Migration in Later Life and Economic Insecurity
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Introduction

Studies on immigrant seniors recognize that they are not a homogenous group. There are a number of dimensions along which their experiences will differ: place of birth; racialized status; ability to speak the official language(s); living arrangements; and so forth. One dimension of difference that has been the focus of recent work on immigrant seniors is the age at which they migrated. The age at migration is an important factor for understanding how life stage shapes integration outcomes. The problem with using age at migration, however, is that it often conflates life stage with the length of time an immigrant has been in a host society. This paper examines both the life stage at migration and the length of time in the host society to understand their effects on poverty among seniors.

Data and methods

Data for the analyses are from the 2006 Canadian Census confidential 20 percent file which was accessed through the York University Research Data Centre. These data allow samples sizes that are large enough to permit a disaggregated analysis by many of the characteristics that are of particular importance to our research questions, particularly immigrants' duration of time in Canada and visible minority status (in order to identify country of origin). Our sample was restricted to individuals 55 years of age and above. Excluded from our analyses are individuals of Aboriginal identity/ancestry, non-permanent residents, and the institutionalized population. We restricted our analyses to the provinces and to census metropolitan areas (CMAs) as the majority of immigrants live in large urban centres.

Unlike many other countries, Canada does not have an official poverty line. Instead, Statistics Canada employs Statistics Canada's an alternative operationalization of low income. The Low Income Cut-Off (LICO) represents income levels at which families or unattached individuals spend a disproportionate amount of their total household income(70 percent or more) on the necessities of life (defined as food, shelter and clothing) which means that they would only be left with marginal amounts to spend on health, education, recreation, insurance, and transportation. The measure is also adjusted for family and municipality size.

A variable identifying immigrants, nonimmigrants and nonpermanent residents is available in the census data, along with year of arrival. Various cohorts of immigrants were created based upon their period and age of arrival: Before 1971, 1971-1980, 1981-1990 (and < 50 years), 1981-1990 (50+ years), 1991-2000 (<50 years), 1991-2000 (50+ years), and 2001-2006. Note that in our subsample, the earliest immigration cohorts are disproportionately comprised of those arrive at younger than 50 years of age, while those arriving 2011-2006 were mostly 50 years of age or over on arrival. Our reference group in the estimations was non-immigrants.

Preliminary Results (selected)

Figure 4 reveals that it is the most recent arrivals that have the highest group membership to living below LICO. In fact, the trend shows a linear trend of time spent in country being

associated with lower levels of living under LICO, with those arriving before 1971 having lower prevalence of living under LICO that non-immigrants. Whether or not someone arrive before or after the age of 50 does not reveal any clear patterns in this bivariate analysis.

Table 2 presents the results of the logistic regression of LICO on gender, age, visible minority status, immigrant status. Four models are presented. In the first model, only gender, age group, visible minority status, and immigrant status are included. Model 2 adds education, labour force activity, and family structure, while Model 3 includes difficulty with daily living, housing tenure and CMA group.

We present only the odds ratios for the variables of interest in order to show how they change when various controls are added (full estimation results available from authors). In terms of gender, being female increases the odds of living below LICO by nearly 50 percent. When controls are added, however, the results remain statistically significant but the direction changes. After controlling for education, labour force activity and family structure, being a female actually decreases the odds of living below LICO by around 10 percent. This suggests that much of the gender effect on living in poverty in our sample is mediated through educational attainment, labour force participation and the characteristics a person's living arrangements. Further refinement of the model in steps 3 and 4 reduces the effect to around 4.5 percent.

In terms of age groups, using the youngest group (55-64) as a reference category, being in the 65-74 and 75-84 groups reduced the likelihood of living below LICO by around 25 percent. The 85+ group failed to achieve statistical significance in the first model, but after controls were added, the size of the odds ratios decreased by more than a half for the previous two groups and the 85+ group achieved statistical significance. Adding additional controls in Models 3 and 4 did not change the overall findings. In general, relative to the youngest group, being in all other age groups decreased the likelihood living below LICO by nearly 70 percent for 65-74 year olds and around 80 percent for the sample members in the oldest two groups.

In terms of the effect of visible minority status, the first model reveals that compared to Whites, all groups except South Asians, Filipinos and Japanese are more likely to live below LICO. South Asian, Filipinos and Japanese are less likely to live below LICO than Whites. When controls for education, labour force participation, and family structure are added, the effect of being Japanese drops from statistical significance. In the final model, West Asians, Koreans, and Japanese are not significantly different from whites, but Latin Americans, Filipinos, South Asians and South East Asians had double the likelihood of living below LICO than Whites. The remaining groups (West Asians, Chinese, and Blacks) all had significant odds ratios indicating that relative to Whites, they were much more likely to be living below LICO.

The results for immigrant status and period/age of arrival indicated that relative to non-immigrants, those who had arrived most recently were nearly 5 times more likely to be living below LICO. The shifts in the size and direction of the odds ratios over the four models, particularly for those arriving before 1971, indicate that the controls improved the fit of the model. There is a steady increase in the odds of being poor relative to non-immigrants the more recent the immigration. Those that arrived at younger ages in the 1981-1990 and 1991-2000 had slightly lower odds of being poor than their peers who arrived at older ages.

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Figure 4. Immigrant status, period and age at arrival, by living under LICO
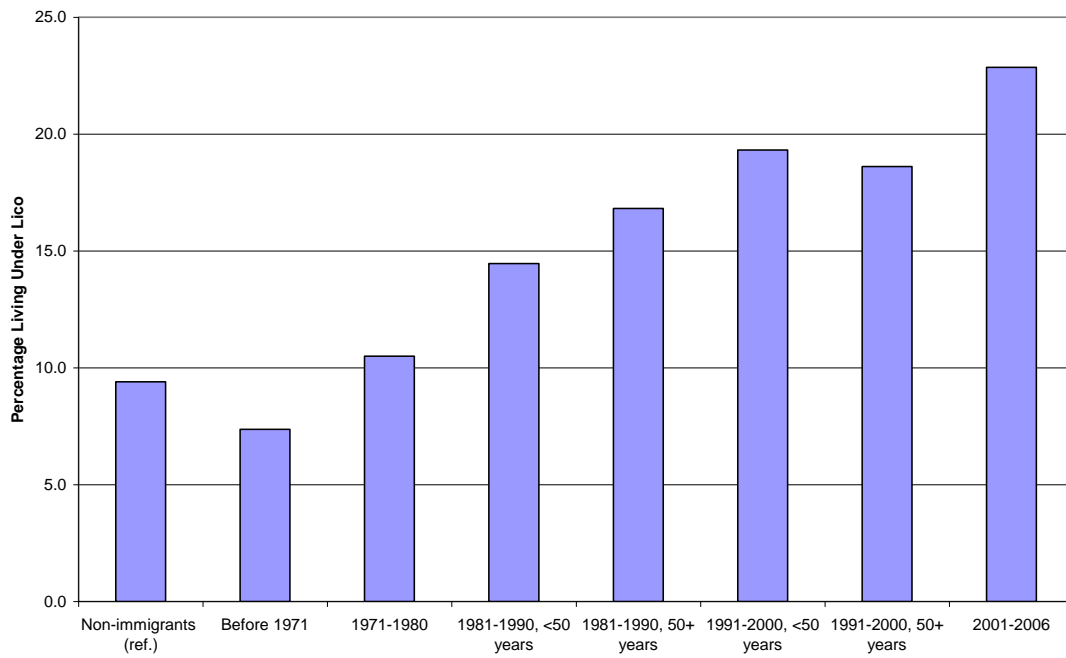
Table 2: Logistic Regressions of Living Below LICO on Gender, Age, Visible Minority Group, Immigrant Status and Controls

Odds Ratios

Variables	Model I	Model II	Model III
Gender (Male omitted)			
Female	1.498*	0.897*	0.944*
Age group (55-64 years omitted)			
65-74 years	0.732*	0.315*	0.314*
75-84 years	0.777*	0.212*	0.203*
85+ years	1.207	0.250*	0.216*
Visible minority group (White omitted)			
Chinese	1.302*	1.538*	1.699*
South Asian	0.719*	0.742*	0.751*
Black	1.666*	1.553*	1.195*
Filipino	0.539*	0.769*	0.668*
Latin	1.528*	1.530*	1.114*
Southeast Asian	1.272*	1.315*	1.185*
Arab	1.716*	1.946*	1.572*
West Asian	1.791*	2.028*	1.735*
Korean	2.351*	3.164*	2.683*
Japanese	0.809*	0.895	0.994
Other visible minorities	1.132*	1.096	1.010
Immigrant status, period and age at arrival (Non-immigrants omitted)			
Before 1971	0.781*	0.913*	1.086*
1971-1980	1.030	1.511*	1.578*
1981-1990, <50 years	1.379*	2.056*	1.967*
1981-1990, 50+ years	1.887*	2.657*	2.445*
1991-2000, <50 years	1.891*	2.922*	2.684*
1991-2000, 50+ years	2.199*	3.128*	2.897*
2001-2006	2.766*	4.055*	3.657*
Pseudo-R2	0.026	0.199	0.243
N	939,987	939,987	939,987
Notes: Weighted data, clustered by household			