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Underemployment and Life Satisfaction: A Study of Internationally Trained Engineers in Canada

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Abstract

This article emerges from a mixed-method study that explored the relationship between underemployment faced by internationally trained engineers and their satisfaction with life in Canada. A survey was conducted with 309 internationally trained engineers. A significantly greater proportion of survey respondents without a job in an engineering field reported being dissatisfied with life in Canada (36% vs. 22%, $p < .01$); and reported not having plans to settle permanently in Canada (54% vs. 40%, $p < .05$) compared to those with jobs in the engineering field. The study highlights the human costs and economic costs of underemployment of internationally trained engineers. Qualitative data from 20 in-depth interviews provide insights into the relationship between underemployment and life satisfaction.

KEYWORDS:

Underemployment | life satisfaction | internationally trained | immigrants | engineers

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