **Practices that affect relationships**	Eby et al. (2008); Singh, Ragins and Tharenou (2009); Allen et al. (2004); Metz and Tharenou (2001); Gong, Chen and Yang (2014); Ouerdian, Malek and Dali (2018); Kram (1985); Noe et al. (2002); Eby, Rhodes and Allen (2007); Scandura and Pellegrini (2007); Fagenson (1988); Kammeyer-Mueller and Judge (2008); Seibert, Kraimer and Liden (2001); Adler and Kwon (2002); Ibarra (1993); Michael and Yukl (1993); Langford (2000); Burt (1997); Kraimer, Seibert and Astrove (2015); Liden, Sparrowe and Wayne (1997); Sherman et al. (2012); Dienesch and Liden (1986); Ilies, Nahrgang

	and Morgenson (2007); Harris and Kacmar (2005); Grestner and Day (1997); Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995); Sparrowe and Liden (1997); Deluga (1994); Wayne, Shore and Liden (1997); Dulebohn et al. (2012); Lam, Yik and Schaubroeck (2002)
- **Practices the provide information**	Suazo, Martinez and Sandoval (2009); Boswell and Boudreau (2002); Dekker, De Grip and Heijke (2002); Roberson and Block (2001)
Individual-level factors	
- **Human capital**	Becker (1964); Stober (1990); Ballout (2007); Tharenou, Latimer and Conroy (1994); Stroh, Brett and Reilly (1992); Sheridan, Slocum Jnr and Buda (1997); Burt (1997); Seibert, Kraimer and Liden (2001); Fugate, Kinicki and Ashforth (2004); Cox and Harquail (1991); Powell and Butterfield (1994. 1997); Whitely, Dougherty and Dreher (1991); Lubit (2001); Tharenou (1997); Biemanna and Braakmann (2013); Lyness and Thompson (2000); Suutari (2003); Eby, Butts and Lockwood (2003); Wayne et al. (1999)
- **Motivation**	Whitely, Dougherty and Dreher (1991); Ayree and Debrah (1993); Orpen (1994); Steffy and Jones (1988); Abele and Wiese (2008)

Social identity barriers	
- **Race**	Jones Jnr. (1986); Baldi and McBrier (1997); Hayes and James (2000); Anderson and Shapiro (1996); Burnum, Liden and DiTomaso (1995); Durden and Gaynor (1998); Holzer (1998); Juhn (2003); Yap et al. (2010, 2013); Rivkin (1995); Maxwell (1994); Thomas and Alderfer (1989); Greenhaus, Parasuraman and Wormley (1990); Nkomo and Cox Jnr (1990); Cox and Nkomo (1991); Skaggs and DiTomaso (2004); Weeden (2002); Ashforth and Mael (1989); Ragins and Gonzalez (2003); Dreher and Cox (1996); Thomas (1990); James (2000); Dreher and Ash (1990); Ragins (1994); Tsui and O'Reilly (1989); Sue, Lin and Rivera (2009); Constantine and Sue (2007); Offermann et al. (2014)
- **Gender**	DiPrete and Soule (1986); Cannings (1991); Schneer and Reitman (1995); Stroh, Brett and Reilly (1992); Eagly, Makhijani and Klonsy (1992); Boulet (2014); Diversity Lead (2013, 2015); Kirchmeyer (2006); Waldfogel (1998); Tharenou (1999); Valvour and Tolber (2003); Valcour and Ladge (2008); Loughran and Zissimopoulos (2009); Korenman and Neumark (1991); Loh

	(1996); Kirchmeyer (1998, 2002); Budig and England (2001); Anderson, Binder and Krause (2003); Cukrowska-Torzewska and Matysiak (2018); Chicha (2009); Landau and Arthur (1992); Lyness and Thompson (2000); Podolny and Baron (1997); Mehra, Kilduff and Brass (1998); Seron (2016); Heilman (2012); Eagly and Karau (2002); Schein (2007)
- **Immigration status**	Picot (2004); Aydemir and Skuterud (2004); Arcand (2009); Scassa (1994); Creese and Kambere (2003); Sweetman (2003); Ferrer and Riddell (2008); Zeng and Xie (2004); Borjas (1994); Reitz (2007); Friedberg (2000); Kanas and van Tubergen (2009); Lancee and Bol (2017); Malik and Manroop (2017); Nakhaie (2007); Nakhaie and Kazemipour (2013); Arcand, Lenoir-Achdjian and Helly (2009); Hakak, Holzinger and Zicik (2010); Gauthier (2016); Hou and Picot (2003); Banerjee and Phan (2014); Law and Kim (2005); Weeden (2002); Bauder (2003); Boyd and Schellenberg (2007); Man (2004); Girard and Smith (2012); Esses, Dietz and Bhardwaj (2006); Li (2001); Li and Li (2008)

1.6 Conclusion

In conclusion, career success research posits that factors at the organizational as well as individual levels impact career success. At the organizational level, studies have emphasized the role of organizational career management practices that enhance competencies, affect relationships, and provide information. At the individual level, human capital as well as motivational factors have been cited as important antecedents of career success. However, although career success scholarship is unequivocal about the role that these factors play in enhancing career success, a rather extensive body of research has established that social identities play an equally important or greater role in producing career outcomes.

As we have shown, identity attributes such as race, gender and immigration status can impact career success in a number of ways. On the one hand, social identities can impact human capital accumulation and use which can, in turn, influence individuals' performance and ultimately their career success. On the other hand, social identities can become the basis of "in-group" formation and "out-group" exclusion which, in a workplace setting, has implications for access to useful career-related resources and the overall treatment that individuals receive from peers and superiors in the way of career support.

As it relates to Black women who are immigrants in Quebec, our review of extant literature suggests that individual aspects of their identity as well as a convergence of social identity attributes can impact their human capital accumulation and use and also the level of career-related support that they receive from their organizations. In terms of the relative influence of each set of factors, research suggests that a lack of access to or exclusion from organizational resources will more likely impact their opportunities to achieve career success. The next chapters of this research

paper will examine the perceptions of career success among a group of Black women who are immigrants in Quebec with a view to better understanding the relative impact of these different variables vis-à-vis their career success.

Chapter 2: Purpose of Research and Research Questions

From the discussion in the previous chapter, it is evident that immigrants are a major feature of the labour market landscape in Quebec. Although official discourse and public policy discussions continue to emphasize the importance of immigration for labour market growth in particular, and economic policy in general, research continues to show that immigrants in Quebec face multifarious challenges with respect to their labour market integration. For Black immigrant women, these challenges appear at multiple levels and seemingly compound because of "interlocking categories" (Shields, 2008) of their social identity (Bellemare, 2015; Chicha, 2009).

Despite the increasing numbers of immigrants integrating the labour market in Quebec, there is surprisingly little research that specifically focuses on the career success of the entire immigrant population, or a cross-section thereof. For the most part, existing scholarship has focused on the labour market barriers affecting either all immigrants or groups of immigrants (see Bellemare, 2015; Boulet, 2016; Chicha, 2009; Chicha and Charest, 2008; Eid, 2012; Martin, 2007) and the negative labour market experiences arising from the presence of such barriers, including low earnings (Boudarbat and Boulet, 2007; Boudarbat and Connolly, 2013; Boulet, 2012) and degree discounting (Bellemare, 2015; Chicha, 2009). Studies such as Fihri, Ledent and Renaud (2004) and Lacroix, Gagnon and Lortie (2017) have been the exceptions, focusing instead on the career trajectories of immigrants. In their study, for example, Fihri, Ledent and Renaud (2004) examined immigrant women's access to and continuation in employment in Quebec while Lacroix, Gagnon and Lortie (2017) considered immigrants' access to a first job of any kind, and access to the first job corresponding to pre-migration level of education according to gender and national origins. However, while they have been informative in that they contribute to our overall

understanding of the career development of immigrants in the province, they, too, do little to shed light on the career success of immigrant employees and the factors that contribute to their career success.

Yet, as previously noted, investigating the career success of employees is important, not only from a theoretical standpoint, but from a practical one as well. Perceptions of career success have been linked to the attainment of competitive advantage, which is of vital importance to organizations (Garavan and Colahan, 1996). Perceived career success has also been linked to the psychological well-being of individuals, which has implications for performance and motivation (Peluchette, 1993). In light of the importance of career success research for both organizations and employees, and given the dearth in existing scholarship in Quebec, this study will focus on the career success of immigrants in the province, and more specifically, the career success of Black immigrant women and the factors that influence their career success.

2.1 Problem Statement

Before elaborating on our problem statement, it is apt to revisit the findings of research that consider the different variables that influence individuals' career success. One research tradition, mainly espoused by economists, advances that individual-level factors, including human capital and motivational factors, are the most important determinants of an individual's career success. According to this stream of research, it is the amount and type of personal input from the individual, such as their type and level of education and work experience, as well as levels of motivation, that are most important in predicting career outcomes. On the other hand, researchers from a number of other fields, including management, sociology and social psychology, reject the

human capital and motivational postulates and instead stress the importance of organizational factors in determining individuals' career success. According to these scholars, it is the availability of organizational support for employees that most accurately predicts their career success.

Organizations indeed play a pivotal role in facilitating and enhancing the career success of employees. As key actors in employment decisions and the settings in which workers perform, organizations are more susceptible to influence individual career outcomes (Britton, 2000; Britton and Logan, 2008; Reskin, McBrier and Kmec, 1999; Skaggs and DiTomaso, 2004; Smith and Joseph, 2010;). Prior research shows that organizations influence individual career outcomes through organization career management practices (OCM), which provide visibility, and help improve the productive capabilities of employees (Bagdadli and Gianecchini, 2019). More specifically, research has shown that OCM practices that enhance individual competencies, provide information, and promote relationships are key determinants of their career success (Ibid.).

Alongside the studies that emphasize the critical role of organizations in promoting career success, others have found that employees do not benefit equally from these career-enhancing practices and policies which lead to career success. Overall, these studies have found that minority-group employees' work experiences, as well as their career outcomes, generally differ from that of the majority group. For minority-group employees, various empirical studies have shown that their sociodemographic attributes are important considerations which come into play in organizational processes and dynamics, and that lead to career success (Browne and Misra, 2003; Combs, 2003; Cunningham and Sagas, 2007; Del Carmen Triana, Garcia and Colella, 2010; Greenhaus, Parasurman and Wormley; 1990; Igbaria and Wormley, 1992, 1995; Ridgeway, 1997; Smith and Calasanti, 2005; Skaggs and DiTomaso, 2004; Smith and Joseph, 2010; Ward, 2004; Wilkof and Schneer, 1995).

Studies that are grounded in social identity theory and the in-group, out-group approach posit that the social construction of race, gender and immigration status leads to experiences of access and treatment discrimination in organizations, which ultimately impact the career success of these employees (Bell, Kwesiga and Berry, 2010Thomas, 1990; Thomas and Alderfer, 1989;). Access discrimination occurs when employers refuse to hire workers for certain jobs, or where they are prevented from entering an occupation on the basis of factors that are not job-related (Bell, Kwesiga and Barry, 2010; Cunningham and Sagas, 2007). Treatment discrimination, on the contrary, is the differential on-the-job treatment that individuals receive on the basis of factors that are not job-related (Ibid.). In instances where a variety of social identities and status dimensions interact, such as is the case with Black immigrant women, individuals are said to face a situation of "multiple jeopardy in discrimination" (Landrine et al., 1995) that lead to disproportionately lower outcomes in terms of their career success.

Extant research has found that minority-group employees' career success is not only impacted by the discriminatory treatment that they receive from individuals and groups within organizations, but by an organization's culture as well. Schein (1992, cited in Smith and Joseph, 2010) defines group or organizational culture as the basic, tacit, and shared assumptions espoused by a group of people that underlie and determine their perceptions, beliefs, attitudes, feelings, and behaviour. Researchers have suggested that work organizations are neither gender-neutral nor race-neutral, but that they may be "gendered" and "racialized" (Acker, 1990; Britton, 2000; Nkomo, 1992). Acker (1990) defines the "gendered" organization as an organization where "advantage and disadvantage, exploitation and control, action and emotion, meaning and identity are patterned through and in terms of a distinction between male and female, masculine and feminine" (Acker, 1990 p. 146). Relying on Acker's conceptualization of the "gendered"

organization, various authors have also argued that organizations are "racialized", that is, that organizations have been defined, conceptualized, and structured in terms of a distinction between races such that institutionalized norms and values and taken-for granted procedures, policies and interaction styles have evolved in relation to the experiences of white men and in a manner that tend to privilege this group (Smith and Calasanti, 2005; Smith and Joseph, 2010). As Smith and Calasanti (2005) note, "despite their apparent objectivity, the ways in which workplace organizations normally operate often unintentionally exclude other racial, ethnic and gender groups" (Smith and Calasanti, 2005, p. 308).

2.2 Purpose Statement and Research Questions

The purpose of the present research is to examine how Black immigrant women in Quebec perceive career success. Our study will be guided by the following questions:

1. How is career success perceived by Black immigrant women in Quebec?

2. How do Black immigrant women evaluate the role of organizational support in helping them achieve objective career success and in enhancing their perceptions subjective career success?

3. What are Black immigrant women's perceptions regarding the role of social identities and the interaction of social categorizations on opportunities for them to achieve career success?

2.3 The Conceptual Framework

Based on our review of extant literature, and considering the aims of this research paper, we propose the following conceptual framework which will guide us in our investigation of Black immigrant women's perceptions regarding their career success.

Individual factors	Barriers	Career Success
- Race - Gender - Immigration status - Human capital - Motivation	Absence of or limited access to practices or policies that enhance competencies or that provide information - Absence of or limited access to practices that enhance relationships - Micro-aggressivity in the workplace - Absence of or limited access to policies that promote work/life balance - Organizational image of ideal leaders - Lack of openness and policies encouraging diversity - Lack of recognition of previous education and experiences qualifications	**Objective career success** - Promotions - Salary increases - Status/prestige - Occupational progression **Subjective career success** - Job satisfaction - Career satisfaction - 'Other-referent' satisfaction - 'Self-referent' satisfaction

Organizational factors

- Organization career management (OCM) practices

After this presentation of the objectives of our research, in the next chapter, we present our research methodology.

Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology

This chapter examines the methodological considerations of our research regarding the perceptions of career success among Black immigrant women in Quebec. It situates our research into the wider field of Industrial Relations and describes the research design, selection of our sample, as well as exposes our interview guide.

3.1 Research Design

The purpose of this study is to understand the perceptions that Black immigrant women in Quebec hold regarding their career success. At the centre of this research then, is an interest in understanding how these women interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experience. Given the objectives of our study, a qualitative rather than a quantitative approach was adopted for use in our research.

Qualitative research, according to Merriam and Tisdell (2016), seeks to capture an in-depth understanding of individuals' views, experiences and behaviors. Its overall purpose is to understand "how people make sense out of their lives, delineate the process (rather than the outcome or product) of meaning-making, and describe how people interpret what they experience (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016; p. 15). Patton (1985, p. 1 cited by Merriam and Tisdell, 2016, p. 15-16) explains that "[Qualitative research] is an effort to understand situations in their uniqueness as part of a particular context and the interactions there. This understanding is an end in itself, so that it is not attempting to predict what may happen in the future necessarily, but to understand the nature of that setting – what it means for participants to be in that setting, what their lives are like,

what's going on for them, what their meanings are, what the world looks like in that particular setting – and in the analysis to be able to communicate that faithfully to others who are interested in that setting…The analysis strives for depth of understanding." Qualitative investigators figuratively put brackets around a temporal and spatial domain in the social world (van Maanen, 1979 cited in Merriam and Tisdell, 2016) as they seek to understand the reality of issues and personal experiences from an individual's perspective and use language to reveal, discover and uncover data rather than rely on scientific experiments and instruments, as is the case with the quantitative approach (Braun and Clarke, 2013).

Braun and Clarke (2013) have noted that research design is the blueprint of a qualitative study. The research design incorporates the goal of the study, the theoretical framework, the research questions, ethical considerations, and the methodology used to generate and analyze data (Ibid.). They further note that the research design is the planning phase and the most critical phase of the research project. Research planning focuses on developing the best methods for exploring the research topic. Studies that are not supported by a good plan are at risk of wasting both the participant's as well as the researcher's time (Ibid.). The research design is determined by the epistemological commitments (Hays and Wood, 2011).

Among the plurality of qualitative research designs that exist (Cunliffe, 2011; Gill, 2014; Merriam and Tisdell, 2016), within the context of the present research, we have opted to use the qualitative phenomenological approach. According to Merriam and Tisdell (2016), the qualitative phenomenological approach is well-suited for research that seeks to explore and understand people's conscious experience of their life-world. Phenomenology, according to Sanders (1982), is the study of conscious phenomena: an analysis of the way in which things or experiences show themselves. It is a way to access the world as it is experienced pre-reflectively (Merriam and

Tisdell, 2016), Ibid.) and seeks to make explicit the implicit structure and meaning of human experiences (Sanders, 1982). Sanders (1982) mentions that there are three fundamental components to designing a phenomenological research model: 1. Determining the limits of what and who is to be investigated; 2. Collection of data; and, 3. Phenomenological analysis of the data. Each of these elements will be explicated below.

3.1.1 Determining the "what"

Determining the "what" to be investigated involves investigating the "the thing itself" (Sanders, 1982). The aim of this study being to understand Black immigrant women's perceptions regarding their career success, the "thing", then, are the views that these women hold, that is, the accounts that they convey and the meaning(s) that they ascribe to the notion of career success.

As discussed in the previous chapter, the concept of career success is variously defined. When success is judged by others and based on observable, measurable and verifiable criteria, this is referred to as objective career success in extant literature. By contrast, when success is measured in terms of an individual's feelings with reference to certain intrinsic indices, this type of career success is referred to as subjective career success. In the context of this study, an important component of the "what" is understanding how career success is evaluated by Black immigrant women in Quebec, and by extension, to understand the extent to which their views and experiences conform to or depart from the pre-existing notions of career success. Furthermore, our study is also concerned with understanding these women's perceptions regarding the role that OCM practices, as well as social identities, play in promoting or inhibiting their career success.

3.1.2   Determining the "who": Participants

After determining the "what", the next concern is determining the "who". Sanders (1982) notes that the persons to be investigated are those who possess the characteristics under observation, or those who can give reliable information on the phenomenon or phenomena being researched.

Our population of interest included Black immigrant women who are employed in organizations in Quebec. To determine who qualified as a Black woman, we adopted the definition of race furnished by Fitzgerald (2007, cited in Scott and McClain, 2018) who notes that race denotes a group of persons who share similar physical characteristics, including skin colour, hair texture, and facial features. The women who were selected to participate in this study had certain physical features in common such as skin colour, hair texture, and facial features. However, they did not have similar country origins, as the Black immigrant community in Quebec are from different regions of the world, including Africa, the Caribbean and even Europe.

We also focused on recruiting Black women who are skilled immigrants. According to Statistics Canada, an "immigrant" is anyone who is, or has been, landed immigrants in Canada. A landed immigrant is anyone who has been granted the right to live in Canada permanently by immigration authorities. This definition of an immigrant carries certain legal entitlements for the person holding such a status, particularly in the areas of settlement and employment, and therefore excludes illegal (or undocumented) migrants, as well as non-permanent residents who are also foreign born, but who do not have the right to live and work permanently in Canada. As it pertains to the "skilled immigrant" sub-category, in this study we used educational attainment as a proxy for "skill" such that "skilled immigrants" denote individuals who possess a bachelor's degree or

higher. Considering the aims of this study and with a view to ensuring that participants had adequate experience, knowledge, and characteristics to address the research questions, we only included Black immigrant women who were actively participating in the labour market in Quebec.

3.1.3 Determining the "how"

For research such as ours that seeks to understand the "lived world" (Wertz, 2005) of study participants, interviewing is necessary as it allows the researcher to observe feelings, thoughts, intentions, and behaviours (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). Patton (2015, p. 426 cited in Merriam and Tisdell, 2016, p. 108) notes that we interview people because "we cannot observe how people have organized the world and the meanings they attach to what goes on in the world. We have to ask people questions about those things [which will enable us] to enter into the other person's perspective."

3.1.3.1 Sampling Procedure

A non-random, purposive snowball-sampling method was used to identify participants in this research (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016; Woodley and Lockard, 2016). Snowball sampling is a sampling strategy whereby selected research participants are asked to identify other research participants within their social circles (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016; Woodley and Lockard, 2016). One advantage of this sampling method is that it allowed the researcher to identify participants who would be otherwise difficult to reach (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016; Woodley and Lockard, 2016). In addition, it allowed the researcher to exercise control over the sample in that she was

able to gain access to individuals who can provide a great deal of information about issues of central importance to the purpose of the inquiry (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016).

During the early phase of this study, the researcher, who is also a Black immigrant woman, identified six Black immigrant women who are a part of her network. The prospective participants were contacted by telephone, and the objectives of the study were explained to them. If they were willing to be interviewed, a mutually convenient time was set for the interview. All six of the women whose participation was initially solicited agreed to be interviewed. Mindful of the purposeful and criterion-based nature of sampling (Patton, 2002) that was being followed, these six women were asked to recommend other women who are a part of their individual networks. As the researcher had also aimed to obtain multi-perspectival views, in addition to identifying women who had at least a first degree at the time of immigration, emphasis was also placed on recruiting women who were from different countries and continents, women who had different professional and academic backgrounds, and women whose labour market experience in Quebec spanned different years and sectors.

3.1.3.2 Sampling Size

Unlike in quantitative research where there is generally a recommended sample size, Merriam and Tisdell (2016) posit that in qualitative studies, there is no ideal number as the sample size will depend on the questions being asked, the data being gathered, the analysis in progress, and the resources that are available to support the study. What is however needed, is an adequate number of participants to answer the question posed at the beginning of the study.

Lincoln and Guba (1985, cited in Merriam and Tisdell, 2016) recommend sampling until a point of saturation or redundancy is reached. Grady (1998, p. 26 cited in Saunders et al., 2018, p.1896) provides a pithy description of the notion of saturation as the point at which,

"New data tend to be redundant of data already collected. In interviews, when the researcher begins to hear the same comments again and again, data saturation is being reached... It is then time to stop collecting information and to start analysing what has been collected."

Based on our evaluation of several factors, including the quality of the data, saturation of themes, the value of the findings as regards the research questions (Saunders et al., 2018), as well as non-negligible time constraints, our recruitment of participants ended with 25 Black immigrant women who are employed in different organizations in Quebec.

3.2 Data Collection Procedure

A preliminary step in the data collection process involved preparing an interview guide in both French and English. As our research was concerned with obtaining participants' perspectives regarding their experiences and feelings of career success, the questions were open-ended, and they were developed based on the findings of previous studies on career success and the factors that influence individuals' experiences and feelings of career success. The line of questioning was structured to capture an overall understanding of participants' experiences. When necessary, prompts were used to obtain more elaborate responses from the participants or for going deeper into the narratives that they recounted (Rowley, 2012). For example, prompts involved asking participants to provide more specific examples of an experience they recounted, or to expound on a feeling that they were trying to relate. Probes were also used, including the silent probe which

involved waiting quietly for the participant to continue speaking (Rowley, 2012). In addition to the interview guide that the researcher used during her one-on-one, in-depth interviews with participants, a brief questionnaire[21] aimed at obtaining certain demographic information was prepared, also in French and English, and circulated to the participants before each interview. Figure 2 below presents our interview guide. Tables 2, 3 and 4 present a summary of the operationalization of our variables.

Figure 2: Interview Guide[22]

1. I understand that since you have immigrated, you have occupied positions in organizations here in Quebec. Do you consider that you have been successful in your career and why?
2. Tell me, in detail, what career success means to you.
3. What factors do you believe have impacted your career success?
4. Tell me, in detail, how you believe that these factors have impacted your career success.
5. Have you encountered any challenges or barriers insofar as achieving career success is concerned?
6. Tell me about these challenges or barriers in detail.

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[21] A copy of the questionnaire can be found in the Annex A.
[22] A copy of the French version of the Interview Guide is in Annex B.

7. Do you believe that certain challenges or barriers have been more important in determining your career success?

8. Tell me about this in detail.

9. In your opinion, what can organizations do to promote the career success of employees?

Table 2: Operationalization of independent variables – OCM practices

Categories	Sub-categories	Questions	References
Organizational career management (OCM) practices	Practices that enhance competencies	Does your organization provide opportunities for competency development?	Van der Sluis and Poell (2003); Sheridan, Slocum Jnr and Buda (1997); Noe and Wilkzietsma (1993); Pil and Leana (2000); Pennings, Lee and van Witteloostuijn (1998); Melero (2010); Lyness and Thompson (2000); Suutari (2003); Lazarova and Caligiur (2001); Capelli (2004); Zikic, J. (2015)
	Practices that affect relationships	Does your organization provide or promote mentoring activities?	Eby et al. (2008); Singh, Ragins and Tharenou (2009); Allen et al. (2004); Metz and Tharenou

| | | Does your organization provide or promote networking activities?

Would you say that you have a special relationship with your supervisor? | (2001); Gong, Chen and Yang (2014); Ouerdian, Malek and Dali (2018); Kram (1985); Noe et al. (2002); Eby, Rhodes and Allen (2007); Scandura and Pellegrini (2007); Fagenson (1988); Kammeyer-Mueller and Judge (2008); Seibert, Kraimer and Liden (2001); Adler and Kwon (2002); Ibarra (1993); Michael and Yukl (1993); Langford (2000); Burt (1997); Kraimer, Seibert and Astrove (2015); Liden, Sparrowe and Wayne (1997); Sherman et al. (2012); Dienesch |
|---|---|---|---|

			and Liden (1986); Ilies, Nahrgang and Morgenson (2007); Harris and Kacmar (2005); Grestner and Day (1997); Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995); Sparrowe and Liden (1997); Deluga (1994); Wayne, Shore and Liden (1997); Dulebohn et al. (2012); Lam, Yik and Schaubroeck (2002)
	Practices that provide information	Does your organization have certain practices or structures in place that provide career-related information to supervisors	Suazo, Martinez and Sandoval (2009); Boswell and Boudreau (2002); Dekker, De Grip and Heijke (2002); Roberson and Block (2001)

		and unit heads such as career assessment centres, performance management practices, work abroad opportunities etc.?	

Table 3   : Operationalization of sociodemographic variables that act as barriers to career success

Categories	Sub-categories	Questions	References
Sociodemographic factors	Race	Do you feel that your race has influenced your career outcomes?	Jones Jnr. (1986); Baldi and McBrier (1997); Hayes and James (2000); Anderson and Shapiro (1996); Burnum, Liden and DiTomaso (1995); Durden and Gaynor (1998); Holzer (1998); Juhn (2003); Yap et al. (2010, 2013); Rivkin (1995); Maxwell (1994); Thomas and Alderfer (1989); Greenhaus, Parasuraman and Wormley (1990); Nkomo and Cox Jnr (1990); Cox and Nkomo

			(1991); Skaggs and DiTomaso (2004); Weeden (2002); Ashforth and Mael (1989); Ragins and Gonzalez (2003); Dreher and Cox (1996); Thomas (1990); James (2000); Dreher and Ash (1990); Ragins (1994); Tsui and O'Reilly (1989); Sue, Lin and Rivera (2009); Constantine and Sue (2007); Offermann et al. (2014)
	Gender	Do you feel that your gender has influenced your career outcomes?	DiPrete and Soule (1986); Cannings (1991); Schneer and Reitman (1995); Stroh, Brett and Reilly (1992); Eagly, Makhijani and Klonsy (1992);

			Boulet (2014); Diversity Lead (2013, 2015); Kirchmeyer (2006); Waldfogel (1998); Tharenou (1999); Valvour and Tolber (2003); Valcour and Ladge (2008); Loughran and Zissimopoulos (2009); Korenman and Neumark (1991); Loh (1996); Kirchmeyer (1998, 2002); Budig and England (2001); Anderson, Binder and Krause (2003); Cukrowska-Torzewska and Matysiak (2018); Chicha (2009); Landau and Arthur (1992); Lyness and Thompson

			(2000); Podolny and Baron (1997); Mehra, Kilduff and Brass (1998); Seron (2016); Heilman (2012); Eagly and Karau (2002); Schein (2007)
	Immigration status	Do you feel that your immigration status has influenced your career outcomes?	Picot (2004); Aydemir and Skuterud (2004); Arcand (2009); Scassa (1994); Creese and Kambere (2003); Sweetman (2003); Ferrer and Riddell (2008); Zeng and Xie (2004); Borjas (1994); Reitz (2007); Friedberg (2000); Kanas and van Tubergen (2009); Lancee and Bol (2017); Malik and Manroop (2017);

			Nakhaie (2007); Nakhaie and Kazemipour (2013); Arcand, Lenoir-Achdjian and Helly (2009); Hakak, Holzinger and Zicik (2010); Gauthier (2016); Hou and Picot (2003); Banerjee and Phan (2014); Law and Kim (2005); Weeden (2002); Bauder (2003); Boyd and Schellenberg (2007); Man (2004); Girard and Smith (2012); Esses, Dietz and Bhardwaj (2006); Li (2001); Li and Li (2008)

Table 4: Operationalization of dependent variables – Career success

Categories	Sub-categories	Questions	References
Career success	Objective career success	From a career standpoint, do you feel successful?	Judge et al. (1995); Ng et al. (2005); Heslin (2003, 2005); Abele and Spurk (2009); Frederickson (1998); Hall et al. (2005); Hall and Chndler (2005); Gattiker and Larwood (1986); Schneer and Reitman (1993); Richardsen et al. (1997); Wayne et al. (1999); Martins et al. (2002); Raabe et al. (2007)
	Subjective career success	Why do you say that you feel successful? What does career success mean to you?	

3.3 Data Analysis

Interviewing of participants began in March 2022 and concluded in August 2022. Interviews were mainly conducted online via Zoom ($n = 21$), but some women specifically requested that the interview take place over the phone ($n = 4$). On average, interviews lasted about 35 minutes, with the shortest interview lasting 22 minutes, and the longest one lasting about 75 minutes. Most of the interviews were conducted in French ($n = 21$) and the rest were done in English ($n = 4$). Each interview was recorded and transcribed using the automated transcription service of Amberscript, an online transcription platform. After the automated transcriptions were complete, the researcher replayed each recording while rereading the transcribed text to ensure consistency between the recordings and the transcriptions. Manual adjustments were made to the latter where necessary.

As previously mentioned, as a method within the interpretive research paradigm, phenomenological research is good for obtaining people's perceptions of the world in which they live and what it means to them from their own perspectives (Creswell, 2013). In analyzing the descriptions of lived experiences provided by study participants, Wertz (2005 citing Giorgi, 1975, 1985; Giorgi and Giorgi, 2003) asserts that four steps are involved. These include: 1. reading the entire description in order to grasp the sense of the whole; 2. rereading the description and demarcating shifts in meaning in the text with a sensitive interest in the phenomenon under investigation; 3. reflecting on each and every meaning unit in order to discern what it reveals about the phenomenon under investigation or what research-relevant insight can be gained from it; and 4. synthesizing these reflections and insights into a consistent statement that expresses the structure of the experience. In phenomenological research, every descriptive statement by research

participants is accounted for, and its analytic treatment is available for public scrutiny (Creswell, 2013).

Analysis of the data was guided by the three research questions which were previously identified, viz., understanding 1. overall perceptions of career success among Black immigrant women; 2. perceptions regarding the role of OCM practices in promoting experiences and feelings of career success; and 3. perceptions regarding the impact of social identities on experiences and feelings of career success. A first step in our analysis of the data involved reading and rereading the transcripts to identify relevant themes to our research. For each transcript, common themes and concepts were identified and relevant quotes were extracted. A note log was used to record the data.

The next phase in our analysis involved ordering, refining and synthesizing the data for the purpose of presentation. During this process, participant accounts were compared to identify uniformities and diversities. According to Glaser (1965), the constant comparison method has important benefits especially in qualitative research, as it allows the researcher to see categories as having an internal development as well as changing relations to other categories. Themes were identified and subsequently grouped together and labelled with a code. By creating themes, we were able to link underlying meanings into categories for analysis (Graneheim and Lundman, 2004). Relevant quotes from the transcripts were grouped together with the identified themes for presentation. Before presenting our findings in the next chapter, we illustrate in Tables 5 and 6 below the different themes that were identified and the codes that were used in our content analysis.

Table 5: Codification of themes by categories-OCM practices variables

Theme	OCM practices directly influence perceptions of objective and subjective career success		
Category	OCM practices		
Sub-category	Practices that enhance competencies	Practices that affect relationships	Practices that provide information
Codes	- On-the-job training and learning activities - Development assignments including international assignments or lateral moves	- Mentorship programs or activities - Networking programs or activities - Leader-member exchange (LMX)	- Assessment centres - Performance management - Training - International assignments

	- Tuition reimbursement		

Table 6: Codification of themes by categories-Sociodemographic variables

Theme	Sociodemographic factors are perceived barriers to career success		
Category	Social identity		
Sub-category	Race	Gender	Immigration status
Code	- Access and treatment discrimination - Exclusion - Microaggression in the workplace	- Marital status - Age and number of children - Stereotypes and biases related to ability to lead	- Lack of knowledge of official languages - Foreign accents - Education outside of Quebec and Canada

			- Limited access to networks
			- Licensing requirements
			- Skill discounting or the non-recognition of previous education and previous work experience

Chapter 4: Findings

In this chapter, we present the findings of our research concerning Black immigrant women's perceptions vis-à-vis their career success. Our study was notably guided by three main questions:

1. How is career success perceived by Black immigrant women in Quebec?

2. How do Black immigrant women evaluate the role of organizational support in helping them achieve objective career success and in enhancing their subjective career success?

3. What are Black immigrant women's perceptions regarding the impact of social identities and the interaction of social categorizations on opportunities for them to achieve career success?

The chapter is divided into four main sections and each section will present the results of the interviews that we conducted with the women. In the first section, we present aggregate data regarding the profiles of the women who participated in our study. More specifically, we present data regarding their country origins, their qualification levels pre-immigration, their language competencies, as well as information relating to the number of years they have been in Canada. In the second section, we focus on the concept of career success and present findings relating to their understandings and feelings of career success. In the third section, we report on their perceptions regarding the role of organizations in helping them achieve objective career success and in enhancing their feelings of subjective career success, and finally, in the fourth section, we present findings regarding the perceived role that social identity plays in their career success. Of particular note, our presentation in the latter section will examine perceived barriers at different levels of analysis- the micro- or individual-level, the meso- or organizational-level, as well as the macro- or institutional-level.

4.1 Biographical profile of participants

Twenty-five Black immigrant women were interviewed between the months of March and August 2022. All 25 women are currently employed in organizations across various industries in Quebec and had, at a minimum, a bachelor's degree upon arriving in Canada.

Table 7 below presents the number of participants by region and country of origin.

Table 7: Number of participants by region and country of origin

Number of participants by region and country of origin		
Africa	Togo	9
	Ivory Coast	5
	Cameroon	2
	Benin	2
	Burkina Faso	1
	Uganda	1
	Burundi	1
The Americas	Dominica	1
	Haiti	1
	Jamaica	1
Europe	France	1

As it relates to their qualifications, over 50% of the women interviewed had a bachelor's degree when they arrived in Canada. One-fifth of them had a masters degree, and a similar proportion had a doctoral degree, including a medical degree. In terms of place of obtention of the highest degree before arriving in Canada, seven women obtained degrees in European countries (two in France, three in Germany and two in Belgium) and one obtained her degree in China. The other 17 women obtained their highest degree at immigration in their region of origin but not necessarily in their country of origin (Africa and the Americas). Chart 1 below presents the number of participants by degree type at immigration.

Chart 1 Number of participants by degree type at immigration
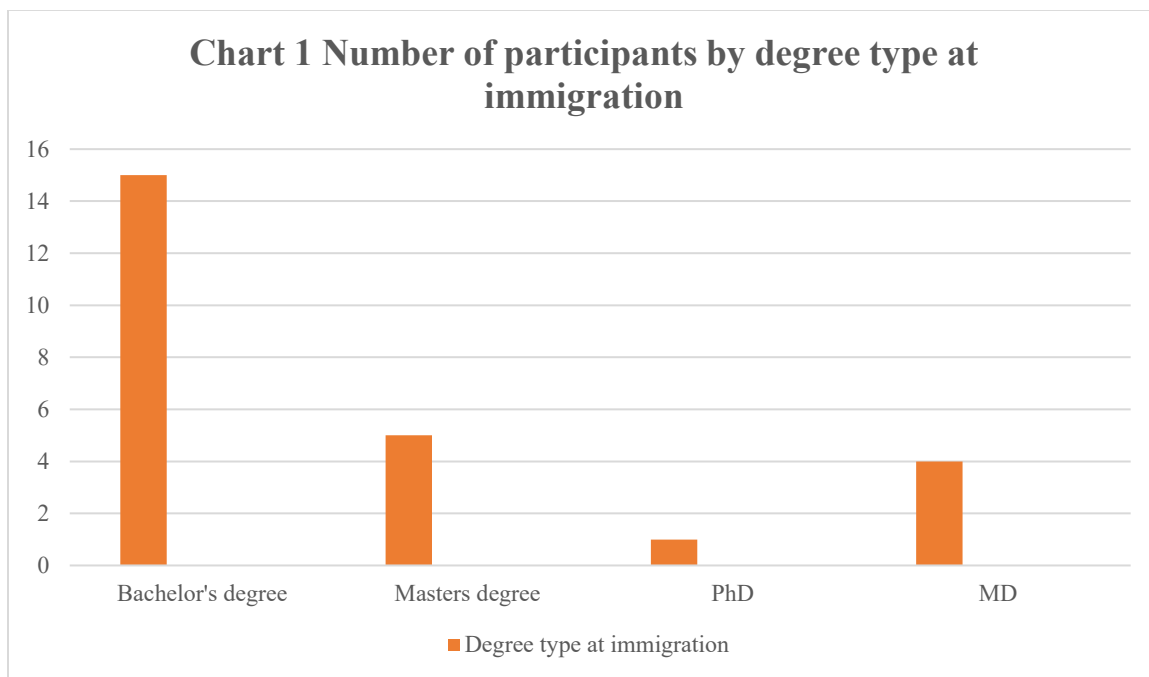
Table 8 presents the language proficiency of the women who were interviewed. Twenty of the 25 women interviewed identified as native French speakers while five identified as native English speakers. Of the five women who identified as native English speakers, four mentioned

that they acquired competencies in French prior to or upon arrival in Quebec (one was fully proficient in French before arriving in Quebec and three learned French after arriving in Quebec). The fifth woman admitted to speaking very limited French although she has been in Quebec for six years. Among the native French speakers, four admitted that they were fully bilingual at arrival (two women studied in English in English-speaking countries, the second woman studied English and another foreign language up to the masters level and the third woman worked in an English-speaking environment for over 10 years before migrating).

Table 8: Language competencies at immigration

Language	Number of women
French only	16
English only	4
French and English	5

Table 9 below presents data relating to the number of years since the women have been in Canada. Most of the women interviewed have been in Canada for five or more years. The longest period cited in terms of presence in Canada was 18 years. Only two of the 25 women interviewed were very recent immigrants, that is, they have been in Canada for five years or less.

Table 9: Time since immigration

Period	Number of participants
Less than 5 years	2
5-10 years	8
10 years and over	15

Finally, in terms of their age at immigration, all of the women who participated in our study except one were below 50 years of age at immigration. Twelve women were in the 20-29 age group category, 11 in the 30-39 age group category and one was in the 40-49 age group category. Thirteen women were married with children at the time that they migrated, five were married without children, two were divorced with children, and five were single without children. One woman from the latter group has since married and become a mother.

After this brief presentation of the participants' biographical data, we now turn to presenting the data that we gathered regarding the women's perceptions of career success, as well as their perceptions regarding the role that meso- or organizational-level factors and micro- or individual-level factors such as their social identity, have played in evaluations of their career outcomes.

4.2 Perceptions of career success

According to existing research, individuals assess their career success in either objective or subjective terms. When success is judged by others and based on observable, measurable and verifiable criteria, this is referred to as objective career success. Salary, salary growth,

status/prestige, occupational responsibility, promotions, as well as occupational progression are the most widely used measures of objective career success in extant literature. By contrast, when success is measured in terms of an individual's feelings with reference to certain intrinsic indices, this type of career success is referred to as subjective career success. Furthermore, subjective career success includes reactions to actual and anticipated career-related attainments across time and involves a wider range of outcomes than those identified using objective standards, for example (Heslin, 2005). Job satisfaction, which refers to the affect resulting from evaluating one's current working conditions, and career satisfaction, which is related to the evaluation of one's occupational development over time, are mainly used to operationalize subjective career success.

In addition to the above-note indicators regarding subjective career success, Heslin (2003, 2005) has advocated for the use of other measures, namely "self-referent" standards of success, such as when individuals compare their careers to their own career-related standards and aspirations and "other-referent" standards of success such as when an individual compares his/her career achievements to a social standard such as a reference group. By expanding the conceptualization of subjective career success, Heslin (2005) suggests that this will contribute to the improvement of the overall measurement of the concept not only from a theoretical point of view but from a practical one as well.

Regarding their perceptions of career success, of the 25 women interviewed almost 50% - or 11 women - said that they did not perceive that they had achieved career success. Eight women mentioned that they felt successful while the other six women said that they had only "partially" achieved career success. For 19 of the interviewees, therefore, the notion of career success was problematized in binary terms - they either felt that they were successful or that were not

successful. Caroline*[23], who responded that she did not feel successful, expressed this in the following terms:

"…*le succès de carrière, c'est comme avoir un point de départ et puis un point d'arrivée, tu vois un peu. Pour moi, quand on n'est pas arrivé à cette ligne d'arrivée là, pour moi le succès n'est pas comme atteint.*"

The six women who mentioned that they felt "partially" successful adopted a more nuanced view. From their perspective, success is best appreciated in degrees or along a continuum, and so while they admitted to achieving some degree of their idea of what success meant, they admitted that "full" success was not yet attained. Priscilla* articulated this idea in these terms:

"*De manière générale…je suis en voie. J'ai pas encore atteint mon plein potentiel ou bien ma pleine vision de comment je me vois dans un carrière. Donc, je continue, je suis en voie. Mais je te dirais que je peux pas dire que je suis déçue ou j'ai pas eu des opportunités, non. Mes efforts ont porté fruits, donc je continue. Donc, comme le mot dit, c'est une carrière. Je suis pas encore arrivée à la fin de mes projets.*"

Farrah* expressed a similar sentiment in the following terms:

" [*Ma carrière*] *est en bonne voie par rapport à ce que j'ai connu en France. Donc, pour moi, c'est à 75% atteinte et puis le 25% reste à chercher.*"

As it pertains to their understanding of the notion of career success, scholars such as Heslin (2005) posit that where individuals are called on to evaluate their careers, context matters. For the women who participated in our interviews this affirmation rang true as one key observation regarding their conceptualizations of career success is that their ideas were largely colored by their immigration experience. For some of the interviewees, career success encompassed continuity

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[23] Pseudonyms are used for each of the 25 participants in our research to protect their identities.

with their past lives, often expressed as an ability to obtain employment in their field of study or in an area analogous with their previous work experience. For others, however, career success was evaluated in terms of adaptability, this is, their ability to first adjust to their new circumstances and then thrive in these new realities.

Jane*, who was among the women who mentioned that she did not feel successful, defined career success mainly in terms of being able to work in the field for which she had trained. Prior to immigrating, Jane* practised as a pediatrician in her country and she disappointingly announced that she has only been able to find a job as a "*professionnelle de recherche*" in a state agency. She mentioned,

"Pour moi, réussir sa carrière c'est pas forcément avoir disons sa carrière de rêve, mais au moins faire ce qu'on aime faire ou bien ce qu'on a l'intention de faire. Travailler dans un emploi qui correspond en fait à nos qualifications, au diplôme qu'on a obtenu…"

Similarly, Pauline* who currently works as a supply teacher in an elementary school and who previously worked as an assistant director at a government agency that managed pension funds in her country, conceived of career success as being able to work in a field that she's qualified in, and where she also has work experience. She said,

" [Pour moi, le succès de carrière c'est], faire ce que vous avez appris en travaillant dans ce domaine-là. J'aurais aimé, par exemple, travailler dans une institution financière, c'est-à-dire dans mon domaine. Si j'avais trouvé un emploi dans ce domaine-là, ça m'aurait aidé. J'aurai dit que j'ai réussi, j'ai fait ce que j'aime, ce que j'ai appris mais ça n'a pas été, ça n'a pas été le cas."

For other women such as Francine* and Sherry*, career success encompassed notions of adaptation and adjustment to their new circumstances and realities, rather than continuity.

Francine*, for example, who held an administrative position in a bank before immigrating and who currently works as a "*technicienne de recherche*", related:

"Quand on est immigrant, c'est un enjeu pour intégrer le marché du travail. Il y a plein de points à considérer. Donc, pour une carrière réussie, c'est d'abord intégrer le marché du travail, s'adapter, okay, et cheminer dans cette carrière-là."

Sherry*, too, who has been working with an employment agency as a nurse for the past few years and who, like Francine*, mentioned that she feels successful in her career, explained, "I did Environmental Sciences before [arriving in Canada and] when I got here to Canada, I changed career because I wanted to get something that it wouldn't be difficult for me to get a job. And that's how I got into nursing. [For me, career success is] being able to get the right training in a career that is something you like… if you're able to get into a field that you like, go through the training, and actually work in it, and I mean it's paying off, for me, that is career success."

Furthermore, as it pertains to how career success is measured or manifested, of the 25 women interviewed, 15 described career success using objective measures while the other 10 women used subjective terms to describe the construct. Among the women who felt that they were successful in their careers, six described the concept using subjective terms while the other two women described it using objective criteria. Among the 11 women who mentioned that they did not feel that they were successful in their careers, 10 described the concept using objective measures such as remuneration and career advancement while one woman described the concept in subjective terms using subjective/self-referent criteria (Heslin, 2005). Of the six women who felt that they had "partially" succeeded, four evaluated career success using objective terms, one woman used objective/other-referent criteria and the other woman used subjective/self-referent criteria (Ibid.).

Among the women who described career success using objective terms, career advancement was a recurring theme - 12 women alluded to career advancement as a pertinent indicant of career success while three used remuneration as an indicator of success. All but two of the women in this group had been in Quebec for more than five years and seven had been in Quebec for 10 years and more.

Liliane*, who had mentioned that she did not feel successful, and Julie* and Suzie*, who said they felt "partially" successful, all conceptualized career success in terms of career advancement. Liliane*, who has over 10 years of work experience as a teacher before immigrating in 2018, but has not been able to find a permanent position in the teaching profession since this time, defined career success as,

"[Having] the position that you really want to hold in your field [and] being able to advance, like to reach the level that you want to reach in your career."

Julie* who currently works at a bank and who admits to starting "*à la porte d'entrée*" when she started working at the same institution about 14 years ago despite her degree in accounting and years of managerial experience in an NGO in her country, described career success in the following terms:

"*Pour moi, un succès de carrière, ça veut dire que je vais atteindre un stade où non seulement c'est ce que je veux faire mais un stade où je serais en mesure de [...] aller vers beaucoup plus quelque chose où je suis en mesure de pouvoir bâtir. [...] le mot bâtir, ça veut dire être dans une position où j'ai quand même la latitude de pouvoir amener mon point de vue, de pouvoir faire avancer les choses en fait, ne serait-ce qu'en termes de processus ou de procédures au sein de l'organisation. Vraiment pouvoir apporter ma touche à moi à l'organisation. Donc pour moi ça me dit OK, bon, mais tu es rendu là, je veux dire oui, c'est vrai qu'il y a le volet rémunération et*

tout ça. Mais au-delà de ça, pour moi, une carrière bien réussie, c'est une carrière ou j'aurais le sentiment d'avoir pu laisser quelque chose, quelque chose de vraiment tangible."

Finally, for Suzie* who had worked as vice president in charge of human resources at a regional bank before arriving in Quebec, and who had only recently obtained a managerial position in a bank in Montreal after having worked for a few years, first as a head-hunter with an agency, and then in a recruitment firm, career success was defined in very specific terms:

"*Réussir ma carrière ici ce serait accroitre mes connaissances déjà acquises et puis évoluer en termes de niveau chaque trois ans, comme chaque deux à trois ans max. Donc change de niveau, de palier etc. en termes de responsabilités, pas seulement en termes de salaire, mais en termes de responsabilités.*"

For other women such as Antoinette* who also worked as a teacher before arriving in Quebec five years ago, success was measured in terms of remuneration. In the past five years, Antoinette* spent a number of years working in the hotel industry before becoming an "*educatrice*" in a school daycare. Her conception of career success as being able to earn a good salary cannot be isolated from her overall experience in the labour market. She candidly narrated, *"Je dirais que, en ce qui me concerne, j'ai déjà fait un emploi que je qualifierais de sous-emploi, c'est-à-dire un petit travail. Donc, par petit travail, on entend un emploi qui n'est pas spécialement valorisant. Qui n'est pas lié avec le domaine de formation ou les objectifs professionnels. Donc j'ai choisi ce genre de travail car je venais juste d'arriver au Canada et je désirais m'intégrer et m'adapter à la société et à la culture québécoise le plus rapidement possible. Donc, à mon arrivée, je cherchais n'importe quel travail sans tenir compte de mon domaine de formation. Pour moi, la notion de succès de carrière veut dire exercer un métier où on aime les tâches qu'on fait et qu'on est passionné par le domaine. Ainsi, on a le sentiment d'accomplissement tout en ayant une très*

bonne rémunération. Donc, celui-ci, c'est-à-dire la rémunération, me permet de me sentir épanouie et heureuse et d'avoir atteint mes objectifs de vie. Parce que c'est à cause de la rémunération que je vais atteindre les objectifs de vie. "

Apropos of the women who evaluated career success using subjective terms, while they framed their ideas of career success using non-objective indicants, some of these women had, by their own admission, already achieved certain observable measures of career success. This idea that conceptions of subjective career success are "secondary" to the attainment of certain objective and verifiable measures of success is consistent with the findings of Nicholson and De Waal-Andrews (2005) and Stumpf and Tymon Jnr (2012). Erfa* who works in the field of logistics, defined success as being able to "*concilier le travail et la famille.*" She stated,

" [Le succès de carrière], ben, c'est quelque chose qui épanouit parce qu'une carrière c'est pas nécessairement devenir le patron, c'est pas nécessairement devenir la directrice du département…parce que moi, personnellement, là on m'a déjà proposé des postes de management et ça ne m'intéresse pas parce que je ne veux pas gérer les problèmes des autres premièrement, et deuxièmement, je veux m'occuper de ma famille. Ça, c'est ma priorité. Des gens qui rentrent tard le soir, qui ne s'occupent pas de leurs enfants, qui ont, qui payent des gardiennes. C'est les grands-parents qui s'occupent de leurs enfants, etc. Ça c'est bien, peut-être pour elle c'est ça la carrière. Peut-être que pour ces personnes-là, c'est une réussite, mais pour moi, ce n'est pas ça la réussite. Moi, la réussite, c'est de faire ce que j'aime et de pouvoir concilier le travail et la famille. C'est ça ma réussite.

However, even as she framed the concept of career success as being meaningful within the wider context of her personal life, she also remarked that *"[ici], j'ai toujours été capable d'être sélectionnée pour les postes que je voulais, qui m'intéressaient"*.

Likewise, Kadian*, a mother of five, conceptualized career success in terms of work-life balance. She defined the notion in the following terms:

" [Pour moi, le succès de carrière est de pourvoir] trouver un emploi qu'on aime, un emploi dans lequel on s'épanouit [et] quand je dis épanouissement, je pense à la conciliation travail famille."

Like Erfa*, Kadian* also mentioned that she felt successful in her career, and she admitted to feeling this way mainly because she had finally landed a permanent position in 2020 in an area where she had acquired significant work experience, the very first permanent position that she was able to obtain since she arrived in Quebec in 2008. She mentioned,

"J'ai ce sentiment [de réussite] là à cause du parcours en lui-même et parce que ça n'a pas été un parcours facile. Ça a été un parcours jalonné d'obstacles, donc ça n'a pas été facile. Et je vois que plusieurs dans ma position auraient abandonné. Mais bon, j'ai continué et j'ai continué. Il y a quand même une certaine persévérance à mon niveau. Donc, aujourd'hui, je peux dire que j'ai le sentiment [de succès]. J'ai le sentiment quand même d'avoir réussi ma carrière. Donc c'est en lien avec mon parcours."

Other women such as Amanda* and Anne* conceptualized career success in terms of feeling satisfied with their current working conditions and career path. Here as well, their sentiments were couched in the wider context of being able to find matching employment to their field of studies and/or areas of work experience. Amanda*, who decided to do a bachelor's degree in social work after immigration even though she had a masters degree in Economics that she obtained from a university in Germany, mentioned:

"Le succès de carrière, [pour] moi, j'ai toujours aimé travailler avec des gens. Donc, le fait que j'ai la formation en travail social et que j'ai eu le travail…Tu sais, j'ai eu à travailler avec les gens, à partager dans la vie, à les aider. C'est des petites actions qui apportent des changements

dans la vie de mes usagers, mais c'est ça qui me fait réaliser jusqu'à tel niveau je suis chanceuse. Je suis heureuse de travailler avec ces gens-là puis de pouvoir faire des petits changements dans leurs vies… à chaque jour que je quitte le travail et je retourne chez moi, je sens un accomplissement."

Anne* who also worked as a teacher at the secondary level in her country and is currently employed in a permanent position in a private school in Quebec noted,

"So, success for me, I would say it's just living your passion. So, for me, teaching is a passion and teaching in a good environment and I'm in a good environment. The school is a good school. So that contributes I would say to my success, you know, being in a good environment and being able to sustain myself..."

Finally, although 14 women mentioned that they felt successful, whether "fully"[24] successful or "partially" successful, it is important to note that, after assessment, only very few experienced "real" success, that is, career success that is "directly observable, measurable, and verifiable by an impartial third party" (Hughes, 1937 cited in Abele, Spurk and Volmer, 2011, p. 196). Based on their accounts, only about one-third or five women had achieved concrete progress in their careers, which was reflected in the promotions that they achieved over time[25]. Of these five women, four were among the group of women who had mentioned that they felt "partially" successful, and the remaining woman is from the group of women who reported that they felt "fully" successful. Among the remaining nine women, some cited salary growth as justifications for their feelings of career success. However, in all such instances, reported salary growth was based on formal processes established in the context of collective bargaining rather than on factors

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[24] The idea of "full" success denotes those instances where women responded in the affirmative to our question about whether they felt successful in their careers and who did not nuance their responses in any fashion.
[25] Of these five women, four were among the group of women who had mentioned that they felt "partially" successful, and the remaining woman is from the group of women who reported that they felt "fully" successful.

such as performance, as all of these women held unionized positions in the public or para-public sectors. As Heslin (2005) and Abele, Spurk and Volmer (2011) aptly remarked, use of salary growth as an indicator of "real" or objective career success in these contexts is debatable, as the career rewards that are experienced by employees are in no way related to their personal investment in the development of their careers.

In conclusion, just as the notion of career success is personalized, a fulsome appreciation of the concept in the lives of individuals requires contextualization. For the 25 women who participated in our study, their ideas of success, that is, success on the plane of cognition, and their feelings of success, that is, success on the plane of emotion, cannot be separated from their individual and albeit very personal experiences as immigrants in Quebec.

After this presentation on the interviewees' perceptions of career success, in the next section we present our findings concerning the women's perceptions of the role of organizational support in helping them achieve objective career success and in enhancing their feelings of subjective career success.

4.3 Perceptions of organizational support and career success

Existing scholarship shows that organizations play a pivotal role in promoting the career success of employees (Clarke, 2013; Wayne et al., 1999; Cable and Murray, 1999; Bagdadli and Gianecchini, 2019). According to the sponsored mobility model of career success, employees who "win" in their careers are those who receive greater sponsorship from the elites in their organizations (Ng et al., 2005). These employees are singled out to receive career sponsorship, obtain supervisor support, and obtain access to training and skill development opportunities,

which, ultimately, contribute to their experiences and feelings of career success. Bagdadli and Gianecchini (2019) identified three clusters of organizational career management (OCM) practices which promote the career success of employees. These include practices that enhance their competencies, practices that affect relationships and practices that provide information. Each of these clusters will be presented below in relations to the women's experiences.

4.3.1 Perceptions of organizational support via career management practices that enhance competencies

Among the various organizational career management practices that have been identified in the literature, the women in our study were mostly able to benefit from training and development activities which allow employees to update or acquire knowledge and skills. That study participants mostly benefitted from OCM practices aimed at developing their competencies supports the conclusions of authors such as Baruch and Peiperl (2000) who found that these "basic OCM practices"[26] are widespread and although they are generally more noticeable in older, bureaucratic organizations, they are by no means exclusive to these organizational types.

In terms of the type of training and development support provided to the women, for the most part, this was via a scheme that allowed organizations to partially or fully cover the tuition fees of those women who wished to undertake studies that were deemed pertinent to their scope of work, or which fell within the overall mission of the organization.

For example, Francine*, who currently works as a research technician in a state agency in Montreal, mentioned that she was able to benefit from the tuition support program for employees

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[26] According to Baruch and Peiperl (2000), "basic OCM practices" did not require much involvement from organizations.

that her employer offers. She noted that, in general, her employer would pay a retroactive amount that would partially cover the tuition fees that were disbursed by employees who undertook studies in an area that fell within the scope of their work or within the mission of the agency.

Julie*, who works at a bank, also received support from her organization to undertake further studies. However, in her organization, or at least in her case, she mentioned that support was not automatic since she had to negotiate with her employer for them to reimburse her training. She said,

"...je suis allée m'inscrire pour la formation pour aller chercher la représentation au niveau de l'épargne. Et j'en ai parlé avec mon employeur et il m'a dit, si tu réussis ton examen, je te le paye. Si tu l'échoues ton examen, je te le paye pas. Donc j'ai pris la chance moi-même d'assumer. Ça coûtait 700 $, j'ai payé 700 $ pour aller faire un cours, réussir mon examen et venir négocier qu'on me le rembourse."

Raquel*, the woman with the PhD degree, also mentioned that her employer sponsored developmental training for her, which she says would facilitate her movement into a managerial position. She mentioned,

"L'organisation a payé des formations qui coûtent assez chères quand même pour me permettre d'aller chercher un outil de développement, pas forcément dans mon domaine, mais c'était plus une formation pour aller dans un autre niveau et je le vois clairement."

Yet, while OCM practices existed at the organizational level and the women admittedly benefited from them, they were also keen to point out that take-up of the opportunities was dependent on the relationships that their direct supervisors had with them. In Raquel's* case, for instance, she mentioned that the opportunity only became available because her direct supervisor had changed. She said,

"[L'organisation a payé] une formation pour aller dans un autre niveau mais ça c'est parce que mon responsable a changé. C'est une nouvelle personne qui est là, qui a eu cette volonté. Tu sais la structure peut avoir, peut mettre en place ce type de support là, mais si tu n'es pas en relation directe avec quelqu'un qui te voit en développement, tu peux ne même pas en bénéficier."

As it relates to her experience in her organization, Francine* also mentioned,

"...du moment que tu choisis une de ces domaines-là, on va te payer une partie de tes études par session. Tu as comme un [montant] rétroactif. Je pense que c'est une mesure incitative qui aide beaucoup, sinon dépendamment je sais aussi qu'il y a des chefs, et quand je dis des chefs, des chefs de service qui sont plus enclins à aider des employés à cheminer, disons dans l'institution. Mais c'est pas donné à tout le monde. On sait que si des fois, et on ne va pas se le cacher, il y a une question d'affinités qui rentre là-dedans aussi. Si un chef t'aime, il va te donner tous les atouts pour que tu puisses avancer. Et s'il y a un autre là où vous avez des atomes crochus, ça risque d'être plus difficile."

Other women such as Esther* acknowledged that organizational support for skill and competency development would have favorably contributed to her feelings of career success. However, she admitted that her working context, including her supervisor's attitude, did not lend themselves to these possibilities. Esther*, a trained medical doctor who enrolled to do a master's degree in public health when she arrived in Quebec because she was told that this could facilitate her transition into the field of medicine but who continues to work as an "*agente de recherches*" almost 20 years later bemoaned,

"Moi, dans l'organisation dans laquelle je suis, c'est tellement limitée, c'est-à-dire que la personne, c'est comme si on a à faire juste à une personne qui est le chercheur principal, qui est dans son laboratoire. Tu sais comme si tu as juste à faire à cette personne, donc elle, elle fait

comme elle veut en fait. Elle se soucie pas forcément de l'avancement de son, de ses employés ou autres. Elle se soucie plus de comment faire avancer ses projets de recherche. Donc c'est pas, ça rentre pas. Je pense que peut-être pour aider, peut être que dans les centres de recherche, les chercheurs commencent aussi à penser à leurs employés. Comment faire en sorte pour que leurs employés puissent évoluer dans leur carrière aussi. Mais peut être que, comme je disais, le, le contexte de la recherche ne permet pas d'évoluer en tant que telle aussi. C'est comme après un niveau, c'est fini. Quand tu arrives à un niveau, c'est terminé, tu restes là, mais peut-être, moi je me dis aller se chercher, peut être permet d'aller chercher de formation en plus sur d'autres...Bon, par exemple, on travaille en recherche il y a certains qui sont moins bons en statistiques, il y a certains qui sont moins bons dans tel type, tel type de recherche. Et moi, je pense que ça serait de donner aussi la possibilité à ces employés de pouvoir aller faire des présentations par rapport aux projets de recherche, parce qu'il y a des voyages même qui sont acquis. Il y a des colloques qui sont organisés, tout ça. Mais tu vois, c'est comme si le chercheur garde tout ça pour elle et ne fait pas profiter de ça à ses employés. C'est comme ça. On devient un peu des rats de laboratoire, un peu. Nous, on est là, on produit et puis on donne, on produit, on donne, on produit, on donne. Donc c'est, c'est comme on est, comme des machines, un peu. Et moi, je trouve qu'à ce niveau-là, c'est ce qui n'est pas positif. Je pense que s'il y avait comme des possibilités de pouvoir partager aussi ces connaissances qu'on a produit, donner la possibilité aux employés de pouvoir partager ces connaissances-là, les associer à tout, à toutes les activités en lien avec peut-être la recherche ou les recherches qu'elle fait, ça serait comme positif, moi je pense."

Jenny* also spoke of her work environment and the limited support that was notably provided by supervisors for individuals who wished to further develop their competencies. While she admitted that she had not personally sought support for competency development because of

family and age-related factors, she said that she had witnessed instances where colleagues were denied opportunities for skill development because their work environment in general and supervisors in particular, were not supportive of the initiatives. She explained,

"You know, it's a CHSLD, it's close to the government, so you're free to do what you want. So, for example, if I want to go and upgrade, that means I have to go and see my boss and say, 'Look, from this and this time, I won't be available because I have to do my job and I'm going to be a student.' So, then you have to prove that, you know, you've been admitted and this kind of stuff. But there are some nasty, nasty bosses, at least that's what happened to two of my colleagues because they went to, you know, they showed every proof that they have to go and they said, 'No, you can't do it now because we lack nurses. You can't go to school now.' The boss refused. They said, 'Fine. I am not made for this. I'm not made to be here all my life. My studies are very important.' So, they had to leave. They had to leave, two of them. They said, 'No, no, no, no.' You know, because they wanted to keep them… Because we understand there are nurses missing. But of course, it's for their future. But this is this the point right now, you know, because we lost two, they left, and that's a very big thing. [It's] big because we have difficulty in replacing them, you know, and then what happens? Because now they're not there, we are obliged to do overtime to fill up the, you know, the spaces and that kind of thing."

Finally, it is important to mention that of all the women who admitted that they had received organizational support for competency development, only two, Julie* and Raquel*, had progressed in their careers in their organizations. In the other cases such as Francine's*, although the women generally expressed satisfaction with the fact that they were provided with resources to do further studies, at the time of the interview, they were still occupying the same position that they did when they had done their training.

4.3.2 Perceptions of organizational support via career management practices that affect relationships

According to Bagdadli and Gianecchini (2019), OCM practices that affect relationships can enhance employees' career success as they provide individuals with the support and visibility of their managers and peers. Existing career scholarship has identified three kinds of relationships which influence perceptions of career success among individuals. These include leader-member exchange (LMX) relationships, mentoring relationships, and relationships built through social networking.

Whereas most of the women in our study recognized that access to these different types of relationships would positively influence their work outcomes[27], only four of the 25 women who were interviewed admitted to having these relationships. One woman, Althea*, admitted to developing what can be classified as a high-quality ("in-group") relationship with her supervisor (Liden, Sparrowe and Wayne, 1997; Sherman et al., 2012). Another woman admitted that she benefited from an informal mentoring relationship with her supervisor where the latter provided both career-related and psychosocial support (Eby, Rhodes and Allen, 2007; Kram, 1985; Noe, 2002; Scandura and Pellegrini, 2007) and, finally, two woman admitted that they actively engaged in networking activities with other employees, and that this process provided resources for them to strategically navigate their work environments.

Althea*, who was a midwife in her country and who studied to become a registered nurse after she immigrated, explained that she benefited from the advice and support of a former

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[27] Antoinette*, for example, mentioned that, *"Pour bien avancer, [le mentorat] c'est très important parce qu'on est immigrante"*.

supervisor. In fact, she credits her decision to apply for a supervisory position to the encouragement that she received from her supervisor. She explained,

"Bon, au fait, moi, quand j'ai terminé mon bac, j'étais comme infirmière sur le plancher. Puis on avait comme une gestionnaire. Bon, elle est quand même québécoise. Puis elle a fait deux ans chez nous. Quand elle partait, elle m'a appelé et elle dit, Je te vois vraiment comme gestionnaire parce que premièrement, avant elle m'a quand même invité à postuler pour être chef d'équipe ou assistant. Donc c'est là que j'avais commencé parce qu'elle m'appréciait beaucoup. Elle dit tu travailles très bien, tu es rigoureuse dans tout ce que tu fais. Donc j'ai commencé par là. Puis, quand elle voulait partir elle-même, elle voulait que je postule pour devenir gestionnaire. Mais en ce moment, c'est pas ce que je voulais en ce moment parce que la gestion, c'est quand même énorme et avec de jeunes enfants, à ce moment, c'était pas facile. Mais j'ai quand même passé l'entrevue, mais j'ai pas eu le poste mais sans regrets parce que c'est, bon, je suis allée mais au fin fond, c'est pas ce que je voulais en ce moment. Donc après, comme un an, quand le poste de conseillère en [nom de l'unité] s'est libéré parce que la madame est partie à la retraite, donc j'ai, j'ai postulé. On était quatre. Puis, comme au niveau de l'ancienneté, c'est moi qui étais la moins ancienne. Mais on a passé les examens et les entrevues [et] c'est moi qui avais le poste."

Incidentally, although Althea* had clearly advanced in her career and had achieved observable and verifiable measures of success, she was among the women who had mentioned that they only felt "partially" successful in their careers. She stated,

"...moi j'étais sage-femme. J'ai un baccalauréat en pratique sage-femme avant d'arriver. Mais là, je suis obligée comme de devenir infirmière et clinicienne et là maintenant je suis conseillère en soin. Donc, bon, maintenant j'ai dit partiellement parce que j'aimerais comme continuer comme sage-femme..."

Althea's* case and that of some of the other women in our study support a key finding from Heslin (2005) regarding perceptions of career success, that consideration should not only be given to extrinsic measures of success but to intrinsic measures as well.

The second woman, Anne*, reported that she received guidance and performance feedback from her direct supervisor, and directly linked the positive work outcomes that she experienced, especially during her first year of teaching, to the informal mentoring role that her supervisor played. She mentioned,

"I mean, for me, it was...This environment, this entire culture of teaching in North America was very new and it was very new and scary at first, especially my first year. But my head of department, she has helped a whole lot. Like, so that first year was like a whole mentoring thing for me, I would say. Like I learned a lot from her like how to deal with certain types of situations, how to approach a particular topic with certain kids and stuff like that. Like because the culture is so different. Like how I would, you know, probably deal with a certain set of students back home, it's different here. So, I learned a lot from her. So, I would say mentorship, I really, I really benefited a lot from that. And I needed that because I feel as though if I didn't have that support my first year, then it would have probably gone left. It would be so hard because one of the things too is that I left the classroom for three years. So, I was teaching in [name of country] and then I came here. And then I studied for another three years and then I started teaching again. And, you know, it's like it's different… It was a whole, you know, new playground in a sense, where I had to be relearning certain things to teach it. So, I needed a lot of support and I think I got that from my HOD [head of department] at the time. Yeah. And that was very, very, very important for me."

Erfa* admitted to engaging in networking activities with individuals who worked in a similar field to hers. She explained that the various activities that she participated in received

official support from the organization where she worked, and that her involvement in these activities contributed to the feelings of job and career satisfaction that she felt. She mentioned,

"Quand je travaillais pour les minières, les compagnies minières, je faisais partie de Women in Mining. Donc ça, c'était dans le domaine minier. Il n'y a pas beaucoup de femmes, vraiment pas là. Donc justement, c'était un réseautage. Toutes les compagnies minières à l'époque qui étaient au centre ville, c'était avant là, vraiment le bon vieux temps quand on était au centre ville. Donc, il y avait Hatch, il y avait Bechtel, SNC-Lavalin, BBA, toutes les firmes d'ingénierie, toutes les minières, ArcelorMittal, Rio Tinto. Donc le peu de femmes qui travaillaient dans ces compagnies-là, on se retrouvait toutes justement dans les événements, on faisait des cocktails. Des fois, on invitait une dame qui pouvait nous inspirer et qui racontait sa carrière. Donc là, on pouvait lui poser des questions. Puis ensuite, on pouvait toutes se mettre debout et discuter, échanger. Ça j'aimais, vraiment, vraiment, vraiment beaucoup."

In the absence of formal activities that are sponsored by their organizations, other women engaged in relationship-building activities with a view to promoting certain career objectives. Kimberly*, who was hired as an "*agente administrative II*" in a hospital after completing a *diplôme d'études collégiales* (DEC) and who aspired to become an "*agente administrative I*" in short order as she felt that the tasks were more befitting of the bachelor's degree in human resources that she obtained from her country, mentioned that she engaged in different strategies in order to progress in her career, including developing "weak tie" relationships (Granovetter, 1973) with other employees. Through her networking behaviours, she was able to build and nurture "personal and professional relationships to create a system or chain of information, contacts, and support" (de Janasz, Dowd and Schneider, 2002, p. 192 cited in Friar and Eddleston, 2007). She explained,

"Au départ, j'étais comme oh non, tu as été embauchée comme agent II puis vu que ce n'est pas comme agent I, il te faut d'abord faire un an d'expérience à l'intérieur. Puis, j'ai fait, c'est écrit où? J'ai vu ça de nulle part ! En même temps, j'avais, ben, j'ai une amie, mais c'était une collègue. C'est une autre employée comme moi, mais plus proche des boss, on va dire. [C'est] une Caucasienne…avec qui je me suis faite amie. Fait que, elle, elle me disait comme des affaires que nous, on ne savait pas [et] qu'eux autres [ils le] savaient. Elle me disait, est ce que tu sais que tel poste va se libérer ? Est-ce que tu sais ? Est-ce que tu sais. Comme les petits chuchotements. Je fais okay, okay je vais tenter ma chance, tu comprends. Donc, il y avait le fait que j'ai pu me tisser une relation privilégiée avec une collègue. Donc, ça, ça a aidé."

Although women such as Latoya*, Farrah*, and Suzie* all acknowledged the mentorship advantage (Eby et al., 2008; Singh, Ragins and Tharenou, 2009), or writ large, the "relationship advantage", they also spoke to the specific challenges that they faced in establishing these relationships. Latoya* mentioned how the overall structure of the mentorship program in her organization militated against her being able to use it to her full advantage. She said,

"[Lorsque] je suis au travail, je fais mon 35h par semaine, ce programme de mentorat est là mais si moi je veux apprendre davantage, ça va être quelque chose que je ferai en dehors de mes heures de travail. Je ne peux pas le faire à l'intérieur de mes heures de travail, donc imaginez un peu avec les enfants. Tu finis de travailler la première chose à laquelle tu penses, c'est vraiment de rentrer à la maison, aller s'occuper de la famille et tout ça là. Donc je ne peux pas dire que j'en ai profité."

Farrah's* criticism focused on a lack of career advancement support provided by her supervisor. She mentioned,

"Pour moi, il faut qu'il y ait un accompagnement réel. Puis quand ton organisation décide que l'employé est compétent, on voit tes valeurs, on voit ta capacité, il y a un accompagnement qui

peut être fait à ce niveau. Donc, pour moi, il faut un accompagnement réel… pour nous [permettre]

aussi [d']évoluer. Moi, je dis par exemple si je vise un poste de gestion, mon gestionnaire doit

m'accompagner. C'est vrai que le temps, on parle toujours du temps. Mais au moins qu'on fasse

un effort. Dans la semaine sur 35 h, je me dis qu'on peut consacrer au moins un 2 h là, okay, pour

m'accompagner pour que mon objectif final que je vise, que je puisse l'avoir. Mais y a pas ça. On

te dit exprime-toi, qu'est-ce que tu veux faire ? Exprime-toi sur ta carrière. Mais tu expliques, on

prend ça en note mais au final, y a rien qui est fait. Donc je pense qu'il faut, il faut un réel

accompagnement, une sincérité dans l'accompagnement pour qu'on puisse évoluer aussi."

Regarding networking, Suzie* highlighted a challenge that is not unique to immigrants,
but which she says is exacerbated by the fact that they find themselves in a completely new
environment. She opined,

"Il faut que quelqu'un t'amène dans le réseau. Le réseau n'est pas sur Google. I can't google "I'm

looking for network that works", and I press go. Et c'est pas comme si c'était pas connu, c'est

quelque chose qui est connu. Somebody has to appreciate you and I'm getting you on board in this

network because I know it will be good for us. Parce que le réseau aussi cherche à "shine". Donc,

il faut que quelqu'un te recrute dans le réseau. Donc le réseau, oui, je veux bien si quelqu'un me

recrute dedans, I'm in. Je veux être dedans. S'il est quelque part, montre-le-moi, je cours. Je vais

aller m'inscrire dedans. Absolument."

Finally, Kadian's* experience highlighted some of the challenges that exist for employees
in developing developmental relationships in certain organizational contexts. From her account,
Kadian* and her supervisor were involved in a leader-member exchange (LMX) relationship.
LMX theory posits that through a role-making process (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995 cited in
Kraimer, Seibert and Astrove, 2015), subordinates and superiors develop unique relationships with

each other. The dyadic interaction between leaders and members results in the development of two types of exchange relationships: a high-quality ("in-group") relationship and a low-quality ("out-group") relationship (Liden, Sparrowe and Wayne, 1997; Sherman et al., 2012). High-quality relationships are characterized by a high degree of mutual trust, respect, loyalty, and obligation (Dienesch and Liden, 1986; Ilies et al., 2007; Kraimer, Seibert and Astrove, 2015). Subordinates in these relationships are more likely to be assigned challenging tasks (Harris and Kacmar, 2005; Schyns, 2007), receive performance feedback from their supervisors (Grestner and Day, 1997), gain access to their leaders' social networks (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995; Sparrowe and Liden, 1997) and be provided with the emotional and instrumental support necessary to achieve positive career outcomes (Deluga, 1994; Sparrowe and Liden, 1997; Wayne et al., 1997). Altogether, the exchanges between both supervisor and subordinate can enhance the experiences and feelings of career success for the latter, as they influence the sense of satisfaction that the subordinate may feel vis-à-vis his/her job and/or career or they may result in more concrete results such as increases in salary or career advancement.

Kadian* explained that because of the many obstacles that she faced in integrating the job market when she first arrived in Quebec, she registered to do the different *concours* at both the provincial and federal levels. She explained, *"J'étais sur des listes partout. J'avais passé des concours à la fonction publique provinciale. J'étais sur des listes des professionnels, des listes des techniciennes, des listes des préposés. J'ai passé [aussi] le concours à la fonction publique fédérale."* After working for a few months as a *"technicienne"* in one of the ministries at the provincial level, she explained that her direct supervisor learned that she was very well qualified - she had obtained a masters degree in Statistics and Epidemiology from an European university and she also did a masters level programme at HEC Montréal in Business Administration. She said

that after her supervisor realized that she was over-qualified for her position, he started giving her more challenging tasks and was willing to promote her advancement within her organization. However, she explained that her involvement in files that did not match the position that she occupied but which could have facilitated her career advancement was abruptly ended, because of certain institutional constraints. She narrated,

"[M]on gestionnaire à un moment donné a fait des démarches pour que je travaille des dossiers professionnels. À un moment donné, on m'a confié des dossiers professionnels au ministère de l'économie. Je travaille avec des organismes de promotion des exportations. Je partageais, j'ai participé au CA, je faisais beaucoup de choses. Mais on ne voulait pas comme me donner le salaire qui venait avec. On ne voulait pas me donner la côte qui venait avec et tout. On dit, bon, vous êtes technicienne et tout. On ne peut pas vous donner... Mais, quand j'ai voulu partie, on a voulu me mettre, c'est un poste professionnel en attendant que le poste s'ouvre. Mon gestionnaire a voulu me garder. Il a dit, écoute Kadian, moi, si je te mets dans là, je te mets là dans telle équipe et tu commences, que tu occupes ce poste-là. Et puis si jamais il y a un poste qui se libère, je te le donne. [Mais], finalement, ça a posé problème. [Ils disent], non, elle est technicienne. On ne peut pas lui donner une certaine charge de tâches professionnelles. Devant le syndicat, ça ne fonctionne pas. Et bon, c'est tout. Ça a quelque chose à avoir avec le légal."*

Incidentally, Kadian's* negative experience which mainly stemmed from the fact that she was working in a unionized environment contrasts with Francine's* who felt that the presence of a union in her organization promoted fairness and created equal opportunities for individuals like her to achieve career success. She noted,

"C'est certain que je suis dans le domaine de la fonction publique. C'est certain qu'il y a un syndicat, mais pour nous autres immigrants ce que j'aime avec ça, c'est comme je sais ce que j'ai

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à faire. Moi, dans mon cas, je sais qu'il fallait que je retourne aux études, ce que j'ai fait et là je finis mon programme là là là. Et là je sais qu'une fois c'est fait quand il va y avoir des postes, je vais être qualifiée et il n'y a personne qui va pouvoir me barrer la route en tant que tel. Donc c'est ça mais je sais que c'est pas donné à tout le monde. Pourquoi est ce que je peux là maintenant vous en parler? Parce que je suis dans une école du gouvernement et comme je vous l'ai dit, c'est un poste syndiqué et quand c'est syndiqué tu as des avantages. Je sais que, je sais que par exemple dans mon cas ça va être par ancienneté ok et puis en fonction des compétences aussi. Donc je sais que c'était le chemin à prendre pour évoluer.''

4.3.3 Perceptions of organizational support via career management practices that provide information

Finally, according to extant literature, OCM practices that provide career-related information to organizations about employees and that provide information to employees about their performance have been found to also impact the career success of these individuals (Bagdadli and Gianecchini, 2019). As several authors have noted, organizations use different career management practices at different employment stages to obtain information about the value and contribution of employees, which may include assessment centers, performance management, training, and international assignments (Bagdadli and Gianecchini, 2019).

Of the 25 women in our study, four mentioned that their organizations had practices in place which allowed them to receive career-related information about employees. Kadian*, who works in the public sector, spoke of the practice where call lists are created after individuals did the public service exams or *concours*. Individuals whose names are on these lists are given priority

when positions become available. However, as the presentation in the previous section concerning her experiences shows, the practice of establishing lists does not provide adequate or reliable information to the employer about an individual's true competencies or skills.

The other three women who mentioned that their organization had OCM practices that provide career-related information to organizations about employees and that provide information to employees about their performance spoke of a practice whereby employees were encouraged to elaborate on a "*plan de carrière*"[28]. The goal of such a plan, according to these employees, was to provide the organization with information concerning their overall performance as well as information about what they wanted from their careers. From their individual accounts, the expectation was that the organization would use the information gathered to help them achieve the career goals that they identified. However, all three women affirmed that very little came out of the process. In other words, aside from encouraging employees to prepare a plan, the organization did very little to translate the information contained in the plans into concrete actions that would facilitate the attainment of their career objectives.

Julie* reported,

"*Je dirais qu'au niveau de la gestion de carrière, en réalité du plan de carrière, oui, c'est écrit, c'est prévu mais dans la pratique, c'est autre chose. Dans la pratique, c'est vraiment autre chose. Je veux dire ton plan de carrière n'est pas nécessairement structuré où je sais que, bon, si je fais tel effort, ça va me donner tant, tu sais. Si admettons je suis au point A et que je fais le processus B à D, ça ne va pas nécessairement aboutir à E. Ce n'est pas de façon linéaire.*"

She continued,

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[28] All three women work for the same organization but not the same branch. Of the three, two are personally known to each other.

"... les plans de carrière, oui, c'est écrit dans la politique RH, on est pour la progression des employés, pour les accompagner. Bâtir ta carrière nanana, mais il n'y a rien de tangible. Je veux dire, il n'y a pas un plan tangible où tu es réévalué au fur et à mesure en disant bon mais tiens si tu fais telle ou telle chose bon tu vas pouvoir arriver ou atteint un objectif ou quoi que ce soit. Oui, il est là, il existe, mais y a rien de structuré. Donc c'est à toi même l'employé de te prendre en main et de te dire bon, mais je suis en train de travailler, je veux me projeter vers telle autre chose et ça fait partie aussi des choses que j'ai faites. Est-ce que ça me prend de retourner à l'école, aller prendre des cours, de la formation supplémentaire, en discuter avec ton gestionnaire pour qu'on accepte de te payer des cours si jamais ça entre, admettons, si tu veux, dans leur vision de ce que pourrait être ton utilité à l'organisation si tu veux ?... Et quand je dis faire ses preuves, ... par exemple, dans le secteur de la vente. Ce n'est pas parce que, admettons que je dois faire 10 millions, que j'ai fait 15 millions cette année que systématiquement l'année prochaine ou à deux années de suite, j'ai fait 15 ou 17 millions que la quatrième année de façon systématique, on va te dire, ah, ben, tiens, je te fais monter d'échelon. Te comprends, non ? Il va falloir que tu cherches toi-même à aller à un poste supérieur. Oui, c'est vrai que ton rendement, tu pourras le présenter. Voilà le rendement que j'ai eu ces différentes années et j'estime qu'avec ces rendements-là, je devrais être en mesure de pouvoir occuper une fonction supérieure. Donc ce n'est pas linéaire."

Regarding her experience, Latoya* also added,

"Du moment où il y a des applications dans l'organisation qui disent que de temps en temps, il faut remplir un plan de carrière pour que l'employeur sache là où vous êtes rendu, l'employeur aussi lui il doit être ouvert à pouvoir en discuter avec moi. L'organisation a également son rôle à jouer parce que je me dis que l'organisation est censée me dire qu'il y a deux ans, toi, Latoya qui avait appliqué pour tel poste et puis c'était telle chose qui était ton diplôme, mais dans ton plan de*

carrière, tu veux arriver au plan B et au plan C ou au niveau C, ou bien au niveau B. Mais pour

le niveau B, là, il faut qu'elle s'ouvre. Mais est-ce que tu l'as au moins [ce diplôme] ? Donc,

l'organisation aussi doit tout de même suivre mon plan de carrière et non se taire là-dessus."

In conclusion, from the various accounts of the women who participated in our study, OCM practices, whether tailored to enhance competencies, affect relationships, or provide information, can play an important role in promoting feelings or experiences of career success. However, as we have shown, in most instances, the women in our study did not benefit from such resources. Career success and organizational scholarship suggest that factors related to one's social identity are possibly key to understanding who gets sponsored in an organization and who does not get sponsored. In the next section, we examine interviewees' perceptions regarding the relationship between their social identity and their experiences and feelings of career success.

4.4 Perceptions regarding the influence of social identity on career success

Research has shown that sociodemographic factors such as race, gender, and immigration status can impact the career experiences and outcomes of individuals as they are key factors that come into play when organizational elites make decisions regarding who will receive sponsorship. In their meta-analysis of the predictors of objective and subjective career success, Ng and colleagues (2005) found that individuals' sociodemographic characteristics positively predicted objective and subjective career success. A plethora of organizational and sociological studies have sought to explain the relationship between individuals' sociodemographic characteristics or their social identities and career outcomes. According to these studies, factors at the micro (individual), meso (organizational), as well as macro (institutional) levels explain the impact of these variables

on career success. At the micro-level, for example, studies point to deficiencies in individuals' skill and competency levels to explain the poor career outcomes of some individuals relative to others. At the meso-and macro-levels, researchers identify certain discriminating practices or policies that are either enacted by individuals or that are embedded in institutions, which impose limits on the abilities of certain individuals to achieve career success. In the next section, we present our findings at different levels of analysis (micro, meso and macro) regarding the perceived roles that different facets of these women's social identity viz., race, gender, and immigration status, play in promoting experiences and feelings of career success.

4.4.1 Perceptions regarding the influence of race on career success

Studies such as Baldi and McBrier (1997), Rivkin (1995) and Maxwell (1994) found that race can be an important predictor of career success. According to these studies, which for the most part are American-centric and concern the Black, non-immigrant population in the US, in general, Blacks achieve fewer positive career outcomes compared to Whites because their investments in education, as measured by the number of years of studies, have been lower. From a human capital perspective, low investments in education will inhibit future rewards because workers do not possess the requisite skills to enhance performance, which will, in turn, translate into positive career outcomes (James, 2000). However, empirical work by Baldi and McBrier (1997), Cox and Nkomo (1991), Greenhaus, Parasuraman and Wormley (1990), Nkomo and Cox Jr. (1990), Shields and Wheatley Price (1999) and Skaggs and DiTomaso (2004) and Thomas and Alderfer (1989) have rejected the claim that the less positive career outcomes generally observed among Blacks are mainly attributable to these micro-level factors. Instead, they argue that Blacks

face numerous discriminatory practices in organizations, which directly impact their career outcomes. Among these, researchers identify social closure practices and opportunity hoarding, which limit Black employees' access to "strong tie" or "weak tie" relationships in their organizations (Granovetter, 1973) or their access to prime resources that the elites in their organizations control such as employer-funded training (Barrett et al., 2013; Diamond and Lewis, 2022; Shields and Wheatley Price, 1999). More recently, researchers have identified other forms of racially motivated discriminatory practices in organizations in the form of racial microaggressions. Although these practices are generally more subtle in nature, research has shown that racial microaggressions are widespread and can have deleterious psychological effects on individuals over time, which ultimately impact their experiences and feelings of career success (Holder, Jackson and Ponterotto, 2015).

According to some of the women who participated in our study, race or country origins, which was sometimes used as a proxy for race, did not influence their career success. One woman, Priscilla*, argued that she did not feel that race played a role in her career outcomes because she was consistently able to demonstrate high levels of performance in the organizations where she worked and by so doing, the effects of race were not manifested. In alluding to her most recent promotion to manager of a CHSLD, she mentioned,

 "Je te dis, être noire ou pas être noire, moi, je me dis je vais m'imposer par mon travail. Donc, je sais qu'il y a des, il y a pleine de théories par rapport à ça. Le racisme institutionnalisé et tout ça. Mais franchement, moi je ne réfléchis pas comme ça. Je réfléchis…il faut que je démontre mes compétences, que je sois la seule qui arrive et puis t'as pas le choix là. Noir ou blanc, t'as pas le choix de me prendre."

Erfa* expressed a similar sentiment arguing that she felt that employers "forgot" that she was Black because of her work ethic. She said,

"Justement, je trouve que comme je démontre que je suis capable de travailler tellement fort, c'est comme les personnes oublient. C'est la sensation que j'ai comme les personnes oublient mon apparence, oublient que je suis noire."

Another woman, Carly*, also mentioned that she did not feel that race played a role in her career outcomes in the organization where she had been working for the past few years. In her view, this was facilitated by the fact that the organization implemented certain formalized human resource management structures (Konrad and Linnehan, 1995) such as the *Programme d'accès à l'égalité en emploi* (PAÉ). Researchers like Stainback, Tomaskovic-Devey and Skaggs (2010) also recognize the significance of the formalization of certain HR processes in reducing perceptions of inequality based on social identity factors. Carly* explained,

"Je sais que la ville pour laquelle je travaille, [elle] applique le programmes d'accès à l'égalité en emploi. Donc, c'est sûr que pour eux, ça ferait positif d'encourager mon développement personnel et professionnel. Et il y a une grande ouverture. En tout cas, je suis très bien là où je travaille. Ils ont une bonne écoute."

Kimberly* also acknowledged that the implementation of formalized programs such as the *PAÉ* in her organization helped improve the career outcomes of racialized individuals because they facilitated access to certain career opportunities that she feels would have otherwise been inaccessible to Blacks. However, while she noted that the existence of the *PAÉ* may have contributed to her becoming the only Black *"agente administrative classe I"* in her organization, she admitted to sometimes feeling that it was a smoke screen meant to *"montrer qu'ils [les organismes et les personnes] ne sont pas racistes"*. In relating an event that occurred after she had

been hired, she explained that although the *PAÉ* may indicate that organizations are more open and prone to promoting the career development of Blacks, without consequential support from organizational elites, these formal rules did not suffice to provide these individuals with access to developmental opportunities that are substantive in nature. She narrated, in reference to Blacks whose employment in organizations is facilitated by the *PAÉ*,

"Ce Noir-là, il ne va pas avancer. Il ne va pas. Non, il ne va pas. Il ne va pas connaître...Ok, moi, j'ai un autre exemple pour toi. Ma boss du temps, c'est quand qu'elle quittait le [nom de l'organisation] qu'elle me dit, "Je trouve que tu as assez de potentiels. Et pourquoi tu n'appliques pas pour être agent de personnel?" Là, là, je me dis j'avais déjà fait deux ans là, puis c'est quand toi tu es en train de t'en aller que tu reconnais maintenant mon potentiel et tu me dis d'appliquer. Ça aurait...Bon, normalement, c'est à toi quand tu as reconnu que j'avais du potentiel, tu aurais été une référence pour moi pour que j'applique et non pendant que tu es en train de partir genre peut-etre il faut voir [car] tu as de potentiel. Mais je peux appliquer mais je sais que je ne vais pas être prise non plus."

Furthermore, apropos of the *PAÉ,* she also expressed that it could have a perverse effect on Blacks' career outcomes. Whereas the program was designed to facilitate the increased representation of Blacks and other minorities in organizations, it was her view that it could potentially lead many down slippery slopes or a glass cliff[29], as they were relegated to positions or placed in work environments where they were not likely to succeed. She explained,

"C'est quand qu'on n'a trouvé personne pour un poste qu'on va te dire bon on va prendre un Noir et on va le mettre là ou encore les postes les plus difficiles, là où il y a du stress, tu vas stresser.

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[29] According to Ryan, Haslam and Postmes ((2007) and Bruckmüller and colleagues (2014) the "glass cliff" phenomenon describes a situation where women manage to attain high level positions in organizations but these positions are generally characterized by greater levels of riskiness and precariousness.

Là où tu vas avoir des apnés, on va te donner ce type de poste là. Tu vas travailler. Pourquoi te mets agent je ne sais pas, ou gestionnaire, dans une brousse, dans un hôpital comme au fond, fond de Gatineau? Des trucs comme ça quoi. Ou on te met dans les CHSLD là où on sait qu'il y a de gros manques, là où tu dois prouver que tu mérites le poste. On sait que les Noirs travaillent forts, eh. On leur donne pas de petits boulots. C'est des boulots durs qu'on leur donne. Eux aussi ils sont contents. Il n'y a pas d'avancement, tu comprends. On est toujours au même niveau et pour s'assurer d'avoir un certain niveau de vie, on va faire du TS a n'en point fini. Le temps supplémentaire à n'en point finir.''

Besides Priscilla*, Erfa* and Carly* who reported that they did not feel that race directly impacted their career outcomes and Kimberly*, who adopted a more nuanced position, other women described specific experiences where they said that they felt that race was at play. Pauline*, for example, said that she felt that race, and more specifically, country origins, influenced the hiring decisions in one NGO where she had applied to work. She explained,

"J'ai postulé à d'autres postes au niveau de certaines ONG et surtout il y en a une là que j'ai...à l'entrevue les gens m'avaient vraiment bien apprécié mais j'ai noté qu'y avait une personne… Là, c'était des Québécois du conseil d'administration mais que je sentais que [cette personne-là] avait un poids dans l'entrevue. [Pendant l'entrevue] je sentais qu'entre nous deux ça n'allait pas. Pendant l'entrevue alors que les autres parlaient comme si, comme c'était très bien mon profil, il y en a même un qui parlait déjà comme si j'avais déjà le poste. [Mais] après, on m'a appelé pour me dire que l'entrevue était vraiment bien et qu'ils regrettent beaucoup mais bon, c'est une autre personne qui a été retenue. Bon, c'est donc à ce niveau-là seulement que j'avais eu le sentiment que ma couleur de peau avait joué. Sinon tous ceux qui m'ont traité pendant l'entrevue, c'était des Québécois quand même qui m'appréciaient mais il y en avait une qui avait donc un pouvoir de

décision important dans le choix de la personne qui allait être directrice de cette ONG-là. Et dès qu'on m'a donné les résultats, j'ai pensé à cette personne-là. Que je me disais bien pendant l'entrevue que celle-là pouvait faire qu'on n'allait pas me prendre. Je parlé des questions de compétences et j'ai senti comme c'était sûr que je ne veux pas cette tête-là, c'est bon."

In addition, Raquel*, who admitted that she felt integrated and accepted in her work environment even though she is the only Black employee[30], mentioned that she felt that race was considered when her compensation level was determined. She mentioned that she had very recently discovered that there was an important salary differential between her and her other colleagues[31]. However, she said that she did not think that this was a "company policy", but that this situation stemmed from her not being "*en relation directe*" with her former supervisor who exercised a lot of discretion in that area[32]. "Within-job wage discrimination", as is described by Raquel*, is one of the forms of employer discrimination based on factors such as race and gender that Castilla (2008) identifies in his study.

Farrah* also mentioned that she felt that race played a role in determining her advancement opportunities, or the lack thereof, in her company. As in Raquel's* case, she cited the absence of a "strong tie" relationship with her new manager as the cause of these missed opportunities. She narrated the following experience,

" Je me dis ça dépend des gestionnaires qu'on a. Ça dépend. Je me dis que souvent on a des gestionnaires qui sont pas sincères. Moi, personnellement, c'est comme ça que je le ressens. On te félicite pour ton travail et tout. Mais à chaque fois qu'il y avait un poste supérieur qui s'affichait, on te trouve des arguments. Il y a l'anglais qui bloque, il y a ci...des arguments fallacieux qui font

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[30] She was careful to mention that she was especially referring to her relationship with her colleagues, including those who held similar positions to hers and those who had non-professional positions.
[31] Raquel* had been working in her company for 11 years.
[32] She mentioned that the discrepancy was corrected after her supervisor changed.

qu'à un moment donné on se dit bon, je coupe le cordon ici. Moi, je coupe le cordon. Parce qu'on

ne te reprochait pas de ton travail, mais on ne veut pas te donner dans le fond la possibilité

d'évoluer. [Une fois] avant [de partir en congé de maternité de ma dernière] il y avait un poste

qu'on m'avait refusé à moi et une autre. Pendant mon congé de maternité, cette dernière a eu le

poste. Et puis c'est une Québécoise. Donc moi je me suis dit simplement, je me disais que c'était

du racisme qui est là-dedans, et donc du coup, quand je suis revenue de congé maternité et j'ai

constaté, j'ai dit wow. J'ai dit, bref, elle a eu pour elle et moi je vais l'avoir pour moi. Et, au final,

quand j'ai vu qu'il n'y avait pas d'opportunités dans cette [organisation], j'ai décidé de changer,

aller ailleurs et là on m'a fait une offre. Je dirais que j'ai été arrachée de cette évolution-là. Pour

moi, je me dis il y a eu un frein, il y a eu un frein qui fait que mon évolution ne se passe pas

rapidement. J'ai quand même mis quatre ans, quatre ou cinq ans et c'est quand j'ai décidé de partir

de cette [organisation] que finalement il y a eu une porte qui s'était ouverte, que j'ai eu un poste

beaucoup plus supérieur. On peut se dire que pour chacun, ça se fait différemment et tout. Mais

souvent, on voit qu'il y a des contraintes pour évoluer. Il faut faire du forcing un peu à quelque

part comme on dit, pour aller chercher l'évolution et pour moi ça a été le cas."

Moreover, other women described experiences where they encountered more covert forms of racial bias. These experiences amount to what has been widely described in extant literature as racial microaggression. Although racial microaggressions tend to be implicit "small acts", research by Holder et al. (2015) and Sue et al. (2008) suggests that constant exposure to these daily assaults can have major impact on individuals' mental and physical wellbeing and, by extension, their career outcomes.

Julie* described instances where she faced both verbal and behavioral microinsults in her organization and suggested that these experiences impacted her feelings of job and career satisfaction.

"Je sais que pour certains clients, la couleur était problématique pour eux. Puis …au début, si je regarde onze ans en arrière-là, quand c'était comme ça, on s'arrangeait pour trouver la peau idéale pour le client. Alors, déjà, services à la clientèle, finances versus noir… Dix ans en arrière, c'était assez stéréotype. C'était assez stéréotype, même vis-à-vis de la clientèle. Tu sais, même s'ils te le diraient pas de façon directe, tu le vois. [Même] quand tu essaies d'entrer en communication…Je me rappelle …Quand j'ai commencé vraiment au niveau trois, je m'occupais beaucoup plus du recouvrement des gens qui étaient en retard sur leurs prêts. J'ai appelé un monsieur une fois juste pour le dire, écoutez, malheureusement, il manque un petit peu d'argent pour pouvoir compléter votre paiement hypothécaire. Donc si vous pouvez déposer de l'argent pour que ça n'affecte pas votre bureau de crédit et tout ça. Il m'a dit, ah, ok, ok bon, bah parfait, écoutez, je vais faire ça. Puis, je dis, écoutez, désolée de devoir avoir cette communication-là avec vous. Il me dit, ah non, mais ne vous inquiétez pas, ça permet à des gens comme vous autres d'avoir du travail. Je dis okay, merci, bonne soirée. Quand j'ai raccroché j'ai dit bon c'est clair que tu ne vas pas faire trois mois de plus ici. Il va falloir que tu fasses autres choses de ta vie. C'est clair que non."

Another woman related experiences of blatant social exclusion practised by her colleagues at work. She mentioned that while she was employed in a state agency as a social worker, her colleagues would all get up and leave the table in the cafeteria when she would join them for lunch. She explained that she did not initially understand what was happening but after numerous occurrences, she understood that they did not want to dine with her. After these experiences, she

said that she started dining alone. She related other instances where her colleagues practised "light racism[33]" towards her. One of this woman's tasks at work involved going out into the field to meet clients. She said that she noticed that certain cars were 'pre-selected' and reserved for her use and that these never included the 'more beautiful' ones. She said that these attitudes, along with other factors, caused her to decide not to continue working with that agency.

Other women described experiences where superiors and colleagues would make sly remarks about them or their experiences. In the words of one woman, *"parfois ils peuvent te sortir des affaires qui vont venir te chercher."* For example, one woman said that after denying an accusation from a colleague concerning a workplace incident, the latter responded that, *"de toute façon, vous vous ressemblez tous."* The Haitian woman mentioned that she was told by a few colleagues that she was 'fortunate' to have had the opportunity to leave Haiti and now live in Quebec. This same woman said that when she informed her colleagues that she was moving, they insinuated that she was moving to certain neighbourhood. After she advised them that she was moving to a certain city, they expressed shock that she was able to move there. Yet another interviewee said that her supervisor once told her that she should consider herself *"privilégiée[34]"* to be working in their organization and with her team. This same participant said that a recruiter at a job fair was showcasing her before other colleagues because she was an African woman who does not speak French or English *"avec accents"* and who seemed "sharp"[35]. Finally, one of the women who is a nurse supervisor at a hospital mentioned that a subordinate once said in her presence that, *"à un moment donné, c'est seulement les noirs qui vont nous diriger ici!"*

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[33] Participant's words.
[34] Participant's words.
[35] Participant's words. She used the term to refer to her grooming and professional skills that she said that she had occasion to display before said recruiter.

Finally, another woman related how certain stereotypes relating to a Black person's role in organizations impacted some of her day-to-day experiences. In reference to instances where she was required to attend meetings with clients and colleagues, she mentioned:

"J''avais certains collègues très masculins, la grosse barbe comme ça. Bon, il se présente comme ça, mais il est nul. Mais là, les gens, ils l'écoutent, etcetera parce que sa présentation, alors que moi, si je veux la même attention, si je veux le même respect, je dois ramener un peu plus et prouver un peu plus alors que lui, il a juste à arriver juste parce qu'il a une grosse barbe et parce qu'il est comme ça. Donc il y a le respect tout de suite. Mais à côté de ça, il n'y a rien. [Alors que pour moi] les gens ils pensent peut-être que je suis automatiquement la secrétaire ou l'adjointe, ou l'assistante, ou celle qui va prendre des notes, etcetera. Donc, il faut un petit peu montrer que non, non, non, c'est pas ça du tout là. Moi, j'ai aussi des compétences."

4.4.2 Perceptions regarding the influence of gender on career success

Like race, researchers have argued that gender and more specifically being female, can be a barrier to career success. For example, studies such as Cannings (1991), DiPrete and Soule (1986), Eagly, Makhijani and Klonsy (1992), Ng et al. (2005), Schneer and Reitman (1995) and Stroh, Brett and Reilly (1992) and found evidence to suggest that family responsibilities and the roles that women assume in the home are factors that will more likely influence the career outcomes of women than men. Other studies have pointed to the existence of gender-based biases in the workplace to explain the poor career outcomes that women achieve in relation to men. According to research by Eagly and Karau (2002) and Heilman (2012), in many organizations there is a perceived dissimilarity between the female gender role and conceptions of the managerial

role. To the extent that individuals believe that there is incongruity or a "lack of fit" (Heilman, 2012) between the two roles, women will face prejudice or bias insofar as their career advancement is concerned (Eagly and Karau, 2002; Heilman, 2012).

Of the 25 women who participated in our study, four mentioned that they did not have family responsibilities, that is, that they were single and without children while the other 21 women reported that they were either married with children or divorced with children. Unsurprisingly, none of the four women in this situation reported that they perceived gender to be a barrier to their career success. Regarding the women who reported that they had family responsibilities, while all 21 women mentioned that having a career while being a mother imposed certain challenges, the degree to which they perceived gender to be a barrier to career success varied depending on factors such as the number of children and the age of their children. These findings are in line with studies by Chicha (2009), Guérin et al. (1997) and Tremblay (2005) for instance that found that the number and age of children directly impact the career outcomes of women.

For example, Kadian*, a mother of five, explained that after she had her fourth child, she felt obliged to accept a less qualified and less stable position in an organization (it was a one-year non-renewable contract) because it allowed her to be closer to her family. Moreover, although she mentioned that the organization where she previously worked had certain family-friendly policies in place that allowed her to work over four days, from Monday to Thursday, instead of over five days (flextime policy), she admitted that the responsibilities that came with the age and the number of children that she had, nullified the positive impact that the policy could have had on her career development. She explained:

J'ai démissionné [de l'agence située à Québec] avec le gouvernement fédéral. Par contre, là, c'était un emploi quand même, j'étais rentrée avec un emploi, un contrat, un emploi temporaire,

mais au gouvernement fédéral, ça allait que c'était reconduit jusqu'à ce qu'on avait la permanence, mais mon poste, je ne pouvais pas le transférer à Montréal et puis c'était vraiment très difficile l'organisation familiale. Les enfants qui appellent au téléphone pour pleurer le soir. Maman tu es où? Chaque fois que j'ouvrais le téléphone là, c'était pour enregistrer des pleurs et m'occuper des chicanes au téléphone. Mais lui, il a pris mon ballon, il n'a pas voulu me le donner. Mais on va, on va, on va, on va voir ça. J'arrive, j'arrive le vendredi. Je vais régler toute cette histoire. Mais maman moi, je veux que tu viennes dormir avec moi. Moi, c'était le côté vraiment très difficile d'occuper cet emploi-là. Mais on s'est dit en tout cas, on le fait. C'est pour la famille aussi. On le fait, c'est pour les enfants aussi qu'on le fait. Donc, on peut rester à la maison, dire que bon, on ne travaille pas. Mais en tout cas, c'est aussi pour la famille qu'on travaille pour l'épanouissement de la famille. Donc on a dû passer par tout cela. Donc le [nouveau travail à Montréal] est arrivé comme vraiment une réponse. Là, tu sais, c'est un emploi qui était attendu. J'étais prêt à occuper n'importe quel emploi à Montréal pour revenir à Montréal, parce que l'organisation familiale était vraiment très difficile."

Julie*, too, who had two young children when she arrived and then a third after arrival, admitted that family responsibilities imposed limits on her career growth as she was forced to turn down certain career opportunities because these would conflict with her family responsibilities. She explained,

"J'ai dû me freiner aussi par rapport à certaines choses ou même certains types de postes aussi où on te demande, même encore aujourd'hui, où il faut que tu te déplaces ou que tu voyages tout le temps, que tu sois sur la route. J'irai pas sur ce genre de poste là, parce que je sais que j'ai une famille qui est là et que ça va être difficile pour moi en fait, même si je trouvais ça intéressant. Le fait que j'ai encore des jeunes enfants, tu sais, comme je ne peux pas."

Finally, Esther*, Jessica*, Priscilla* and Jane*, who are all trained medical doctors who arrived with young children or who had children shortly after immigration, admitted that family obligations were one of many barriers to their career success. According to these women, their responsibilities as wives and mothers directly influenced their decisions not to undertake or to follow-up on the various processes involved in becoming doctors here in Quebec. In comparing her situation to another foreign-trained medical doctor who is male Esther* mentioned,

"J'ai trouvé que c'était plus simple pour eux [les hommes] d'être disponibles, d'avoir plus de temps pour se concentrer sur les études en parallèle, en fait, sur ces examens-là. Je trouve que c'était plus simple pour eux comparativement à moi qui avais en ce moment-là déjà un enfant et puis il fallait gérer ça. Il fallait gérer le travail, gérer la maison. Donc à quel moment je m'assois, moi, pour étudier, pour préparer mes examens ? Ça, je trouvais ça difficile. J'ai commencé, tu vois. Et puis après, j'ai laissé tomber parce que je me disais que je n'ai pas le temps. Ça allait être trop dur. C'était difficile."

Priscilla* also mentioned:

" [Les obligations familiales ont imposé] beaucoup de freins. Même quand je dis que les objectifs évoluent, changent et puis l'environnement t'amène à penser autrement, à dire mais est ce que, est ce que, il y a ça aussi parce que quand je suis arrivée ici au Québec, c'est par un regroupement familial mais j'avais aussi des enfants en bas âge, pour ne pas dire des nouveaux, un nouveau-né et puis un enfant en bas âge. Et financièrement, le temps et tout ça, je pouvais pas, je pouvais pas faire mes évaluations pour devenir médecin, tu comprends. J'avais pas ce temps, j'avais pas, l'environnement n'était pas propice pour ça et les facteurs n'étaient pas réunis, les facteurs côté financier. Le temps, s'occuper de la famille, t'as pas de réseau, tu n'as pas de soutien. Et là avec

ton conjoint et puis deux enfants. Un conjoint qui n'a pas encore, qui n'est pas encore établi, on s'entend. Donc tu vois ça et puis tu juges le pour le contre."

Unlike these women, there were others who had family responsibilities of a similar nature (young children and number of children) who perceived that this factor was not a barrier to their career success. One woman with three young children admitted that her organization's policies as well as the presence of female leaders in her organization mitigated the effects of family responsibilities. While she bemoaned the fact that she was still in the same position 10 years after she started working in the organization despite her many applications to advance in her organization, she said that she did not feel that gender was in any way a barrier to her career success. She said,

"Cet organisme-là, quand même, [il] favorise la conciliation famille-travail. Et puis, on a beaucoup de, comme de gestionnaires, beaucoup de gestionnaires femmes, voilà, qui occupent des postes de responsabilités. Notre ancienne PDG même c'était une femme. Donc, je ne pense pas que ce soit, ça soit un obstacle."

In addition to family responsibilities, extant research also found that gender-based biases in the workplace can influence perceptions of career success. According to researchers such as Eagly and Karau (2002) and Heilman (2012), to the extent that individuals believe that there is a "lack of fit" between the female role and the role of a manager, women will face prejudices or biases insofar as their career advancement is concerned. For the women in our study who assumed supervisory or management roles, they considered that their gender was a boon rather than a bane because they worked in female-dominated professions (social work and nursing) or because in certain occupations, women dominate at certain management levels (human resources, for example).

According to the woman who had become an *infirmière conseillère* in her service,

"Au niveau du travail, je ne dirais pas que le fait d'être femme m'empêche dans quoi que ce soit dans l'évolution. Surtout comme infirmière, on est plus majoritairement femmes, donc je ne pense pas, je le pense."

The woman who assumed the role of *coordonnatrice professionnnelle* at the CLSC where she worked also mentioned:

"Le fait d'être une femme, je pense pas que ça a pesé sur mon parcours parce que mon milieu de travail, il y a des femmes dans le travail social. Si vous regardez le travail social, la majorité c'est des femmes. Donc, il y a aussi des hommes mais 75 ou 80 % c'est des femmes. Donc je pense pas que le fait d'être une femme a eu un impact. Parce que la majorité, tu sais même ici au CLSC là où je travaille, il y a comme quatre hommes qui sont dans notre équipe. On est comme 28, et puis on a quatre hommes et puis 24 femmes. Donc, tu vois que c'est un métier de femmes."

Additionally, the woman who had recently assumed a managerial position in human resources at the bank where she works mentioned, in response to the question about the perceived role of gender on her career outcomes,

"Une femme, non. Les DRH, ils aiment bien les avoir en femme. Je pense pas que le fait d'être une femme pourrait poser un problème."

There was one woman who worked in a male-dominated field (she mainly worked with engineers in engineering firms but was not an engineer) who admitted that she felt that her gender could impact her career outcomes. However, she said that she felt that her organization's policies, especially the organization where she is currently working, militated in favour of her achieving certain career goals. She mentioned, in reference to her company's policies,

"Moi, essentiellement, je travaille avec des hommes, essentiellement là, essentiellement des hommes. En fait, là où je travaille en ce moment chez [nom de l'organisation], ils ont une politique très très, très, sévère de d'acceptation en fait. Qu'est-ce que je veux dire ? Tu n'as pas le droit de discriminer. C'est vraiment dans la politique de l'entreprise. Donc j'ai remarqué que les collègues font très attention. Ils font très attention parce que si jamais tu te fais dénoncer comme quelqu'un qui a fait du racisme, du harcèlement ou que tu as eu un comportement inapproprié, tu peux perdre ton emploi. Donc, j'ai remarqué qu'ils font attention. Ils sont galants. Ils font tout pour ne pas se mettre dans une situation. Je ne sais pas si c'est vrai, c'est naturel. Des fois, je ne sais pas si c'est vraiment naturel ou est-ce que c'est parce que la compagnie est si sévère, tu comprends."

Finally, there was one woman who admitted that she felt that the intersection of her identity as female and Black could impose barriers on her career development in the organization where she was currently working. While she admitted that her gender could be considered a boon because she was working as a teacher, which is a female-dominated profession, she said that she believed that expectations, especially from parents, regarding the image of the ideal leader in her organization, would limit opportunities for growth in her organization[36]. She noted,

"In my organization, you know, they preach the inclusiveness and all of that, but you just have to be very realistic. I don't think that they will put a Black woman in a certain position. At least not anytime soon. The limitation, limiting of the possibility of maybe being in a role like a director of something…Like director of academics, the director of athletics, stuff like that. Head of my department, again, I don't know. But, like, you know, just by what I've observed so far, I don't think that it's something that is really encouraged, not encouraged, but I don't know if they're ready for that step because some of these parents, too, the demographic of the students here…Most of

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[36] In addition to being a teacher, this woman played sports at the professional level. She admitted that one of her long-term goals was to become director of athletics in a school setting.

them are white students, white, rich students, and some of their parents like, you know... So, they have to feel comfortable with the environment that their children are in and I just, I honestly feel as though the image of the school matters to these parents and the people that are in charge really look at this. And, so, I don't think, I don't see a woman, a Black woman, you know, leading certain charges would be something that, you know, they would really promote."

4.4.3. Perceptions regarding the influence of immigration status on career success

Research examining the labour market outcomes of immigrants, including their career outcomes, is extensive, and has identified factors at the individual, organizational or institutional levels that bear on these. At the individual level, researchers have identified 'gaps' in immigrants' human capital to account for their relatively lower career outcomes. Language competencies, or a lack thereof, in either French or English, have been shown to impact immigrants' career outcomes (Arcand, 2006; Frank et al., 2013). Research by Creese and Kambere (2003) found that even where sufficient language competencies exist, a link could be made between foreign accents and career outcomes such that the 'heavier' the accent or the 'farther away' the accent was from the dominant accent, the least likely those immigrants were to advance in their careers. Still concerning micro-level factors, research by Borjas (1994), Bratsberg and Ragan (2002), Duleep and Regets (1999), Friedberg (2000), Sweetman (2004) and Zeng and Xie (2004)posit that immigrants' poor career outcomes result from origin-country human capital being less valued or valuable in the host country. For example, Sweetman (2004) found that Blacks' and other visible minority immigrants' educational qualifications are less valued in the Canadian labour market

Meso-level factors, including immigrants' limited access to instrumental network ties, have also been found to be a significant obstacle to their career success (Arcand, Lenoir-Achdjian and Helly, 2009; Friedman and Krackhardt, 1997; Gauthier, 2016; Hakak and Holzinger, 2010; Malik and Manroop, 2017; Nakhaie, 2007; Nakhaie and Kazemipour, 2013). As the plethora of studies on this topic have shown, in the case of many immigrants, they unfortunately lack either the right types of relationships or the right relationships in sufficient numbers, to help them get ahead in their careers. Moreover, research has shown that certain institutional factors such as licensing requirements and the non-recognition of diplomas and degrees by employers are obstacles to immigrants' career success (Banerjee and Phan, 2014; Bauder, 2003; Boyd and Thomas, 2001; Esses, Dietz and Bhardwaj, 2006; Frank, 2013; Girard and Smith, 2009; Lacroix, Gagnon and Lortie, 2017; Li, 2001; Man, 2004; Salaff et al., 2002; Ziestma, 2010). For immigrants with pre-immigration training in regulated professions, research has shown that the high costs and length of time associated with licensing, as well as the requirement to understand subtle social and cultural norms, effectively foreclose opportunities for them to access high status and well-remunerated professions. For those with pre-immigration training in non-regulated professions, skill discounting, where immigrants' pre-immigration human capital is not recognized, often force many to turn to low status or "survival jobs" located in the secondary labour market. As previously mentioned, jobs that are located outside of the primary labour market typically have fewer career advancement opportunities, thus impacting immigrants' experiences and feelings of career success (Banerjee and Phan, 2014; Bauder, 2003; Malik and Manroop, 2017).

Of the 25 women who participated in our study, 23 perceived that their status as immigrants in Quebec influenced their career outcomes. Among the 23 women, 21 were from the African

continent[37], and the other two women are from the Americas. Although time since immigration seemed to buffer the negative perceptions regarding the association between immigration status and career success, this factor alone could not reliably predict whether these women felt satisfied with their careers. Among the 11 women who said that they did not feel that they were successful in their careers and who also expressed that they felt that their status as immigrants impacted their career outcomes, only two had been in Canada for less than five years. Six of these women were in Canada for 10 years or more and three had been in Canada between five and 10 years. Among the interviewees who mentioned that they felt "partially" successful and who also expressed that they felt that their status as immigrants impacted their career outcomes, three had been in Canada for five to 10 years and the other three women have been in Canada for 10 years or more. Finally, among the women who felt that they were successful and who also expressed that they felt that their status as immigrants impacted their career outcomes, six had been in Canada for more than 10 years while two have been in Canada for five to 10 years[38].

Based on these women's accounts, immigration status impacted their career outcomes in several ways. For example, for 22 of the 23 women, deskilling or skill discounting, which involves the devaluation of pre-immigration education, professional training, work experience, and other work-related skills (Chicha, 2009, 2012; Esses, Dietz and Bhardwaj, 2006), was a reality, and this negatively influenced their experiences as well as feelings of career success[39]. In many instances, it was their previous work experience, which sometimes spanned decades, that was not recognized

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[37] This number represents all the participants in our study who were from countries in Africa.

[38] The two women who mentioned that they did not feel that their status as immigrants impacted their career outcomes were among the group of women who had expressed that they felt successful in their careers.

[39] The only exception was the woman who had a Ph.D. She said that her doctoral degree, which she obtained from a university in Belgium, was given equal equivalency in Quebec and that her organization had also recognized that she had a Ph.D. However, she had also admitted that her remuneration did not always match the level of her qualifications.

by employers, while in other instances it was their educational qualifications outside of Quebec that were not recognized. In some instances, participants even reported that their diplomas or degrees were downgraded by at least one level.

Of equal interest as regards the question of academic qualifications is the fact that place of obtention of degrees did not seem to buffer the negative association that these women made between their immigration status and career success. Among the 22 women, seven had obtained their highest degrees before immigration in foreign countries- six in European countries and one in China. However, possession of these degrees alone was not a harbinger of positive career outcomes insofar as their integration in the labour market in Quebec was concerned. Among the seven women, four mentioned that they had to do further studies after arrival because they were not able to access quality jobs in their fields of study or were not able to advance in their careers with their pre-immigration qualifications alone. One of the other three women mentioned that she had plans to undertake further studies as she had not managed to access certain career opportunities with her current qualifications, while the other two women admitted that they felt penalized for not having completed further studies because their remuneration does not match their qualifications nor is it on par with the salary level of colleagues with similar qualifications.

For women like Latoya* whose university diploma in accounting was only recognized as a DEC in Quebec, the non-recognition of her diploma translated into loss opportunities for growth or progress in her career because, as she noted, she will always be considered one step behind other candidates, including those who, in reality, are less qualified than her. In relating an experience where she was denied a promotion, she mentioned,

"Aujourd'hui, la fonction où je suis, je rends grâce. Mais la même personne n'étant pas immigrante comme moi, elle est à un niveau je peux dire même sans diplôme plus que moi, elle est à un niveau

que moi j'aurais aimé être aujourd'hui. Mais si on dit à compétences égales… peut être qu'on va dire que les compétences sont là, mais elle est rentrée dans l'organisation au même moment que moi. Moi, j'avais plus de diplômes qu'elle mais le côté, le volet immigrant vient quand même nous rattraper. Ça c'est quelque chose sur lequel on peut pas se leurer."

Francine* related a similar experience where her academic qualifications, though recognized by her two previous employers, were not recognized by a new employer, and this decision had an adverse impact on her remuneration. She narrated,

"C'est que quand j'étais [à l'autre emploi]…j'avais tout reconnu ça, ok, j'avais tout reconnu mes études passées parce que j'ai fait des études en gestion j'avais tout reconnu ça et puis j'avais l'échelle salariale qui matchéait avec. Mais quand je suis arrivée au [nouvel employeur], j'ai comme été rétrogradée au niveau salarial. On me disait, mais je sais pas pourquoi on vous a reconnu telle ou telle affaire [chez l'ancien employeur] parce que ça n'a pas de lien vraiment avec ce que vous allez faire ici et tout."

Julie* also attributed the very slow pace at which her career evolved to the non-recognition of her previous work experience. Before immigrating, Julie* occupied a managerial position in an NGO where she oversaw the organization's finances. She related,

"[Mon] évolution n'est pas peut être aussi rapide que moi je le souhaiterais en fait. Donc, pas parce que j'ai pas cherché ou que je suis restée cloisonnée. C'est une ascension qui s'est fait vraiment graduellement… Il faut dire qu'en arrivant ici, je n'ai pas pu accéder directement à un poste où je commençais déjà à avoir des délégations au niveau des prises de décisions ou quoi que ce soit. J'ai vraiment commencé comme on dit à l'entrée. Donc, il faut faire tout le parcours. Donc il faut vraiment refaire le parcours échelle par échelle. Il faut refaire ses preuves à chaque niveau auquel tu atteints. Ben, c'est un petit peu un recommencement… Il faut encore redoubler d'efforts

et tout ça pour pouvoir finalement, à un moment donné, atteindre un certain niveau en fait. Donc, je pense que ça a aussi penché dans la balance… quelqu'un qui arriverait ou qui entrerait directement à un certain niveau de poste comparativement à une autre personne qui arrive sur le marché et qui doit remonter toutes les échelles. [L]'ascension ne sera pas pareil."

For Liliane*, the non-recognition of her previous work experience as a teacher imposed significant barriers in terms of both access and advancement. This also influenced her feelings of career satisfaction. In addition to her bachelor's degree, Liliane* has a university certificate in teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) and well over 10 years of work experience teaching the subject matter. However, despite her qualifications and previous work experience, she is still on the call list of a school board. She elaborated on her situation in the following terms:

"I can be a sub, but I can't hold a *poste*. So, like, you can have a contract and the contract will end. But I can't say that I have a permanent position in one school. Yes, contract to contract, to contract. You know, you get a contract, you do that for one year and then that's it. And then if there's something available the next year, you can take you can take that contract. If there's not, you do some sub teaching in the meantime and [then] maybe [you'll get] a contract."

Furthermore, she mentioned that the most disappointing aspect is that, despite the many meetings that she and other colleagues have had with school board officials who admit that they want to 'regularize' her/their situation, and other stakeholders like faculty representatives from a particular university that her school board consulted with, she has still not experienced any change in her situation. This suggests that the barriers that immigrants in this situation face is not just organizational, but that they are institutionalized.

Caroline's* experience with skill discounting reinforces an idea that she constantly repeated throughout the interview that "*l'Africaine vient toujours dernière*" and confirms that for

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some women, their immigration status was a real handicap to achieving career success. Before immigrating, Caroline* studied in Europe and worked part-time in a pharmaceutical company doing market research and technical support. After immigrating, she said that she did a DEP so that she could rapidly integrate the job market. With the qualifications that she obtained in Quebec, she explained that she started working in a state agency as an "*agente administrative classe II*". She mentioned that she became an "*agente administrative classe I*" and then "*technicienne*" in short order. Despite the progress that she had then currently achieved, she explained that her ambition was to become an "*agent de recherche*" and she believed that she had the requisite experience, especially given the work that she did while in Europe, and qualifications to assume the responsibilities of the position. However, after nine or 10 years of working with her organization, she bemoaned the fact that she continued to work as a "*technicienne*" even though she had undertaken many attempts to obtain a promotion. She explained,

"Depuis, le poste que j'occupe depuis euh, je crois 2012/2013. Donc disons depuis douze, douze ans, onze ans voilà, je suis, j'occupe ce poste comme, comme technicienne! Lorsque j'appliquais sur ces postes d'AGP ou agent de recherche, bon les ressources humaines me disaient que dépendamment de mon parcours, donc mon cv, les titres sur lesquels j'appliquais ne correspondaient donc pas à mon profil. Parce que tu vois quelqu'un qui était comme dans les finances ou même ici ce que je faisais, c'était plus au niveau du budget, j'étais plus au niveau des, des chiffres donc. Alors que, par exemple, pour un poste comme agent, agent de recherche ou spécialiste, la description des tâches ne correspondait pas plus ou moins à ce à quoi j'avais eu à faire."

  To further underscore the idea that the barrier that she faced stemmed uniquely from her immigration status, Caroline* mentioned that there were other individuals, including another

young, Black employee of immigrant origins who had very recently joined the team, who were promoted to the position of "*agent de recherche*". As she admitted, these experiences not only impacted her experiences of career success, but they also seriously influenced the feelings of job and career satisfaction that she had.

Finally, Pauline's* experience also illustrates that the non-recognition of previous work experience not only carries with it important consequences for these women's objective career outcomes, but that this can have deleterious psychological effects as well. Before immigrating five to 10 years ago, Pauline* worked as an assistant director in a state agency that manages pension funds in her country. After arriving, she worked for about seven months in an NGO in a position that she said was somewhat similar to the one that she had in her country.[40] Owing to a number of operational problems in the organization, she lost her job[41] and she has since been working as a supply teacher with a school board. She recounted the following:

"[A]vant de venir au Canada, j'avais travaillé dans une caisse qui est un peu comme la Caisse de dépôt et placement comme ici...c'était un peu comme ça. Donc, j'ai travaillé longtemps là et j'étais directrice adjointe de cette caisse-là quand j'ai quitté mon poste pour venir ici. Alors, vous voyez donc j'ai évolué déjà jusqu'à un niveau de directeur général. Maintenant je suis venue ici et puis on a fait une formation d'intégration [avec Emploi Québec] et on nous dit d'oublier tout ce qu'on a fait dans nos pays. Qu'il faut faire le deuil de tout ce qu'on a eu comme carrière et tout ça parce que c'est différent ici. J'ai trouvé ça comme un peu humiliant parce que moi je dis je suis venue ici en tant que travailleur qualifié. On a regardé mes diplômes tout, et lors de l'entrevue, j'ai fourni mes diplômes, on m'a fait une entrevue en anglais. On a parlé de mes postes et tout, alors j'ai été qualifiée pour venir ici. Donc moi, dans ma tête, c'est comme tu viens ici, je pourrais facilement

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[40] The position title was similar, but the scope of her activities was very different.
[41] The NGO ceased its activities.

trouver du travail parce que c'est comme on a besoin de mon profil. Mais je viens et puis Emploi-Québec nous envoie faire une formation d'intégration et c'est là où on te dit qu'[il faut] oublier...On nous a appris à chercher du travail. Comment on cherche du travail ici et il fallait postuler pour des petits emplois, pour gagner comme 12$ de l'heure, des choses comme ça...[C]'était un peu décevant et puis humiliant pour moi. Moi, personnellement, je suis rendue à un âge où je me suis dite moi je veux plus faire de petits boulots. Je veux plus postuler à quoi que ce soit. Moi je ne veux plus postuler pour choisir uhhh...bon, je ne veux plus postuler. Je vais tout doucement préparer mon retour dans mon pays"

Besides the non-recognition of previous work experience and educational qualifications, women in our study spoke of challenges that they faced in connection with obtaining professional licences. Five of the women who participated in our study had previous training in a regulated profession - four were medical doctors and the fifth woman was a midwife. According to these women, the high costs, time investment involved, as well as complex procedures, including application procedures, were major obstacles to their career development in these fields. The result, at least from an objective point of view, is that the careers of three of the five women have very clearly stagnated or regressed over time. For the other two women who have been able to attain some level of objective success, they, like the other three women, still held perceptions that they are not following their passions or pursuing their ideal career paths.

Priscilla*, a gynaecologist/oncologist who studied to become a nurse after she arrived in Quebec, mentioned that the high costs involved, as well as the lack of family support in Quebec were the main reasons behind her decision not to pursue a career in medicine. Although she has since managed to advance in her new career, currently serving in a managerial position in a CHSLD, she mentioned that *"je ne fonctionne pas à ma pleine potentielle"*.

As in Priscilla's* case, the intersection of barriers relating to her immigration status and gender influenced Esther's*[42] decision not to pursue a career in medicine in Quebec. However, unlike Priscilla* who mentioned that she felt "partially" successful in her career because she has been able to advance in her new field of work, Esther* expressed utter disappointment in her career development since she has been in the province. In her situation, despite doing a master's degree in public health post-immigration, she bemoaned the fact that she was in the same job position since 2005 and deplored that her salary was well below her qualifications level. In fact, she admitted that she felt exploited by her employer who took advantage of her vulnerability and naivety as an immigrant in Quebec. She explained that when she started working with her employer, her main concern at the time was to acquire Canadian experience and so she did not negotiate her salary like many of her native colleagues did. Today, she finds herself in a situation where she is grossly underpaid, and this directly fueled the feelings of dissatisfaction that she expressed vis-à-vis her job and her career.

Jessica*, another medical doctor, also expressed utter dissatisfaction and disenchantment with her career. In addition to the intersecting barriers that she faced because of her status as an immigrant as well as a mother, specifically cost and time barriers, she spoke of the lack of information available to immigrants as a major barrier to her career success. She explained that when she arrived in Quebec, individuals in her network advised her to enrol in nursing, which she did in a CEGEP. However, she said that this one-year course only allowed her to become an *infirmière technicienne* and not a *infirmière clinicienne,* as is the case for individuals who obtain a university degree in nursing. She mentioned that despite her many attempts with her employer and the *Ordre des infirmières et infirmiers du Québec* to get her degree upgraded given that she

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[42] Esther* was a general practitioner.

has previous experience working as a medical doctor, she continues to work as an *infirmière technicienne*. She finds her situation both frustrating and ungratifying. She explained,

"Globalement, je me suis senti quand même, j'ai senti comme pas une humiliation, mais une petite frustration. Oui. Parfois un peu révoltée. Je ne sais pas contre qui, mais je me dis c'est une injustice, si on peut le dire aussi comme ça. Peut etre c'est trop fort mais c'est ça que moi j'ai ressenti, c'est ça."

Jane*, a former paediatrician, also opted to do studies to become a nurse after she encountered several administrative barriers relating to her application to the *Collège des médecins*. She explained,

"En fait, [le problème] c'est pour tous les étrangers en général et surtout pour ceux qui viennent d'Afrique, c'est compliqué d'avoir une équivalence parce qu'en fait, le Collège des médecins ici, c'est un peu comme, je les qualifie de mafia en fait. Parce qu'ils ont des règles vraiment très, très dures. Quelque part, je les comprends parce qu'ils ne savent pas, pas qu'ils ne savent pas, ils ne font pas confiance en notre formation. Le problème qui s'est posé au premier abord, c'est qu'avant de pouvoir passer des examens, il faut d'abord que le Collège des médecins vérifie que mon diplôme de médecine est authentique. Et pour faire cette vérification-là, il passe par l'intermédiaire d'un organisme américain qui envoie des formulaires à remplir à notre université d'origine et, à l'époque, du doyen de notre université ne voulait pas signer des formulaires qui attestaient que notre diplôme était vraiment authentique. Ça, c'était déjà le premier blocage parce qu'il disait que les médecins qu'il formait partaient travailler à l'étranger et que ça ne lui plaisait pas. Il voulait comme nous empêcher de travailler à l'étranger. Donc, à l'époque, il ne signait pas des formulaires et on ne pouvait même pas s'inscrire aux examens. Ça a duré un an ou deux ans. Je sais pas. Il a fallu qu'on change de doyen et c'est le nouveau doyen qui a commencé par signer

ses formulaires-là. Donc, au début, quand moi j'avais envoyé mon dossier, mon dossier traînait donc c'est là qu'il fallait que je fasse quelque chose en attendant. Je ne pouvais pas rester à la maison. Donc c'est là que j'ai commencé mes études de, mon baccalauréat en sciences infirmières en attendant que mon dossier soit débloqué. Donc, finalement, quand l'autorisation a été signée et que mon diplôme a été authentifié, j'étais en plein dans mon baccalauréat. J'avais plein de cours et puis finalement, je n'arrivais pas à faire les deux, faire mes cours de baccalauréat et puis réviser pour les examens parce qu'il y avait beaucoup de matières quand même à réviser. Donc, en ce moment-là, j'avais mon mari et mon enfant, dont il fallait que je m'occupe aussi. Et puis je travaille comme assistant de recherche à l'université. Donc ça me faisait énormément de choses, donc je n'avais plus en fait le temps de réviser pour des examens. C'était soit j'abandonnais mes études pour me consacrer à l'examen ou bien je laissais tomber des examens pour terminer des études. Donc, et puis, comme aussi après les examens, je n'avais aucune assurance que j'allais trouver un stage parce qu'après les examens en fait il fallait effectuer un stage de deux ans avant de pouvoir passer au dernier examen qui permettait d'obtenir le permis. Donc, ce stage a également été difficile à trouver. Il y avait beaucoup de personnes qui étaient en attente du stage donc j'ai réfléchi et je me suis dit je ne pouvais pas gâcher mes études qui allaient comme m'assurer un avenir financier pour me consacrer aux examens et à la fin, ne même pas trouver de stage pour pouvoir obtenir le permis. Donc c'est là que j'ai mise les examens en stand-by en me disant bon, je vais finir mes études de sciences infirmières et puis je verrai si après je pourrais me replonger là-dedans. Et puis, finalement, quand j'ai fini mes études, j'ai commencé à travailler. Je me suis dit, bon, ça faisait quoi? Euh, quatre ans déjà que j'étais au Canada et puis je me dis non, que je vais plus me lancer dans quelque chose d'hypothétique, quelque chose qui n'allait pas forcément

aboutir. Il fallait que je choisisse… Puis je n'allais pas passer des années à poursuivre un rêve qui finalement peut-être ne se réaliserait pas."

However, despite what seemed to be a calculated decision to change her career and the sense of appreciation that she has given her current working conditions, she admitted to feeling that she has failed in her career. She said,

"[E]n fait, pour avoir pour ce sentiment de réussite là, il faudrait que j'arrive à me débarrasser de, j'arrive à faire le deuil, à faire le deuil de ma carrière de médecin. Que j'arrive à me débarrasser de ce sentiment de, comment dire, sentiment d'échec. Appelons-le comme ça. C'est quand même un sentiment d'échec. Le fait de ne pas avoir...C'est vrai qu'en ce moment, j'ai un bon emploi mais le fait de ne pas avoir réussi à obtenir mon permis de pratique ici comme médecin, ça constitue quand même un échec. [I]l arrive comme des fois, des moments passagers où je ressens comme des regrets, ou bien disons de la nostalgie de ma carrière passée. Parce que quand même, quoiqu'on dise dans cette carrière-là, j'avais l'impression d'être vraiment utile. Parce que des fois, tu reviens le soir à la maison et tu sens que tu as fait un plus dans la vie des personnes que tu as vu dans la journée. T'as même pas, il y a des jours où tu sauves carrément des vies. Et puis, c'est des choses que tu...C'est des sentiments que tu ne pourrais jamais avoir en travaillant comme professionnelle de recherche[43], par exemple."

Althea*, the former midwife who also studied to become a nurse after she arrived in Quebec, admitted to feeling "partially" successful in her career because she was not able to practise as a midwife in Quebec. She, too, spoke of the lengthy process and how this impeded the possibility for her to feel "fully" successful in her career. She explained,

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[43] Jane* currently works as a *professionnelle de recherche* in a state agency and is not a practicing nurse.

"[C]omme c'est Trois Rivières seule qui forme les sages-femmes au Québec, quand [j]'étai[s] arrivé[e], en ce moment elle formait à-peu-près 20 sages femmes par année et [elle] prenait comme deux étrangers, deux ou trois étrangers par cohort donc. Et moi, quand j'ai envoyé mon dossier, j'ai terminé mon bac avant de recevoir l'appel. Donc, je me suis dit, bon, j'ai terminé mon bac, c'est fini. [Mais] j'ai dit partiellement parce que j'aimerais comme continuer comme sage-femme."

Some participants like Francine* also spoke of the exclusion that she was made to feel in her work environment mainly because she is an immigrant, and she admitted that this ultimately influenced her feelings of job satisfaction. She explained,

"[J]e suis dans un domaine où c'est des intellectuels. Moi, je les appelle les érudits, je suis avec les érudits, okay. C'est comme des personnes avec des post-doctorats, des doctorats, donc, tu vois...des personnes avec une grande...des capacités intellectuelles, qui ont fait des grandes études. Voilà donc. Ce qui fait qu'il y a le clan des érudits, les chercheurs, et tout là [et] il y a le clan des personnes qui n'ont pas...enfin ceux qui ne le sont pas, okay. Mais pourquoi est-ce que je peux dire que l'origine...il y a ça qui joue un rôle [dans les relations avec les autres]. [J]e vais vous donner un exemple. Il y avait une Péruvienne dans notre équipe. C'est une personne super qualifiée aussi qui a fait des grandes études en France. C'est sûr qu'au niveau de professionnels...c'est sûr qu'on pouvait faire appel à elle déjà. C'est une spécialiste surtout des indicateurs en fait, des indicateurs qui ont lieu avec l'immigration. C'est sûr, dans les recherches, il faut que tu connaisses quelqu'un qui puisse travailler sur ces indicateurs-là. Donc elle était souvent interpellée. Par contre, je vais te dire qu'au niveau des relations interpersonnelles, elle avait le même enjeu que moi. Donc, vous voyez, c'est pour ça que je dis des fois, ça se fait sentir."

Kimberly* and Suzie* related the experiences of other immigrants in their organizations, or in organizations with which they do business, to illustrate that immigration status can impact career outcomes. For example, Kimberly* shared the story of a former colleague, a Rwandan immigrant, who she felt experienced differential treatment from her supervisor in the ratings of her job performance. According to Ilgen and Youtz (1986), differential treatment of subordinates can depress skills, ability and motivation to perform, which negatively influences actual performance levels and ultimately career success. She related,

"[Il y a] 20 jours d'orientation. Le système est tellement lourd. On a deux écrans devant nous. Il y a plusieurs applications. Tu dois être comme constamment dans ci, dans ça. Tu peux faire une erreur [et] c'est tellement vite parti en cacahuète et tout. Donc, il faut vraiment avoir le souci de détail. Puis fais attention parce qu'on joue aussi avec la paie des employés. Il faut coder les bons quarts de travail comme la bonne heure, le bon temps de pause, si l'employé est en TS, toute une histoire. Mais on n'a pas tous le même niveau d'adaptation. [Q]uand les Québécois viennent, un de leurs parents a déjà travaillé peut-être à l'hôpital et puis elle sait c'est quoi l'auxiliaire. Elle sait c'est quoi une infirmière auxiliaire. Mais moi, je viens du [nom du pays]. Il n'y a pas d'infirmière auxiliaire. Même s'il y en a, je ne connais pas parce que j'ai pas travaillé dans ce système-là. Donc vous venez d'être embauché là et vous me demandez d'être excellente. Ne me demandez pas d'être déjà bonne au 21ᵉ jour [car] on n'a pas tous le même niveau d'adaptation. Alors, la madame rwandaise, pendant la formation, elle posait tellement de questions [car elle ne comprenait pas]. Au bout de deux semaines, elle s'est fait rencontrer tellement de fois- "Non, tu poses les mêmes questions. Quand que tu ouvres les applications c'est pas disposé de la bonne façon donc c'est normal que ça te mélange. Hier tu as fait une erreur de ci, une erreur de ça" Oui, et alors? Des fois ça va toucher tellement ton estime de toi, même genre je ne suis pas capable.

Mais quand que c'est eux comme genre les mêmes nationalités, des Blancs et puis tout, on dit, "oh non, elle est stressée. C'est parce qu'elle est stressée." C'est trop, c'est tellement banal! À croire que nous, on n'est pas stressés. Ils sont excusables comme sur beaucoup de choses mais jamais nous. Mais dans leur convention, je sais pas si c'est une convention, mais c'est le contrat, ça dit que c'est 90 jours de probation. Laissez-moi faire mon chemin. Au bout de 90 jours, jugez-moi, mais pas avant. Au final, la madame rwandaise, elle a décidé de partir d'elle-même."

While relating her story and the difficulties that she personally faced in accessing the labour market, Suzie* also mentioned that her experience working with recruitment firms in Montreal validated certain beliefs that she had regarding the negative relationship between immigration status and career outcomes. As she explained, the existence of biases and stereotypes regarding immigrants seriously impaired possibilities for them to achieve their career objectives. She explained,

"C'est peut-être pas tant que telle la couleur de peau, mais c'est le préjugé même de tout ce qui vient de l'étranger. Qu'on n'est pas sûr qu'on veut leur confier des choses. Donc, l'enjeu est là. Ça, c'est c'est mon analyse. Et pour les firmes de recrutement, je me rappelle il y a quoi, 2016, hein, je te parle de 2016. Le client, le client, notre client, évidemment, il est roi. Et quand il te dit que, écoute, je cherche un responsable comptable avec un CPA et s'il te plaît, je ne veux pas de nom que je n'arrive pas à prononcer. C'est ça le bon de commande que je reçois. Donc c'était clair, clairement écrit ou pas écrit là. Mais quand on va en prise de besoins parce qu'on avait des séances donc pour prendre le besoin du client… Donc, on va chez le client. Si ce sont les noms que je ne peux pas prononcer, non. Ils disent que si je fais appel à une firme, c'est parce que je veux un Tremblay, je veux un Côté, je veux un Ducôté, je veux un Miller, je veux un Dubois. Je ne veux pas des noms que je ne peux pas prononcer. Il y en a qui ont déjà dit je ne veux pas de musulmans,

littéralement. Parce que ça ne fait pas bon ménage avec les autres. Il y en a qui ont déjà dit que je ne veux pas de personnes voilées, extremists. Ils le disent à ma face. À une noire, ils me disent ça.

In addition to these meso-level factors, some women mentioned that they believed that micro-level factors such as limited competencies in one or another of the official languages in Canada, were a barrier to their career success. Both Jenny* and Amanda*, two native English-speakers, considered that limited competencies in the French language were a major barrier to their career success because this imposed limits on the range of career opportunities that they had in the labour market as well as the opportunities for career growth. The limitation imposed by the language barrier was especially striking in Jenny's* case and was manifested at three different levels: 1. accessing the job market in Quebec; 2. accessing a job in her field in Quebec; and 3. accessing and maintaining a high-quality job in Quebec.

Jenny*, who trained as a social worker in Germany, explained that after she arrived in Quebec in 2005, it took her approximately two years to find a job because she did not speak French. After finally landing a job where she worked in a community-based organization that helps immigrants, she said that she decided to leave after six months because it did not allow her to improve her French, which was essential, and the organization itself was not conducive for her career growth because it functioned "like we work in Africa, like, you know, it's not so serious." Her next 'real' job came after about five- or six-years post-immigration when she was employed as an "*intervenante sociale*" in another community-based organization. Again, in this situation, her limited language competencies proved a challenge and she said that she ended up functioning more like a "watch man" than a social worker because she did not have the opportunity to do one-on-one consultations with clients.

Her next job opportunity came when she obtained a six-month internship at the DPJ. By the time that opportunity came around she said that she felt that her French was "somehow okay", and she would be able to successfully complete the internship and then integrate the service in one fashion or another. However, she explained that her competency levels in French were deemed inadequate after her evaluation, and she did not continue with the service after the six-month period. After this experience, she said that she worked as a *préposée au bénéficiaire* and then as a nursing assistant in a CHSLD, which she continues to do. Although Jenny* acknowledged that she felt "partially" successful because she believed that she was in somewhat of a better position than many other Black immigrants in Quebec, as demonstrated, the language barrier seriously limited the career opportunities of which she could avail herself. In fact, owing to the language barrier, for many years she was obliged to function either at the peripheries of the primary labour market or in the secondary labour market.

Unlike in Jenny's* and Amanda's* situations where limited competencies in French were considered a barrier, for Esther* it was her limited competencies in English that proved to be a challenge. In her view, this foreclosed certain job opportunities for her especially in the field of research where she worked. In relating her experience to that of other immigrants from Africa, she argued,

"Au Québec, je dirais d'abord qu'il y a la barrière [de] la langue aussi parce que quand tu es francophone et que tu arrives au Québec et que tu ne parles pas l'anglais, cette barrière, moi je pense qu'il y a comme une barrière de langue qui est là, parce que certains, il y a beaucoup de francophones qui arrivent, de femmes noires aussi qui arrivent au Québec en se disant, Ah, bon, je lis, je décide de choisir le Québec parce qu'on parle le français. Mais elles se rendent compte par après que non, on parle le français, mais quand je regarde les offres d'emploi, il faut parler

d'anglais et c'est une des, je me dis c'est, ça c'est une barrière, une grosse barrière. Et puis, dans le milieu de l'emploi, les employeurs n'offrent pas, par exemple, cette possibilité là à leurs employés d'aller perfectionner ou développer leur apprentissage de la langue qui est parlée au Canada parce que le Canada est bilingue, c'est le français, c'est l'anglais. On ne donne pas cette opportunité-là les employeurs. C'est à l'employé de se débrouiller. C'est à dire soit il va chercher des cours en plus, ou en tout cas l'employé qui se débrouille même tu sais l'employeur ne va pas comme financer l'apprentissage, par exemple de la seconde langue pour garder son employé. Il va préférer aller chercher quelqu'un qui est déjà bilingue ou quelqu'un qui connait déjà les deux langues plutôt que de recruter quelqu'un et puis de dire ben moi, je vais comme financer, je vais comme payer les cours de langue à cet employé. Donc, la barrière est tout de suite au début, dès le recrutement, moi je me dis par rapport au niveau de la langue aussi."

Finally, among the 25 women who were interviewed, two mentioned that they did not think that their status as immigrants impacted their career outcomes. In the opinion of these women, cultural proximity between home and host countries mitigated the negative effects that immigration status could have on career success because this equipped them with certain cultural codes that helped to minimize areas of differentiation and distinction that could be made between them and natives and which could form the basis of stereotypes in the workplace. Erfa* details this in explicit terms.

"[M]oi je trouve que, comment dire, je suis immigrante mais je viens quand même d'un pays qui est comme occidental. C'est comme la même chose. Si je venais directement de la Côte d'Ivoire, ce serait surement différent, je pense. Ce serait peut-être plus difficile pour moi. [I]l y a une différence de culture qui est très, très, très, très grosse. Quand tu viens de France par rapport à ici, il n'y a pas de différence de culture vraiment. Quelqu'un qui vient d'Afrique, il va plus avoir

un choc et l'adaptation va être plus difficile. Et il va devoir euh... parce que les codes ne sont pas toujours les mêmes, tu comprends. Moi, je trouverais ça dur d'arriver directement de Côte d'Ivoire et puis d'arriver ici au Québec comme ça, je trouvais ça vraiment difficile. Je trouverais ça un plus gros défi en tout cas.''

She also added,

"J'avoue que ce qui m'aide aussi, c'est que je parle français euh, sans accent aussi. Donc ça, ça aide aussi. Je me dis que peut être, si j'avais un accent très fort, peut-être que les gens auraient un peu plus de mal à m'assimiler.''

In addition to possessing certain cultural codes and attributions that helped blur the lines between their identity(ies) and the dominant culture, both women mentioned that their organizations' openness, whether demonstrated via their policies or in terms of the communities that they serve, helped facilitate the feelings of satisfaction that they had vis-à-vis their work environments. Erfa* also admitted that her organization's openness helped promote feelings that she could attain certain objective measures of career success in her company. She explained that the organization that she was working with had adopted what researchers such as Allison (1999) have described as anti-discriminatory policies and practices, which have become part and parcel of the organization's culture. She narrated,

"Par exemple, nous à [nom de la compagnie], le président est américain et quand il y a eu l'affaire de George Floyd, le président a fait une allocution là, il s'est adressé [à nous]. Et d'ailleurs, il trouve inadmissible que des personnes puissent subir une telle chose. Et il a nommé quelqu'un, un Noir américain, qui a été nommé à un nouveau poste qu'il a créé, qui s'appelle, dont le but est de s'assurer qu'il n'y ait aucune discrimination dans sa compagnie. Chief executive integration, inclusion, quelque chose comme ça. Et donc, en fait, c'est vraiment…Si vous voyez le moindre

signe qu'il y a un problème, il faut le dénoncer parce que nous, on n'est pas du tout ce genre de

compagnie où les personnes ne se sentent pas à l'aise ou les personnes ne se sentent pas incluses.

On ne veut pas du tout entendre parler de ça. Donc nous, parce qu'en gros, ce qu'il voulait dire,

c'est que ce qui se passe dans le monde, il n'a pas vraiment de pouvoir. Mais ce qui se passe dans

la compagnie, ça il peut faire en sorte de changer et de changer les mentalités là. Mais moi, ça

me fait sentir importante parce que je sais qu'en plus il ne fait pas juste avec les personnes de

couleur et les personnes noires, il le fait aussi... Ils ont aussi un comité pour les personnes

homosexuelles. Ils ont aussi un comité [pour] les personnes asiatiques, les personnes sud-

américaines. Et pour les femmes aussi. Ils ont plein de petits comités comme ça, pour que les gens

se sentent vraiment, sentent vraiment bien, se sentent à l'aise. Dans la compagnie, tout le monde

a différents postes. Mais toi, tu veux un poste, là tu peux l'avoir aussi. Il faut prendre l'exemple

sur un tel. Regarde un tel, il a réussi. Toi aussi tu peux y arriver. Il faut te faire entendre. Il faut

pas rester dans ton coin tout timide en me disant je ne vais pas, je suis pas capable, on va pas me

donner ça. Non, ça ça ne marche pas, il faut t'affirmer, etc. Donc c'est ce que j'aime vraiment,

vraiment beaucoup dans cette compagnie. Honnêtement, ce n'est pas toutes les compagnies qui

sont comme ça. Ils sont ouverts, qui pratiquent l'inclusion.''

In Anne's* case, she mentioned,

"…the school that I am at it's an international boarding school. So, most of the kids here are

international students. So, it's not like, you know, so to have a teacher who is an international

faculty member, I don't think it's something that you know, it's taboo, so to speak, like I don't think

it will have an impact..."

4.4.4 Intersectional identities and career success

Like (Chicha, 2012), our study found instances of *discriminations croisées* (Chicha, 2012, p. 88), where the intersection of two or more aspects of these women's social identity created situations of "double-jeopardy" or "triple-jeopardy", which further limited opportunities to achieve career success. Kadian's* experiences are particularly unequivocal and illustrate how the barriers associated with her immigration status and her gender role combined to effectively foreclose opportunities for career growth. As she explained, not only did she face important setbacks in her career because of the access discrimination that she faced in relation to her status as an immigrant in Quebec, but the burdens of motherhood imposed further limits on the opportunities that she was able to make use of. She described her challenges in much detail:

"[J]'ai fait une maîtrise en sciences économiques en Côte d'Ivoire [puis] je suis allée en Belgique…[J]'ai fait une maîtrise professionnelle en statistique et épidémiologie en Belgique. Et quand j'ai arrivé ici au Québec, je suis arrivée avec ma maîtrise en économie et ma maîtrise professionnelle en statistique et économie. Donc, ma maîtrise en Belgique, elle a été évaluée comme une maîtrise en statistique ici. Et épidémiologie, évidemment. Mais quand j'ai commencé à chercher le travail, quand j'ai commencé à chercher l'emploi, mon premier emploi, c'était dans une manufacture, une manufacture… Et puis, bon, j'ai décidé de retourner aux études, tant bien même que j'avais déjà un deuxième cycle universitaire. J'ai décidé de retourner aux études parce qu'il y avait à l'époque plusieurs personnes qui disaient que pour avoir un emploi qu'on aime au Québec, il faut étudier au Québec parce qu'ici, les employeurs ils aiment les diplômés du Québec et tout ça donne toujours. Donc voilà, je me suis retrouvée en train de faire un deuxième cycle universitaire au HEC de Montréal... Et puis cette formation là ben, quand je l'ai terminée, j'étais toujours en train de travailler pour [nom de l'organisation] dans mon centre d'appels. Et à la fin de ma formation bien ça fait, deux ans, j'avais un deuxième enfant. Donc la famille a grandi, les responsabilités ont grandi, mais le même rythme faut le conserver pour trouver le moyen de conserver le rythme. Comment est ce qu'on concilie tout ça? Et voilà. Suite à cela, j'ai eu un emploi à la [nom de l'organisation] comme comme préposée aux opérations. Donc c'était comme un agent de back office aux opérations financières. Donc c'est le travail en fait que je faisais et j'ai fait ce travail là de 2010 jusqu'à 2012…Mais c'était vraiment des, c'était vraiment des contrats, c'était des petits contrats des fois d'un mois, deux mois. Mais j'avoue que j'offrais une bonne prestation de travail. Donc, ça fait que chaque fois quand un emploi ou un contrat se terminait, bien, je me retrouvais avec un autre contrat dans une autre direction de la banque et tout. Mais je m'étais butée à un obstacle. C'est que, malgré que j'offrais une bonne prestation, mon gestionnaire en tout cas, il hésitait à me donner le poste et il me disait qu'avec tous les diplômes que vous avez, ce n'est

pas le genre de travail que vous devez occuper. « Mais je le fais déjà ce travail là avec vous depuis des années ! » Fait que je ne manquais jamais le travail, mais c'était des contrats vraiment temporaires… À un moment donné, j'étais un peu tannée de travailler vraiment, sans aucun statut. Quand on a le discours, « tu fais un très bon job, en tout cas pour toi, tu ne peux jamais manquer de travail au milieu de nous. » Et bon, et on n'est pas capable d'avoir un poste, c'est juste pour des raisons qu'on n'arrive pas à comprendre vraiment…"

She further recounted that after spending over 7 years post-immigration working several odd jobs, she was finally able to find a position with the federal government that offered opportunities for career growth. However, as she explained, she was not able to take full advantage of these because of her family obligations. She explained,

"…j'avais passé des concours à la fonction publique provinciale. J'étais sur des listes des professionnels, des listes des techniciennes de listes, des préposés. Je cherchais partout. J'allais passer le concours à la fonction publique fédérale. J'étais sur des listes partout. À ce moment là, durant mon année où j'étais en chômage, j'ai axé ma recherche d'emploi. J'ai plus travaillé avec le fédéral. Je postulais sur toutes les concours qui s'ouvraient. Et là, j'ai eu un poste au gouvernement fédéral, un poste d'agent de prestation de services à Québec. Je suis à Montréal, ma famille est à Montréal. Là, on est rendus en 2015 de mon périple, là. À Québec, la famille à Montréal, j'ai quatre enfants à Montréal, j'ai un poste à Québec. Puis, puisque le parcours n'a pas été vraiment facile au plan professionnel, je me suis dis, « Mais non, je ne peux pas manquer cette opportunité. Je dois y aller. En plus, le gouvernement fédéral, ça va sonner gros dans mon CV. Ça va être une porte ouverte pour moi. On va avoir un poste permanent, quelques part. Et regardez, je me retrouve à travailler à Québec, à la Sécurité de vieillesse, parce qu'au gouvernement fédéral, quand je suis rentrée là, je me suis rendue compte que tu pouvais faire tes 37 h 50 sur quatre jours, si tu le voulais. Et tout cas, il y avait une organisation à l'interne, même avant le télétravail, pour vraiment comme avantager les employés et tout ça. Je me retrouvais à faire mes 37 h semaine en quatre jours de travail et chaque vendredi matin, j'étais dans le covoiturage pour revenir à Montréal pour venir assurer, m'occuper de la famille, la cuisine pour toute la semaine, le ménage qui n'a pas été fait pour toute la semaine, les boîtes à lunch au congélateur. Il fallait tout penser, tout, tout, tout, tout organisé. Laver et classer pour toute la semaine et je vous explique que j'avais des week ends très épuisants. Et chaque dimanche soir, j'étais en route pour Québec pour aller passer mes autres jours de travail…Et donc ce travail là, je l'ai occupé de juin, de juin 2015 à jusqu'en avril 2017… Et en mars 2017, je me fais appeler par le ministère du Travail, ici à Montréal, par un centre local d'emploi à [nom de la ville] qui siège des agents d'aide socio-économique. Donc, j'ai accepté ce poste là parce que wow, c'était à Montréal et ça allait me couper vraiment mon organisation très difficile. Et j'ai démissionné. J'ai démissionné de l'Emploi et Développement Social Canada avec le gouvernement fédéral. Par contre, là, c'était un emploi…temporaire, mais au gouvernement fédéral, ça allait que c'était reconduit jusqu'à ce qu'on avait la permanence, mais mon poste, je ne pouvais pas le transférer à Montréal et puis c'était vraiment très difficile l'organisation familiale… Donc voilà, au ministère du Travail, je suis restée là de 2017 jusqu'à 2020. Je suis restée au ministère du Travail. [Mais]

c'était [un] emploi occasionnel… Moi, j'avais une bonne famille derrière moi. J'ai cinq enfants. J'ai des bouches à nourrir, comme on le dit en Afrique. Je pouvais pas garder un emploi occasionnel pendant tout ce temps parce que chaque année on me renouvelait occasionnel. "

Farrah's* and Jenny's* experiences illustrate how skill discounting or deskilling, a critical barrier that immigrants face in the labour market in Quebec and race-related barriers (in Farrah's* case, it was limited access to practices that enhance relationships while in Jenny's* case it was exclusion from relationships and micro-aggression) combined to limit opportunities for career development in their current situations and in future ones as well. Farrah* explained that her diplomas that she obtained in Ivory Coast and in France were evaluated as a DEC in Quebec and that this (de)classification along with racism led to a situation where her remuneration was below that of her pairs. She explained,

"[C'est une hirtoire de] …race. Il faut aller arracher parce qu'il y a des personnes même qui ont les mêmes qualifications que les gens d'ici, qui sont formées ici, qui sont très productives comme ces personnes de race blanche…Donc, dernièrement j'ai eu justement à discuter avec mon gestionnaire parce qu'il a vu que j'appliquais pour aller ailleurs. Et cette gestionnaire où j'ai appliqué a communiqué avec lui pour dire que, « Écoute, peut être c'est une question de salaire, parle avec elle et puis on verra. » Donc, il m'a abordé. C'est une porte ouverte. J'ai dit que c'est ça, on voit le coût de la vie aujourd'hui et puis sur mon salaire il ne suit pas et quand j'entends qu'il y a une distinction, parce que les gens se parlent entre eux. Il y a une distinction salariale. Je dis que c'est vrai. Et puis j'ai même mentionné, je dis que c'est vrai qu'on demande un certain niveau d'études et tout, mais quand même, on fait la même job. Mais mon gestionnaire il m'a répondu. Il a dit que cette situation elle est resolue. C'était avant qu'on va dire que toi t'as un baccalauréat l'autre c'est un DEC ou bien c'est pour ça que les salaires vont pas être les mêmes. Donc pourquoi X ou Y fait la même job que moi et souvent même je travaille même plus qu'elle parce que j'ai l'expérience plus qu'elle, je suis dans la caisse, je suis dans l'entreprise plus longtemps qu'elle mais j'ai pas la même rémunération ? Là, moi, je vais dire là il y a un problème de racisme. Moi c'est un problème de race. Ca n'a rien à avoir avec le niveau d'etude, tu vois. Ca pour moi ils mettent ça en avance pour dévoiler les choses mais à partir du moment où la job est faite pareille. Là, on ne te dit pas que toi tu as un DEC donc on te donne moins de choses versus celle qui a un baccalauréat. C'est pas comme ça qu'on fait le travail. On fait tous la même job, donc tout le monde doit etre égal face au salaire. "

Jenny's* experience with micro-aggression, which is detailed above, along with her experiences of skill discounting, also detailed above, not only curtailed opportunities for her to obtain certain positions in the organizations where she worked but they even limited access to

organizations located in the primary labour market, which provide career development opportunities such as career advancement. As the experiences of these three women show, where multiple minority statuses intersect, these often result into significant and profound experiences of discrimination and oppression for the individuals (Harnois, 2015).

In conclusion, all 25 of the women who participated in our study considered that either individual facets or the aggregate of their social identity was a barrier to their career success. Previous research examining the impact of social identity on career success found that factors at the micro-, meso- as well as macro-levels are associated with perceptions of objective or subjective career success. In the case of our study participants, while some acknowledged that micro-level factors such as language skills played a role in their career outcomes, in most instances, the women considered that meso- as well as macro-level factors imposed non-negligible constraints on their career outcomes. In the next and final chapter, we will unpack and discuss our research findings specifically in light of the objectives that have guided this study, which include understanding the perceptions of career success among Black immigrant women in Quebec as well as the perceived role that organizational career management practices and social identity play on their career outcomes.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Over the last few decades, skilled immigrants, including skilled Black immigrant women, have become a key feature of the labour market landscape in Quebec. Data from the last few years have shown that these individuals continue to contribute in important ways to the economic growth of the province. Data for 2020 show for example that labour market growth rates among the immigrant population increased by 0.8%, from 17% in 2019 to 17.8% in 2020, whereas this declined among the native population (*Ministère de l'Immigration et de la Francisation et de l'Intégration*, 2021). Yet while immigrants' presence in the labour market continues to rise, surprisingly few studies have focused on their career success even though it is widely recognized that *all* workers want to be successful in their careers and have the opportunity to use their skills, knowledge and expertise (Yap et al., 2013). Our study, which aimed to examine Black immigrant women's perceptions vis-à-vis their career success, is a first attempt at addressing the existing gap in current research.

In the present chapter, we discuss the findings of our study in the broader context of career success and organizational research. In particular, we discuss how our findings relative to each of the research questions that we explored are consistent with or depart from those in extant literature. Additionally, we discuss the implications of our findings for organizations which are key stakeholders in immigrants' integration in the labour market, as well as for decision-makers who are tasked with designing enabling legal frameworks as well as relevant and appropriate policies, which will facilitate the integration process. Finally, before concluding, we also identify some of the limitations of our study and make recommendations for future research.

5.1 Perceptions of career success

Based on the perspective that career success is an outcome rather than an antecedent of other career outcomes[44], a first critical finding of our research is that the attainment of any number of the accepted indicators of "real" career success, including salary, salary growth, status, and promotions, was a central career objective for the women even though this type of success remained mostly illusive for many of them. These findings regarding the career orientation of these women notably contrast with research by an important number of authors that suggests that in contemporary contexts, employees are mostly concerned with the psychologically rewarding aspects of employment (Arthur, Khapova and Wilderom, 2005; Briscoe, Hall and DeMuth, 2006; Eby, Butts and Lockwood, 2003; Mirvis and Hall, 1994; Rodrigues, Guest and Budjanovcanin, 2016) and are less focused on the "hallmarks of the objectively successful, secure organizational career" (Spurk, Hirschi and Dries, 2019, p. 37).

Researchers such as Arthur and Rousseau (1996) advance that in contemporary contexts careers have become "boundaryless" and that an increasing number of employees are adopting "protean" (Hall, 1996) attitudes towards their careers. A common theme of the boundaryless career is independence from, rather than dependence on, traditional organizational principles (Arthur, 1994 cited in Rodrigues and Guest, 2010) and the concept of the protean career emphasizes freedom, self-direction and choices based on one's own values rather than those that reflect societal norms (Briscoe and Hall, 2002; Eby, Butts and Lockwood, 2003; Mirvis and Hall, 1994). From a strict objective career success and subjective career success perspective, supporters of the boundaryless and protean careers suggest that employees now mainly evaluate their careers in

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[44] For a comprehensive discussion of the distinction between both constructs, see Spurk, Hirschi and Dries (2019).

terms that embrace subjective views of success rather than objective views (Arthur, Khapova and Wilderom, 2005; Baruch, 2006; Spurk, Hirschi and Dries, 2019). However, as we have shown, and consistent with the findings of research by Rodrigues and Guest (2010) for example, the idea that employees are systematically moving away from the old, traditional career and towards the boundaryless and protean paths is not necessarily supported by empirical evidence. In fact, in the specific case of Black immigrant women, their career paths since immigration have mainly been "bounded" in the sense that there has not been much physical mobility, and they continue to focus on achieving the hallmarks of the traditional career with an underlying expectation that their organizations will play a key role in this process.

One possible explanation for the demonstrated level of "boundedness" among the women in our sample is that most of them still seemed to be in the process of adapting, rather than thriving, in the labour market. Zikic, Bonache and Cerdin (2010) identify a typology of career orientation among qualified immigrations, which include embracing, adaptive and resisting. Career orientation, according to Igbaria, Kassicieh and Silver (1999, p. 31), "provides a focus or direction to channel employees' efforts and determines what may be done to achieve their career goals and aspirations." Individuals with an adaptive orientation are generally focused on navigating and managing their new careers and searching for ways to adapt to new labour market requirements. More specifically, while in this stage, qualified immigrants may still be performing 'survival jobs', they may have only managed to partially transfer their foreign cultural capital, or they may still be planning or working towards acquiring local cultural and social capital (Zikic, Bonache and Cerdin, 2010). Although the association between time since immigration and career orientation type was not directly addressed by the authors, there is an implicit suggestion that the more time an immigrant spends in a host country, the less likely he/she is to have an adaptive orientation. In

other words, the more time spent in a host country, the more likely it is that an immigrant will "thrive" in their new context and achieve career success. However, as we have shown, in the case of Black immigrant women in Quebec, time since immigration was not necessarily a predictor of career orientation stage as defined by Zikic, Bonache and Cerdin (2010) as many women, including those who have been in the labour market for well over a decade, were not thriving in the labour market but were still actively searching for ways to adapt to the new labour market requirements.

A second, more plausible explanation for the observed level of "boundedness" may be that these women may have an "inherent" security and stability career anchor in the sense that this has always been their priorities (Schein, 1999 cited in Feldman and Bolino, 1996), or that they may have developed this career anchor with time because of their overall experience with immigration. Arnold, Coombs and Gubler (2019, p. 3194) define career anchors as "an expression of key parts of a person's self-concept, because they are made up of work-related values, needs and/or skills. They are therefore not just the background context to a person's career. Instead, they form a driving force for career choices, goals and actions." Schein, whose seminal work from the 1970s and 1980s forms the basis of research on the concept of career anchors, suggests that individuals have only one true career anchor and that this does not change (Schein, 1990 cited Feldman and Bolino, 1996). It follows, then, from this perspective, that in the case of Black immigrant women, they may have always been primarily motivated by job security and long-term attachment to one organization, which are among the characteristics of the security and stability career anchor. However, unlike Shein (1975, 1978, 1987, 1990 cited in Feldman and Bolino, 1996), a number of researchers including Arnold, Coombs and Gubler (2019) and Feldman and Bolino (1996) suggest that individuals may have multiple career anchors and that even if they are not all "inherent", they

may be developed over time as individuals are forced to adjust to strong situational cues and constraints. In the case of the Black immigrant women who participated in our study, this latter point especially would imply that they may have developed "new" career anchors as they sought to adjust to their new circumstances in the Quebec labour market.

5.2 Organizational career management (OCM) practices and career success

As it relates to the link between organizational career management practices and perceptions of career success, a critical finding of our research is that only few women reported that they benefitted from OCM practices. Furthermore, our research found that among the different forms of OCM practices that reportedly existed in the organizations where our study participants work, competency development through the provision of tuition reimbursement was a common practice. Cappelli (2004) also found that tuition reimbursement is a common OCM practice in organizations and argued that organizations may be more inclined to provide this type of support to their employees because these programs are inversely linked to turnover rates. Strober (1990) and Lee and van Witteloostuijn (1998) also considered the type of training content that organizations were most likely to sponsor, and they found that they tended to support firm-specific training rather than generalized training because of the greater returns of this type of training to organizations.

One logical consequence of our finding that only few women benefitted from OCM practices is that these women did not perceive that they were successful in their careers. Inversely, for the women who reported that they benefitted from OCM practices, their perceptions were that they had achieved career success. The latter finding is consistent with the results of previous

studies by Judge et al. (1995), Ng et al. (2005) and Bagdadli and Gianecchini (2019) that show that employees who benefit from OCM practices will likely perceive that they are successful in their careers.

A few explanations can be offered to account for the limited number of women who benefitted from OCM practices in their organizations. First, it could be assumed that the women in our study did not benefit from OCM practices that promote career success because the organizations where they worked did not support or no longer supported the organizational career as this has been traditionally conceptualized. Over the last few decades, multiple studies have been conducted that have focused on the changing nature of work as well as the changing nature of organizations where work is performed. The consensus among the many authors who have examined these issues, which include Baruch (2003, 2004, 2006), Eby, Butts and Lockwood (2003), Peiperl and Baruch (1997) and Sullivan and Arthur (2006), is that the organizational setting that promoted the long-term, linear career of previous years is being replaced by a more flexible and individualized model where individuals are in full control of their careers and their career outcomes.

However, as Clarke (2013), De Meuse, Bergmann and Lester (2001), De Vos, Dewettinck and Buyens (2008) and Heranus, Pavlovic and Klindzic (2019) note, although organizations have no doubt had to change in order to adapt more quickly and appropriately to the increasing chaos in labour markets, and individuals have also had to develop or adopt different career management strategies and behaviors because these will enable them to better adapt to the volatility in new work environments, organizations are still in the business of promoting OCM practices because they still form the context in which career development takes place and also because they do recognize that to retain and further improve a company's market position, it is important to invest

in its employees. From this, the assumption, then, that the women in our study did not benefit from OCM practices because these do not exist or are no longer supported by the organizations where they work, is not supported.

Moreover, to buttress the preceding argument that the limited support that the women experienced did not arise from their organizations' wholesale disengagement from OCM practices, it is also important to mention that research has shown that the organizational career is still very much alive in the organizations where most of the women who participated in our study work. Empirical research by McDonald, Bradley and Brown (2005) has shown that the organizational career that is exemplified by long-term employment and linear career progression is still evident in bureaucratic structures that are typically found in public sector organizations or in large financial institutions. In the specific context in Quebec, although researchers such as Lemire (2005) and Lemire and Rouillard (2003) mention that some important shifts have taken place in public sector organizations and that these have in part engendered changes to the psychological contract between employers and employees, they suggest that these organizations continue to play a role in managing the careers of their employees.

A second explanation that could be invoked to justify the low proportion of women who benefitted from OCM practices is that they may have encountered discrimination in their organizations, which curtailed access to OCM practices that can develop competencies or that enhance relationships, or they may have faced prejudice and bias in the practices that provide information to organizations. Researchers have previously examined the influence of race, gender, and cultural origins on OCM activities such as developmental training, mentor-protégé/supervisor-employee dyads or developmental networks, as well as on activities that provide information to organizations, and, in general, they have found that individuals with these sociodemographic

characteristics face discrimination and exclusion, or they are subject to biases and stereotypes in the workplace.

Research by Ferdman (1995), Ibarra (1993), Judge and Ferris (1993), O'Neill (2002), Ragins (2002), Thomas (1991), Tsui and O'Reilly (1989), Turban and Jones (1988) and Wayne and Liden (1995), for example, found evidence to suggest that race, gender, and cultural origins influence access as well as the quality of developmental relationships in organizations. Similarly, Cooke, Zeytinoglu and Chowhan (2009), Cox and Nkomo (1986) and Oppler et al. (1992) reported evidence of differential access to training or differential rating by race and gender. Based on these findings, it is conceivable that the individual or collective sociodemographic characteristics of our participants – Black, female, immigrants – imposed important limits on their access to organizational resources or the types of organizational resources that they had access to.

5.3 Social identity barriers to career success

As previously mentioned, a number of studies have found that factors such as race, gender, and immigration status influence the career success of employees. In general, these studies show that Blacks, women, and immigrants face important disadvantages in the labour market and the workplace, which curtail or impede opportunities to achieve career success. Furthermore, research by Acker (2006), Combs (2003), Cox and Nkomo (1991), Dreher and Cox (1996), Mehra, Kilduff and Brass, (1998), Mighty (1997), Podolny and Baron (1997), Prasad, D'Abate and Prasad (2007), Seron (2016) and Thomas (1990, 1993), suggest that the intersection of the different facets of an individual's social identity can seriously hamper opportunities to achieve career success because they interact and work together to further oppress individuals.

Regarding race, consistent with the findings of researchers such as Dreher and Cox (1996), Dreher and Dougherty (1997) and Oppler et al. (1992), or Chicha (2009, 2010a., 2010b., 2012, 2013), Ng and Gagnon (2020) and Yap et al. (2010)who specifically focus on the Canadian or Quebec case, our study found that race influences perceptions of career success. From our findings, some women perceived access and treatment discrimination in the workplace such as bias in hiring and evaluation decisions or discrimination in terms of access to developmental relationships, and these experiences influenced their perceptions of career success, especially objective career success. There was, however, no reported association between race and access to employer-funded training. Moreover, many women, including some of those who mentioned that they felt successful in their careers, reported experiences of microaggression in the workplace, which particularly influenced their feelings of job satisfaction. The latter finding suggests that these experiences are widespread and commonplace, and it corroborates previous reports that racial microaggressions can have serious effects on the workplace experiences and career outcomes of certain employees (Holder, Jackson and Ponterott, 2015; Sue, Capodilup and Holder, 2008; Torres, Driscoll and Burrow, 2010).

Besides these results that were largely expected given current scholarship, another key finding is that there were also some women who did not feel that race influenced their career outcomes. In justifying their perceptions that race was not an obstacle to their career success, the women in this group pointed to the existence of certain policies and practices in their organizations that, in their view, either facilitated access to certain positions or promoted equal opportunities for career advancement. This finding regarding the positive association between the implementation of what Konrad and Linnehan (1995) have characterized as formalized HRM structures, which can be either identity-conscious or identity-blind, and perceptions of career success, contradicts some

early findings by Chicha and Charest (2010, 2013) for example, who found that the implementation of formal programs such as the *Programme d'accès à l'égalité en emploi* (*PAÉ)* had a limited impact on the labour market and, by extension, the career outcomes of minorities, including racialized individuals. The difference in the two sets of findings might be due to the fact that our data were collected in 2022, roughly one decade after the publication of the earlier of the two studies and that, in the organizations where these women worked, the program had matured and was effective in addressing the problem of under-representation and systemic discrimination that affects Black women in particular.

In addition, some women mentioned that they did not perceive tht race played a role in their career outcomes because their organizations are grounded in the ideals of meritocracy and equality and are hence "color-blind" (DeCuir-Gunby and Gunby Jr., 2016; Stevens, Plaut and Sanchez-Burks, 2008), that is, they engage in the "non-recognition" of race (Ibid.). According to the women in this group, by demonstrating that they are high achievers and that they can consistently outperform others, they were able to achieve career success. Certain researchers such as DeCuir-Gunby and Gunby Jr. (2016), Gotanda (1991), Ray (2019) and Reynolds-Dobbs, Thomas and Harrison (2008), have contested the implicit assumption that organizations are "race neutral". Studies such as Reynolds-Dobbs, Thomas and Harrison (2008) show for instance, that where a Black woman feels obliged to display a "superwoman" image[45], whereby her actions in the workplace are carefully and meticulously orchestrated so as to defy the ubiquitous stereotypes that prevail concerning Blacks, this does not imply that organizations are race-neutral. Instead, this suggests that organizations both notice and consider race (Gotanda, 1991) in their decision-making

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[45] According to Reynolds-Dobbs, Thomas and Harrison (2008), the characteristics of the "superwoman" stereotypical image include being an overachiever, being intelligent, articulate, professional and assertive.

processes and that racialized individuals are forced to adapt their behaviors in the workplace to account for this reality.

Consistent with the findings of previous research by Chicha (2009), Guérin et al. (1997), Kirchmeyer (2005) and Tremblay (2005), our study also found that gender was a perceived barrier, especially to the objective success of our study participants. Like these studies, ours found that the age and number of children were important determinants of perceived career success as these factors significantly influenced certain career choices such as the types of work that they accepted to do as well as perceptions of opportunity structure. These findings concerning the influence of gender on career outcomes are important as they contradict the generally held view that Quebec is an exception in North America insofar as gender equality and the fair participation of women in the labour market is concerned (Genin, Laroche and Marchadour, 2022). The difference in our findings may be linked to the intersecting social identities of the women who participated in our study - female and immigrants -, and they further suggest that these women's needs in terms of the types of gender equality policies and practices that are adopted by the workplace may significantly differ from those that have been designed to meet the needs of the majority white, female population in Quebec.

In addition to the above findings, our results also show that the existence of family-friendly policies combined with a supportive work environment can mitigate the negative effects of family responsibilities. These results support the findings of previous research by Allen (2001), Hammer et al. (2009, 2011), Kossek et al. (2011) and Sargent et al. (2022) that suggest that workplace support, which is defined as "the degree to which individuals perceive that their well-being is valued by workplace sources" (Kossek et al., 2011, p. 292), especially by supervisors, can influence the work outcomes of employees in general and women in particular.

In addressing the question of gender-related barriers and perceptions of career success, the theme of the "glass ceiling" or the "concrete ceiling" was raised by some of our participants. The literature on the "glass ceiling", or in the case of Black women, the "concrete ceiling", suggests that women will not advance in their careers because there is an artificial barrier that constrains their progress (Stroh, Brett and Reilly, 1996). An underlying assumption of the "glass ceiling" or the "concrete ceiling" argument is that women will be competing with men for positions of management in organizations and in the context of this competition, men will almost always come out on top either because of 1. the individual differences that have been found between them and women; 2. discrimination in the workplace that work in their favour; or 3. the systemic barriers that exist in institutions that are grounded in the idea of male -White male- dominance (Morrison and Von Glinow, 1990; Yap and Konrad, 2009). Our findings regarding perceptions of a "glass ceiling" or the "concrete ceiling" are inconclusive as while there was one woman who admitted that she did not feel that she could occupy certain positions in her organization because she is female and Black, many others suggested this was a non-issue because they work in female-dominated fields or professions.

Finally, with regards to perceptions that immigration status is a barrier to career success, a key finding of our research, which supports the findings of many other studies, is that immigration status is perceived as an important barrier to career success. In fact, of the three sociodemographic factors that our study evaluated, immigration status was perceived to be the most important barrier to the women's career success. Based on the women's accounts, factors at the micro-, meso-, as well as the macro-levels influenced their perceptions of career success. However, while some women cited micro-level factors such as a lack of competencies in either French or English to account for the challenges that they faced in terms of their career progress, for the most part, the

women mentioned that meso- and macro-level factors could account for the limited success that they had then currently achieved. Our findings regarding the relative importance of meso- and macro-level factors vis-à-vis micro-level factors notably contrast with those of Arcand (2006), Picot (2004), Aydemir and Skuterud (2008) and Sweetman and Warman (2008) who found that micro-level factors were key determinants of the poor labour market and career outcomes of immigrants in Canada or in Quebec.

There are three possible reasons for the difference in our observations. First, the sample of women who participated in our study were mostly admitted to Canada via the Economic Class category of immigration (23 women and 2 women were admitted via the family reunification scheme) and had all arrived in Quebec after 2006. For immigrants who arrived in Quebec especially after 2006, language competencies were an important consideration in their selection (Boudarbat and Grenier, 2017) and so the idea that the challenges that they encounter in their organizations in particular or in the labour market in general can be attributed to their poor competencies in French, is not validated. Additionally, as was highlighted in the previous chapter, as many as 21 of the women in our study were French language speakers- as many as 16 were native speakers and 5 were bilingual (French and English) at immigration.

Secondly, like most women in the province, the majority of our study participants work in the fields of retail, education, health care and social assistance (Cloutier-Villeneuve, 2018 cited in Genin, Laroche and Marchadour, 2022), where services are mainly delivered in French. This suggests that the challenges that the women face in terms of their career progress is not because they lack the requisite competencies or qualifications to occupy positions, whether language or otherwise. In fact, as it pertains to educational qualifications, our study revealed that in most instances the women were over-qualified for the positions that they occupied. Our findings, then,

stand the belief that Black immigrant women have not been able to progress in their careers because of certain micro-level deficiencies on its head.

In connection with the preceding argument about the women's qualifications, all of the women who participated in our study are highly educated, with a minimum of a bachelor's degree in their respective fields. Researchers such as Ballout (2007) and Strober (1990) posit that educational level is an accurate predictor of career outcomes. Furthermore, Burt (1997), Seibert, Kraimer and Liden (2001), Sheridan, Kraimer and Liden (1997), Stroh et al. (1992) and Tharenou et al. (1994), argue that as education level rises, skills increase and this will, in turn, increase productivity, which is later rewarded with higher earnings and career advancement in organizations. However, despite their high levels of education, many of the women in our sample failed to achieve career outcomes that are commensurate with their education levels or level of skills. Again, these findings imply that the challenges that these women face in achieving career success are not related to their human capital, or a lack thereof, but that they can be linked to certain constraints that they face in organizations and in the wider institutional context in which they function.

5.4 Implications

This study has implications for organizations as well as labour market integration policy in Quebec. As it relates to organizations, the general perception among study participants that sociodemographic factors are important barriers to their career success implies that organizations are not currently doing enough to promote the career success of Black immigrant women. According to these women and based on our results, much more needs to be done.

To begin, it is important that organizations put in place measures or practices to punctiliously assess the competencies of Black immigrant women, and based on this, that they are provided with fair and equal opportunities to progress in their careers. Our results show that almost all of the women experienced deskilling or skill discounting, where pre-immigration qualifications and experience were not taken into account in the processes involved in determining labour market access and integration, and especially in the assessment that went into determining whether they possessed the requisite skills and qualifications to progress in their careers. In some instances, women even reported that locally acquired qualifications and skills were disregarded in assessments used to determine whether they possessed the competencies to occupy certain positions.

Multiple stakeholders, including decision-makers in the *Ministère de l'Immigration, de la Francisation et de l'Intégration* as well as human resource personnel, have unique roles to play in this process, which would not only involve implementing measures or practices to ensure that the competencies of Black immigrant women are adequately assessed, but that these are taken into account in employment decisions as well. Implementing measures or practices to ensure that the competencies of Black immigrant women are adequately assessed would first imply that their pre-immigration education is acknowledged and treated with just and equal value in the Quebec labour market. As educational qualifications are the springboard to obtaining certain positions, it is important that these qualifications are fairly assessed. It would also imply that pre-immigration work experiences that sometimes span decades are also acknowledged and treated with just and equal value in the labour market. As one woman suggested, it should not have to take the 101st application before HR personnel they take notice that an employee is interested in occupying a position, whether the move is intra-organizational movement or inter-organizational.

To minimize the possibility for bias to creep into the selection process and simultaneously enhance perceptions of fairness and equity, organizations may consider using 'blind' applications where individuals do not need to divulge their names nor the places where they acquire their academic qualifications or work experience. Instead, it would be sufficient to mention the types of qualifications that they possess and provide a description of tasks and functions that they previously assumed and which they think match the positions that they are applying for.

Secondly, given the direct relationship that has been found to exist between organizational sponsorship of training and development activities and career success, it is apt that organizations consider selecting more of these women to benefit from these activities. However, as previously shown where sponsorship of training and development activities is concerned, it does not suffice to only invest in tuition fee payment or reimbursement of 'generalized' training activities that are in areas that match the organization's mission. Rather, women who are found to possess the required talents and abilities must also be selected for specialized training that are tailored to meet the specific needs of the organization. In other words, women should be selected to participate in training programs where there is a clear link between training programs and organizational goals. Additionally, research by Fang, Zikic and Novicevic (2009) shows that, as it relates to immigrants, they seem to encounter more difficulties than natives in leveraging their training into concrete career results. To further promote the positive career outcomes of immigrants who access training and development opportunities, organizations may also consider providing them with additional training into how to translate "basic" training into positive career outcomes (Fang, Zikic and Novicevic, 2009).

Similarly, given the positive association between access to developmental relationships and career success, organizations should consider putting into place practices that will enhance

these women's access to relationships that will not only promote their career development but that will support their social and psychological development as well. A number of strategies can be used to promote access as well as the effective leveraging of these relationships into positive career outcomes. First, for organizations with formal programs in place, they can consider having meetings during working hours so that more women can participate in activities. In this vein, they could consider having sessions during lunch breaks or organizing online meetings. Secondly, given the fact that most women will be involved in cross-race or cross-sex relationships because of the organizational context here in Quebec and considering the challenges that these types of relationships can pose (O'Neill, 2002; Ragins, 2002), organizations can consider organizing short training sessions on cultural awareness and diversity.

A recurrent theme raised by many women was that they did not feel that they were given equal opportunities to demonstrate their abilities or to learn new things. One woman who has been in the same position for 10 years reiterated throughout the interview that, "*il faut qu'ils nous donnent une chance*." Providing equal opportunities to these women would require that organizations become less rigid in their approach to multifarious processes that could promote the career growth of employees. Organizations that are less rigid will provide opportunities for lateral moves, for temporary assignments or for current employees to "grow in place" (De Vos, Dewettinck and Buyens, 2008). By providing these opportunities, employees will be able to acquire new skills or will be able to improve their performance, which, ultimately, will promote their career success, whether objective or subjective career success.

Finally, considering the importance of diversity and equality management to firm performance (Armstrong et al., 2010), organizations could consider adopting diversity policies whose aims should go beyond making their workforce more heterogenous (Thomas and Ely,

1996). Instead, such policies should strive to better integrate human resource talent that are of different backgrounds by focusing on removing existing barriers to integration. Mighty (1991, p. 67 cited in Agócs and Burr, 1996, p. 36) proposes that organizations adopt a strategy of "valuing diversity", which involves a broad organizational change effort geared towards "changing individuals' attitudes and behaviours, while at the same time changing the organization's philosophy and culture, and consequently, its structure, policies and procedures." Formal policies do not only have the advantage of signalling a commitment of leaders to the goal of diversity and inclusiveness (Emerson and Murphy, 2014), but they also have the effect of impelling and compelling employees, clients, and other stakeholders to follow suit. One woman who mentioned that her organization had formal policies in place to promote diversity and inclusiveness commented that because of the existence of these policies, employees were generally more mindful of the things that they said and what they did and the impact that their attitudes and behaviours may have on others. Overall, she explained that the existence of these policies reinforced her feelings of job and career satisfaction.

Our study results also have implications for policy. From our findings, it is clear that Black immigrant women generally perceive that the $PA\acute{E}$ has a positive effect on their career outcomes because it promotes opportunities for access to career opportunities. To the extent that the program continues to focus on creating equal opportunities for access, decision-makers could consider embracing a more proactive approach especially as regards sectors of activity where implementation is not currently mandatory by more actively promoting adoption of the program in organizations. Furthermore, as it relates to program implementation in any sector of activity but especially in the public and para-public sectors where the program is more mature, decision-makers should also ensure that strategies are put in place to ensure that the objective of creating

equal opportunities for access is not limited to entry-level positions. Some participants noted that the objective of promoting representation from a quantitative perspective is seemingly confined to entry-level positions. By requiring organizations to ensure that there is representation of minority communities, including Black immigrant women, at all levels in an organization, this will not only guarantee that the goals of the program are achieved from a quantitative perspective but from a qualitative one as well.

According to many women, it is important that governments and other stakeholders including professional bodies, recognize that institutional barriers exist that prevent them from effectively transferring their skills and know-how to their new realities, and that concrete action is necessary to minimize the negative effects that these have on their career development and their overall well-being. A good starting point, according to these women, is to recognize that the differences that exist across borders in the training that individuals receive are probably overstated. In the fields of education and healthcare, for example, the women mentioned that policy objectives are comparable across borders. As one of the trained medical doctors mentioned, *"la santé demeure la santé que ce soit en Afrique ou bien en Asie ou bien en Europe. C'est la même chose."* If policy goals are similar across borders and the only real difference is in the settings and the specific tools and methods that are applied to each setting, then, according to these women, a trained medical doctor or nurse for example should not have to redo 3, 5 or 7 years of studies before being afforded with the opportunity to practise in a field that they have pre-immigration qualifications as well as years of experience in.

Finally, most women underscored the importance of providing more accurate information regarding the job market in Quebec, current needs of employers as well as more precise information regarding post-immigration training requirements and projected outcomes. Béji and

Pellerin (2010) in their study of the socio-professional integration of immigrants in Quebec identify similar informational needs. According to the women, with more accurate information, they would be better equipped to efficiently and effectively allocate resources to the integration process as well as better manage their own expectations and together, these processes would contribute to their experiences and feelings of career success.

5.5 Limitations

While our research has the advantage of bringing focus on Black immigrant women who are increasingly present in the labour market in Quebec but whose career experiences and outcomes have been largely ignored by extant research, it is not without limitations. First, although the sample size is consistent with other qualitative investigations, our study included 25 Black immigrant women only whose selection was purposive and highly selective. Caution must therefore be exercised with regard to the generalizability of our findings. That said, the findings of this study could form the basis of future studies where the career outcomes of women and men could be compared or where perceptions of career success among Black immigrant women could be compared across organizations of different sizes or across different sectors of activity. These additional studies would allow for a more fine-grained understanding of the different factors that may moderate the relationship between OCM practices and career success and would be an important complement to studies such as Banerjee, Reitz and Oreopoulos (2018). Moreover, a comparison of perceptions of career success across organizational setting or sectors of activity can provide further understanding regarding the role of important stakeholders such as trade unions in promoting efficiency and equity goals in the workplace (Pohler and Luchak, 2014).

Secondly, given our study's objectives, we did not consider other variables that may influence the career success of study participants such as age, stable individual differences or other human capital variables such as motivation, political knowledge and skills, job tenure etc. (Ng et al., 2005). Furthermore, given our concern with understanding the influence of organizational career management (OCM) practices, we did not consider the role of individual career management (ICM) practices on these women's career outcomes. However, career management is a joint responsibility, and the individual has an important role to play to play in the process as well (De Vos, Dewettinck and Buyens, 2009; Kossek et al., 1998; Seibert et al., 2001). Future research regarding the career success of this group of individuals would no doubt benefit from the inclusion of a wider range of variables and by considering the influence of ICM practices on career outcomes.

Third, like Chicha (2012), our study identified instances where the intersection of different facets of these women's social identity led to significant and profound experiences of discrimination and oppression (Harnois, 2015), especially as regards their career development. Yet, while our use of an intersectional approach allowed us to unearth these women's experiences with inequality and show that they are not only shaped by one factor alone but by a combination of factors, we were not able to confirm, as other intersectional scholars such as Crenshaw (1989) and McBride, Hebson and Holgate (2015) do, that the intersectional process maybe multiplicative rather than additive. Caution should therefore be exercised as it pertains to the applicability of our study. Our study could however form the basis of other academic studies with an intersectional focus. In this regard, it would be worthwhile to compare the career outcomes of other groups of individuals in Quebec, including other 'marginalized' groups, with a view to determining the

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cumulative impact of social identity factors such as gender and/or ethnicity and/or immigration status.

Finally, our study relied on the participants' subjective interpretations and perceptions of objective career success. Although we did attempt to identify instances when the women achieved "real" success, our conclusions are nevertheless based on the women's self-report. Further empirical work on the topic would allow us to better understand the relationships between the different variables that were examined.

5.6. Conclusion

In conclusion, our research sought to shed light on the career experiences of Black immigrant women in Quebec, a topic that has been largely ignored in extant literature up to this point. Specifically, we set out to understand what these women's experiences and feelings were regarding career success, investigate the influence of organizational factors on their perceptions of objective and subjective career success as well as examine the influence of factors related to their social identity on perceptions of career success. Unlike many previous large-scale studies which aimed to identify trends in the employment outcomes of immigrants or that compared their outcomes to that of non-immigrants for example, our research was much smaller in scale and focused exclusively on identifying and analyzing the different mechanisms underlying the experiences of Black immigrant women in organizations in Quebec.

To some extent, the findings of our study were unsurprising given the substantial body of literature that currently exists which addresses various themes examined in this research. However, our results were also illuminating, as they provided further insight and a more fine-grained

understanding of these women's experiences and the various factors and mechanisms that undergird their perceptions of career success. From our findings, it is clear that organizations need to do more to not only promote the participation of these women in the workforce but to ensure that they advance and thrive in their careers as well. Given the centrality of career success in the lives of individuals and the direct link that exists between experiences and feelings of career success and organizational performance and productivity (Abele, Spurk and Volmer, 2011), this factor cannot be ignored by any forward-looking organization that is concerned with becoming or remaining competitive in contemporary contexts. The imperative of understanding and promoting the career success of minority groups like Black immigrant women should be of concern to decision-makers as well, because this appeals to our sense of justice and equality, which are ideals that governments all over purport to embrace.

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Annex A

Questionnaire

École des Relations Industrielles
Université de Montréal

Chère Participante,

Dans le cadre de notre étude sur les perceptions des femmes noires d'origine immigrante travaillant au Québec sur le succès de carrière, en plus des informations que nous allons recueillir par entrevue, nous demandons votre précieuse collaboration à nous fournir des informations suivantes. Veuillez cocher la case qui correspond à votre situation particulière ou, le cas échéant, entrer les informations pertinentes.

1. Pays d'origine

   _____

2. Quel était votre plus haut niveau d'études avant d'arriver au Canada?

   Baccalauréat/Licence _____
   Maîtrise _____
   Doctorat _____

3. Dans quel pays avez-vous obtenu le diplôme correspondant à votre plus haut niveau d'études avant d'arriver au Canada?

_____

4. Veuillez préciser votre domaine d'études avant d'arriver au Canada.

_____

5. Quelle est votre langue maternelle?

_____

6. Quelle est votre niveau de competence en français?

_____

7. Parlez-vous l'anglais? Oui _____ Non _____
Veuillez préciser votre niveau de compétence en anglais, s'il y a lieu. _____

8. Par quelle catégorie d'immigration êtes-vous entrée au Canada?

    a. Immigration économique/travailleur qualifié: _____
    Etiez-vous le demandeur principal: Oui _____ Non _____

    b. Regroupement familial: _____

    c. Refugié: _____

9. Quelle était votre catégorie d'âge avant d'arriver au Canada?

    a. 20-29 ans _____
    b. 30-39 ans _____
    c. 40-49 ans _____
    d. 50 ans et plus _____

10. Quel était votre situation familiale en arrivant au Canada?

    a. Célibataire sans enfants _____
    b. Célibatire avec enfants _____
    c. Mariée sans enfants _____
    d. Mariée avec enfants _____
    e. Divorcée sans enfants _____
    f. Divorcée avec enfants _____

11. Depuis combien de temps êtes-vous au Canada?

    0-5 ans _____
    5-10 ans ____
    10 ans et plus ____

Annex B

Guide d'entrevue

1. Depuis que vous avez immigré, vous avez occupé des postes dans les organisations ici au Québec. De manière générale, avez-vous le sentiment que vous avez réussi votre carrière?

2. Qu'est-ce que la notion de succès de carrière veut dire pour vous? Comment est-ce que vous la définiriez?

3. Parlez-moi un peu de ce que vous faisiez au pays et ce que vous faites actuellement comme travail au Québec.

4. À votre avis, est-ce que l'organisation/les organisations dans laquelle/lesquelles vous travaillez/avez travaillé contribue/a contribué au développement de votre carrière?

5. Pensez-vous que votre identité comme immigrante noire au Québec est une barrière à votre réussite?

- *Pensez-vous que le fait d'être noire a eu un impact sur votre parcours?*
- *Pensez-vous que le fait d'être une femme a eu un impact sur votre parcours?*
- *Pensez-vous que le fait d'être une immigrante a eu un impact sur votre parcours?*

6. Dites-moi, en détail, pourquoi vous dites que ces différents facteurs on eu un impact sur votre parcours.

7. À votre avis, qu'est-ce que les organisations pourront faire pour promouvoir le succès de carrière des femmes d'origine immigrante?