

# THE EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF AFRICAN IMMIGRANT PARENTS

*and its impact on children's wellbeing in BC, Canada.*



**Project Supervisors:** Dr. Wendy Hulko, Professor, Dr. Rebecca Sanford, Associate Professor

Social Work Student Researcher

**Dec 2, 2024**

**Benjamin Baah Nketiah**

## Introduction

Canada is widely recognized for its commitment to inclusivity and diversity, a value that resonates with most Canadians. In recent years, the country has experienced a significant increase in its immigrant population, with a notable surge in African immigrants. The 2021 Census reports that 1.5 million people in Canada identify as Black, with over 32% born in African countries (Statistics Canada, 2023). Despite Canada's welcoming policies, employment has emerged as a critical challenge for African migrants in British Columbia.

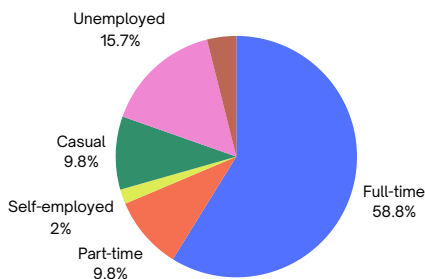
## Abstract

The study explored the impact of African immigrant parents' employment status on their children's well-being in British Columbia. It used a quantitative approach, following the positivist paradigm, and sought to establish causal relationships between parental employment and children's well-being through regression analysis. It also explored some mediating factors, like family support and relevant policies, to provide insights for developing policies and interventions tailored to the needs of African immigrant families in Canada.

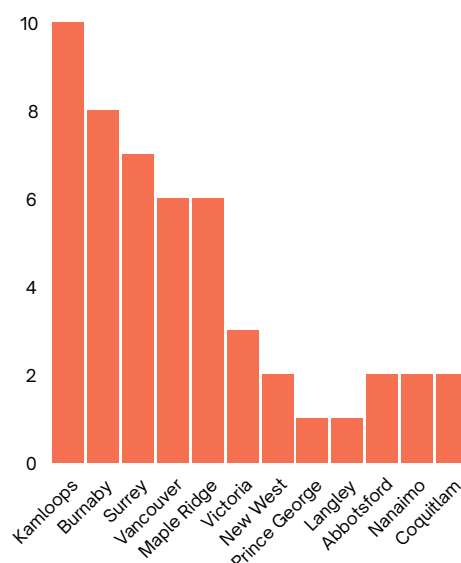
## Demographics

A questionnaire was used to collect data from 51 African immigrant parents in BC.

## Employment



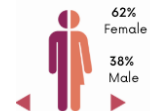
## City of Participants



### AGE RANGE

Largest group  
(50.98%)  
aged 30-39

### GENDER



Regarding educational qualifications, 82% of African immigrant parents had completed either bachelor's (n=21) or graduate degrees (n=21).

## Findings on Income and Work Hours:

- 43.14% of participants had annual household incomes below \$49,999, while 25.49% earned between \$50,000 and \$74,999. There was a statistically significant positive relationship between length of time in Canada and income level



( $r=.586$ ;  $p\leq.001$ ).

- The findings revealed most immigrant parents' incomes are below the BC annual income range.
- Nearly 42% worked 31-40 hours weekly, and 25% worked over 40 hours, impacting Children's well-being.

## Children's Well-Being:

<b>Academic Performance</b>	50% Half of the participants rated their children's academic performance as above average.
<b>Emotional Wellbeing</b>	Participants with non-standard work schedules ( $M=3.61$ ; $n=28$ ) reported a lower average rating for their child(ren)'s mood and emotional wellbeing than participants with a standard work schedule ( $M=4.38$ ; $n=16$ ).
<b>Physical/Behavioral Wellbeing</b>	48.94% said work hours influence children's behavior.
<b>Mental Wellbeing</b>	40% rated as "Very Good" with Weighted average: 3.94.

## Challenges Identified

- Income: 43.14% earned below \$49,999 annually
- Discrimination in the job market and lack of recognition of foreign credentials
- *"Working mixed shifts leaves me tired and sleep-deprived. Sometimes I do not have the energy to do activities with my children."* - P.79168

## Recommendations

- Flexible work hours and increased remote work options allow parents to balance work and family care.
- Promote policies for affordable after-school programs and weekend camps.
- Some participants expressed a strong preference for an *African Nanny System* as a means to maintain and pass down cultural values and promote child well-being. *"It would preserve our culture while maintaining our way of child upbringing."* - P.17239
- Address racial income disparities and advocate for recognition of international credentials to improve economic opportunities for immigrant families.

## Conclusion

The study's findings suggest that implementing an employee wellness program, addressing income disparity, international credential recognition and introducing the African Nanny system for after-school care could promote children's overall well-being within the community. Future researchers could employ longitudinal designs to track the wellbeing of African immigrant children over time.



To download the full report, visit TRUSpace: <https://tru.arcabc.ca/islandora/object/tru%3A6540>

FUNDING INFORMATION: This project was funded by Thompson Rivers University Undergraduate Research Award Program (UREAP)