AN EXAMINATION OF IMMIGRANT WORKERS' EXPERIENCES OF
OVERQUALIFICATION USING RELATIVE DEPRIVATION THEORY

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ABSTRACT

Overqualification has been documented to affect immigrant workers, which poses implications for their job attitudes and behaviors. The purpose of this multi-method investigation was first to understand how specific factors related to immigrants' working experiences (e.g., language skills) relate to their experiences of perceived overqualification and contribute to the manifestation of relative deprivation. Additionally, this work examines two variables that may further inform knowledge of immigrants' experiences of perceived overqualification and relative deprivation: acculturation and job gratitude. Results of 13 semi-structured interviews gathered from immigrant workers in the U.S. who identified as overqualified for their current work role provided preliminary qualitative evidence of several themes relevant to their overqualification experiences (e.g., foreign credential recognition, discrimination, starting from the bottom). Although support was not found for the proposed moderating roles of acculturation and job gratitude, results of a two time-point survey study of immigrant workers in the U.S. suggested that relative deprivation mediates the relationship between perceived overqualification and job satisfaction. This contributes additional evidence in support of relative deprivation theory. Exploratory analyses also identified distal outcomes of relative deprivation (e.g., turnover intentions). Findings of this work not only contribute additional insights into how perceived overqualification and relative deprivation impact an understudied population, but can also be used to inform strategies to reduce the negative effects.

This dissertation is dedicated to my husband, Trey, and my family. Thank you for all your encouragement and support.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The United States workforce is evolving, with major changes occurring to its demographic composition. Although an abundance of literature has examined how diversity influences workplace attitudes and behaviors (see Roberson et al., 2017; Roberson, 2019 for reviews), there is one growing population that has yet to receive appropriate attention in the organizational literature: immigrants. There are over 40 million immigrants in the U.S. today, comprising approximately 14% of the total U.S. population and 20% of the entire world's migrants; further, the number of immigrants living in the U.S. has nearly tripled since 1970 (Moslimani & Passel, 2024). Despite current levels of immigration and the projection that immigrants and their children will account for 88% of the U.S. population growth through 2065 (Budiman, 2020), there has been little research considering their workplace experiences.

One notable issue for this population is overqualification, a form of inadequate employment that occurs when employees possess more qualifications than required by their jobs (Erdogan et al., 2011; Maynard et al., 2006). Although some immigrants[1] come to the U.S. on an employment visa for a job that may be commensurate with their qualifications, others coming to the U.S. may not be as well positioned to secure a job that fits their experience and training due to issues such as visa sponsorship, lack of foreign credential recognition, language barriers, unfamiliarity with their host country and culture, and discrimination (Guerrero and Rothstein, 2012; Johnston et al., 2015; Turchick Hakak et al., 2010; Wassermann et al., 2017; Zikic et al., 2010). Previous research, in fact, shows that immigrants have a high risk for overqualification in their host country (e.g., Aycan & Berry 1996; Crollard et al., 2012; Frank & Hou, 2017). For example, research conducted using Canadian census data suggests that immigrants are nearly

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[1] Immigrant is defined in the remainder of this dissertation as a person who is residing in a country other than their country of origin.

three times more likely to experience persistent overqualification than their non-immigrant counterparts (Cornellisen & Turcotte, 2020). Data from the OECD (Dumont, 2021) further demonstrate the prevalence of overqualification: over one third of highly educated immigrants in its member states and the E.U. are overqualified for their current jobs. Clearly, overqualification among immigrant communities raises concerns.

In their review of the overqualification literature, Erdogan and Bauer (2021) summarize overqualification as a predictor of numerous job attitudes, health and well-being, turnover intentions, turnover, job performance, organizational citizenship behaviors, interpersonal relationships, innovative behavior, counterproductive work behaviors, and career success. Additionally, research on immigrants specifically has lent further support to these relationships, showing that perceived overqualification is associated with reduced psychological well-being, life satisfaction, and job satisfaction (Eguakun, 2020; Wassermann et al., 2017, 2019).

Such findings, however, may not be fully indicative of the consequences associated with immigrants' experiences of overqualification. When immigrants come to the U.S., they are likely met with differences in culture, norms, and way of living. Acculturation, or the changes that occur to individuals through firsthand contact with a new culture, has been found to result in affective, cognitive, and behavioral reactions directed toward both the original and host culture (Berry & Sam, 1997). Given its ramifications, overqualification may hinder immigrants' abilities to establish themselves in the host society (Wassermann et al., 2017). Although Wassermann et al. (2017) found support for the role of host national identity in moderating the relationship between perceived overqualification and job satisfaction, such that greater identification with the host country strengthened the effect of perceived overqualification on job satisfaction, no research has considered how experiences of acculturation may influence the distinct

psychological processes (e.g., feelings of relative deprivation) that connect perceptions of overqualification to outcomes such as job satisfaction and turnover intentions. Instead, other research has viewed acculturation as an outcome of overqualification (Eguakun, 2020). By understanding how acculturation more immediately relates to such psychological processes, organizations can develop strategies for effectively and efficiently preventing negative consequences of perceived overqualification in the workforce. Additionally, such research would yield insight not only into how cross-cultural experiences impact the direct (e.g., relative deprivation) and indirect (e.g., job satisfaction) effects of perceived overqualification, but would also contribute novel information into how the non-work and work domains intersect with one another.

Further, there are likely other underexplored influential factors that relate to immigrants' experiences of overqualification. Gratitude and its emergence in immigrants, for example, has appeared as a topic of discussion in popular press. Specifically, there has been critique regarding the belief that immigrants should be grateful for what they have (Mehta, 2019). Questions can be asked regarding whether gratitude affects the relationships between perceived overqualification and its outcomes. For example, when one is grateful for their job, they may choose to overlook other negative elements, such as the fact that they are overqualified for their role, which may then relate to their feelings of being deprived of something they want and deserve.

The purpose of this dissertation, which aims to highlight the overqualification experiences of immigrant employees, is twofold. First, I aim to build on the literature of relative deprivation, the predominant theoretical approach that connects perceived overqualification to its outcomes (Erdogan & Bauer, 2021), by examining immigration-relevant factors (e.g., language skills) that are believed to inform its manifestation. Specifically, I will investigate how these

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immigration-relevant factors relate to the two preconditions of relative deprivation: feelings of wanting and deservingness (Crosby, 1982). The findings from this investigation will allow for me to expand the theory of relative deprivation in an understudied population, which will yield novel insights into how this theoretical mechanism operates. Second, I aim to examine how acculturation and job gratitude relate to perceived overqualification and its outcomes in immigrant employees. As mentioned earlier, acculturation has yet to receive attention as a more proximal variable affecting relationships between perceived overqualification and outcomes (i.e., it is treated as an outcome). Additionally, I introduce gratitude for one's job (i.e., job gratitude) as another factor that is believed to affect the relationship between perceived overqualification and its outcomes.

The following chapters provide a definition of overqualification and related theoretical perspectives (Chapter Two), describe factors predicting wanting and deservingness in immigrant workers (Chapter Three), describe the relationship between relative deprivation and job satisfaction (Chapter Four), propose moderating factors related to perceived overqualification (Chapter Five), describe a series of exploratory hypotheses (Chapter Six), present the qualitative study methodology and results (Chapter Seven), describe the main survey study methodology (Chapter Eight), present the main study results (Chapter Nine), and discuss the findings of the main study (Chapter Ten).

CHAPTER 2: APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF OVERQUALIFICATION

Overqualification is defined as a form of inadequate employment that occurs when employees possess more qualifications than required by their jobs (Erdogan et al., 2011; Maynard et al., 2006). The study of overqualification can be approached from two perspectives. The first, objective overqualification, involves an assessment of the extent to which a person's qualifications are more than what is required by the job. There are three common methods for measuring objective overqualification (Hartog, 2000; Larsen et al., 2018): job analysis, worker self-assessment, and realized matches. In the job analysis method, information is gathered from a systematic evaluation of job titles and the required level/type of education compiled by professional job analysts. Two examples of sources of this information are the U.S. Dictionary of Occupational Titles and Occupational Information Network. In the worker self-assessment method, workers are asked to specify the education required to obtain or perform their job. In the realized matches method, the level of required education is computed based on what workers in that specific job or occupation have usually attained (e.g., mean or mode).

The second perspective to the study of overqualification is perceived overqualification, which focuses on individuals' subjective perception of the extent to which they believe they are overqualified for their current role. Previous research investigating the relationship between objective and perceived overqualification has found that the two are moderately and positively related ($\rho = .40$; Harari et al., 2017), suggesting that these two measures are correlated but not redundant (Harari et al., 2017). Despite this observed positive relationship, researchers have further argued that studying overqualification from the angle of perceived rather than objective overqualification is more appropriate for assessing psychological phenomena (e.g., Erdogan et

al., 2011; Hu et al., 2015; Maynard & Parfyonova, 2013). Therefore, the current research will focus on perceived rather than objective overqualification.

Theoretical Perspectives to Perceived Overqualification: Relative Deprivation

Relative deprivation theory (Crosby, 1976, 1982, 1984) is the most frequently referenced framework for perceived overqualification (Erdogan & Bauer, 2021) and states that individuals who want an object and feel entitled to receive it will feel angry and resentful when they do not have it (e.g., Liu et al., 2015; Smith & Pettigrew, 2015). Relating overqualification to relative deprivation theory, perceived overqualification is expected to result in a sense of one being deprived of a job that they feel they deserve (Erdogan & Bauer, 2021). Smith et al.'s (2012) review on relative deprivation has found that such feelings relate to individual behavior (e.g., deviance), intergroup attitudes (e.g., ingroup favoritism), and collective behavior (e.g., approval of political violence). Other research has also observed relationships between relative deprivation and physical and mental health (Mishra & Carleton, 2015).

Despite the frequency with which relative deprivation theory appears in the perceived overqualification literature, little work has explicitly tested the relationship between perceived overqualification and relative deprivation. One exception is recent work by Erdogan and colleagues (2018), who found support for relative deprivation as a mediator of the relationships between perceived overqualification and current career satisfaction, positive affect, negative affect, and life satisfaction. Although these outcomes are undoubtedly important, the relevant takeaway from this research is the observed relationship between perceived overqualification and relative deprivation ($\beta = .49$). As one's perceptions of overqualification signal that their working conditions and job demands could be better, relative deprivation thus emerges as employees compare themselves to similar others and consequently experience negative emotions such as

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anger and resentment because of their employment situation (e.g., Liu et al., 2015; Smith & Pettigrew, 2015) .

Hypothesis 1: Perceived overqualification positively predicts relative deprivation.

The conceptualization of relative deprivation has evolved over the years. With prior theorists discussing relative deprivation from multiple perspectives (e.g., in-group & out-group comparisons, Davis (1959); social justice, Runciman (1966); organized protest, Williams, (1975)), Crosby (1976) synthesizes and advances the relative deprivation literature by explicating six preconditions that must exist for relative deprivation to be observed. These preconditions are that the person (1) wants X, (2) sees that some other or others have X, (3) feels entitled to X, (4) thought (in the past) that X was attainable, (5) thinks that X will not (in the future) be attainable, and (6) refrains from blaming themselves for their failure to possess X currently (Crosby, 1976, 1982). In reviewing the literature on relative deprivation theory, Crosby (1982) later refined her theory of relative deprivation, paring down these six preconditions to two preconditions: that the person (1) wants X and (2) feels deserving of X. Early research conducted by Crosby (1982) found support for the utility of wanting and deservingness in predicting the extent of deprivation about one's job. Additionally, Olson et al. (1995) later found support for wanting and deservingness in predicting deprivation. Using a field study of single mothers receiving government assistance, these authors found support for a two-factor model (wanting, deservingness) in predicting discontent with one's own status.

In focusing on the immigrant population, the role of deservingness (of healthcare, social services), for example, has been discussed with respect to migrants (Holmes et al., 2021; Ratzmann & Sahraoui, 2021); it is not yet clear, however, how feelings of wanting or deservingness emerge or are conceptualized from immigrants' own perspective. Given their

status as a foreigner and outsider (Jones-Correa, 2012) and the country's long history of anti-immigrant sentiments, one could ask the extent to which immigrants possess feelings of wanting or deservingness. For wanting, it is likely that immigrants will report wanting a job that is commensurate with their qualifications given the effort and energy invested into preparing themselves for that job (as discussed in the next section). However, it is unclear the intensity to which they will report wanting that job or the details associated (e.g., reasons for wanting) with wanting that job. For deservingness, immigrants may feel as though they are deserving of a job in the U.S. that is commensurate with their qualifications for different reasons such as their work ethic or obtained credentials. However, given the prevalence of anti-immigrant rhetoric and stereotypes (e.g., Chan, 2018; Lee & Fiske, 2006; Sullivan, 2023), especially the stereotype of immigrants stealing native workers' jobs (Constant, 2015), immigrants may question their place in the U.S. and deservingness to work in the country. Note that the research questions in the remainder of this section were investigated via semi-structured qualitative interviews in a sample of immigrant workers in the U.S. that identify as being overqualified for their current job (see Chapter Seven).

> ***Research Question 1***: How do immigrants describe their level of (a) wanting a job in the U.S. that is commensurate with their qualifications and (b) deservingness for a job in the U.S. that is commensurate with their qualifications?

Lastly, based on prior research (Crosby, 1982; Olson et al., 1995), feelings of wanting and deservingness of a job for which one is appropriately qualified for are expected to contribute to one's feelings of relative deprivation. As the focus of this work is on experiences of perceived overqualification and relative deprivation, relative deprivation here is examined only in regard to one's current (perceived overqualification) and desired (relative deprivation) employment

situation. Although no previous research has examined these in-depth experiences of relative deprivation from the perspective of immigrants themselves, particularly regarding one's employment situation, there is no reason to expect that the relationship between feelings of wanting or deservingness and relative deprivation will differ for this population. Nevertheless, it is interesting to consider whether in this population, one factor (wanting, deservingness) is more influential than the other to experiencing relative deprivation or whether the two factors, as specified in previous work (Crosby, 1982; Olson et al., 1995) are equally as important.

Additionally, one concept that is central to understanding relative deprivation is one's choice of a referent other, or in other words, the person or group with whom one compares themselves. As immigrants are in a unique situation, moving from one country and employment situation to another, they have many options with whom to compare themselves. For example, someone who is overqualified for their current position and experiencing relative deprivation (first meeting the preconditions of feeling wanting and deserving of a job commensurate with their qualifications) may compare their situation to that of other immigrants in their host country. However, they may also compare their situation to family and friends who are in their home country. Knowing who immigrants compare themselves to while experiencing relative deprivation will be beneficial for individuals and organizations in minimizing the negative effects of relative deprivation as strategies can focus on identifying other points of comparison that are positive for the worker.

> **Research Question 2**: How do immigrants describe their experiences of job-related relative deprivation, specifically regarding (a) feelings of wanting, (b) feelings of deservingness, and (c) one's choice of a referent other?

CHAPTER 3: FACTORS PREDICTING WANTING AND DESERVINGNESS IN

IMMIGRANT WORKERS

In further elaborating on the theory of relative deprivation, it is interesting to consider what might predict the two preconditions of wanting and deservingness in an immigrant population. In her original form of the theory, Crosby (1976) describes various determinants of relative deprivation, including personality traits (i.e., self-blame, need for achievement), personal past (e.g., recency of loss of X, length of time one possessed X), immediate environment (e.g., proportion of others possessing X, contact with others possessing X), societal dictates (e.g., message that person deserves X, message that person can obtain X), and biological survival (i.e., centrality of X to biological survival). However, although each of these factors could be seen as relevant when it comes to immigrants' experiences and the relative deprivation preconditions of wanting and deservingness, I propose two additional categories of factors to relate to immigrants' experiences of wanting and feeling deserving of a job in the U.S. that is commensurate with their qualifications: (1) human capital characteristics (i.e., education/training/credentials, language skills) and (2) perceptions of others' prejudice and discrimination. Additionally, I aim to investigate a third factor that may either minimize or exacerbate the effects of relative deprivation in immigrant workers: job characteristics. As with the previous section, I present a series of research questions that were investigated via semi-structured qualitative interviews in a sample of immigrant workers in the U.S. that identify as being overqualified for their current job.

Human Capital Characteristics

The between-country transfer of human capital, or the economic value that a worker possesses based on their training, experience, and skills, has been recognized as a challenge for

immigrant workers (Chiswick & Miller, 2009). Previous research has sought to identify the transferability of immigrants' human capital (Chiswick & Miller, 2009), examining the effects of factors such as the recency of labor market entry, pre-immigration labor market experience, and duration in the host country. Other research has quantified the underutilization of immigrants' skills, with findings showing that immigrants receive lower earnings premiums for education and work experience, and that immigrants from certain home countries earn less than immigrants from other home countries (Reitz, 2001). Central to this dissertation is whether one's human capital may contribute specifically to immigrants' feelings of wanting and deservingness of a job in the U.S. that is commensurate with their qualifications. In this dissertation, I focus on two elements of human capital that pose unique implications for the immigrant population: (1) education, credentials, and training, and (2) language skills.

Education, Credentials, and Training

Immigrants who worked in high-skilled occupations in their home countries likely invested significant time, energy, and effort into obtaining education and training that would allow them to perform effectively in those jobs. Of key interest is how having these credentials translates into wanting and feeling as though one deserves to work in a similar high-skilled job in the U.S. First, regarding feelings of wanting, it is likely that having these qualifications for a high-skilled position will elicit feelings of wanting a job commensurate with those qualifications, given the commitment that these individuals have made into pursuing the appropriate education and training for their career path. Similarly, because they possess these credentials, they may feel as though they are deserving to work in that occupation.

One complexity, however, that arises is that those that obtained their education and training outside of the U.S. may question their deservingness of an appropriate job if they are

unsure if their foreign education and training has prepared them for that same occupation in the U.S. In fact, foreign credential recognition is a prominent topic in the literature on immigrants and has been recognized as a barrier to immigrants' integration into the workplace and career success (e.g., Damelang et al., 2020; Guo, 2009; Rabben, 2013). With the lack of federal level regulation in evaluating foreign credentials (Recognition of Foreign Qualifications, n.d.), this service has instead been delegated to private, non-governmental entities that have different criteria for evaluating credentials (Recognition of Foreign Qualifications, n.d.). As such, proving that one has the required education for a position therefore may be difficult and expensive for immigrant workers, incurring what has been called a "transition penalty" (Lochhead, 2003). This may affect their perceptions of their deservingness of holding a job commensurate with their education, credentials, and training.

Additionally, the question of whether immigrants with a high-skilled background feel as though they are deserving of a similar role in the U.S. becomes even more nuanced considering that some immigrants may also have completed or are in pursuit of additional education based in the U.S. For these individuals, feelings of deservingness are likely heightened as they now can say that they have education or training that was completed in the same country in which they are working.

> *Research Question 3*: How do immigrants' education, credentials, and training affect their feelings of (a) wanting a job in the U.S. that is commensurate with their qualifications and (b) feelings of deserving a job in the U.S. that is commensurate with their qualifications?

Language Skills

Previous research has identified immigrants' language skills as a barrier to their career success (Austin & Este, 2001; Chen & Hong, 2016; Guerrero & Rothstein, 2012). When language requirements (i.e., specific level of proficiency) are not met, an individual may not be able to obtain a higher-level position compared to what they may have held in their home country. In fact, the level of language proficiency demanded by professional occupations is typically more advanced than what is required during one's immigration application (Chen, 2008). This lack of proficiency can also impact an employer's interpretation of the employees' other skills and productivity, such that when an employee does not possess the required language skills, the employer may believe that the employee does not possess certain required job-related skills.

Questions can be asked regarding how immigrants' language skills affect their wanting and deservingness of a job commensurate with their qualifications. Specifically, it is worthwhile to consider how their own perceptions of their language skills and the presence of an accent affects these preconditions. For perceptions of language skills, immigrants may perceive themselves anywhere ranging from having poor command to excellent command of the English language. What may vary, however, is the degree to which this affects their wanting and deservingness. For example, one immigrant who perceives that they have low command of the language, regardless of how they are evaluated by others with respect to their language skills, may still want and feel deserving of a position commensurate with their qualifications because despite their low self-rating, they can still speak the language at a fundamental level. On the other hand, someone else with similar low perceptions of their language skills may not want a job commensurate with their other qualifications (education, training) if they believe their (lack

of) language skills will be a barrier to completing the work. Additionally, they may not feel deserving of such a position if they believe their language skills to be a barrier. At a general level, it is also interesting to consider the extent to which each of these situations occur in the first place. In other words, how do immigrants who believe that they are overqualified for their current job evaluate their own language skills, especially when comparing themselves to their native-born counterparts?

Another aspect unique to immigrants' language skills is the presence (or absence) of an accent. Previous research with immigrants has shown that even if a person possesses the required language skills for a job, just the presence of an accent affects listeners' evaluations of the speaker (Eichenauer et al., 2023; Hosoda & Stone-Romero, 2010; Lee & Wessel, 2023). In line with the previous discussion of language skills, this issue concerns immigrants' own perception of whether they have an accent or not and how that contributes to feelings of wanting or deservingness. For wanting, it is likely that whether or not one believes that they have an accent is unrelated to feelings of wanting. However, for deservingness, having an accent may bring out feelings of self-consciousness or self-doubt regarding one's language abilities, especially when working with native-born workers. This may therefore contribute to lower feelings of deservingness. In fact, research also finds differential reactions based on the type of accent, with French-accented speakers evaluated as favorably or more favorably than standard English accented speakers and Japanese accented speakers evaluated more negatively than either group (Hosoda & Stone-Romero, 2010). However, on the other hand, immigrants with an accent may see their accent as unrelated to their feelings of deservingness if they feel they can still speak the language proficiently.

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Research Question 4: How do immigrants' language skills affect their feelings of (a) wanting a job in the U.S. that is commensurate with their qualifications and (b) deserving a job in the U.S. that is commensurate with their qualifications?

Immigrants' Meta-Stereotypes

Prejudice and discrimination have been a predominant theme when it comes to the treatment of immigrants over the course of U.S. history (Yakushko & Morgan, 2012; see Esses, 2021 for a review). Negative treatment, including xenophobia, racism, and sexism, is still recognized as a salient issue facing immigrants today (Gereke et al., 2020; Szaflarski & Bauldry, 2019; Vochocová, 2021; Yakushko, 2009). Recently, the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic may have further exacerbated these conditions, with immigrants especially becoming targets for stigmatization and scapegoating (e.g., Marley et al., 2020; Stein & Murphy, 2020). Such treatment poses consequences for this community, including experiences of exploitation (Buller et al., 2015; Miller, 2007), negative impacts on physical and mental health (Bacallao & Smokowski, 2013; Szaflarski & Bauldry, 2019), and decreases in life satisfaction (Houle & Schellenberg, 2010).

These experiences may also affect feelings of wanting and deservingness when it comes to obtaining a job for which one is qualified in their host country. For wanting, immigrant workers may not want a position that is commensurate with their qualifications if they, at the same time, believe that they are going to be discriminated against in the workplace. In fact, some research finds that ethnic exclusion and discrimination are reasons underlying immigrants' decisions to pursue self-employment (Bonacich, 1973; Light, 1979; Model and Ladipo, 1996). Given the devaluation of immigrants' qualifications and credentials (e.g., Basran & Zong, 1998;

Bauder, 2005), immigrants may not want to pursue the job search process if they believe they will only see rejection due to their foreign credentials.

Given the literature available, it is currently unclear how immigrants' meta-stereotypes, or perceptions of others' prejudice against immigrants, would affect their feelings of deserving an appropriate job in their host country. Some related research, though, finds discrimination to result in decreases to one's self-esteem (Bourguignon et al., 2006; Verkuyten, 1998). In line with this finding, being exposed to xenophobic sentiments, in addition to having an awareness of the devaluation of foreign credentials, may make immigrants question their worth and therefore their deservingness of holding such a position. On the other hand, perceiving that one is being discriminated against or will be discriminated against in the future may be unrelated to feelings of deservingness because others' discrimination does not affect the competencies or qualifications one possesses.

Research Question 5: How do immigrants' meta-stereotypes and perceptions of discrimination toward immigrant groups affect their feelings of (a) wanting a job in the U.S. that is commensurate with their qualifications and (b) deserving a job in the U.S. that is commensurate with their qualifications?

Job Characteristics

Up to this point, factors that are believed to relate to immigrants' wanting and deservingness of a job in the U.S. commensurate with their qualifications have focused on characteristics of the immigrants themselves (i.e., human capital) and perceived characteristics of others that interact with immigrants (i.e., meta-stereotypes and discrimination). Although these factors are proposed to be influential within the scope of relative deprivation theory, it is also important to take a holistic approach and consider how the characteristics of the job may

additionally relate to immigrants' feelings of relative deprivation. In fact, person-environment fit theories (e.g., Schneider, 1987) postulate that fit, rather than its individual components (i.e., person, environment), is a stronger predictor of individual outcomes (van Vianen, 2018).

Although research on the relationship between job characteristics and relative deprivation is not yet available, some previous work with immigrants suggests that job characteristics are influential to other aspects of their lives. For example, in a study of migrant workers, psychosocial job characteristics (i.e., skill discretion, decision authority, job insecurity) were found to significantly predict mental health (Liu et al., 2020). Additionally, other work has found job characteristics to predict job satisfaction among immigrant workers. Specifically, Wang and Jing (2018) discuss salary, job demands, job control, and learning opportunities as determinants of immigrants' job satisfaction. It is possible that each of these characteristics would relate to feelings of relative deprivation. For example, learning opportunities may decrease immigrants' relative deprivation because such opportunities may signal room for growth or promotion at one's place of work. Additionally, learning opportunities may provide a chance for individuals to upgrade their skills and knowledge, which could assist them should they choose to search for employment at another organization. Although the present work focuses on job characteristics in relation to *immigrants'* relative deprivation experiences, it is possible that results would further generalize to non-immigrant populations. Regardless of the population of interest, such findings pose important implications as certain job characteristics that are found to reduce experiences of relative deprivation could be introduced by employers into the work environment or enhanced to protect against the later consequences of relative deprivation.

> ***Research Question 6*:** What job characteristics enhance or minimize immigrants' feelings of relative deprivation?

CHAPTER 4: RELATIVE DEPRIVATION AND JOB SATISFACTION

Perceived overqualification has been found to predict numerous workplace outcomes. Harari et al.'s (2017) meta-analysis finds a negative relationship between perceived overqualification and job satisfaction (ρ = -0.41), organizational commitment (ρ = -0.35), psychological well-being (ρ = -0.26) and self-rated organizational citizenship behaviors (ρ = -0.25) , and a positive relationship with counterproductive work behaviors (ρ = 0.04). Such findings mirror those of other research including a recent article by Erdogan and Bauer (2021), who reviewed relationships between overqualification and turnover intentions, interpersonal relationships, innovative behavior, and career success, and a review conducted by Liu and Wang (2012) who proposed additional relationships with team performance, health and well-being, and work-family conflict. Central to the present research, perceived overqualification has consistently been linked to decreased feelings of job satisfaction (Erdogan & Bauer, 2021). As discussed in Chapter Two, this may be because individuals feel deprived of something they deserve. Further, according to relative deprivation theory, the employee will feel angry and resentful, and these emotions will be directed towards their job and employer (Crosby, 1976; Feldman et al., 1997).

Job satisfaction is one particularly interesting outcome because it may represent one of the first reactions that an employee has when they perceive that that are overqualified. Additionally, job satisfaction has meta-analytically been shown to be more strongly related to perceived overqualification (ρ = -0.41) as compared to other variables such as job search behaviors (ρ = .30) and psychological well-being (ρ = -.26; Harari et al., 2017). Further, lack of job satisfaction is consequential as it has been shown to relate to important outcomes such as turnover intentions (Holtom et al., 2008). It is unclear, however, whether job satisfaction is a direct outcome of the proposed theoretical mechanism (relative deprivation) of perceived overqualification. Job

satisfaction can be thought to result from relative deprivation because when one feels that they are deprived of a job that they want and deserve, they may blame the organization for these feelings, resulting in lower job satisfaction. In fact, Sweeney et al. (1990) showed that relative deprivation was a useful theory for explaining employees' satisfaction with their pay, such that employees who felt that similar others earned more were more dissatisfied with their pay.

Hypothesis 2: Relative deprivation negatively predicts job satisfaction.

As discussed earlier, perceived overqualification is expected to positively predict relative deprivation. Taking Hypothesis 2 into account, relative deprivation is then expected to mediate the relationship between perceived overqualification and job satisfaction for the following reason. Specifically, perceived overqualification is expected to predict lower levels of job satisfaction because those who are overqualified face feelings of anger and frustration towards their job, consistent with the literature describing the experiences of relative deprivation (e.g., Crosby, 1976; Smith et al., 2012).

Hypothesis 3: Relative deprivation mediates the relationship between perceived overqualification and job satisfaction.

CHAPTER 5: MODERATORS OF THE PERCEIVED OVERQUALIFICATION –

RELATIVE DEPRIVATION RELATIONSHIP

As discussed in Chapter Two, perceived overqualification is expected to relate to relative deprivation (Hypothesis 1). However, there are also likely moderators of this relationship. This chapter will introduce two proposed moderators of the relationship between perceived overqualification and relative deprivation: acculturation and job gratitude.

Acculturation

Acculturation is the change process that results from contact between two or more cultural groups and their members (Berry, 2005). Not only does acculturation involve psychological change or adaptation, as reflected by psychological and physical well-being outcomes, but it also involves sociocultural adaptation, which reflects how a person is able to manage daily life in the new culture. According to Berry (2005), acculturation is a long-term process and involves shifts in behavior as well as problems that emerge for those undergoing acculturation (i.e., acculturative stress). Research on acculturation and more specifically, acculturation strategies, which are variations in how individuals undergo acculturation (Berry, 2007), indicates that people do not experience acculturation in the same ways. Acculturation strategies are comprised of attitudes (i.e., preferences regarding how to acculturate) and behaviors (i.e., the activities a person engages in to acculturate) that are displayed in day-to-day interactions with others from a different culture (Berry, 2005). Berry (2005) proposed four acculturation strategies that are based on one's preference for maintaining their heritage culture and identity, as well as their preference for contact and participation in the broader society. Further, the four acculturation strategies differ in name based on whether the focus is from the perspective of the dominant or nondominant group. The four strategies from the perspective of

the nondominant group are: assimilation, separation, integration, and marginalization[2]. Although a complete discussion of these strategies is outside of the scope of this dissertation, a key point regarding acculturation is that it is possible to map both shifts in behavior and acculturative stress onto these strategies, such that some strategies are associated with greater changes in behavior or acculturative stress than others (Berry & Sam, 1997). For the remainder of this paper, I use the term 'acculturation' to refer to the extent to which individuals are psychologically, socioculturally, and economically adapted to their host culture. In the language of Berry's (2007) acculturation strategies of ethnocultural groups, 'acculturation' here refers to either assimilation or integration. Assimilation and integration are included as 'acculturation' because both strategies feature a desire to become integrated (versus separated) with the host culture.

Some research suggests that acculturation is directly related to experiences of overqualification among immigrants. In their study of Spanish immigrants in Germany, Wasserman et al. (2017) found that the negative effect of perceived overqualification on job satisfaction was exacerbated when immigrants strongly identified with their host country. According to these authors, immigrants who more strongly identify with their host country may have better language skills, which in turn may increase their levels of perceived entitlement and accessibility to a job commensurate with their qualifications. One limitation of this study that they note, however, is the fact that they did not test for the behavioral explanation provided above, instead only focusing on host national identity which is an affective level of acculturation (Schwartz et al., 2011).

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[2] In this paper I am interested in the perspective of the immigrant group rather than the dominant group. However, there are four strategies from the perspective of the dominant group and these are: melting pot, segregation, exclusion, multiculturalism (Berry, 2005).

One emerging question is how acculturation, understood more broadly, impacts the relationship between perceived overqualification and overall feelings of relative deprivation. Specifically, one may ask whether being more accustomed to or familiar with the culture of the U.S. influences the effect of perceived overqualification on relative deprivation. For example, adjustment may serve as a personal resource that mitigates the effect of perceived overqualification on the negative feelings of deprivation. However, adjustment may also act in the opposite direction, such that someone who is more adjusted to their new country may possess greater feelings of entitlement (Wassermann et al., 2017), possibly resulting in an even greater effect of perceived overqualification on perceptions of deprivation. The following competing hypotheses are therefore presented.

> *Hypothesis 4a*: The positive relationship between perceived overqualification and relative deprivation is weakened by acculturation.

> *Hypothesis 4b*: The positive relationship between perceived overqualification and relative deprivation is strengthened by acculturation.

Job Gratitude

One relevant societal problem that has been highlighted in popular press (e.g., Mehta, 2019; Nguyen, 2019) concerns the role of gratitude and whether immigrants are expected to maintain a certain degree of gratitude for their circumstances in their host country. According to these arguments, immigrants should be "simply grateful to be here" (Mehta, 2019). Such an argument can also extend into the role of employment. Specifically, it may be argued that immigrants should be grateful for the job that they have in their host country. Regardless that this expectation undoubtedly stems from prejudice and xenophobia, immigrants may still feel

pressure from others and the broader social landscape to feel grateful for their circumstances, including those pertaining to their employment.

One characteristic that may reduce the negative effects of perceived overqualification is gratitude for the job. Gratitude, or the "quality or feeling of being grateful or thankful" (Dictionary.com, n.d.), is thought to be a resource for individuals that enhances positive affect and life satisfaction (Emmons & McCullough, 2003; McCullough et al., 2002; O'Leary & Dockray, 2015), self-esteem (Rash et al., 2011), well-being (Wood et al., 2009), and positive relationships (Di Fabio et al., 2017). Although Cain et al. (2019, p. 441) define workplace gratitude as the "tendency to notice and to be thankful for how various aspects of job affect one's life," I define job gratitude here more narrowly: job gratitude is the level of gratitude that one has for their current job, or the tendency to feel grateful for having their job. This conceptualization is different from other conceptualizations of gratitude discussed within the broader workplace gratitude literature. In this study I am focusing on a more specific gratitude object, one's job. As Table 1 in Appendix A shows (and see Locklear et al., 2023 for a review on gratitude in the organizational behavior literature), gratitude research typically speaks to a general feeling or gratitude for specific aspects (e.g., gratitude for interactions; Cain et al., 2019) of one's work. The focus here is specifically on being grateful for the job one has, regardless of what that job is. This is most like Youssef-Morgan et al.'s (2022) grateful appraisals subscale (example item: "Right now, I have so much at work to be thankful for") of their work gratitude scale, though my conceptualization again focuses on gratitude for the job itself, rather than aspects of one's work.

Despite Cain et al. (2019) claiming there to be limited research on gratitude within the workplace, the existing work on gratitude as a predictor of the previously mentioned positive

experiences is promising. When individuals perceive that they are overqualified, gratitude for the job may act as a reminder that they have a job. Recognizing the consequences of unemployment, such as a decline in income, human capital, and well-being (Nichols et al., 2013), people who are overqualified for their job may be less negatively affected by the overqualification when they are grateful. Job gratitude therefore may serve as a resource that buffers the negative effect of overqualification on outcomes such as relative deprivation. For example, experiencing feelings of gratitude for one's job may buffer the degree to which perceived overqualification makes employees feel deprived of something they want and believe they deserve. This is again because the employee recognizes that having a job is better than the alternative of not having a job, so they would therefore feel less deprived because they have a job in the first place.

> *Hypothesis 5*: Job gratitude moderates the positive relationship between perceived overqualification and relative deprivation, such that the positive relationship between perceived overqualification and relative deprivation is weaker when job gratitude is high.

CHAPTER 6: EXPLORATORY ANALYSES

Given that the study of perceived overqualification's connection to relative deprivation in immigrant populations is underexplored, this dissertation also presented an opportunity to examine additional, related concepts and relationships. This chapter provides an overview of exploratory examinations of (1) the connection of occupational downgrading to perceived overqualification and related outcomes, (2) how relative deprivation relates to established outcomes of job satisfaction (i.e., job satisfaction as a mediator), and (3) acculturation's relationship to health and satisfaction outcomes (i.e., positive health, negative health, job satisfaction, career satisfaction).

Occupational Downgrading

In addition to understanding the theoretical mechanism underlying the effects of perceived overqualification (relative deprivation), another area of research concerns occupational downgrading, or what occurs when one's current position has lower prestige than in the previous position (Akresh, 2008). Research on occupational downgrading is largely found in sociology and economics, with studies investigating involuntary status downgrading throughout one's career (Buchs et al., 2017), patterns of downgrading versus upgrading (Evans, 1999), and population predictors of downgrading (Léné, 2011). Additionally, much research on occupational downgrading concerns immigrants specifically. For example, Akresh (2008) examines occupational trajectories of immigrants including a comparison of the last job abroad with the first job in the U.S. In a qualitative study examining occupational downgrading of adult immigrants, Adversario (2021) investigates how occupational downgrading influences immigrants' integration into the U.S. workforce. Fernando and Patriotta (2020) examine highly skilled migrants' transition from Sri Lanka to the U.K. and find evidence of three sensemaking

narratives (disregard, opportunity, fit) that contribute to immigrants' identity while experiencing occupational downgrading.

Importantly, like the study of overqualification, I distinguish between objective occupational downgrading and subjective occupational downgrading. Whereas objective occupational downgrading is said to occur based on the results of an occupational downgrading index, such as Ganzeboom et al.'s (1992) popular International Socio-Economic Index of occupational status (ISEI), subjective occupational downgrading is contingent on the employees' perspective and does not necessarily correspond perfectly to objective downgrading. However, it is expected that these two variables will be positively related. In line with previous rationale for looking at perceived rather than objective overqualification, I focus here on subjective occupational downgrading as the more psychologically relevant construct.

Although similar in nature, subjective occupational downgrading can be distinguished from perceived overqualification. Whereas occupational downgrading pertains specifically to the loss of status and prestige, perceived overqualification pertains to the attainment of excess qualifications. Further, whereas occupational downgrading pertains to the prestige of one job compared to that of another job, perceived overqualification pertains to one's perception of their self as it relates to the job. In other words, occupational downgrading relates to job characteristics while perceived overqualification relates to personal characteristics. Again, although these two constructs are proposed to be distinct, it is likely that there is a relationship between them. Specifically, subjective occupational downgrading may positively relate to perceived overqualification because when a person believes that they have experienced a downgrade between their current and previous roles, they may now see themselves as overqualified for their current role.

Exploratory Hypothesis 1: Subjective occupational downgrading is positively associated with perceived overqualification.

Subjective occupational downgrading is also likely to relate to other outcomes. For example, in a recent study of Venezuelans who immigrated to Colombia, Lebow (2024) find evidence that occupational downgrading predicted decreases in wages and productivity. Additionally, Adversario (2021) examines how downgrading affects immigrants' integration into the U.S. workforce and focuses in on aspects such as racial discrimination, language barriers, and lack of social networks. Further, Crollard et al. (2012) discuss connections between immigrants' occupational trajectories, including occupational downgrading, and consequences on one's health. Although these studies tend to examine occupational downgrading from the objective lens, often using a downgrading index such as the ISEI (Ganzeboom et al., 1992), like studies of perceived overqualification, it is believed that subjective occupational downgrading rather than objective occupational downgrading will relate more strongly to psychological phenomena.

Although there is no work on subjective occupational downgrading in the organizational literature to my knowledge, one potential outcome that can be inferred from Crollard et al. (2012) is employee health. These authors connect overqualification, which has demonstrated numerous health effects (e.g., Friedland & Price, 2003; Lundberg et al. 2009; Peter et al., 2007) to occupational downgrading and propose that that there are likely to be similar outcomes. More specifically, occupational downgrading, which is defined by the loss of status or prestige in one's job, may cause psychological distress, further manifesting both an increase in negative psychological and physical health and decrease in psychological and physical well-being. Previous research in fact has supported this "dual continuaa model" (Keyes & Michalec, 2010; Keyes et al., 2010). Another potential outcome of subjective occupational downgrading is job

satisfaction. Simply put, employees who experience lower status or prestige may find themselves more dissatisfied with their current position, especially considering that these are aspects that they previously possessed. Job prestige, in fact, has been shown to positively predict job satisfaction (Jonason et al., 2015) so it makes sense that a loss in prestige would result in job dissatisfaction. Finally, subjective occupational downgrading may also relate to career satisfaction, which accumulates one's experiences of job satisfaction. When one perceives a downgrade in their job, this is likely to trigger negative affective experiences that one associates with their work, resulting in lower career satisfaction.

> ***Exploratory Hypothesis 2***: Subjective occupational downgrading (a) positively predicts negative health and negatively predicts (b) positive health, (c) job satisfaction, and (d) career satisfaction.

Exploration of Relative Deprivation's Relationship to the Outcomes of Job Satisfaction

It is also worthwhile to consider the more distal effects of relative deprivation, specifically via job satisfaction because job satisfaction has been linked to numerous outcomes (e.g., performance, organizational effectiveness; Judge et al., 2010). The links between job satisfaction and outcomes (i.e., turnover, job search behavior, and career satisfaction) are well established (e.g., Boštjančič & Petrovčič, 2019; Delfgaauw, 2007; Tett & Meyer, 1993; Williamson et al., 2005), so in the interest of a parsimonious focus of this document, those replicative hypotheses and accompanying rationale and analyses are presented in Appendix B; here I focus specifically on the connection of relative deprivation to these outcomes of job satisfaction.

As relative deprivation is expected to result in lowered job satisfaction (Hypothesis 2), the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationship of relative deprivation to these traditional

outcomes can be investigated. Specifically, relative deprivation may be positively related to different employee withdrawal behaviors (i.e., turnover intentions, job search behaviors) via job satisfaction as employees who are dissatisfied in their current jobs will likely seek out alternative working arrangements, manifesting in increased turnover intentions and job search behaviors. Alternatively, when employees are satisfied, this job satisfaction likely contributes to more overarching feelings of career satisfaction, which reflects one's satisfaction with their job and work over the course of their entire career.

> ***Exploratory Hypothesis 3***: Job satisfaction mediates the relationship between relative deprivation and (a) turnover intentions, (b) job search behaviors, and (c) career satisfaction.

Exploratory Relationships of Acculturation with Outcomes

An extensive body of literature has examined predictors of acculturation, acculturation strategies, and acculturation attitudes in immigrant populations. For example, in their study of Chinese adolescents in Canada, Kuo and Roysircar (2004) find socioeconomic status and English reading ability to significantly predict acculturation, which they assessed using measures of social customs and language usage. Abu-Rayya (2009), in their study of adult immigrants in France, find feelings of being settled in France, command of the French language, and lower degrees of involvement with one's national/ethnic community to be associated with lower levels of ethnic group/home country identification as compared to identification with the French. In discussing acculturation strategies, Samnani et al. (2013) propose cultural identity salience, or the extent to which people perceive their original culture to be critical to their identity (Ting-Toomey et al., 2000), to be predictive of acculturation strategy. Recently, Schmitz and Schmitz (2022), in their meta-analysis of the acculturation strategy literature, identify a series of

correlates (personality, stress and negative emotions, coping styles, psychological and health-related variables, sociocultural adjustment) with acculturation strategies. Although these authors consider psychological health to be a prerequisite for functioning in a sociocultural sense, they also note that there could be potential for bidirectionality (Schmitz & Schmitz, 2022).

It is interesting, in fact, to consider one's health as related to adaptation to the host culture. When someone is in good health and does not present symptoms of psychological or physical distress or illness, it can be thought that they have more energy and personal resources that they can devote to different areas of their life, including integrating into a new culture. In contrast, when someone is in poor health, they are likely at risk of feeling psychologically and physically drained and possess a lower ability to pursue non-critical activities (e.g., activities other than working, caring for oneself and dependents). In other words, this may hinder their ability to take the time and energy to integrate into the host culture through activities such as language development and active involvement with their new community.

On the other hand, acculturation to the host culture may contribute to positive health and well-being. For example, when one is more familiar and settled into the customs and practices of their new country and culture, they likely have greater ease and potentially confidence in navigating social situations. This in turn may contribute to positive health experiences. Additionally, acculturation may serve as a protective resource that prevents against negative consequences, such as health impairments. Therefore, a relationship between health and acculturation is expected. Further, previous research has supported a distinction between positive and negative health, drawing on the "dual continuaa model" which states that mental health and illness are two different but correlated dimensions (Keyes & Michalec, 2010; Keyes et al., 2010). As a specific example of this model, Winzer et al. (2014) examine the factor structure of the

twelve-item General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12), finding evidence of a two-factor positive/negative health model. Taking this into account, relationships are expected between both acculturation and positive health as well as negative health.

Another variable whose relationship with acculturation has been examined is job satisfaction. Ea et al. (2008), in their study of Filipino registered nurses in the U.S., find that acculturation is a significant positive predictor of job satisfaction ($\beta = .31$) while accounting for nurses' age and length of U.S. residency. Similarly, Valdivia and Flores (2012) find in their sample of Latino/a immigrants in the U.S. that acculturation to the Anglo culture is a significant predictor of workers' job satisfaction ($\beta = .14$). Additionally, Salo & Birman (2015) find that American acculturation is a significant predictor of job satisfaction ($b = .42$) in a sample of Vietnamese refugees in the U.S. As can be seen by these studies, it is well documented that acculturation to the host culture positively predicts job satisfaction. The acculturation-job satisfaction relationship may also operate in the opposite direction. Specifically, when immigrant employees are satisfied with their jobs, they likely do not bring work complaints and stress home with them and instead, can focus on other areas of their life. This includes adjusting to their host culture. For example, someone may choose to pursue a language skills course or become involved with their local community, both of which could facilitate their adaptation in the new country. Further, a person's satisfaction with their career overall may contribute to positive acculturation experiences. As with job satisfaction, career satisfaction can be thought to predict acculturation as one likely has a greater ability to pursue additional developmental opportunities when they are not as concerned or worried about their career.

Exploratory Hypothesis 4: Acculturation is positively related to (a) positive health, (b) job satisfaction, (c) career satisfaction, and (d) negatively related to negative health.

CHAPTER 7: QUALITATIVE STUDY METHOD AND RESULTS

To answer the research questions presented in Chapter Three relating to predictors of the preconditions of relative deprivation, a qualitative semi-structured interview study was designed. Rather than ask participants to elaborate on their experiences using a survey, this interview design allows for the researcher to further question participants based on their responses and can capture more nuanced information. After providing a description of the recruitment procedure and sample information, I present an analysis and interpretation of results.

Recruitment Procedure

Based on previous experience, I estimated a need for approximately twenty interviews to reach theoretical saturation, though this number could vary based on participant responses and the degree to which similar themes appeared.

Recruitment of participants involved several methods. First, recruitment was limited to the Greater Houston Texas metropolitan area. The Greater Houston Texas metropolitan area is populous, with a 2024 population of 6.8 million people (Houston Metro Area Population 1950 – 2024, n.d.), with 2.3 million located in the city of Houston itself (Explore Census Data, n.d.). Further, the city of Houston is racially and ethnically diverse. Out of 2.3 million people, an estimated 45.8% are Hispanic or Latino, 23.7% are Black or African American, 7.9% are Asian, and 38.5% are another race not listed (i.e., not White, Black or African American, American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander; Explore Census Data, n.d.).). Additionally, as of 2017, the Greater Houston metropolitan area was home to 1.6 million immigrants (Capps & Ruiz Soto, 2018). Therefore, the Greater Houston Texas metropolitan area presented opportunity for recruiting immigrant participants.

Through the author's connection with a large academic healthcare institution located in Houston, Texas, one pool of potential participants was identified and contacted. Emails to a group of potentially eligible employees (i.e., employees on visas) were distributed by an associate vice president of the institution, inviting them to participate in a screening survey for an online Zoom interview study being conducted by researchers at Michigan State University on the workplace experiences of immigrant workers. Individuals completing the screening survey were asked to provide an email address so that if eligible, the researcher could follow up to notify them that they were eligible for the interview study. Due to tax regulations and visa requirements, participants were made aware that they would not receive compensation for this study before enrolling. In order to be eligible for the Zoom interview study, participants must have met the following criteria: not been born in the country (U.S.) they are living in, immigrated to the U.S. at age 25 or older[3], work full-time or part-time, previously worked in a professional occupation (e.g., doctor or other healthcare provider, lawyer, engineer) in their home country, and self-identify as being overqualified for their current work role. From this academic healthcare institution, two individuals completed an interview. However, one participant was found ineligible at the beginning of the interview due to not identifying as being overqualified for their current position. This interview was not included in analyses.

Based on the low number of eligible responses received after inviting individuals from this healthcare institution, additional methods were used to recruit participants. The author posted a recruitment message to her social media and shared the recruitment message with

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[3] This was included as eligibility criteria to increase the likelihood that participants had professional work experience in their home country. The age 25 years old was selected based on reporting of labor force characteristics of foreign-born workers by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (see U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2024).

colleagues to distribute. Although more screening response were indeed received, very few were eligible and even fewer responded to the author's invitation to participate. The author also reached out to several local organizations that served the immigrant community in the Greater Houston, Texas area, but such organizations either could not support the project or did not respond to the author's inquiry. Including the recruitment effort made at the academic healthcare institution and social media outreach, a total of 166 people were screened ($N_{Interviews} = 1$). Prolific was then used as a last attempt to screen participants and schedule interviews. Screening criteria remained the same as previously used. From Prolific, a total of 1,200 responses were received and screened and 45 (3.8%) participants were identified as eligible for the interview study. Participants who completed the screening study received compensation at a rate of $12.00 USD/hour ($0.20/1 minute survey), consistent with Prolific's recommendations for participant compensation (Denison, 2023).

From the screening data, 64% of potential participants were disqualified because they indicated that they do not identify as being overqualified for their current work role. Out of the 45 eligible participants, 13 (28.9%) interviews were conducted. However, one participant was found ineligible during the interview due to not working in a professional occupation in their home country. This interview was not included in analyses. To incentivize participation, Prolific interview participants were compensated at a rate of $30.00 USD/hour (for a one hour-long interview). In total, over 1,300 screening responses were received from several recruitment methods and the total number of interviews that made up the dataset for analysis was 13 (1.1%).

As a factor of the number of interviews conducted and the thematic content that appeared in these interviews, theoretical saturation was not reached. For example, when participants were asked to elaborate on their desired/ideal occupation, several did name the occupation they

pursued in their home country or a more senior version of their current role, consistent with expectations. However, four participants (30.8%) also mentioned retirement (e.g., "I mean…to be honest with you, I am at the point where I am looking forward to retirement.), which would not appropriately allow for me to ask them about their ideal work role, a major investigative theme in these interviews. See the discussion section of this chapter for additional details. Ultimately, to prevent improper conclusions from being reached given the limited data, the decision was made to not speculate on definitive answers to the questions and instead move forward with a descriptive analysis of emerging themes.

Sample

The majority (n = 12) of participants were recruited from Prolific and one participant was recruited from a large academic healthcare institution in the Greater Houston Texas area. The final sample consisted of four men and nine women. The average age of participants was 46.92 years old (SD = 11.29). Participants immigrated to the U.S. from several different countries[4], including Bangladesh (1), Nepal (1), Nigeria (2), India (2), the Philippines (2), Guatemala (1), China (1), Brazil (1), and Canada (1). Participants immigrated to the U.S. between 1991 and 2020 and immigrated using a variety of visas, including F1, H1B, tourist, temporary residence, and marriage visas. Participants represented a variety of previous occupations held in their home country and occupations currently held in the U.S. Table 2 in Appendix A presents participants' previous and current occupations. Participants possessed a range of educational credentials[5]: bachelor's degree (6), master's degree (7), university degree – level unspecified (5), and doctorate degree (1). Two participants had multiple advanced degrees.

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[4] One participant declined to provide their country of origin.
[5] Educational degrees vary widely by country. I report what participants described as their educational background.

Participants lived in different states across the U.S., including New York (2), Utah (1), Texas (2), Florida (1), California (1), Michigan (1), Nevada (1), Oregon (1), Wisconsin (1), New Jersey (1), and Arizona (1). Five participants (38.5%) lived in metropolitan areas. The average length of time in their current role was 7.41 years (SD = 4.62) and the average length of time with their current employer was 8.64 years (SD = 6.33).

Interview Procedure

Before enrolling in the Zoom interview study on Prolific[6], participants were presented with a study description that outlined expectations for participation (Appendix C). After enrolling in the study on Prolific, participants were then redirected to the researcher's personal Calendly link where they signed up for a one-hour Zoom interview time slot. To preserve anonymity in the calendar scheduling, participants were encouraged to enter a false name (as requested by Calendly) and provide their Prolific email address. After selecting their time slot, an email from Calendly containing the participant's unique Zoom interview link was sent to the email address provided by the participant. To ensure that all participants received their Zoom link, the researcher copied the Calendly invitation and either sent it again to the email address provided by the participant or to the participant via Prolific's anonymous messaging system (if the participant provided their Prolific email address).

At the beginning of the Zoom interview, the researcher first screen-shared the consent form, verbally walked the participant through the consent form, and allowed them to ask any questions. After verbally obtaining the participant's consent to participate, the researcher

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[6] For the one participant who was recruited from the academic healthcare institution, interview scheduling took place via email and the interview took place via Zoom. Due to tax regulations and visa requirements, this participant was not compensated. All other aspects of the study remained the same as reported with the Prolific sample.

obtained their Prolific ID (when applicable) and confirmed whether audio recording was permissible. The researcher also reviewed the eligibility criteria with the participant, confirming that they met the criteria. The researcher then proceeded to interview the participant based on the interview protocol (Appendix D). At the conclusion of the interview, the researcher answered any questions that participants had and asked whether they would like to receive a copy of the study results. In exchange for the one-hour long Zoom interview, Prolific participants were compensated with a one-time payment of $30.00 USD.

Interview Protocol

The interview protocol is provided in Appendix D.

Analytic Procedure

Before analyzing the qualitative data, interviews were transcribed verbatim either manually by the author or with the assistance of Otter.ai's transcription feature. Interviews that were transcribed using Otter.ai were also reviewed manually by the author to ensure all content was captured accurately. After a handful of interviews had been conducted, coding for the qualitative analyses began. To code each transcript, the author first read through the transcript and coded quotes that exemplified a particular topic. After all transcripts had been coded, the author then reviewed each code category and the resulting quotes to ensure that the quotes fit appropriately into the category. During this process, the author also broke larger code categories (e.g., recommendations for employers) down into smaller subcategories (e.g., provide training) based on the data. To further ensure quotes were appropriately categorized by the author, two graduate students with expertise in diversity, equity, and inclusion and who have been trained in qualitative data analysis independently reviewed (but did not code themselves) the codes presented below. Although some quotes were added to other categories in addition to what they

were initially coded as and one quote was removed from the Emotions in Current Job category, no other changes were made.

Results

Based on a calculation of the most coded topics across each entire interview, the most frequently mentioned themes are presented below.

Foreign Credential Recognition (N_{Quotes} = 17, $N_{Participants}$ = 8). Multiple participants expressed concern with how foreign credentials are viewed or treated in the U.S. For example, one participant noted:

> *I think the only reason I got started with a better job because I had a master's degree from the US. I think if I only had a bachelor's degree from Nepal and then I had started applying for jobs over here without U.S. experience I don't think I would've had that opportunity for me.*

Another participant corroborated this storyline, stating:

> *And then when you show the Carnegie Mellon piece of paper, then they're satisfied. So that is why I did it. It doesn't make sense because I also have a master's from the Indian Institute of Management Bangalore which is a world-class institute. But just because people cannot understand it, I have to do another one.*

One participant further commented

> *...because some immigrants, for them to come over to the U.S. and work, they must have been through so many trainings and so many educational trainings and so many things. But because most immigrants probably come from the other side of the world, we our [sic] qualifications tend to be looked down on, so I think that needs to be changed.*

Starting From Scratch (N_{Quotes} = 15, $N_{Participants}$ = 7). Participants consistently voiced the need to start from scratch or from the bottom after immigrating to the U.S. One participant commented "…these people have lived here their whole lives, and they had, they didn't immigrate here and have to start from scratch." Similarly, one participant voiced "Coming to the U.S., I have to start from scratch so to say." Another participant noted the need to get their "foot in the door": "My thought was okay, at least…it's a foot in the door. It's a starting point, and let's see what, where it takes." One participant expressed the need to "move up the ladder": "…because I feel like, I feel like it can be challenging when you have to move up the ladder especially when you are not originally from here as far as cultural factors, language, stuff like that."

Experiencing Discrimination (N_{Quotes} = 16, $N_{Participants}$ = 8). Participants voiced their experiences with discrimination and prejudice in the U.S. For example, one participant stated, "I've faced discrimination sometimes because I'm a woman, I'm from a south Asian country, I have faced this kind of discrimination in the workplace." One participant described an encounter with a customer:

> *…and he's like "Yeah, it's probably the place where you had to go to get your green card." And I am a citizen. "Oh, oh, okay, sorry," you know. So it's like, although I did have a green card before I became a citizen, it's like, that statement is a little bit too bold to assume, you know, just, just because someone has an accent, and just because, and I had to tell him once when he was, like, just saying, "Oh, I can't understand, like, because the accent is too strong."*

Another participant commented on experiences they had heard from other immigrants:

that is definitely something that I have noticed a lot in the process, and like, when I was

going through the immigration process, I, you know, connected with other immigrants

that were going through the process at the same time, and I know a lot of them struggled

with discrimination, even just trying to contact, like, like the Center for Immigration

Services, like just they struggled with, first of all, understanding what people were asking

of them. But then, you know, people were not very nice to them because of their accents.

Interestingly, almost half of participants ($N_{Quotes} = 6$; $N_{Participants} = 5$) noted that they had not experienced discrimination while in the U.S. Specifically, one participant claimed, "I feel like I'm welcomed everywhere the way I am and I don't feel like I'm being discriminated against." Another participant stated "I always hear that, I always hear that, about discrimination, but in my more than 20 years here in the States, never. People have been very nice to me."

Comparison to Others ($N_{Quotes} = 15$; $N_{Participants} = 7$). As interviews proceeded, I began to ask participants whether they compare their situation to others. One participant noted:

my best friends in college, two are, three are working as nurses and they have huge

houses, big houses, like mansions, so whenever I see them, sometimes I think about oh I

wish I pursued this being a nurse, being like that.

Another participant voiced "I feel like with others, with my same training, they are in positions and I haven't been able to do it myself." Another participant claimed to compare themselves both to Americans and individuals from their home country:

like I look at my friends back home and I'm like, Wow, they're so much further ahead than

I am. But then I'm like, wait, they didn't immigrate to another country. And so it's just

kind of like a like, I'm comparing myself to both sides.

Qualifications and Deserving the Ideal Job (N_{Quotes} = 9; $N_{Participants}$ = 7). Participants were asked reasons why they felt deserving to be in their ideal occupation and several noted their education, experience, and credentials. For example, two participants expanded on their work experience, stating:

> *I think I'm quite deserving to go to the next level. Because I've been doing same job almost 7 years. I have been training other employees to do the same job. I see I'm quite capable of going to the senior level position*

and "I have enough experience in what I'm doing. I've been doing this for 6 years so because I deserve it." Other participants noted their education as contributing to their deservingness:

> *I have colleagues who just finished a technical course or like a two-year associate degree, they're in the same position. I have a bachelor's degree in electrical and computer engineering. That also comes to my mind sometimes that I should be able to go to a better position*

and "I just feel like since I have a master's, and I have a desire to make a difference I should be allowed to."

Emotions in Current Job (N_{Quotes} = 20; $N_{Participants}$ = 10). After elaborating on their experiences of overqualification, participants were asked to describe emotions they experience in their current role. Several negative emotions were expressed, including embarrassment ("I kinda feel embarrassed to tell people that I work for the post office," offense ("Because I feel very insulted about what I do right now."), hurt ("So I feel hurt. But most importantly, I feel hurt, how despite everything being so unequal"), and frustration ("frustration, just because it's like, I know what I have to do to be able to get to where I want to be, like, I know that I need to go get like, a, like, an associate's degree, or, like a technical…"). Interestingly, positive emotions were

expressed as well, including happiness ("I am really happy being there, like I said I am curious about new things."; "I'm actually happy. I'm not disappointed. I enjoy it. I enjoy all the challenges that comes with it."), fulfillment ("I feel fulfilled as well for where I am currently. I feel fulfilled."), excitement ("I feel excited, because my current job actually inspires me. Okay, so I feel excited."), and grateful:

> I'm super grateful, matter of fact, you know, for all the lessons I've learned so far, both good and bad, you know, and I always, like I said, try to, you know, dwell more on the positive side of things, you know, instead of the negative side of things.

In line with these findings, one participant noted experiencing "mixed emotions."

Recommendations for Employers (N_{Quotes} = 25; $N_{Participants}$ = 12). Participants were asked what steps employers can take to improve immigrants' working experiences. Exemplar quotes are provided in Table 3 of Appendix A. Eight participants recommended offering training. For example, one participant spoke to offering training relating to language skills or company culture. Another participant suggested training related to adapting to the new U.S. work environment. Two participants recommended the employer get to know the employee. Specifically, one stated that employers should ask about the workers' experience in their home country and the other suggested working with the employee to identify goals for the upcoming years. Other recommendations related to organizational culture (e.g., creating a culture where immigrants feel welcome), recognition of language skills (e.g., compensating employees for their multilingual skills), hiring the most qualified candidate, and giving immigrants a chance.

Discussion

Several interesting findings, including those relating to feelings of wanting and deservingness, emerged from this pool of immigrant workers who identified as overqualified for

their current work role. First, although demographic data show that these participants were well-educated, with many holding advanced degrees, Table 2 of Appendix A shows that several are now working in occupations seemingly lower in rank than those they held in their home country. For example, one participant who was a nurse in their home country now works three part-time jobs: retail worker, food service worker, and realtor. Such an observation may at least partially be attributed to another emerging theme: foreign credential recognition.

Across all 13 participants, 17 quotes related to the topic of foreign credential recognition and valuation of foreign credentials. This is a popular topic among the literature on immigrant workers, with several studies examining the employment and economic implications of foreign credential recognition (Anger et al., 2022; Seward & Dhuey, 2021; Tan & Cebulla, 2022) and Zikic et al. (2010) finding qualitative evidence of lack of recognition of foreign credentials as a barrier to immigrant workers' careers. As another example, one study found that although recognition of foreign credentials does narrow the gap in the hiring of native- and foreign-trained applicants, it does not close it completely (Damelang et al., 2020). As foreign credential recognition in the U.S. may be completed by the employers themselves[7] (Evaluation of Foreign Degrees, n.d.), careful attention needs to be directed toward who is completing these evaluations and the procedure being used. As shown by Alanis (2021), familiarity with candidate's educational institution positively predicts evaluations of candidate's competence, warmth, and job suitability, which may bias hiring outcomes and result in fewer offers being made to candidates with foreign education.

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[7] In other cases, employers may request that workers obtain a credential evaluation completed by a private, non-governmental entity. (Evaluation of Foreign Degrees, n.d.). This is a paid service that remains the responsibility of the worker to obtain.

It is interesting that despite the issues demonstrated with foreign credential recognition, participants frequently drew not only on their qualifications, but their coworkers' qualifications, to explain why they felt deserving of working in their ideal job. As far as their qualifications, this may be because rather than drawing on their experiences in their home country, they were instead speaking about their more recent experiences in the U.S. In fact, the participant who claimed that they felt they were deserving to go to the next level because they had been in the same job for several years had received their bachelor's degree in the U.S. In addition to being in the same position for several years, the fact that they received their education in the U.S. rather than another country may also contribute to why they feel deserving. Additionally, the participant who expressed that they have their master's degree and a "desire to make a difference" may also be hinting at the greater perceived value of U.S. education. In fact, this was the same participant who mentioned that they didn't think they would've had an opportunity for their current job if they only had a bachelor's degree from their home country. As far as other's qualifications, some participants also did compare themselves to others in terms of education, training, and experience (comparisons discussed later in this section). Seeing that others in similar work roles to oneself possess lesser education may heighten their feelings of deservingness to be in another role likely with greater status and responsibility.

Interestingly, one theme that was of theoretical interest but unable to be extracted from the available data related to feelings of wanting to be in one's ideal occupation. First, although most participants indicated that they would prefer to work in the same occupation as they held in their home country, several participants did not have an ideal occupation as they were instead focused on finishing work in their current role and transitioning into retirement. Although they did not express wanting a job commensurate with their qualifications, it could be said that they

still exhibited feelings of wanting, only for retirement instead. Additionally, although other participants were asked about what contributes to their wanting to be in that ideal occupation, findings greatly varied. For example, some participants spoke broadly to improving their economic situation, while others focused more on specific aspects of the job (e.g., analyzing data, impacting students). Further, there was even disagreement across participants as to the role of one's qualifications in contributing to their levels of wanting. Lastly, although there was disagreement in terms of what contributes to feelings of wanting, it is important to note that wanting was still indirectly observed in some participants. For example, by choosing to pursue additional education for their career, several expressed their desire to move up in rank or obtain their ideal position.

After being reminded that they earlier identified as overqualified for their current position, participants also spoke on the emotions they experienced in their current job. Notably, several mixed emotions, such as happiness, frustration, and excitement were mentioned despite the literature on perceived overqualification and relative deprivation focusing only on negative emotions (anger, resentment, boredom; Erdogan & Bauer, 2021; Liu et al., 2015; Liu & Wang, 2012; Smith et al., 2012). In contrast to native-born workers, it is possible that immigrant workers may not be as negatively affected by experiences of overqualification or relative deprivation because they are in the U.S. and employed, regardless of what their job is. In fact, one participant did express gratitude for the lessons learned, good and bad. Job gratitude, or the feeling that one is grateful for their job regardless of what it is, could be an important variable when it comes to understanding immigrants' experiences of overqualification and relative deprivation and may differentiate immigrant workers from their native-born counterparts. Further, for participants that did express negative emotions in their current role, it may be

inferred that they possessed at least some level of wanting or deservingness for their ideal position.

Another prominent theme that emerged was feelings of having to start from the bottom or start from scratch when it comes to getting a job. Although little research examines immigrants' working experiences soon after arrival to their new country (Ressia, 2010), there is some evidence that immigrants often must work their way "up the ladder." In a sense, moving up the ladder is indicative that immigrants do want a specific job, and potentially relates to their feelings of deservingness. In Ressia's (2010) qualitative interview study of twelve skilled migrant workers in Australia, one participant remarked they were "quite aware of…making a substantial break in career because my previous employer did not have any operation in Australia…so we started from scratch once again" (p. 77). Research on immigrants' occupational mobility supports this finding, with studies showing that the occupational status of immigrants is worse than in their country of origin (Fleming et al., 2016; Redstone Akresh, 2006; Simón et al., 2014).

An important attribute of relative deprivation theory (Crosby, 1976, 1982, 1984) is the referent other. In this study, participants were asked whether they compared their situation to others and to elaborate on who was the object of the comparison. Quotes revealed a mixture of referent others. As mentioned earlier, several participants compared themselves to their coworkers, particularly with respect to how their education and training was greater than those of their coworkers. This may hint that these participants did feel deserving of their ideal role, as they witness their coworkers possessing lesser qualifications while being in similar positions. This may also suggest different ways in which people compare themselves to others. Specifically, rather than comparing oneself to a single person, someone may compare themselves

to a group of people with specific qualifications. Along these lines, while one participant noted that they compare themselves both to Americans and individuals in their home country, another participant claimed that it would be "unfair" to compare themselves to those in their home country and instead said that they compare themselves to other immigrants. Notably, several participants also expressed that they do not compare their situation to others. Such a finding poses important implications to the study of relative deprivation in immigrants, as the crux of relative deprivation theory lies in this comparison process. In contrast to what the literature on perceived overqualification would suggest, research may benefit from examining the value of relative deprivation as an explanatory mechanism that links perceptions of overqualification to its outcomes in this understudied population.

In terms of practical implications, participants provided several suggestions as to what employers can do to benefit their immigrant workers. Many participants mentioned training, whether that be language-based training, cultural training, or the training of technical skills. Previous research has examined the benefits of language training for immigrants, with findings of several studies demonstrating positive effects on immigrants' integration into the host country (Kanas & Kosyakova, 2023; Lang, 2022; Lochmann et al., 2019; Pont-Grau et al., 2023; Wong et al., 2001). Participants were also asked to provide advice to immigrant workers new to the U.S. and their sentiments echoed those provided here, with "learn the language" being suggested by three participants.

This study is not without its limitations. First, an investigation into the proposed research questions was not appropriate given the sample size and lack of theoretical saturation. As mentioned earlier, several participants, when asked about their ideal or desired job, named retirement. This was an unexpected finding, though unsurprising given the distribution of

participant ages. Participants mentioning retirement posed to be a complication given how the majority of interview and research questions centered around one's ideal work role. In addition to mention of retirement, one participant also voiced satisfaction with remaining in their current role: " …but of course, I'm open to stay in my current field till I retire," and another expressed pessimism regarding pursuing their ideal job:

> *Well, my ideal job to really get back to marketing, but it's not going to happen anymore. That's what I would want. so and with my age, you know, it's like, I rather stick it out with my current job now because looking at like, what, eight years? I mean, it's like, Why move?*

Given how widespread these issues appeared (affecting over a third of the sample) and the implications they posed for following up regarding one's ideal job, the decision was made to refrain from examining the research questions further. Additionally, although certain themes were able to be extracted as presented earlier, there were also inconsistencies in participant responses to other key questions. For example, when participants were asked about whether language skills relate to their wanting to be in their ideal job, some participants claimed language skills to be unrelated, while others claimed them to be related. This discrepancy could be a function of the small sample size and should more data be collected, a clearer picture may emerge. Overall, the available data and analysis yielded a more high-level, descriptive set of findings. While these findings are still valuable, the current study is limited in its ability to dive deeper into the theoretical underpinnings of relative deprivation theory.

Further, although interviews provide the benefit of being able to obtain greater detail and the opportunity to probe with follow-up questions, they are inherently less anonymous (even though participants were encouraged to refrain from providing personal details to the researcher).

Participants may have been reluctant to speak to certain experiences, such as those of discrimination or possessing negative feelings or emotions in their current jobs.

Additionally, while recruiting eligible participants was a challenge, the eligibility criteria may not have been as comprehensive as was warranted. Specifically, although participants should have previously worked in a professional occupation and examples of these occupations were provided, there appeared to be different interpretations of what a professional occupation included. In the future, similar studies would benefit from a more targeted recruitment effort with stricter eligibility criteria. However, as seen in this study, which screened over 1,300 individuals and culminated in a final sample size of thirteen, this will not be an easy task. Suggestions for future research based on previous work on hard-to-reach populations include the following: pursuing venue-based and cultural events (Vahabi et al., 2015), snowball and respondent-driven sampling (Ellard-Gray et al., 2015) and building relationships with community organizations (Ellard-Gray et al., 2015; Lopez-Class et al., 2015).

It is also worth noting that recruitment may have been a challenge if people are initially reluctant to admit that they are overqualified for their current position. As perceptions of overqualification were the focal construct here, it is important to consider how participants are viewing themselves or the situation of overqualification. For example, although one may consider their educational attainment to be beyond what is required in their position, they may not perceive themselves as overqualified if there are other aspects (e.g., work experience) that are at or below the level required by the job. Future research should carefully consider the operationalization of perceived overqualification as well as providing participants with a definition of what exactly perceived overqualification entails (e.g., possessing education or work experience greater than what is required by the job).

Another limitation pertains to the sample itself. As I was generally not able to recruit participants who were non-U.S. nationals[8], per Prolific's participant eligibility requirements, it is unclear as to whether the findings that emerged would apply to recently immigrated individuals and/or individuals who are in the U.S. on a visa, rather than on lawful permanent resident (LPR) or naturalized citizen status. Crucial differences may exist between these two groups which could influence the generalizability of these results. For example, acculturation to the U.S. may be greater in this sample of U.S. nationals, which could affect other factors such as experienced discrimination.

Despite these limitations, this study is noteworthy in that it was able to gather critical, in-depth insights into the experiences of an understudied and hard-to-reach population. Although several themes are consistent with the extant literature (e.g., foreign credential recognition, starting from scratch), mixed findings also emerged regarding emotions these workers experience in their current jobs as well as their perceptions of discrimination. In the future, research may consider the role of immigrants' vulnerability (e.g., visa dependency) in predicting emotions experienced while still identifying as overqualified for the job. If consistent with the current study, such findings of mixed and perhaps even positive emotions would yield a novel perspective to the study of overqualification and relative deprivation.

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[8] The one participant from the greater Houston, TX area was a non-U.S. national.

CHAPTER 8: MAIN STUDY METHOD

The purpose of this survey study was to test a theoretical model of perceived overqualification that incorporates the theory of relative deprivation (Crosby, 1976, 1982, 1984), as well as two moderating variables that are expected to be reflective of immigrants' experiences (Acculturation, Job Gratitude).

This study involved completion of two online surveys, spaced approximately one week apart to reduce common method bias. The Time 1 survey consisted of the model's exogenous variable (Perceived Overqualification), moderating variables (Job Gratitude, Acculturation), exploratory measures, an attention check item, and demographic items. The Time 2 survey (approximately one week later) consisted of the model's mediating variable (Relative Deprivation), outcome variable (Job Satisfaction), exploratory measures, and an attention check item.

Sample

Prolific filters were employed in a screening survey separate from the main study to recruit and sample participants meeting the following criteria: located in the U.S., ages 18 or older, not born in the U.S., and working full-time or part-time. Within the screening survey itself, participants were asked to report the following information: age, country residing in, employment status, country born in, age immigrated to the U.S., if they had lived in the U.S. since this age, and if not, what age they most recently returned to the U.S. Participants were eligible to enroll in the full study at a later date if they met the following criteria: located in the U.S., ages 18 or older, not born in the U.S., working full-time or part-time, and immigrated to the U.S. at ages 18 or older or immigrated to the U.S. at any age if they left and returned when 18 or older. The screening survey was originally opened for 1,000 participants. Out of the 1,000

participant slots, 1,009 responses were recorded.[9] Out of the 1,009 responses, 271 (26.9%) were eligible for the main study's Time 1 survey. These 271 responses are hereafter referred to as Batch 1. The main study's Time 1 survey was then published for Batch 1 at this point to reduce the amount of time that had passed between their completion of the screening study and their enrollment of the main study, an attempt to increase the likelihood of them participating in the main study. While setting the main study up in Prolific, note that only 268 of the 271 potential participants for Batch 1 were eligible[10] to enroll in the study and Prolific further identified only 262 participants who had been active in the past 90 days. Therefore, the main study's Time 1 survey was opened to 262 potential participants of Batch 1. All Batch 1 participants had approximately one week to complete the Time 1 survey. By the survey closure date, 158 out of 262 (60.3%) participants had completed the Time 1 survey.

For Batch 1, the Time 2 survey was opened approximately one week later to 152 participants who had completed the Time 1 survey and been identified by Prolific as being active in the past 90 days. Participants had approximately one week to complete the Time 2 survey. By the survey closure date, 137 out of these 152 (90.1%) Batch 1 participants had completed the Time 2 survey.

To increase the total sample size, the screening survey was opened to another 500 participants and was closed after 506 new responses were received. While compiling this Batch 2 set of responses, three additional responses from the Batch 1 timeline (included in the 1,009)

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[9] The number of recorded responses can exceed the number of participant slots/requested responses if participants time out or return their survey and are automatically replaced by another participant. See https://researcher-help.prolific.com/hc/en-gb/articles/360009223113-Why-do-I-have-more-participants-than requested#:~:text=Therefore%2C%20even%20though%20you%20may,recruited%20to%20take%20their%20p lace for more information.

[10] Due to U.S. tax regulations, three screening participants who were non-U.S. nationals were prohibited from participating in the main study by Prolific. Though I reached out to Prolific, it remains unclear why these three participants were allowed to enroll previously in the screening survey.

were identified. These responses may have been originally saved as partial responses and therefore not have appeared in the original Batch 1 screening data. These three responses are included in Batch 2. Therefore, the total number of responses collected allocated to Batch 2 is 509. Out of these 509 responses, 147 (28.9%) were eligible for the main study. Out of the two screening batches, this resulted in 418 (27.6%) eligible participants out of the total 1,515 responses.

The Time 1 survey was then opened for 145 Batch 2 participants who had completed the screening study and been identified by Prolific as active in the past 90 days. All Batch 2 participants had approximately one week to complete the Time 1 survey. By the survey closure date, 84 out of 145 (57.9%) participants had completed the Time 1 survey. Approximately one week later, the Time 2 survey was opened for these 84 Batch 2 participants and remained open for approximately one week. By the survey closure date, 67 out or 84 (79.8%) Batch 2 participants had completed the Time 2 survey. After Batch 1 and Batch 2 studies were completed, the resulting total number of Time 1-Time 2 matched responses was 204.

Data cleaning to determine the final sample then proceeded. For Batch 1 Time 1, two participants failed the initial attention check. When prompted to respond again, consistent with Prolific's attention check policy, they passed and continued the survey. These responses were retained in the dataset. Additionally, one duplicate response was removed. For Batch 1 Time 2, one participant failed the initial attention check. When prompted to respond again, consistent with Prolific's attention check policy, they passed and continued the survey. This response was retained in the dataset. For Batch 2 Time 1, three participants failed the initial attention check. When prompted to respond again, consistent with Prolific's attention check policy, they passed and continued the survey. These responses were retained in the dataset. For Batch 2 Time 2, two

participants failed the initial attention check. When prompted to respond again, consistent with Prolific's attention check policy, they passed and continued the survey. These responses were retained in the dataset. In terms of incomplete responses, one blank response was removed from Batch 1 Time 1, one removed from Batch 1 Time 2, and two removed from Batch 2 Time 1. Overall, no responses were removed due to attention checks though one duplicate response was removed and three blank responses were removed. Therefore, the final sample included 200[11]matched Time 1-Time 2 participants.

This final sample included 117 men (58.5%), 82 women (41.0%) and 1 respondent who declined to provide their gender (0.01%). The average age was 44.93 years old (SD = 12.08). 40 (20.0%) participants identified as White/Caucasian/Not of Hispanic Origins, 61 (30.5%) as Black or African American, 37 (18.5%) as South Asian, 26 (13.0%) as East Asian, 13 (6.5%) as Hispanic, 10 (5.0%) as selecting multiple races, nine (4.5%) as Other, and four (2.0%) as Middle Eastern or Arab. 72 (36.0%) participants identified as being a visible minority. 81 (40.5%) participants held a bachelor's degree from their home country, followed by 35 (17.5%) holding a master's degree, 34 (17.0%) having a high school diploma or the equivalent, 11 (5.5%) having some college credit with no degree, and 10 (5.0%) holding a professional or doctorate degree. The remaining participants fell into other educational categories. 67 (33.5%) participants held a master's degree from the U.S., followed by 40 (20.0%) having no schooling completed in the U.S., 39 (19.5%) holding a bachelor's degree, and 21 (10.5%) holding a professional or doctorate degree. The remaining participants fell into other educational categories. The average age

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[11] Based on a Monte Carlo simulation power analysis used to estimate the necessary sample to detect an indirect effect (H3) at a $p < .05$ significance level, a total of 140 participants was required. Using GPower 3 (Faul, 2007) to estimate the number of participants to detect H4 and H5's proposed interaction effect, with 80% power for a small-medium effect size at a .05 level of statistical significance, a total of 114 participants was required.

participants immigrated to the U.S. was 24.30 years old (SD = 8.41). Participants represented a variety of visas used to immigrate to the U.S., including H1B (specialty occupations), F1 (international students), J1 (exchange visitor programs), B2 (visitor), K1 (fiancé/fiancée), and IR1/CR1 (spouse). 162 (81.0%) participants worked full-time and 38 (19.0%) worked part-time. Participants worked an average of 37.74 hours (SD = 8.35) per week. The top five industries participants were employed in included: 40 (20.0%) in healthcare, 29 (14.5%) in professional and business services, 25 (12.5%) in education, 20 (10.0%) in information, and 20 (10.0%) in high tech.

Procedure

A copy of all materials presented to participants is presented in Appendix E. After enrolling in the Time 1 survey on Prolific, participants were redirected to the Qualtrics survey platform to take the Time 1 survey. Before completing the survey, they read the consent form and provided their informed consent to participate. After completing the Time 1 survey, participants were thanked for their participation and redirected back to the Prolific website to confirm that they had completed the study. Approximately one week later, participants were invited to enroll in the Time 2 survey and complete it on the Qualtrics survey platform. Before completing the survey, they again read a consent form and provided their informed consent to participate. After completing the Time 2 survey, participants were thanked for their participation and redirected back to the Prolific website to confirm that they had completed the study. For both surveys, participants were paid at a rate of $15.00/hour (10 minutes at $2.50/survey), consistent with Prolific's recommendations for participant payment rates (see Denison, 2023). Participants were paid in a timely manner.

Measures

A copy of all measures is presented in Appendix E.

Screening Measures

      Prolific pre-screening criteria were first used to identify the appropriate participants for the screening survey. To enter and complete the survey, participants must have been located in the United States (Location), indicate that they moved to the country they are now living in (Immigration), and indicate that they either currently work full-time or part-time (Employment Status). Additionally, a 50/50 (Male/Female) quota was used to sample participants equally across gender. Once they entered the survey, participants were again asked to respond to these same pre-screening questions. To be eligible for the main study, participants must have had consistent responses that met the eligibility criteria. Additionally, those that confirmed that they moved to the country that they are now living in were asked the following questions: (1) "At what age did you (first) move to the United States?" and (2) "Have you been living in the United States since this age?" If participants selected No to the second question, they were asked "At what age did you most recently move/return to the United States?" Participants were eligible for the main study if they met the following additional criteria: first moved to the United States at age 25 or older, or first moved to the United States at any age as long as the age at which they most recently returned to the United States was 25 or older. These criteria were included to increase the likelihood that participants had professional work experience in their home country.

Time 1 Measures

      Perceived Overqualification. The extent to which participants perceived themselves as overqualified for their current position was measured with Maynard et al.'s (2006; $\alpha = .92$) nine-

item Scale of Perceived Overqualification. An example item is "My job requires less education than I have." Responses were rated on a 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) Likert scale.

Job Gratitude[12]. The extent to which participants felt grateful for their current job was measured with four items developed by the author (α =.86). The items were preceded with the following stem: "To what extent are you grateful for…". An example item is "the job you have now." Responses were rated on a 1 (Not at All Grateful) to 5 (Extremely Grateful) Likert scale.

Acculturation[13]. The extent to which participants were acculturated to U.S. culture was measured with sixteen items of Stephenson's (2000; α =.90) thirty-two item Multigroup Acculturation Scale. Participants read the following instructions prior to responding to the items: "Below are a number of statements that evaluate changes that occur when people interact with others of different cultures or ethnic groups. For questions that refer to "COUNTRY OF ORIGIN" or "NATIVE COUNTRY," please refer to the country from which your family originally came. For questions referring to "NATIVE LANGUAGE," please refer to the language spoken where your family originally came." An example item is "I am informed about current affairs in the United States." One item was revised to reference "family" rather than "spouse or partner." Responses were rated on a 1 (False) to 4 (True) Likert scale.

Demographics. Participants provided their gender, race/ethnicity, identification as a visible minority, highest level of education completed in their home country and the United States, numbers of hours worked per week, industry, age first and recently (if applicable)

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[12] The psychometric properties of this measure were first assessed in a pilot study of 89 undergraduate students. Results supported a one factor structure and good reliability was obtained (α = .85).
[13] The remaining items were measured but not included in the primary analyses as they instead measured integration with one's native (vs. U.S.) culture.

immigrated to the United States, and class of visa they entered the United States on. Additionally, age and employment status were collected from the screening survey.

Time 1 Exploratory Measures

Relative Deprivation. The extent to which participants experienced job-related relative deprivation was measured with four items created by Erdogan et al. (2018; $\alpha = .89$). An example item is "I feel resentful when I see how prosperous other people who have similar qualifications (education, experience, skills) as me seem to be." Responses were rated on a 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) Likert scale.

Referent Other. Participants' choice of referent other(s) was assessed immediately following the relative deprivation measure. Participants were asked "When you were completing the questions above, who were you comparing yourself to? Select all that apply." Response choices included the following: Work colleagues in the United States, Family or friends in the United States, Other people in the United States (please specify), Previous work colleagues in my home country, Family or friends in my home country, Other people in my home country (please specify), and Other (please specify).

Objective Occupational Downgrading. The International Socio-Economic Index of Occupational Status (Ganzeboom et al., 1992) was used to measure the extent to which occupational downgrading had occurred between the job a person worked in their home country and their current job in the United States. Participants were first asked "Are you performing a different job or occupation than you did in your home country?" with yes/no as response options. If participants selected yes, they were asked to provide their most recent current occupation, select the category of their current occupation from a pre-defined list, provide their most recent previous occupation (if applicable), and select the category of their most recent previous

occupation from a pre-defined list (if applicable). If they provided a response indicating that they held a previous occupation, they were then asked, "Did you perform this most recent previous occupation inside or outside of the United States" If they selected Inside, they were then asked to provide their most recent previous occupation that was located outside of the United States and select the category of that occupation from a pre-defined list. Text responses were collected for descriptive purposes, while the ISEI Major Group (options in the pre-specified occupation list) was used to determine whether occupational downgrading had occurred. Occupational downgrading was coded as having occurred when the ISEI Major Group value for the current position was less than the ISEI Major Group value for the previous non-United States position.

Subjective Occupational Downgrading[14]. As with the Objective Occupational Downgrading measure, participants completed a measure of Subjective Occupational Downgrading if they selected yes to "Are you performing a different job of occupation than you did in your home country?" The extent to which participants themselves perceived that they had experienced an occupational downgrade between their home country and the United States was measured with four items developed by the author ($\alpha = .93$). An example item is "The prestige of my current occupation in the United States is lower than the prestige of my previous occupation in my home country." Responses were rated on a 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) Likert scale.

Perceived Job Mobility. The extent to which participants perceived that they had job mobility was measured with three items from Rusbult and Farrell (1983; $\alpha = .78$). An example

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[14] The psychometric properties of this measure were first assessed in a pilot study of 170 undergraduate students. Results supported a one-factor structure and good reliability was obtained ($\alpha = .83$).

item is "All things considered, how good are your alternatives to this job?" Responses were rated

on a 1 to 5 scale consistent with the phrasing of the item (e.g., 1 (Terrible) to 5 (Excellent)).

Time 2 Measures

Relative Deprivation. The extent to which participants experienced job-related relative

deprivation was measured with the same items used in the Time 1 survey ($\alpha = .91$).

Job Satisfaction. The extent to which participants reported satisfaction with their current

job was measured with three items from Cammann et al. (1983; $\alpha = .82$). An example item is

"All in all, I am satisfied with my job." Responses were rated on a 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5

(Strongly Agree) Likert scale.

Time 2 Exploratory Measures

Referent Other. Participants' choice of referent other(s) was assessed with the same

measure as used in the Time 1 survey.

Turnover Intentions. The extent to which participants expressed intention to turnover

from their current role was measured with four items from Shore & Martin (1989; $\alpha = .87$). An

example item is "How do you feel about leaving this organization?" Responses were rated on a 1

to 5 scale consistent with the phrasing of the item (e.g., 1 (I am presently looking at planning to

leave) to 5 (It is very important for me to spend my career in this organization)).

Job Search Behaviors. The extent to which participants engaged in job search behaviors

over the last three months was measured with eleven items from Blau (1994; $\alpha = .95$). Some

items from the original scale were removed as they lacked relevance in current times (e.g., "Read

the help wanted/classified ads in a newspaper, journal, or professional association") and replaced

with more modern items (e.g., "Read the help wanted/classified ads online or in print"). An

example item is "Prepared/revised your resume." Responses were rated on a 1 (Never (0 times)) to 5 (Very Frequently (at least 10 times)) Likert scale.

General Health. The extent to which participants reported feelings or behaviors indicative of general health in the past week was assessed with twelve items from Goldberg (1972), as reported by Gnambs and Staufenbiel (2018; $\alpha_{PositiveHealth}$ = .87, $\alpha_{NegativeHealth}$ = .90). An example Positive Health item is "Been able to concentrate on whatever you are doing." An example Negative Health item is "Lost much sleep over worry."

Reemployment Self-Efficacy. The extent to which participants reported feeling efficacious when it comes to finding a new job was assessed with four items from Wanberg et al. (2010; α = .92). Participants were presented with the following instructions: "Imagine that you are searching for another job. Answer the following questions according to what you believe would describe you as you are searching for a job." An example item is "I am ___ I would find a job if I looked."

Career Satisfaction. The extent to which participants felt satisfied with different aspects of their career was assessed with five items from Greenhaus et al. (1990; α = .93). An example item is "I am satisfied with the success I have achieved in my career." Responses were rated on a 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) Likert scale.

CHAPTER 9: MAIN STUDY RESULTS

All analyses were conducted using R and R Studio. Before testing the hypotheses together using path analysis, which is a more rigorous test of the hypotheses and better accounts for measurement error, each hypothesis was first tested separately. Descriptive statistics and bivariate correlations for all hypothesized variables are presented in Table 4 of Appendix A.

To test H1, which stated that perceived overqualification positively predicts relative deprivation, a linear regression was conducted. Results showed that Time 1 perceived overqualification was a significant positive predictor of Time 2 relative deprivation ($b = .33$, $se = .07$, $\beta = .29$, $95\% CI = [.18, .47]$, $R^2 = .09$) , supporting H1.

H2 stated that relative deprivation negatively predicts job satisfaction. Time 2 relative deprivation was a significant negative predictor of Time 2 job satisfaction ($b = -.54$, $se = .04$, $\beta = -.66$, $95\% CI = [-.62, -.45]$, $R^2 = .45$), supporting H2.

To test H3, which stated that relative deprivation mediates the relationship between perceived overqualification and job satisfaction, an indirect effect was calculated using the bootstrapped confidence interval method using a bootstrapped sample size of 5,000 (Preacher et al., 2007). The indirect effect of Time 1 perceived overqualification on Time 2 job satisfaction via Time 2 relative deprivation was statistically significant, (*indirect effect* = -.17, *95% CI* = [-.26, -.08]) as seen by zero not being included in the confidence interval (Table 5, Appendix A).

To test H4a and H4b, which each stated that acculturation moderates the relationship between perceived overqualification and relative deprivation (though in a different direction for each hypothesis), a linear regression with acculturation included as a moderating variable was conducted. All predictors were grand-mean centered. As seen in Table 6 of Appendix A, the interaction term was not significant. Therefore, H4 was not supported.

To test H5, which stated that job gratitude moderates the relationship between perceived overqualification and relative deprivation, a linear regression with job gratitude included as a moderating variable was conducted. All predictors were grand-mean centered. As seen in Table 7 of Appendix A, the interaction term was not significant. Therefore, H5 was not supported. However, it is worth noting that job gratitude did significantly relate to relative deprivation ($r = -.19$).

Given that H4 and H5 were not supported, the path analysis was not conducted.

Exploratory Findings

<u>Occupational Downgrading.</u> EH1 stated that subjective occupational downgrading positively relates to perceived overqualification. Results showed that subjective occupational downgrading was a significant positive predictor of perceived overqualification ($b = .41$, $se = .07$, $\beta = .49$, $95\% \; CI = [.28, .54]$), $R^2 = .24$), supporting EH1. EH2 stated that subjective occupational downgrading (a) positively predicts negative health and negatively predicts (b) positive health, (c) job satisfaction, and (d) career satisfaction, and was tested with a series of linear regressions. Results first showed that subjective occupational downgrading was not a significant predictor of negative health ($b = .02$, $se = .06$, $\beta = .02$, $95\% \; CI = [-.11, .14]$), failing to support EH2a. However, subjective occupational downgrading did significantly negatively predict positive health ($b = -.13$, $se = .05$, $\beta = -.23$, $95\% \; CI = [-.22, -.03]$, $R^2 = .05$), supporting EH2b. Results also showed that subjective occupational downgrading significantly negatively predicted job satisfaction ($b = -.22$, $se = .06$, $\beta = -.29$, $95\% \; CI = [-.34, -.10]$, $R^2 = .09$) and career satisfaction ($b = -.26$, $se = .07$, $\beta = -.32$, $95\% \; CI = [-.39, -.13]$, $R^2 = .11$), supporting EH2c and EH2d. Overall, EH2 received partial support.

Job satisfaction as a mediator. To test EH3, which stated that job satisfaction mediates the relationship between relative deprivation and (a) turnover intentions, (b) job search behaviors, and (c) career satisfaction, indirect effects were calculated using mediation analysis as described above. First, the indirect effect of relative deprivation on turnover intentions via job satisfaction was calculated, which resulted in a significant positive indirect effect (*indirect effect* = .43, *95% CI* = [.32, .56]). Estimates for each path are provided in Table 8 of Appendix A. Next, the indirect effect of relative deprivation on job search behaviors via job satisfaction was calculated, which resulted in a nonsignificant indirect effect (*indirect effect* = .17, *95% CI* = [-.98, 1.25]). Estimates for each path are provided in Table 8. Lastly, the indirect effect of relative deprivation on career satisfaction via job satisfaction was calculated, which resulted in a significant negative indirect effect (*indirect effect* = -.28, *95% CI* = [-.38, -.19]). Estimates for each path are provided in Table 8. All measures for these analyses were assessed at Time 2. EH3a and EH3c were supported but EH3b was not.

Acculturation relationships. EH4 stated that acculturation is positively related to (a) positive health, (b) job satisfaction, (c) career satisfaction, and (d) negatively related to negative health. As seen in Table 4 of Appendix A, acculturation was significantly associated with positive health (*r* = .19, *p* < .05) and career satisfaction (*r* = .17 , *p* < .05). However, there was not a significant relationship between acculturation and job satisfaction (*r* = .14, *p* = .06) or negative health (*r* = .07, *p* = .28). Therefore, EH4a and EH4c were supported while EH4b and EH4d were not.

CHAPTER 10: MAIN STUDY DISCUSSION

Studies of perceived overqualification, which often draw on the theory of relative deprivation (Crosby, 1976, 1982, 1984), have yielded numerous insights (see Erdogan & Bauer, 2021 for a review and Harari et al., 2017 for a meta-analysis) into what predicts employees' perceptions of overqualification, why perceived overqualification results in certain outcomes, and what those outcomes of perceived overqualification are. Further, studies of relative deprivation have sought to predict numerous outcomes (e.g., individual behavior, internal states), though Smith et al. (2012), in their meta-analysis, speak specifically to the limitations (e.g., weak study designs, small effect sizes, inconsistency in findings) inherent in the literature.

The present research aimed to build on the extant literature of both perceived overqualification and relative deprivation by first replicating previous findings in an understudied, multicultural population (i.e., immigrants in the U.S.), a necessary development to further the generalizability of I-O psychology research and repair the lack of cultural representation in the field (Myers, 2016). Second, this research aimed to introduce two understudied constructs (i.e., acculturation, job gratitude) to the literature on perceived overqualification and relative deprivation, furthering their nomological networks and implications for practice.

First, perhaps unsurprisingly given the abundance of literature claiming a relationship between perceived overqualification and relative deprivation, perceived overqualification was found to positively predict feelings of relative deprivation in this sample of U.S. immigrant workers. However, it is worth noting that this relationship has only been empirically examined and supported once by Erdogan et al. (2018) in a study of recent Spanish graduates. Therefore,

this finding bolsters the literature on the relationship between perceived overqualification and relative deprivation.

Further, this study provided evidence that relative deprivation mediates the relationship between perceived overqualification and job satisfaction, such that perceived overqualification results in greater relative deprivation, which then translates into lower job satisfaction. As far more research investigates the perceived overqualification-job satisfaction link directly (e.g., Arvan et al., 2019; Wasserman et al., 2017), rather than through relative deprivation (one exception being Erdogan et al., 2018, who instead investigate career satisfaction), such a finding provides further evidence of the utility of relative deprivation in explaining relationships between perceived overqualification and its outcomes. Further, these results demonstrate the usefulness of the relative deprivation framework in explaining perceived overqualification experiences of immigrant workers.

In addition to examining a proximal outcome (i.e., job satisfaction), more distal outcomes of relative deprivation were investigated in exploratory analyses. Specifically, job satisfaction was proposed to mediate the relationship between relative deprivation and turnover intentions, job search behaviors, and career satisfaction. Although the turnover intentions and career satisfaction links were supported, there was no evidence of job satisfaction mediating the relationship between relative deprivation and job search behaviors. This is an interesting finding, as relative deprivation was indirectly and positively related to turnover intentions, which was significantly and positively related to job search behaviors ($r = .31$). One potential explanation for this finding may be that because this is a sample of immigrant workers, they are less willing to pursue other job options if it could affect their employment status, and thus ability to reside in

the U.S. Although this specific sample of workers were, to my knowledge[15], not residing in the U.S. on a visa (instead they were likely LPRs or naturalized citizens), there are still potentially restrictions associated with their employment. LPRs, for example, must stay with their sponsoring employer for two years after they receive their green card to obtain their green card permanently (Chernysheva, 2022). Thus, this would affect the degree to which they engage in job search behaviors.

In extending the relative deprivation literature, acculturation was introduced both as a moderator and in exploratory analyses, as associated with multiple job- and personal-related outcomes (i.e., job satisfaction, career satisfaction, positive health, negative health). Acculturation to one's host culture, again reflected here as Berry's (2007) assimilation and integration acculturation strategies, may impact perceived overqualification's relationship to relative deprivation for several reasons. As a moderator, acculturation was proposed to strengthen or weaken the relationship between perceived overqualification and relative deprivation, as the current literature was not yet clear on how exactly acculturation may alter this relationship. In terms of these possibilities, the positive effect of perceived overqualification on relative deprivation may be strengthened by acculturation because familiarity and integration with one's host culture may be associated both with greater levels of entitlement and perceived accessibility to a job commensurate with one's qualifications (Wasserman et al., 2017). For example, when one is more accustomed to their host country, they likely have better host country language skills. Having these language skills, they may feel as though they are deserving of a job commensurate with one's qualifications, which may exacerbate the effect of perceiving oneself as overqualified on feelings of being deprived of something they want and deserve. On the other

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[15] Per Prolific's participant requirements, participants cannot be recruited or compensated if they are (a) located in the U.S. and (b) a non-U.S. national.

hand, when one is more accustomed to their host country, this acculturation may instead serve as a resource that weakens the experience of perceived overqualification on relative deprivation. However, neither of these explanations were explicitly supported as acculturation was not found to be a significant moderator. While it may be the case that both pathways are in fact operating, on average, they may cancel each other out resulting in a null finding. Alternately, it may just be the case that the interaction between perceived overqualification and acculturation does not explain any additional variance in relative deprivation. The results may also have been attenuated given acculturation's distribution ($M = 3.33$, $SD = .56$, $Min = 1.25$, $Max = 4.00$). Lastly, it is possible that time spent in the host country plays an important role. Although time spent in the host country is not to be used as a proxy for acculturation (Juárez et al., 2023), it may be interesting to examine whether the relationships investigated here are stronger in a sample of recently arrived immigrants as compared to those who have been in the U.S. for a long period of time. Should significant differences appear, such results would speak to the need to examine the within-group heterogeneity of immigrant groups.

In addition to investigating acculturation as a moderator of the perceived overqualification-relative deprivation relationship, job gratitude was also explored. Specifically, it was hypothesized that when job gratitude is high, the relationship between perceived overqualification and relative deprivation will be weakened. However, as with the acculturation moderation hypothesis, this hypothesis was also not supported. One possibility for this finding is that job gratitude, as conceptualized here, may have been too broad of a construct. Consistent with prior literature assessing specific aspects of gratitude in one's job (see Chapter Five for a discussion), perhaps something that matters and relates more to perceived overqualification is gratitude for one's ability to use their skills and abilities. Thus, research can investigate other

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forms of gratitude in the relationship between perceived overqualification and relative deprivation.

Further, in introducing a rather new construct to the organizational literature in exploratory analyses, subjective occupational downgrading, defined here as the perception that one believes they have experienced a downgrade between their previous (non-U.S.) and current (U.S.) work roles, was investigated as related to perceived overqualification in addition to other work- (i.e., job satisfaction, career satisfaction) and health-related outcomes (i.e., negative health, positive health). Findings overall tended to provide support for these hypotheses, though there was no evidence of subjective occupational downgrading predicting negative health. Specifically, there were significant negative relationships between subjective occupational downgrading and positive health, job satisfaction, and career satisfaction. Such findings are in line with previous research providing evidence of occupational downgrading as a predictor of negative outcomes, including wages and productivity (Lebow, 2024) and integration into the host country's workforce (Adversario, 2021). However, this literature, which tends to come from the fields of sociology and economics, largely takes an objective perspective, often defining downgrading as occurring based on some socioeconomic index (e.g., ISEI, Ganzeboom et al., 1992). In fact, no research to my knowledge sought to understand workers' *perceptions* of their downgrading. One exception may be Fernando and Patriotta (2020), who elicit narratives from their participants on their experiences with occupational downgrading, though their focus is on how participants navigate their new identity versus the downgrading itself. Regardless, it is worthwhile to investigate participants' perceptions regarding experiencing a downgrade because the present study shows these perceptions to be negatively related to job satisfaction, career satisfaction, and positive health.

One question related to this topic is whether subjective occupational downgrading and perceived overqualification are empirically distinct, given their conceptual overlap. Consistent with my propositions that subjective occupational downgrading concerns elements of the job itself (e.g., prestige) while perceived overqualification concerns a person's sense of self as related to the job as well as their excess of overqualifications, subjective occupational downgrading and perceived overqualification demonstrated a moderate to strong, though not perfect, correlation ($r = .49$). This demonstrates evidence of the constructs being empirically distinct, though they are positively related as hypothesized. Future research on perceived overqualification would do well to incorporate perceptions of subjective downgrading.

Theoretical Implications

One aim of the present research was to extend the literature on relative deprivation, a commonly theorized yet rarely tested mechanism for connecting perceived overqualification to its outcomes (Erdogan et al., 2018). Results suggested relative deprivation did act as a mediator of the relationship between perceived overqualification and job satisfaction, contributing empirical evidence of its theoretical role in this population of immigrant workers in the U.S. However, although these survey findings did provide evidence of relative deprivation's role as a mechanism, as discussed in Chapter Seven, not one participant expressed feelings of anger because of their overqualification. In fact, some even reported positive feelings. As relative deprivation theory is intimately tied to anger and resentment (Smith & Pettigrew, 2015) and previous research does find the relationship between perceived overqualification and counterproductive work behaviors to be mediated by anger (Liu et al., 2015), the utility of relative deprivation theory, or at least its current conceptualization, may also be called into question.

Other reasons to speculate on why relative deprivation may operate differently in this population concern the two preconditions of wanting and deservingness investigated in the qualitative study. Specifically, for wanting, although some immigrants may express a desire to have a job commensurate with their qualifications, the intensity of this desire may differ from native-born individuals. This may be because immigrants have other stronger priorities or considerations (e.g., keeping family together) that come above their desire for a job that fits their qualifications. Thus, future research on relative deprivation should consider both the intensity of wanting for the job as well as its placement/ranking in terms of other life priorities. Additionally, one's future time perspective may be an important consideration in future work. As several participants in the present study expressed an interest in retirement in the near future, this likely has implications for their levels of wanting to be in a specific job. Drawing on Crosby's earlier (1976) preconditions to relative deprivation, considering whether X will not (in the future) be attainable may provide more clarity to immigrants' experiences of relative deprivation. In terms of deservingness, future research would benefit from an examination of immigrants' level of deservingness for a job commensurate with their qualifications compared to native-born individuals. As discussed earlier, popular press (e.g., Mehta, 2019; Nguyen, 2019) paints a controversial picture of gratitude expected by immigrants. Immigrants' feelings of deservingness may be comparably impacted, such that compared to native-born individuals, they do not feel as deserving of working in their desired occupation. Future research therefore can investigate initial differences between immigrant and native-born levels of deservingness, as well as seek to understand if deservingness is contingent on a referent other, consistent with relative deprivation theory. Taking these considerations for feelings of wanting and deservingness into account, there are likely underexplored nuances in how we understand and apply relative deprivation theory to

immigrant workers. Lastly, going along these lines, research is needed to examine other theoretical mechanisms (e.g., person-job fit) in conjunction with relative deprivation to better understand what drives the relationship between perceived overqualification and its outcomes in this unique population.

Further, I introduced two focal constructs (acculturation, job gratitude) that had not previously been examined with relationship to relative deprivation, proposing both to moderate the relationship between perceived overqualification and relative deprivation. Despite failing to find evidence of moderation for either construct, this yields important conclusions. First, the fact that acculturation did not moderate this relationship, in contrast to Wasserman et al.'s (2017) finding of host national identity moderating the relationship between perceived overqualification and career satisfaction, perhaps suggests that acculturation or at least elements of it have a more influential role *after* feelings of relative deprivation have already manifested. Second, job gratitude, rather than acting as a moderator, may instead be understood as more useful as either a direct predictor or outcome of perceived overqualification. As a predictor, job gratitude may negatively impact perceived overqualification as the more one is grateful for their job, they less they may perceive misfit between their qualifications and what is required by their job. As an outcome, perceived overqualification may result in less job gratitude because one is not using their talents and skills to their fullest abilities. It should, however, be noted that in the present study, a significant relationship was not found between job gratitude and perceived overqualification ($r = -.11$, $p > .05$). This is an interesting finding because job gratitude was significantly related to relative deprivation ($-.19$, $p < .05$), an outcome of perceived overqualification.

In addition to aiming to understand the roles of acculturation and job gratitude as they relate to perceived overqualification and relative deprivation, this study also contributes knowledge to the theory of relative deprivation through a closer examination of relative deprivation's relationships with work and personal outcomes. Specifically, evidence was found of job satisfaction mediating the relationship between relative deprivation and turnover intentions and career satisfaction. Such findings introduce additional nuance to the work of Erdogan et al. (2018), who find evidence of relative deprivation directly and negatively predicting career satisfaction. The results of the present study point to the need to look more closely at other direct and indirect effects of relative deprivation.

It may also be worthwhile for future research to explore other potential moderators of the relationship between perceived overqualification and relative deprivation. Such information would provide additional knowledge to this commonly hypothesized, yet rarely studied relationship. One potential moderator of this relationship suggested by the qualitative data is experiences of discrimination. For individuals who have experienced greater instances of discrimination, the relationship between perceived overqualification and relative deprivation may be strengthened. This may be because discrimination represents an additional stressor that may compound the effects of overqualification on feelings of relative deprivation. On the other hand, there may be certain resources that could instead buffer the effect of perceived overqualification on relative deprivation. For example, social support in the workplace, defined as "actions of others that are either helpful or intended to be helpful" (Deelstra et al., 2003, p. 324), may help to alleviate the negative effects of perceived overqualification. Understanding how the negative effects of perceived overqualification can be reduced would further lend itself to specific

practical recommendations that individuals themselves can use or that employers can implement to benefit their employees.

Practical Implications

In addition to theoretical contributions, this study also presents several implications for practice. First, as perceived overqualification was found to predict relative deprivation, which previous meta-analytic work as well as the present research has shown to be associated with other negative outcomes (e.g., lower job satisfaction, negative psychological well-being, poor health; Smith et al., 2012), employees would benefit from understanding the implications of overqualification. For employees, recognizing that one is overqualified for their current role may be a good opportunity to consider moving positions or organizations. For job seekers, it would be wise to consider the consequences of accepting a role for which one is overqualified. Further, career counselors could play an important role in encouraging individuals to apply only for positions for which their qualifications align with the job description. Finally, as relative deprivation has also been shown by Smith et al. (2012) to positively relate to individual behaviors such as deviance (e.g., violence) and escape (e.g., counterproductive work behavior), it would be beneficial for employers and those in hiring positions to be educated on these topics.

For immigrant workers in particular, obtaining a job commensurate with one's qualifications (as demonstrated in Chapter Seven) can be challenging. In fact, one may choose to accept a position for which they are overqualified because they feel as if they have no other choices and are pressured (e.g., by visa sponsorship requirements) to do so. Rather than suggest avoiding positions for which one is overqualified, as this may not be feasible given such circumstances, immigrant workers can take other steps to increase their likelihood of obtaining a position for which they are appropriately qualified for in the U.S. For example, it is well

documented that foreign credential recognition is a barrier for immigrant job seekers (e.g.,

Damelang et al., 2020; Guo, 2009; Rabben, 2013). As suggested by participants in Chapter

Seven, immigrant workers may benefit from pursuing additional educational and training

opportunities in the U.S. as U.S.-based experience appears to be of particular value to employers.

It should be clear, however, that this recommendation does not dismiss any potential bias against

foreign education or experience on the part of the employer. Rather, employers also need to be

trained on how to appropriately and systematically evaluate foreign credentials should they

choose to pursue this evaluation process in-house.

Finally, although we can try to identify and mitigate the effects of perceived

overqualification and relative deprivation, this only addresses the symptoms, not the root of the

issue (i.e., hiring individuals that are overqualified). It is emphasized here that employers should

be aware of the effects of both objective and perceived overqualification as overqualification can

be damaging to the success of the business. For example, employees who perceive themselves as

overqualified are more likely to experience intentions to turnover and engage in

counterproductive work behaviors (Harari et al., 2017). As a caveat, although employers may not

be responsible for employees' *perception* of themselves as overqualified, there are steps (e.g., not

hiring overqualified individuals, taking responsibility for the growth of employees and

appropriate matching in terms of jobs) employers can take to prevent this perception from

occurring.

Limitations, Strengths, and Future Directions

Despite the contributions discussed above, this study is not without its limitations. First,

although two time points were utilized in the study design to reduce the potential for common

method bias, a strength of the study, some analyses did rely only on cross-sectional data and the

timing between surveys was only one week apart. One issue with the present design relates to the directionality of findings. Specifically, although support was found for the presence of certain relationships, in some cases we cannot be certain as to which variable truly is the predictor and which is the outcome. For example, although job search behaviors were significantly related to both positive and negative health, these relationships may act bidirectionally. However, in other cases (e.g., the relationship between perceived overqualification and job satisfaction), this is less likely to be the case.

Additionally, the duration of time between surveys does not allow for us to infer how long these effects of perceived overqualification and relative deprivation last. Future research can incorporate longitudinal designs with greater space between timepoints to better tease apart these issues of directionality and longevity of results.

Another limitation pertains to the use of self-report measures. Although self-report measures may be considered a strength for certain variables (i.e., perceived overqualification, where we want the person's own interpretation or perception), they can pose a weakness to others. Specifically, health is one variable that may be captured more objectively through the reporting of factors such as the number of doctor's visits or number of medical diagnoses. However, it should be noted that requesting this information is not without its challenges as well (e.g., people who refrain from visiting healthcare professionals despite presence of symptoms, reluctancy to report medical information).

Additionally, one especially notable limitation of this study is the difficulty in recruiting eligible participants and the fact that it did not capture the experiences of those individuals who are residing in the U.S. on a visa (per Prolific's participation requirements). These individuals may have substantially different experiences than those who are LPRs or naturalized citizens

(e.g., differences in acculturation, discrimination). However, it is worth noting that this study still managed to report on the experiences of an understudied and difficult-to-reach population of immigrants in the U.S. This is certainly a strength of the present research as it advances the I-O literature towards greater cultural representation and less reliance on Western, educated, industrial, rich, and democratic (WEIRD) samples (Henrich et al., 2010).

With that being said, more work can be done to understand the experiences within different groups of immigrants, rather than treating immigrants as one monolithic group. Future research can investigate how relative deprivation operates for different immigrant groups (e.g., by national origin, cultural values). It may be the case that perceived overqualification has more of an impact on relative deprivation if one comes from a more industrialized or wealthier nation compared to a nation where there is high power distance and/or little occupational mobility. Further along these lines, there may be additional influential factors (e.g., age[16]) that contribute to how relative deprivation operates or manifests in different immigrant groups. Though there are numerous other variables that may help clarify conclusions, the key message is that research can move away from examining immigrants as one group and instead towards examining the rich heterogeneity of this population.

Several interesting avenues for future research resulted from this study. First, it should be mentioned that in contrast to the abundancy of previous literature documenting overqualification as a problem for immigrant workers (e.g., Cornellisen & Turcotte, 2020; Dumont, 2021), the average level of perceived overqualification in this sample trended towards the midpoint of a 5-point Likert scale, equivalent to neither agreeing nor disagreeing with perceiving oneself as overqualified. As this may be a function of assessing one's perceptions, rather than objective

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[16] Although age could potentially influence relative deprivation, it should be noted that there was a nonsignificant correlation between age and perceived overqualification ($r = .04$, $p > .05$).

overqualification, future research can investigate the relationship between objective and perceived overqualification. Should perceived overqualification be lower than objective overqualification, additional questions can investigate why participants are either reluctant to report or do not perceive themselves as overqualified, despite an objective misfit between their credentials and what is required by the job. Additionally, research can investigate whether this perceived overqualification-objective overqualification is weaker for immigrants than for other populations.

As mentioned above, Chapter Seven finds that despite being overqualified for their work, some participants expressed feelings of enjoyment and happiness in their work. As previous research finds overqualification to relate to several negative outcomes (e.g., decreased job attitudes, career success, and well-being; Erdogan & Bauer, 2021), this is an intriguing result. One reason for this finding may be immigrants' lack of job mobility. Specifically, when someone knows that they do not have the ability to move jobs or organizations, they may exert extra effort into making the most out of their current work situation. As such, additional research can work towards documenting and understanding why positive emotions may occur even in the presence of overqualification.

Regarding future avenues for relative deprivation theory research, more work can be done to investigate one's choice of comparator(s) and why they choose those individuals. In both the qualitative and survey study, participants tended to compare themselves to friends or work colleagues in the U.S. For the survey study, the majority (80.5%) of participants indicated that they compared themselves to work colleagues in the U.S., followed by 50.0% who indicated that they compare themselves to family or friends in the U.S. It is indeed interesting that fewer participants compared themselves to colleagues or friends and family in their home country.

However, this may change based on one's recency of immigration. Therefore, additional research is needed to understand one's choice of comparator in a sample of more recently immigrated individuals.

Additionally, in the present study, relative deprivation was assessed with a job-specific measure of relative deprivation, as consistent with prior literature (Erdogan et al., 2018). It would be interesting to consider how perceived overqualification may relate to relative deprivation more broadly (i.e., relative deprivation of one's life circumstances). Such findings could speak to the impact of perceived overqualification outside of the work domain, potentially demonstrating evidence of a spillover effect between work and non-work environments. In contrast to previous work examining the link between perceived overqualification and relative deprivation, as well as additional outcomes (i.e., Erdogan et al., 2018), the present research sought to understand how perceived overqualification relates to *job*, not career, satisfaction via relative deprivation. Although it is indeed beneficial to understand how perceived overqualification and relative deprivation contribute to one's overall assessment of satisfaction over the course of different roles, an examination of one's current job satisfaction provides a more immediate picture of how perceived overqualification and relative deprivation impact the worker.

It would also be interesting to study the transition and changes in identity between immigrants' home countries and host country. One question that may be asked is how these workers navigate their identity changing from that of holding a high status or prestigious job to one of lower status. Such research could draw on the occupational downgrading literature and research on identity navigation. For example, Schöpke-Gonazalez et al. (2020) discuss identity navigation in a sample of refugees and find three prominent themes to emerge in their research: prolonged liminality, navigating social norms and unfamiliar information space, and

misinformed information spaces (e.g., prevalence of negative news reports). Additionally, abundant literature exists on identity formation in immigrant adolescents. For example, Schwartz et al. (2018) discuss multiple forms of individual identity formation (ethnic, national personal), as well as how identity is shaped by societal level intergroup processes (e.g., stereotypes).

Lastly, future research adopting a similar mixed-methods approach can benefit from the guidance provided by Wellman et al. (2023). In first discussing common pitfalls in multimethod submissions to the *Academy of Management Journal*, these authors then elaborate on recommendations (e.g., ensure theoretical and operational alignment) for pursuing this type of research. In continuing to build out work on immigrants' working experiences, a population who remains understudied in the organizational literature and who may yield novel insights that extend existing theoretical foundations, researchers can leverage multimethod research strategies as outlined by Wellman et al. (2023) to obtain both an increased quality to their work as well as higher impact.

Conclusion

Overqualification is known to affect immigrant employees. Using a combination of qualitative and quantitative data gathered from immigrant workers in the U.S., this study contributed to our knowledge of perceived overqualification through the lens of relative deprivation theory, as well as research on acculturation and job gratitude. Although survey findings do not provide support for acculturation or job gratitude moderating the relationship between perceived overqualification and relative deprivation in a sample of immigrant workers, exploratory results suggest a need to consider additional predictors, direct effects, and indirect effects of both perceived overqualification and relative deprivation. Additionally, qualitative findings suggest several themes (e.g., foreign credential recognition, the role of positive

emotions in overqualification) for future research to investigate, as well as themes where findings are less consistent (e.g., reasons for wanting to be in one's ideal job). Despite current negative sentiments surrounding immigration in the U.S., the present research captures the perspectives and experiences of an understudied and hard-to-reach population in the organizational literature.

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Table 1. Summary of gratitude definitions in organizational research

Citation(s)	Term	Definition
Emmons & McCullough (2004); Fehr et al. (2017)	Episodic Gratitude	"a feeling of appreciation in response to an experience that is beneficial to, but not attributable to, the self" (p. 363)
Fehr et al. (2017)	Persistent Gratitude	"a stable tendency to feel grateful within a particular context" (p. 363)
Fehr et al. (2017)	Collective Gratitude	"persistent gratitude that is shared by the members of an organization" (p. 364)
Cain et al. (2019)	Workplace Gratitude	"the tendency to notice and be thankful for how various aspects of a job affect one's life" (p. 441)
Present Study	Job Gratitude	The tendency to feel grateful for one's current job

Table 2. Qualitative study participant previous and current occupations

Participant	Previous Occupation(s) in Home Country	Current Occupation(s) in U.S.
1	Teacher	Analyst at a software company
2	Civil engineer	Coder at government organization; School paraprofessional
3	Office worker	Clerk at a store
4	Department head in the civil service	Admissions coordinator for university master's level programs
5	Nurse; medical representative	Retail worker; food service worker; realtor
6	Researcher	Senior research assistant
7	High school teacher	Lead teacher at preschool
8	Marketing analyst	Park maintenance worker
9	Accountant	Information management/records management worker
10	Lawyer	Store consultant at an office/shipping company
11	Entry-level bank worker	Administrative assistant at a bank
12	Professor	Environmental scientist
13	Nurse	Health practitioner

Table 3. Qualitative study exemplar quotes for recommendations for employers

Category	Exemplar Quote
Training	"If anyone doesn't have the proper language skill, they can add a language class or something just to intro the company culture and everything. Probably a language class would be great. I would say language specific to the company is more important"
	"On training, maybe there can be kind of training workshops or classes that teach immigrants how to adapt in the work environment, than what they're used to. Because many immigrants come to the US and they get to find out that things are really different, like move at a very fast pace"
	"well, I think that there should be like, free training, like, where you where you actually get, like certificates that you can use to kind of back up on your resume" "Um, I think that there should be a lot more training for other employees, about, like, how to treat immigrant workers, and like to try and come, like, combat some of those stereotypes that people carry around with them"
Employers Should Get to Know Their Employees	"I think they should make it a point to actually know their employees and what they did in their country to see if they can help them, train them or something, they should not just believe they are from somewhere else, they can't just assume things. Know your employee better would be the best way to focus on the positives"
	"Just talk to them and see what they want to do or where they see themselves in a couple of years, five years, or longer than that. See if they can help the people to get to that point sooner cuz that'd be so much better for the company and the employee"
Organizational Culture	"employers can also try to create an enabling environment, create a culture where immigrants feel at home. I must feel like they're actually immigrants, but they feel like yeah, citizens of United States"
Recognition of Language Skills	"give people who speak more than one language, different pay. For example, you know, in like language proficiency, because this way you encourage people who speak more languages to look for those jobs, because they are not only you know, they have an extra skill, but they will be helping the company with that community"
Hiring the Most Qualified Candidate	"So, so let me, let me say that definitely the best person, best qualified person, should get the job. That that's the bottom line in my head."
Giving Immigrants a Chance	"you gotta give people a chance. I think, yeah, immigrants should be given the chance. So, you know, prove that they can do the work" "they should try to give immigrants the opportunity to prove themselves in some way that they give to their citizens."

Table 4. Survey study descriptive statistics and bivariate correlations for hypothesized variables

	M (SD)	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.
Time 1 Variables												
1. Perceived Overqualification	2.89 (.98)	(.92)										
2. Acculturation	3.33 (.56)	-.04	(.90)									
3. Job Gratitude	3.95 (.77)	-.11	.19*	(.86)								
4. Subjective Occupational Downgrading	2.42 (1.19)	.49*	.03	-.16	(.93)							
Time 2 Variables												
5. Relative Deprivation	2.56 (1.09)	.29*	-.04	-.19*	.26*	(.91)						
6. Turnover Intentions	2.68 (1.04)	.23*	-.60	-.27*	.25*	.48*	(.87)					
7. Job Search Behaviors	21.22 (9.62)	.06	.02	-.01	.01	.42*	.30*	(.95)				
8. Job Satisfaction	3.77 (.88)	-.28*	.14	.35*	-.30*	-.67*	-.69*	-.30*	(.82)			
9. Career Satisfaction	3.47 (.95)	-.23*	.17*	.30*	-.33*	-.56*	-.57*	-.09	.64*	(.93)		
10. Positive Health	3.93 (.67)	-.23*	.19*	.37*	-.22*	-.51*	-.46*	-.23*	.61*	.54*	(.87)	
11. Negative Health	2.07 (.84)	.10	.07	-.09	.02	.61*	.35*	.54*	-.47*	-.41*	-.45*	(.90)

Note. *p* < .05. Perceived overqualification, subjective occupational downgrading, relative deprivation, job satisfaction, and career satisfaction measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). Acculturation measured on a 4-point Likert scale (1 = false, 5 = true). Job gratitude measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = not at all grateful, 5 = extremely grateful). Turnover intentions measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = low turnover intentions, 5 = high turnover intentions). Job search behaviors measured as the sum of eleven 5-point Likert scale items (1 = no job search behaviors, 55 = very frequent job search behaviors). Positive and negative health measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = low negative/positive health, 5 = high negative/positive health).

Table 5. Bootstrapped results for relative deprivation mediating the relationship between perceived overqualification and job satisfaction

Predictor		M (Relative Deprivation)					Y (Job Satisfaction)			
		b	SE	p	95% CI		b	SE	p	95% CI
X (Perceived Overqualification)	*a*	.33	.08	.000	[.16, .48]	*c'*	-.08	.05	.132	[-.19, .02]
M (Relative Deprivation)		-	-	-	-	*b*	-.51	.05	.000	[-.60, -.42]
		R^2 = .086					R^2 = .454			

Indirect Effect = -.17
95% CI = [-.26, -.08]

Note. a = X to M path. *b* = M to Y path. *c'* = X to Y path. Perceived overqualification measured at Time 1. Relative deprivation and job satisfaction measured at Time 2.

Table 6. Results for acculturation moderating the relationship between perceived overqualification and relative deprivation

Variable	b	SE	β	t	p	95% CI
Intercept	2.56					
Perceived Overqualification	.33	.08	.29	.000	.000	[.18, .48]
Acculturation	-.05	.13	-.03	-.403	.687	[-.32, .21]
Perceived Overqualification X Acculturation	.04	.13	.02	.274	.784	[-.23, .30]
$R^2 = .09$						

Note. All predictors grand-mean centered.

Table 7. Results for job gratitude moderating the relationship between perceived overqualification and relative deprivation

Variable	b	SE	β	t	p	95% CI
Intercept	2.57					
Perceived Overqualification	.30	.08	.27	3.96	.000	[.15, .45]
Job Gratitude	-.24	.10	-.17	-2.48	.014	[-.43, -.05]
Perceived Overqualification X Job Gratitude	.12	.10	.08	1.16	.248	[-.08. .33]
$R^2 = .09$						

Note. All predictors grand-mean centered.

Table 8. Bootstrapped results for job satisfaction mediating the relationship between relative deprivation and (a) turnover intentions, (b) job search behaviors, and (c) career satisfaction

Predictor		**M (Job Satisfaction)**					**Y (Turnover Intentions)**			
		b	**SE**	**p**	**95% CI**		**b**	**SE**	**p**	**95% CI**
X (Relative Deprivation)	*a*	-.54	.05	.000	[-.63, -.45]	*c'*	.04	.07	.613	[-.11, .17]
M (Job Satisfaction)		-	-	-	-	*b*	-.80	.08	.000	[-.96, -.63]
		$R^2 = .45$					$R^2 = .48$			

Indirect Effect = .43
95% CI = [.32, .56]

Predictor		**M (Job Satisfaction)**					**Y (Job Search Behaviors)**			
		b	**SE**	**p**	**95% CI**		**b**	**SE**	**p**	**95% CI**
X (Relative Deprivation)	*a*	-.54	.05	.000	[-.63, -.45]	*c'*	3.53	.83	.000	[1.90, 5.21]
M (Job Satisfaction)		-	-	-	-	*b*	-.31	1.06	.767	[-2.34, 1.79]
		$R^2 = .45$					$R^2 = .18$			

Indirect Effect = .17
95% CI = [-.98, 1.25]

Predictor		**M (Job Satisfaction)**					**Y (Career Satisfaction)**			
		b	**SE**	**p**	**95% CI**		**b**	**SE**	**p**	**95% CI**
X (Relative Deprivation)	*a*	-.54	.05	.000	[-.63, -.45]	*c'*	-.21	.07	.002	[-.31, -.09]
M (Job Satisfaction)						*b*	.52	.08	.000	[.35, .68]
		$R^2 = .45$					$R^2 = .44$			

Indirect Effect = -.28
95 % CI = [-.38, -.19]

Note. a = X to M path. b = M to Y path. c' = X to Y path. All measures assessed at Time 2.

Figure 1. Moderated mediation model of perceived overqualification predicting job satisfaction via relative deprivation with acculturation and job gratitude as first-stage moderators

```
                    ┌─────────────────┐
                    │ Acculturation / │
                    │  Job Gratitude  │
                    └────────┬────────┘
                             │
                             ▼
┌──────────────┐    ┌─────────────────┐    ┌──────────────────┐
│  Perceived   │───▶│    Relative     │───▶│ Job Satisfaction │
│Overqualification│    │   Deprivation   │    │                  │
└──────────────┘    └─────────────────┘    └──────────────────┘
```
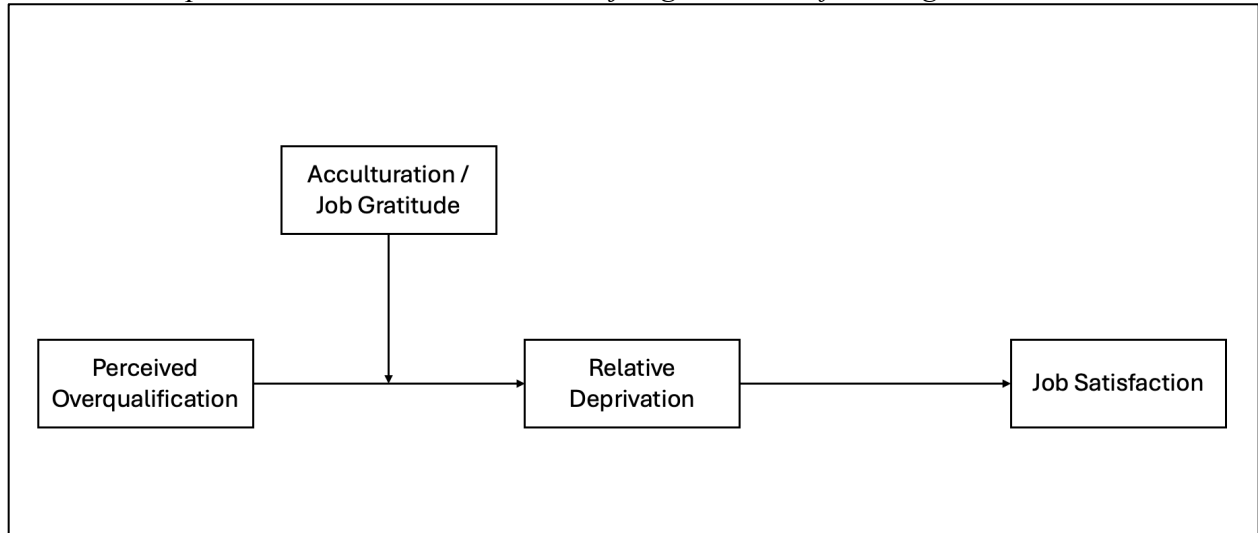
APPENDIX B: OUTCOMES OF JOB SATISFACTION IN IMMIGRANT WORKERS

An abundance of literature has examined the effects of employees' job satisfaction. In their review of the literature, Judge et al. (2020) present a nomological network of job satisfaction, with outcomes including performance, organizational effectiveness, organizational citizenship behaviors, counterproductive work behaviors, and a variety of withdrawal behaviors (e.g., absenteeism). Additionally, Faragher et al.'s (2005) meta-analysis finds associations between job satisfaction and mental/psychological health (e.g., burnout). Other recent work has investigated job satisfaction's impact on organizational performance, with Kessler et al. (2020) finding that job satisfaction has a positive effect on multiple organizational financial indices over the span of four years.

One limitation to this body of work, however, pertains to the generalizability of these findings to other populations. In their review of self-reported limitations in the I-O psychology literature, Brutus et al. (2010) find threats to external validity to be one of the most reported limitations in their sample of over 2,000 I-O psychology articles from the years 1995 to 2008. Specifically, they find that the most common discrete limitation within this external validity category was generalizing across people, including generalizability relating to age, gender, and culture. Similarly, psychology broadly has been said to suffer from an overreliance on Western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic (WEIRD) samples (Henrich et al., 2010). As stated by Myers (2016), this issue is of particular importance for I-O psychology, whose research is sought to be applied to modern global organizations. In demonstrating the lack of cultural representation in the field's research, Myers (2016) presents a distribution of 299 samples obtained from five leading I-O psychology journals in 2014. Unsurprisingly, 136 of these samples were drawn from North America, followed by 32 samples from China and 13 samples

from Germany. To address this issue of cultural misrepresentation and move the field in the right direction, efforts need to be made at the individual study level to sample a globally representative population (Myers, 2016). Although such efforts undoubtedly come with their own challenges (see Spector et al., 2015 for a review), the current study paves the way for assessing the generalizability of an established body of literature to a multicultural population.

As mentioned earlier, job satisfaction has been found to relate to numerous outcomes. When employees are dissatisfied with their current job, they are likely to formulate thoughts and intentions to leave that job or the organization. Tett and Meyer's (1993) study on the relationships between job satisfaction, organizational commitment, turnover intentions, and turnover demonstrates evidence of this. In this meta-analysis of 155 studies with 178 independent samples, they find that job satisfaction negatively predicts turnover intentions, with turnover intentions and withdrawal cognitions mediating the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover. Similarly, job satisfaction has also been shown to relate to job search behaviors. Notably, some of this research has investigated outcomes of job satisfaction in non-North American samples. In a study of employees in the Netherlands, Delfgaauw (2007) shows that employees' dissatisfaction with various aspects of their current job as well as their job overall tends to positively predict job search behaviors (exceptions being dissatisfaction with work pressure and facilities at work). Contrary to what would be expected when a person experiences low levels of job satisfaction (e.g., turnover intentions, job search behaviors), it is also worthwhile to consider outcomes when job satisfaction is high. For example, Williamson et al. (2005) find job satisfaction and career satisfaction to be positively and significantly correlated ($r = .58$). This finding, however, does not speak to which construct precedes the other. It is likely

that job satisfaction, which reflects an employee's more immediate circumstances, is predictive

of career satisfaction, which is more cumulative and likely encapsulates job satisfaction.

To build this pathway, Boštjančič and Petrovčič's (2019) study of 1,169 employees of a

European university finds job satisfaction to positively predict career satisfaction. However, this

study is limited in that it is cross-sectional in nature and could be contaminated with common

method bias. Little research aside from Boštjančič and Petrovčič (2019) explicitly measures the

job satisfaction to career satisfaction link and instead approaches job satisfaction and career

satisfaction as two separate outcomes (e.g., Shaver & Lacey, 2003; Laschinger, 2012; Payakachat

et al., 2011; Zingeser, 2004), rather than interrelated. Thus, greater investigation into job

satisfaction's role in predicting career satisfaction is warranted.

> ***Exploratory Hypothesis 5****:* Job satisfaction negatively predicts (a) turnover intentions, (b)
>
> job search behaviors, and positively predicts (c) career satisfaction.

Distal Outcomes of Job Satisfaction

In addition to the more proximal outcomes of job satisfaction discussed above (i.e.,

turnover intentions, job search behaviors, career satisfaction), it is also interesting to consider the

cascading effects, which allows for one to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the

phenomenon of interest. In other words, what additional outcomes can be explained by job

satisfaction via turnover intentions, job search behaviors, and career satisfaction? One direction

pertains to how turnover intentions, job search behaviors, and career satisfaction relate to

respondents' health and well-being. Turnover intentions, which are believed to be predicted by

job satisfaction, may result in worsened health because of the cognitive effort that goes into

considering leaving one's job and the potential stressors associated with it (e.g., unemployment,

searching for a new job). Further, this could operate via two simultaneous pathways: an increase

in negative health and a decrease in positive health. Drawing on the General Health

Questionnaire (GHQ), which is a self-administered questionnaire used to assess general

psychiatric well-being (Sánchez-López & Dresch, 2008), negative health is indicated by

symptoms such as loss in confidence and not being able to overcome difficulties, while positive

health is indicated by symptoms such as having an ability to concentrate and a capability of

making decisions. Although job satisfaction may directly relate to health, it is proposed that these

effects instead occur via turnover intentions given the cognitive effort and stressors associated

with the potential for turnover.

> *Exploratory Hypothesis 6*: Turnover intentions (a) positively relate to negative health
>
> and (b) negatively relate to positive health.
>
> *Exploratory Hypothesis 7*: Turnover intentions mediate the relationship between job
>
> satisfaction and (a) negative health and (b) positive health.

Like turnover intentions, job search behaviors may also be predictive of one's health.

When one engages in a job search, they may experience a decrease in overall health and well-

being given the negative emotional experiences that may accompany job search behaviors (e.g.,

anxiety, frustration, loss of status; Manroop & Richardson, 2016). Further, job seeking can be a

stressful experience by itself as one must devote time and energy into searching for and applying

for jobs. Although previous studies have documented a relationship between unemployment and

psychological and physical well-being (see McKee-Ryan et al., 2005 and Paul & Moser, 2009 for

meta-analyses), less work has examined engagement in the job search behaviors themselves as a

predictor of one's health. One exception is Vansteenkiste et al. (2004), who find a significant

negative correlation ($r = -.24$) between job search intensity and general health. Again however,

the direction of this relationship is not clear. It is proposed here that engagement in job search

behaviors predict negative and positive health, rather than health predicting job search behaviors. In line with Vansteenkiste et al. (2004), the more job search behaviors one engages in, the more cognitive effort and resources they are likely using, thus resulting in reduced health. As with turnover intentions, it is also expected that engagement in job search behaviors acts as a mediator between job satisfaction and health, such that job satisfaction positively predicts job search behaviors, which then predict negative and positive health.

> ***Exploratory Hypothesis 8:*** Job search behaviors (a) positively relate to negative health and (b) negatively relate to positive health.

> ***Exploratory Hypothesis 9***: Job search behaviors mediate the relationship between job satisfaction and (a) negative health and (b) positive health.

Lastly, some research has investigated the effects of career satisfaction on health. Wiener et al. (1981) show career satisfaction to be a positive predictor of overall mental health in two separate samples of staff professionals and store managers. Recently, Nae and Choi (2022) also find evidence of career satisfaction significantly and positively predicting subjective well-being. As stated by these authors, this may be because employees who are satisfied with their careers may have high levels of self-efficacy (Elliot et al., 1997), confidence and optimism (Spurk & Abele, 2014), and self-esteem (Gardner & Pierce, 1998), all of which then translate into greater well-being. Conversely, lack of career satisfaction may result in decreased health. This is because employees who are dissatisfied with their careers may be frustrated with their (lack of) growth or promotion opportunities over time or the type of work they have consistently been doing. Career dissatisfaction thus may result in symptoms of negative health, including anxiety and loss of confidence. Further, career satisfaction is expected to mediate the relationship between job satisfaction and health. Specifically, satisfaction with one's job(s) accumulates over the course of

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a career, manifesting a positive relationship. Career satisfaction, reflected by other positive states (e.g., self-efficacy, confidence; Elliot et al., 1997; Spurk & Abele, 2014), then may translate into the absence of negative health and presence of positive health.

Exploratory Hypothesis 10: Career satisfaction (a) negatively relates to negative health and (b) positively relates positive health.

Exploratory Hypothesis 11: Career satisfaction mediates the relationship between job satisfaction and (a) negative health and (b) positive health.

Results

All hypotheses were examined using linear regression and bootstrapped mediation analysis with a bootstrapped sample size of 5,000 (Preacher et al., 2007) where appropriate using R and R Studio. To test EH5, a series of linear regressions modeled the effect of job satisfaction on turnover intentions, job search behaviors, and career satisfaction. Job satisfaction showed to be a significant predictor of all three outcomes, supporting EH5. Specifically, job satisfaction negatively predicted turnover intentions (b = -.82, se = .07, 95% CI = [-.95, -71]) and job search behaviors (b = -3.26, se = .75, 95% CI = [-4.73. -1.78]), and positively predicted career satisfaction (b = .70, se = .06, 95% CI = [.58, .82]).

To test EH6, negative health and positive health were each regressed on turnover intentions. Results showed that turnover intentions positively predicted negative health (b = .28, se = .05, 95% CI = [.18, .39]) and negatively predicted positive health (b = -.29, se = .04, 95% CI = [-.37, -.21]), supporting EH6. To test EH7, which stated that turnover intentions mediate the relationship between job satisfaction and (a) negative health and (b) positive health, mediation analysis was used. The indirect effect of job satisfaction on negative health via turnover intentions was not statistically significant (*indirect effect* = -.03, 95% CI = [-.16, .10]),

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as seen by the confidence interval including zero. The indirect effect of job satisfaction on positive health via turnover intentions was also not statistically significant (*indirect effect* = .04, *95% CI* = [-.04, .12]). Therefore, EH7 was not supported.

To test EH8, negative and positive health were each regressed on job search behaviors. Results showed that job search behaviors positively predicted negative health (*b* = .05, *se* = .01, *95% CI* = [.04, .06]), and negatively predicted positive health (*b* = -.02, *se* = .00, *95% CI* = [-.03, -.01]), supporting EH8. To test EH9, which stated that job search behaviors mediate the relationship between job satisfaction and (a) negative health and (b) positive health, mediation analysis was used. The indirect effect of job satisfaction on negative health via job search behaviors was statistically significant (*indirect effect* = -.12, *95% CI* =[-.21, -.06]), as seen by the confidence interval not including zero. The indirect effect of job satisfaction on positive health via job search behaviors, however, was not statistically significant (*indirect effect* = .01, *95% CI* = [-.02, .04]). Therefore, EH9a was supported while EH9b was not.

To test EH10, negative and positive health were each regressed on career satisfaction. Results showed that career satisfaction negatively predicted negative health (*b* = -.36, *se* = .06, *95% CI* = [-.47, -.25]), and positively predicted positive health (*b* = .38, *se* = .04, *95% CI* = [.30, .46]), supporting EH10. To test EH11, which stated that career satisfaction mediates the relationship between job satisfaction and (a) negative health and (b) positive health, mediation analysis was used. The indirect effect of job satisfaction on negative health via career satisfaction was not statistically significant (*indirect effect* = -.11, *95% CI* =[-.23, .00]), as seen by the confidence interval including zero. The indirect effect of job satisfaction on positive health via career satisfaction, however, was statistically significant (*indirect effect* = .13, *95% CI* = [.05, .21]). Therefore, EH11a was not supported while EH11b was supported.

Discussion

Consistent with prior literature (e.g., Tett & Myer, 1993), job satisfaction was found to relate to numerous outcomes, including career satisfaction, turnover intentions and job search behaviors. Importantly, the main contribution of these findings is that these relationships held up in an understudied, multicultural sample of U.S. immigrant employees. Such results contribute further evidence of the generalizability of these results to non-WEIRD samples (Henrich et al., 2010).

Further, results bolstered evidence of the connection between job search behaviors and health. Specifically, job search behaviors were found to relate to both positive and negative health, also supporting the "dual continuaa model" (Keyes & Michalec, 2010; Keyes et al., 2010) discussed in Chapter Six. These results indicate that job search behaviors not only contribute to increases in negative health (e.g., anxiety, stress), but also decreases in positive health (e.g., ability to concentrate). Job seekers should therefore stay attuned to their mental and physical health, as poor health may further lead to difficulties with the job search process (e.g., completing applications, interview performance). On the other hand, difficulties faced in the job search process (e.g., rejection) may relate to poor health, providing evidence of the reverse relationship.

The mediating role of job search behaviors on the relationship between job satisfaction and health was also investigated. Interestingly, results suggested conflicting findings such that although there was a significant indirect effect of job satisfaction for the outcome of negative health, there was no significant indirect effect for positive health. Similarly, the mediating role of career satisfaction on the relationship between job satisfaction and health was examined. Again, results suggested conflicting findings. Although the indirect effect of job satisfaction on negative

health via career satisfaction was not significant, there was a significant indirect effect of job satisfaction on positive health. While it is not as clear as to why these results were obtained, findings do indicate a need to measure multiple dimensions of health to obtain the most comprehensive picture of results and to use longitudinal designs to evaluate causality over time.

Conclusion

These exploratory analyses provide several insights. First, the generalizability of some established relationships with job satisfaction to immigrant populations was demonstrated. This helps to advance the field towards greater cultural representation. Second, the mixed findings regarding job satisfaction relating to positive and negative health via job search behaviors and career satisfaction speak to the need to incorporate multiple measurements of health, as a focus solely on the negative aspects of health may result in incomplete conclusions.

APPENDIX C: QUALITATIVE STUDY PARTICIPATION DESCRIPTION

Based on your responses to a previous screening survey, you have been selected to participate in this research study on overqualified immigrants' work experiences.

What You Will See on the Next Page
- You will be presented with a page to schedule your interview with the researcher. Please select a time that best works for you.
- If there is not a time that works listed, please message the researcher on Prolific and we will work to accommodate your schedule.

Details for the Interview
- You will be asked a series of questions regarding your work experiences and job aspirations.
- The interview will take place on Zoom. **Please make sure you have Zoom downloaded and working prior to logging on to the interview.** The researcher will send you a message on Prolific ahead of time with your unique meeting link.
- You are not required to have your camera on. You must have a working microphone. You will be asked for permission to record the interview for transcription purposes. You will have the option to opt-out of recording.
- The researcher will present you with an informed consent form prior to starting the interview and answer any questions you may have.
- You will be compensated after participating in the interview. **Compensation is contingent on attendance and participation in the interview. If you do not complete the interview, you will be asked to return your submission.**

APPENDIX D: QUALITATIVE STUDY INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Thank you for your interest in participating in this interview study about immigrants' work-related experiences. You have been invited to participate in this study because you have self-identified as being an immigrant, 18 years or older, having previously worked in a professional occupation (e.g., doctor or other healthcare provider, engineer, lawyer) in your home country, and currently being overqualified for your current work role in the United States.

The purpose of today's study is to understand how unique factors related to immigrants' work experiences (e.g., recognition of foreign credentials) contribute to you wanting to work in your *desired* occupation as well as your feelings of deservingness to work in your *desired* occupation.

In this interview, which is expected to take about one hour, you will be asked a series of questions regarding both your current and previous jobs, your job-related ambitions and desired occupation, and your levels of and reasons for wanting and deservingness for being in that desired occupation.

Before we get started with the questions, please take a moment to review the consent form that was sent to you. I want to emphasize that this research is voluntary and that you have the right to say no to participate in this research even after it has started. Do you have any questions about your participation?

Please say yes to confirm that you are voluntarily agreeing to participate.

Do I have your permission to record today's interview?

1. What is your prolific ID? You can paste it in the chat.

2. Please tell me about your current job or occupation.

    a. Is this the same or different type of work you were completing in your home country before you moved to the United States? If different, how?

    b. What education, credentials, and training did you complete to pursue your previous job? Your current job?

        i. Were these qualifications completed in and/or outside of the United States?

3. Now that you are in the United States, what are your job- or occupation-related ambitions?

    a. Are these different from ambitions you held in your home country? If so, how?

    b. What is your desired occupation?

4. For the next set of questions, think about whether you want to be in this occupation. Wanting is defined as having a desire to possess or do something. What are the factors that contribute to you *wanting* to be in this occupation?

    a. How do your qualifications affect your desire for this occupation?

    b. How do you see your language skills relating to your desire to be in this occupation?

    c. One societal issue facing immigrants worldwide is prejudice and discrimination, including xenophobia. Does this issue affect your desire to pursue this occupation?

5. The next topic relates to feelings of deservingness in relation to your work. Deservingness is defined as the quality of being deserving or worthy of something. How would you describe yourself in terms of *deserving* to work in your desired occupation?

    a. What factors contribute to your feelings of deservingness?

    b. Do your qualifications previously described affect how much you believe you deserve to be in this occupation? If so, how?

    c. Do your language skills relate to your deservingness to be in this occupation? If so, how?

        i. One influential factor that has been cited as part of immigrants' workplace experiences is having an accent. How may having an accent be related to deservingness for a job?

        ii. How do you think other people perceive others who have an accent?

    d. As mentioned, one societal issue facing immigrants is prejudice and discrimination. Do others' biased attitudes towards immigrants contribute to your feelings of deserving to work in your desired occupation?

6. Tell me about your experiences of overqualification.

7. How do you feel about being in your current job? For example, what emotions do you experience and why?

        i. How do these emotions affect your performance on the job?

        ii. How do you manage these emotions? What could your leader or organization do to help you better manage these emotions?

8. What additional steps can employers take to improve immigrants' working experiences?

    a. Is there anything employees can do to enhance their own working experiences?

9. **Demographics**
    a. National origin?
    b. Gender?
    c. Age? Input from screening sheet
    d. Year immigrated to the U.S.?
    e. State you reside in?
    f. In a metropolitan area?
    g. Length of time in current role?
    h. Length of time with current employer?
    i. Visa?

APPENDIX E: SURVEY STUDY MATERIALS AND MEASURES

Participants saw the materials in the following order:

1. Qualtrics Screening Survey
   a. Thank You for Participation
   b. Prolific ID Submission
   c. Screening Measures
      i. Age
      ii. Residence
      iii. Employment Status
      iv. Immigration

2. Time 1 Qualtrics Survey
   a. Informed Consent
   b. Prolific ID Submission
   c. Time 1 Measures
      i. Perceived Overqualification
      ii. Exploratory: Relative Deprivation
      iii. Exploratory: Relative Deprivation Referent
      iv. Job Gratitude
      v. Exploratory: Objective Occupational Downgrading
      vi. Exploratory: Subjective Occupational Downgrading
      vii. Exploratory: Perceived Job Mobility
      viii. Attention Check
      ix. Acculturation
      x. Demographics
   d. Thank You

3. Time 2 Qualtrics Survey
   a. Informed Consent
   b. Prolific ID Submission
   c. Time 2 Measures
      i. Relative Deprivation
      ii. Exploratory: Relative Deprivation Referent
      iii. Job Satisfaction
      iv. Exploratory: Positive and Negative Health
      v. Exploratory: Reemployment Self-Efficacy
      vi. Exploratory: Turnover Intentions
      vii. Exploratory: Job Search Behaviors
      viii. Exploratory: Career Satisfaction
   d. Thank You

Qualtrics Screening Survey – Thank You for Participation

Thank you for your interest in participating in this study. The purpose of this research is to understand the working experiences of immigrant workers in the United States.

To determine if you are eligible to participate in the interview study, please answer the following questions. If you are found eligible, the researcher will invite you to participate in the follow-up study on Prolific. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the researcher using Prolific's messaging system.

This study, STUDY00010288, has been approved by the Michigan State University Human Research Protection Program. Your participation indicates your consent to take part in this screening study.

Qualtrics Screening Survey – Screening Measures

Age
What is your age in years?

Residence
What country are you currently living in?
United States
Other

Employment Status
What is your employment status?
Full-time
Part-time
Due to start a new job within the next month
Unemployed (and job seeking)
Not in paid work (e.g., homemaker, retired, or disabled)
Other

Immigration
Were you born in the country you are currently living in?
Yes, I was born in the country I am now living in
No, I moved to the country I am now living in
Rather not say

[IF No, I moved to the country I am now living in IS SELECTED]
Immigration Age
At what age did you (first) move to the United States?

[IF above question IS DISPLAYED]
Living US
Have you been living in the United States since this age?
Yes
No

[IF No IS SELECTED]
At what age did you most recently move/return to the United States?

Time 1 Qualtrics Survey – Informed Consent

Research Participant Information and Consent Form

You are being asked to participate in a research study related to various factors that are believed to predict job satisfaction. Your participation in this study will take about 10 minutes. Researchers are required to provide a consent form to inform you about the research study, to convey that participation is voluntary, to explain risks and benefits of participation including why you might or might not want to participate, and to empower you to make an informed decision. You should feel free to discuss and ask the researchers any questions you may have.

1. **PURPOSE OF RESEARCH**

The purpose of this research is to understand how different factors (e.g., job gratitude, acculturation, perceived overqualification) predict job satisfaction among immigrant workers.

2. **WHAT YOU WILL BE ASKED TO DO**

If you choose to participate in this study, you will be asked to take part in an anonymous online survey that asks questions about your work experiences and job satisfaction. These questions are not in any way harmful and do not contain any language stronger or more threatening than would be encountered on a daily basis. You will also be asked to report non-identifying demographic information about yourself. You will have the option to skip any questions that you would prefer not to answer. We expect your total participation in this study to take approximately 10 minutes.

After completing this survey, you will be invited to take part in a second survey approximately 1 week later. This second survey will ask similar questions (e.g., job experiences) to those encountered in today's survey.

3. **POTENTIAL BENEFITS**

You may not benefit personally from being in this study. However, we hope that, in the future, other people might benefit from this study because this research may help us better understand how to enhance the working experiences of immigrant workers.

4. **POTENTIAL RISKS**

There are no foreseeable risks to participating in the present study.

5. **PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

This study is anonymous. Only trained research staff will have access to your responses and all data will be stored on password protected computers.

6. **YOUR RIGHTS TO PARTICIPATE, SAY NO, OR WITHDRAW**

You have the right to say no to participate in the research. You can stop and exit the survey at any time after it has already started.

7. COSTS AND COMPENSATION FOR BEING IN THE STUDY

You will be compensated the amount previously advertised on Prolific. In order to receive compensation, you **MUST** complete the survey in its entirety. Responses that indicate inattentiveness (e.g., selecting "Strongly agree" for all responses, writing gibberish to open-ended questions) will result in you being asked to return the survey.

8. CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have concerns or questions about this study, such as scientific issues, how to do any part of it, or to report an injury, please contact the researcher using Prolific's messaging system. Additionally, you may contact Ann Marie Ryan, Ph.D., Department of Psychology, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824, phone: (517) 353-8855, email: ryanan@msu.edu.

If you have questions are concerns about your role and rights as a research participant, would like to obtain information or offer input, or would like to register a complaint about this study, you may contact, anonymously if you wish, the Michigan State University's Human Research Protection Program at (517) 355-2180, Fax (517) 432-4503, or email irb@msu.edu or regular mail at 4000 Collins Rd., Suite 136, Lansing, MI 48910.

Please indicate that you are voluntarily agreeing to participate in this study by selecting " I agree."

[ ] I agree

Time 1 Qualtrics Survey – Perceived Overqualification (Maynard et al., 2006)

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

1. My job requires less education than I have.
2. The work experience that I have is not necessary to be successful on this job.
3. I have job skills that are not required for this job.
4. Someone with less education than myself could perform well on my job.
5. My previous training is not being fully utilized on this job.
6. I have a lot of knowledge that I do not need in order to do my job.
7. My education level is above the education level required by my job.
8. Someone with less work experience than myself could do my job.
9. I have more abilities than I need in order to do my job.

Response Options:
1 = Strongly Disagree
2 = Disagree
3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree
4 = Agree
5 = Strongly Agree

Time 1 Qualtrics Survey – Exploratory: Relative Deprivation (Erdogan et al., 2018)

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

1. I feel deprived when I compare the job I have to the one other people who have similar qualifications (education, experience, skills) as me have.
2. I feel resentful when I see how prosperous other people who have similar qualifications (education, experience, skills) as me seem to be.
3. I feel bad to have this job when compared to other people who have similar qualifications (education, experience, skills) as me.
4. I feel dissatisfied with what I have in my current job compared to what other people who have similar qualifications (education, experience, skills) as me have.

Response Options:
1 = Strongly Disagree
2 = Disagree
3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree
4 = Agree
5 = Strongly Agree

Time 1 Qualtrics Survey – Exploratory: Relative Deprivation Referent Other

When you were completing the questions above, who were you comparing yourself to? Select all that apply.

Work colleagues in the United States
Family or friends in the United States
Other people in the United States (please specify): _____
Previous work colleagues in my home country
Family or friends in my home country
Other people in my home country (please specify): _____
Other (please specify): _____

Time 1 Qualtrics Survey – Job Gratitude

Please respond to the following questions.

To what extent are you grateful for…

1. The job you have now
2. Having a job in the first place
3. The opportunity to perform a job, no matter what it is
4. Being able to call yourself employed

Response Options:
1 = Not at all grateful
2 = A little grateful
3 = Moderately grateful
4 = Very grateful
5 = Extremely grateful

Time 1 Qualtrics Survey – Exploratory: Objective Occupational Downgrading (ISEI; Ganzeboom et al., 1992)

1. Are you performing a different job or occupation than you did in your home country?
   Yes
   No

[IF YES]:

1. In the box, please type your most recent **current** occupation.
2. Please select the category of your **current** occupation from the list below.
3. In the box, please type your most recent **previous** occupation. Please be as specific as possible. If you do not have a previous occupation, leave this blank.
4. Please select the category of your most recent **previous** occupation from the list below. If you do not have a previous occupation, leave this blank.
5. Did you perform this most recent **previous** occupation inside or outside of the United States?
   Inside of the United States
   Outside of the United States
6. **[IF INSIDE]:** In the box, please type your most recent **previous** occupation that was located **OUTSIDE** of the United States. Please be as specific as possible. If you do not have a previous occupation that was performed outside of the United States, leave this blank.
7. **[IF INSIDE]:** Please select the category of your most recent **previous** occupation that was located **OUTSIDE** of the United States from the list below. If you do not have a previous occupation that was performed outside of the United States, leave this blank.

Response Options:

Professional, Technical, and Related Workers. Examples include: architects and engineers, medical/dental/veterinary professionals, accountants, authors/journalists/related writers, sculptors/painters/photographers/related creative artists, athletes/sportsmen/related workers.

Administrative and Managerial Workers. Examples include: legislative officials/government administrators, managers (not specified in another category).

Clerical and Related Workers. Examples include: clerical supervisors, government executive officials, bookkeepers/cashiers/related workers, computing machine operators, transport and communications supervisors, mail distribution clerks, telephone and telegraph operators.

Sales Workers. Examples include: Wholesale and retail trade managers, working proprietors, sales supervisors and buyers, salesmen.

Service Workers. Examples include: catering and lodging services managers, housekeeping and related service supervisors, cooks/waiters/bartenders/related workers, building caretakers, launderers/dry-cleaners/pressers, protective service workers.

Agricultural, Animal Husbandry, and Forestry Workers, Fishermen and Hunters. Examples include: farm managers and supervisors, farmers, agricultural and animal husbandry workers, forestry workers, fishermen/hunters/related workers.

Production and Related Workers, Transport Equipment Operators and Laborers. Examples include: production supervisors/general foremen, miners/quarrymen/well drillers/related workers, metal processors, wood preparation workers/paper makers, chemical processors, spinners/weavers/knitters/dyers/related workers, food and beverage processors, tailors/dressmakers/sewers/upholsterers.

Time 1 Qualtrics Survey – Exploratory: Subjective Occupational Downgrading

[**IF** Are you performing a different job or occupation than you did in your **home country**? = **Yes**]

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

1. The prestige of my current occupation in the United States is lower than the prestige of my previous occupation in my home country.
2. The status of my current occupation in the United States is lower than the status of my previous occupation in my home country.
3. The type of work I am currently performing is not as reputable as the type of work I was performing in my home country.
4. I experienced a downgrade in my occupation when I moved to the United States.

Response Options:
1 = Strongly Disagree
2 = Disagree
3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree
4 = Agree
5 = Strongly Agree

Time 1 Qualtrics Survey – Exploratory: Perceived Job Mobility (Rusbult & Farrell, 1983)

Please answer the following questions as they relate to your current job.

1. All things considered, how good are your alternatives to this job?

Response Options:
1 = Terrible
2 = Bad
3 = Okay
4 = Good
5 = Excellent

2. In general, how do your alternatives compare to your current job?

Response Options:
1 = Alternatives are Much Worse
2 = Alternatives are Worse
3 = Alternatives are Neither Better nor Worse
4 = Alternatives are Better
5 = Alternatives are Much Better

3. How do your alternatives compare to your ideal way of occupying your time?

Response Options:
1 = Alternatives are Much Worse
2 = Alternatives are Worse
3 = Alternatives are Neither Better nor Worse
4 = Alternatives are Better
5 = Alternatives are Much Better

Time 1 Qualtrics Survey – Acculturation (adapted from Stephenson, 2000)

Below are a number of statements that evaluate changes that occur when people interact with others of different cultures or ethnic groups. For questions that refer to "COUNTRY OF ORIGIN" or "NATIVE COUNTRY," please refer to the country from which your family originally came. For questions referring to "NATIVE LANGUAGE," please refer to the language spoken where your family originally came.

1. I understand English, but I'm not fluent in English.
2. I am informed about current affairs in the United States.
3. I speak my native language with my friends and acquaintances from my country of origin.
4. I have never learned to speak the language of my native country.
5. I feel totally comfortable with (Anglo) American people.
6. I eat traditional foods from my native culture.
7. I have many (Anglo) American acquaintances.
8. I feel comfortable speaking my native language.
9. I am informed about current affairs in my native country.
10. I know how to read and write in my native language.
11. I feel at home in the United States.
12. I attend social functions with people from my native country.
13. I feel accepted by (Anglo) Americans.
14. I speak my native language at home.
15. I regularly read literature of my ethnic group.
16. I know how to speak my native language.
17. I know how to prepare (Anglo) American foods.
18. I am familiar with the history of my native country.
19. I regularly read American media.
20. I like to listen to music of my ethnic group.
21. I like to speak my native language.
22. I feel comfortable speaking English.
23. I speak English at home.
24. I speak my native language with my family.
25. When I pray, I use my native language.
26. I attend social functions with (Anglo) American people.
27. I think in my native language.
28. I stay in close contact with family members and relatives in my native country.
29. I am familiar with important people in American history,
30. I think in English.
31. I speak English with my family.
32. I like to eat American foods.

Response Options:
1 = False
2 = Partly False

3 = Partly True
4 = True

Time 1 Qualtrics Survey – Demographics

1. Which gender do you prefer to identify as?

   Man
   Woman
   Transgender Man
   Transgender Woman
   Nonbinary
   Agender
   Other (please specify)
   Prefer not to answer

2. Please select your race/ethnicity. Choose all that apply.

   American Indian or Alaska Native
   East Asian
   South Asian
   Middle Eastern or Arab
   Hispanic
   Black or African American
   Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
   White/Caucasian/Not of Hispanic Origins
   Other (please specify)

3. Do you identify as a visible minority?

   Yes/No

4. What is the highest degree or level of education you have completed that was earned in your **HOME COUNTRY**? If no degree or education was earned in your home country, select "No schooling completed."
   No schooling completed
   Elementary to 8th grade
   Some high school, no diploma
   High school graduate, diploma, or the equivalent (for example, GED)
   Some college credit, no degree
   Trade/technical/vocational training degree or certification
   Associate degree
   Bachelor's degree
   Master's degree
   Professional degree
   Doctorate degree

5. What is the highest degree or level of education you have completed that was earned in the **UNITED STATES**? If no degree or education was earned in the United States, select "No schooling completed."
No schooling completed
Elementary to 8th grade
Some high school, no diploma
High school graduate, diploma, or the equivalent (for example, GED)
Some college credit, no degree
Trade/technical/vocational training degree or certification
Associate degree
Bachelor's degree
Master's degree
Professional degree
Doctorate degree

6. On average, how many hours do you work per week?
[text box]

7. Choose the industry that best describes where you work.

Manufacturing
Natural resources and mining
Finance
Professional and business services
Education
Health care
Information
Trade, transportation, and utilities
Restaurant
Leisure and hospitality
Retail
Other services (please specify)
High tech
Other (please specify)

8. At what age did you (first) immigrate to the United States?

[text box]

9. Have you resided in the United States since then?
Yes
No
10. [IF NO]: At what age did you most recently immigrate to the United States?

[text box]

11. What class(es)/type(s) of visa did you enter the United States on?

[text box]

Time 1 Qualtrics Survey – Thank You

Thank you for your participation in today's survey. **Please click the button below to submit your response and be redirected to Prolific.**

Time 2 Qualtrics Survey – Informed Consent

Research Participant Information and Consent Form

You are being asked to participate in a research study related to various factors that are believed to predict job satisfaction. Your participation in this study will take about 10 minutes. Researchers are required to provide a consent form to inform you about the research study, to convey that participation is voluntary, to explain risks and benefits of participation including why you might or might not want to participate, and to empower you to make an informed decision. You should feel free to discuss and ask the researchers any questions you may have.

1. **PURPOSE OF RESEARCH**
The purpose of this research is to understand how different factors (e.g., job gratitude, acculturation, perceived overqualification) predict job satisfaction among immigrant workers.

2. **WHAT YOU WILL BE ASKED TO DO**
If you choose to participate in this study, you will be asked to take part in an anonymous online survey that asks questions about your work experiences and job satisfaction. These questions are not in any way harmful and do not contain any language stronger or more threatening than would be encountered on a daily basis. You will have the option to skip any questions that you would prefer not to answer. We expect your total participation in this study to take approximately 10 minutes.

3. **POTENTIAL BENEFITS**
You may not benefit personally from being in this study. However, we hope that, in the future, other people might benefit from this study because this research may help us better understand how to enhance the working experiences of immigrant workers.

4. **POTENTIAL RISKS**
There are no foreseeable risks to participating in the present study.

5. **PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY**
This study is anonymous. Only trained research staff will have access to your responses and all data will be stored on password protected computers.

6. **YOUR RIGHTS TO PARTICIPATE, SAY NO, OR WITHDRAW**
You have the right to say no to participate in the research. You can stop and exit the survey at any time after it has already started.

7. **COSTS AND COMPENSATION FOR BEING IN THE STUDY**
You will be compensated the amount previously advertised on Prolific. In order to receive compensation, you **MUST** complete the survey in its entirety. Responses that indicate inattentiveness (e.g., selecting "Strongly agree" for all responses, writing gibberish to open-ended questions) will result in you being asked to return the survey.

8. **CONTACT INFORMATION**

If you have concerns or questions about this study, such as scientific issues, how to do any part of it, or to report an injury, please contact Ann Marie Ryan, Ph.D., Department of Psychology, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824, phone: (517) 353-8855, email: ryanan@msu.edu.

If you have questions are concerns about your role and rights as a research participant, would like to obtain information or offer input, or would like to register a complaint about this study, you may contact, anonymously if you wish, the Michigan State University's Human Research Protection Program at (517) 355-2180, Fax (517) 432-4503, or email irb@msu.edu or regular mail at 4000 Collins Rd., Suite 136, Lansing, MI 48910.

Please indicate that you are voluntarily agreeing to participate in this study by selecting " I agree."

[ ] I agree

Time 2 Qualtrics Survey – Relative Deprivation (Erdogan et al., 2018)

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

1. I feel deprived when I compare the job I have to the one other people who have similar qualifications (education, experience, skills) as me have.
2. I feel resentful when I see how prosperous other people who have similar qualifications (education, experience, skills) as me seem to be.
3. I feel bad to have this job when compared to other people who have similar qualifications (education, experience, skills) as me.
4. I feel dissatisfied with what I have in my current job compared to what other people who have similar qualifications (education, experience, skills) as me have.

Response Options:
1 = Strongly Disagree
2 = Disagree
3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree
4 = Agree
5 = Strongly Agree

Time 2 Qualtrics Survey – Exploratory: Relative Deprivation Referent Other

When you were completing the questions above, who were you comparing yourself to? Select all that apply.

Work colleagues in the United States
Family or friends in the United States
Other people in the United States (please specify): _____
Previous work colleagues in my home country
Family or friends in my home country
Other people in my home country (please specify): _____
Other (please specify): _____

Time 2 Qualtrics Survey – Job Satisfaction (Cammann et al., 1983)

For the following statements, think about your current job and organization/employer. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

1. All in all, I am satisfied with my job.
2. **In general, I don't like my job. (R)**
3. In general, I like working here.

Response Options:
1 = Strongly Disagree
2 = Disagree
3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree
4 = Agree
5 = Strongly Agree

Time 2 Qualtrics Survey – Exploratory: Positive and Negative Health (Gnambs et al., 2018; Goldberg, 1972)

Please indicate the frequency with which you experienced the following feelings or behaviors over the past week.

1. Been able to concentrate on whatever you are doing **(Positive)**
2. Felt that you are playing a useful part in things **(Positive)**
3. Felt capable of making decisions about things **(Positive)**
4. Enjoyed normal day-to-day activities **(Positive)**
5. Been able to face up to your problems **(Positive)**
6. Felt reasonably happy, all things considered **(Positive)**
7. Lost much sleep over worry **(Negative)**
8. Felt constantly under strain **(Negative)**
9. Felt you could not overcome your difficulties **(Negative)**
10. Been feeling unhappy and depressed **(Negative)**
11. Been losing confidence in yourself **(Negative)**
12. Thinking of yourself as a worthless person **(Negative)**

Response Options:
1 = Never (0 times)
2 = Rarely (1-3 times)
3 = Sometimes (4-6 times)
4 = Often (7-9 times)
5 = Very Frequently (at least 10 times)

Time 2 Qualtrics Survey – Exploratory: Reemployment Self-Efficacy (Wanberg et al., 2010)

Imagine that you are searching for another job. Answer the following questions according to what you believe would describe you as you are searching for a job.

1. I am ___ I would find a job if I looked.
2. I am ___ I would get a good paying job.
3. I am ___ I would find a job that I like.
4. I am ___ that I would find a job as good as or better than the one I left.

Response Options:
1 = Not at All Confident
2 = A Little Confident
3 = Somewhat Confident
4 = Confident
5 = Highly Confident

Time 2 Qualtrics Survey – Exploratory: Turnover Intentions (Shore & Martin, 1989)

For the following questions, consider your relationship with your current organization/employer.

1. Which of the following statements most clearly reflects your feelings about your future with this organization in the next year?

    Response Options:
    1 = I definitely will not leave
    2 = I probably will not leave
    3 = I am uncertain
    4 = I probably will leave
    5 = I definitely will leave

2. How do you feel about leaving this organization? **(R)**

    Response Options:
    1 = I am presently looking and planning to leave
    2 = I am seriously considering leaving in the near future
    3 = I have no feelings about this one way or the other
    4 = As far as I can see ahead, I intend to stay within this organization
    5 = It is very important for me to spend my career in this organization

3. If you were completely free to choose, would you prefer or not prefer to continue working for this organization?

    Response Options:
    1 = Prefer very much to continue working for this organization
    2 = Prefer to work here
    3 = Don't care either way
    4 = Prefer not to work here
    5 = Prefer very much not to continue working for this organization

4. How important is it to you personally that you spend your career in this organization rather than some other organization? **(R)**

    Response Options:
    1 = It is of no importance at all
    2 = I have mixed feelings about its importance
    3 = It is of some importance
    4 = It is fairly important
    5 = It is very important for me to spend my career in this organization

Time 2 Qualtrics Survey – Exploratory: Job Search Behaviors (Adapted from Blau, 1994)

Please indicate the frequency to which you have engaged in the following behaviors over the last three months.

1. Read the help wanted/classified ads online or in print
2. Prepared/revised your resume
3. Sent out resumes to potential employers or job search websites
4. Filled out a job application
5. Read a book or article about getting a job or changing jobs
6. Had a job interview with a prospective employer
7. Talked with friends or relatives about possible job leads
8. Contacted an employment agency, executive search firm or state employment service
9. Spoke with previous employers or business acquaintances about their knowing of potential job leads
10. Talked with a prospective employer
11. Used current within company resources (e.g., colleagues) to generate potential job leads

Response Options:
1 = Never (0 times)
2 = Rarely (1-3 times)
3 = Sometimes (4-6 times)
4 = Often (7-9 times)
5 = Very Frequently (at least 10 times)

Time 2 Qualtrics Survey – Exploratory: Career Satisfaction (Greenhaus et al., 1990)

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements.

1. I am satisfied with the success I have achieved in my career.
2. I am satisfied with the progress I have made towards meeting my overall career goals.
3. I am satisfied with the progress I have made towards meeting my goals for income.
4. I am satisfied with the progress I have made towards meeting my goals for advancement.
5. I am satisfied with the progress I have made towards meeting my goals for the development of new skills.

Response Options:
1 = Strongly Disagree
2 = Disagree
3 = Neither Agree Nor Disagree
4 = Agree
5 = Strongly Agree

Time 2 Qualtrics Survey – Thank You

Thank you for your participation in today's survey. **Please click the button below to submit your response and be redirected to Prolific.**