



# No Room for Talent: Immigrants face a “sticky floor”

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**What is the “sticky floor” that immigrants face? How do these differ for men and women; and across racialized and non-racialized groups?**

# Key Points

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- Canada needs Immigrants
- Newcomers face challenges in the integration process
  - Unrecognition of foreign credentials
- Institutions have been responsive to the concerns
  - - Canadian Immigration Integration Project
  - - The Ontario College of Physicians and Surgeons
  - - Engineer Canada

# Key Points: *Continued*

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- Some challenges can also be addressed before their arrival to Canada by:
  - - Orientating new immigrants on Canadian heritage and culture
  - - Language Training
  - - Credential Assessment
  - - Career advising

# Case

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For a time, Sanjay Mavinkurve and wife Samvita Padukone were held up as poster children for Canada's open and flexible immigration system, long touted for the benefits it brings to both the country and its newcomers. When the couple married in 2008, Mavinkurve—born in India, raised in Saudi Arabia and trained at Harvard University—was living in Silicon Valley, where he led a team of engineers designing Google maps for mobile phones. Padukone was working in finance at Singapore's largest investment bank. Mavinkurve's temporary U.S. work visa didn't allow his wife to work in the States. So Google arranged to transfer Mavinkurve to the company's office in Toronto, where Padukone, with degrees in engineering and finance and experience in international banking, hoped to land a job.

...their story turned out to be less a picture of the Canadian dream than an image of the ugly reality facing so many Canadian immigrants. Padukone struggled to find a job. Calls to employers went unreturned or recruiters told her she would need Canadian work experience to qualify. With extended family already living in Canada, the couple expected a slow start, but was shocked by how difficult life here turned out to be. "I was trying to deny these thoughts in my head that my wife wasn't facing these issues," says Mavinkurve. "But then I'd see the taxi drivers with the Ph.D.s and the ads on TV saying, 'hire a skilled immigrant.'"

# Critique

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- Proposes an individualistic view on employment issues faced by immigrants
  - *“Stop behaving like victims, don’t like it? Catch a flight, get out of here”*
- Fails to address the fact that integration processes differ for men and women and across ethnic groups
- Aboriginal and indigenous communities also experience the “sticky floor”

# Strengths

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- Access to information on programs available to new immigrants
- Outlook on the progress of foreign credential assessment
- Conclusive recommendations

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U-r2umsoMcM>

# Discussion

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- Considering the changes made in the workplace to enable immigrant to obtain a job in their fields, do you think the 'sticky floor' has been cleaned up?
- Do you think getting a job in Canada is more of an individual responsibility or a societal responsibility?
- Highly qualified and educated immigrants result in extra competition for Canadian born people... should licensing bodies for foreign credentials make their policies easier?
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