Forced Migration: Tales of Downward Mobility
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Abstract
Forced migration is referred to as the forcible displacement of people to new regions. When highly educated professionals are forcibly displaced, they need to cope with the challenge of integrating into the host country’s economic system. Unfortunately, being a well-educated immigrant does not automatically guarantee a professional job in most host countries. Barriers such as lack of work permits, unfamiliarity with the system, incomplete professional certifications, language limitations, and limited networking prevent them from incorporating into the host economy. Under these circumstances, many high-skilled new immigrants are practically forced to take low-skilled and low-payment jobs, that are physically demanding. This phenomenon is known as downward mobility. This phenomenological study focuses on understanding downward mobility’s negative effects among well-educated immigrants. It provides recommendations to cope with the phenomenon. A Downward Mobility Readiness Survey (DMRS) is included to create awareness about this topic.

Methodology
This qualitative study used a phenomenological design. The study adhered to ethical guidelines and followed the institutional review board (IRB) protocol. Snowball sampling was used to locate individuals for the study. The participant is a middle-age, male, professional, facing downward mobility. All information from the participant was masked and coded for reporting purposes. The data collection was completed through a face-to-face semi-structured interview, with open-ended questions. The interview was audio-recorded and transcribed, then coded, and organized into themes, based on the affinity of the codes. The trustworthiness of the study was ensured by cross-checking the coding and results with peers.

Themes Identified

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<tr>
<th>Better education</th>
<th>Children education</th>
<th>Quality of life</th>
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<td>&quot;Once I finish my degree, then I will apply for a better job.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;We came here for better children education.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;We will get better time in the future.&quot;</td>
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<td>Challenge</td>
<td>Time constraint</td>
<td>Language barriers</td>
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<td>&quot;Everything is challenging, and you know, new country! (laughing)&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;You try to balance (activities) accordingly. Time is one constraint... It’s very difficult. It’s not easy.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;I want to learn the language and get accustomed to the culture, faster.&quot;</td>
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<td>Multidimensional roles</td>
<td>Skills and experience degradation</td>
<td>Acculturation</td>
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<td>&quot;I have a lot of pressure like study, family.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;They (actual job) don’t recognize our degree from our country.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;My (actual job) should help me to know the culture contact.&quot;</td>
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<td>Diaspora</td>
<td>Transitional stage</td>
<td>Long distances and family dependence</td>
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<td>&quot;Sometimes, we go with them (diaspora).&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;They (family) know that we are in a big transition.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;I have to drop my son, pick my son and daughter, sometimes, and I need to give ride for my wife also.&quot;</td>
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How to Cope with Downward Mobility

1. Use the multidimensional role such as food provider, driver, connector, and even translator to strengthen family’s bonds.
2. Find ways of acculturation to the host economy.
3. Try to get a local accreditation or certification.
4. Understand this stage as a transitional period.
5. Identify, connect, and socialize with their diaspora.
6. Pushing children to perform well in their classes to get a college degree and a good job.

References

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