

Labour Market Attachment: Defining the Spectrum between the Employed and the Inactive

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Author:
Donnalee Bell

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Research Team:
**Sareena Hopkins, Donnalee Bell, Bryan Hiebert, Dave Redekopp & Jessica Isenor
Canadian Career Development Foundation**



**Canadian Career Development Foundation
Fondation canadienne pour le développement de carrière**

119 Ross Avenue, Suite 202, Ottawa, Ontario K1Y 0N6 CANADA
Tel: 1-877-729-6164 • 613-729-6164 • Fax: 613-729-3515
information@ccdf.ca • www.ccdf.ca

Introduction

This literature review is part of a larger research study called, *Assessing the Impact of Career Development Resources and Counsellor Support across the Employability Dimensions* (Employability Dimension Project). The aim of this study is to examine the differential effects of career and labour market information/resources on employment service clients who have weak labour market attachment versus those who are more strongly attached. The study is in response to a paradox in the Canadian labour market: In Canada, there are high adult unemployment rates in many sectors, but also acute labour shortages in a number of sectors, e.g., environment, mining, health, technology. Economists, business and labour studies researchers suggest that if potential and current workers had the needed career development information, resources, and supports to access targeted training, they would be able to develop the skills needed to successfully connect with appropriate work opportunities and thereby have a greater chance of being or remaining employed (Fortin, 2010). Accordingly, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada's (HRSDC) began a national research agenda to better understand "what works" in career services and, by extension, how career services might best contribute to addressing these significant labour force challenges. The Employability Dimensions Project was proposed by the [Canadian Career Development Foundation \(CCDF\)](#), in partnership with Career/Employment Services in Alberta and Manitoba, and was selected as one of three 11-month research projects to be funded under this national research initiative.

This study examines clients with needs across four Employability Dimensions (Career Exploration/Decision Making, Skills Enhancement, Job Search and Job Maintenance). It will develop four tailored resource packages (one for each Employability Dimension) to provide participants in the study with labour market information, coaching and support resources to guide them through reflective activities and action steps geared to addressing their employability need. The research protocol will include both an assisted and unassisted condition. The assisted condition will provide participants in this group with a broad range of coaching and support which accurately mirrors the level of service typically delivered by Career Development Practitioners (CDP) in Alberta and Manitoba. The project will pilot a tool to predict the extent to which a client would likely benefit from self-managed service versus those more likely to require CDP intervention and it will examine the differential impact of treatment conditions on clients who are weakly attached to the labour market versus those who are more strongly attached.

There are three foundational reports that will be published in Phase 1 of this study:

1. A Snapshot Report on the state of practice developed from data gathered from participating Career/Employment Services in Alberta and Manitoba to better understand current practices in needs determination and service delivery. The purpose of this review is to ensure – to the extent possible – that the Employability Dimensions Project employs protocols, tools and interventions that build on existing best practices, mirror the typical intensity and flow of delivery and are readily integrated into current service structures.

2. A review of the literature to identify factors which contribute to the capacity to self-help. This will inform the development of an index to gauge the capacity of participating clients for self-management;
3. And finally, this literature review on labour market attachment examines sociological, economic and labour studies research in an effort to define labour market attachment and identify factors impact weak and strong attachment. Based on these findings, a Labour Market Attachment Index will be developed and piloted to assess a client's degree of attachment to the labour market.

Background: Defining of Labour Market Attachment

Research on the dynamics of the labour market is filled with references on the quality of labour market attachment of specific populations. Despite the prevalence of the term, there are very few formal definitions of labour market attachment that were found in the literature. A scan of the literature found three definitions of labour market attachment – one Canadian and two international. The Canadian definition was found in the Glossary of Terms for the Employment Program of British Columbia (n.d.). It states that labour market attachment means “working or providing services in the labour market for remuneration, on a full-time, part-time, seasonal or temporary basis, either as an employee or in Self-Employment.” The UK's Department of Transport in its Data Sources for the Appraisal of Regeneration Impacts document defines labour market attachment as a:

concept relating to a person's proximity to the labour force. It covers a spectrum from fully attached workers (e.g. those in employment or International Labour Organization's [ILO's] unemployment) at the one extreme, to those who do not want a job at the other extreme. The latter group, which includes economically inactive retired people, might be considered completely detached from the labour market (April 2011, 4).

The third definition found in the literature was specifically developed for research purposes to analyse the influence that temporary help agencies (THA) have on Spanish workers' labour market attachment. The Malo and Muñoz-Bullón study defined labour market attachment as “the change in workers' labour market state, as established by their situation at predetermined moments of time, which range from unemployment (or inactivity) to employment through a permanent contract” (2002, 3).

Although there were only three definitions found, they highlight four important factors in the study of labour market attachment as described in the literature. First, the UK definition mentions the ILO's definition of unemployment. Despite the brevity of the mention, it is vitally important to the study of labour market attachment. The ILO's definitions of employment, unemployment and economically inactive are used as the basis for statistics worldwide and for the measurement of one's proximity to the labour market (attachment level). These ILO's definitions determine who is considered attached (employed and unemployed) and who is not considered attached (economically inactive) to the labour market.

The ILO defines **employed** persons as being above a specified age (usually 15 and above)

...who furnish the supply of labour for the production of goods and services. When measured for a short reference period (of one week or one day), it refers to all persons who worked for pay, profit or family gain during that period. It also includes all persons who had a job or enterprise but were absent from that job or enterprise during that period on a temporary basis: persons who during the reference period were sick, on vacation, maternity leave, strike or were temporarily laid off (ILO web site).

Unemployed persons are above a specified age are:

...available to, but did not, furnish the supply of labour for the production of goods and services. When measured for a short reference period, it relates to all persons not in employment who would have accepted a suitable job or started an enterprise during the reference period if the opportunity arose, and who had actively looked for ways to obtain a job or start an enterprise in the near past (usually four weeks) (ILO web site).

A fundamental point for the research on labour market attachment is the determination that the unemployed are those who want a job, are looking for a job and can start immediately. Everyone else is considered **economically inactive** or not attached to the labour market.

According to the ILO, the employed and unemployed make up the labour force. All others are outside of the labour force are considered economically inactive. Determinations of who is in the labour force shape who is attached to it. The employed are fully attached; the unemployed less so but still defined as attached and the inactive are fully detached. These terms are not used exactly the same way in every country, but are adapted, with ILO endorsement, to suit their specific labour market conditions. Although there is some modification from country to country, these terms are defined similarly so that international labour market statistical comparisons can be made.¹

The second important element of defining labour market attachment also appears in the UK definition. It is the reference to labour market attachment as covering *a full spectrum of attachment* from employed to those not wanting a job. The ILO's three-point reference of attachment (employed-

¹ Canada, for example, uses definitions for employment, unemployment and not in the labour force (economically inactive) endorsed by the ILO. **Employed persons**, according to StatsCan, are those who, during the reference week: a. did any work at all at a job or business, that is, paid work in the context of an employer-employee relationship, or self-employment. It also includes unpaid family work, which is defined as unpaid work contributing directly to the operation of a farm, business or professional practice owned and operated by a related member of the same household; or b. had a job but were not at work due to factors such as own illness or disability, personal or family responsibilities, vacation, labour dispute or other reasons (excluding persons on layoff, between casual jobs, and those with a job to start at a future date). **Unemployed persons** are those who, during reference week: a. were on temporary layoff during the reference week with an expectation of recall and were available for work, or b. were without work, had looked for work in the past four weeks, and were available for work, or c. had a new job to start within four weeks from the reference week, and were available for work. Those **not in the labour force** are those who, during the reference week, were unwilling or unable to offer or supply labour services under conditions existing in their labour markets, that is, they were neither employed nor unemployed. This definition is close to what the ILO deems the **economically inactive**. (See, Statistics Canada, Guide to the Labour Force Survey, 2010).

unemployed-inactive) has been re-examined by a small number of economists and labour market statisticians for the past 20 years. In this research, they are examining the expansion of this three-point scale. This discussion will be fully explored later in the paper.

The British Columbia Employment Program definition of labour market attachment with its interpretation of who is employed (e.g. temporary workers) also connects to this literature looking at a more nuanced examination of the attachment levels, specifically those who work part-time or on temporary contract and who may be defined as underemployed. Some of the literature looking at defining a spectrum of labour market attachment has expanded both the inactive and the “employed” group to include a grouping of the underemployed including those who work part-time and want more work hours and those on temporary contract.

The Malo-Muñoz-Bullón definition represents another approach to labour market attachment which looks at the attachment levels of defined social groups (e.g. temp workers, lone parents, youth, etc.) and the demographic factors impacting weak attachment. Studies like these look at the vulnerability of specific social groups to full attachment and focus on the causes of weak attachment. They also look at the pathways of these groups to transition to full attachment status (employment). This research has the potential to inform the Employability Dimensions Project on the socio-cultural factors of those individuals who typically have weak or high attachment.

Not included in the definitions is the literature outlining cognitive and non-cognitive factors on labour market outcomes. This literature will be discussed later in the paper.

Approach

As described above, there are three fields of study that could inform the development of a Labour Market Attachment Index. The first field of study examines the potential or value of expanding the definition of the labour force to include the potential labour force, expanding labour force groupings beyond employed, unemployed and economically inactive. The second approach examines the socio-cultural factors that contribute to weak and strong attachment. This approach to labour market attachment research will be explored to identify key social groups who typically have weak attachment to the labour market. Lastly, there is literature that looks at the psychological factors that influence employment outcomes. This literature has been included as there may be a link between the Self-Help Index developed for this project to measure the capacity for self-management in career services and the self-help attributes, which are largely non-cognitive, impacting labour market attachment.

Labour Force Status Research

The most significant research on labour market attachment is the research looking at the transition probabilities among a variety of different labour market states. One of the most noted reports in this field of research is Jones and Riddell’s, “Unemployment and Labour Force Attachment: A Study of Canadian Experience, 1997-1999.” This report is regarded internationally as providing critical evidence

for the expansion of the three-point employed-unemployed-inactive attachment model primarily used in the field of labour force statistics to a model that looks at the non-employed (inactive) more heterogeneously² with differing levels of attachment (Little, 2007; Bradbury, 2006; Brandolini et al., 2004). Jones and Riddell state that “the conventional criteria [based on the ILO definition] for making the distinction [between the non-employed] are ‘availability for work’ and ‘job search’” (1999, 1). Although proving to be a “useful” method for monitoring and analysing economic and labour market development to date, they argue that “it is unlikely that any simple categorization into two labour force states [attached and inactive] will adequately capture [the] diversity [of attachment among the non-employed]” (Jones and Riddell, 1999, 1). Their central research question is: Are there more distinct groupings among the non-employed demonstrating varying degrees of attachment and, if yes, is there a need for additional measures of labour force status?

Using Canadian *Labour Forces Survey* (LFS) data from 1997-1999, Jones and Riddell studied the behavioural differences among the following groups: (a) a comparison of transitions from unemployed (U) [out of work, looking for work, wanting work], marginal attachment (M) [out of work, wanting work, not looking for work] and not-attached to the labour force (N) [neither looking or wanting work]; (b) a further breakdown of U by active job searchers, passive job searchers, those on temporary layoff and short-term futures starts; (c) a further breakdown of transitions of M by reason of not searching; and (d) a further breakdown of transitions from N by long-term future starts and other.

They found that U moved into jobs quicker than M and M moved into employment four times more quickly than N. This was consistent across expanded datasets of the LFS 1979-1992. As a result of this finding, they concluded that M is a distinct intermediate state between U and N in terms of labour force attachment. They also found that those with future job starts had the greatest hazard to employment, followed closely by those on temporary lay-off. Job searchers had a lower transition probability into employment than those with future job starts with those using active job search methods³ being more likely to be employed than those using passive methods (looking at job ads). They also established that the passive job search group was not equivalent to the non-participant group (N) in terms of their rate of transition to employment and therefore could not be lumped in with this attachment grouping. They found that the marginally attached group had some evidence of heterogeneity and the waiting group (waiting for recall or replies) had more probability of transitioning to employment than those in the categories of personal (own illness or disability; caring for others; going to school), and discouraged (believing no work available). Finally, Jones and Riddell found a further heterogeneity among the N group (d) namely those in the Long-Term Future Starts having significant likelihood of attachment compared to the rest of the N grouping.

² In Sociology, this term is used to emphasize the diversity among sub-populations or groups. In Statistics, it means that groups are not statistically uniform, alike or interchangeable. Namely, that the group is not homogeneous; it contains several quite distinct sub-groupings, and that each sub-group has quite different characteristics and should be treated differently.

³ Six job search methods were considered here: Used Public Employment Agency, Checked with Employers, Contacted Relatives, Looked at Ads, Answered Ads and Used Other Method. “Looked at Ads” is considered in their study as “passive” whereas the other five methods are considered “active”.

Jones and Riddell did not go as far as to create a scale of attachment. Their main conclusion in this paper was that the data “permitted identification of a range of labour market states” (27). They called for a recording of labour market outcomes as a supplement to current data collection and benefit to measuring labour market attachment.⁴

Brandolini et al. in 2004 wrote a paper called, “Does the ILO Definition Capture all Unemployment?” Their research looked at whether Jones and Riddell’s results could be replicated for the EU and Italian contexts. Brandolini et al. looked at the comparisons between four groups: unemployed (wanting and actively searching for work), the potential labour force (less active job seekers who had not looked for work in four weeks, but who were still looking for work), discouraged workers (those willing to work, but who have given up looking), and the unattached (neither searching nor willing to work). Their purpose in defining these four groups was to capture data on those left out of EU and Italian definitions of unemployed because they did not meet the criteria of having looked for work in the past four weeks.⁵

Brandolini et al.’s results confirm Jones and Riddell’s findings that there is a group that has a different level of labour market attachment between conventional definitions of unemployment and those who are completely inactive (not wanting or looking for work). They called this group the “Potential Labour Force” (PLF). Within the PLF, they found a heterogeneous group, “where the persons searching more intensively for work (but less frequently than four weeks prior) exhibit the same transition probabilities (labour market attachment potential) as the unemployed” (24). For Brandolini et al., it is the intensity and the quality of the job search (passive vs. active) that contributes to the potential for labour market attachment, not the arbitrary four-week criteria that most countries base the category of unemployed. Job search activities, for them, make the distinction between the categories of labour market attachment. They argue that:

Statistical agencies should move from providing a single measure of unemployment to offering a range of (standardised) measures of the pool of job seekers distinguished by the intensity of their search. Time elapse since job search action is one way, but others could be the number of steps taken in a unit period or the type of method used (25).

Similar research from Garrido and Toharia (2004) who reviewed Spain and Schweitzer’s (2003) approach to US data concur with Jones and Riddell and Brandolini et al. that there are those that are deemed inactive “who have tendencies to work that equal those of the unemployed” (Schweitzer, 2003, 40). Schweitzer concludes the research of these authors by stating that “other categories of the inactive are still relevant for employment, despite their lower transition rates, but they are not direct substitutes for the unemployed” (2003, 40).

In 2011, de la Fuente’s “New Measures of Labour Market Attachment” build on the authors cited above and argued for the development of three new Eurostat indicators to supplement the unemployment

⁴ Interestingly, many countries including Canada began producing alternative measures of unemployment in accordance with the ILO in 1992. In Canada some alternative measures have been available since 1976 with most available since 1997. The discussion on the expanding of labour market attachment becomes more active in this period (see Gilmore and LaRochelle-Côté, 2011; Elder, 2009; Hussmanns, 2007).

⁵ They argue that this group accounts for 20% of people in EU countries that do not count as unemployed (2004).

rate. In addition to the labour force statuses of employed, unemployed and economically inactive, de la Fuente argues that “underemployed part-time workers (UPW),”⁶ be separate from the employed and unemployed as groupings inside the labour force and “persons seeking but not immediately available (PSIA)”⁷ and “persons available to work but not seeking (PAWNS)”⁸ be considered “potential additional labour force (PALF)” (2011,1). The PALF accounts, he argues, for 10.6 million of the economically inactive in the European Union (EU). He states that:

Unemployment is the most widely used labour market indicator, reflecting a range of aspects that are both economic (e.g. labour underutilization, business cycle) and social (e.g. joblessness, risk of poverty and social exclusion, etc.). However, with an increasingly fragmented and diversified labour market and strongly varying degrees of attachment to it, the unemployment rate indicator can on its own no longer sufficiently describe all those aspects (1).

De la Fuentes sequences these labour force statuses along a 6-point scale of attachment: employed-UPW-unemployed-PSIA-PAWNS-inactive. Using job tenure and previous work experience as variables, he is able to describe attachment levels for all six groups. He states that the first column in Table 1 shows a clear decreasing pattern of attachment in terms of having worked in the past two years among the non-employed groups along his scale.

Table 1: Potential additional labour force by work experience (comparison to ILO unemployed and other economically inactive persons included for reference), EU-27, 2010

	Time since last worked				Total
	Less than 2 years ago	2 years or more	Never worked	No answer	
Unemployed (ILO definition)	59%	24%	16%	1%	100%
Persons seeking work but not immediately available	47%	26%	25%	2%	100%
Persons available to work but not seeking	32%	37%	30%	0%	100%
Other economically inactive persons	11%	56%	32%	1%	100%

De la Fuentes, 2011 from Eurostat, EU-LFS

⁶ De la Fuentes defines **underemployed part-time workers** as persons who are “employed part-time who want to work more hours and are available to do so” (2).

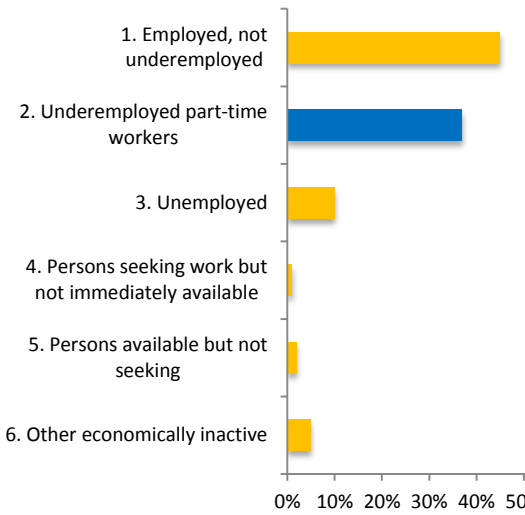
⁷ **Persons seeking work but not immediately available** “consists mostly of people who do not qualify as unemployed because of their limited availability to start in a new job, despite their being jobseekers. Other smaller groups are included in this indicator for completeness reasons, e.g. jobless people who have found a job they will start later” (De la Fuentes, 2011, 2).

⁸ **Persons available to work but not seeking** “consists of people wanting to work and available to do so, but who are not recorded as unemployed because they are not actively looking for a job” (De la Fuentes, 2011, 2). This indicator includes discouraged workers and persons prevented from seeking work because of illness or family care issues.

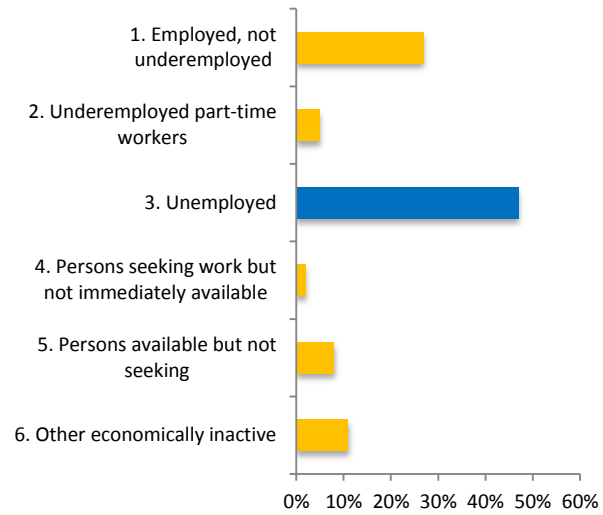
Besides looking at job tenure and work experience measures, he also looked at the data on permanence rates and transition probabilities. At the two poles of the six measures, employed and inactive are 90% likely to remain as is. UPW, unemployed, and PAWNS have significant permanence percentages but most movement measured for these groups is done positively toward employment (See Figure 1). PSIA is the most volatile grouping with only 10% remaining in the category one year on with most of the group moving positively toward greater attachment indicators during this period. De la Fuentes concludes that probability for transition data justifies using a six-point scale of attachment as these data show the increased likelihood for attachment for each group moving towards full employment.

Figure 1: Transition probabilities between 2009 and 2010, EU

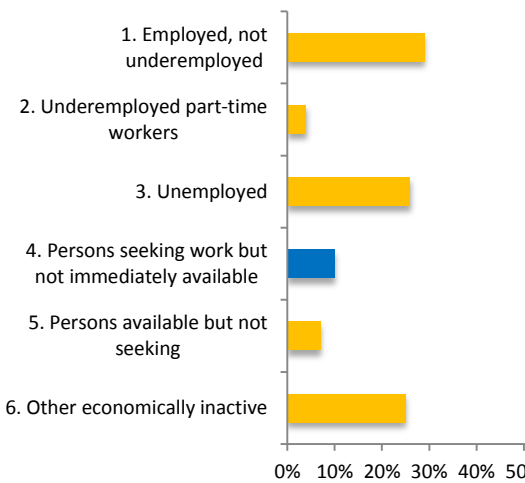
1a. Underemployed part-time workers



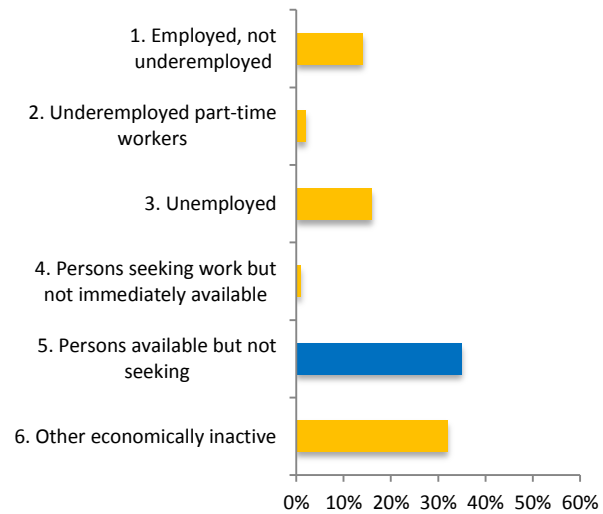
1b. Unemployed (ILO definition)



1c. Persons seeking work but not immediately available



1d. Persons available but not seeking



Research on the Factors for Weak Attachment

Socio-economic Factors

In addition to the studies on labour market status cited above, there is also sociological, labour studies and economic research referring to the labour market attachment of particular social groups. For the most part, this research looks at a variety of social, cultural, demographic and economic factors

impacting workforce participation. Labour market barriers such as low skill attainment, poor health, and unsupported family care responsibilities were reported as contributing to weak attachment prospects. Typically, this literature did not respond directly to the labour market status research cited above with the exception of two articles found examining the labour market attachment of people with poor health. Brown et al.'s "Reservation Wages, Labour Market Participation and Health" looked at people with poor health in the UK. Combining the disciplines of health and labour economics, they applied a labour market attachment scale that included the economically inactive to see if a separation between unemployed and inactive had an impact on the labour market attachment of people with poor health. By separating out the economically inactive or "weakly attached", Brown et al. were able to show that poor health does not contribute to unemployment, rather poor health is a major cause of economic inactivity or weak attachment. "Poor health appears to be keeping people away from the labour market, but for those in the labour market (be it currently employed or unemployed), health effects are insignificant once [they are attached to the labour market]" (Brown et al., 2010, 526). A similar investigation in Canada by Fortin found that Canadians who had poor labour attachment were more likely to be in poor health than those who were attached. She also found that although persistent poverty had an impact on health, persistent unemployment had a stronger effect on health. Accounting for labour market attachment, these authors demonstrate a significant characteristic of the weakly attached being those in poor health.

Fortin's and Brown et al.'s studies are two examples of the use of labour market attachment to isolate socio-cultural groups who have a high likelihood of being weakly attached to the labour market. However, this was the only literature that combined labour market status groupings to look at the socio-economic barriers that can attribute to weak attachment. A brief review of the literature mentioning labour market attachment found reports referring to several specific barriers to the labour market. For example, in Sissons et al.'s (2010) extensive review of worklessness in Newham, a borough in London, UK, referred to countless factors that weakened attachment for specific social groups living in Newham. Factors they listed in their report included: poor literacy skills, education levels below high school, income level, living in precarious or rental housing, poor work histories, having parents who have low attachment, being a single parent, being a caregiver, being in debt, having a criminal record, lack of aspiration, motivation and confidence arising from long term unemployment. Similarly, a scan of the Canadian literature referring to labour market attachment found the following social-cultural-economic factors were mentioned as having the potential to be associated with weak attachment: low levels of education, persistent health problems, mental health issues, physical and intellectual disabilities, lone parent, youth, lack of childcare, lack of external supports, and being an Aboriginal Canadian.⁹ These are some of the main factors and affected groups, but the list is not exhaustive.

⁹ These factors and social groupings were found in Scott, D. "Disability and Labour Market Attachment: Assessing and Responding to the Needs of Saskatchewan Social Assistance Clients," *Welfare to Work: The Next Generation*, National Forum, 2003; "Disability in Canada: A 2006 Profile," Human Resources and Skill Development Canada; Food Banks Canada, "Creating Quality Sustainable Jobs and a Resilient Workforce in Canada," Food Banks Canada Policy Brief, August 2011; Michalski, J. and Wason, M., "Labour Market Changes and Family Transactions: An In-depth Qualitative Study of Families in British Columbia," *Canadian Policy Research Networks*, 1999; Sharpe, A., Arsenault, J. and Lapointe, S. "The Potential Contribution of Aboriginal

Non-Cognitive Factors

Sisons et al.'s list includes socio-cultural and economic factors that can potentially lead to weak attachment. It also refers to non-cognitive factors such as aspiration, motivation and confidence¹⁰. There is psycho-economic literature on the importance of both cognitive and non-cognitive skills on labour market outcomes. This research is led by Nobel Laureate, James Heckman who, in his study on the effects of cognitive and non-cognitive abilities on labour market outcomes and social behaviour, looks at how these abilities impact wages, schooling, work experience, occupational choice and participation in risky behaviours (Heckman et al., 2006). While not referring to labour market attachment directly, literature looking at non-cognitive factors has demonstrated the link between non-cognitive ability (social intelligence) and labour market and socio-economic outcomes (see Caneiro et al., 2007; Heckman et al, 2006; Cunha and Heckman, 2006; Postlewaite and Silverman, 2006). Caneiro et al. (2007) found in their paper on the impact of early cognitive and non-cognitive skills on later outcomes that:

.... an overall measure of non-cognitive skill is important for a host of outcomes, including whether or not an individual stays on at school beyond the age of 16, whether they have obtained a degree by age 42, employment status at age 42, work experience between ages 23 and 42, wages at age 42, smoking at age 16, truancy before age 16, exclusion from school, teenage pregnancy, involvement with crime (ages 16 and 42), and health at age 42 (i).

Heckman argues that non-cognitive factors such as perseverance, motivation, time preference, risk aversion, self-esteem, self-control and preference for leisure have an almost equal or sometimes stronger effect on some socio-economic outcomes than cognitive factors (Heckman, 2007).

Because non-cognitive abilities are developed from adolescence through to adulthood, research in this area suggests that active labour market policies take advantage of the latency of this skill development and direct programming to build these skills. For this reason, these skills may be important to include on the Labour Market Attachment Index along with the socio-cultural factors listed above. Critics of this approach argue that skills (including non-cognitive ones) alone are not the full measure of poor employment outcomes. There are political and institutional forces like racial, gender and class discrimination that have significant impacts as well (Sites and Parks, 2011).

Canadians to Labour Force, Employment, Productivity and Output Growth in Canada, 2001-2017," Centre for the Study of Living Standards, 2007; Luffman, J. and Sussman, D. "The Aboriginal Labour Force in Western Canada," Statistics Canada: Perspectives, January 2007; Compton, J. "The Mom Effect: Family Proximity and the Labour Force Status of Women in Canada, " Canadian Labour Market and Skills Researcher Network, Working Paper No. 87, November 2011; Bell, D. and Benes, K., "Transitioning Graduates to Work: Improving the Labour Market Success of Poorly Integrated New Entrants (PINEs) in Canada," Canadian Career Development Foundation, May 2012; "Alberta Labour Force Profiles: Immigrants, 2011," Government of Alberta; Toronto Immigrant Employment Data Initiative, "TIEDI Labour Force Update: Canada May, 2012".

¹⁰ Non-cognitive traits, skills, and characteristics include perseverance, motivation, self-control, and other aspects of conscientiousness (see Borghans et al., 2008).

Conclusion: Developing an Index to Measure Low Attachment

There are three main fields of research in the literature of attachment outlined in this literature review: 1) the research on labour market attachment according to labour market status; 2) the research on the socio-economic factors affecting weak attachment and 3) the studies on non-cognitive abilities impacting employment outcomes. Separately, each field of research offers indicators of weak or strong attachment and together they present a fuller picture of the impacts. For this reason, the Labour Market Attachment Index should consider integrating all three components to include all of this research:

Component 1: Labour Market Status

Building on 20 years of the labour market statistic research on labour market attachment, de la Fuente's research seems to offer a usable scale for measuring labour market attachment. The six point scale of Employed-UPW-Unemployed-PSIA-PAWNS-Inactive is well researched showing statistically increasing levels of attachment from inactive to employed. In addition to de la Fuente's groupings, Brandolini et al.'s groupings of active versus passive job search strategies impacting labour market attachment are also significant in the measurement of attachment. Jones and Riddell's categories of the unemployed to include those on temporary layoff or short-term future starts are also useful groupings.

When looking at this research, it is important to keep in mind that only certain labour market status groupings take advantage of employment services. Given that the project is focussed on those clients who are using employment services, the index must consider those groups. To this end, the labour market attachment index could include the following groupings outlined in the labour market status research (not listed in any particular order):

- 1) Underemployed:
 - a) People who work part-time but who want more hours
 - b) People who are on temporary contract
- 2) Unemployed:
 - a) Out of work, wanting work, actively looking for work
 - b) Temporary lay-off
 - c) Seeking but not immediately available
- 3) Active job seekers (people using at least two of the following: public employment agencies, checking with employers, contacting relatives, looking at ads, answering ads or used other method)
- 4) Passive job seekers (people looking at job ads only)
- 5) Economically Inactive
 - a) Social Assistance Recipient who cannot find work or who does not have supports (day care) that would make it financially viable to not receive social assistance

Component 2: Demographic factors

In addition to the groupings listed above, the index should include socio-economic-cultural factors that have a greater causality to weak attachment. The literature, as cited above, referred to the following demographic factors impacting attachment:

- a) Level of education
- b) Literacy level
- c) Family care responsibility
 - a. Single parent vs. dual parent
 - b. Responsible for elder/childcare
 - c. Access to affordable elder/childcare
- d) Lack of external supports (family nearby and/or access to public services)
- e) Being in debt
- f) Belonging to a designated group (women, persons with disabilities, Aboriginal people, visible minorities)
- g) Health
 - a. Healthy vs. persistent health problems
 - b. Mental health
- h) Having a Disability
 - a. Physical
 - b. Intellectual
 - c. Learning
- i) Housing
 - a. Live/lived in public housing
- j) Having a criminal record
- k) Work history/experience
 - a. Never worked
 - b. Periods between working/not working
 - c. Positive or negative work experience(s)
- l) Family History
 - a. Family's attitude toward work
 - b. Family's attitude toward education attainment
- m) Engagement in risky behaviors (crime, drug and/or alcohol abuse)

Component 3: Non-cognitive factors

The third component of the index highlights how non-cognitive skills impact employment outcome and therefore labour market attachment. This literature is not directly responding to the literature on labour market attachment, but the link can be made. As stated earlier in this paper, the project, will likely be seeking to measure non-cognitive factors such as goal orientation, motivational style, self-efficacy, locus of control, perseverance and self-regulation in the Self-Help Index being piloted as a measure of capacity to benefit from self-managed supports. The non-cognitive factors measured by the Self-Help Index should be cross-referenced to the Attachment Index as a way of tracking these factors impacting attachment.

Including these three components will combine all aspects of the literature on labour market attachment. In doing so, the Employability Dimensions Project will be breaking new ground and, hopefully, contribute substantively to the body of labour market and career development research.

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