



# Labour Market Outcomes in Rural Areas and Small Towns in Ontario, Canada

Sadequl Islam & Eeshan Bajaj

1. Department of Economics, Laurentian University
2. Graduate Student, Department of Economics, Simon Fraser University

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**Abstract:** This paper examines determinants of employment across different community sizes in the province of Ontario, with a focus on rural areas and small towns. Logistic regression techniques have been applied to the microdata derived from the Canadian Income Survey, 2020, to analyze how different individual characteristics- age, sex, educational attainment, and immigration status affect the probability of being employed. The analysis has been conducted across five geographic categories: i) rural Ontario, ii) towns with a population under 30,000, iii) towns with a population between 30,000 and 99,999, iv) the province of Ontario as a whole, and v) Canada as a whole. The results highlight that labour market outcomes vary substantially by geography. Rural and small-town residents face systematically different employment prospects in comparison to their urban counterparts. The highest level of educational attainment and sex emerge as significant predictors. The results indicate the requirement for regionally tailored employment and educational policies that address the labour market challenges faced by residents of rural areas and small towns of Ontario.

**Keywords:** Labour market outcomes, small towns, Ontario, employment outcomes, logistic and logit regressions, Canadian Income Survey, education, sex, geographic disparities

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## INTRODUCTION

The structure of the labour market varies significantly across different communities. In Ontario, rural communities and small towns face distinct economic realities which are marked by limited job opportunities and slower employment growth. There has been a notable increase in the attention paid towards inequality and precarious work conditions in Canada, but little research has focused on the individual characteristics that influence employment in the non-metropolitan areas of the province.

The study aims to investigate how demographic and educational factors, such as an individual's age, sex, immigration status, and level of schooling, directly affect employment status, especially in smaller and rural communities. By comparing results across five geographic categories, ranging from rural Ontario to the national level, we can uncover patterns that reflect how geography affects the odds of employment. Using microdata from the Canadian Income Survey and applying logit and logistic regression models, we look at how these personal characteristics can relate to employment outcomes, and how these patterns vary across rural areas, small towns, and larger regions.

Through this study, we aim to answer the following research questions:

1. How do individual characteristics like education, age, sex, and immigration status affect employment outcomes?
2. Do these effects vary as we move from smaller to larger population centres, and if yes, how?
3. Which social groups face the greatest employment barriers, and does geography make these barriers worse or better?

By answering these questions, this paper becomes a valuable addition to the growing literature on labour market disparities outside urban areas. The findings highlight how demographic factors interact to shape employment chances, offering insights that could support more inclusive labour policies in Ontario.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Several studies have explored various forms of precarious or non-standard employment in Canada. For instance, Noack and Vosko (2011) have examined the prevalence of precarious jobs in Ontario during 1999-2009 based on the *Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics (SLID)*. In this study, precarity of employment is characterized by low wages, the absence of unions, the lack of employer-sponsored pension plans, and employment in small firms. Two major findings of this study are the following: First, precarious jobs, characterized by part-time employment, continued to persist during the 1999-2009 period. Second, women, single parents, and racialized minorities have a higher propensity to hold precarious jobs. It is useful to mention three limitations of this study. First, this study doesn't examine the prevalence of precarious jobs in rural areas and small towns in Ontario. Second, this study doesn't investigate the wage levels and wage inequality in rural areas and small towns compared to large metropolitan areas. Third, the study concentrates on the 1999-2009 period. Given the availability of more recent data from Canadian Income Survey (2012-2020), it is worthwhile to explore labour market outcomes during recent years.

A more recent study (Hardy, Lovei, and Patterson, 2018) found that during 1998-2018, temporary employment grew faster than permanent employment; furthermore, employment growth was higher in urban areas compared to rural areas. This study, however, concentrates on Canada and provinces rather than on rural areas and small towns in Ontario. Patterson (2018) has found that in 2017, about 19% of Canadians worked part-time. Furthermore, 49% of youth aged 15 to 24 worked part-time; women were twice as likely to work part-time as men. Fortin (2008) in a study has found that the incidence of living in a low-income family is higher among the self-employed in rural areas and higher among the low-paid in urban areas. Based on logistic regressions, the study found that for a worker, the probability of being poor, if a lone parent or unattached, was higher in rural areas compared to urban areas. Alasia and Rothwell (2003) found that the rural-urban income divide during 1992-1999 widened. In a multi-country study, Ananian and DellaFerrera (2024) have noted the precarious nature of rural workers. Furthermore, they highlight that rural workers are paid, on average, 24% less than their urban counterparts.

A major study was carried out by Ali, Newbold, and Mills (2020). This study has explored precarious forms of employment in Canada and across different provinces, census metropolitan areas, and urban/rural areas. This study used data from *Labour Force Surveys* from 2011 to 2016. The main results of this study are as follows. First, various forms of precarious employment revealed distinct spatial patterns. Second, results from logistic regression analyses indicate that patterns in precarious employment were reinforced by socio-demographic variables, including gender, age, immigration status, education, and income. Third, spatial variations in precarious forms of employment were robust even controlling for socio-demographic variables. This study, however, has some limitations. First, it concentrates on precarious employment rather than the levels and inequality of wages. Second, the study focuses on Canada, provinces, and large metropolitan areas rather than on rural areas and small towns in Ontario.

Our paper contributes to the literature in several ways. First, it includes several variables concerning labour market outcomes such as participation or non-participation in the labour force, labour force status (employed or unemployed), part-time and full-time employment. Second, the paper concentrates on rural areas and small towns in Ontario. The paper also compares the results from rural and small towns in Ontario with those from larger geographical units. Third, empirical analyses of the paper apply logistic regression models involving a wider set of labour market variables than used in the literature.

The findings of the paper have implications for regional development policies, social policies, and labour market policies pursued by national, provincial, and local governments.

## **DATA AND METHODOLOGY**

The study uses microdata from the Canadian Income Survey, which provides detailed socio-demographic and labour market information for individuals aged 15 and above across Canada. The dataset includes information on employment status, education, sex, immigration background, income, and geographical location. Observations with missing or invalid values in key variables were omitted. Since the regression models are estimated separately for the five geographical categories, the sample size varies across models depending on the population size of each region.

The dependent variable is employment status, coded as a binary variable where 1 indicates that the individual is employed, and 0 indicates not employed. The independent variables include age group, sex, educational attainment, and immigration status.

Age group is categorized into 12 brackets: 16-17 years, 18-24 years, 25-29 years, 30-34 years, 35-39 years, 40-44 years, 45-49 years, 50-54 years, 55-59 years, 60-64 years, 65-69 years, and 70 years and above. For the purposes of the regression, "16-17 years" is treated as the reference category. Sex is coded as 1 for male and 2 for female, with male as the reference group. Education is coded on a four-point scale: 1 for less than high school, 2 for high school graduate or some postsecondary, 3 for non-university postsecondary diploma or certificate, and 4 for university degree. Individuals with less than a high school

education form the reference group. Immigration status has been coded 1 for immigrants and 2 for non-immigrants, with immigrants as the reference group.

To examine the relationship between these individual characteristics and employment status, we applied logistic and logit regression models, using Stata. The model estimates the probability of being employed as a function of age, sex, educational attainment, and immigration status.

The equation for the model can be expressed as:

$$\ln \left( \frac{P(\text{Employed}=1)}{1-P(\text{Employed}=1)} \right) = B_0 + B_1 \text{Age}_i + B_2 \text{Sex}_i + B_3 \text{Education}_i + B_4 \text{Immigrant}_i + \epsilon_i$$

Separate regressions are run for five geographic categories:

1. Rural Ontario
2. Towns with a population under 30,000
3. Towns with a population between 30,000 and 99,999
4. Ontario overall
5. Canada overall

This approach enables comparison of how employment predictions vary across different community sizes and regional contexts.

## EMPIRICAL RESULTS

This section presents the findings from the regression models estimated separately for each of the five geographic categories. For each region, two versions of the regression results are reported: logit coefficients and odds ratios (logistic regression). Logit coefficients are used to assess the direction and magnitude of relationships; odds ratios provide a more intuitive assessment of effect size.

### Rural Ontario

The logit model indicates that individuals between 40 and 54 years are significantly more likely to be employed in comparison to the reference group, which is reflected by positive and statistically significant coefficients. For instance, the coefficient is 1.09 for ages 40-44 ( $p=0.014$ ), 1.04 for ages 45-49 ( $p=0.017$ ), 0.97 for ages 50-54 ( $p=0.021$ ). In contrast, individuals in the older age brackets, especially those who are 60 years and above, experience a sharp decline in employment probability. The effect is more pronounced among those aged 70 and over, who have a coefficient of -3.73 ( $p<0.001$ ) which highlights that there is a significant decline in labour market participation in older age groups. These findings are consistent with the logistic model, where the odds ratio for age is 0.65 ( $p<0.001$ ) which confirms a general decrease in employment odds with an increase in age.

Sex is a significant indicator. The negative coefficient for females (-0.79,  $p < 0.001$ ) indicates that that women are less likely to be employed than men in rural areas, holding other factors constant. The logistic results also reiterate the results, with an odds ratio of 0.53, which indicates that women face nearly half the odds of employment in comparison

to their male counterparts. The gender gap is significant and may reflect social barriers to women's participation in labour markets.

**Table 1: Logistic Regressions: Rural Ontario**

		Coefficient	Std. err.	z	P> z	[95% conf. interval]	
Employed							
Age							
	18 to 24 years	.4559982	.3955876	1.15	0.249	-.3193392	1.231336
	25 to 29 years	.3037626	.4575882	0.66	0.507	-.5930939	1.200619
	30 to 34 years	.5959953	.4148941	1.44	0.151	-.2171821	1.409173
	35 to 39 years	.4282023	.4023952	1.06	0.287	-.3604778	1.216882
	40 to 44 years	1.092562	.4443058	2.46	0.014	.2217387	1.963386
	45 to 49 years	1.037262	.43405	2.39	0.017	.1865396	1.887984
	50 to 54 years	.9760689	.423407	2.31	0.021	.1462065	1.805931
	55 to 59 years	-.1773806	.3539147	-0.50	0.616	-.8710407	.5162794
	60 to 64 years	-.8061581	.3444246	-2.34	0.019	-1.481218	-.1310983
	65 to 69 years	-2.280323	.3550558	-6.42	0.000	-2.97622	-1.584427
	70 years and over	-3.727142	.3643686	-10.23	0.000	-4.441291	-3.012992
Sex							
	Female	-.7851295	.1220586	-6.43	0.000	-1.02436	-.5458991
Education							
	Graduated high school or partial pos..	.5297034	.2040539	2.60	0.009	.1297651	.9296418
	Non-university postsecondary certifi..	.9543896	.2029433	4.70	0.000	.556628	1.352151
	University degree or certificate	.8624821	.2218138	3.89	0.000	.4277351	1.297229
Immigrant							
	No	.0822324	.2400075	0.34	0.732	-.3881735	.5526384
	_cons	.9086156	.3756624	2.42	0.016	.1723309	1.6449

**. logistic Employed Age Sex Education Immigrant**

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	No	.0822324	.2400075	0.34	0.732	-.3881735	.5526384
	_cons	.9086156	.3756624	2.42	0.016	.1723309	1.6449

Log likelihood = **-1104.7778**

Number of obs = **2,185**  
 LR chi2(4) = **761.56**  
 Prob > chi2 = **0.0000**  
 Pseudo R2 = **0.2563**

Employed	Odds ratio	Std. err.	z	P> z	[95% conf. interval]	
Age	<b>.651061</b>	<b>.0136997</b>	<b>-20.39</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>.6247562</b>	<b>.6784733</b>
Sex	<b>.5262352</b>	<b>.0557729</b>	<b>-6.06</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>.4275289</b>	<b>.6477304</b>
Education	<b>1.549342</b>	<b>.0872326</b>	<b>7.78</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>1.387465</b>	<b>1.730105</b>
Immigrant	<b>1.421055</b>	<b>.2753236</b>	<b>1.81</b>	<b>0.070</b>	<b>.9720625</b>	<b>2.077436</b>
_cons	<b>92.64508</b>	<b>49.75581</b>	<b>8.43</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>32.33534</b>	<b>265.4405</b>

Note: **\_cons** estimates baseline odds.

Education is also a strong predictor of employment. Individuals who graduated high school or pursued some postsecondary education have significantly higher likelihood of being employed, relative to individuals with less than high school education (coefficient= 0.53, p=0.009). The effect is even stronger for those with non-university postsecondary certificates (0.95, p < 0.001) and university degrees (0.86, p < 0.001). These results coincide with the odds ratio of 1.55, confirming that higher education significantly improves employment prospects in rural Ontario.

Lastly, immigration status does not appear to have a statistically significant impact on employment in rural Ontario. The coefficient for non-immigrants is small and non-significant (0.08,  $p=0.732$ ). The logistic model yields an odds ratio of 1.42 ( $p=0.070$ ), which is marginally significant. This suggests that immigrant status alone may not be a decisive factor in employment outcomes, possibly owing to smaller immigrant populations in rural areas.

### Towns with a Population under 30,000

**Table 2: Logistic Regression for Ontario with a Population of Less Than 30,000**

Employed	Coefficient	Std. err.	z	P> z	[95% conf. interval]	
Age						
18 to 24 years	.024875	.4991479	0.05	0.960	-.9534369	1.003187
25 to 29 years	.278484	.5130448	0.54	0.587	-.7270652	1.284033
30 to 34 years	.4106722	.4875751	0.84	0.400	-.5449574	1.366302
35 to 39 years	.1842957	.4807066	0.38	0.701	-.7578719	1.126463
40 to 44 years	.3528114	.4988276	0.71	0.479	-.6248726	1.330495
45 to 49 years	.5017427	.5025601	1.00	0.318	-.483257	1.486742
50 to 54 years	-.0038454	.4601449	-0.01	0.993	-.9057128	.8980219
55 to 59 years	-.3889573	.4425455	-0.88	0.379	-1.25633	.4784159
60 to 64 years	-1.037312	.4266461	-2.43	0.015	-1.873523	-.2011008
65 to 69 years	-2.312337	.4376008	-5.28	0.000	-3.170019	-1.454656
70 years and over	-4.196353	.4466502	-9.40	0.000	-5.071771	-3.320935
Sex						
Female	-.5628795	.1338355	-4.21	0.000	-.8251922	-.3005668
Education						
Graduated high school or p..	.9181949	.2448458	3.75	0.000	.438306	1.398084
Non-university postseconda..	1.349205	.2417199	5.58	0.000	.875443	1.822968
University degree or certi..	1.477706	.2682257	5.51	0.000	.951993	2.003418
Immigrant						
No	-.0963299	.3157203	-0.31	0.760	-.7151302	.5224705
_cons	.7909278	.4705685	1.68	0.093	-.1313695	1.713225

  

Employed	Odds ratio	Std. err.	z	P> z	[95% conf. interval]	
Age	.6429422	.0146115	-19.44	0.000	.6149326	.6722275
Sex	.7062697	.0832861	-2.95	0.003	.5605231	.8899131
Education	1.660254	.1077855	7.81	0.000	1.461887	1.885539
Immigrant	1.097593	.275979	0.37	0.711	.670525	1.796667
_cons	83.03193	54.02403	6.79	0.000	23.19626	297.2161

In the case of towns with a population of less than 30,000, there is a significant decline in the probability of being employed with an increase in age. This effect is more pronounced for those aged 60 and above. Those who are aged 60 to 64 show a statistically

significant negative coefficient of -1.04 ( $p=0.015$ ) and those aged 65 to 69 and 70 and above experience even sharper declines with coefficients of -2.31 and -4.20, respectively. These figures reflect a strong pattern of labour market withdrawal among older age groups. The logistic regression results support this with an odds ratio of 0.64 for age, indicating a reduction in employment with an increase in age. The logit coefficient for females is -0.56, which reflects that women are significantly less likely to be employed than men in smaller towns. This is also supported by the corresponding odds ratio of 0.71 ( $p= 0.003$ ), meaning that women have approximately 30% lower odds of employment. Individuals who have completed high school or pursued postsecondary education have higher chances of being employed. The coefficients range from 0.92 for high school graduates ( $p < 0.001$ ) to 1.48 for those with a university degree ( $p < 0.001$ ), indicating a positive and upward relationship between educational attainment and the likelihood of employment. The odds ratio of 1.66 ( $p < 0.001$ ) reinforces this notion.

Immigration does not have a statistically significant effect. The logit coefficient for non-immigrants is close to zero (-0.10,  $p = 0.76$ ) and the logistic model with an odds ratio of 1.10 ( $p = 0.711$ ) also does not find any meaningful correlation. This indicates that in towns with a population of less than 30,000, being an immigrant does not independently influence employment outcomes.

### Towns with a Population between 30,000 and 99,999

In this geographical unit, individuals between 25 and 54 years old are significantly more likely to be employed, with the highest probability in the 40-44 and 45-49 age groups, with coefficients of 1.11 and 1.04, respectively ( $p < 0.05$ ).

**Table 3: Logistic Regression in Ontario with a Population Between 30,000 and 99,999.**

Employed	Coefficient	Std. err.	z	P> z	[95% conf. interval]	
Logistic regression						
Log likelihood = -1038.8167			Number of obs = 2,542			
			LR chi2(16) = 1425.49			
			Prob > chi2 = 0.0000			
			Pseudo R2 = 0.4069			
Age						
18 to 24 years	.3454317	.3841054	0.90	0.368	-.407401	1.098265
25 to 29 years	.8732561	.4392511	1.99	0.047	.0123398	1.734172
30 to 34 years	.5098373	.4056319	1.26	0.209	-.2851866	1.304861
35 to 39 years	.9421481	.4472642	2.11	0.035	.0655263	1.81877
40 to 44 years	1.109984	.4615705	2.40	0.016	.2053228	2.014646
45 to 49 years	1.040224	.4418097	2.35	0.019	.1742927	1.906155
50 to 54 years	.7707691	.4085397	1.89	0.059	-.0299541	1.571492
55 to 59 years	-.2538978	.3615162	-0.70	0.482	-.9624565	.4546609
60 to 64 years	-1.036579	.3534996	-2.93	0.003	-1.729426	-.343733
65 to 69 years	-2.20862	.3665297	-6.03	0.000	-2.927005	-1.490235
70 years and over	-4.102	.3891711	-10.54	0.000	-4.864761	-3.339239
Sex						
Female	-.4600929	.1122495	-4.10	0.000	-.6800979	-.2400879
Education						
Graduated high school or p..	.6993778	.1992112	3.51	0.000	.308931	1.089825
Non-university postseconda..	1.298841	.1983378	6.55	0.000	.9101056	1.687575
University degree or certi..	1.311424	.2203701	5.95	0.000	.8795062	1.743341
Immigrant						
No	-.011163	.2424489	-0.05	0.963	-.486354	.4640281
_cons	.4442708	.3834598	1.16	0.247	-.3072966	1.195838

Logistic regression

Number of obs = 2,542

LR chi2(4) = 1021.24

Prob &gt; chi2 = 0.0000

Log likelihood = -1240.9385

Pseudo R2 = 0.2915

Employed	Odds ratio	Std. err.	z	P> z	[95% conf. interval]	
Age	.6505598	.012259	-22.81	0.000	.6269708	.6750363
Sex	.7145319	.0709852	-3.38	0.001	.5881105	.8681291
Education	1.827234	.1018031	10.82	0.000	1.638212	2.038066
Immigrant	1.400986	.273172	1.73	0.084	.9560089	2.05308
_cons	32.65203	16.59795	6.86	0.000	12.05647	88.4301

However, the trend is reversed for age groups above 60. The coefficients for 60-64, 65-69, and 70+ are 1.04, -2.21, and -4.10, respectively (all  $p < 0.001$ ). The logistic regression results support this with an odds ratio of 0.65 for age, indicating a reduction in employment with increasing age.

Sex also plays a significant role in this model. Females are less likely to be employed than males, with a coefficient of -0.46 ( $p < 0.001$ ). The odds ratio of 0.71 implies that females have 29% lower odds of employment in towns of this size. Additionally, individuals who graduated high school have a coefficient of 0.70 ( $p < 0.001$ ), compared to those with a non-postsecondary education diploma (1.30) or university degree (1.31), who have even higher and highly significant coefficients (both  $p < 0.001$ ).

Immigration is not a statistically significant predictor of employment in this geographic group as well. The coefficient for non-immigrants is -0.01 ( $p = 0.963$ ), which means that there is no meaningful difference in employment likelihood of immigrants and non-immigrants. The odds ratio of 1.40 ( $p=0.084$ ) is not statistically significant at the 5% level either.

## Ontario Overall

For the province of Ontario, we notice a similar trend. Compared to individuals under 18, those aged 25 to 54 years are significantly more likely to be employed, with the 45-49 age group experiencing a peak (coefficient = 1.33,  $p < 0.001$ ). After age 55, employment probabilities drop sharply. Individuals who are between 60-64 have a coefficient of -0.34 ( $p= 0.001$ ), and the decline increases among those between 65 to 69 (-1.61) and 70+ (-3.19), both highly significant ( $p < 0.001$ ). The odds ratio of 0.71 ( $p < 0.001$ ) confirms this trend, indicating that the odds of being employed decline by about 29% for each successive increase in age group.

The coefficient for females is -0.52 ( $p < 0.001$ ), which means that women are less likely to be employed than their male counterparts in Ontario. The odds ratio of 0.67 also supports this and indicates that women have 33% lower odds of employment compared to men, holding other factors constant.

Education also exhibits a strong correlation with employment. Individuals who graduated from high school have a coefficient of 0.61 ( $p < 0.001$ ). Moreover, individuals with non-university post-secondary credentials (1.08) and university degrees (1.38) are





significantly more likely to be employed than individuals with less than a high school education. The significant odds ratio of 1.65 ( $p < 0.001$ ) indicates that one is 65% more likely to be employed with higher levels of education.

Lastly, immigration status is statistically significant and positively associated with employment in the national context. The model indicates that non-immigrants are more likely to be employed than immigrants, as evidenced by the coefficient for non-immigrants, which is 0.13 ( $p < 0.001$ ). The odds ratio of 1.16 ( $p < 0.001$ ) also reflects that non-immigrants have about 16% higher odds of being employed than immigrants, *ceteris paribus*.

## **CONCLUSION**

The findings highlight demographic patterns that are evident across all geographies while also identifying regional nuances. Age has consistently emerged as a strong determinant of employment across all geographies. Individuals between 25 and 54 years, especially those in the 40-49 age range, have the highest probability of employment. However, the likelihood of employment declines after age 55, with the steepest declines observed for those aged 70 and above. This pattern is consistent across rural, small-town, provincial, and national contexts, which reflects a trend of labour force exit among older Canadians.

Sex also plays a significant role in shaping employment outcomes. Women face significantly lower odds of employment across all geographies. The employment disadvantage was the most severe in rural Ontario, where the odds ratio indicated that women had nearly half the odds of employment relative to men. Moreover, the odds ratios of 0.67 and 0.65, at the provincial and national levels respectively, indicate that women across Ontario and Canada face 30-35% lower employment odds than men, controlling for other variables.

Educational attainment also proved to be a powerful determinant of employment in every geographical unit. In comparison to individuals with less than a high school education, those with high school diplomas, non-university postsecondary certificates, and university degrees consistently had higher employment probabilities. The odds ratios across all models ranged from 1.55 to 1.86, indicating that higher educational attainment sharply increases the probability of employment, irrespective of geographical units.

Immigration status exhibited mixed and geography-specific results. In rural Ontario, small towns, and mid-sized towns, immigration status was not a statistically significant predictor of employment. The coefficients were close to zero, and the p-values were greater than the significance levels. These results indicate that immigration status does not independently affect employment outcomes in these smaller communities, possibly owing to the smaller number of immigrants or a less competitive labour market. In contrast, immigrants are statistically less likely to be employed than non-immigrants at the national and provincial levels. The odds ratios for non-immigrants in Ontario and Canada were 1.12 and 1.16, respectively, indicating 12% lower odds of employment in Ontario and 16% nationally for immigrants. Therefore, immigration status has a modest but significant impact on employment probabilities, at the provincial and national levels, suggesting the presence of systemic barriers that hinder immigrants' integration into more competitive and urbanized labour markets.

The effects of demographic characteristics on employment vary across geographies, and as we move from smaller to larger geographies, some patterns remain stable while others shift. Age and education have a uniform influence across all regions. However, the effects of sex and immigration status show important geographic differences. The employment disadvantage faced by women is most pronounced in rural Ontario. Meanwhile, the influence of immigration status is only evident at the provincial and national levels.

Overall, the findings indicate that older individuals, women, and immigrants (at broader levels) face the greatest employment barriers. The geographical context shapes the intensity of these barriers. For instance, the gender employment gap is most severe in rural Ontario, but the negative effects of immigration status become statistically significant at the provincial and national levels. Meanwhile, the decline in employment after age 55 is uniform across all geographies, and education consistently improves employment outcomes, irrespective of the location.

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