

# **Job Stress in the Retail Industry in St. John's, Newfoundland**

By

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## Abstract

Typically, Retail jobs are considered to be rather stressful, and physically, and emotionally draining on incumbent workers. Yet, they tend to be low-paying occupations at the same time. In this research, the focus is on analyzing job stress and its predictors among Canadian-born and non-Canadian-born retail workers in St. John's, NL. Although many studies have researched job stress and its causes in the retail industry, relatively few studies have explored the relationship between job stress in the retail industry. Moreover, one contribution of this paper is the focus on whether the retail worker is Canadian-born or non-Canadian-born, and their duration of stay in Canada. A quantitative research design was chosen for this study because it allows for an exploration of the strength of statistical relationships between different key variables. Via a survey distributed to multiple retail stores in St. John's, NL, 105 usable surveys were received from participants. The results of the study show that most retail workers in St. John's, NL, experience at least moderate job stress levels. It was also found that non-Canadian-born retail workers have higher job stress levels and also have lower job satisfaction levels than Canadian-born retail workers, on average. Furthermore, it was found that for both Canadian-born and non-Canadian-born retail workers, the three highest job stress predictors are low wages and benefits, role overload, and rude and demanding customers. Finally, we unexpectedly found that newly arrived immigrants, on average, experience lower job stress levels than 'earlier-arrived' immigrants who have been in Canada. The study recommends employers proactively manage and mitigate job stress levels in their workplaces and provide more targeted support for non-Canadian-born employees. More specifically, it is recommended that employers provide the necessary equipment to reduce physical fatigue, encourage open communications between colleagues and between employees and their managers, have clear job

descriptions for every role, celebrate and rewards employees' strength, to provide opportunities to learn and grow on the job, and make sure a sufficient number of employees is present on every shift to cover the workload. Future research could focus on exploring the relationship between job stress and specific health outcomes. Future research could also investigate the role of workplace culture in job stress by examining how various workplace cultures or subcultures, such as toxic work environments and overly competitive workplaces, contribute to job stress. Finally, future research could focus on clarifying the reasons behind our unexpected findings that i) newly arrived immigrants, on average, experience lower job stress levels than those earlier arrived immigrants, and that i) those earlier arrived immigrants are also more likely to endure severe job stress than those newly arrived immigrants.

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### **List of Abbreviation**

ILO	International Labour Organization
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
WHO	World Health Organization
APA	American Psychological Association
NL	Newfoundland and Labrador

## Chapter 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Today's world isn't ordinary. All it takes is a simple question, "What is happening in the world around us?" to realize that society feels off-track. According to Jordan Peterson, the world is divided into "Order" and "Chaos." Order is explored territory. It's stability and structure (Peterson, 2018), it's the things we understand, and Chaos is an unexplored territory (Peterson, 2018); it's the things and situations we don't understand. As I write this introduction, the world is enduring several sudden changes. Some of the critical factors fueling this change are high inflation rates (Scotiabank, 2022), the global pandemic (Covid-19) and its devastating effects on the world (ILO, FAO, IFAD, and WHO, 2020), the substantial political instability between countries especially the Russia-Ukraine war (Ellyatt, 2022). These factors lead to uncertainty in people's daily lives. Exposed to constant uncertainty, a person can develop what is known as "Anticipatory stress," where the person is afraid of something terrible that might happen in the future due to current events (Monat, A., Averill, J. R., & Lazarus, R. S. (1972; p. 237-253). This creates anxiety and emotional stress. Anticipatory stress is just one of many types of stress people can be exposed daily. Stress can vary from one person to another and from one environment to another and can have unlimited effects. Therefore, when studying stress, it is crucial to pick a specific type of stress to explore and a specific niche of people or industry to study. Considering stress is everywhere, and individuals spend a considerable amount of their life working, the idea to focus on stress within the workplace emerged

In this research, I focus on "job stress", which can be defined as the change in one's physical or mental state in response to workplaces that pose an appraised challenge or threat to that employee (Colligan & Higgins, 2006; p.89). According to a Gallup poll, the percentage of

workers' experiencing daily job stress reached a record high, increasing from 38% in 2019 to 43% in 2020 (Gallup, 2022); this yearly increase has led to more research focusing on "Occupational stress" or what we will call "job stress." Job stress has many "causes" (i.e., statistical "predictors"). Some of these predictors are common in all industries, and some can differ from one sector to another and from person to person.

Human bodies and minds react to job stress differently (Carver & Connor-Smith, 2010); however, the most common reactions are anxiety, depression, uneasiness, apathy, and alienation (Kompier, 1994; Stranks, 2005). Job stress can also trigger physiological effects on the human body, such as increased blood pressure, increased or irregular heart rate, muscular tension, neck, head, and shoulder pain, dry throat and mouth, and overproduction of gastric acid juice (Kompier, 1994; Stranks, 2005). When exposed to stress over long periods of time, some people might start smoking or overeating. Some might even begin drinking alcohol to ease off the stress. Job stress can also lead to aggressive and violent behavior (Kompier, 1994; Stranks, 2005).

In this study, we will focus on job stress in the retail sector. Why the retail sector? According to new research, the retail sector is one of the biggest sectors and employers in the world, especially in the United States of America and Canada. It is a highly labour-intensive sector, meaning that the psychological health and well-being of the workers are fundamental to the industry's future. For this purpose, it is crucial to understand potential threats to psychological health and well-being (Tuckey et al., 2017). In addition to that, retail employees tend to have little training and experience and tend to be low-paid but can face some rather demanding and difficult customers and working conditions. Retail workers deserve attention because of the huge number of retail employees in Canada, and because the net benefits for

workers in this sector appear to be small, nonexistent, or even negative. That means that many people work in this industry because it is the type of job that they can find, not because they necessarily enjoy it. In addition, some of the jobs out there are high-stress jobs; however, incumbents are not compensated for that stress; on the contrary, what makes retail an important industry to study is that, as mentioned above, jobs in this field tend to be low-paying and yet incumbents can still incur job stress due to their tasks, coworkers, management, and customers.

The population of Newfoundland is transitioning from being primarily rural-based to being mainly urban-based. This is mainly fueled by the increasing number of rural people moving away or into the financial and commercial capital of the province (i.e. the Greater St. John's area), and the increasing number of immigrants. This transition means that new businesses are opening branches in St. John's every year, especially retail businesses, as previous malls have been reconstructed to increase their store capacity. This led to an increase in the number of retail employees in the city.

Why is it essential to study job stress, and why should employers pay attention to stress at work? Stress is a problem for both the company and the employee; in addition to that, as we mentioned earlier, work stress problems are on the rise. Furthermore, when it comes to an employer's responsibility towards preventing stress-related illnesses, the Human Rights Commission has become quite assertive in its expectations regarding the prevention and alleviation of stress-related absences; employers are expected to be vigilant and proactive, employers have a duty to accommodate employees experiencing stress ("Managing stress at work: a how-to for employers | CFIB", 2022). Stress has many harmful effects on employees; however, harmful stress can be avoided since it is, to a large extent, work-related (Kompier,

1994).

## **1.2 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this research was to analyze job stress and its predictors among Canadian-born and non-Canadian-born retail workers in St. John's, NL. This study hopefully will shed light on a stressful work environment and even give clues for companies on how to become a better, less stressful environment.

The reason non-Canadian-born employees are of special interest is due to the reality that international students and immigrants, in general, are overrepresented in this sector in St. John's, NL. This is mainly because it is one of the few types of jobs that is easily accessible to newcomers in the community and province. However, they might have fewer supports at work and home to deal with stress, and, as outsiders, they might feel communication or cultural differences, or even a lack of respect, that affect how they are treated by customers, coworkers, and/or management at work, all of which could lead to incremental job stress for them, relative to Canadian-born counterparts.

## **1.3 Research Objectives and Methodology**

The study seeks to undertake the following research objectives:

1. To assess the level of job stress among retail workers in St. John's, NL.
2. To determine whether there are differences in the average job stress levels and types of job stress between Canadian-born and non-Canadian-born retail workers in St. John's,

NL.

3. To analyze whether there are differences in job stress predictors among Canadian and non-Canadian-born retail workers in St. John's, NL.
4. To explore whether length of stay in Canada, among immigrant retail workers, affects their level of job stress.

To answer these questions, a quantitative approach was employed. An intensive literature review was undertaken on the potential causes of job stress generally, independent of the industry. Then, a literature review was performed on the predictors of job stress in the retail industry specifically, in addition to the job/working conditions in the retail sector. Lastly, we consider immigrants' work challenges in Canada and in NL. The reason a quantitative approach was chosen is because quantitative research allows the researcher to test for potential causal (i.e., statistically significant) relationships between variables (Williams 2021), it also helps the researcher to objectively analyze the relationships between variables, thus increasing the potential accuracy of the results, and it also provides the possibility of generalizing results to wider populations (Williams, 2021)<sup>1</sup>. This is important for us to understand and analyze job stress and its predictors among Canadian-born and non-Canadian-born retail workers in St. John's, NL.

Permission to survey employees was sought from a dozen employers in St. John's, NL; once the permissions were granted, retail employees were asked to fill an online survey<sup>2</sup>. The

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<sup>1</sup> With a small cross-sectional survey, the focus will be on statistical predictors of job stress, and we will be refraining some concluding or implying causation.

<sup>2</sup> Prior to beginning data collection, permission was also sought and received by MUN's ICEHR.

survey contained questions about the employee's demographic and job information to help us assess the types of workers who have higher or lower job stress. The online survey was completely voluntarily to give the participants the freedom to decide whether or not they wished to consent to participate in this research.

Descriptive and inferential statistics were applied as a data analysis method. Descriptive statistics analysis is important because it allows us to summarize, describe and represent important features of the data in a meaningful form so that a trend, if any, emerging out of the data can be seen easily (Stapor, 2020, p.67.) In addition, the inferential statistics analysis is equally important as it allows us to draw conclusions about the population (Stapor, 2020, p.65.), ask questions about the data, and explore in-depth relationships between different variables (Somekh & Lewin, 2005, p.226).

#### **1.4 My Interest in This Topic**

My interest in this topic arises from my own personal academic and professional experiences. I have a bachelor's degree in business administration with a minor in management and am in the process of acquiring a master's degree in management. I was always interested in finding the best ways to manage employees to improve productivity and create more positive work environments. Being a non-Canadian retail worker in St. John's, NL, I faced many of the so-called job stressors, and I have experienced their effects on my physical and emotional health. This led me to think, does everyone in the retail sector here in St. John's, NL go through this, or is it only me? What are the levels of job stress in the retail industry, and does being a non-Canadian-born retail worker affect these levels of stress and their predictors? In addition, something about retail workers is in what are typically considered to be rather stressful,



physically and emotionally draining, yet low-paying jobs. My geographic focus is on St. John's, admittedly partially based on convenience but also because of the relatively high unemployment rates and high cost of living. Low minimum wage means that retail workers might face incremental psychological challenges compared to their retail counterparts in other parts of Canada where it is easier to find and maintain retail employment, and where hourly wages and cost of living tends to be more worker-friendly. In particular, I'm interested in the mean job stress levels of these retail workers because I intend to use a global measure of job stress as a subjective way to make inferences about job quality based on the views of these incumbent employees. To go a step further, I also posit that non-Canadian-born retail workers, especially those with a non-English mother tongue and/or who have arrived more recently, will have higher job stress levels due to systemic barriers and/or acculturation challenges while on the job.

### **1.5 Outline of The Thesis**

The thesis has the following chapters: Literature review, methodology, findings, discussion, and conclusion. The literature review chapter focuses on past research studies on the predictors of job stress, the job and working conditions in the retail sector, and a small section on immigrants and the work challenges they face in Canada. In the methodology chapter, we go over the study's method and design, context and sampling, data collection, and analysis. Then, in the findings chapter, we provide the results of the study according to the research objectives. In the discussion chapter, we explain and evaluate our findings and show how it relates to our literature review and research objectives. Finally, the conclusion chapter contains a summary of the most important insights of the research and paves a way for future research.

## **Chapter 2 Review of Literature**

Due to the constantly evolving environment within the retail industry, retail workers face many job stressors (Wolken & Good, 1995; Cho et al., 2013; Tuckey et al., 2017). This chapter will dive deeply into different research sections on job stress in the retail industry in St. John's, NL.

This chapter consists of 4 parts. The first part covers job stress in the retail industry, its causes which we will call predictors, its different effects on workers, and some mitigation techniques that organizations and individuals can implement to mitigate job stress. Additionally, the relationship between job stress and job satisfaction will be explored. The second part focuses on job conditions in the retail sector, including the job demands and tasks, customer and social expectations, scheduling and wage issues, and organizational culture and management styles. The third part focuses on work challenges that immigrants face in Canada due to systemic barriers and acculturation while discussing the literature gap paving the way for our research questions and objectives. Finally, the fourth part of this chapter consists of a brief summary of the main predictors of job stress and its effects, the main challenges in the retail environment, and the main challenges that migrant workers face in Canada.

### **2.1 Job Stress: predictors, effects, mitigation, and job satisfaction**

We all have heard about job stress, and some of us might have experienced it, but what is job stress precisely? What are its predictors and effects? Are there techniques to help mitigate stress levels? And how does job stress affect employees' overall job satisfaction?

### **2.1.1 What is Job Stress?**

Stress is defined differently in different branches of science. In engineering terms, “stress is a force that deforms bodies,” and in medicine, “the term refers to your body’s strategy for adapting to whatever influences, changes, demands, and strains it encounters” (Kompier, & Levi, L.,1994; p. 13). According to the highly acclaimed researcher Richard Lazarus (1966), psychologically speaking, stress can be defined as a state of anxiety due to certain events and responsibilities exceeding the person’s capabilities, meaning that if a person takes on more physical or mental burdens than they can handle, they might be susceptible to stress. Physiologically speaking, “stress is defined as the rate of wear and tear on the body”.

After defining stress generally, it is crucial to go ahead and define job stress in particular. “Workplace stress is the change in one’s physical or mental state in response to workplaces that pose an appraised challenge or threat to that employee” (Colligan & Higgins, 2006; p.89). Although Collins and Higgins (2006) referred to “Workplace Stress”, in this paper, the term “job stress” will be used instead. Job stress can happen when you face a conflict with your colleague, your manager offends you, or when there’s high pressure or expectation for you to accomplish something that you don’t think is possible or appropriate.

Stress and job stress are not experienced the same by all people; each individual can react differently to the same stressful environment. One individual might find the environment very stressful; another might find it slightly stressful, whether at work or otherwise. Why is this important? The level of job stress experienced by the individual directly affects the severity of the stress on the individual’s health (Kompier & Levi, L. 1994; Stranks, 2005; Carver & Connor-Smith, 2010). If we go back to our engineering definition, when you’re driving, the

more you step on the peddle and give the car more gas, the faster the engine is functioning; this leads to the engine wearing out faster. If we compare this to our medicine definition, we find out that job stress affects the body similarly; the higher the stress levels, the more quickly the body wears out (Kompier, & Levi, L. 1994; Stranks, 2005; Carver & Connor-Smith, 2010).

In this paper, for the sake of consistency, when stress is mentioned, it refers to demands and strains that people feel at work or beyond. On the other hand, job stress and “stress related to employment” will be used interchangeably to refer specifically to demands and strains that people feel as a result of their job or employment situation in particular. When referring to job stress within a particular organization, the phrase “stress within the workplace will be used”<sup>3</sup>.

### **2.1.2 Predictors of job stress:**

In general, job stress occurs when an employee faces specific demands, pressures, and professional aspects at work which does not meet their knowledge and ability levels, which in terms poses a challenge to the employee’s capabilities and makes it hard for the employee to continue his employment at his workplace (Steve, 2011). One of the main reasons for job stress, according to Mead (2001), is workload, or what we will call role overload. Role overload can be caused by many things, such as poor job designs, poor leadership and management, and inadequate staffing (Tuckey et al., 2017). According to research by Rubina et al. (2008), a lack of resources and an increased workload have led to increased levels of stress in the workplace. According to Gillespie et al.(2001), when an employee cannot find enough resources to perform his or her job the right way, such as training material, management support, clear role

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<sup>3</sup> Note to readers: Since the causes and effects of stress in general, and job stress in particular, are many and varied, the literature review in this paper is necessarily rather selective, and only represents a subset of all of the factors that cause or contribute to stress.

descriptions, the employee tends to quit, thus decreasing staff levels at the workplace and leading to inadequate staff levels. What does this mean for the remaining employees? This will increase pressure on the remaining employees, and the workload that needs, for example, five people to handle will need to be run by only three people; this will increase employees' stress levels. Stranks (2005) mentions that insufficient staff for the size of the workload, and too many unfilled posts, can result in excessive overtime working and employees taking up tasks for which they have not been trained, which may lead to job stress. Time pressure such as unreasonable deadlines, or tasks with no clear time period, is another example of role overload; many researchers have mentioned that time pressure directly affects the levels of job stress (Zuzanek, 2004).

Another critical predictor of job stress is role conflict. Role conflict happens when the employee must perform different tasks that contradict each other simultaneously or on the same shift (Crossman, 2022). One of the main reasons leading to role conflict is when assigned tasks conflict with others.

Multiple customer-related social stressors can also cause job stress. According to Broadbridge et al. (2000), workers consider friendly and nice customers to be a source of satisfaction in their job. But not all customers are nice and friendly; on the contrary, dealing with difficult people sometimes can be tiring and stressful; this applies to work too. Employees must deal with difficult customers all the time. Serving these sometimes rude and demanding customers can be very stressful for salespeople (Broadbridge et al., 2000). Lack of appropriate training and formal employee assistance can make it more challenging and, thus, more stressful for employees to deal with difficult customers (Tuckey et al., 2022). In addition, a lack of

security personnel can put the employee under more job stress, especially when dealing with those troublesome customers.

Excessive physical demand is another predictor of job stress. Insufficient space to operate comfortably and safely, lack of privacy, excessive noise levels, inadequate ventilation, poor levels of illumination, inhuman workplace layouts requiring excessive bending and stretching, and inadequate temperature and humidity are all forms of excessive physical demands (Stranks, 2005). Constant exposure to these unfavorable conditions can cause job stress. Another form of physical demand is the proneness to violence; if the employee works alone at night in an isolated location (Zeytinoglu et al., 2005), they are exposed to the danger of being robbed, for example. Furthermore, being responsible for opening and closing the store and the cash register, along with depositing the cash made during the day after work hours, can also expose them to violence (Zeytinoglu et al., 2005).

Irregular and unpredictable hours can also be mentioned as a predictor of job stress. The most significant number of part-time and casual employees in Canada is in the retail industry (WES Compendium, 2001). Part-time workers often have fewer benefits than full-time employees. They are also employed only to cover sick calls or peak hours during the week, which means their hours are not guaranteed (Zeytinoglu et al., 2005). National data shows that part-time workers learned of their work schedule with just a week or less notice (Henly & Lambert, 2014). In addition, even when the employee has his schedule ready, shifts can often be added or canceled on the same day without further notice. This unpredictability in hours can be stressful and makes it hard for the employee to have a personal life; in other terms, retail work offers a poor work-life balance. Irregular hours can also mean short and split shifts. This means

instead of an employee working 20 hours in three shifts of 8-6-6 hours, the 20 hours can be spread through five shifts consisting of only four hours each. Keep in mind that when working a 4-hour shift, the manager is only required to give the employee a 15-minute break; thus, the manager can reduce break times during the day (Zeytinoglu et al., 2005). Why is this a wrong schedule for the employee? This will force the employee to juggle multiple jobs to reach the full-time number of hours needed to cover monthly expenses, often working two or more jobs on the same day. This will increase transportation costs and commute time between one job and the other and leave little to no time for the employee's personal life (Zeytinoglu et al., 2005).

The relationships between the employee and his boss, subordinates, and colleagues are considered a major source of job stress (Cooper & Payne, 1978; Stranks, 2005). Some behavioral scientists (Argyris, 1964; Cooper, 1973) have mentioned that positive relationships between different employees in the same workplace are key factors in individual and organizational health. What's the difference between positive/good relationships and negative/poor relationships? Poor relationships between work colleagues are defined by French and Caplan (1973) as those with "low trust, low supportiveness, and low interest in listening to and trying to deal with problems that confront the organizational member.", meaning that work colleagues have no interest to listen and truly support their colleagues in any work-related matter. Other studies by French and Caplan (1972) found the same results; they found a positive relationship between low trust in the workplace and high role ambiguity, which can lead to poor communication and low job satisfaction. According to Buck (1972), employees had more job pressure when they felt their boss or manager had low consideration towards them, taking no interest in their wellbeing or any personal suggestion they have on work related problems. They also reported that when they were under pressure, their boss didn't give them helpful criticism

and played favorites with other colleagues. Whenever their boss had the chance, they didn't hesitate to take advantage of them. Buck also found an inverted relationship between "considerate behavior of supervisors" and "feelings of job pressure." The more considerate the supervisors are, the less pressure the employees feel, and vice versa. When discussing relationships at work, we should also include relationships between employees and their colleagues. (Lazarus, 1966) found that the lack of social support between colleagues can also lead to stress. Working with people employees don't get along with can also cause job stress. If they always get resentful or angry when dealing with their colleagues, this can negatively affect the employee's health (Giga & Hoel, 2003).

In addition, research shows that little or no recognition for an employee's good job performance and under-promotion/over-promotion can be major sources of job stress (Stranks, 2005). Under-promoted employees might feel that they have been overlooked, while over-promoted employees may be only promoted due to incorrect selection or the lack of available employees to fill the post more efficiently. Stranks (2005) also argues that thwarted ambition is where the employee's own ambitions and goals don't align with management's perception of his current and future abilities.

### **2.1.3 Effects of Job stress:**

According to (Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety, 2018), low levels of job stress are considered okay; in fact, they can be beneficial since they can be seen as a "challenge," "motivation" or "positive" stress. However, high levels of job stress over a long period can have mental and physical effects and changes. See (Yerkes & Dodson, 1908) for a seminal theory of stress and its negative effects if too low or too high.)



According to research, the most common and observed reactions to job stress are anxiety, depression, uneasiness, apathy, and alienation. Some of these reactions can be avoided, and some cannot be; however, what matters, is the intensity and frequency of these reactions (Kompier, 1994). Stranks (2005) argues that Anxiety and depression are the most common effects of job stress and that anxiety and depression can arise in different ways and with different levels and intensities and can lead to some disruptive life events, individual genetic features, and changes in neurological chemistry. Moreover, while these effects of stress might be short-term in nature, they can also continue to cause problems over the longer-term as well (O'Leary, 1990).

Job stress can also have behavioural consequences on people; ongoing exposure to job stress over time can push people to start smoking or overeating. Some people might even begin drinking high levels of alcohol to ease the stress. High-stress levels can also lead to aggressive and violent behaviour (Kompier, 1994). Job stress can also have physiological effects on the human body; it may cause high blood pressure, high or irregular heart rate, muscular tension, subsequent pain in the neck, head, and shoulder, dryness of the throat and mouth, and overproduction of gastric acid juice (Kompier, 1994).

Job stress can have significant effects at the organizational level. According to Mead (2009), job stress can directly affect employee turnover rate. According to (Lambert et al., 2004), job stress can lead to corporate inefficiency, high turnover rates, increased absence rate among employees, decreased job performance, and increased health care costs due to increased employees' physical and mental diseases caused by job stress. Job stress can also have critical effects on employees' job performance (Stranks, 2005), such as high rate of absenteeism, erratic

job performance, personal appearance, and poor staff relations.

According to Carver & Connor-Smith (2010), people can respond differently to the stressor that they encounter. More specifically, Cooper & Payne (1978) argue that not everyone will react to or experience a particular job situation the same way, nor will one person respond to or experience all job situations the same way. Different people will react differently to the same work environmental conditions; some people will find them pleasant and motivating, and others will find them stressful (Cooper & Payne, 1978). For example, a person with a low need for interpersonal affiliation will find a job dealing directly with people very stressful or dissatisfying; on the contrary, a person with a high demand for interpersonal affiliation will find the same job comfortable and satisfying. It is important to note that this depends on the nature of the stressor, some stressors affect people the same way (e.g., chemical exposure).

Many things affect people's proneness to job stress. According to Kompier (1994), social support, coping ability, and type "A" personality are all determinants of individual susceptibility to job stress, in addition to age, gender, and present illness or state of chronic disability. Someone with a Type "A" is usually associated with high achievement, competitiveness, and impatience. Some of the people most vulnerable to job stress are type "A" personalities, young and elderly workers, migrant workers, disabled workers, and female workers (Kompier, 1994). People with type "A" personalities tend to be very competitive in the workplace by being impatient, hostile, obsessed with speed, and doing more than others in less time (Kompier, 1994). Even though type A's are respected by organizations for their passion and motivation, they may be disliked by their colleagues and managers for their impatience and lack of teamwork skills. While there are several other variables (e.g. personality type, hardiness, etc.) that might moderate how a given worker is affected by job stress, tests for moderation are

beyond the scope of this paper.

#### **2.1.4 Mitigation techniques:**

Organizations can implement multiple prevention or mitigation techniques to create more positive and less stressful work environments. According to Kompier (1994), organizations can follow three fundamental strategies to “prevent” stress in the workplace. First, organizations can try to end the stressful situation or remove the person from it. Second, they can adjust the work to fit the needs and abilities of the worker. And third, increase the worker’s susceptibility to job stress by providing them with the required resources, such as social support, physical exercise, meditation, and training. To implement these three strategies, multiple measures must be taken; some of them are targeted toward the working situation and others towards the individual. Paul Rosch (1984) mentions ten actions that organizations can follow to reduce stress at the workplace, (1) providing sufficient time for employees to accomplish their given tasks, (2) laying out a clear job description, (3) rewarding good job performance, (4) make way for employees to come forward with their complaints safely, (5) coordinate responsibility and authority, (6) Give a clear description of the goals and values of the organization and try to adapt them with the workers own goals and values, (7) create a just, secure and tolerant work environment, (8) reduce or eliminate any harmful physical exposure, (9) learn from previous mistakes by understanding their causes and effects, and make sure not to make them again, and (10) provide employees with control and pride over the product.

In addition, the US National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) recommends designing appropriate work schedules with stable and predictable rotating shifts, allowing workers to be included in decisions and actions concerning their jobs, making sure job tasks are compatible with the employee’s capabilities, designing tasks to be meaningful and

with the ability to provide the employee with a sense of completeness, provide social and emotional support to the employee, provide the employee with job security, and define the employee's roles and responsibilities clearly. Physical exercise can be a great way to reduce energy levels in our body produced by stress; medication can also be a way to decrease an individual's reaction to work stressors, and finally, seeking help from a doctor or a therapist to help us voice out our harmful thoughts and work towards changing our ways of responding to them (Kompier, 1994; Stranks, 2005).

According to Stranks (2005), there are many indicators that act as an alert that the individual or the work group are subjecting themselves to job stress. These indicators may be physical, emotional, or mental. Physical indicators can include chest tightness, muscle tightness, headaches, skin disorders, asthma, increased alcohol consumption, loss/gain in appetite, and insomnia. Emotional indicators can include anger, anxiety, frustration, guilt, and increased irritability. Mental indicators can include overthinking, severe attention to detail, forgetfulness, and trouble with thinking clearly. It is critical to know that people will almost never experience the same stress indicators.

There are also many indicators that organizations can look for to potentially identify stress in their workplace. These indicators are Absenteeism, poor timekeeping, high labour turnover, high sickness absence rates, low productivity, industrial unrest, and resistance to change in work procedures (Stranks, 2005).

There are potentially substantial benefits to organizations that can manage to reduce job stress levels among their employees. Reducing stress levels at the workplace can result in

improved health and morale, reduced levels of sickness absence, increased levels of performance, improved relationships with work colleagues, clients, and customers, reduced employee turnover, and reduced employee costs (Stranks, 2005; Bickford, 2005).

### **2.1.5 Job Satisfaction<sup>4</sup>**

Job satisfaction is an individual's response to his job by comparing the current results with their wants, needs, and expectations (Cook, Hepworth, Wall, & Warr, 1981; Cranny, Smith, & Stone, 1992). It is a subjective and individual feeling representing the level at which the employee's job meets their needs (Griffin et al., 2009). A straightforward and precise definition of job satisfaction was mentioned by Spector (1996; p.214), "the extent to which people like their jobs." Job satisfaction has a negative relation with job stress and job burnout (Cherniss, 1980; Gerstein et al., 1987; Whitehead, 1989; Whitehead & Lindquist, 1986)., meaning that high-stress levels lead to low job satisfaction. An employee who thinks their job doesn't meet their wants and needs may enter a state of dissonance from which they will try to break out (Cherniss, 1980; Whitehead, 1989). Employees with low levels of job satisfaction are more likely to quit their jobs; research done in the past shows that low job satisfaction leads to a higher employee turnover rate (Byrd, Cochran, Silverman, & Blount, 2000; Jurik & Winn, 1987; Lambert, 2006; Mitchell, MacKenzie, Styve, & Gover, 2000; Stohr, Self, & Lovrich, 1992). If the employee cannot quit their job, they will start feeling job stress as a reaction to the circumstances they don't like.

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<sup>4</sup> While Job Satisfaction is peripheral to the main themes of this dissertation, it is briefly considered in the analyses for added context for readers.

## **2.2 The Retail Environment**

The retail environment is a fast and constantly evolving environment. During the last few years, the retail environment has changed from an environment dominated mainly by full-time workers to an environment dominated by part-time and casual workers (Hinton, Moruz and Mumford 1999; Kainer 2002; Zeytinoglu and Crook 1997; Zeytinoglu et al., 2005; Henly & Lambert, 2014). And according to the WES Compendium (2001), the retail sector has the highest number of part-time and casual workers. This means that most of the retail workers who are part-timers are exposed to lower wages than full-time workers and even fewer benefits than full-time workers (Atkinson 1987; Beechy and Perkins 1987). Zeytinoglu and Crook (1997) mention that managers and companies purposely reduce work hours for part-time workers and even split the hours into shorter shifts. Split shifts can be tiring for the worker since working a four-hour shift doesn't include any breaks or meals. And, by having low hours, workers are forced to find another job (to afford today's high living costs), which also gives them short and split shifts. Hence, these part-time workers end up working four hours in the morning with no breaks or meals, finishing their shift, and then heading to their other job to work another four hours with no breaks or meals. The workers now will have to spend more time and money commuting to work and less time on their personal life, such as going to school, spending time with their families, etc. In addition, schedules for retail workers are usually sent out on less than a week's notice, giving them little to no time to plan their schedules.

Furthermore, these part-time workers have poor job security since their hours are not guaranteed. Since managers always try to match the work hours given and the sales demand during the month or season, these part-time workers may get little to no hours during low

seasons such as the winter. Having few, if any, guaranteed hours also makes it harder for workers to apply for specific loans and lines of credit since banks want a steady and guaranteed source of income. When it comes to training, research by Zeytinoglu and Weber (2002) shows that part-time workers are offered less training, on average, than full-time workers at the same job.

Even in today's world, there's still a difference between women and men in the retail environment and between part-time and full-time workers; research shows that management positions are often dominated by full-time male employees, while low-level associate positions are dominated by part-time and casual female employees (Kainer 2002; Zeytinoglu and Crook 1997). When it comes to age, the highest percentage of workers in the retail environment are young workers (Men and Women), single mothers, and middle-aged married women (Zeytinoglu 1999; Zeytinoglu and Muteshi 2000a, 200b).

Research shows that the retail sector is one of the sectors that need high physical effort; workers may have to perform their jobs in increased cold or hot temperatures and may have to work in environments that expose them to emotional harassment (Hinton, Moruz, and Mumford 1999; Messing 1998). Retail jobs often include standing for the whole shift and carrying/lifting heavy boxes constantly, especially when working in grocery stores. Messing (1998) mentions that working a long shift while standing and making repetitive motions can expose the worker to some health problems. Workers who have jobs in fast-food restaurants spend a long time in the kitchen, where they may face some dangers. For example, constantly using knives or heavy cutting machines, always being near boiling cooking oil and cooking grills and ovens, they are also required to go inside freezers with freezing temperatures to grab items for the kitchen.

Quinlan, Mayhew, and Bohle (2001), and Lewchuk et al. (2003) argue that all these factors combined, low wages, short and split shifts, low job security, low work-life balance, emotionally harassing environments, and dangerous environments can lead to high job stress levels between retail workers.

Another stressful part of the retail environment is that employees must deal with angry, rude, and demanding customers daily. Employees are also required to isolate their emotions completely when dealing with these customers and always serve with a smile; Hochschild (1983) found that isolating one's feelings can lead to psychological consequences. In addition, Hodapp et al. (1992) and Mills et al. (1989) showed that suppression of one's emotions, especially anger, has a positive relation with high systolic blood pressure levels. The retail environment is also very competitive, which sometimes promotes competition between colleagues or different stores by adding commission pay. This can create a hostile working environment that encourages personal goals instead of team goals and objectives. In addition, employees are sometimes required to perform multiple jobs on the same shift (For example, working on the cash, serving customers on the floor, and unloading incoming inventory).

Young, freshly graduated workers often are obliged to accept the first job that offers itself to them since they have little to no experience to be able to negotiate a good position; this job might not be compatible with their abilities and ambitions, which may expose them to job stress (Kompier, 1994). In addition, elderly workers are also exposed to job stress since they have to accept jobs with a high risk of exploitation and increased exposure to harmful conditions because of the low chances of landing any other jobs (Kompier, 1994). On top of their physical or mental handicap, which could limit their ability to function at work, disabled



workers also face prejudice from their employers and colleagues (Kompier, 1994). Female workers have and are still facing a lot of labour regulations that deny them a job in certain industries in some countries for lower physical strength and to protect women during their early stages of pregnancy. Today, women in the workplace are more prone to job stress for reasons not physical at all. They face prejudice, get low positions, get lower wages for the same jobs held by men, have fewer advancement opportunities inside the organization, and sometimes they are discriminated against and face sexual harassment, whether by their colleagues or their managers (Kompier, 1994).

### **2.3 Immigrant workers**

Canada is one of the most welcoming nations on earth, and according to Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) (2015), Canada welcomes around 250,000 immigrants yearly. These immigrants come from all around the world and are accepted under different immigrations programs, such as the Federal skilled workers program, which aims to fill the gaps in some industries in Canada (Sakamoto et al., 2010); another famous program is the express entry program, this program is based on points that the applicant can gather depending on his studies, work experiences, English and French proficiency, and many other factors, the importance of this program is that the government chooses applicants with the highest points possible, this means that these applicants are highly skilled applicants who will benefit the community and the workplace in Canada (Government of Canada; 2017a). Canada's immigration policies came in to solve some challenges that the government was facing; these challenges include low birth rates in the country, an aging population, labour shortages, and skills shortages in some industries (Boyd and Alboim, 2012; Elabor-Idemudia, 2005). Banerjee and Verma (2011) argue that current immigrants to Canada are highly educated and highly skilled people;

however, according to Man (2004) and Reitz (2007), these skilled immigrants still face challenges in their integration and settlement into Canada. The biggest challenges that these skilled immigrants face in their integration and settlement into Canada are (1) language barriers; (2) lack of social support; (3) lack of recognition of work experience outside of Canada; (4) lack of proper access to information; (5) lack of recognition of previous studies outside of Canada; (6) culture differences; (7) discrimination and stereotypes (Alboim and McIsaac, 2007; Banerjee and Phan, 2004; Chen et al., 2010; Drolet et al. 2015; Government of Canada, 2006; Weiner, 2008).

In this section, we focus on employment and discrimination, cultural and language-based challenges, and how they can expose immigrants to stress. When seeking employment, it can be challenging for an immigrant to land a job due to discrimination and the fact that sometimes, the immigrant's work experience outside of Canada is not recognized; the majority of employers would ask questions such as, do you have any Canadian work experience? (Alboim and McIsaac, 2007; Murphy, 2010; Statistics Canada, 2005; Weiner, 2008). Most immigrants who come to Canada will only find a job that is less productive/rewarding than the one they were working at in their home country (Banerjee and Phan, 2014) due to the challenges of landing a job and the lack of recognition of previous credentials, and since research found that the lack of employment is positively related to poor health conditions, these immigrants can be exposed to psychological health effects (Raphael, 2004; Marmot & Wilkinson, 2006; Murphy & Athanasou, 1999; Harnois & Bagriel, 2000; Stuart, 2006). Research shows that discrimination against new immigrants is still happening to this day; in general, non-European immigrants face devaluation regarding their skills and education (Bauder, 2003; Palameta, 2004; Thompson, 2000). This devaluation may prohibit new

immigrants from finding jobs in a high position in the Canadian labour market (Bauder, 2003) and, thus, push them towards low-paying jobs such as retail jobs.

New immigrants can also face challenges when it comes to language and acculturation. According to Grenier and Xue (2011) and Grondin (2005), language skills are considered one of the main pillars that clear the way for a skilled immigrant to land the desired job and to be successful in their career. In the process of integration into a new country, speaking the country's official language is very important. Even if a high majority of immigrants are skilled immigrants who have high English or French proficiency, language can still be a challenge for them due to the lack of a Canadian accent, industry-specific jargon, slang, and cross-cultural communication (Government of Canada, 2006; Social Planning Council of Ottawa, 2009). The process of acculturation can be complex and may affect new immigrants' mental health; new immigrants typically lack a social network, lack Canadian work experience, lack language proficiency, and are not familiar with the Canadian labour market structure (Boyd & Schellenberg, 2007).

Research shows that new immigrants to Canada usually have better health than the majority of Canadians; however, after a while, the immigrants' health status starts to decrease (Bergeron et al., 2009; Lou and Beaujot, 2005; Ng and Omariba, 2010). This phenomenon is called the "healthy immigrant effect" (Ng, 2011). Due to the many challenges that were mentioned earlier, such as acculturation, language barriers, difficulty in landing a job, lack of social support, and separation from their home country, immigrants' health status will start declining after a while, causing many psychological health issues such as stress (Chadwick and Collins, 2015; CIC, 2011; Robert and Gilkinson, 2012).

Research on job stress, the retail environment, and the challenges that new immigrants face in Canada is well-established and constantly improving; however, almost no study was found on the differences in job stress levels and predictors between Canadian and non-Canadian-born retail workers in Canada. This gap in the literature sparked our research and helped us form our research objectives, which were listed in the Introduction (i.e., page 14 of Chapter 1).

## **2.4 Summary**

This study focuses on job stress in the retail industry in St. John's, NL. This chapter covered multiple topics from previous well-established research. In the first part, job stress was defined, and various predictors and effects of job stress were explored. Then, the correlation between job stress and job satisfaction was briefly discussed. The second part included an overview of the different challenges that retail workers face in the retail environment. And finally, in the last part, an overview of the existing literature on the challenges that new immigrants face in Canada was discussed.

In the literature, it was discussed that there are many predictors to job stress, such as role overload, role conflict, time pressure, customer-related social stressors, excessive physical demands, irregular and unpredictable hours, work relationships, and appropriate rewarding; in addition, job stress can have many psychological, physical, and behavioural effects on the human body such as anxiety and depression, high levels of alcohol intake and aggressive behaviour, high blood pressure, high or irregular heart rate, and muscular tension. Additionally, job stress can have effects on the organizational level, such as high employee

turnover, low job performance, high absence rate among employees, high number of accidents, loss of concentration, loss of short-term memory, high number of mistakes, personal appearance, and poor staff relations. Furthermore, the retail environment can be very stressful due to the different challenges that retail workers may face, such as short and split shifts, poor job security, high physical effort, low work-life balance, emotionally harassing environments, and low wages. Also, new immigrants potentially face many challenges that may psychologically affect their mental health, such as language barriers, lack of social support, lack of recognition of work experience outside Canada, lack of proper access to information, lack of recognition of previous studies outside of Canada, culture differences, and discrimination and stereotypes.

## Chapter 3 Methodology

### 3.1 Introduction

The methodology of this study is presented in separate components.1 . The first part will describe quantitative research, followed by an overview of the main attributes of the survey method chosen. Afterward, the sampling procedures, data collection methods, and data analysis will be outlined. Then, the reliability of the data will be explored. And finally, ethical considerations regarding this study will be presented. To recap, my research objectives for this study are the following:

1. To assess the level of job stress among retail workers in St. John's, NL.
2. To determine whether there are differences in the average job stress levels and types of job stress between Canadian-born and non-Canadian-born retail workers in St. John's, NL.
3. To analyze whether there are differences in job stress predictors among Canadian-born and non-Canadian-born retail workers in St. John's, NL.
4. To explore whether length of stay in Canada, among immigrant retail workers, affects their level of job stress.

This research aims to analyze job stress and its predictors among Canadian-born and non-Canadian-born retail workers in St. John's, NL. This study hopefully will shed light on a stressful work environment and even give clues for companies on how to create a better, less stressful environment for their employees.

### **3.2 Quantitative research**

“Quantitative and scientific methods are the foundation of modern science” (Swanson & Holton III, 2005, p. 30). Quantitative research consists of multiple methods that can be used to study a social phenomenon using statistical and numerical data (Watson, 2015). Qualitative research aims to try to explore and understand potentially complex and multi-directional relationships between variables with the possibility of developing new understandings in an inductive fashion (Watson, 2015). In contrast, quantitative research is undertaken to test theories deductively via the use of inferential methods to reveal statistical associations between variables of interest (Creswell, 2003).

In this research, a quantitative approach will be used to analyze and measure job stress among retail workers in St. John’s, NL, the relationships between job stress predictors and job stress, compare job stress levels of non-Canadian-born retail workers and Canadian-born retail workers, and determine whether the longevity in Canada of non-Canadian-born retail workers is statistically associated with their level of job stress. Quantitative analysis also allowed me to take into consideration control variables which might concurrently be related to job stress. But, to be explicit, I will be exploring statistical associations, and will not conclude or imply causation, due to the relatively small sample size and nonexperimental nature of the data.

### **3.3 Context and Sampling**

This research study took place in St. John’s, NL, and focused only on retail workers. This city is currently transitioning from a smaller to a larger urban area as an increasing number of rural people are moving away or into the capital region, St. John’s, accentuating the urban-rural divide.

By using a quantitative approach, the researcher will be able to analyze the relationships between variables objectively, thus increasing the accuracy of the results and then generalizing results to broader populations (Williams, 2021). The researcher visited businesses that fall under the retail sector (Grocery stores, clothing stores, restaurants) in St. John's, NL, and talked to management about the possibility of surveying employees for a study being conducted at Memorial university of Newfoundland concerning job stress in the retail industry.

Approximately 70% of managers provided an answer on the spot, with almost half saying "Yes" and the other half saying "No." The other 30% of managers were unsure if they could provide me with permission and had to seek head office approval. For those managers, the researcher provided contact information and followed up with them regularly seeking an affirmative reply. A total of 21 businesses agree to distribute the survey (with implied consent letter) to their employees. The initial target was to receive completed surveys from 250 participants. That goal proved to be optimistic, since a total of 105 usable surveys were ultimately received, even after gently encouraging those participating employers to encourage that their employees undertake this voluntary, anonymous survey. The participants could be in any position in the retail sector, such as associate, supervisor, or manager, and could be Canadian-born or non-Canadian-born.

In this study, a purposive sampling technique was applied; this sampling technique is effective when the researcher wants to study a certain domain. It is a non-random technique in which I, the researcher, decide what needs to be known and went out to find people who can and are willing to provide the information I am looking for (Etikan, 2016; Rai & Thapa, 2015). The main idea of purposive sampling is to focus on people with specific characteristics (Retail workers in St. John's, NL) who can assist with our research (Etikan, 2016; Rai & Thapa, 2015).



### **3.4 Data collection: Surveys**

According to (Scheuren, 2004), a survey is a method employed by the researcher to gather data and information from a sample of individuals. This sample studied can then be used to generalize results to broader populations (Williams, 2021). The reason surveys were chosen as a method of data collection is the ability to gather information from a large cohort and some of the advantages they provide over other methods, including having a large population and, therefore, a greater statistical power, the ability to gather large amounts of information, and having the availability of validated models. (Jones et al., 2013, p. 7).

In this research, to collect data, a recruitment letter (Appendix A) was sent out by email to employers who agreed to survey their employees. Then, each employer distributed the recruitment letter to their employees, who then decided whether they wanted to fill out the survey voluntarily (Appendix B). After reading the recruitment letter, if the employee wanted to fill out the online survey, they would click on the link provided, which will take them directly to the survey. The platform Google forms were used for this survey. Once the employee clicked on the survey link, the survey opened and took them to an informed consent form (Appendix C). At that point, participants read the form and decided whether or not to consent to participate in the survey. If they answer “Yes,” they will start the survey, and if they answer “No,” the survey will end.

The survey consists of 29 multiple-choice and short answers questions, is approximately 10 minutes long, and is restricted to retail employees in St. John’s who are 18 years old and above. The survey is anonymous and optional and does not ask about employees’ names or employers; the only information that is collected is the email address of participants who wish

to participate in the draw for prizes. However, all email information will be destroyed after the draw is complete. To protect participant's privacy and confidentiality, electronic data (survey results) was stored on a password-protected computer, most results were presented in an aggregated format, details from any individual responses were camouflaged, and access to the data collected was limited to the researcher and his supervisor only.

Participants were informed in the recruitment letter and on the consent form that their participation is voluntary and that they may withdraw at any time. They can withdraw from the survey by simply abandoning it or closing the browser. If the participant withdraws from the survey, the data won't be collected; their responses are only collected after the participant finishes the survey and clicks "submit."

The survey starts with a few questions about demographics (which helped us separate Canadian-born employees from non-Canadian-born employees and determine non-Canadian-born employees' longevity in Canada) and about the participant's job information (which helped us find if the employees are part-time or full-time, and their position at the organization). Then, the participants were asked about their overall levels of job stress and about each job predictor and how much job stress it causes them. And finally, we ask about each participant's job satisfaction level.

### **3.5 Data Analysis**

A quantitative approach has been employed in this study, beginning with univariate descriptive statistics, followed by correlation matrices, and finally, OLS regression modeling (with job stress as the dependent variable) and logistic regression modeling (with severe job

stress as the dichotomous dependent variable). In these studies, the relationships between different variables are sought and interpreted. This type of research tries to find trends and patterns in the data but does not look for, or imply, causes for the patterns found (Baker, 2017). Only the data, relationships, and distributions of variables are studied. No variables are manipulated; they are explored in a natural setting. Our research will focus on the relationship between our different job stress predictors and job stress by determining the level of stress each predictor causes.

After data collection ended, it was time to start organizing the data. We started by exporting the data to an excel sheet, then transforming all the data to a numerical format to perform quantitative analysis. The coding of the variables is shown in Table 1. After the variables were coded, two other tables were created. Table 2, shows the sample characteristics of all the variables<sup>5</sup>, while Table 2A presents the frequencies of Independent and Control Variables. Next, descriptive analysis using “Jamovi”; multiple univariate analyses were performed, and tables and bar plots were created, which helped us visualize and reflect on our data, which enabled us to uncover multiple themes and exciting findings.

After the descriptive analysis was completed, we created dichotomous variables, as necessary, among the categorical variables to be able to perform correlation and regression analyses. Furthermore, we created multiple correlation and regression tables to determine which ones to present in this thesis. Bivariate correlations were used to assess variables, and then in pairs, to lay the foundation for our regression analysis, which is the heart of our data analyses,

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<sup>5</sup> Although this analysis is based on non-experimental data, we refer to ‘dependent’ and ‘independent’ variables throughout this paper for convenience and clarity, even though it would be more precise to refer to them as criteria and predictor variables.

and where we find or do not find support for each of our hypotheses<sup>6</sup>.

***Table 1. Variable Operationalizations (i.e., Variable Codebook)***

<b>Dependent Variables Description/ Source</b>	<b>Purpose/Explanation, Coding</b>
Overall level of Job Stress (Q16)	None - very low = 1, Low = 2, Moderate = 3, High = 4, Very High = 5
Severe Job Stress (Derived from Q16)	Yes = 1 (i.e., Stress equal high or very high), No = 0 (i.e., Stress is none to moderate)
Overall level of non-work-related stress (Q17)	None - very low = 1, Low = 2, Moderate = 3, High = 4, Very High = 5
Job Stress due to role overload (Time pressure, deadlines, staffing issues, etc.) (Q18)	Not Applicable = 0, None - very low = 1, Low = 2, Moderate = 3, High = 4, Very High = 5
Job Stress due to role conflict (Having different or incompatible roles at the same time, or your role overlapping with another worker, etc.) (Q19)	Not Applicable = 0, None - very low = 1, Low = 2, Moderate = 3, High = 4, Very High = 5
Job Stress due to dealing with rude or demanding customers (Q20)	Not Applicable = 0, None - very low = 1, Low = 2, Moderate = 3, High = 4, Very High = 5
Level of Job stress due to physical demands (Long hours, job duties, etc.) (Q21)	Not Applicable = 0, None - very low = 1, Low = 2, Moderate = 3, High = 4, Very High = 5
Level of Job stress due to irregular hours (Last minute shifts cancellations, schedule unpredictability, short workweeks, etc.) (Q22)	Not Applicable = 0, None - very low = 1, Low = 2, Moderate = 3, High = 4, Very High = 5
Level of Job stress due to supervisor's treatment (Unhelpful or unfair criticism, supervisor playing favourites, lack of support, irresponsible supervisor) (Q23)	Not Applicable = 0, None - very low = 1, Low = 2, Moderate = 3, High = 4, Very High = 5
Level of Job stress due to interactions with colleagues (rude or unpleasant colleagues) (Q24)	Not Applicable = 0, None - very low = 1, Low = 2, Moderate = 3, High = 4, Very High = 5
Level of Job stress due to pressure for upselling (Commission-based pay, a competitive environment, etc.) (Q25)	Not Applicable = 0, None - very low = 1, Low = 2, Moderate = 3, High = 4, Very High = 5

<sup>6</sup> One Reviewer suggested that, due to the nested nature of the data given that each employee/worker was employed within a single, specific organization, multi-level analyses could have been considered. I agree that that approach could have been fruitful, and that is noted in the limitations section in this document.

Level of stress due to low wages and benefits (Q26)	Not Applicable = 0, None - very low = 1, Low = 2, Moderate = 3, High = 4, Very High = 5
Level of Job stress due to short or split shifts (For example, 20 hours per week split over 5 days, each consisting of a 4-hour shift, etc.) (Q27)	Not Applicable = 0, None - very low = 1, Low = 2, Moderate = 3, High = 4, Very High = 5
Job Satisfaction (Q28)	Very dissatisfied = 1, Slightly dissatisfied = 2, Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied = 3, Slightly satisfied = 4, Very satisfied = 5

<b>Independent &amp; Control Variables description/source</b>	<b>Purpose/Explanation, Coding</b>
Age (Q2)	Age in Years
Gender (Q3)	Male = 1, Female = 0, and Gender Fluid = 0, Gender Fluid was coded as Female to protect participant anonymity due to small sample size
Born outside of Canada (Q4)	Yes = 1, No = 0
Duration In Canada (Q5)	Less than 1 year = 1, 1-3 years = 2, 3-5 years = 3, 5-10 years = 4, more than 10 years = 5, (i.e. value is missing for those born in Canada)
Participant with an English mother tongue (Q6)	Yes = 1, No = 0, Including those born inside Canada
Number of jobs in the retail sector from (Q7)	One job in the retail sector = 1, two or more jobs in the retail sector = 0
Type of Retail Store (Q8)	Clothing/outlet = 1 (Reference), Supermarket/Grocery/Convenience = 2, Restaurant/coffee shop/Fast Food = 3, Internet/Mobile = 4, Shoe Store = 1, Kitchen/home appliances = 2, others recorded see footnote 1 below <sup>7, 8</sup>
Number of other employees present at a typical shift (Q9)	Less than 5 employees = 1, 6-10 employees = 2, More than 10 employees = 3, others recorded see footnote 2 <sup>9</sup>
Employee Position (Q10)	Associate (Sales, Cashier, Server, Runner) = 1, Team Lead / Supervisor = 2, Manager/Assistant Manager = 3 (Reference group) <sup>10</sup>
Part time Status (Q11)	Part-time = 1 (Less than 30 hours per week), Full-time = 0 (30+ hours per week)

<sup>7</sup> For Q8, there were two participants who chose other, those 2 participants were recoded into the main 4 categories, where they fit best.

<sup>8</sup> We created dichotomous variables for each of the four categories.

<sup>9</sup> Footnote 2: For Q9, there were a small number of participants who said that on a typical shift they work with 4-6 co-workers, these were recorded into the 6-10 employee's category.

<sup>10</sup> We created dichotomous variables for each of the three variables.

Years working in Retail (Q12)	Less than 1 year = 1, 1-3 years = 2, 3-5 years = 3, 5-10 years = 4, more than 10 years = 5
Permanent Status (Q13)	Permanent = 1, non-Permanent (i.e. Casual Temporary / Fixed-Term) = 0
Consider themselves to be low-paid (Q14)	Yes = 1, No = 0
Type of Household they live in (Q15)	They live in a household with at least one other earner They are the sole earner = 1, = 0

### 3.6 Reliability

According to (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), the quality of quantitative research can be assessed by its degree of internal and external validity, reliability, and objectivity. A study is considered internally valid when it can determine whether a causal relationship exists between one or more independent variables and one or more dependent variables (Heffner, 2017). Additionally, a study is internally valid when there are as few confounding variables (Variables that the researcher can't control or eliminate) as possible (Shuttleworth, 2008). In this research, the relationship between the dependent variable (job stress) and the independent variables (job stress predictors) can be determined. In addition, the researcher chose the independent variables, and the participants were directly asked about them.

External validity refers to the ability to generalize a study (Trochim, 2006); the sample needs to be appropriately chosen. In our research, access to the survey was limited to the selected organizations' employees only to ensure only retail workers in St. John's, NL, were participating in the study, which will help us offer some preliminary generalizations at the end of this dissertation. A study is considered reliable if it will always provide the same results over and over (Trochim, 2006). Among the factors that can hinder reliability is when a researcher adopts a subjective approach (Wilson, 2010); however, in this study, the researcher had no

contact or influence with the participants.

For a study to be as objective as possible, the researcher needs to distance themselves from what they are studying, so results are natural and are not influenced by the personality, beliefs, and values of the researcher (Payne & Payne, 2004). The researcher had no contact with participants; the survey was emailed to employers who distributed it to their employees, and in no way did the researcher influence participants' responses. However, due to time constraints and challenges collecting the survey data, the researcher did not undertake pilot testing for validity or reliability.

### **3.7 Role of the researcher**

I am interested in retail workers because these types of jobs are considered stressful yet low-paying jobs. I chose St. John's based on convenience since this is where I reside, but also because it is a bit harder for employees to find good, high-paying jobs here in St. John's compared to other cities in Canada. As a researcher, I tried to be as objective as possible. This was done by having no connection with any of the participants; permission was sought from employers who were responsible for distributing the survey to their employees. There were no direct interactions between the researcher and the participants. The data were analyzed and presented as it is with no manipulation.

### **3.8 Ethical Considerations**

Ethics approval was sought in July 2022 and was received from MUN's Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research (ICEHR) in August 2022. The ICEHR reviewed a research proposal, an informed consent form, the survey used to collect data, and the recruitment letter sent to employers. Before filling out the survey, the employees had to read the

informed consent form. In the informed consent form, the employees were informed about the objectives, benefits, and risks of filling out the survey; they were also informed that the survey is optional, confidential, and anonymous and that they could withdraw from the survey at any time.

Data collected from the survey was stored on a password-protected computer. Data will be kept for a minimum of five years, as required by Memorial University policy on Integrity in Scholarly Research, and then will be destroyed. The informed consent form, the survey, and the recruitment letter can be found in Appendix A, B, and C.

### **3.9 Summary**

The researcher employed a quantitative research study design to analyze job stress and its predictors among Canadian-born and non-Canadian-born retail workers in St. John's, NL. This chapter covered the methodology of the study by going over the quantitative research design, methods, data collection and analysis process, the trustworthiness of the research, the role of the researcher, and the ethical considerations followed by the researcher.



## Chapter 4 Findings

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the different findings that emerged from our collected surveys. The analysis of the data was driven by the previously mentioned research objectives and the themes emerging from the reviewed literature. As a result, the following set of hypotheses emerged:

1. Being an immigrant retail worker is a positive predictor of job stress.
2. Among retail workers in NL, perceptions of being low-paid is a positive predictor of job stress.
3. Among immigrants in NL working in the retail sector, the duration of time in Canada is a negative predictor of job stress.
4. Compared to all others, newly-arrived immigrant retail workers report a higher level of job stress due to mistreatment from customers.
5. A) Compared to those immigrating earlier, newly-arrived immigrant retail workers report a higher level of job stress due to mistreatment from managers.  
B) Compared to those immigrating earlier, newly-arrived immigrant retail workers report a higher level of job stress due to mistreatment from colleagues.

As mentioned in the literature review, immigrant workers face many challenges in their journey in Canada; we believe that these challenges also apply in the retail industry

leading to higher job stress levels. We also suspect that the perception of being low-paid can discourage a given worker and potentially trigger an increase in their job stress levels. When it comes to immigrants in Canada working in the retail sector, we predict that the longer they are in Canada, the lower their job stress levels due to the time they spend adapting to the multiple challenges they face and overcoming them. This also led us to speculate that newly arrived immigrants potentially have higher job stress levels caused by mistreatments from customers, managers, and colleagues.

Below, univariate and crosstabs are presented for most variables in the survey shown in the sample characteristics table below (Table 2). The first section of this chapter will focus on the level of job stress among retail workers in St. John's, NL. The second section will focus on the differences in the average job stress levels and types of job stress between Canadian and non-Canadian-born retail workers in St. John's, NL. The third section will analyze whether there are differences in job stress predictors among Canadian and non-Canadian-born retail workers in St. John's, NL. The final section will explore whether longevity in Canada among immigrant retail workers affects their level of job stress.

**Table 2. Sample Characteristics**

<b>Sample Size (N) = 105</b>				
<b>Dependent Variables (i.e., Stress)</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>
Overall level of Job Stress (Q16)	3.162	1.001	1	5
Overall level of non-work-related stress (Q17)	2.692	1.089	0	5
Job Stress due to role overload (Q18)	3.106	1.023	1	5
Job Stress due to role conflict (Q19)	2.838	1.093	0	5
Job Stress due to dealing with rude or demanding customers (Q20)	3.146	1.004	1	5
Level of Job stress due to physical demands (Q21)	2.904	1.010	1	5
Level of Job stress due to irregular hours (Q22)	3.038	1.079	1	5
Level of Job stress due to supervisor's treatment? (Q23)	2.305	1.395	0	5
Level of Job stress due to interactions with colleagues (Q24)	2.314	1.288	0	5
Level of Job stress due to pressure for upselling (Q25)	2.298	1.434	0	5
Level of Job stress due to low wages and benefits (Q26)	3.448	1.168	1	5
Level of Job stress due to short or split shifts (Q27)	2.429	1.537	0	5
Job Satisfaction (Q28)	2.721	1.136	1	5
Severe Job Stress	0.410	0.494	0	1
<b>Independent &amp; Control Variables</b>				
Age (Q2)	25.733	6.066	18	49
Male (Q3) (Recoded Version)	0.433	0.498	0	1
Born outside of Canada (Q4)	0.371	0.486	0	1
Duration In Canada (Q5)	2.000	1.026	1	5
Participant with an English mother tongue (Q6)	0.648	0.480	0	1
Number of jobs in the retail sector (Q7)	0.848	0.361	0	1
Type of Retail Store (Q8) (Recoded Version)	1.524	0.878	1	4
Number of other employees present at a typical shift (Q9) (Recoded Version)	1.629	0.763	1	3
Employee Position (Q10)	1.714	0.793	1	3
Part time Status (Q11)	0.638	0.483	0	1
How long have they been working in Retail (Q12)	2.600	1.268	1	5
Permanent Status (Q13)	0.500	0.502	0	1
Consider themselves to be low paid (Q14)	0.743	0.439	0	1
Type of Household they live in (Q15)	0.471	0.502	0	1

#### 4.2 Sample Characteristics: Descriptive Analysis

The frequencies of independent, and control variables are important characteristics

of a study population. The frequencies of these variables provide information on the distribution of the variables in the sample, and their potential associations with each other, Table 2(A) below provides a better understanding of the study population

*Table 2(A). Sample Characteristics (Continued): Frequencies of Independent and Control Variables. [1]*

<b>Independent &amp; Control Variables</b>	<b>Counts</b>	<b>% Of Total</b>	<b>Cumulative %</b>
<b>Age (Q2)</b>			
18	5	4.8 %	4.8 %
19	9	8.6 %	13.3 %
20	8	7.6 %	21.0 %
21	6	5.7 %	26.7 %
22	5	4.8 %	31.4 %
23	9	8.6 %	40.0 %
24	11	10.5 %	50.5 %
25	5	4.8 %	55.2 %
26	8	7.6 %	62.9 %
27	8	7.6 %	70.5 %
28	7	6.7 %	77.1 %
29	5	4.8 %	81.9 %
30	1	1.0 %	82.9 %
31	3	2.9 %	85.7 %
32	1	1.0 %	86.7 %
33	3	2.9 %	89.5 %
34	2	1.9 %	91.4 %
35	1	1.0 %	92.4 %
38	2	1.9 %	94.3 %
39	2	1.9 %	96.2 %
41	2	1.9 %	98.1 %
42	1	1.0 %	99.0 %
49	1	1.0 %	100.0 %

**Gender (Q3) (Recoded Version)**

Female	59	56.7 %	56.7 %
Male	45	43.3 %	100.0 %

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**Born Outside of Canada (Q4)**

No	66	62.9 %	62.9 %
Yes	39	37.1 %	100.0 %

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**Duration In Canada (Q5)**

Less than 1 year	12	30.8 %	30.8 %
1-3 years	21	53.8 %	84.6 %
3-5 years	2	5.1 %	89.7 %
5-10 Years	2	5.1 %	94.9 %
More than 10 Years	2	5.1 %	100.0 %

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**Participant with an English mother tongue (Q6)**

No	37	35.2 %	35.2 %
Yes	68	64.8 %	100.0 %

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**Number of jobs in the retail sector (Q7)**

Two or more jobs	16	15.2 %	15.2 %
One job	89	84.8 %	100.0 %

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**Type of Retail Store (Q8) (Recoded Version)**

Clothing/Outlet including Shoe Store	75	71.4 %	71.4 %
Supermarket/Grocery/Convenience including Kitchen/Home Appliances	7	6.7 %	78.1 %
Restaurant/Fast Food	21	20.0 %	98.1 %
Internet/Mobile	2	1.9 %	100.0 %

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**Number of other employees present at a typical shift (Q9) (Recoded Version)**

Less than 5 Employees	57	54.3 %	54.3 %
6-10 Employees	30	28.6 %	82.9 %

More than 10 Employees	18	17.1 %	100.0 %
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**Employee Position (Q10)**

Associate (Sales, Cashier, Server, Runner)	52	49.5 %	49.5 %
Team Lead / Supervisor	31	29.5 %	79.0 %
Manager/Assistant Manager	22	21.0 %	100.0 %

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**Part time Status (Q11)**

Full-time	38	36.2 %	36.2 %
Part-time	67	63.8 %	100.0 %

---

**How long have they been working in Retail (Q12)**

Less than 1 year	19	18.1 %	18.1 %
1-3 years	43	41.0 %	59.0 %
3-5 years	17	16.2 %	75.2 %
5-10 years	13	12.4 %	87.6 %
More than 10 years	13	12.4 %	100.0 %

---

**Employment Status (Q13)**

Casual / Temporary / Fixed - Term	52	50.0 %	50.0 %
Permanent	52	50.0 %	100.0 %

---

**Consider themselves to be low-paid (Q14)**

No	27	25.7 %	25.7 %
Yes	78	74.3 %	100.0 %

---

**Type of Household they live in (Q15)**

They live in a household with at least one other earner	55	52.9 %	52.9 %
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They are the sole earner	49	47.1 %	100.0 %
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[1] Missing cases are excluded in these presented percentages.

To make it easier for the reader, the above tables will be split into small figures and analyzed separately. Looking at Table 3 below, we can see that the mean for the levels of job stress among retail workers in St. John's is equal to 3.16, meaning that the average retail worker in St. John's, NL, has a moderate to a high level of job stress. By also looking at the mode, which is the value that occurs most often, we can see that in our survey, the highest number of answers on the following question "In your main retail job, what is your overall level of job stress?" was 4, suggesting that the typical retail worker in St. John's, NL, within this survey, has a high overall level of job stress. In addition, a standard deviation equal to 1 indicates that the level of job stress of retail workers in St. John's, NL, mainly falls between low and high. As per Table 4, we can see that employees with a very high level of job stress represent 6.7% of our sample, followed by employees with a high level of job stress (34.3%), followed by employees with a moderate level of job stress (32.4%), followed by employees with a low level of job stress (21.9%), and finally, employees with none or very low level of job stress have the lowest level of job stress (4.8%). Looking at the severe job stress variable we created (see, again, Table 1), we see that 41% of retail workers in St. John's, NL, within this survey, experience severe job stress (i.e. having a high or very high level of job stress) .

**Table 3. Sample Characteristics of overall level of job stress and severe job stress**

	<b>Overall level of Job Stress (Q16)</b>	<b>Severe Job Stress</b>
Mean	3.16	0.410
Median	3	0
Mode	4.00	0.00
Standard deviation	1.00	0.494

*Sample Size (N) = 105*

**Table 4. Frequencies of Overall level of Job Stress (Q16)**

<b>Levels</b>	<b>Counts</b>	<b>% of Total</b>	<b>Cumulative %</b>
Very High	7	6.7 %	6.7 %
High	36	34.3 %	41 %
Moderate	34	32.4 %	73.4 %
Low	23	21.9 %	95.3 %
None - Very Low	5	4.8 %	4.8 %

*Sample Size (N) = 105*

**Table 5. Frequencies of Overall level of Job Stress (Q16) Split place of Birth**

<b>Overall level of Job Stress (Q16)</b>	<b>Born outside of Canada (Q4)</b>	
	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>
Very High	4	3
High	22	14
Moderate	10	24
Low	2	21
None - Very Low	1	4

*Sample Size (N) = 105*



Looking at the different job stress levels seen in Table 5; for the none - very low level, there are four Canadian-born retail workers and only one immigrant retail worker, which is a ratio of 4 to 1. For the low job stress level, there are twenty-one Canadian-born retail workers and only two non-Canadian-born retail workers; in addition, for the moderate job stress level, there are twenty-four Canadian-born retail workers and ten non-Canadian-born. This indicates that Canadian-born retail workers are more likely to experience low to moderate levels of job stress than Canadian-born retail workers. Furthermore, when it comes to high job stress levels, there are fourteen Canadian-born retail workers and twenty-two non-Canadian-born retail workers. Finally, among those with a very high job stress level, there are three Canadian-born retail workers and four non-Canadian-born retail workers. This indicates that non-Canadian-born retail workers are more likely to experience high to very high levels of job stress.

**Table 6. Frequencies of Severe Job Stress split by Place of Birth**

<b>Severe Job Stress</b>	<b>Born outside of Canada (Q4)</b>	
	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>
No	52	17
Yes	14	22

*Sample Size (N) = 105*

To better understand this, a new variable was created called “Severe job stress,” which collapsed the level of job stress into two categories “Yes = experiences job severe job stress” and “No = does not experience severe job stress”. “Yes” being the applicants who answered that they experienced high and very high job stress levels, and

“No” being the applicants who did not experience job stress levels of high and very high. We can see in Table 6 that when it comes to retail workers who do not experience severe levels of job stress, 52 of them are Canadian-born, and 17 are immigrants. In contrast, among retail workers who experience severe job stress, 14 of them are Canadian-born, and 22 are immigrants among Canadian born retail workers. This shows that among Canadian-born retail workers, 21.2% experienced severe job stress, and among immigrants, 56.4% experienced severe job stress. If we look next at the same variable, severe job stress, but split by gender (Table 7), we can see that females are more likely to experience severe stress in the retail sector, with 19 Females and 16 males answering that they experience severe job stress.

***Table 7. Frequencies of Severe Job Stress Split By Gender***

<b>Severe Job Stress</b>	<b>Gender (Q3)</b>	
	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
No	40	29
Yes	19	16

*Sample Size (N) = 105*

In Table 8, the statistical relationship between severe job stress and one’s mother tongue is explored. The number of applicants whose first language is English and who experienced severe job stress levels is 13 (which represents 19.11% of the 68 participants having English mother tongue). That compares to 23 applicants whose first language is not English and who experienced severe job stress levels (which represents

62.1% of the 37 participants with a non-English mother tongue).

**Table 8. Frequencies of Severe Job Stress Split by Mother Tongue**

<b>Severe Job Stress</b>	<b>Participant with an English mother tongue (Q6)</b>	
	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>
No	14	55
Yes	23	13

*Sample Size (N) = 105*

In addition, the type of employment is also statistically associated with job stress levels. In our case, 15 Casual / Temporary / Fixed – Term retail workers experienced severe job stress, and 20 Permanent retail workers responded that they experienced the same level of stress. This can be seen in Table 9 below.

**Table 9. Frequencies of Severe Job Stress Split by Type of Employment**

<b>Severe Job Stress</b>	<b>Type of employment (Q13)</b>	
	<b>Full time</b>	<b>Part time</b>
No	32	37
Yes	20	15

*Sample Size (N) = 105*

Another factor that should be taken into consideration when speaking about the levels of job stress is the size of the store; this can be measured by the number of employees present at the store at a typical shift; if we look at the following Table 10

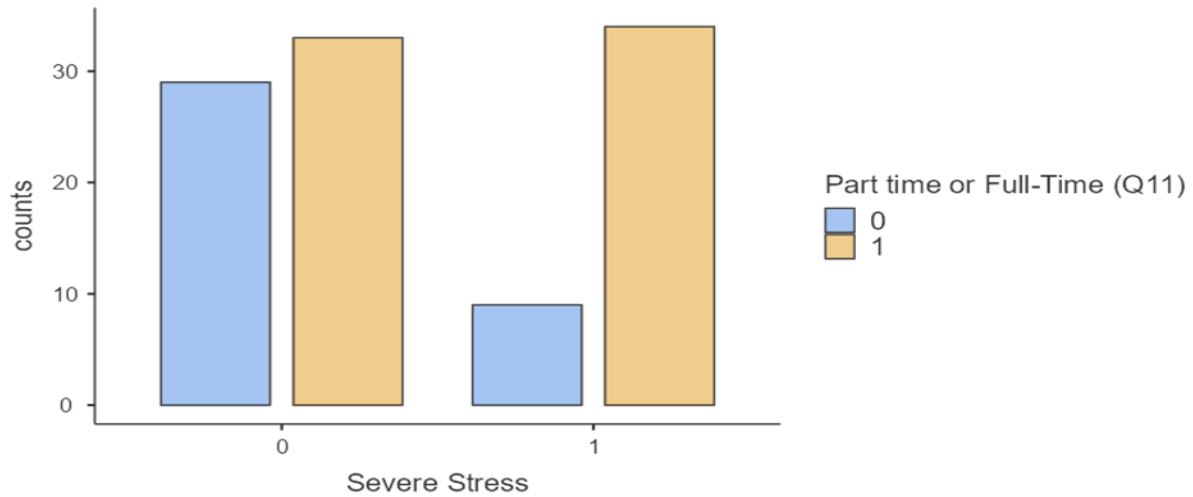
below, we notice that when the number of employees present at a specific shift increases, the number of employees experiencing severe job stress is lower. For stores with a number of employees at a typical shift of less than 5, 22 out of 57 (38.5%) employees experience severe job stress levels, and for stores with a number of employees at a regular shift of 6-10, 13 out of 30 (43.3%) experience severe stress levels, however, when it comes to stores with more than ten employees at a typical shift, only one employee out of 18 (5.5%) experience severe job stress level, a very significant difference than the other two store sizes.

***Table 10. Frequencies of Severe Job Stress Split by Number of Other Employees***

<b>Severe Job Stress</b>	<b>Number of other employees present at a typical shift (Q9)</b>		
	<b>Less than 5</b>	<b>6 - 10</b>	<b>More than 10</b>
No	35	17	17
Yes	22	13	1

*Sample Size (N) = 105*

Turning to the number of hours worked by each employee and the effect it has on the stress level, a bar plot was created (Figure 1) to better visualize this, showing the frequency of severe job stress between part-time and full-time retail workers in St. John's, NL. By looking at the employees who experience severe job stress, we can see that part-time workers are more than double the amount of full-time retail workers.



**Figure 1. Bar Plot showing the frequency of severe job stress between Part-time and Full-time retail workers (Part-Time = 0, Full-Time = 1) Sample Size (N) = 105**

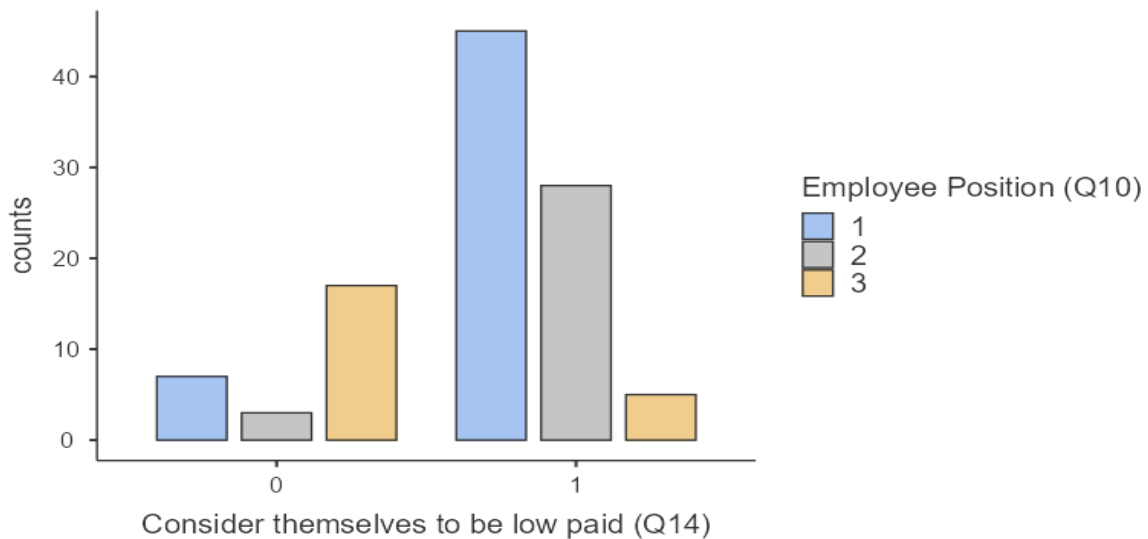
Another vital factor to look at is the position of the retail worker. In our survey, we had three positions for the applicant to choose from, Associate, Team Lead/Supervisor, and Manager/Assistant Manager. And in our results, we found (Table 11) that out of the 36 employees who answered that they experience severe job stress levels, 24 (66.6%) of them were low-level employees or what we referred to as an Associate, 8 (22.2%) of them were Team leads or supervisors. Only 4 (11.1%) of them were managers or assistant managers. We can see that as the position increases, the number of employees experiencing severe job stress decreases.

**Table 11. Frequencies of Severe Job Stress Split by Employee Position**

Severe Job Stress	Employee Position (Q10)		
	Associate	Supervisor/Team lead	Manager/Assistant Manager
No	28	23	18
Yes	24	8	4

Sample Size (N) = 105

When discussing an employee’s position, it is also worth mentioning the following results. When asked if they consider themselves low-paid, Associates had the highest number of employees who answered yes, followed by Team Leads and Supervisors, and lastly, Managers. We can notice the large discrepancy in their answers in Figure 2.



**Figure 2. Bar Plot showing the frequencies of employees who consider themselves to be low-paid based on their position (Associate = 1, Supervisor/Team Lead = 2, Manager/Assistant Manager = 3) Sample Size (N) = 105**

Let's look now at the longevity in Canada of non-Canadian-born retail workers in St. John's, NL, and see if it affects their level of job stress.

**Table 12. Frequency table showing severe job stress split by the longevity of immigrant retail workers in St. John's, NL**

<i>Sample Size (N) = 105</i>	<b>Duration In Canada (Q5) in Years</b>				
	<b>&lt;1</b>	<b>1-3</b>	<b>3-5</b>	<b>5-10</b>	<b>&gt;10</b>
<b>Severe Job Stress</b>					
No	7	5	1	2	2
Yes	5	16	1	0	0

We can see (Table 12) that when it comes to immigrants in the retail sector who experience severe job stress, five immigrants who have been in Canada for less than one year said that they experience severe job stress, and 16 immigrants who have been in Canada for 1-3 years said that they experience severe job stress.

**Table 13. Sample characteristics of Job Stress predictors split by place of Birth.**

<b>Job predictors</b>	<b>Born outside of Canada (Q4)</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
Stress due to role overload (Q18)	No	2.94	1.051
	Yes	3.39	0.916
Stress due to role conflict (Q19)	No	2.55	1.112
	Yes	3.33	0.869

*Table 13. Sample characteristics of Job Stress predictors split by place of Birth.*

<b>Job predictors</b>	<b>Born outside of Canada (Q4)</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
Stress due to dealing with rude or demanding customers (Q20)	No	2.91	0.971
	Yes	3.54	0.942
Level of stress due to physical demands (Q21)	No	2.68	0.970
	Yes	3.28	0.972
Level of stress due to irregular hours (Q22)	No	2.74	1.050
	Yes	3.54	0.942
Level of stress due to supervisor's treatment? (Q23)	No	2.00	1.347
	Yes	2.82	1.335
Level of stress due to interactions with colleagues (Q24)	No	1.95	1.143
	Yes	2.92	1.306
Level of stress due to pressure for upselling (Q25)	No	2.12	1.295
	Yes	2.61	1.620
Level of stress due to low wages and benefits (Q26)	No	3.17	1.197
	Yes	3.92	0.957
Level of stress due to short or split shifts (Q27)	No	1.91	1.486
	Yes	3.31	1.195

*Sample Size (N) = 105*

When it comes to job stress predictors, not all individuals are affected the same; what might cause someone a lot of stress might be negligible for someone else, depending on their age, gender, background, etc. In this part of the chapter, we will look at the predictors of job stress and their effects on Canadian-born and non-Canadian-born retail workers in St. John's, NL.

Looking at Table 13 above, we can see that when it comes to stress caused by role overload, Canadian-born retail workers reported an average of 2.94, compared to 3.39



reported by non-Canadian-born workers. Regarding job stress due to role conflict, Canadian-born retail workers reported an average of 2.55, compared to an average of 3.33 reported by non-Canadian-born retail workers. Looking at job stress caused by rude or demanding customers, we can see that the average reported by Canadian-born retail workers is 2.91, compared to 3.54 reported by non-Canadian-born retail workers. Next, we have job stress due to physical demands; Canadian-born retail workers reported an average of 2.68, compared to an average of 3.28 for non-Canadian-born retail workers. In addition, when it comes to stress caused by irregular hours, Canadian-born retail workers reported an average of 2.74 compared to 3.54 for non-Canadian-born retail workers.

Furthermore, Canadian-born retail workers reported an average of 2 for job stress caused by supervisor's treatment, compared to 2.82 for non-Canadian-born retail workers. Regarding job stress due to colleagues' interactions, Canadian-born retail workers reported an average of 1.95, compared to an average of 2.92 for non-Canadian-born retail workers. Job stress caused by pressure for upselling was relatively low for both Canadian-born and non-Canadian-born retail workers, with an average of 2.12 and 2.61, respectively. As discussed in the literature review, low pay and benefits are significant predictors of job stress. As we can see here, it is the predictor with the highest contribution to the overall level of job stress, with Canadian-born retail workers reporting a high average of 3.17. Non-Canadian-born retail workers reported a whopping 3.92. And finally, for job stress caused by short and split shifts, Canadian-born retail workers reported an average of 1.91, and non-Canadian-born retail workers reported an average of 3.31.

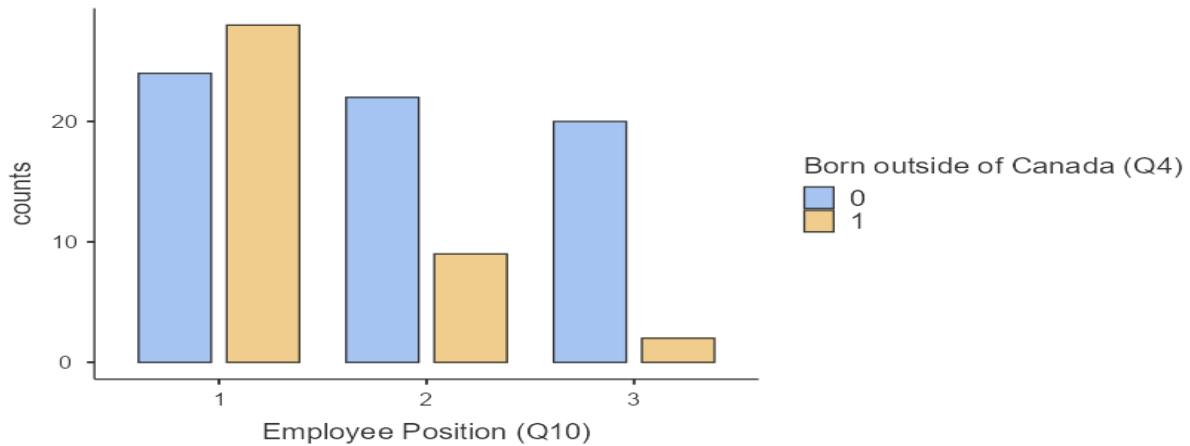
As shown in Table 13 above, the overall level of job stress is higher for immigrant retail workers than for Canadian-born retail workers, and job stress predictors affect immigrant workers much higher than it does for Canadian-born retail workers. So, one would assume that the level of individual job satisfaction for immigrants would be lower than that of Canadian-born retail workers. Table 14 below shows that Canadian-born retail workers have higher satisfaction levels than immigrant retail workers.

**Table 14. Job Satisfaction Level split by Place of Birth**

	<b>Born outside of Canada (Q4)</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
Job Satisfaction level (Q28)	No	3.02	1.10
	Yes	2.23	1.04

*Sample Size (N) = 105*

Next, we will look at the below bar plot (Figure 3), which I found to be interesting; as we can see, when it comes to an employee position, the frequency of retail workers in St. John's, NL, who were born in Canada, is almost the same across all positions. However, for retail workers born outside of Canada, we can see that the frequency decreases significantly when the position gets higher. In addition, when comparing management positions between workers born in Canada and outside Canada, we can see a significant difference in the number of managers between Canadian-born retail workers and non-Canadian-born retail workers.



**Figure 3. Frequencies of employee positions split by Place of Birth (No= 0 / Yes = 1) Sample Size (N) = 105**

### 4.3 Correlations<sup>11</sup>

Due to the large number of variables in our survey, only selected correlations between key variables are provided, via two correlation matrices. The first correlation matrix (Table 15) shows all the Job Stress variables and the key independent variables such as country of origin/born in Canada and length in Canada.

The second correlation matrix (Table 16) contains job stress, severe job stress, country of origin/born in Canada, length in Canada, one or more variables in our hypotheses, and control variables such as gender, age, permanent job status, type of position, type of retail store, part-time job status.

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<sup>11</sup>Given the large number of correlations provided in this subsection, the author admits that Type I error could exist, given an escalating familywise error rate.

**Table 15. Correlation between the job stress variables and the key independent variables. Sample Size (N) = 105**

		Overall level of Job Stress (Q16)	Severe Job Stress	Born outside of Canada (Q4)	Duration In Canada (Q5)	Job Stress due to role overload (Q18)	Job Stress due to role conflict (Q19)	Job Stress due to dealing with rude or demanding customers (Q20)	Level of Job stress due to physical demands (Q21)	Level of Job stress due to irregular hours (Q22)	Level of Job stress due to supervisor's treatment? (Q23)	Level of Job stress due to interactions with colleagues (Q24)	Level of Job stress due to pressure for upselling (Q25)	Level of job stress due to low wages and benefits (Q26)	Level of job stress due to short or split shifts (Q27)	Consider themselves to be low paid (Q14)	Job Satisfaction (Q28)
Overall level of Job Stress (Q16)	Pearson Correlation	1	.837**	.389**	-0.122	.665**	.595**	.675**	.522**	.549**	.364**	.467**	.323**	.612**	.554**	.380**	-.775**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000	0.000	0.458	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Severe job Stress	Pearson Correlation	.837**	1	.402**	-0.107	.569**	.427**	.586**	.352**	.406**	.236**	.370**	0.180	.462**	.463**	.268**	-.691**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000		0.000	0.515	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.015	0.000	0.067	0.000	0.000	0.006	0.000
Born outside of Canada (Q4)	Pearson Correlation	.389**	.402**	1	. <sup>c</sup>	.215*	.350**	.307**	.292**	.361**	.286**	.365**	0.163	.314**	.442**	.227**	-.336**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000			0.028	0.000	0.002	0.003	0.000	0.003	0.000	0.098	0.001	0.000	0.020	0.000
Duration In Canada (Q5)	Pearson Correlation	-0.122	-0.107	. <sup>c</sup>	1	-0.028	-0.118	-0.163	0.079	0.082	0.096	0.039	0.064	-0.188	-0.257	-0.227	0.124
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.458	0.515			0.866	0.474	0.320	0.632	0.621	0.561	0.812	0.702	0.253	0.114	0.164	0.454
Job Stress due to role overload (Q18)	Pearson Correlation	.665**	.569**	.215*	-0.028	1	.525**	.511**	.283**	.456**	.195**	.290**	.286**	.389**	.330**	.212*	-.511**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.028	0.866		0.000	0.000	0.004	0.000	0.048	0.003	0.003	0.000	0.001	0.031	0.000
Job Stress due to role conflict (Q19)	Pearson Correlation	.595**	.427**	.350**	-0.118	.525**	1	.509**	.555**	.429**	.436**	.514**	.413**	.554**	.528**	.533**	-.589**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.474	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Job Stress due to dealing with rude or demanding customers (Q20)	Pearson Correlation	.675**	.586**	.307**	-0.163	.511**	.509**	1	.400**	.346**	.364**	.416**	.248**	.609**	.419**	.507**	-.634**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.002	0.320	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.012	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Level of Job stress due to physical demands (Q21)	Pearson Correlation	.522**	.352**	.292**	0.079	.283**	.555**	.400**	1	.475**	.460**	.432**	.434**	.479**	.356**	.380**	-.546**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.003	0.632	0.004	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Level of Job stress due to irregular hours (Q22)	Pearson Correlation	.549**	.406**	.361**	0.082	.456**	.429**	.346**	.475**	1	.398**	.333**	.326**	.357**	.398**	.205**	-.493**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.621	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.001	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.037	0.000
Level of Job stress due to supervisor's treatment? (Q23)	Pearson Correlation	.364**	.236**	.286**	0.096	.195**	.436**	.364**	.460**	.398**	1	.728**	.458**	.293**	.427**	.318**	-.379**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.015	0.003	0.561	0.048	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.002	0.000	0.001	0.000
Level of Job stress due to interactions with colleagues (Q24)	Pearson Correlation	.467**	.370**	.365**	0.039	.290**	.514**	.416**	.432**	.333**	.728**	1	.529**	.295**	.495**	.314**	-.450**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.812	0.003	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.001	0.000		0.000	0.002	0.000	0.001	0.000
Level of Job stress due to pressure for upselling (Q25)	Pearson Correlation	.323**	0.180	0.163	0.064	.286**	.413**	.248**	.434**	.326**	.458**	.529**	1	.221**	.419**	.231**	-.316**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001	0.067	0.098	0.702	0.003	0.000	0.012	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.000		0.024	0.000	0.018	0.001
Level of Job stress due to low wages and benefits (Q26)	Pearson Correlation	.612**	.462**	.314**	-0.188	.389**	.554**	.609**	.479**	.357**	.293**	.295**	.221**	1	.513**	.732**	-.643**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.001	0.253	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.002	0.002	0.024		0.000	0.000	0.000
Level of Job stress due to short or split shifts (Q27)	Pearson Correlation	.554**	.463**	.442**	-0.257	.330**	.528**	.419**	.356**	.398**	.427**	.495**	.419**	.513**	1	.521**	-.558**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.114	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.000
Consider themselves to be low paid (Q14)	Pearson Correlation	.380**	.268**	.227**	-0.227	.212*	.533**	.507**	.380**	.205**	.318**	.314**	.231**	.732**	.521**	1	-.553**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.006	0.020	0.164	0.031	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.037	0.001	0.001	0.018	0.000	0.000		0.000
Job Satisfaction (Q28)	Pearson Correlation	-.775**	-.691**	-.336**	0.124	-.511**	-.589**	-.634**	-.546**	-.493**	-.379**	-.450**	-.316**	-.643**	-.558**	-.553**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.454	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).  
 \* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).  
 c. Cannot be computed because at least one of the variables is constant.

A correlation matrix is provided in Table 15 for all our job stress variables and key variables, showing that the born outside of Canada variable and all our job stress variables are significantly correlated, except for one, which is job stress caused by

pressure for upselling. Next, looking at the severe job stress variable and being born outside of Canada, the correlation between the two variables is also significant, and its strength is moderate ( $r = 0.402$ ). This means that immigrant retail workers in St. John's, NL, are more susceptible to job stress that is positively associated with role overload, role conflict, dealing with rude or demanding customers, physical demands, irregular hours, supervisor's treatment, interaction with colleagues, low wages and benefits, and short and split shifts. We can also see that the job satisfaction variable and being born outside of Canada variable are significantly correlated with an ( $r = -0.336$ ). Next, we can see that the overall level of job stress variable and the considers themselves to be low-paid variable are significantly correlated, with an ( $r = 0.380$ ).

The next thing to look at in our correlation matrix is the duration in Canada of immigrant retail workers in St. John's, NL. We can see the duration in Canada variable (which includes the duration in Canada of immigrant retail workers only), and all our job stress variables are not significantly correlated. We can see that with an ( $r = -0.122$ ), the duration of immigrants in Canada is negatively correlated with overall job stress levels, the correlation between the two variables is not significant, which in terms, does not allow us to make any assumptions. The same thing applies to the duration of immigrant retail workers in Canada, all other job stress variables, and the job satisfaction variable (This is likely due to our small sample size).

Turning to the second correlation matrix below (Table 16), we notice that the correlation between the duration in Canada of immigrant retail workers and job stress due to dealing with rude or demanding customers, supervisor's treatment, and interactions

with colleagues is weak and not significant, thus, does not allow us to make any assumptions about the data.

It is worth mentioning that there is a significant correlation between the overall level of job stress variable and the part-time, Casual – Temporary – Fixed term, and associate variables, indicating that being part-time or having a casual/Temporary type of employment can have a significant and positive impact on job stress levels, same with being an associate.

***Table 16. Correlation between overall level of job stress, severe job stress, some of our independent variables, some variables in our hypotheses, and control variables.***

		Overall level of Job Stress (Q16)	Severe Job Stress	Born outside of Canada (Q4)	Duration In Canada (Q5)	Job Stress due to dealing with rude or demanding customers (Q20)	Level of Job stress due to supervisor's treatment? (Q23)	Level of Job stress due to interactions with colleagues (Q24)	Age (Q2)	Male	Female	Part-time Status	Casual / Temporary / Fixed-Term	Associate	Team Lead / Supervisor	Supermarket/Grocery/Convenience	Restaurant/Coffee Shop/Fast Food	Internet/Mobile
Overall level of Job Stress (Q16)	Pearson Correlation	1	.837**	.389**	-0.122	.675**	.364**	.467**	-.275**	0.052	-0.052	.321**	.199*	.202*	0.042	-0.120	.205*	-0.093
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000	0.000	0.458	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.005	0.595	0.595	0.001	0.042	0.039	0.674	0.222	0.035	0.348
Severe Job Stress	Pearson Correlation	.837**	1	.402**	-0.107	.586**	.236**	.370**	-.287**	0.022	-0.022	.264**	.205*	.260**	-0.072	-0.067	0.165	-0.116
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000		0.000	0.515	0.000	0.015	0.000	0.003	0.821	0.821	0.006	0.036	0.007	0.466	0.495	0.093	0.238
Born outside of Canada (Q4)	Pearson Correlation	.389**	.402**	1	c	.307**	.286**	.365**	-0.178	.290**	-.290**	.374**	.328**	.342**	-0.109	0.032	.207*	0.037
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000			0.002	0.003	0.000	0.069	0.003	0.003	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.270	0.749	0.034	0.707
Duration In Canada (Q5)	Pearson Correlation	-0.122	-0.107	c	1	-0.163	0.096	0.039	.485**	0.104	-0.104	-.454**	-0.281	-.450**	0.120	-0.095	-0.110	-0.160
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.458	0.515			0.320	0.561	0.812	0.002	0.528	0.528	0.004	0.083	0.004	0.466	0.565	0.506	0.330
Job Stress due to dealing with rude or demanding customers (Q20)	Pearson Correlation	.675**	.586**	.307**	-0.163	1	.364**	.416**	-.204*	0.090	-0.090	.313**	0.167	0.170	0.074	-0.039	0.174	-0.021
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.002	0.320		0.000	0.000	0.039	0.365	0.365	0.001	0.093	0.087	0.459	0.693	0.079	0.837
Level of Job stress due to supervisor's treatment? (Q23)	Pearson Correlation	.364**	.236**	.286**	0.096	.364**	1	.728**	-.230*	0.059	-0.059	.322**	.382**	0.126	0.008	-0.004	0.182	-0.081
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.015	0.003	0.561	0.000		0.000	0.018	0.547	0.547	0.001	0.000	0.202	0.933	0.970	0.063	0.413
Level of Job stress due to interactions with colleagues (Q24)	Pearson Correlation	.467**	.370**	.365**	0.039	.416**	.728**	1	-.241*	0.013	-0.013	.262**	.347**	0.188	-0.012	-0.036	.249*	-0.088
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.812	0.000	0.000		0.013	0.896	0.896	0.007	0.000	0.055	0.903	0.717	0.010	0.369
Age (Q2)	Pearson Correlation	-.275**	-.287**	-0.178	.485**	-.204*	-.230*	-.241*	1	0.045	-0.045	-.582**	-.438**	-.616**	0.125	0.132	-0.116	0.006
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.005	0.003	0.069	0.002	0.039	0.018	0.013		0.651	0.651	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.202	0.180	0.239	0.950
Male	Pearson Correlation	0.052	0.022	.290**	0.104	0.090	0.059	0.013	0.045	1	-1.000**	-0.069	0.011	0.104	-0.096	0.154	0.048	0.161
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.595	0.821	0.003	0.528	0.365	0.547	0.896	0.651		0.000	0.486	0.911	0.289	0.328	0.116	0.626	0.101
Female	Pearson Correlation	-0.052	-0.022	-.290**	-0.104	-0.090	-0.059	-0.013	-0.045	-1.000**	1	0.069	-0.011	-0.104	0.096	-0.154	-0.048	-0.161
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.595	0.821	0.003	0.528	0.365	0.547	0.896	0.651	0.000		0.486	0.911	0.289	0.328	0.116	0.626	0.101
Part-time	Pearson Correlation	.321**	.264**	.374**	-.454**	.313**	.322**	.262**	-.582**	-0.069	0.069	1	.641**	.587**	-0.121	0.042	0.129	-0.040
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001	0.006	0.000	0.004	0.001	0.001	0.007	0.000	0.486	0.486		0.000	0.000	0.220	0.668	0.190	0.685
Casual / Temporary / Fixed-Term	Pearson Correlation	.199*	.205*	.328**	-0.281	0.167	.382**	.347**	-.438**	0.011	-0.011	.641**	1	.486**	-0.111	-0.041	0.067	-0.001
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.042	0.036	0.001	0.083	0.093	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.911	0.911	0.000		0.000	0.262	0.680	0.499	0.989
Associate	Pearson Correlation	.202*	.260**	.342**	-.450**	0.170	0.126	0.188	-.616**	0.104	-0.104	.587**	.486**	1	-.641**	-0.112	0.076	0.141
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.039	0.007	0.000	0.004	0.087	0.202	0.055	0.000	0.289	0.289	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.255	0.440	0.152
Team Lead / Supervisor	Pearson Correlation	0.042	-0.072	-0.109	0.120	0.074	0.008	-0.012	0.125	-0.096	0.096	-0.121	-0.111	-.641**	1	0.078	0.042	-0.090
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.674	0.466	0.270	0.466	0.459	0.933	0.903	0.202	0.328	0.328	0.220	0.262	0.000		0.428	0.672	0.360
Supermarket/Grocery/Convenience	Pearson Correlation	-0.120	-0.067	0.032	-0.095	-0.039	-0.004	-0.036	0.132	0.154	-0.154	0.042	-0.041	-0.112	0.078	1	-0.134	-0.037
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.222	0.495	0.749	0.565	0.693	0.970	0.717	0.180	0.116	0.116	0.668	0.680	0.255	0.428		0.174	0.706
Restaurant/Coffee Shop/Fast Food	Pearson Correlation	.205*	0.165	.207*	-0.110	0.174	0.182	.249*	-0.116	0.048	-0.048	0.129	0.067	0.076	0.042	-0.134	1	-0.070
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.035	0.093	0.034	0.506	0.079	0.063	0.010	0.239	0.626	0.626	0.190	0.499	0.440	0.672	0.174		0.480
Internet/Mobile	Pearson Correlation	-0.093	-0.116	0.037	-0.160	-0.021	-0.081	-0.088	0.006	0.161	-0.161	-0.040	-0.001	0.141	-0.090	-0.037	-0.070	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.348	0.238	0.707	0.330	0.837	0.413	0.369	0.950	0.101	0.101	0.685	0.989	0.152	0.360	0.706	0.480	

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

c. Cannot be computed because at least one of the variables is constant.

Sample Size (N) = 105

#### 4.4 Regression Analyses<sup>12</sup>

In this section, regression analyses are used to assess which factors seemingly are most closely related to job stress. Our 1<sup>st</sup> hypothesis is that being an immigrant retail worker is a positive predictor of job stress; this was predicted since, as mentioned in our literature review, immigrants face multiple challenges such as acculturation, language barriers, racism, etc. Thus, these challenges are expected to lead to higher job stress levels. Our 2<sup>nd</sup> hypothesis is that among retail workers in NL, perceptions of being low-paid is a positive predictor of job stress; this was predicted since we believe that pay is one of the essential factors of one's job, and an employee who thinks that they are low-paid, or are paid less than they deserve, is more susceptible to job stress. Our 3<sup>rd</sup> hypothesis is that among immigrants in NL working in the retail sector, the duration of time in Canada is a negative predictor of job stress.; this was predicted by the speculation that as immigrants spend more time in Canada, they get over or get used to some of the previously mentioned challenges and barriers, leading to a decrease in job stress levels. Our 4<sup>th</sup> hypothesis is that compared to all others, newly-arrived immigrant retail workers report a higher level of job stress due to mistreatment from customers. We believe this is true due to cultural differences, language barriers, and lack of social support. Our last two hypotheses, 5A, and 5B, are that compared to those immigrating earlier, newly-arrived immigrant retail workers report a higher level of job stress due to mistreatment from managers, and colleagues. We also predicted these two hypotheses due to the many

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<sup>12</sup> In the regression results presented in Tables 17-20, unstandardized regression coefficients are shown. Standardized (ie. beta) coefficients are available from the author upon request.



challenges immigrants face in Canada. All the hypotheses are listed at the beginning of chapter 4 (Findings).

**Table 17**  
**Born outside of Canada and Other Variables**  
**Affecting Overall level of Job Stress**

<i>Model:</i>	<i>Sample:</i>			<i>All</i>		
	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>4(A)</i>	<i>4(B)</i>
<u><i>Independent Variables</i></u>	<u><i>Coefficients</i></u>	<u><i>Coefficients</i></u>	<u><i>Coefficients</i></u>	<u><i>Coefficients</i></u>	<u><i>Coefficients</i></u>	<u><i>Coefficients</i></u>
Born outside of Canada			0.6645**			
Newly Arrived Immigrants				-0.50443		
Newly Arrived Immigrants (alt)					0.1153	
Duration in Canada (alt)						0.1930*
Consider themselves to be low paid		0.6660*	0.6609*	0.76013	0.6849*	0.6362*
<u><i>Control Variables</i></u>						
Born outside of Canada						
Age	-0.0143	-0.0109	-0.0209	-0.07836	-0.0104	-0.0175
Female	-0.1905	-0.2300	-0.0531	-0.23589	-0.2160	-0.0989
Part-Time Status	0.5692	0.4613	0.2882	0.18405	0.4591	0.3520
Non - Permanent	-0.0887	-0.1630	-0.2277	0.00555	-0.1741	-0.1937
Associate	0.1215	-0.1178	-0.3023	0.44339	-0.1364	-0.1299
Team Lead / Supervisor	0.2903	-0.0435	-0.1230	0.84114	-0.0506	-0.0400
Supermarket (And related)	-0.4898	-0.6232	-0.6239	0.02166	-0.6329	-0.5587
Restaurant (And related)	0.3287	0.2082	0.0900	0.15926	0.1967	0.1646
R-Square	0.168	0.213	0.287	0.461	0.215	0.255
Sample size	105	105	105	105	105	39
Degree of Freedom	104	104	104	38	104	104

*Note: Significance levels: \*\* p < .01, \* p < .05*

**Table 18**  
**Born outside of Canada and Other Variables**  
**Affecting Severe Job Stress**

<i>Model:</i>	<i>Sample:</i>			<i>All</i>		
	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>4(A)</i>	<i>4(B)</i>
<u><i>Independent Variables</i></u>	<u><i>Odds Ratio</i></u>	<u><i>Odds Ratio</i></u>	<u><i>Odds Ratio</i></u>	<u><i>Odds Ratio</i></u>	<u><i>Odds Ratio</i></u>	<u><i>Odds Ratio</i></u>
Born outside of Canada			6.327**			
Newly Arrived Immigrants				0.00249*		
Newly Arrived Immigrants (alt)					0.850	
Duration in Canada (alt)						1.812**

Consider themselves to be low paid	2.541	2.895	2.20444	2.468	2.581
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Control Variables

Born outside of Canada						
Age	0.932	0.934	0.887	0.46626*	0.933	0.892
Female	0.872	0.836	1.400	0.10521	0.817	1.263
Part-Time Status	1.513	1.333	0.840	60.16376	1.336	0.944
Non - Permanent	1.103	1.006	0.849	0.00432	1.021	0.924
Associate	1.626	1.152	0.598	6.91e+7	1.177	1.082
Team Lead / Supervisor	1.308	0.826	0.617	2.21e+7	0.833	0.876
Supermarket (And related)	0.772	0.635	0.606	135.6912	0.641	0.766
Restaurant (And related)	1.908	1.642	1.226	0.12078	1.668	1.502
Pseudo R-Square	0.0958	0.109	0.196	0.476	0.110	0.168
Sample size	105	105	105	105	105	105
Degree of Freedom	104	104	104	38	104	104

Note: Significance levels: \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*  $p < .05$

In Table 17 above, linear regression results are presented, showing the statistical association between being born outside of Canada, being a new immigrant, duration in Canada, the perception of being low-paid, and the overall level of job stress while controlling for other variables. Estimates from the linear regression are presented as coefficients. In Table 18 above, logistic regression results are presented, showing the statistical association between being born outside of Canada, being a new immigrant, duration in Canada, the perception of being low-paid, and severe job stress while controlling for other variables. Estimates from the logistic regression are presented as odds ratios. Odds ratios compare the probability of events for two groups, with an odds ratio greater (less) than one implying the event is more (less) likely in the comparator group than the referent group.

In Model 2 in Table 17, we can see that, when controlling for other variables, retail workers in St. John's, NL, who are born outside of Canada face an increase of

0.6645 in mean job stress levels than those born inside of Canada. The same results can be seen in Table 4, Model 3, where immigrant retail workers in St. John's, NL, are significantly more likely (6.3 times) to experience severe job stress. These results show that there is a significant positive correlation between being an immigrant retail worker in St. John's, NL, and job stress, which in terms, allows us to say that the data supports our first hypothesis, that being an immigrant retail worker is a positive predictor of job stress.

Looking at Model 2 in Table 17, the results indicate that, when controlling for other factors, retail workers in St. John's, NL, who consider themselves to be low-paid, face an increase of 0.666 in the mean overall level of job stress. These results can also be seen in Model 3 (0.6609 increase in the mean job stress levels), 4(A) (0.6849 increase in the mean job stress levels), and 4(B) (0.6362 increase in the mean job stress levels). In Addition, looking at Table 18, we see retail workers in St. John's, NL, who perceive themselves to be low-paid, are more than twice as likely to experience job stress than those who don't perceive themselves as being low-paid. These results show that there is a positive correlation between one's perception of being low-paid and job stress, which allows us to say that the data supports our 2<sup>nd</sup> hypothesis that among retail workers in St. John's, NL, perceptions of being low-paid are a positive predictor of job stress.

Furthermore, in Table 17, we can see that the newly arrived immigrant independent variable and job stress are not significantly correlated. We can also see in

Model 4(B) that the duration in Canada is a significant positive predictor of job Stress, showing that those earlier-arrived immigrants are, on average, more susceptible to job stress than newly-arrived immigrants. These results are mirrored in Table 18, where we can see that the more immigrant retail workers have been in Canada, the more likely (1.812 times) they experience severe job stress. These results also show that immigrants who have been in St. John’s, NL, for more than one year seemingly have higher job stress on average than a newly arrived immigrant, and those earlier-arrived immigrants are much more likely to endure severe job stress.

**Table 19**  
**Born outside of Canada and Other**  
**Variables Affecting Overall level of Job**  
**Stress**

<i>Sample: Born outside of Canada only (Immigrants only)</i>			
<i>Model:</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>7</i>
<u><i>Independent Variable</i></u>	<u><i>Coefficients</i></u>	<u><i>Coefficients</i></u>	<u><i>Coefficients</i></u>
Newly Arrived Immigrants			-0.50443
Duration in Canada		0.3208	
Consider themselves to be low paid	1.449*	0.8419	0.76013
<u><i>Control Variables</i></u>			
Age	-0.0551	-0.0789	-0.07836
Female	-0.1315	-0.1123	-0.23589
Part-Time Status	0.1179	0.2260	0.18405
Non - Permanent	-0.0183	-0.0926	0.00555
Associate	0.1569	1.2140	0.44339
Team Lead / Supervisor	0.4859	1.5109	0.84114
Supermarket (And related)	-0.0703	0.1601	0.02166
Restaurant (And related)	0.1389	0.1605	0.15926
R-Square	0.410	0.468	0.461
Sample size	39	39	39
Degree of Freedom	38	38	38

*Note: Significance levels: \*\* p < .01, \* p < .05*

Table 19, which only includes the 39 respondents born outside of Canada, shows the relationship between newly arrived immigrants, duration in Canada, and job stress. We can see that the newly arrived immigrant variable is a negative predictor of job stress, and duration in Canada is a positive predictor of job stress. Our third hypothesis is that among immigrants in NL working in the retail sector, the duration of time in Canada is a negative predictor of job stress. However, our data and results do not support our hypothesis.

**Table 20**  
**Being a newly arrived immigrant and**  
**Other Variables affecting job stress due to**  
**mistreatment from customers, managers,**  
**and colleagues respectively.**

<i>Independent Variable</i>	<i>Sample: All</i>		
	<i>Model: 5A</i>	<i>5B</i>	<i>5C</i>
	<i>Job Stress due to mistreatment from: Customers / Managers / Colleagues</i>		
	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Coefficients</i>
Newly Arrived Immigrants (Alt)	0.26550	0.0568	0.2770
Consider themselves to be low paid	1.26577**	0.6833	0.5890
<i>Control Variables</i>			
Age	0.00995	-0.0337	-0.0203
Female	-0.29076	-0.2986	-0.0145
Part-Time Status	0.45859	0.4651	-0.0976
Non - Permanent	-0.32309	0.8482*	0.7009*
Associate	-0.22809	1.2667*	-0.3707
Team Lead / Supervisor	-0.21086	-0.7716	-0.3076
Supermarket (And related)	-0.52427	-0.1528	-0.0530
Restaurant (And related)	0.02885	0.3718	0.5827
R-Square	0.314	0.238	0.201
Sample size	105	105	105

Note: Significance levels: \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*  $p < .05$

When it comes to our fourth hypothesis, which is that compared to all others, newly-arrived immigrant retail workers report a higher level of job stress due to mistreatment from customers; we will have to look at Model 5A in Table 20, where we can see that there is no significant relationship between the newly arrived immigrant variable and the job stress due to mistreatment from customers variable, which means that our sample and data does not contain sufficient evidence to conclude that a relationship exists in the population.

Moving to our fifth hypothesis (5A), which is that compared to those immigrating earlier, newly-arrived immigrant retail workers report a higher level of job stress due to mistreatment from managers, and looking at Model 5B in Table 20, we notice that there is no significant relationship between the newly arrived immigrant variable and the job stress due to mistreatment from managers variable. Meaning that our sample and data do not contain sufficient evidence to conclude that a relationship exists in the population.

And lastly, we discuss our last hypothesis (5B), indicating that, compared to earlier-arrived immigrants, newly-arrived immigrant retail workers report a higher level of job stress due to mistreatment from colleagues; if we look at Model 5C in Table 20, we notice that there is no significant relationship between the newly arrived immigrant variable and the job stress due to mistreatment from colleague's variable, which means that our sample and data does not contain sufficient evidence to conclude that a relationship exists in the population.

## Chapter 5: Conclusion

### 5.1 Introduction

The primary purpose of this study was to analyze job stress and its predictors among Canadian-born and non-Canadian-born retail workers in St. John's, NL. The findings from this study hopefully will contribute to existing knowledge and also give clues for companies on how to nurture a better, less stressful environment.

A survey was distributed to retail workers in St. John's, NL, in which 105 retail workers participated. Approximately 62% of these retail workers were Canadian-born, and around 38% were non-Canadian-born. These retail workers were asked about multiple things, such as their backgrounds, job information, and job stress and satisfaction levels. They were also asked an open-ended question about what causes them the most job stress at their main retail job. It was found that the level of job stress differs between individuals based on many things, such as their place of birth, their position, their type of employment, etc. The job stress level ranged from very low to very high, with the majority answering that they experience moderate stress levels, with some outliers experiencing very low and very high-stress levels. The highest predictors of job stress appeared to be dealing with rude or demanding customers, role overload, irregular hours, and low wages and benefits.

This chapter will explore and discuss the results based on our research objectives. In addition, at the end of this chapter, we will discuss the study's limitations, present our conclusions, and offer some recommendations for retail workers and employers in St. John's, NL, to help them better mitigate stress levels.

## 5.2 Answers to the Research Objectives

**Objective 1:** To assess job stress levels among retail workers in St. John's, NL.<sup>13</sup>

In the survey, participants were asked multiple questions related to their job stress levels; after analyzing the data, it was found that the mean for the overall job stress level in St. John, NL is 3.162, indicating that most retail workers in St. John's, NL experience moderate stress levels. In addition, by looking at the frequency of job stress, we can see that most of the retail workers in St. John's, NL, experience high levels of job stress, followed by moderate level, then low level, then very high level, and finally very low level.

Some of the biggest antecedents of job stress were spotted in the answers to our survey. From Q18, participants indicated that role overload is one of the most significant contributors to their job stress levels. These results align with previous research saying that Role overload is one of the main reasons for job stress (Mead, 2001). According to Tuckey et al. (2017), this indicates poor job designs, poor leadership and management, and inadequate staffing, and according to Zuzanek (2004), this shows time pressure is being placed on employees. Here are some of the answers to our open-ended question (Q28), "On bad days, bad things compound on top of each other. So, we mess up orders only when it's insanely busy, but then we get yelled at by customers at the same time which is very disheartening", "Having to cover for low staffing by working long hours and doing more than one job," "Management expects us to perform all job duties at the

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<sup>13</sup> The researcher admits the unusual format here, since there were new findings here, in the concluding section, that were not presented in the results section, this was done to emphasize on the importance of job stress and its most common antecedents.



same time,” “Being forced to do two people’s work because of low staffing,” “I don't have a clear description of my job, often I end up running around doing everything.” These findings show that many retail stores in St. John’s, NL, suffer from role overload, and their employees experience stress due to poor management, low staffing, poor job designs, and a high overall workload. Role overload also affects management positions in St. John’s, NL; we can see from the following answers that store managers are also put under high pressure by their own managers to accomplish certain tasks, sometimes in low periods. “Our DM gives our branch high sales goals considering we exist in a small city compared to other districts,” and “head office giving illogical deadlines to perform tasks that require more time.”

Another major antecedent to the overall level of job stress in the retail industry in St. John’s, NL, was found to be dealing with rude or demanding customers (Q20). This aligns with previously mentioned research that serving difficult, rude, and demanding customers can be very stressful for salespeople (Broadbridge et al., 2000). Even though, with a mean of 3.146, which falls under moderate stress level, stress caused by dealing with rude or demanding customers is still relatively high compared to other job predictors. The following answers to our open-ended questions indicate that some customers in St. John’s, NL, are rude to retail workers and can be highly demanding. “Rude customers,” “Dealing with unhappy customers,” “Some customers treat me differently because of my skin color,” “Working in a speedy environment and impatient customers,” “Customers just being completely out of touch with what is reasonable,” “Customers treating us poorly.”

From Q22, having irregular hours were also positively associated with the overall level of job stress that a given respondent had, indicating that in St. John's, NL, retail workers are primarily part-time workers with unpredictable work schedules and last-minute shift cancellations. This can also be supported by the following answers to our open-ended question (Q28), "Weekly schedules changing all the time," "I almost have to beg to get enough hours in a week," "I usually work night shifts and my husband work day shifts, I barely get the time to see him since when he comes home, I already am leaving to work.," "Worrying if I will get enough hours this week to cover my bills" and "Cancelling my shifts at last minute," it is also worth noting that management positions also suffer from irregular hours; however, differently, as we can see from the following answers, management suffers from employees canceling their shifts last minutes and leaving them low staffed. "Employees calling in sick last minute," "staff canceling their shifts," "short staff, employees canceling shifts last minute, employees coming up with random excuses to cancel shifts last minute," "Lazy colleagues, others not doing what they are supposed. People using self-diagnosed mental health issues as an excuse for everything."

And from the data collected, the most notable statistical predictor of overall job stress in the retail industry in St. John's, NL, was found to be low wages and benefits. This shows that, as mentioned in our literature review chapter, most of the retail workers who are part-timers are exposed to lower wages than full-time workers and even fewer benefits than full-time workers (Atkinson 1987; Beechy and Perkins 1987). This data is supported by the following answers to our open-ended question (Q28); when asked about what causes them the most stress in their retail job, the majority answered "Low wages,"

“No benefits at all,” “Minimum wage,” “not being paid enough,” and some of the following answers that drew our attention, “My managers expect me to go above and beyond for my job. Meanwhile they're paying me minimum wage”, “Not being paid well enough in relation to my experience,” “I have no insurance or benefits at both of my jobs.” This shows that the retail industry in St. John’s, NL, still falls behind other industries regarding pay and benefits.

**Objective 2:** To determine whether there are differences in the average job stress levels between Canadian and non-Canadian-born retail workers in St John’s, NL.

Participants in our survey were asked to report if they were born in Canada or outside of Canada; their answers helped us study our 2<sup>nd</sup> objective. It was found that non-Canadian-born retail workers have higher job stress levels than Canadian-born retail workers; in addition, they also reported lower job satisfaction levels. I would argue that this is due to multiple factors already mentioned in our literature review, such as language and acculturation barriers (Government of Canada, 2006; Social Planning Council of Ottawa, 2009), lack of social support, lack of recognition of work experience outside of Canada; lack of proper access to information; lack of recognition of previous studies outside of Canada; cultural differences; discrimination and stereotypes (Alboim and McIsaac, 2007; Banerjee and Phan, 2004; Chen et al., 2010; Drolet et al. 2015; Government of Canada, 2006; Weiner, 2008). This difference in the job stress levels between immigrants and Canadian-born retail workers needs to have a cause or what we call in this research, predictors, which we will discuss next in our 3<sup>rd</sup> objective.

In addition to stress levels, it is worth mentioning that, when it comes to an employee position, the majority of non-Canadian-born retail workers in St. John's, NL, are associates, and only a minimal number are in management positions, especially when compared to Canadian-born retail workers. Future research can focus on studying the reason behind these differences and why there are few immigrants in management positions in the retail industry.

**Objective 3:** To analyze whether there are differences in job stress predictors among Canadian and non-Canadian-born retail workers in St John's.

In our research, participants were asked about their overall level of job stress and then asked about multiple job stress predictors and how much stress it currently causes them. After collecting the data and analyzing it, we found that non-Canadian-born retail workers in St. John's have higher overall levels of job stress; however, when we look at the job stress predictors individually, we see that the three predictors with the highest contribution for job stress for both Canadian-born and non-Canadian-born retail workers job stress are the same. Low wages and benefits from the employer, high role overload, and dealing with rude and demanding customers are the three highest contributors to job stress for both parties. This means that the same job stress predictors in the retail industry can cause different stress levels depending on whether the person is born in Canada or outside of Canada. Future research can focus on why immigrant retail workers in Canada are affected by the same job stress predictors as Canadian-born retail workers but on a higher level, by looking at the attributes and demands from retail jobs.

**Objective 4:** To explore whether longevity in Canada, among immigrant retail workers, affects their level of job stress.

In our results, we found that newly arrived immigrants have, on average, lower job stress levels than immigrants who have been in Canada for more than one year, and those immigrants who have been in Canada the longest, endure more severe job stress. We speculate that those earlier-arrived immigrants potentially continue to face barriers that non-immigrants do not face and that once the shine of arriving and working in Canada wears off, those earlier-arrived immigrants endure incremental job stress from those illegitimate barriers. We also suggest that when immigrants first come to Canada, they settle for low-paying retail jobs and are content with that. Still, as time passes, they are likely to lose interest in these low paying jobs, and seek something more fulfilling and with higher pay. Presumably, an immigrant who has been working a low-paying retail job for years might feel more stressed about it especially if they are unable to find something better. This can also be true for non-immigrants stuck working in retail on an ongoing basis.

## **5.3 Limitations, Conclusions, and Recommendations**

### **5.3.1 Limitations**

One of the main limitations of this study is the number of participants in our survey; with only 105 participants, it is inappropriate to generalize the data collected to represent all retail workers in St. John's, NL. The reason I settled for 105 participants is mainly driven by time; as a master's student, I ran out of time to collect data, as I had to

move into the data analysis part. Another limitation is that almost all the participants were workers in big chain retail stores. Thus, the researcher cannot make assumptions that the data collected represent retail workers in all retail store sizes and ownership models. The reason I collected data from big chain retail stores is mainly driven by convenience; in St. John's, NL, the number of small businesses is small, so I had to target retail chain stores in big malls. Another limitation is that the detailing of antecedents of job stress is selective, with a focus on some of the common causes of work stress, and that is due to time limitation and resources. In addition, due to time constraints and challenges collecting the survey data, the researcher did not undertake pilot testing for validity or reliability. Other limitations include the non-experimental design of the methodology, testing for moderators, the nested nature of the respondents but not controlling at an organizational level, possibility of Type 1 errors existing within my set of correlations, and the possible impact of common method variance on the study results, as the researcher did not take any actions to mitigate against this potential problem. In the regression tables, a shortcut was taken there due to time limitations, which meant that a curvilinear relationship with longevity in Canada might have been missed.

Future research can focus on immigrant workers in the retail industry by studying their job stress levels when they start working and tracking them through the years.

Future research can also study if all retail workers in different cities (big and small) in Canada experience the same job stress.

### 5.3.2 Conclusions

This study contributes to existing knowledge by exploring the difference in job stress between Canadian-born and non-Canadian-born retail workers daily, and to understand the predictors of job stress among these two subpopulations of interest. First, these retail workers experience moderate job stress levels, with the highest number of them experiencing moderate stress levels. Second, it was found that non-Canadian-born retail workers experience higher job stress levels than Canadian-born retail workers. Third, it was found that Canadian and non-Canadian retail workers suffer from the same job stress predictors, even if it is on different levels, but the same predictors. Lastly, we found that among immigrant retail workers in St. John's, NL, newly arrived immigrants have, on average lower job stress levels, and those earlier-arrived immigrants are more likely to endure severe job stress. We believe this is because earlier-arrived immigrants may still encounter incremental obstacles that Canadian-born workers do not, and that after the novelty of coming to Canada and starting a job wears off, those earlier-arrived immigrants experience increasing job stress as a result of these barriers.

Firstly, retail workers in St. John's have moderate to high job stress levels. This is due to multiple factors, such as role overload in the form of low staffing, time pressure, and lack of resources, which can lead to high levels of job stress in the workplace. Another factor contributing to job stress is role conflict, which comes from poor job designs and job descriptions. Furthermore, excessive physical demands such as insufficient space to operate comfortably and safely, lack of privacy, excessive noise levels, inadequate ventilation, poor levels of illumination, inhuman workplace layouts

requiring excessive bending and stretching, and inadequate temperature and humidity, can be a significant contributor to job stress. Also, irregular and unpredictable hours, in the form of part-time work, late schedules, sudden shift cancellations, and short and split shifts, can affect job stress levels in the workplace. In addition, hostile relationships between worker and their colleagues/subordinates are also considered a significant source of job stress. Another contributor to job stress in the workplace is dealing with rude or demanding customers. And finally, the most significant effect on job stress of our participants came from low wages and benefits; it is worth noting that in the retail sector, the minimum wage is the standard, and most workers are part-timers, which results in little to no benefits at all.

Secondly, in this research, we found that non-Canadian-born retail workers experience higher levels of job stress than Canadian-born retail workers. This can be due to many challenges; these challenges are language barriers; lack of social support; lack of recognition of work experience outside of Canada; lack of proper access to information; lack of recognition of previous studies outside of Canada; cultural differences; discrimination and stereotypes.

Thirdly, we found that even though stress levels differ between Canadian-born and non-Canadian-born retail workers in St. John's, NL, they both suffer from the same predictors, and we noticed that the three highest predictors for both parties are low wages and benefits, role overload, and rude and demanding customers. This shows us that people can experience the same situations and react differently, whether it's higher or lower job stress levels.



Lastly, even though we found that immigrant retail workers in St. John's, NL, endure higher job stress levels than Canadian-born retail workers, however, among those immigrant retail workers, the longer they were in Canada, the more likely they were to experience severe job stress, with the newly arrived immigrant experiencing on average lower job stress levels than those earlier-arrived immigrants.

### **5.3.3 Recommendations<sup>14</sup>**

Based on the results of this study, numerous recommendations are presented that may benefit employers to better understand the retail environment and help manage and mitigate job stress levels in the workplace. Managing employees is challenging and complex, and one would argue that it is impossible to eliminate job stress. However, one should try and mitigate these stress levels as much as possible to ensure that employees' physical and mental health is being looked after, which will increase productivity in the workplace and help create a healthy, positive work environment. Some strategies that employers and stressed workers can use to help mitigate job stress are:

- Consider Setting up regular break times by allowing your employees to take standard 15 minutes every 3 hours and a lunch break in the middle of their shift. All employees, including stressed employees, should be taking their breaks regularly throughout the day.
- Consider providing the necessary equipment to reduce physical

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<sup>14</sup> Please note that several of these recommendations are aspirational, and did not emerge directly from the data gathered and analyzed in this study.

fatigue, for example, chairs for cashiers, and if standing is essential, make sure to offer anti-fatigue mats.

- Make sure to set up the work schedule more than a week in advance, and in case of any sudden changes, make sure to give notice in a considerable amount of time.
- Modify the “Treat everyone the same mentality” and start being sensitive to individual employee needs; not every person is the same. In addition, make sure that every employee is in the proper role. You will unleash their full potential when you show your employees that you care about them individually.
- Encourage employees to take their vacation days even if not needed and encourage them to increase their self-care.
- Encourage open communications between colleagues and between employees and their managers.
- Ensure you reward your employees accordingly through direct compensation, raises, or even a simple “good job.”
- Have clear job descriptions for every role, and provide your employees with clear goals and development plans that they can follow to reach these goals and advance in their careers.
- Celebrate and rewards employees’ strength, and highlight their weaknesses as opportunities to grow instead of just flaws.
- Please make sure a suitable number of employees is present on every shift to cover the workload, and don’t cut expenses by making your employees do more than they can handle.

- Stressed workers should exercise on a regular basis and adopt a healthy diet: exercise and a healthy diet have been proven to be great ways to relieve tension and stress. In addition, they can practice meditation and yoga, which are techniques that improve relaxation.
- Stressed workers should seek support from their peers, managers, family members, and trained professionals.
- All employees, including stressed employees, should manage their time effectively, which will make them feel more in control and less stressed.
- Employees are encouraged to focus on the important tasks first and avoid focusing on different tasks at the same time to avoid feeling overwhelmed.

Governments can play a significant role in reducing job stress by promoting policies and initiatives that prioritize employee well-being, mental health, and work-life balance. By investing in these strategies, governments can help create more productive, healthy, and happy workplaces. Some strategies that governments can use to help decrease job stress are:

- Promote work-life balance: Governments can encourage employers to provide easily accessible work arrangements such as flexible scheduling, which can help employees manage their work and personal responsibilities.
- Enforce labour laws: Governments can enforce labour laws that protect workers from exploitation, such as minimum wage laws, overtime pay, and workplace safety regulations. These laws can help reduce the stress associated with financial

instability and unsafe work environments.

- Provide access to mental health resources: Governments can invest in mental health resources and provide employees with access to counseling and therapy services. This can help individuals better manage their stress and improve their overall well-being.
- Offer training and support: Governments can provide training and support programs to help individuals develop coping skills and better manage their stress. This can include stress management workshops, mindfulness training, and employee assistance programs.
- Encourage healthy workplace culture: Governments can promote healthy workplace cultures that prioritize employee well-being, such as promoting open communication, offering employee recognition programs, and fostering a positive work environment.

Future research on job stress can focus on many areas. Future research could focus on exploring the relationship between job stress and specific health outcomes such as cardiovascular disease, mental health disorders, or chronic pain. Future research could also investigate the role of workplace culture in job stress by examining how various workplace cultures or subcultures, such as toxic work environments and highly competitive workplaces, contribute to job stress. Furthermore, researchers could examine the effectiveness of stress reduction techniques by investigating the effectiveness of these different techniques and identifying best practices for implementation. Future research could also explore the relationship between technology use, work-life balance, and stress levels; this is important due to the rise in technology use in the workplace. While this study measured job stress levels at a single point in time, future research

could focus on measuring individuals' job stress levels over the course of their careers to better understand how job stress levels fluctuate over long periods of time. Finally, future research could focus on studying, in-depth, the reasons behind our unexpected findings that newly arrived immigrants, on average, experience lower job stress levels than those earlier arrived immigrants, and those earlier arrived immigrants are also more likely to endure severe job stress.

In the end, it was disappointing to see the level of job stress that exists among the surveyed workers in the retail industry in St. John's, NL, regardless of whether being Canadian-born, or immigrants. It is hoped that this study can play at least a small role in drawing attention to this situation, and it is further hoped that the provided conclusions and recommendations made a contribution to academic and practitioner knowledge.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A Informed Consent Form

Title: Job Stress in the retail industry in St. John's, NL

Researcher(s): Gerard Makhoul, Faculty of business administration, gcmakhoul@mun.ca / 709-691-6973

Supervisor(s): Gordon Cooke, Faculty of business administration, gcooke@mun.ca

You are invited to take part in a research project entitled "Job Stress in the retail industry in St. John's, NL."

This form is part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. It also describes your right to withdraw from the study. In order to decide whether you wish to participate in this research study, you should understand enough about its risks and benefits to be able to make an informed decision. This is the informed consent process. Take time to read this carefully and to understand the information given to you. Please contact the researcher, Gerard Makhoul, if you have any questions about the study or for more information not included here before you consent.

It is entirely up to you to decide whether to take part in this research. If you choose not to take part in this research or if you decide to withdraw from the research once it has started, there will be no negative consequences for you, now or in the future.

### Introduction

This online survey is being distributed in support of a research project being conducted by Gerard Makhoul in partial fulfilment of his master's degree (MSc) in Management within the Faculty of Business Administration (FBA) at Memorial University of Newfoundland (MUN), under the supervision of Dr. Gordon Cooke.

In brief, I am interested in retail workers because retail jobs are often considered to be rather stressful, and emotionally draining jobs, yet low-paying jobs. Moreover, my geographic focus is on St. John's, admittedly partially based on convenience, but also because the relatively high unemployment rates and cost of living, and low minimum wage, means that these sorts of workers might face incremental psychological challenges compared to their retail counterparts in other parts of Canada where it is easier to find and maintain retail employment, and where hourly wages and cost of living tends to be more

worker-friendly.

**Purpose of study:**

The goal of this survey is to measure the amount and causes of job stress among Canadian-born and non-Canadian born retail workers in St. John's, NL.

**What you will do in this study:**

You are being invited to participate in a survey about job stress in the retail industry in St. John's, NL.

**Length of time:**

This survey is estimated to take approximately 10 minutes to complete.

**Withdrawal from the study:**

Your participation in this research project is completely voluntary. You have the right to withdraw from the research study at any time. Online survey participants can withdraw at any time prior to the completion of the online survey by simply abandoning the survey. If you decide to withdraw or not submit your responses, you can do so by closing your browser or by clicking the "clear form" button at the bottom right of the survey. Online survey participants may also skip any question(s) that they do not wish to answer. To have your responses included, please click the "submit" button at the end of the survey.

You may ask the researcher any questions you may have about this research study. Once you complete this survey and click submit, your data cannot be removed because we are not collecting any identifying information and therefore, we cannot link individuals to their responses. However, if you provided us with your email address to participate in the draw at the end of the survey and you wish to have your responses removed, you may reach out to us and specify your email address and we can remove your responses (Deadline to have your responses removed is December 31st, 2022).

**Possible benefits:**

We hope that this can bring about positive results and shed light on a stressful work environment and help retail employees by giving clues to how to become a better less stressful environment. And help companies cherish and treasure their employees to an absolute degree.

By assessing the level of job stress among retail workers in St. John's and determining if there are any differences in the job stress causes and levels between Canadian-born and non-Canadian-born retail workers in St. John's, NL, hopefully, we will be able to decrease stress levels and increase productivity in our work environments.

### **Possible Compensation:**

At the end of the survey, you have the chance to participate in a random draw to win one of three 25\$ prepaid visas. Since participation is optional, if you wish to participate, please provide your email address. All email information will be destroyed after the prizes are awarded.

### **Possible risks:**

There are minimal risks to participate in this research project. We will ask questions about the things that cause you stress in your retail job, but we do not require you to identify your employer, and you are welcome to skip any question that you would prefer not to answer. We acknowledge the possibility for psychological / emotional distress, as the very nature of this topic may be a trigger for employees who feel stressed in their place of employment.

If you experience any kind of psychological / emotional distress due to your employment or other related causes, we encourage you to reach out to any of the following counselling services.

- Bridge the Gapp - [bridgethegapp@gov.nl.ca](mailto:bridgethegapp@gov.nl.ca)
- Government of Newfoundland – Mental health department (709) 752–8888)
- Mental Health Crisis Line - 811
- Doorways - 709-752-4903

### **Confidentiality**

The information you will share with us, if you participate in this study, will be kept confidential. Participant privacy and confidentiality will be protected throughout this study. Electronic data (survey results) will be stored on a password protected computer. To further protect you, you will not be asked to provide your name, nor your contact details nor your organization's name. In the survey, we will only ask for basic demographic and job information, to help us assess the types of workers who have higher (or lower) job stress. Most results will be presented in aggregated format. No individual responses will be included in any public reports.

**Anonymity:**

To ensure your anonymity, you will not be asked to provide your name, nor your contact details nor your organization's name. At the end of the survey, if you wish to provide your email address to enter the draw for the prizes, your email information will be destroyed once the prizes are awarded. Please note that anonymity cannot be ensured if you provide an email address that may identify you.

**Recording and Storage of Data:**

Electronic data (survey results) will be stored on a password protected computer. Data will be kept for a minimum of five years, as required by Memorial University policy on Integrity in Scholarly Research, and then will be destroyed.

The platform used for this survey, Google forms (Google), is located in the United States and as such is subject to U.S. laws. The US Patriot Act allows authorities to access the records of internet service providers. Therefore, anonymity and confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. If you choose to participate in this survey, you understand that your responses to the survey questions will be stored and may be accessed in the USA. The security and privacy policy for the web survey company can be found at the following link:

<https://policies.google.com/privacy>

**Reporting of Results:**

Information from the online survey will be coded to preserve participant anonymity and confidentiality, and will be summarized, in anonymous format, in the body of the final report. At no time will any specific comments be attributed to any individual unless specific agreement has been obtained beforehand. All documentation will be kept strictly confidential.

**Sharing of Results with Participants:**

All participants will be provided with access to the final report following its completion. To access the final report, simply go to <https://research.library.mun.ca/>, and search "Job Stress in the retail industry in St. John's, NL". The thesis will be publicly available at the QEII library.

**Questions:**

You are welcome to ask questions at any time during your participation in this research. If you would like more information about this study, please contact: Gerard Makhoul /

gcmakhoul@mun.ca / 709-691-6973 or Dr. Gordon Cooke / [gcooke@mun.ca](mailto:gcooke@mun.ca)

**ICEHR Approval Statement:**

The proposal for this research has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University's ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research, such as the way you have been treated or your rights as a participant, you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at [icehr@mun.ca](mailto:icehr@mun.ca) or by telephone at 709-864-2861.

**Consent:**

By completing this survey, you agree that:

- You have read the information about the research.
- You have been able to ask questions about this study.
- You are satisfied with the answers to all your questions.
- You understand what the study is about and what you will be doing.
- You understand that you are free to withdraw from the study, without having to give a reason, and that doing so will not affect you now or in the future.

You can end your participation by simply closing your browser or navigating away from this page.

Please note that participation in this study is not a job / employment requirement, your employer / manager will not know whether you participate or not and will not see your responses.

By consenting to this online survey, you do not give up your legal rights and do not release the researchers from their professional responsibilities.

Please retain a copy of this consent information for your records.

**Clicking “Yes” below and submitting this survey constitutes consent and implies your agreement to the above stipulations.**

## Appendix B Email Text Recruitment Letter

Aug xx, 2022

I hope this email finds you well and thank you for your permission to survey your employees.

Allow me to re-introduce myself. My name is Gerard Makhoul, and I am a student in the faculty of Business Administration (FBA) at Memorial University of Newfoundland. I am conducting a research project called “Job Stress in the Retail Industry in St. John’s, NL” for my master’s degree under the supervision of Dr. Gordon Cooke.

As previously discussed, I am sending you an invitation to my online survey. I kindly ask you to distribute this survey invitation (provided below) to your current employees.

If you have any questions about me or my project, please contact me by email at [gcmakhoul@mun.ca](mailto:gcmakhoul@mun.ca), or by phone at 709-691-6973.

Thank-you in advance for considering my request,

Gerard Makhoul

Suggested email content for your employees, please:

**(start)**

Aug xx, 2022

To: Employees within the retail sector in the St. John’s area:

Subject line: *Job Stress in the retail industry in St. John’s, NL*

*From: Gerard Makhoul; Master’s student at Memorial University of Newfoundland (MUN)*

My name is Gerard Makhoul, and I am a student in the faculty of Business Administration (FBA) at Memorial University of Newfoundland. I am conducting a research project called “Job Stress in the Retail Industry in St. John’s, NL” for my master’s degree under the supervision of Dr. Gordon Cooke. The purpose of the study is to measure the amount and causes of job stress among Canadian-born and non-Canadian-born retail workers in St. John’s, NL.

Please note: Your employer has kindly agreed to forward this email to you. I am hoping that you will agree to complete this short (10 minute) survey, please. Although you are receiving this email from your employer, all completed surveys are submitted online through Google forms,

and only (my supervisor and) I will have access to individual survey results, and the survey does not ask for your name or employee information.

I would be very grateful for your participation please and am very interested in your thoughts and situation. Some additional information is provided below.

The link to the survey is available via: <https://forms.gle/yhyd6SouBUqRTzC77>, and I would be very grateful if you submitted your answers by Sept xx, 2022, please.

You need to be at least 18 years old and employed in the retail sector in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Please note that participation in this study is not a job / employment requirement, your employer / manager will not know whether you participate or not and will not see your responses.

Additional information for possible survey participants:

## **Introduction**

This online survey is being distributed in support of a research project being conducted by Gerard Makhoul in partial fulfilment of his master's degree (MSc) in Management within the Faculty of Business Administration (FBA) at Memorial University of Newfoundland (MUN), under the supervision of Dr. Gordon Cooke.

In brief, I am interested in retail workers because retail jobs are often considered to be rather stressful, and emotionally draining jobs, yet low-paying jobs. Moreover, my geographic focus is on St. John's, admittedly partially based on convenience, but also because the relatively high unemployment rates and cost of living, and low minimum wage, means that these sorts of workers might face incremental psychological challenges compared to their retail counterparts in other parts of Canada where it is easier to find and maintain retail employment, and where hourly wages and cost of living tends to be more worker-friendly.

If you have any questions about me or my project, please contact me by email at

gcmakhoul@mun.ca, or by phone at 709-691-6973.

Thank-you in advance for considering my request,

Gerard Makhoul

The proposal for this research has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University's ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research, such as your rights as a participant, you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr.chair@mun.ca or by telephone at 709-864-2861.

**(End of suggested email to your employees)**

### **Appendix C Job Stress Survey**

Survey for Memorial University of Newfoundland (MUN) Master of Science (MSc) in Management Program - Gerard Makhoul - As part of Master's thesis research

The goal of this survey is to measure the amount and causes of job stress among Canadian-born and non-Canadian-born retail workers in St. John's, NL. While I would be grateful if you answer each question, if any question makes you feel uncomfortable, please feel free to skip it.

\* Required

**Do you wish to participate? \***

Yes

No

**1- Are you employed in the retail sector in Newfoundland and Labrador, and, are you at least 18 years of age? \***

Yes

No



**2 - Your Age (in Years) \***

---

**3 - Your Gender**

Male

Female

Prefer not to say

Other:

**4 - Were you born outside of Canada?**

Yes.

No.

Other:

**5 – How long have you been in Canada? (In Years)**

Less than 1 Year 1 - 3

3 - 5

5 - 10

10+ Years

**6 - Is English your mother tongue? (The language you spoke first in life)**

Yes

No

**7 - How many different employers do you currently work for?**

None. If so, please don't complete this survey.

One job in the retail sector.

Two or more jobs, including at least one in retail. If so, when answering the following questions, please think about your main retail job.

**8 - Type of retail store where your main retail job is**

Supermarket/Grocery/Convenience

Clothing/Outlet

Restaurant/Coffee Shop/Fast Food

Internet/Mobile

Other:

**9 - When working in your main retail job, how many other employees are usually present on a typical shift, at your place of employment?**

Less than 5

6-10

More than 10

Other:

**10 - Employee Position of your main retail job**

Manager/Assistant Manager Team Lead / Supervisor

Associate (Sales, Cashier, Server, Runner)

Other:

**11 - Average Work Hours in your main retail job**

Full-time ( 30+ hours per week)

Part-time ( less than 30 hours per week)

**12 - How long have you been working in Retail ( in Years )**

Less than 1 year 1 - 3

3 - 5

5 - 10

More than 10 years

**13 - Type of employment at your main retail job**

Permanent

Casual / Temporary / Fixed - Term

Other:

**14 - Do you consider yourself to be low-paid in your main retail job? (In terms of your hourly rate of pay )**

Yes

No

Other:

**15 - What type of Household do you live in?**

I am the sole earner

I live in a household with at least one other earner

Other:

**16 - In your main retail job, what is your overall level of job stress?**

Not Applicable

None - Very low

Low

Moderate

High

Very high

**17 - What is your current overall level of non-work-related stress? (I.e. stress outside of work)**

Not Applicable

None - Very low

Low

Moderate

High

Very high

**18 - In your main retail job, how much stress do you think role overload currently causes you? ( Due to things like time pressure, deadlines, staffing issues, etc.)**

Not Applicable

None - Very low

Low

Moderate

High

Very High

**19 - In your main retail job, how much stress do you think role conflict currently causes you? ( Due to things like having different or incompatible roles at the same time, or your role overlapping with another worker, etc. )**

Not Applicable

None - Very low

Low

Moderate

High

Very high

**20 - In your main retail job, how much stress do you think dealing with rude or demanding customers currently causes you?**

Not Applicable

None - very little

Little

Moderate

High

Very high

**21 - In your main retail job, how much stress do you think physical demands causes you? (Due to things like long hours, job duties, etc.)**

Not Applicable

None - Very low

Low

Moderate

High

Very high

**22 - In your main retail job, how much stress do you think irregular hours currently causes you? ( Due to things like last minute shifts cancelations, schedule unpredictability, short workweeks, etc)**

None - Very low

Low

Moderate

High

Very high

**23 - In your main retail job, how much stress do you face currently due to your supervisor's treatment? ( Due to things like unhelpful or unfair criticism, supervisor playing favourites, lack of support, irresponsible supervisor)**

Not Applicable

None - Very low

Low

Moderate

High

Very high

**24 - In your main retail job, how much stress do you think interactions with your colleagues currently causes you? ( Due to things like rude or unpleasant colleagues )**

Not Applicable

None - Very low

Low

Moderate

High

Very high

**25 - In your main retail job, how much stress do you think pressure for upselling currently causes you? ( Due to things like commission-based pay, a competitive environment, etc. )**

Not Applicable

None - Very low

Low

Moderate

High

Very high

**26 - In your main retail job, how much stress do you think low wages and benefits currently cause you?**

Not Applicable

None - Very low

Low

Moderate

High

Very high

**27 - In your main retail job, how much stress do you think short or split shifts currently cause you? ( For example, 20 hours per week split over 5 days, each consisting of a 4 hours shift, etc. )**

Not Applicable

None - Very low

Low

Moderate

High

Very high

**28 - In your main retail job, in your own words, what causes you the most stress in your job?**

---

**29 - Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you currently with your main retail job?**

Very satisfied

Slightly satisfied

Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied

Slightly dissatisfied



Very dissatisfied

As a thank you for your time and information, three 25\$ prepaid visas will be randomly drawn for any participant who chooses to provide their email address to be able to enter. After the three prizes are awarded, the email information will be destroyed.

If you wish to enter, please enter your email address below.

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We acknowledge the possibility for psychological / emotional distress, as the very nature of this topic may be a trigger for employees who feel stressed in their place of employment.

If you experience any kind of psychological / emotional distress due to your employment or other related causes, we encourage you to reach out to any of the following counselling services.

- Bridge the Gapp - [bridgethegapp@gov.nl.ca](mailto:bridgethegapp@gov.nl.ca)
- Government of Newfoundland – Mental health department (709) 752–8888)
- Mental Health Crisis Line - 811
- Doorways - 709-752-4903