

# Financial strain, loss of social status and psychological well-being among recently-arrived migrant fathers with young children

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# Research Team

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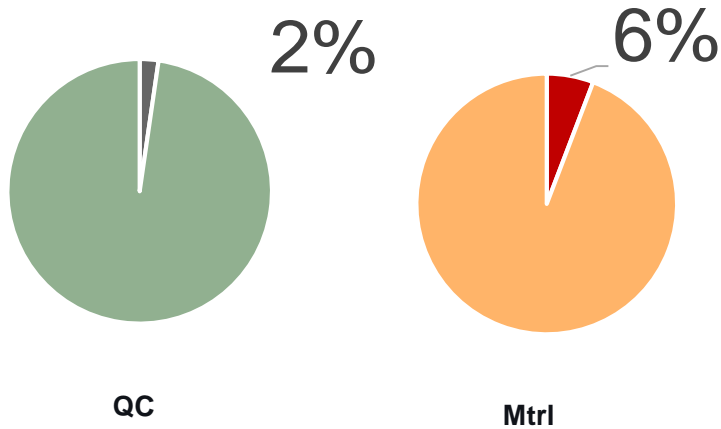
## Hamilton

- Olive Wahoush, Nursing  
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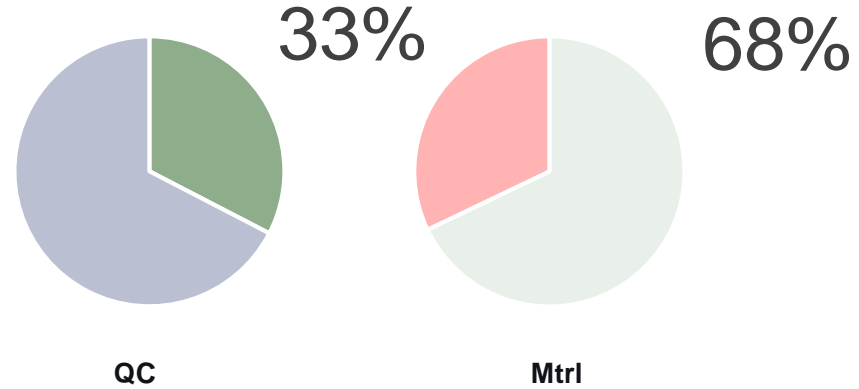
## Edmonton

- Kemi Amodu , Nursing  
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- Bukola Salami, Community Health Sciences,  
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# Young migrant families



Proportion of children aged 0 to 5 born outside of Canada (2016)



Proportion of births with at least one foreign-born parent (2018)



# Young migrant families

## Early-childhood

- Challenging period for parents
- Crucial time for child-development and health

## Migrant parents

- Compounding stress associated with resettlement and parenthood
- More emotional difficulties and poorer mental well-being than non-parent counterparts
- Psychological well-being affected: loneliness, isolation, depression, parental stress, reduced self-efficacy...

**Mothers**

# Resettlement stressors

## Financial challenges

- Low income
- High living costs

## Social position

- Under/unemployment
- Education/training not recognized
- Low education level

**Fathers**

# Objective

Explore the effects of :

- **Financial strain**
- **Social position**



**Psychological well-being of recently-arrived migrant fathers with young children**

- Stress
- Depressive symptoms
- Loneliness / social support
- Self-reported health status
- Parental stress / competence

# Methods

- Secondary analysis\*
- Cross-sectional survey
- Recently-arrived ( $\leq 5$  years), migrant parents with children 0-5 years old
- Recruitment (ongoing) in 3 cities
- Data collection: interview administered questionnaire  
English, French, Spanish, Punjabi, Arabic



\* Study on Transnationalism and psychosocial well-being of parents

# Methods

## DATA

### **Socio-demographics**

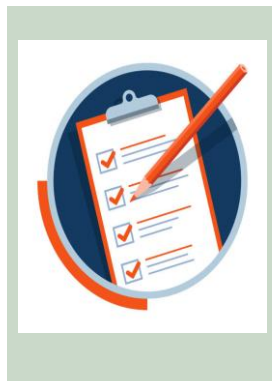
income, education, employment

### **Transnational ties**

social/family, economic, cultural

### **Psychological well-being**

- Stress
- Depressive symptoms
- Loneliness / social support
- Self-reported health status
- Parental stress / competence



## Analyses

### **Descriptive**

Socio-demographics

Psychosocial well-being

### **Psychological well-being stratified by:**

- Financial strain
  - Low income
  - Housing costs
- Social position
  - Under/unemployment
  - Education not recognized
  - Low education level



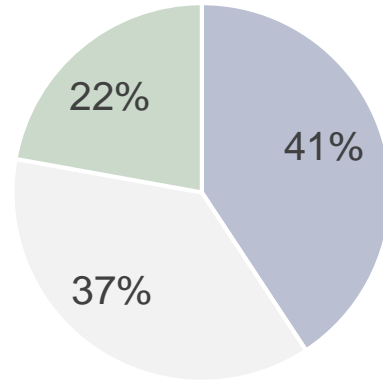
# Participant characteristics



# Participants

**N= 194**

**City**

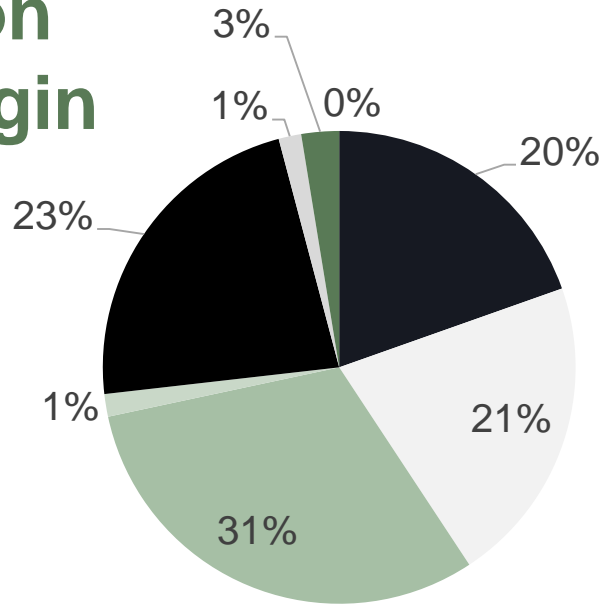


■ Montreal ■ Hamilton ■ Edmonton

# Participants

## N= 194

### Region of origin



- Sub-Saharan Africa
- North Africa/Middle-East/Central Asia
- Mexico/South & Central America
- Caribbean
- South Asia
- South-East and East Asia
- US/West and South Europe/Australia
- East Europe

**Syria** = 10%

**Colombia** = 11%

**Nigeria** = 11%

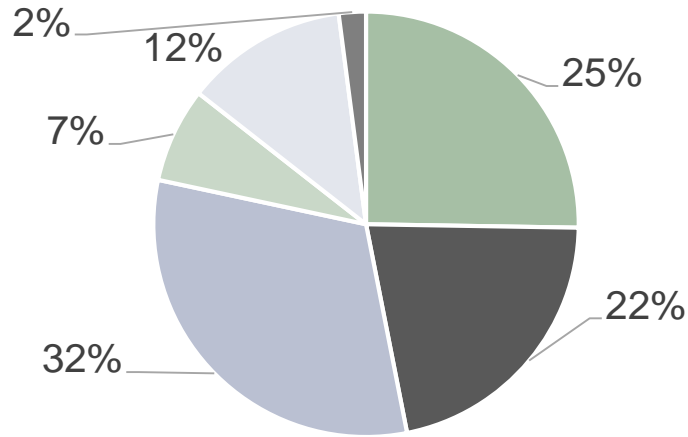
**Mexico** = 16%

**India** = 17%

# Participants

## N= 194

### Migration status

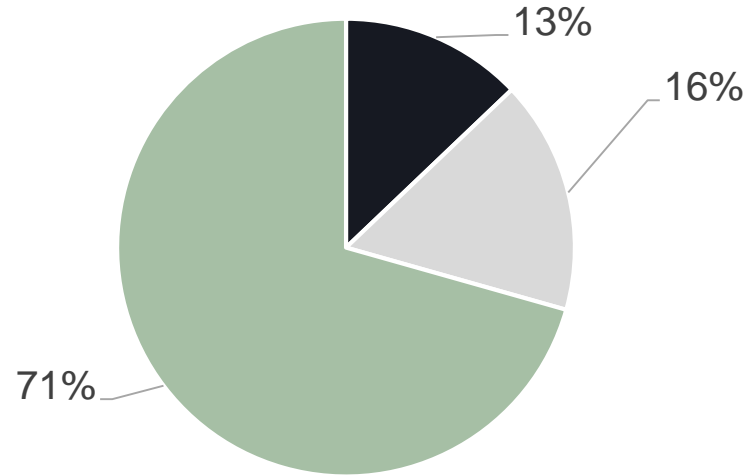


- Refugee claimant
- Refugee history
- Immigrant
- Student
- Temporary worker
- Visitor

# Participants

## N= 194

### Education completed

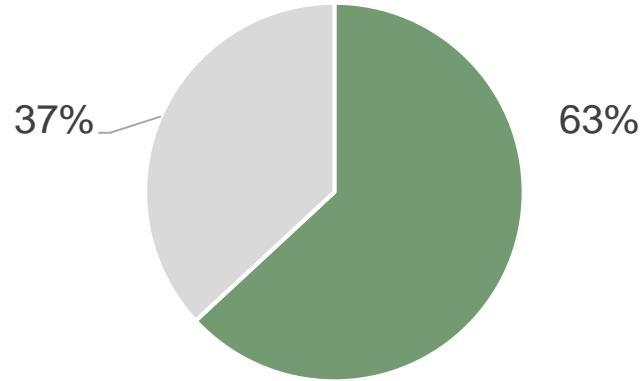


■ Primary school or less ■ High school ■ College/University

# Participants

**N= 194**

## Education recognized

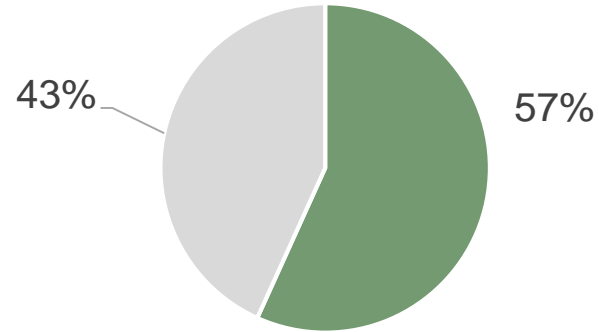


■ Partially/Not Recognized    ■ Recognized

# Participants

**N= 194**

## Under/unemployment

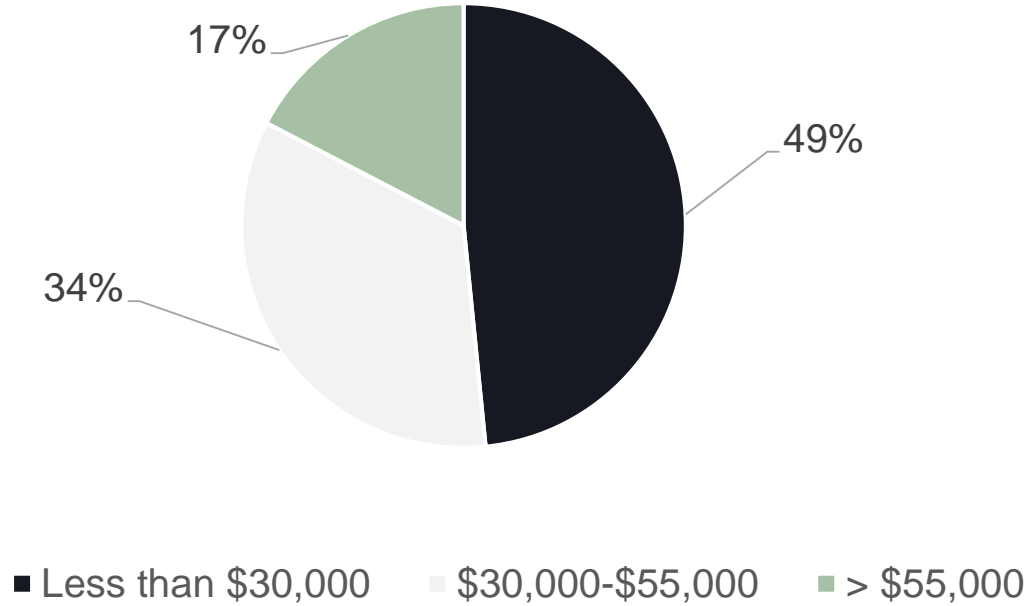


- Looking for work/skills do not match
- Employed/Not looking

# Participants

N= 194

## Household income

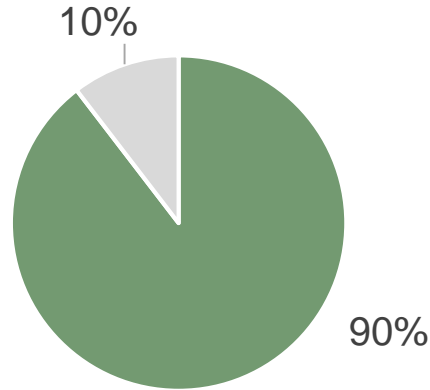




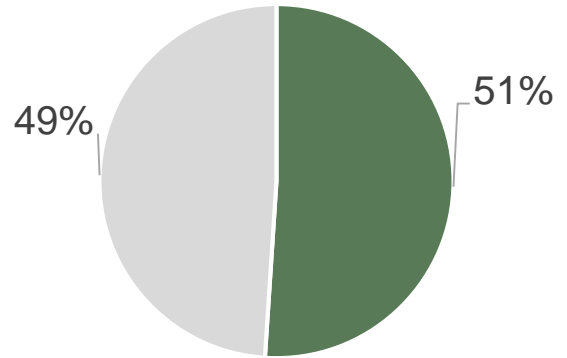
# Participants

## N= 194

### % Income spent on housing



- >30% of income on housing
- ≤ 30% of income on housing



- ≥50% of income on housing
- < 50% of income on housing

# Psychological well-being



# Stress

- In the last week, how often have you felt you were **unable to control the important things in your life?**
- In the last week, how often have you felt **confident in handling your personal problems?** \*
- In the last week, how often have you felt that **things were going your way?**\*
- In the last week, how often have you felt **difficulties were so high that you could not overcome them?**

**Average score =**

**4.82**

SD = 3.01

Range= 0.0 - 15

Never (0)	Almost never (1)	Sometimes (2)	Fairly often (3)	Very often (4)
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\*Reverse scored

**Maximum score = 16 (more stress)**

# Depressive symptoms

Felt this way **3-7 days** during the past week:

I felt depressed	7%
I felt my life was a failure	3%
I had crying spells	5%

# Loneliness / social support

**Always** felt this way during the past week:

There is no one you can turn to	10%
No one really knows you well	11%
People are around you but not with you	9%

## Loneliness / social support

**Rarely/never** felt this way during the past week:

Feel that there are people you can talk to	18%
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**Disagree/strongly disagree:**

There are people I can depend on to help me if I really need it	13%
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# Perceived health

In general, would you say **your health** is:

Excellent / Very Good	60%
Good / Fair / Poor	40%

## Parental role : Stress

Thinking about the youngest child,  
**agrees/ strongly agrees :**

I feel overwhelmed (overloaded) by the responsibility of being a parent.	<b>20%</b>
The major source of stress in my life is my child.	<b>11%</b>
I worry whether I am doing enough for my child.	<b>69%</b>



## Parental role : Sense of competence

Thinking about the youngest child,

**agrees/somewhat or strongly agrees :**

Being a parent makes me tense and anxious	43%
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**disagrees/somewhat or strongly disagrees :**

Being a parent is manageable, and any problems are easily solved	30%
I honestly believe I have all the skills necessary to be a good father to my child	9%
My abilities in caring for my child meet my personal expectations	9%

# Summary

- **Stress** → low range; accurate ?
- **Depressive symptoms & loneliness** → important proportion affected, but within range of general population
- **Perceived health** → aligns with Canadian population data
- **Parental stress / anxiety** → important proportion affected, but within range of general population; “Worry about doing enough for my child” = particular concern
- **Parental sense of competence** → important proportion have doubts, but within range of general population; “Being a parent is manageable” = particular concern

# Psychological well-being by financial strain



# Housing costs\*

	< 50% income on housing	≥ 50% income on housing
Feels depressed	<b>3%</b>	<b>12%</b>
No one to turn to	<b>5%</b>	<b>14%</b>
People around, but not with you	<b>4%</b>	<b>14%</b>
No one to talk to	<b>12%</b>	<b>24%</b>
No people to depend on for help	<b>7%</b>	<b>19%</b>
Child is source of stress	<b>2%</b>	<b>9%</b>

\* **No difference:**

- Stress
- Depressive Sx: Failure, **Crying**
- Loneliness Sx: **No one knows you**
- Perceived health
- Parental stress/anxiety
- Parental competence

\*\* **No difference** for any outcomes when stratified <\$30K vs. ≥ \$30K household income



# Psychological well-being by Social position



# Education not recognized\*

	Partially/not recognized	Recognized
No one to talk to	<b>23%</b>	<b>10%</b>
Health good/fair/poor	<b>47%</b>	<b>32%</b>
Worry doing enough for child	<b>74%</b>	<b>59%</b>
Lacking skills necessary to be a good father	<b>4%</b>	<b>16%</b>

\* **No difference:**

- Stress
- Depressive Sx
- Loneliness Sx: No one to turn to, **No one knows you**, People around, but not with you
- Social support
- Parental stress/anxiety
- Parental competence

\*\* **No difference** for any outcomes when stratified under/unemployment vs. employed/not looking



# Low education\*

	Primary/ High school	Higher education
Feels depressed	<b>17%</b>	<b>4%</b>
Crying spells	<b>14%</b>	<b>2%</b>
People around, but not with you	<b>16%</b>	<b>7%</b>
Health good/fair/poor	<b>60%</b>	<b>32%</b>
Being a parent is not manageable	<b>14%</b>	<b>39%</b>
Lacking skills necessary to be a good father	<b>2%</b>	<b>12%</b>

\* **No difference:**

- Stress
- Depressive Sx:  
**Failure**

- Loneliness Sx: No one to turn to,  
**No one to talk to**, No one knows you
- Social support

- Parental stress/anxiety
- Parental competence:  
**Abilities and expectations**



# Interpretation

- **High housing costs** → Mental health (depressive symptoms & loneliness)  
→ Lack of social support
- **Lower education** → Mental health (depressive symptoms & loneliness)  
→ Health perceived Good / fair / poor  
(vs. Excellent / very good)
- **Higher education** → More doubts about parenting competency
- **Education not recognized** → Isolation  
→ Health perceived Good / fair / poor  
(vs. Excellent / very good)  
→ Worry about doing enough for their children



# Discussion

- **Implications** for practice :
  - How best to support psychological well-being for fathers ?
- How best to **capture psychological well-being** outcomes ?
  - Stress tool not optimal
  - Scales vs. individual items to capture essence of well-being (e.g., parental stress vs. parental anxiety)
- What measures to use to **assess financial strain and social position** ?
  - Income – low income is inadequate for capturing financial strain
  - Employment – under/unemployment not sufficient to capture social position ?
  - Education not recognized- not clear what's captured
- **Future study:**
  - Larger sample needed to capture psychological well-being of fathers
  - Population-based study

**Next steps...**

# Questions ?

