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Cover Page Footnote

3. Canadian Human Rights Act, R.S.C. 1985, c. H-6, s.2. [hereinafter CHRA] 4. Immigration Act, R.S.C. 1985, c. 1-2.

**A Logistic Regression Analysis of Life Satisfaction amongst African Immigrants in
Hamilton, Canada**

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Keywords: Life satisfaction, Human rights, African immigrants, Ordered logistic regression,
Canada

ABSTRACT

Many minority immigrants currently face severe human rights violation through discrimination and racism, influencing how they rate their life satisfaction in their host destinations. This paper examines the factors that affect African immigrants' life satisfaction in a mid-sized Canadian city. Using a combination of descriptive and multivariate methods applied on a sample survey (n=236) conducted in Hamilton, Ontario, this article investigates socio-demographic and health-related factors that predict life satisfaction amongst African immigrants, specifically, Ghanaians and Somalis. Findings suggest that Ghanaian immigrants reported greater life satisfaction than their Somali counterparts. People with residency in Canada over 10 years are more likely to report higher life satisfaction than those with length of residence from zero to ten years. Older individuals (i.e., age 25-54) are more likely to express higher life satisfaction compared to younger individuals (i.e., 18-24). The findings indicate that socio-demographic conditions matter for immigrants' life satisfaction.

INTRODUCTION

While migration can be a positive and empowering experience for individuals and communities and can benefit both countries of origin and destination, it is important to note that conditions that place people in vulnerable situations are serious human rights concerns (Human Right Council 2016). As Ward (1996) notes, immigration and a different cultural background raises questions of psychological and sociological adaptation, along with belonging and acceptance. In addition to factors such as lower income, unemployment and underemployment, lower education, and poorer health; being identified as an ethnic minority adds life challenges and discrimination that can lower general quality of life (Statistics Canada 2003; CIC 2010) and therefore how minorities rate their overall satisfaction of life in Canada. Human rights are a general form, which encapsulates civil rights, liberties and social, economic and cultural rights. These may constitute the extent to which the needs of individuals are satisfied and their aspiration for better life fulfilled. It is noted that most immigrant groups have higher levels of life satisfaction than their source-country population (Statistics Canada 2014). These differences, however, decrease over time for several immigrant groups when socio-demographic factors are controlled, which means immigrant selectivity does not play a major role in life satisfaction (Statistics Canada 2014).

Since the publication of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1982 (Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms 1982), the comparative approach to equality in the system has played a pivotal role in Canada's minority immigrant receiving communities. In addition to the achievement of positive results toward equality, the high degree of social inequalities in many spheres of life is currently a main focus of human rights debate. In general, the Charter guarantees rights of equality, specifically prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, ethnic or national origin, colour, religion, etc. However, very few studies have looked at differences in life satisfaction across different ethnic groups (see Bruni and Porta 2007; Dolan, Peasgood and White 2008).

Understanding life satisfaction amongst visible minorities is essential as it relates to whether individual's rights to life chances have been met in their host destinations. The Canadian Human Right Act (1977) states that 'every individual should have an equal opportunity with other individuals to make for himself or herself the life that he or she is able and wishes to have, consistent with his or her duties and obligations as a member of society, without being hindered in or prevented from doing so by discriminatory practices based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, and sex. Indeed, it would be naïve to assume that some discrimination would not be present. Further, the Canadian Immigration Act in section 3(f) states that an immigration objective is 'to ensure that any person who seeks admission to Canada on either permanent or temporary basis is subject to standards of admission that do not discriminate in a manner inconsistent with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (4). The inclusion of these rights illustrates, at least officially, a government commitment for non-discrimination principles underlying the Canadian Human Right Act. Even so, racism and discrimination continue to be part of many people's daily lives in Canada, particularly amongst visible minorities in immigrant receptive communities. Visible minority members who feel out of place or discriminated against are likely to be less satisfied with their life in the country of residence. Researchers have found relatively low life satisfaction amongst ethnic and racial minorities (Michalos and Zumbo 2001; Verkuyten 2008; Ullman and Tatar 2011), which may have bearings on their settlement and integration in a host society.

There are approximately 7 million visible minority immigrants in Canada (Statistics Canada 2017), representing 19.1% of the total population, and are expected to reach 33% by 2031. Visible minority immigrant families represent a wide variety of socio-economic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds and continually face multiple challenges integrating into the Canadian society, including racism and discrimination (Agyekum and Newbold 2019). While many visible minorities are able to successfully integrate into the mainstream society, others struggle, with

health implications in their attempt to adapt to their new conditions. Research on immigrants indicates that visible minorities and their offspring are sometimes denied access to good jobs and are often not given the opportunity to gain necessary skills or utilize their existing skills and education (Yap and Everett 2012). A visibly minority is defined by the Government of Canada as ‘persons, other than aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour’ (Statistics Canada 2015). Under this definition, regulations specify the following groups as visible minorities: Chinese, South Asians, Blacks, Arabs, West Asians, Filipinos, Southeast Asians, Latin Americans, Japanese, Koreans, and other visible minority groups such as Pacific Islanders. As Boatman and Lalonde (2000:217) rightly put it: ‘it would be naïve to assume that the politics of visible minority identity in Canada are not influenced by events and trends taking place in the United States. Similar to the white/non-white dichotomy in the United States, Canada employs white versus visible minorities. The two categories, despite differences in appearance, perform the same process of exclusion and inclusion (Kusow 2006). It creates ‘us’ and ‘them’ that can be used for discrimination. Thus, although exclusion and inclusion differences between visible minorities and non-visible minorities (i.e. Aboriginal peoples and Caucasians) can put the former at risk of increased racism, discrimination and associated health problems, and also decreased their potential for socio-economic advancement. This constitutes a human right violation against visible minorities and impinges on integrity of national culture and identity. This risk may be reduced if resettlement workers and other stakeholders exhibit greater involvement in visible minority immigrants’ integration.

LIFE SATISFACTION AND AFRICAN IMMIGRATION

Being and staying healthy is a fundamental right of every human being, and it is important that immigrants, particularly the visible minorities are given the opportunity to feel satisfied in their respective communities. Immigrants to Canada are generally happy with life in their new destination, with most immigrant groups typically expressing higher levels of life satisfaction than their source-country populations (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2014) (CIC). Most of the attention on the relationship between migration and happiness has focused on income (i.e. greater income leading to greater happiness). However, the relationship between happiness and income is not necessarily linear: increased income does not generally lead to greater happiness (Bartram 2013; Cai, Esipova, Oppenheimer and Feng 2014). More importantly, many social scientists do not believe that standard measures of income equitably capture the happiness of individuals (see Bartram 2014; Cai et al. 2014; Olgiati, Calvo and Berkman 2013), with happiness challenged by complexities due to different preparedness and different expectations and/or aspirations for migrating. Further, Graham and Markowitz (2011) observed that people who intend to migrate are generally less satisfied than those who do not; however, they found that migrants are “frustrated achievers” (see Olgiati et al. 2013), people who have relatively high levels of objectives, such as income, but who are dissatisfied with their conditions and seek to improve them through migration. Happiness and life satisfaction are used interchangeably in the literature (see Bartram 2014; CIC 2014), yet happiness may differ from life satisfaction due to a concern for the happiness of others, along with differences in language and cultural backgrounds. Early constructs of life satisfaction address individuals’ ability to (1) have a life that meets their needs (Cummins 1996) and (2) be “happy” (Andrews and McKennell 1980).

The term “Life Satisfaction” is defined as an individual’s subjective appraisal of life, composed of cognitive and affective components (Edwards and Lopez 2006). Many factors predict the life satisfaction of immigrants in a host society. McCullough, Huebner and Laughlin (2000) found that the life events experienced in the immigration and settlement process may have a substantial impact on immigrant’s life satisfaction.

Immigrants’ everyday activity is linked to adaptation and belonging. Amongst immigrants,

it may be that a positive sense of place encourages life satisfaction. Experiences and perceptions of racism and discrimination may have negative consequences for the way minority members feel about their lives and may also affect their identity with the host community. The consequences of racism in our society cannot be overlooked since it gives some advantage to certain groups while other groups tend to suffer. Researchers have found relatively low life satisfaction amongst ethnic and racial minority groups (Verkuyten 2008; Michalos and Zumbo 2001; Ullman and Tatar 2001). There is evidence of the negative relationship between perceived ethnic discrimination/inequality and life satisfaction (Ward 2006; Verkuyten 2008; CIC 2010) and subjective well-being and mental health (Ward 2013). Experiencing discrimination and racism discourages a sense of belonging to the host country (Human Right Council 2016), an outcome that is likely to decrease satisfaction relative to the majority population. Visible minorities are more likely to experience discrimination and receive unfair treatment, which may compel them to detach from the larger society (Knies, Nandi and Platt 2014). For example, in their study amongst 7000 immigrants in 13 countries, Vedder, Van de Vijver and Liebkind (2006) found that perceived discrimination was negatively associated with psychological adaptation, including general life satisfaction.

Belonging to a minority ethnic group tends to be associated with economic and social disadvantage (see Platt 2007b; Cheung and Health 2007). Many ethnic minority groups face higher risks of unemployment (Platt 2007b), earn less (Longhi and Platt 2008), and live in more deprived areas than their majority ethnic counterparts (Hulchanski 2010). While several studies have shown that economic conditions are important to individual's life satisfaction evaluations, social context is also important (Helliwell, Huang and Harris. 2009). A more recent study by Statistics Canada revealed that more years of residence in Canada and speaking English or French at home are all significant predictors of sense of belonging (Statistic Canada 2017). In the United Kingdom, Wright (2011) found that immigrants who do not speak English on arrival face broader exclusion in employment and social relations in London. Thus, language is seen as essential both for obtaining a job and as a defence against ill-treatment (Knies et al. 2014).

Life satisfaction is contingent on a number of factors, including social, physical and personal affects. It has been argued that the social conditions surrounding a person may consist of the social interactions, relationships and social activities that a person partakes (Sirgy and Cornwell 2002). The level of one's attachment to a community influences their levels of satisfaction (Aiello, Ardone and Scopelliti 2010). Fear of crime and feelings of personal safety are predictors of one's satisfaction. Thus, people who perceive their community as unsafe are less likely to be satisfied (Aiello et al. 2010; Grillo, Teixeira and Wilson 2010; James, Carswell and Sweaney 2009). Also, satisfaction with community services, including emergency services, business services, shopping centres and religious services have been observed to influence one's life satisfaction (Sirgy and Cornwell 2002; Potter and Cantarero 2006). Ward and Masgoret (2004), for example, identified cultural inclusiveness, language proficiency, contact with host nationals, a positive attitude in the host community toward immigrants, more social support, and less discrimination as factors increasing attachment to the community, consequently leading to a satisfaction with one's community (Uzzell, Pol and Badenas 2002; Braubach 2007). In terms of personal factors, it has been observed that an individual can develop an attachment to place through economic and temporal ties (i.e. length of residence) to the community of residence (Aiello et al. 2010; James et al 2009). Other factors associated with life satisfaction are ethnicity (Lu 1999; Hur and Morrow 2008; Long & Perkins 2007), high socioeconomic status (Billig 2005; Jorgensen, Jamieson and Martin 2010; James 2008), marital status (Lu, 1999), age (James 2008; Chapman & Lombard 2006), education (Chapman and Lombard 2006), gender (Aiello et al. 2010) and income (Pinqart and Sorensen 2001).

In recent years, there have been an increasing number of immigrants from African countries to Canada, and the African population is growing considerably faster than the total population (Statistics Canada 2007). Despite different cultural backgrounds that immigrants bring to their new

societies, they bring with them resources, habits, and experiences from their home country (i.e., sources of human capital) that can be harnessed for substantial economic returns for the host country (Constant and Zimmermann 2013). For example, in 2001, Statistics Canada reported that 7.3% of people aged 25 and over who reported having African origins had either a Master's Degree or an earned doctorate, versus 4.8% of all Canadians in this age range (Statistics Canada 2007). However, research has shown that members of the African community in Canada are slightly less likely to be employed than the rest of the population (Ornstein 2006; Statistics Canada 2007; Mensah 2010). Additionally, a look at identity formation in Canada reveals that amongst immigrants, the Black population has the lowest rate of responding that they either 'strongly agree' or 'agree' they view themselves as citizens of their province or region (75.7%) compared to 89.9% of White people, 91.2% of East Asians, 93.9% of South Asians and 90.5% of the Arab population. Possible explanations for these differences have been highlighted to include discrimination and racism that undermine trust and attachment to Canadian society (Statistics Canada 2003; CIC 2010).

It is also important to note that there are a number of reasons why individuals immigrate to Canada. As Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC 2010) noted, refugees are likely to have different reasons than other immigrant entry groups, with refugees likely having a different sense of attachment to Canada. In the last decade, refugees from Africa, including Ethiopia, Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo and Somalia were among the top 10 source countries for refugees selected under the Resettlement Program (CIC 2007).

Research on African immigrants to Canada has focused mainly on economic questions, including examining themes such as labour market outcomes (Creese and Wiebe 2012; Mensah 2010) and health (Fenta, Hyman and Noh 2004; Simich, Hamilton and Baya 2006; Simich 2008). However, these studies have not explored the general quality of life amongst these immigrants, a concept which extends beyond, but also overlaps with, economic outcomes and health. The current study examines how immigrants perceive their communities of residence and the satisfaction they derive from these places based on evaluations of their lives. This literature on migration and satisfaction outcomes has the potential to fill some of the gaps in existing paradigms in immigrant studies.

Notwithstanding a number of studies, there is a dearth of empirical research specific to life satisfaction in medium-sized cities amongst African immigrants in Canada. This study examines African immigrants' own self-assessment of their needs and perceptions of factors influencing satisfaction outcomes in their host communities. Ghanaian and Somali immigrants are among the largest Black African communities in Canada (Mensah and Williams 2014), and have tended to arrive in Canada under broadly different conditions. Different contexts of settlement and reception experienced by different immigrant groups shape their experience of life satisfaction (Portes and Borocz 1989). In general, Ghanaian immigrants were mostly made up of scholarship students, professionals working in education, health, and social services, and a few political dissidents escaping persecution. Somali arrivals, on the other hand, have tended to arrive as refugees, responding to civil strife and a lack of government in Somalia. Yet, both arrival groups have been identified as under privileged (Ornstein 2006). Our focus on these two groups is driven by the large number of individuals from both groups – the two most populous Black Africans in Hamilton, Ontario, enabling contrasting the life satisfaction of immigrants from a virtually 'failed' nation state in Somalia and an emerging democracy in Ghana. Again, Hamilton has recently been a major destination for African immigrants (see Agyekum and Newbold 2016). Given that the conditions of immigrants' place of origin may result in differences in life satisfaction (Bartram 2011), we expect that structural discrimination in areas including income, education, employment and housing may affect life satisfaction in the country of residence. For these reasons, we would expect life satisfaction amongst Ghanaians to be greater than Somalis. Further, it is likely that

individuals with greater duration of residence and higher income are more likely to have greater life satisfaction.

THE STUDY AREA

With an increasing number of immigrants settling in smaller and medium-sized cities in Canada, researchers have called for more studies on second-tier cities (Frideres 2006; Radford 2007; Gallina and Williams 2014). These calls reflect the need and desire to retain immigrants through the provision of desirable conditions and appealing opportunities within immigrant communities and neighbourhoods (Garcea 2006; CIC 2011; Grubel 2013). With a population of just over 500,000, Hamilton is a medium-sized city in Ontario about 75 kilometres southwest of Toronto. It is comprised of six communities, including the original City of Hamilton, and five more suburban communities that were amalgamated with the original city in 2001, including Ancaster, Stoney Creek, Dundas, Flamborough, and Glanbrook. Hamilton is a diverse city with almost 25% of its residents born outside Canada and 12.3% as visible minorities (City of Hamilton 2005-2010). The city provides newcomers a wide variety of living accommodations, including single family homes, high and low-rise apartments and townhouses (City of Hamilton 2005-2010). Physically divided by the Niagara escarpment which runs east-west through the city, poverty is most severe in the lower, older parts of the city, and particularly in the downtown core as compared to the western communities of Ancaster and Dundas. While the downtown core has been the traditional entry point for newcomers, large numbers of immigrants have also settled in suburban communities such as Stoney Creek or the newer suburbs of Hamilton, including its 'mountain' neighbourhoods. The 2013 health profile of Canada reveals that about 64.6% and 77.3% of residents in Hamilton reported very good or excellent perceived health and mental health, respectively. In comparison, somewhat smaller proportions were observed at the provincial level (61% and 74.3%). Residents of Hamilton also reported a lower level of perceived life stress (22.5%) than the province of Ontario (24%). About 93.2% of residents in Hamilton identified themselves as satisfied or very satisfied with their life, compared to 91.5% for Ontario. In addition, 69.8% residents of Hamilton rated their sense of community belonging as positive compared to 67.5% of the province of Ontario (Statistics Canada 2013).

Hamilton has a variety of effective programs and initiatives at the local level, which help newcomers and minorities integrate into the main stream society. Some of these programs and initiatives include training and language courses for immigrants, mentoring and network building and the setting up of the 'Refuge Clinic' (A clinic that assists visible minority immigrants and operates with language interpretation and appropriate cultural practices). Efforts are designed and implemented within local organizations, which in turn attract and affect how immigrants rate their life in Hamilton.

We argue Ghanaian and Somali immigrants' general quality of life and therefore their human rights issues could be understood by analyzing their perceived life satisfaction. Our work therefore examines perceived life satisfaction; analyzing the socio-demographic, socio-economic and health related factors that contribute to life satisfaction amongst two specific origin groups: Ghanaians and Somalis. Given that immigrants to Canada often cite improvements in quality of life as the motivation for migration (Statistics Canada 2014), evaluations of perceived life satisfaction are important tests, as they provide immigrants' own assessments of their rights to quality of life in Canada. In so doing, this paper answers the main research question: Does life satisfaction vary according to age, gender, length of residence, family status, education, employment, income, sense of place, and health related factors, including perceived

depression, anxiety and stress? The impetus for this research has been the dearth of research on life satisfaction amongst Black African immigrants in Canada, an aspect of human rights issues in Canada.

DATA AND METHODS

The data for the present analyses were based on a closed-ended questionnaire survey of 236 Ghanaian and Somali immigrants in Hamilton, Ontario. Eligibility criteria for participation in the study were to have immigrated to Canada at age eighteen and above and to be a resident of Hamilton. The study received ethics approval from the authors' institution. The primary outcome variable for this study is life satisfaction, assessed using a six-point scale, ranging from 1 (Extremely/very satisfied) to 6 (Extremely/very dissatisfied). In addition to questions related to socio-demographic (sex, age, education), socioeconomic (income) and health-related (happiness levels, depression levels) variables, the questionnaire contained a validated 16-item sense of place scale (often referred to as community belonging) established by Williams, Kitchen, DeMiglo, Eyles et al. (2010). It focuses on four areas, namely neighbourhood rootedness; neighbourhood sentiment; neighbours and, environmental and health. Each of the four areas is made up of four questions. All sixteen items were collected on a five-point scale and later recorded into numbers between the values of one and five. Values of one represent the most positive responses and values of five represent the most negative responses (Williams et al. 2010). For comparative purposes, most socioeconomic and demographic survey items were derived from the World Values Survey (see Abdallah, Thompson and Marks 2008; World Values Survey Association 2013). The World Values Survey has demonstrated how economic development and rising social tolerance have increased the extent to which people perceive that they have free choice, which in turn has led to higher levels of satisfaction around the world (Inglehart, Foa, Peterson and Welzel. 2007). The findings provide information for policy makers seeking to build civil society and democratic institutions around the world. In the absence of a reliable sampling frame, we relied on networks of Ghanaian and Somali immigrant churches/mosques, ethnic and home associations (for similar recruitment strategies, see Mensah and Williams 2014; Whitt-Glover 2016; Agyekum and Newbold 2016) from which we were able to administer questionnaires to a total sample of 250 individuals. Questionnaires were conducted face-to-face in a range of locations, including respondents' places of residence, churches and mosques; and were done in English, Ghanaian *Twi* and Somali *Af Maay* and *Af Maxaatiri* with the help of interpreters. In total, 250 surveys were given out to participants, with 236 returned as complete, representing a response rate of 94.4% while 14 participants refused, representing 5.6%. After four months, we could not identify more participants for the survey. We suggest that because a true randomization was not possible due to lack of a complete sample-frame, readers should interpret our findings with caution.

Data were cleaned, analyzed and summarized to produce descriptive statistics about the participants (see Table 1, n=236, including 133 Ghanaians and 103 Somalis). The description shows the frequency and percentage for each variable. Additionally, cross-tabulations were run for the study groups (Ghanaian and Somali). Layers were added using a number of socio-economic and demographic variables including education, employment, household income, dwelling type and length of residence. Next, we undertook a series of ordered logistic models to evaluate the correlates of life satisfaction. In the regression model (Table 2), the effect of immigrant origin (Ghanaian and Somali), gender, age, length of residence, marital status, citizenship status, educational level, employment status, income, dwelling type, living arrangement with people, and

sense of place were entered as factors. All factor variables were dummy-coded. Life satisfaction was aggregated and re-coded into different variables with 1 representing “Extremely satisfied”, 2 representing “Generally satisfied” and 3 representing “Generally/Very dissatisfied” because of limited response numbers in some individual categories.

Health-related variables were introduced into the model using the following independent variables: perceived stress, perceived mental wellness, levels of anxiety, levels of depression and levels of happiness. All independent variables were dummy-coded. Odds ratios and confidence intervals were calculated. Odds ratios greater than 1 indicate that the association of the independent variable with ‘life satisfaction is positive, while those less than 1 indicates that the association of the independent variable with life satisfaction is negative. Odds ratios close to 1 indicate that changes in the independent variable are not associated with changes to life satisfaction.

RESULTS

Table 1 presents bivariate descriptive statistics for all the variables used in the regression. The analyses yielded a number of significant associations. First, 58.1% of Ghanaians rated their life satisfaction as extremely/very satisfied, while 42.7% of Somalis rated their life satisfaction in the same way. A slightly smaller proportion of Ghanaians (2.5%) rated their life satisfaction as generally dissatisfied, compared to 3.9% of Somalis. Ghanaians were also more likely to have a university level education (33.1%) as compared to Somalis (7.8%). Equal shares (12.8%) of Ghanaians (12.8%) reported ‘less than high school’ and ‘high school diploma’, respectively, compared to 22.3% and 30.1% for Somalis (95% CI). Ghanaians were also more likely to be engaged in full-time employment (64.7 %) as compared to Somalis (51.5 %), and were less likely to be unemployed (18.8% versus 26.2% for Ghanaians and Somalis, respectively). In terms of household income, different levels emerged again. While 27.1% of Ghanaians reported household incomes below \$20,000 and 21.8% reported incomes greater than \$80,000, 42.7% of Somalis reported an income below \$20,000 and just 2.9% reported an income greater than \$80,000 (significant at the 95% CI). Dwelling type also differed between the two groups, with nearly a quarter (33.8%) of Ghanaian respondents reporting that they lived in a single detached home versus 17.5% of Somalis. Somalis were also more likely to live in a high rise apartment (62.1%), compared to 42.9% of Ghanaians who lived in similar accommodation.

Table 1 Descriptive statistics socio-demographic & economic variables (N=236)

Variable	Count	Ghanaian(%)	Somali(%)	Pearsons’r
Life satisfaction				
Extremely/very satisfied	81	58.1	42.7	0.02
Generally satisfied	142	39.4	53.4	
Generally dissatisfied	13	2.5	3.9	
Gender				
Female	119	51.9	48.5	0.61

Male	117	48.1	51.5	
Length of residence				
0-10	173	67.7	80.6	0.03
Over 10 years	63	32.3	19.4	
Education level				
Less than high sch.	40	12.8	22.3	
High school	48	12.8	30.1	
Some college	49	22.6	18.4	0.00
College/trade	47	18.8	21.4	
University graduate	52	33.1	7.8	
Employment status				
Employed	139	64.7	51.5	
Retired/homemaker	45	16.5	22.3	0.12
Unemployed/student	52	18.8	26.2	
Household income				
Less than \$20,000	80	27.1	42.7	
\$20,000-\$39,000	67	24.1	34	0.00
\$40,000-\$79,000	57	27.1	20.4	
\$80,000 & above	32	21.8	2.9	
Sense of place				
Low	127	51.9	56.3	
Average	69	27.8	31.1	0.30
High	40	20.3	12.6	

Bold indicates significant ($p < 0.05$) associations

Table 1 (Continued)

Variable	Count	Ghanaian(%)	Somali(%)	Pearson's r
Dwelling type				
Single/semi-detached	63	33.8	17.5	
Row/town/low-rise	52	23.3	20.4	0.01
High rise apartment	121	42.9	62.1	
Marital status				
Single never married	68	24.8	34	
Married/common law	112	54.9	37.9	0.03
Separate/divorce/widowed	56	20.3	28.2	
Living arrangement				
Unattached living alone	42	16.5	19.4	
Unattached living with other	66	22.6	35	0.11
Couple living with children	81	39.1	28.2	
Couple living alone/ no kids	47	21.8	17.5	

Age category				
18-24	29	10.5	14.6	
25-34	56	24.8	22.3	
35-49	59	27.1	22.3	
45-54	47	18	22.3	0.62
55-64	31	12	14.6	
65 & above	14	7.5	3.9	
Self-perceived mental health				
Excellent/very good	117	54.1	43.7	
Good	71	27.8	33	0.27
Fair/poor	48	18	23.3	
Levels of anxiety				
Severe	68	54.4	45.6	
Moderate/	64	56.2	43.8	0.91
Mild/absent	104	57.7	42.3	
Levels of stress				
Severe	70	58.6	41.4	
Moderate	80	62.5	37.5	0.19
Mild/absent	86	48.8	51.2	
Levels of depression				
Severe	93	61.3	38.7	0.22
Mild/absent	143	53.1	46.9	

Bold indicates significant ($p < 0.05$) associations

With a reported difference in life satisfaction between Ghanaians and Somalis, Table 2 displays the findings of the ordered logistic regression. The pseudo r-squared is 0.277, indicating that the selected predictors account for approximately 28% of the variance in the outcome variable 'life satisfaction'. Several significant factors were associated with life satisfaction: being a Ghanaian (OR= 4.12, 95% CI: 1.94, 8.73) versus being a Somalian; having a residency in Canada over 10 years (OR= 1.22, CI: 1.47, 9.16) versus length of residence from zero to ten years; being employed (OR= 2.39, CI: 1.93, 6.15) versus unemployed/student/disability; and living in a single/semi-detached house (OR= 3.04, CI: 1.10, 8.38) versus living in a high rise apartment. It appears three age-categories positively correlate with life satisfaction. Individuals in age- categories 25-34, 35-44 and 45-54 (OR= 3.63, CI: 1.01, 13.03; OR= 4.77, CI: 1.23, 18.54; OR= 5.77, CI: 1.31, 25.44) are 3.6, 4.8 and 5.8 respectively more likely to say they are satisfied with their lives compared to those in the age-category 18-24 (Reference group). No significant difference was observed between the reference group and individuals aged 55 and over. Finally, there were no significant effects for gender, education, and income on life satisfaction.

Table 2 Ordered logistic regression model, Life satisfaction (N=236)

Variable	Odds ratio	95% CI
Log likelihood = -141.96		
Prob > chi2 = 0.0000		
Pseudo R ² = 28.0% (rounded up? ok)		
Study group (ref = Somali)		
Ghanaian	4.12**	1.95-8.73
Gender (ref = Male)		
Female	0.87	0.46-1.65
Length of residence (ref = 0 – 10 years)		
Over 10 years	1.22*	1.47-9.16
Education level (ref = Less than high school)		
High school diploma	0.83	0.27-2.52
Some college/university	0.26	0.08-0.86
College/trade diploma or certificate	0.70	0.23-2.14
University graduate	0.60	0.19-1.93
Employment status (ref = Unemployed/student)		
Employed	2.39*	1.93-6.15
Retired/homemaker	1.39	0.35-2.99
Household income (ref = <\$20,000)		
\$20,000 - \$39,000	0.74	0.29-1.86
\$40,000 - \$79,000	0.87	0.33-2.30
\$80,000 & above	0.12	0.03-0.53
Dwelling type (ref = High rise apt)		
Single/semi-detached	3.04*	1.10-8.38
Row/town/low-rise	0.90	0.41-2.25
Marital status (ref = Single/never married)		
Married/common law	0.38	0.12-1.26
Separate/divorce/widowed	0.40	0.12-1.34
Living arrangement (ref = Unattached adult living alone)		
Unattached adult living with others	0.43	0.13-1.42
Couple living with children	0.85	0.20-3.64
Couple living alone without children	0.77	0.212.88

**Statistically significant at P < 0.01; *statistically significant at P < 0.05

Table 2 (Continued) Ordered logistic regression model, Life Satisfaction (N=236)

Log likelihood = - 141.96
 Prob > chi2 = 0.0000
 Pseudo R² = 28.0%

Variable	Odds ratio	95% CI
<i>Age category (ref = 18 – 24)</i>		
25 – 34	3.63*	1.01-13.03
35 – 44	4.77*	1.23-18.54
45 – 54	5.78*	1.31-25.44
55 and above	3.38	0.63-18.24
<i>Sense of place (ref= low)</i>		
Average	0.71	0.31-1.62
High	0.66	0.23-1.92
<i>Levels of depression (Ref = Severe)</i>		
Mild/absent	0.10	0.42-1.92
<i>Levels of anxiety (Ref = Severe)</i>		
Moderate	0.93	0.35-2.49
Mild/absent	0.93	0.30-1.89
<i>Levels of stress (Ref = Severe)</i>		
Moderate	1.08	0.44-2.65
Mild/absent	0.91	0.31-2.64
<i>Levels of happiness (None of the time)</i>		
Almost all the time	0.12	0.04-0.37
A good bit of time	0.26	0.08-0.83
Some of the time	0.34	0.09-1.26
<i>Mental wellness (Fair/Poor)</i>		
Excellent/very good	0.22	0.07-0.69
Good	0.60	0.21-1.68

****Statistically significant at P < 0.01; *statistically significant at P < 0.05**

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this exploratory study was to examine how socioeconomic, demographic and health-related factors shape visible minority immigrants' life satisfaction in a mid-sized Canadian city – an outcome of how immigrants' economic, social and cultural rights have been considered and protected. Our findings reveal differences in the evaluation of life satisfaction between the two study groups. In particular, results reveal that Ghanaian immigrants were more satisfied with life in Canada than Somali immigrants.. Previous studies have reported that lower

levels of financial wellbeing (see, e.g. Easterlin 1974; Frijters, Haisken-DeNew and Shield 2004) are associated with lower life satisfaction. This finding is consistent with the results of Sam, Vedder, Ward and Horenczyk. (2006), who found that socioeconomic adjustment is an important factor for immigrant and minority groups to feel at home and to be satisfied with their life. Other studies have cited factors associated with settlement problems, including inadequate official language proficiency, affordable housing, and employment (Opoku-Dapaah 1995; Murdie 2003; Mensah and Williams 2013). These problems have likely worsened in recent years, given the rise of Islamophobia in the post-9/11 era (Mensah and Williams 2014). Further research should explore the reasons behind these observed differences.

Consistent with previous research, this study suggests that higher evaluations of life satisfaction are more common amongst people with longer length of residence in host communities (Werkuyten and Nekuee 1999; Verkuyten 2008). One potential explanation for this finding may lie in the acculturative process after immigration as individuals familiarize themselves in their new destinations. The process of acculturation has an important influence on an individual's adjustment and well-being (Garcia-Coll and Marks 2011), which may predict life satisfaction. It is interesting to note that a significant predictor of life satisfaction was observed amongst those who have been in Canada for ten or more years, likely reflecting the development of memories and experiences that promote sense of meaning and attachment to particular places (Golant 2003; Charkhchian and Daneshpour 2010; Rowles and Bernard 2013). Several studies have also shown correlates between length of residence and satisfaction (see Hur and Marrow-Jones 2008; Fleury-Bahi, Felonneau and Marchand 2008). Thus, length of residence contributes to the feeling of comfort and bonding to a place, which may affect the positive image of a place, safety, security and positive connection with neighbours (Ujang 2012; Goldar and Daneshpour 2015). Existing research has relatively limited information on length of residence and life satisfaction, which is an important area for further study.

Employment has been found to be one of the domains that can contribute to life satisfaction (Michalos and Zumbo 2001). There are a number of possible explanations as to why those 'working full-time' have higher life satisfaction than the 'retired/home' and the 'unemployed/student' that this study revealed. Research suggests that employment and having a quality job that matches employee's priorities and preferences contribute to quality of life and life satisfaction of workers (James and Spiro 2006). In general, high quality jobs support people's financial, social, physical, and emotional well-being (Silverman, Hecht and McMillan 2000; Fernandez-Ballesteros, Zamarron and Ruis 2001; Johnson and Krueger 2006). Another possible explanation is that those 'working full-time' may have resources to engage in other activities that would promote their well-being and life satisfaction. Research has shown that lower life satisfaction amongst some immigrant groups may reflect unobserved factors such as sacrifices made for migration (e.g. family separation, or a perceived drop in status due to a shift in their reference group (Statistics Canada 2014). These explanations suggest that external factors are important to immigrants' life satisfaction and are potential topics for future research.

Socioeconomic status is reflected in the significant differences that have been observed in dwelling types with people in single/semi-detached housing more likely to evaluate their life satisfaction higher than those who rent (e.g., those in low and high rise apartments). It may be explained that those in single/semi-detached dwellings may have the means to be able to afford good housing at a preferred location which is likely to contribute to life satisfaction and overall quality of life. This finding underscores the importance of housing in the evaluation of quality of life and by extension life satisfaction. As noted by Murdie (2003), appropriate housing establishes

conditions for access to other formal and informal supports and networks, and speeds up the integration of immigrants in the host societies. Consequently, this is likely to impact on other spheres of immigrants' lives, including their sense of place. Thus, more attention could be focused on how housing characteristics may influence attachments to place.

The insignificance of sense of place (community belonging) on life satisfaction does not necessarily mean that place does not matter. Rather, it may indicate a diminished sense of community belonging for immigrants whose goal is to seek better life conditions for themselves and their offspring. Nevertheless, studies have consistently shown positive effects of sense of place on health and life satisfaction (Benejam 2006; Hur and Morrow-Jones 2008; Williams and Kitchen 2012) and as important aspects of an individual identity (DeMiglio and Williams 2008).

Lastly, age was significantly related to life satisfaction. The differences between individuals in age-categories and in terms of length of residence in the host society may have influenced the differences in the evaluation of life satisfaction (Singh et al. 2011; Moztarzadeh and O'Rourke 2015). In spite of positive relationships between age and life satisfaction, this study found that life satisfaction was greatest amongst respondents aged 25-54. For older adults (55+), their life satisfaction was no different than the reference group (18-25). Consistent with a study in Australia, Foroughi, Misajon and Cummins (2001) observed that Iranian-Australians who migrated at an older age reported lower subjective quality of life, which may suggest negative effects of migration on older immigrants. Thus, declining physical health with advancing age may affect the emotional health and well-being of immigrants, which, in turn, influences the way life satisfaction is rated.

CONCLUSION

Our study underscores the importance of human rights issues and life satisfaction amongst African immigrants in understanding whether the desire to improve their general quality of life (often cited) has been achieved. This study has demonstrated that Somali immigrants have lower life satisfaction than Ghanaian immigrants, a finding that indicates that socio-demographic conditions matter for immigrants' life satisfaction. Additionally, the findings suggest that length of residence, employment status, housing type and age of immigrants contribute to important differences in the evaluation of life satisfaction amongst immigrant groups in Canada. The paper contributes to the study of quality of life of visible minority immigrants in several ways. First, it examines life satisfaction of African immigrants, a growing immigrant group in Canada that is projected to double in size in the next two decades. Second, it focuses on Ghanaian and Somali immigrants, whose quality of life has received relatively little attention but who have also been identified as under privileged (Ornstein 2006). Third, it disentangles the various socio-demographic, socio-economic, and health-related factors that significantly affect life satisfaction, aspects of quality of life bearing on integration and wellbeing and human rights issues in Canada.

It is important to note that conditions of host communities are important to immigrants' life satisfaction. The lower life satisfaction observed for Somali immigrants may reflect integration difficulties relative to socioeconomic adjustment, including employment, housing conditions and length of residence. Immigrant settlement workers and agencies would be better able to meet the needs of these immigrants if they are conscious of the effects of settlement challenges. Attention should be focused on reducing stress at a systemic level, including helping families identify sources of support, providing jobs, affordable housing, language interpretation

and training. At the individual level, empowering immigrants to cope effectively with settlement challenges as they navigate through their new destinations would be worthwhile.

This study is unique because of our singular focus on African immigrants in a second-tier reception city. As respondents were recruited in Hamilton, Ontario only; generalizability to other African immigrants living elsewhere in Canada or other countries is limited. Increasing the number of African immigrant groups studied from a variety of medium-sized cities (replication) might help to increase the generalizability of the results of future studies. Future studies could also focus on other visible minority immigrants in other cities to further understand the ways that minority position affects life satisfaction. Additionally, specific research on factors that promote belongingness may help to fully understand factors affecting life satisfaction in ethnic minorities' communities of residence.

If the principles of human right and inclusiveness should be the proper aim of government, then what action can be taken to promote inclusion and to ensure that policy interventions solidify links between immigration and integration or enhance immigrants, particularly the visible minorities' full potential in the Canadian society?

This article suggests that changing attitudes toward human rights should be viewed within the broader framework of the human right implementation process. If government leaders recognize the problem of racism and discrimination and take steps to remedy the situation, these leaders may be able to promote integration, productivity and lower the costs of human right complaints of the visible minorities. A governmental effort which is above all people-centered, human rights-based and ethnic minority-responsive, would ensure both social inclusion and in accordance with the goal of reducing inequalities (Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Target on safe, orderly and regular migration), promoting satisfaction of life for all. The common notion that immigrants are an unjust burden on health, education, and other social services is challenged by evidence that immigrants contribute more in taxes and social contributions than they receive in benefits (OECD 2014). Ensuring inclusion, protecting rights and valuing the contributions of visible minorities are essential aspects of building a cohesive society. In this regard the conditions of inclusion for immigrants as enshrined in the Immigration Act should be enforced, monitored and evaluated, including protection of their economic, social and cultural rights.

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