

The Ethics of Foreign Student Immigration in Canadian

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How can Canada facilitate an ethical approach to immigration pursuits in the case of foreign students? Taking into consideration the historical, political, and social dimensions that contribute to one's decision making. Is it ethical to design and allot immigration targets based on perceived potential contribution? Is it justifiable or ethical to Selecting /Emphasizing / giving preference to individuals with a (high economic evaluation) and/or presumed ability to recontribute over someone who does not share the same status at the same time? Is the logic of the program, is heavily focused on the preconceived/ current economic status? How do we ethically deal with immigration in a manner that advances Canada through addressing voids, but at the same facilitate external circumstances and participate in a just way. Giving preferential treatment to those who immigrate with strong economic finances over those without can be justified, based on the conditions set forth of a particular program or stream. Although the Government of Canada- Department of Citizenship Immigration, must consider its objectives in terms of the countries wants/ (economic endeavours); it is ethical to ensure that immigration is done in good faith wherein all entities individuals, country, and the market good is taken into consideration. This paper will address the aforementioned questioned through examination of Mills Utilitarianism in particular the greatest utility principle focussing on the good of all stakeholders, this followed by assessing a key tangent of immigration, the pursuit of multiculturalism albeit actual or aspiration and finally moral standards.

Background information

Well, what exactly do we mean by the Ethics of Immigration? Carens discusses this by addressing how do determine who belongs and who gets into a country? (19). This takes into the account the complexities of and critiques of attempting to achieve an equilibrium between what

is idea for a state as well as what is possible. National profile will refer to the ways in which immigration has been integrated into the conception of Canada as a country and entity. He offers the terms democratic principle – which in a general sense explain the moral commitments that underlie and justify contemporary political institution and policies throughout North America (2). In discussing parameters, the question of who is worthy or should be accepted into a country is the contention of many debates. Immigration is a large complicated sub-set of multiple systems, working with and in one another. This paper specifically examines the foreign student immigration category which can offer pathways to permanent residency contingent on the completion of the degree and securing employment. Foreign students apply to school in Canada and often secure a student visa to allow them to attend the education institutions, most schools maintain international office and personnel allocated to aid in the facilitation of the international students. This is a critical question/discussion for a few reasons : the historical role of the move the Global North, Canada's profile as a desirable , moderate country with open minded ways of being ,economic needs of the country as it relates to the attrition crisis that the country is currently facing, low population and labour deficits within the country, growing populism which are all factors one will evaluate when choosing to immigrate as well as important for a growing country to consider. The quality of a western education lies as much in it is a credibility as its symbolic forcer (Gabriel and Helene, 85). Considering the numerous factors ongoing in immigration and economy it is an important discussion to have. As education institutions work with smaller budget and endowments, a sizable portion of this can be recovered in international student fees which on average are approximately three times the rate of a domestic student.

Utility Principle and Public Good

Canada should continue engaging with foreign student immigration granted it is being done in good faith and balanced between the student, institutions, and country. However, States are sovereign and have the responsibility and sole ability to determine their admissibility or non – admissibility to their state. This brings into question the Mill’s Utility principle or more commonly known the Greatest Happiness principle which eloquently argues: the greatest good for the greatest number of persons (55). This is granted the good of one is not jeopardized, and then the decision can be viewed as idea. This applied in the case of foreign student immigration means that actions such as maintaining or increasing current targets or levels is okay if this does not minimize happiness. This is where some critical accounts become apparent how does one define happiness or good? Within immigration there are many key stakeholders who are implicated in decision making: the individual, country Government of Canada in particular IRCC (*Immigration Refugee Citizenship Canada*), and/or society at large? This begs the question of who is good is being assessed and how do we achieve the greatest good?

It is ethical and important for Canada to continue its engagement with foreign student immigration programs that allow for students to become permanent resident and citizens. It is important as it grows the economy with educated persons, with backgrounds that contribute to social life for all. Well Carens answers this by demonstrating the challenges faced in sovereignty and democratic self-determinations which highlight two key problems : 1, States should be free to set their own immigration and citizenship policies free from external critique or 2’ issues and questions of immigration should be reserved for self- governing people to answer for themselves(7). This argument allows us to question the morality and moral responsibility of the state. Some may argue a moral analysis is not fit for discussion immigration, but this is a short-sighted critique which fails to address the fact that states have decision making

ability an authority and an answer to a higher order or set of orders is a fair. Also, if not the use of morality as an evaluator, then what will we use? What tool can be employed that does not embody bias or riddled with institutional prejudices? A state bound to no higher critique. Again, this is not to lose sight of the core thought that although a state may occupy moral right or obligation to make certain decisions, does not mean all decisions made are moral.

Some may argue having international students is not ethical as they take post-secondary spaces and/or jobs away from Canadians. The Greatest Happiness principle is flawed because is happiness even attainable? With many different stakeholders, it is argued that good is difficult to assess due to three considerations: What is good and bad? Who is good? and lastly the evaluation of whether an action is right or wrong by their actual and unintended outcomes. Although these critiques hold some weight, there are methods in determining how to approach the concepts by defining what this may mean and for who. There are not uniform/ stringent definitions or approaches to any mature concept as time and context can add or lessen emphasis on particular aspects.

As it relates to target level appropriateness, Canada is a country wherein immigration not only part of the country's profile but necessary for development within numbers reaching 200,000-300,000 for all programs inclusively. In particular to foreign students the challenges of the number being too high is not factual. This is not true and there are target numbers set yearly and reviewed to ensure there is space allocation for domestic and non-domestic students. In addition, international students pay exorbitant fees which in fact make it inaccessible to many. This inherently acts as a check and balance on the system as obtaining international student status is not an easy, cheap, or simple feat to accomplish. Although it may be difficult to appease

many diverse stakeholders, each can be addressed in different manners as each has a different bottom line or idea outcome. This brings us to a deep analysis of the Utility principle in regard to higher and lower pleasures which are useful in determining how can we define happiness as it relates to immigration rates of foreign students in Canada.

Aspirational v. Actual Multiculturalism

The complexity involved in immigration is largely situated in the range of programs policies, institutions and conditions involved in the system. Immigrants and society building are strongly linked (Fleras, 110). Higher pleasure defined as: and lower pleasures is one method in which we can seek to use to analyze where targets should be. To further support his analysis, I will use the example of aspirational versus actualized immigration. Aspirational multiculturalism versus actualized multiculturalism (diversity is our strength) is important to note and can be further exemplified by analyzing three spaces: Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver or more affectionately known as MTV. These are three well known locations in Canada that newcomers' foreign students alike are drawn to for many reasons. It is oft the case, that there are established families and/or networks reside there, accessibility and proximity to cultural needs such as food and lastly, close proximity to international airport. Although these spaces are great for the aforementioned reasons, it creates a dichotomy wherein each person's happiness is concerned. It positions the MTV region as diverse, international multicultural, which by a numeric assessment this can be confirmed. However, with such significant concentrations of diversity focused in these three cities as it creates a comparison that is not fully addressed in Canada wherein what about the other spaces that do not hold the same numbers? There are several reasons this can be the case, from not as established communities, lack of diverse

services such as food, culture and spaces and network both familial and professional/culture focused ties.

Bentham argues that all pleasure is equal (West 33) whereas Mills approach is two tiered and results in higher quality and lower quality pleasures: This can understand applied in our valuing of Diversity and or multiculturalism as a goal or desire as well as a characteristic of the nation's profile. It encompasses a higher pleasure because: it furthers the development of a sophisticated cosmopolitan space particularly a higher quality of society, collegial behaviour, exposure and understanding of diverse groups of people traditions, cultures, and ways of being.

On the other hand, objections to this may be that international students come with their way of life that does not intersect with "Canadian Life." Bentham addresses this through his critique of pleasure, primarily being that pleasure is experienced based thus subjective in application (West 36). Although some may argue that a goal may be easier to facilitate when there is direct connection to the end goal it is a complicated process which Aristotle captures in the difference of ends and the notion that every activity has end or goal. Which further as the question of why are we in pursuit of a particular goal? Some things may be an action or others may be products (Aristotle3). Thus, if one immigrates for education pursuits and leaves thereafter or undertakes the process of becoming a citizen, it is okay that the process of being educated in Canada leads to different ends. In addition, this does not lessen the question of why one may choose to emigrate to further their academic pursuits as individual add economic and social value for the duration of their stay and this is easily seen alone in the fees associated with studying in Canada or international students. This is largely problematic as international students contribute to Canadian culture and are often more than willingly to learn and teach. It

adds to the culture capital of Canada. Global movements of people are normal, and mobility is vital to development of all types including country, human, social and economic (Fleras,36) There are noted economic and social benefits that are tied to having multicultural spaces. International student, alike many newcomers contribute to our communities and our understandings as a society. In addition, they contribute to the economy in a plethora of mechanisms. In addition, one does not have to immigrate to a country to value immigration, regardless of stream or program of entry.

Moral Standard

Moral standards are an interesting concept in the application of immigration target levels as it forces one to consider what is important to consider for humanity. Creating a moral standard is a complex feat as it cannot be pursued without consideration of historical contributions and system analysis. Kant speaks to this in how a duty is to be applied in his analysis of rational requirements. He argues that actions are good when they are pursued for the sake of duty, which looks at categorical imperatives and treating humanity in each person as an end in itself (Hill14). The moral worth of acting from duty alone is both informed by good will. These are critical concerns for immigration policies as individuals are agents acting on the impetus of the law and or mandate that obligates them to act in accordance, which may limit their ability to act morally.

Some may argue that utilitarianism does not take into consideration the differences or uniqueness of people. Also, that it is extremely difficult (the process of) predicting and evaluating the consequences of actions is exceedingly difficult and ultimately a shortcoming of using solely the utilitarianism as an approach towards ethical immigration. There is no all-encompassing meta-theory that is able to address all concerns. There is the slippery slope of

overextending well developed theories and or principles to circumstances that are perhaps not the best fit. As an ethical philosophy, Utilitarianism provides a procedure or map for decision making. Considering context and time, Ethical philosophy strive to outlive conditions and remain a fixture to how an entity can analyze or address recent problems or concerns by assessing the core foundational concerns of an issue.

Ethical approaches to immigration will remain a philosophically conflictual debate to settle based on the facts presented. “An agent acts ethically where they choose a course of action where the welfare of others is given some appropriate moral consideration (Boston 202). The deliberation of the justification of immigration as a self-benefiting/maximizing activity versus a humanitarian or global obligation based on the international community’s perspective and historical conditioning of defining characteristics of Canada. This is depicted in the argument for utility and public solidifies that immigration adds value in unmeasurable ways. This is the outcome. The subsequent argument addressed the perception versus reality question of diversity and multiculturalism and makes the justification for speaking truth to power. Continued support for international immigration has many supporters from, governments, individuals residing abroad, institutions and the critics arguments can often only be supported through numeric contributions that do not represent the entire claim. However, this is arguably the objective of applied ethics, and the deliberation of Consequentialism which concerned with the actions of humans and not the actions themselves. Consequentialism ethical theory is concerned with the end the consequence of an action.

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