PORTUGUESE-CANADIANS AND THEIR ACADEMIC UNDERACHIEVEMENT IN HIGH SCHOOL IN BRITISH COLUMBIA: THE CASE OF AN INVISIBLE MINORITY

by

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Abstract

On average, Portuguese-Canadians have a lower educational attainment than other ethnicities. With the exception of the Toronto School Board, this issue has been relatively ignored across Canada. I attempt to fill this gap by focussing on Portuguese-Canadians in British Columbia, specifically in Vancouver, using Census data to provide a statistical profile, and conducting focus groups to identify some of the key challenges participants faced throughout school. Analysing these two data sources brings out a number of alternatives that have been divided into two categories, community and formal school system. On the whole, these alternatives are relatively low cost in comparison to the current level of funding on education and work mainly within the community to foster an interest and growth in educational attainment. Finally, the conclusion recommends the best course of action and role for public policy over time.

Executive Summary

This study analyses the educational attainment of Portuguese-Canadians in British Columbia. Portuguese-Canadian educational attainment has been extensively researched in Ontario, specifically Toronto. The low educational attainment of Portuguese-Canadians is the main factor that has contributed to their low socio-economic status. Despite the research that has been conducted in Ontario, this is the first study that analyses the low educational attainment of Portuguese-Canadians in British Columbia and provides programs that will help Portuguese-Canadians attain success in education. In 2003-2004, Portuguese-Canadians were the ethnicity with the lowest Dogwood diploma completion rate at 33 percent. This study attempts to find characteristics associated with high school graduation and find possible solutions to improve Portuguese-Canadian educational attainment.

There is a large body of research written that explores the relationship between educational attainment and ethnicity. The majority of this research has been conducted in the United States where there is an abundance of available data. The literature in the United States focuses on the differences between Hispanic and Black educational attainment and the rest of the population. Even after controlling for a number of variables, these studies still find a negative relationship between ethnicity and educational attainment. While these studies show a statistical relationship between educational attainment and ethnicity, they do not go beyond the statistical results to show why ethnicity might negatively affect educational attainment.

This study uses two methods to analyse the relationship between educational attainment and Portuguese ethnicity. Census data has been obtained to run a binary choice model to determine some of the key characteristics associated with improved educational attainment. The study also uses focus groups to obtain a better understanding of how family life, the community, friends and schools interact. Specifically, I ask how do relationships based on ethnicity interact to negatively affect education outcomes.

Results

The binary choice model has a number of significant variables. Males are less likely to graduate from high school than females. Knowledge of Portuguese as a second language is positively related to education outcomes. Portuguese has been used in Toronto to improve education outcomes, yet this is the first time that this variable has been tested in a regression and found to have a positive relationship. Finally, an improvement in educational attainment is associated with a higher income based on wages and salaries. This suggests that an improved education status would improve the socio-economic status of Portuguese-Canadians in British Columbia.

The common themes from the focus group involved:

- Early struggles due to cultural differences

- A lack of knowledge about the benefits of education

- A high rate of employment in high school

- Inability to convince parents to obtain a tutor

- Inadequate access to Portuguese community youth groups that are not held through the Catholic Church

- A relaxed attitude by parents about their child's education

- Difficulty for parents to become involved in their child's education

Alternatives

From the model and focus group results, a number of alternatives have been developed and analysed for their effectiveness to improve education outcomes. The alternatives have been divided into targeted and non-targeted programs. Targeted programs work with not-for-profit organisations to provide services for the community. These alternatives include: a new community infrastructure program; a new tutoring program; and increase access to Portuguese language training. Non-targeted programs are offered through schools. Not only would Portuguese-Canadians benefit from these programs, but other students will also benefit. These alternatives include: a new career days program; and a new apprenticeship and training program.

Recommendation

The Ministry of Education should adopt both a targeted and a non-targeted program. The non targeted program should be the tutoring program implemented by the Ministry as a pilot project. The tutoring program would have Portuguese-Canadians in post-secondary education tutor younger generations. Post-secondary students would benefit from a job that uses the skills they have developed through their education and pays a higher wage than the typical retail job available to these individuals. The program can be coordinated by the Portuguese Benevolent Society or Jovens Vancouver and would be targeted for Grade 3 to 7 students. The Ministry would be able to track the progress of students that receive tutoring services through the Foundation and Skills Assessment.

The Ministry of Education should increase apprenticeship and training programs offered to high school students through the Industry Training Authority. The Industry Training Authority currently works with industries and post-secondary institutions to develop course curricula and apprenticeships for these institutions. They have the expertise and knowledge to expand these services to high school students. Apprenticeship and training programs are relatively more expensive than academic studies. The Industry Training Authority's expertise and connections will minimise the cost of these programs compared to providing these services through schools. Finally, apprenticeship and training programs must be linked to high school graduation to be successful. On February 6, 2006, the Ministry of Education announced ACE IT, which is essentially the same program. However, ACE IT is only offered to Grade 12 students. It is recommended that the Ministry apply ACE IT to Grades 10 and 11. University requirements include these grade levels and students who will enrol in apprenticeship programs at that age are unlikely to pursue university studies.

Dedication

To my heart Sandra, without your support I would never have been able to get to this point in my life.

Acknowledgements

I would like to start off by offering my gratitude to Nancy Olewiler and Dominique Gross for all the help, support and guidance they have given me to write this paper. I would especially like to thank you for your encouragement and feedback on my work along the way.

I would like to thank the MPP capstone group. Even though our meetings were often much longer than any of us expected, nobody ever complained and you were always ready and available to provide good feedback.

To Terry Costa and Susan Almeida, I would never have been able to write this paper without your help. I would like to particularly thank you for facilitating my re-engagement into Vancouver's Portuguese community. Your efforts made it extremely easy for me to become involved in the Portuguese community once again.

I would like to thank all the participants in the focus groups for coming out in your spare time. Hopefully, I did not bring up too many horrible memories about school.

To all my friends who have been so patient with me when I talk about policy. I promise I will not talk about education policy anymore while playing poker.

I would like to thank Manuel, Armanda, Marlene and Tina for all their support for the past six years. Even though we do not get to see each other very often anymore, you will always be in my heart.

Finally, I would like to thank my Mom, Dad, Paulo, Clara and Lucas for all your patience over the past couple of years. I know there have been some worrisome years, especially for my parents, but I have finally made it and you have all been there for me every step of the way. Para os meus pais, eu gostaria de agradecê-te para fazer a decisão dificil para vir a Canadà na busca de uma vida melhor. I love you all.

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1   Introduction

Portuguese immigrants to English-speaking countries typically have a lower than average educational attainment. As a result, Portuguese immigrants are among the groups with the lowest socio-economic status in these countries. The low socio-economic status of this group is highly associated with their lower educational attainment. On average, individuals who claim Portuguese ethnicity have a lower educational attainment than the rest of the population in English speaking countries (Barrow, 2005; de Abreu, 2003; Nunes, 1998).

The bulk of the research in Canada has focussed on Portuguese-Canadian educational attainment in Ontario, specifically in Toronto where the majority of Portuguese live. In 1994, the Government of Ontario's Royal Commission on Learning identified students of Portuguese ethnicity as the least likely ethnicity to graduate from high school and go on to post-secondary education. The low educational attainment of Portuguese-Canadians not only applies to the first generation of immigrants. Second and third generation immigrants also exhibit a low educational attainment, which perpetuates the low socio-economic status of Portuguese-Canadians in Ontario on subsequent generations.

As of the 2001 Census, there were 357,690 individuals residing in Canada that claim Portuguese ethnicity[1]. The majority of those individuals are located in Ontario and Quebec, specifically in Toronto and Montreal. Next to these two populations, British Columbia has the third largest Portuguese community with approximately 10 percent of the Portuguese population at 30,085, or approximately one percent of the total British Columbian population. For the most part, the Portuguese in British Columbia can be found concentrated in the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD), especially in east Vancouver.

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[1] Nunes (1998) notes that this number may be underestimated for at least a couple of reasons. Some Portuguese immigrants may not fully understand the importance of Census data and may not fully answer all relevant and personal questions. Also, Portuguese immigrants may have a hard time understanding the Census questions and, rather than reporting their children's ethnicity as Portuguese, will report them as being Canadian.

1.1   Policy Problem

While there is an extensive literature on Portuguese-Canadian educational attainment in Toronto, the literature in British Columbia has ignored this minority group. Two main factors help to explain this observation. First, relative to Toronto, the Portuguese community in British Columbia accounts for a smaller percentage of the total population and, unlike Toronto, there is not a central area where one finds the Portuguese community living[2], making it increasingly difficult to find specific and targeted programs for this segment of the population. Second, a number of Portuguese organisations exist in Vancouver. To date, there are approximately ten organisations that are fully recognised by the Government of British Columbia. These organisations are fairly divided, representing a number of different interests within the community, often divided by the regions from which individuals migrated. While these organisations have worked well to serve the community, they have traditionally been more involved with maintaining the Portuguese heritage and culture in Canada and less involved as a political voice. Recently, many of these organisations have started to become active politically; however, there are still some divisions between the groups.

This paper analyses why the graduation rate for Portuguese-Canadians living in British Columbia is lower than the average for the rest of the population. For example, in 2003/2004 the completion rate of individuals citing Portuguese as their home language from high school was approximately 33 percent. Their completion rate was below any other group reported by the British Columbian Ministry of Education. Census data and focus groups are both used to analyse why Portuguese-Canadians have a low educational attainment in British Columbia and to identify the challenges individuals face when trying to achieve a higher level of educational attainment. Policy alternatives are offered that would assist Portuguese-Canadians attain a higher level of education in British Columbia.

1.2   Problem Definitions

Portuguese-Canadian educational attainment is too low, but how low is too low? Ultimately, the goal of any education system is to graduate 100 percent of students. This is currently not attained in the province of British Columbia. Therefore, the goal of this policy paper is to analyse ways to improve Portuguese-Canadian graduation rates to a level that is comparable with the rest of the population. There are a number of ways to define Portuguese for

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[2] Toronto has an area of the city, referred to as little Portugal, where a majority of Portuguese-Canadians live.

this study. It could be argued that the study should include all individuals in British Columbia who speak Portuguese. For example, this definition would include individuals from Brazil, Morocco, and Angola. For the purposes of this study, Portuguese is defined as individuals whose ethnicity can be traced to Portugal and identify themselves as Portuguese ethnicity in the 2001 Census.

In the following section, I present some background information on the historical context of the Portuguese community in Canada, a theoretical construct of the effect of ethnicity on education, and the state of Portuguese-Canadian education for all of Canada and specifically British Columbia. In section 3, I review the data and methodology that has been used for this study. Section 4 analyses the results from the data. In section 5, I review the proposed alternatives that have come out of the analysis. Finally, section 6 provides a number of recommendations for increased community involvement and recommendations for that could be looked at through the education system.

2   Background and Literature Review

The first wave of immigrants arrived from Portugal on May 13, 1953 aboard the ship Saturina at Pier 21 in Halifax, Nova Scotia and consisted of 85 immigrants. Immigration was encouraged through a labour agreement between the Canadian and Portuguese governments just prior to this date. The agreement allowed Portuguese immigrants to enter Canada to fill a temporary shortage in the labour market for low-skilled labour, specifically at that time for the construction of a northern railway and to provide agricultural workers after World War II. Between 1953 and 1988, Canada accounted for 10 percent of the migration coming out of Canada (Baganha, 2002)[3]. Immigration from Portugal to Canada peaked in the mid to late 1970s; however, immigration is still occurring although in much lower numbers. While the initial agreement saw a large influx of Portuguese immigrants, the story of Portuguese individuals in Canada dates back much further.

The Portuguese were one of the first European groups to land in Canada; the first recorded landing was in 1501. There is some sparse evidence that the Portuguese were the first Europeans to land in Canada. The Portuguese influence on Canada is particularly noticeable on the east coast. For example, Portuguese explorers named Conceptual Bay and Portugal Cove. The name Labrador, which means farmer in Portuguese, is named after the Portuguese explorer who was integral in discovering Newfoundland and Labrador. The Portuguese have fished cod off the coast of Newfoundland and Labrador for over 500 years, and it was a Portuguese male who was Canada's first postman. The influence of the Portuguese heritage on Eastern Canada is reflected in the *Celebration of Portuguese Heritage Act, 2001* by the Government of Ontario. The Act recognises the importance of the Portuguese culture and heritage on Canada, and was also the first province to officially recognise June as Portuguese Heritage Month and June 10 as Portugal Day in Canada[4].

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[3] However, it is estimated that the number of Portuguese immigrants to Canada declines to 6 percent when taking into account the number of illegal immigrants leaving the country.
[4] The Government of British Columbia has since followed up with similar legislation that recognizes these same events in British Columbia.

While the Portuguese have been integral in shaping Eastern Canada, British Columbia has not had that same level of historical exposure. The first known Portuguese individual recorded in British Columbia was Joseph Silvey, aptly nicknamed Portuguese Joe, who immigrated to Canada in the 19th Century. In his time in British Columbia, Portuguese Joe managed to shape the way this province would develop in the future. He was British Columbia's first true entrepreneur during the gold rush by running local saloons for individuals in the search for gold. After owning a portion of what is now Stanley Park, Portuguese Joe bought and moved to one of the small islands off the British Columbia coastline. However, Portuguese Joe never returned to Portugal and, therefore, was unable to bring more Portuguese people to the western coast, like those that travelled to Eastern Canada. As a result, there are not a large number of individuals that have settled in this area until the 1950s. Yet, despite the impact and importance that the Portuguese heritage has had on Canada, Portuguese-Canadians have not been actively involved in Canadian public affairs, and have rarely been a subject of study.

Canada was not the only country to realize a substantial increase in the number of migrants coming from Portugal. Britain, France, and the United States are among the countries that benefited from increased migration out of Portugal. They benefited from the hard and good 'blue collar' workers that Portugal was producing at the time (Bauer et al, 1998; Malheiros, 2002). Portuguese migrants have been quite successful in European countries. In fact, Schrover (2003) finds that Portuguese immigration to France has two key characteristics. First, immigration to France is strongly followed by assimilation. Second, the results of their study indicate that low-skill wage workers are generally perceived as middle class. These two factors may indicate why Portuguese immigrants to France have been more successful than immigrants throughout the rest of the world.

Figure 2.1 below shows the number of immigrants entering into British Columbia from Portugal between 1946 and 2001. Melo (1997) finds that many of these first generation immigrants did not intend on staying in Canada for a long period of time. They simply wished to come to Canada in order to make enough money to one day return to Portugal. Nunes (2004, p. 41) finds that many of the first generation of Portuguese migrants into Canada, "originated disproportionately from the poorest and most disadvantaged regions of continental Portugal and the Azores Islands." Under the political climate of the time, these individuals did not have the opportunity to attend school past grade four. Hence, many of these individuals came to Canada with a low educational attainment and only basic skills.

Figure 2.1   Immigration from Portugal to British Columbia, 1946-2001.

Immigration from Portugal to British Columbia, 1946-2001
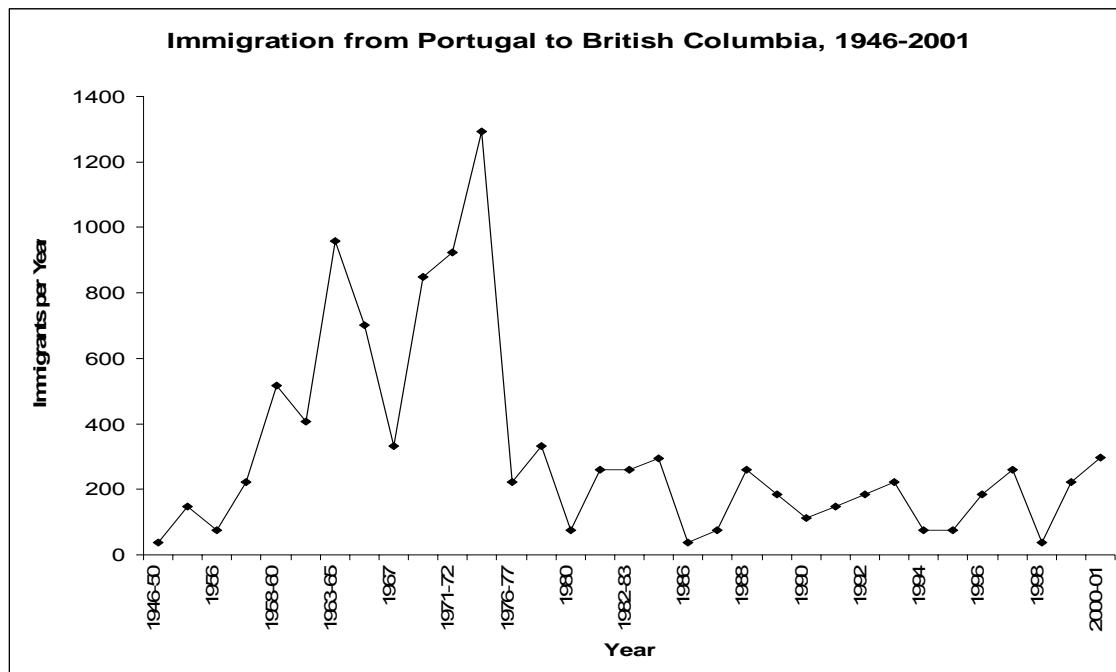
Source: Statistics Canada, Census data 2001.

Despite the long history of the Portuguese in Canada, there have been relatively few studies that have been conducted on this group in society and even fewer public policies that have been put in place. For the most part, the work that has been done on education was in Toronto, which is an obvious choice since it has the largest proportion of the Portuguese population than in any other city. British Columbia has the third largest concentration of the Portuguese-Canadian population. To my knowledge, this is the first piece of literature written to investigate the factors behind the low educational outcomes for Portuguese Canadians in British Columbia and introduce possible policy options to help improve the situation.

In the 2001 Census, there were 357,690 individuals who identified themselves as Portuguese-Canadians across Canada[5]. This includes both multiple and single ethnic origins, although the majority identified themselves as single ethnic origin, and represents slightly more than one percent of the population in Canada. The Census reports that there are 30,085 Portuguese-Canadians in British Columbia. Figure 2.2 below shows the distribution of Portuguese-Canadians across British Columbia by different cities. A majority of Portuguese-Canadians live within the Lower Mainland, specifically in Vancouver with a population of 16,775. Burnaby, Surrey, and Victoria all have sizeable Portuguese populations, accounting for

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[5] Statistics Canada, Census 2001 Reference Table no. 97F0024XIE2001006.

close to 7 to 10 percent each of British Columbia's Portuguese population. Victoria and Kitimat have the largest reported concentration of Portuguese-Canadians outside of the Lower Mainland[6]. While Kitimat accounts for a fairly small proportion of the Portuguese population in British Columbia, it is reported here because the Portuguese population accounts for nearly 10 percent of Kitimat's population.

Figure 2.2   The Distribution of Portuguese-Canadians in British Columbia by Portuguese Ethnicity, 2000.
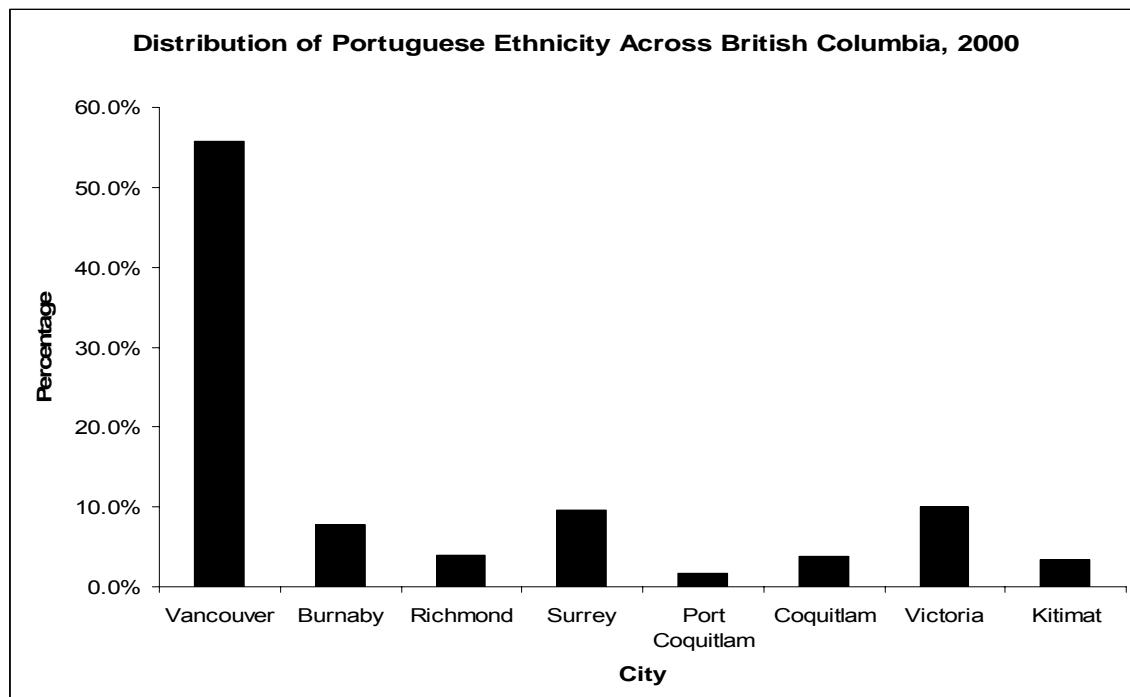
Source: Statistics Canada, table formatted by author.

Figure 2.3 below shows the distribution of the Portuguese-Canadian community in British Columbia by age groups. While the figure does not show percentages, there are two key points to note about the distribution of the population. First, the population is relatively old. The aging population is indicative of the current demographic situation in Canada. The aging population may also be due to many young Portuguese-Canadians 'rejecting' their cultural identity possibly because they have been turned off by community characteristics and they may feel more Canadian than Portuguese (Oliveira & Texeira, 2001). Second, despite the fact that there is an aging Portuguese community, there are still a large number of individuals that are

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[6] Vancouver, Burnaby, Richmond, Surrey, Port Coquitlam, and Coquitlam are all located in the Lower Mainland.

between the ages of 15 and 45. Many of these individuals will have children of their own soon engaged in the education system. Nationally, the Portuguese community has the fastest growth rate for children under the age of 15 than any other minority – 47% projected growth from 1991 to 2006 – after the Chinese (96%), South Asian (73%) and the Black (51%) community (Tepper, 2002).

Figure 2.3   Distribution of Portuguese-Canadians in British Columbia by age, 2001.

Distribution of Portuguese-Canadians in British Columbia, 2001
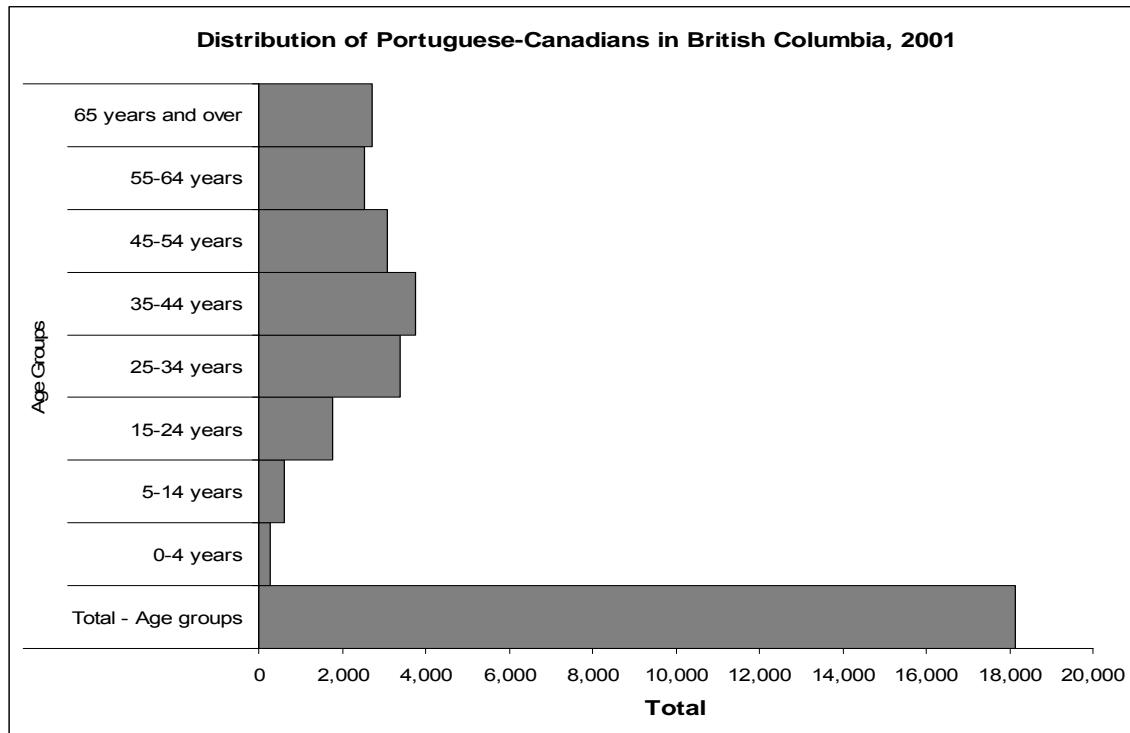
Source, Statistics Canada, figure created by author.

On average, the Portuguese community earns less income than the rest of the population. In 1990, the average income for members of the Portuguese community was $22,000, while the average income for other Canadians and immigrant groups was $23,749 and $25,300, respectively (Nunes, 2003). The low levels of income in the community is attributable to the disproportionately large number of workers making less than $40,000 per year and a low number of individuals in the upper income range (Nunes, 1998). The situation is not much different in British Columbia. The mean income among workers aged 15 and up was $22,673 with a median income of $17,412 in 2001. Meanwhile, the mean income for the same age group of the non-Portuguese community was $29,549 and the median income was $22,680. The lower median

income of Portuguese-Canadians indicates that the average income is skewed in the direction of the lower income groups. This is also shown by the fact that 75% of the Portuguese community in British Columbia earn an income below $34,000 per year. The relatively low levels of income amongst many Portuguese may lead students to after-school and summer jobs, which encourages leaving school, and also describes how many of these students lack the same white collar contacts that individuals from other communities often take for granted because these contacts are crucial for job networking and career mentoring (Nunes, 1998).

Young males exhibit the highest unemployment rate within the Portuguese community. However, in comparison to other ethnicities and Canadian-born male youth, Portuguese males have the lowest unemployment rate (Nunes, 1998). Figure 2.4 and Figure 2.5 below show the differences between the Portuguese community and the non-Portuguese communities in British Columbia between different classes of workers. Throughout all age groups, there are consistently more individuals working in wage and salary workers for both groups. Among Portuguese-Canadian youth, there are a disproportionate number of youth that are employed, specifically between 10-19 years old. More Portuguese-Canadian youth between 10-19 years old are employed in industry jobs than the rest of the population. Looking at a subset of data with individuals between the ages of 15-19 years of age, there are proportionately more Portuguese-Canadians that are employed than the rest of the population. Also, Portuguese-Canadians are more likely to stay employed in wage and salary employment than the rest of the population. The difference between self-employment and employment in occupations paying wages and salaries is evident even from the early ages between 20 to 29 years old. It is at this stage that there is a recognizable difference between the types of employment among all age groups.

Figure 2.4   Distribution of Portuguese-Canadians by Class of Workers in BC, 2000.
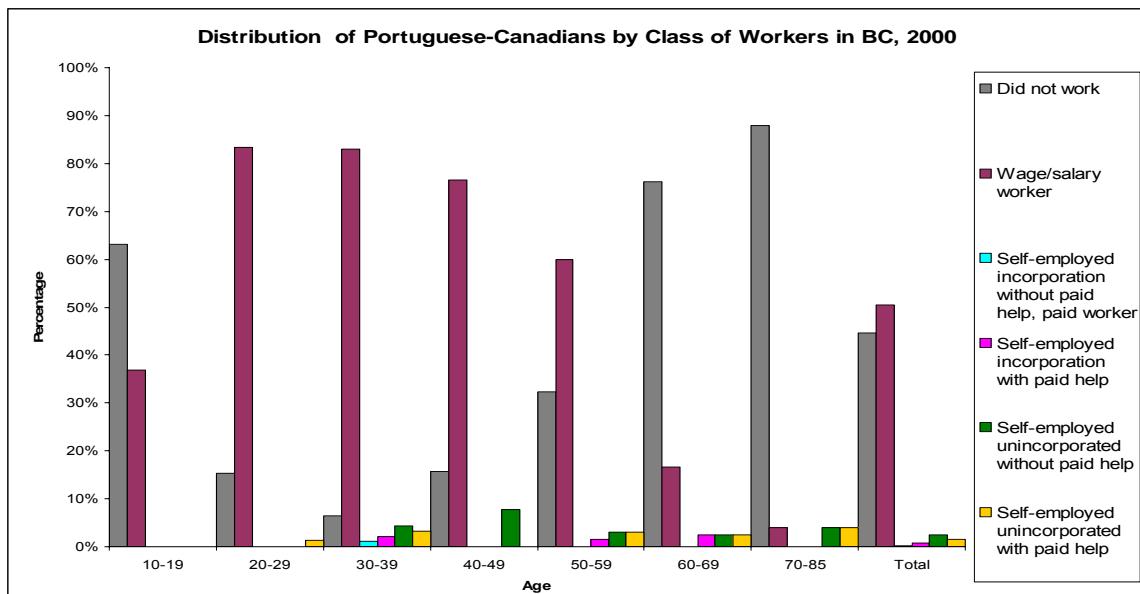
Source, Statistics Canada, figure and calculations by author.

Figure 2.5   Distribution of Canadians by Class of Workers and Age in BC, 2000.
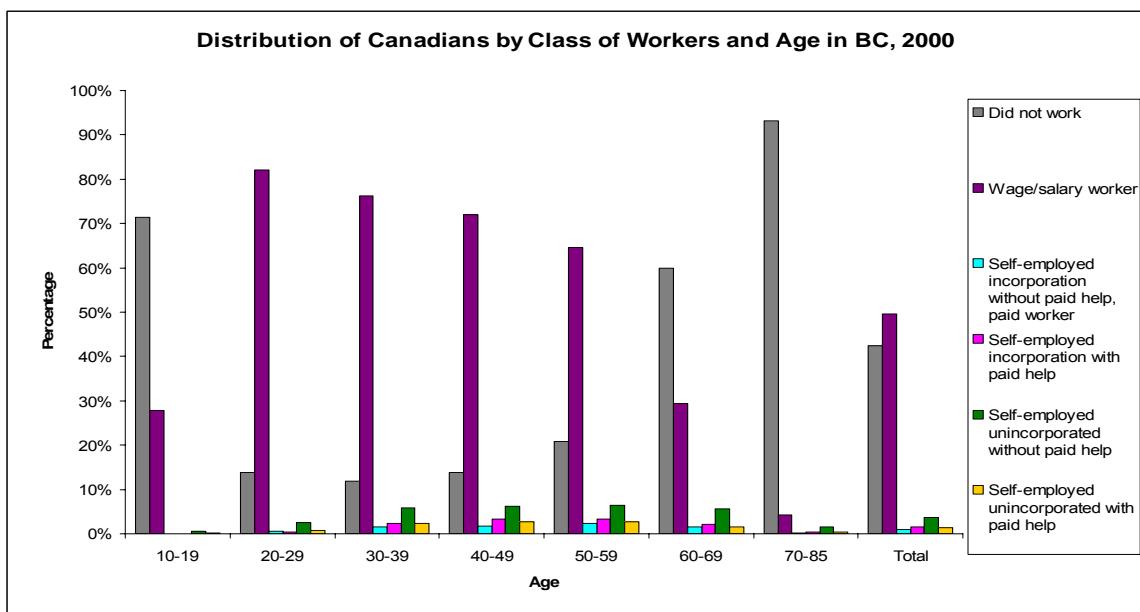
Source, Statistics Canada, figure and calculations by author.

A national assessment of the Portuguese-Canadian community's needs points out that there is a disproportionate representation of the Portuguese community below the poverty line (Nunes, 1998). Specifically, Nunes looks at the population as a whole and then analyses the older

aged Portuguese community. For the purposes of this study, I have decided to analyse the differences in low-income status between the youth in the Portuguese-Canadian community and the youth in the rest of the population. Here, the results are promising. Among youth below 19 years of age, there are disproportionately fewer Portuguese-Canadians living under the poverty line than the rest of the population, 19% versus 23% respectively. The relatively low number of children under the low income cut-off indicates that there are few children living in low-income families. Under-representation of children in low-income status families may be a further explanation of why this issue has not been given its due attention. In almost each country that Portuguese migrate, they are seen as hard-workers and are often in middle income families. As a result, more attention is often given to low-income families, since this group is often seen as having the most difficulty in attaining a higher level of education.

2.1   Ethnicity and Education

A comprehensive literature has been developed in recent years that analyses the relationship between ethnic origin and educational attainment. The empirical literature attempts to identify some of the key characteristics associated with individuals who do not finish secondary school. Rong and Grant (1992) organise the many theories of educational attainment and ethnicity into two separate categories, cultural discontinuity or acculturation and cultural-ecological models of education. Cultural discontinuity occurs when individuals feel that a conflict exists between language, cultural, and social interaction within the school system and their life at home. It is most commonly found with recent immigrants as they struggle to find a medium and a place within society that fits between the life they once knew and the life that they wish to obtain in their newly arrived country. Melo (1997) speaks directly to this issue. He points out that many Portuguese immigrants came to Canada with the hopes that one day they will be able to return to their home country of Portugal. This was evident by the number of his participants that decided to keep their old properties in Portugal. However, after returning to Portugal, they found that the country and the lifestyle they once knew no longer exist and they feel they do not belong in either country.

The cultural-ecological models of education, originally developed by Ogbu (1978), claim there is a more complex relationship of multiple factors that affect educational attainment than cultural discontinuity. These factors include: the motivation to immigrate, the conditions under which immigrants enter the country, the labour market payoff for attainment, and perceptions of the opportunity that education creates. Cultural-ecological models produce what have been

termed "caste-like" minorities through Ogbu's typology. Ogbu's typology has been one of the most commonly cited explanations for low educational attainment by minority groups, particularly in the US where it was first applied to the Hispanic and Black populations. Most caste-like minorities immigrated involuntarily as they faced oppressive conditions in their country of origin or they immigrated illegally and faced a number of economic challenges, exploitation and disincentives to stay in school. Along with the negative attitudes towards education, these groups typically face a perceived job ceiling in which they do not think that they will be able to attain an improved economic situation. Individuals are not able to properly assess the returns to education because of this perceived job ceiling. An information gap is created when individuals are not able to properly assess the returns to education, which discourages individuals to reach a higher educational attainment. Ogbu's typology stipulates that immigrants who claim refugee status should do markedly worse than groups such as the Portuguese community, who voluntarily migrate from Portugal. However, Gibson (1997) finds that this is not the case since Portuguese-speaking performance is in direct contrast to Ogbu's typology. Most Portuguese immigrated to Canada in search of job opportunities and not necessarily from political oppression, yet still exhibit a low educational attainment.

Riphahn (2001) identifies three additional methods of analysing the educational attainment of ethnic minorities. The first analyses the role of social capital in educational attainment, which is very similar to the cultural discontinuity model. The second model introduces the concept of ethnic capital by Borjas (1991). He uses two data sources for his study, the General Social Surveys and the National Longitudinal Surveys of Youth to construct an ethnic capital based on the average skill level of the ethnic group in the father's generation. It is the capital that each ethnic community has and is primarily seen as an externality, since there are many positive aspects to having a higher level of education from a social perspective. Borjas' (1991, p. 4) main findings indicate that, "[i]f the external effect of ethnicity is sufficiently strong, ethnic differences in skills observed in this generation are likely to persist for many generations (and may never disappear)."

The third model of education is referred to as the optimal schooling model. Individuals in society have a certain 'preference' associated with educational attainment. This preference may be based on a number of factors, including different tastes for schooling, different time preferences, a diaspora effect, discrimination, and differential investment productivity. Chiswick (1988) analyses the problem as one in which an investment decision must be made. In this decision, there is the supply of funds related to the marginal interest cost, while the demand for

investment funds relates to the marginal rate of return to a given level of investment. The optimal solution occurs when the marginal cost of education is exactly equal to the marginal rate of return on the investment. In this case, the marginal rate of return would have to be equal to the after-tax interest rate in the economy, which can be modelled in a supply and demand for human capital investment[7]. Since the supply of education services is fixed for all ethnicities, Chiswick (1988) focuses on the demand side to analyse differences between ethnicities. The slope of the demand curve is affected by the different challenges and preferences for education of each ethnic group. As a result, different ethnic groups would have different slopes in their demand for education services. The preference for education services may also be affected by the discount rates that ethnicities may have on future benefits. A lower discount rate is associated with a higher educational attainment. Using this model, an individuals' perception of the situation would shape their consumption value of education and their own evaluation of their expected income after they have completed their training (Leslie & Drinkwater, 1999).

The recent empirical literature has focussed on the American and German education systems, mainly because there is an abundance of available data. The studies conducted in the US tend to examine Hispanic and Black ethnic populations. While there are subtle differences between the Hispanic and Portuguese culturally, Hispanic students would be the closest comparison group to the Portuguese. Hispanic students demonstrate a lower academic achievement, higher drop out rates, and a higher rate of grade failure in school – often referred to as grade retention – than Asian and non-Hispanic whites in the US (Rong & Grant, 1992). This pattern is followed into second and third generations of Hispanic students. While the educational attainment of Hispanic students increases with each successive generation, the rates do not increase at the same rate or even to the same level as other ethnicities tend to experience. Rong and Grant (1992) find that there is a full year's difference between Asians – the group with the highest educational attainment – and Hispanic communities with the lowest educational attainment.

Gang and Zimmerman (1999) study the effect of ethnicity on education in the German education system. One of the interesting things to note in the German system is that there are actually three different types of schools in Germany. The three levels of schooling are:

- Basic School (Hauptschule): graduates individuals after 6 years of secondary education and has traditionally prepared people for 'blue collar' work.

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[7] When modelling this relationship on a graph, Chiswick (1988) models "Dollars Invested in Schooling" on the x-axis, and the "Marginal Rate of Return, Marginal Interest Cost of Funds" on the y-axis.

- Middle School (Realschule): lasts 6 years and generally trains individuals for 'white collar' work.

- Highest Track (Gymnasium): offers 9 years of school and a degree (Arbitur) which is a precondition for future academic study.

Riphahn (2001) analyses the distribution of students and their different ethnicities and the different types of degrees obtained by these students. She finds a disproportionate amount of students from different ethnicities graduate with a basic school degree; whereas, native Germans are more likely to be enrolled in the highest track and attend advanced education. Gang and Zimmerman (1999) analyse the effects that parents' schooling, family and culture through social and neighbourhood support, life experience of the student and the competition among students for educational placement variations from cohort to cohort. They find that, holding a variety of different variables constant, there are still some aspects of educational attainment which can only be explained by using a dummy variable for ethnicity. They also find that parental education has no independent effect on the education outcomes of immigrant children. For native Germans, the education attainment of the child's father has a larger impact than the mother's level of education. Finally, Kalter and Granato (2002) analyse the effect of education on income and employment with an emphasis on ethnicity in Germany. They find that different ethnicities do in fact receive the same rate of return from their education as native-born Germans.

The empirical research has also explored relationships between educational attainment and a variety of different variables. Bradley and Taylor (2004) use data collected in the United Kingdom to find a positive relationship between gender issues – girls tend do to better than boys – and family background. They find a positive relationship between parents' education, parents' occupation, household income, family structure, and parental involvement in their child's education. The relationship between parental education and occupation has been well-documented (Leslie and Drinkwater, 1999; Rice, 1987, 1999). The probability of staying in school is higher for youth whose father or mother has a professional occupation than if their father is a manual labourer. Lower drop-out rates are also associated with a higher unemployment rate in the local area (Bradley & Taylor, 2004). Intuitively, this suggests that a higher local unemployment rate creates less opportunity for high school students to drop out and decreases the opportunity cost of staying in school. Finally, peer groups may have some effect on educational achievement. Feinstein and Symons (1999) compose an index of peer groups based on the proportion of children in the class with fathers in non-manual occupation, the proportion of children in the class only taking General Certificate of Education exams, the proportion of

children in the class only taking General Certificate of Secondary Education, and the proportion of children from the previous year's class who stayed on in education after the then minimum age of 15 in England. They find that peer groups increase educational attainment by 8 percent.

2.2   Portuguese-Canadians and Education

The empirical literature pertaining to the academic underachievement of the Portuguese-Canadian community dates back as far as the late 1980s. All of the previous work on this subject has essentially been focused in Toronto. In the first major policy piece focussing on Portuguese-Canadians, McLaren (1993) looks specifically at a west-end school board in Toronto and concludes that the education system itself should take the blame for Portuguese-Canadian underachievement. While the research was extremely useful in identifying some of the racial discrimination that students experience in the education system from teachers, McLaren lacked a "culturally aware and grounded interpretation of the observed phenomena." (Nunes, 2004; page 70) He neglected to look at the students being affected by the system and ignored key aspects that affect an individuals' education such as their home life and also paid little attention to the community's views and perception of the education system.

In recognition of the difficulties associated with having a multicultural education system, the Government of Ontario undertook a number of programs to try to promote increased learning. The Government of Ontario attempted to promote different cultures through the curriculum and began to include black history, Portuguese culture, Chinese culture, etc. In particular, two projects were introduced to improve educational outcomes, the Balanced Literacy Project and the Best Practices Project. The Balanced Literacy Project was started by the Catholic School Board. The project started in 10 elementary schools and used Portuguese and English to encourage the early acquisition of literacy, namely between kindergarten and Grade 3. It was such a successful project that the school board has considered implementing it for all school districts in all languages. The Best Practices Project was a 5-year project involving 4 schools. The project worked in coordination with local community organisations and increased accountability to the school board and the local community organisations. Both organisations were accountable in working together to improve the educational attainment of the Portuguese community (Januario, 2003).

Despite the efforts of the Government of Ontario, Portuguese-Canadians were still listed as one of the groups of concern in the 1994 report of Ontario's Royal Commission on Learning (Nunes, 2004). In 1997, the Government of Ontario conducted a survey called the Every Second

Student Survey. In this survey, the Portuguese constituted the group with the second lowest percentage who planned to attend university (29%), the second highest percentage who were unsure about their post-secondary plans (24%), and the highest percentage who planned to work full-time (17%) after completing high school (Nunes, 2003). It appears that the system was able to accomplish some of its goals, however, is still inadequate in addressing the needs of the Portuguese community.

As a result, the Portuguese community still faces a number of issues in Toronto, including: a low number of Portuguese entering post-secondary education, high drop out rates, economic and social marginalization of youth, and a perceived lack of encouragement of their children's education by Portuguese parents. It is this last point that I wish to touch on next. In many cases, teachers and education professionals infer that a lack of involvement in the school system is indicative of a lack of parental support for their child's education. However, many of these professionals do not understand that it is not because parents are uninterested in their child's education, but rather that they are not comfortable in dealing with an English education system when they only speak Portuguese (Januario, 2003).

Nunes (2003) finds that many Portuguese-Canadians did not drop out of school because of pressure from their parents to drop out and get a job, but instead felt pressured by their parents to over succeed. Students were on their own to succeed in education since parents felt they could not help their children once they began to study subjects beyond their own educational attainment. Studies that have placed the blame solely on parents is an over simplification of a more complex problem that is rooted in discriminatory education practices, as well as an inappropriate response on the part of many people in the Portuguese-Canadian community to their continued social, economic, political and educational marginalisation. The reasons for the community responses include: a "close-minded" mentality of the community, leading to a lack of culture and economic ambition; a lack of willingness in the community to take responsibility for its own problems to openly discuss and confront the issue; Portuguese-Canadian media ignores community problems and focuses on unimportant events or petty rivalries and thus fails to educate and inform the community; and, a history of reacting to problems rather than being proactive has led to a lack of preparation for the future (Nunes, 1998).

2.3   Portuguese-Canadians in British Columbia

I now turn to some of the statistics on educational attainment in British Columbia for the Portuguese-Canadians and a couple of possible explanations why the situation really has not been

looked at in the same depth as in Ontario. Figure 2.6 below shows the educational attainment of various groups by home language in British Columbia. Based on data collected by the BC Ministry of Education, Portuguese-Canadians are the least likely ethnicity to graduate from high school when based on the most common language spoken at home. In 2004, approximately 33 percent of all Portuguese-Canadians registered in high schools were able to attain a Dogwood degree. This is far below the Chinese community, which has the best performance in this category at slightly more than 90 percent. The Portuguese also fall short of the rest of the population's average, which is approximately 85 percent. Figure 2.7 below shows the highest degree for Portuguese-Canadians in British Columbia. The majority of individuals have not graduated from high school and very few have gone on to obtain a university degree. The preferred choice for those that do go on in education is to obtain a college certificate or a trade's certificate.

Figure 2.6   The 2003/2004 Completion Rate by Home Language Public Schools.
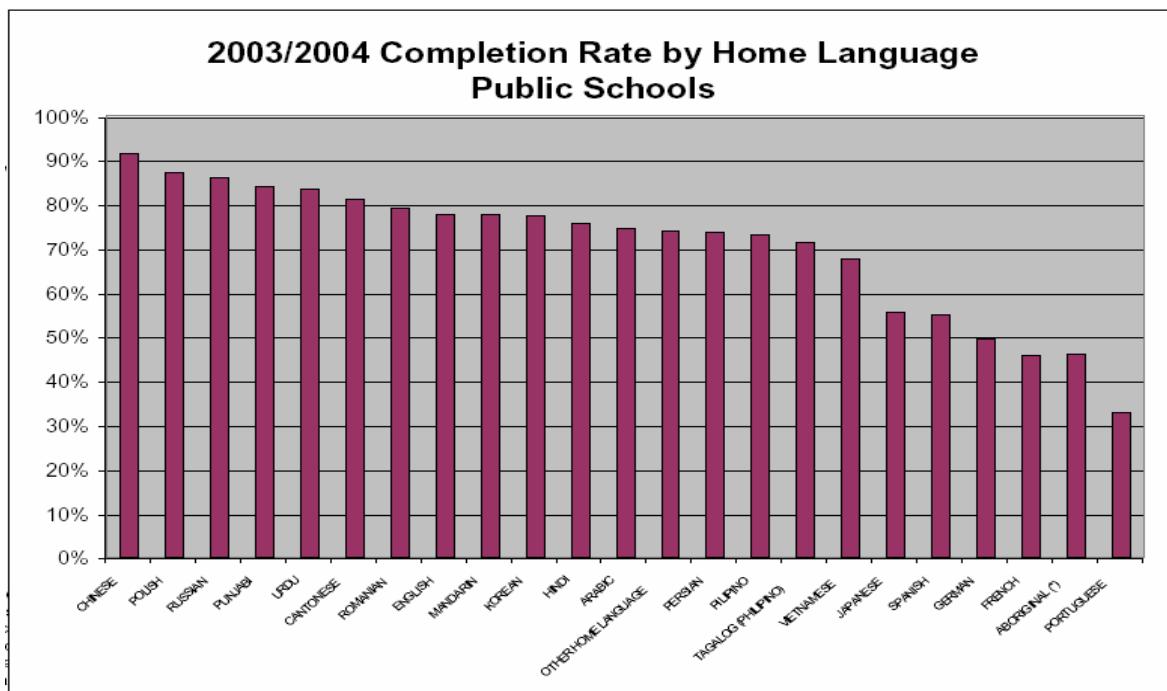
Source: BC Schools and the Performance of Aboriginal Students, presentation by Barry Anderson, Director, Information Department, BC Ministry of Education at the Urban Aboriginal Education Colloquium, May 27, 2005.

Figure 2.7   Highest Degree, Certificate, or Diploma in BC for Portuguese Canadians, 2000

Highest Degree, Certificate, or Diploma in BC, 2000
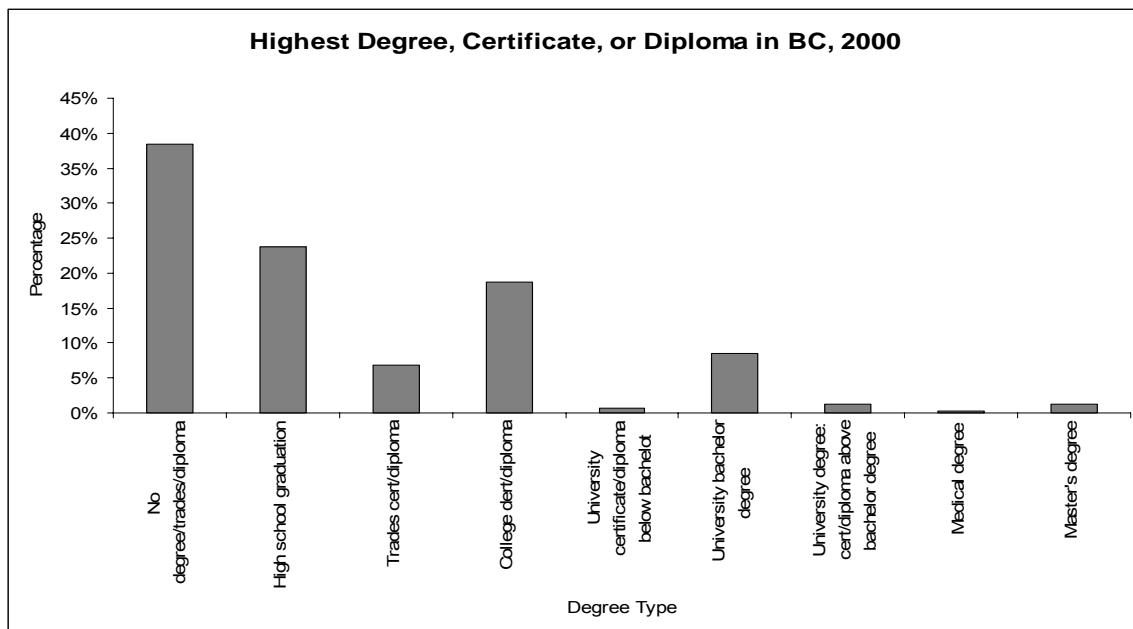
Source: Statistics Canada, calculations and diagram by author

I propose two reasons why little attention has been given to Portuguese-Canadians in British Columbia. First, until recently, there has not been an effective political organisation in place that has raised awareness on issues affecting youth in the Portuguese-Canadian community. The only real institution that has provided services over a long period of time has been through Our Lady of Fatima, a local Portuguese church in East Vancouver. While they have provided services to the community as a whole, individuals that are in conflict with the church or with some members of the church have not been able to benefit from these programs. However, a handful of community leaders have begun to establish some infrastructure geared towards the Portuguese-Canadian youth. Second, the proportion of Portuguese-Canadian students in the education system is relatively small, unlike in Toronto. Estimates of the Portuguese population in British Columbia would put, at most, the Portuguese-Canadian population at 1 percent of the total school-aged population. Along with the fact that Portuguese-Canadians are difficult to distinguish between other types of ethnicities – such as Caucasian, Hispanics and other groups from the Mediterranean – it becomes more difficult to direct policies geared towards the Portuguese community. De Abreu (2003) refers to this issue as the case of the 'invisible minority' which is a title given to the Portuguese community within the British society.

2.4   Limitations of the past studies

The majority of the empirical research uses a variety of regression techniques to analyse the relationship between ethnicity and educational attainment; however, these models cannot explain how ethnicity affects educational attainment. There are two underlying reasons that may negatively impact these results. First, there may be a problem of endogeneity. This means that the choice to continue in school is endogenous to the individual. Each individual assesses their own capabilities and then, based on that assessment, they decide whether or not they wish to invest in their own human capital. This type of decision process is difficult, if not impossible to measure and control effectively. Second, these studies reveal the ethnicities that face struggles in education, but it is difficult to measure the exact cultural effects that may be responsible for the outcome. For example, many studies find a positive relationship between parental education and the educational attainment of the child. Implicitly, this makes the assumption that the parents do not value education since they decided to drop out rather than finish school. However, Portuguese parents who immigrated to Canada did not have the opportunity to attend school past Grade 4. The political climate when they were young was such that only those individuals who were financially well-off or lived in major urban centres were able to send their children to school. For example, my parents have a combined 11 brothers and sisters. Yet, only one of my aunts was actually able to attend school past Grade 4. Even then, she was one of the few people in my parents' small town that had the opportunity to move on in school.

While studies on Portuguese-Canadians are insightful, these studies are limited to individuals who live back east. However, Canadians in Western Canada face much different circumstances than in Eastern Canada. For example, the construction industry is highly seasonal in Eastern Canada because of the climate; however, Western Canada's climate is milder and industries like construction can operate the whole year round. This should reflect in slightly higher than average income for Portuguese-Canadians in British Columbia and should have a negative effect on educational attainment.

3   Data and Methodology

Data comes from two sources for this study, census data and the use of focus groups. A microdata Canadian Census file from 2001 has been obtained in order to provide background on the Portuguese-Canadian community in British Columbia. The Census data samples 50 percent of the Portuguese-Canadian community in the British Columbian population. Focus groups have been conducted in order to supplement the Census data by allowing a better understanding about the issues facing the Portuguese-Canadian community and their educational attainment. An in-depth discussion follows of how these two methods have been used to analyse the policy problem.

3.1   Census Data

The advantage of analysing Census data is that it allows the comparison of the comparison of the Portuguese-Canadian population with other ethnic populations. Comparisons are made between the Portuguese-Canadian population and the rest of the population in British Columbia. While the Census data is useful for comparison between these two groups, it has been streamlined by Portuguese ethnicity, by age, and by the respondent's age at immigration. The variables were divided based on these variables to ensure that only Portuguese-Canadians who have attended any level of high school are included in the regression. The data was then used to run a binary choice model to analyse the characteristics associated with increased educational attainment.

Individuals are asked to fill in their ethnic origin for each census. Portuguese ethnic origin is reported in the Census data and this variable has been used to streamline the dataset. There are 19,349 individuals who claimed Portuguese ethnic origin. A majority of individuals claim first generation status (77%), and slightly more than half claim Portuguese single ethnicity (55%) versus Portuguese multiple ethnicity[8].

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[8] Multiple ethnic origins means that one parent would be considered Portuguese ethnic origin, while the second parent would be from another ethnic origin.

As I stated earlier, a majority of Portuguese migrated to Canada from the lowest socio-economic groups in Portugal. As a result, they did not have access to higher levels of education given the political climate of the time. The data has been separated in two ways to ensure that it only consists of individuals who have attended school in Canada. The data was separated by age between 19 and 49. Given the history of migration into Canada, separating the data by age will eliminate the majority of first generation immigrants who did not migrate to Canada during their education years. The data was then separated by the respondent's age at immigration during ages where the respondent would be eligible to attend school. The respondent's age at the time they immigrated is only available for age groups and not the respondent's actual age when they immigrated, which is why the data has been divided by both current age and age when they immigrated to Canada. Once these adjustments have been made, the sample size decreases to 7,447, with a better distribution of individuals between each category of generation status. Refer to Appendix A for the descriptive statistics of each variable.

3.1.1 Descriptive Statistics

Table 3.1 below breaks down graduation from high school into three age cohorts. Each age cohort has shown a marked improvement in the percentage of individuals that attained a high school degree. In fact, the youngest age cohort's 79 percent graduation rate is close to the British Columbian average. However, it is still below the British Columbian average of 85 percent. It is worth noting that during this year's cohort, the NDP introduced their SkillsNow! policy to increase the skill set in British Columbia through specific efforts focused on high schools. This policy attempted to increase the number of programs that high schools offer to get students an early start in attaining apprenticeship training.

Table 3.1   Portuguese-Canadian graduation rates of three age cohorts between 19-49 in British Columbia, 2000.

Portuguese-Canadian Graduation Rates Between 19 and 49 years of age, 2000				
Age		**Did not graduate**	**Graduate**	**Total**
19-29 years	Total	632	2416	3048
	Percentage within age group	21%	79%	100%
	Percentage of Total	8%	32%	41%
30-39 years	Total	814	2034	2848
	Percentage within age group	29%	71%	100%
	Percentage of Total	11%	27%	38%
40-49 years	Total	517	1035	1552
	Percentage within age group	33%	67%	100%
	Percentage of Total	7%	14%	21%
Total	Total	1963	5485	7448
	Percentage within age group	26%	74%	100%

Source: Statistics Canada, calculations and table formatted by author.

Table 3.2 and Table 3.3 below compare Portuguese-Canadians with the rest of the population and the types of degrees or training obtained. The four categories are either with or without high school education and with or without training certificates. For each age cohort, Portuguese-Canadians display a higher propensity to be in the category of no high school graduation and no training than the rest of the population. It appears that the gap in educational attainment is beginning to close. For example, Portuguese-Canadians between 30 and 39 were twice as likely not to graduate and not receive any training as the rest of the population. However, there is only a four percent difference between Portuguese-Canadians and the rest of the population in the youngest age cohort. Portuguese-Canadians in the youngest cohort who have not graduated from high school are also more likely to have some form of training.

Table 3.2   Types of Degrees Obtained by Portuguese-Canadians in British Columbia, 2000

Types of Degrees Obtained by Portuguese-Canadians in British Columbia, 2000						
Age		Without high school graduation certificate: Without training	Without high school graduation certificate: With training	With high school graduation certificate: Without training	With high school graduation: With training	Total
19-29 years	Total	520	297	446	1784	3047
	Percentage within age group	17%	10%	15%	59%	100%
	Percentage of Total	7%	4%	6%	24%	41%
30-39 years	Total	814	111	518	1405	2848
	Percentage within age group	29%	4%	18%	49%	100%
	Percentage of Total	11%	1%	7%	19%	38%
40-49 years	Total	406	259	332	555	1552
	Percentage within age group	26%	17%	21%	36%	100%
	Percentage of Total	5%	3%	4%	7%	21%
Total	Total	1740	667	1296	3744	7447
	Percentage within age group	23%	9%	17%	50%	100%

Source: Statistics Canada, calculations and table formatted by author.

Table 3.3   Types of Degrees Obtained by the Rest of the Population in British Columbia, 2000

Types of Degrees Obtained by the Rest of the Population in British Columbia, 2000						
Age		Without high school graduation certificate: Without training	Without high school graduation certificate: With training	With high school graduation certificate: Without training	With high school graduation: With training	Total
19-29 years	Total	45388	28656	48954	232028	355026
	Percentage within age group	13%	8%	14%	65%	100%
	Percentage of Total	4%	2%	4%	20%	31%
30-39 years	Total	57029	42270	42495	248027	389821
	Percentage within age group	15%	11%	11%	64%	100%
	Percentage of Total	5%	4%	4%	22%	34%
40-49 years	Total	72216	44361	53640	236649	406866
	Percentage within age group	18%	11%	13%	58%	100%
Total	Percentage of Total	6%	4%	5%	21%	35%
	Total	174633	115287	145089	716704	1151713
	Percentage within age group	15%	10%	13%	62%	100%

Source: Statistics Canada, calculations and table formatted by author.

Table 3.4 and Table 3.5 below show the differences between the Portuguese-Canadian population and the rest of the population in the type of employment between 15-19 years of age. The cross tabulation divides the different types of employment into three groups: did not work during 2000, worked mainly part-time hours during 2000, and worked mainly full-time during 2000. At every age, Portuguese-Canadian students are more likely to be employed during school. The final calculation in each of the tables sums up all the ages. Nearly 20 percent more Portuguese-Canadians are employed before 19 years of age than the rest of the population in British Columbia. In particular, a greater proportion of Portuguese-Canadian high school students are employed in both full and part-time work.

Table 3.4   Full-time versus part-time employment of Portuguese-Canadians under 20 years of age, 2000

Full-time versus Part-time Employment of Portuguese-Canadians Under 20 years of age, 2000					
		Full-time or part-time weeks worked in 2000			
Age		Did not work	Worked mainly full-time in 2000	Worked mainly part-time in 2000	Total
15	Total	186	37	111	334
	Percentage within age group	55.7%	11.1%	33.2%	100.0%
	Percentage of total	7.4%	1.5%	4.4%	13.2%
16	Total	223	37	149	409
	Percentage within age group	54.5%	9.0%	36.4%	100.0%
	Percentage of total	8.8%	1.5%	5.9%	16.2%
17	Total	112	0	186	298
	Percentage within age group	37.6%	0.0%	62.4%	100.0%
	Percentage of total	4.4%	0.0%	7.4%	11.8%
18	Total	74	37	74	185
	Percentage within age group	40.0%	20.0%	40.0%	100.0%
	Percentage of total	2.9%	1.5%	2.9%	7.3%
19	Total	37	74	149	260
	Percentage within age group	14.2%	28.5%	57.3%	100.0%
	Percentage of total	1.5%	2.9%	5.9%	10.3%
Total	Total	1668	185	669	2522
	Percentage within age group	66.1%	7.3%	26.5%	100.0%

Source: Statistics Canada, calculations and table formatted by author.

Table 3.5   Full-time versus part-time employment of the rest of the population under 20 years of age, 2000

Full-time versus Part-time Employment of the Rest of the Population Under 20 years of age, 2000					
		Full-time or part-time weeks worked in 2000			Total
Age		Did not Work	Worked mainly full-time in 2000	Worked mainly part-time in 2000	
15	Total	25643	521	6545	32709
	Percentage within age group	78.4%	1.6%	20.0%	100.0%
	Percentage of total	4.3%	0.1%	1.1%	5.4%
16	Total	21967	818	10671	33456
	Percentage within age group	65.7%	2.4%	31.9%	100.0%
	Percentage of total	3.7%	0.1%	1.8%	5.6%
17	Total	15647	1673	16172	33492
	Percentage within age group	46.7%	5.0%	48.3%	100.0%
	Percentage of total	2.6%	0.3%	2.7%	5.6%
18	Total	12522	4425	15724	32671
	Percentage within age group	38.3%	13.5%	48.1%	100.0%
	Percentage of total	2.1%	0.7%	2.6%	5.4%
19	Total	8472	8513	14943	31928
	Percentage within age group	26.5%	26.7%	46.8%	100.0%
	Percentage of total	1.4%	1.4%	2.5%	5.3%
Total	Total	520632	15950	64055	600637
	Percentage within age group	86.7%	2.7%	10.7%	100.0%

Source: Statistics Canada, calculations and table formatted by author.

There is only one exception to this rule. At 17 years old there are more individuals in the rest of the population that were employed in full-time employment than for the Portuguese-Canadian population. While employment during high school can be advantageous for future job prospects, it does not work well when students work too many hours. Each week has a limited number of hours and each hour spent in paid labour means that students are able to devote less time to after-school activities and homework. Underperformance in school can also lead to difficulties of feeling involved and integrated in the school system and a feeling that students are not able to succeed in school, which may cause students to drop out even more frequently.

3.1.2 Dependent Variable

The Census collects data on the highest degree completed by individuals, which has been used as a measure for educational attainment. In order to run a binary choice model, educational attainment has been coded as a bivariate variable. The Census asks individuals to identify the highest degree they have completed. This variable has been recoded as (1) for high school graduation and (0) for did not graduate from high school[9]. Binary choice models analyse those characteristics in the regression that could possibly explain the differences between individuals within the Portuguese-Canadian community.

3.1.3 Independent Variables

There are a number of characteristics which may effect the educational attainment of Portuguese-Canadians in British Columbia. Unfortunately, some of these effects are not possible to analyse using Census Data, which I will address in the next subsection. Despite the limitations in the data collected by the census, there are still a number of characteristics available that play an important role in determining the educational attainment of Portuguese-Canadians. The variables included in this study include: age, sex, generation status, citizenship other than Canadian, full-time versus part-time employment, wages and salary, Portuguese language, mother tongue, the number of household maintainers, mother's place of birth, and Portuguese ethnicity. Among these variables, only age, and wages and salary are intervals. The rest are categorical variables. Table 3.6 below lists all the variables included in the binary choice model and the anticipated relationship between each variable and higher graduation rates.

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[9] This study assumes that individuals who do not have a high school degree are high school drop outs. It does not take into account that individuals may have returned to school after dropping out to attain a high school diploma. Unfortunately, this is one of the limitations of the Census data.

Table 3.6   Hypothesis Table

Variable		Hypothesis	
		Positive	Negative
Number of Household Maintainers	*One Maintainer*		
	Two Maintainers	●	
	Three or more maintainers	●	
Age			●
Gender	*Female*		
	Male		●
Place of Birth - Mother	*Canada*		
	US	●	
	Europe		●
	Asia	●	
	Other countries and regions	●	
Generation Status	*1st generation*		
	2nd generation: one parent born outside Canada	●	
	2nd generation: both parents born outside Canada	●	
	3rd generation and over	●	
Full-time or part-time weeks worked in 2000	*Did not work*		
	Worked mainly full-time in 2000	●	
	Worked mainly part-time in 2000		●
Wages and Salary		●	
Mother Tongue	*Other Mother Tongue*		
	Portuguese Mother Tongue		●
Knowledge of Portuguese	*No knowledge of Portuguese*		
	Portuguese known	●	

Rong and Grant (1992) find that Hispanic students in the US tend to do better with each subsequent generation; however, each generation does considerably worse when compared to the progress of other ethnicity's generations. Nunes (1999) finds that Portuguese-Canadian low educational attainment is not only shown in the second generation, but also shown in subsequent generations. As a result, the generation status of an individual is included to test if the same effect holds true in British Columbia. There are four different categories of generations: first

generation, second generation with both parents born in Portugal, second generation with only one parent born in Portugal, and third generation. All generations born in Canada are anticipated to perform better in education than first generation Portuguese-Canadians.

Two variables that measure the effect of Portuguese language have been included in the model. The Toronto District School Board has been active in improving the educational outcomes of Portuguese-Canadians. Initiatives that have shown the greatest success have included a component of Portuguese language training and heritage history. These initiatives have been successful for a number of reasons. Parents have a much easier time becoming involved in their child's education. As a result, students gain a greater sense of the importance of education. Also, younger generations are able to better communicate with older generations, and gain a sense of involvement and pride in the community. The respondent's mother tongue is included to control for individuals who would claim Portuguese as their first language. The mother tongue variable has been recoded from the Census to other mother tongue (0) and Portuguese mother tongue (1). Knowledge of the Portuguese language (1) has also been included to compare with individuals with no knowledge of Portuguese (0). Including both variables in the regression analyses the effect that knowledge of Portuguese as a second language and the educational attainment of Portuguese-Canadians.

The number of household maintainers is also included in the regression. The effect of single parenthood on the educational attainment of children is well documented (For example: Ermisch & Francesconi, 2001; Garner & Raudenbush, 1991; Krein & Beller, 1988). While the literature on Portuguese educational attainment does not mention a large problem with single-parenthood, the Census data did have a small proportion of single-parent families. Therefore, the variable has been included as a control variable, comparing multiple household maintainers to a single household maintainer.

Two labour market variables are included in the regression to test labour market outcomes and wages and salary levels have on educational attainment. Full-time versus part-time weeks worked in 2000 are included to analyse whether individuals working either full-time or part-time in 2000 were more or less likely to have a higher educational attainment. Also, income from wages and salary are included to test whether there is a price ceiling to the returns to education for Portuguese-Canadians. A price ceiling in the labour market would distort the educational attainment decision for Portuguese-Canadians, since individuals would not fully realise the returns to education. The Census data reports income from wages and salary in total

yearly figures. However, total income has been scaled by a thousand dollars to obtain a meaningful coefficient.

Along with the above variables, a number of control variables have been used to isolate the effects of the above variables in the regression. Age, gender, and the place of birth of the mother have been used as control variables. Table 3.1 above shows the break down of the Portuguese-Canadian graduation rate among different age groups. Older individuals have a lower graduation rate than younger generations. Older generations have a higher number of first generation Portuguese-Canadians, which means that age should be negatively related to high school graduation. A gender difference in educational attainment already exists. Richards (2005) shows that graduation rates for males are lower than graduation rates for females for the general population. Bradley and Taylor (2004) also find that males tend to do worse than females even when controlling for ethnicity. Therefore, gender has been included in the model. Finally, mother's place of birth has been included as a proxy for parental ability. Parental ability has a direct effect on educational attainment. Most studies have found that father's background has a stronger effect than mother's background (Bradley & Taylor, 2004; Leslie & Drinkwater, 1999; Rice, 1988, 1999). Originally, I ran the model with both variables in the regression. Father's place of birth was statistically insignificant and was taken out of the model.

3.2   Limitations of the Census Data

While the self-identification of Portuguese ethnicity provides a sufficient number of observations statistically, there is some bias associated with the variable. A self-selection bias is dependent on people to identify themselves as Portuguese and may not capture all Portuguese-Canadians, especially later generations that have been born in Canada, or individuals that may have dissociated themselves from the community for various reasons. This may imply that educational attainment levels may conceivably be higher or lower than the actual values given in this paper. However, in many cases, the use of a probability function such as a logit function does minimize the bias effects of self-selection (Wooldridge, 2003).

3.3   Focus Group

Two focus groups have been conducted in order to obtain a better understanding of the obstacles Portuguese-Canadians face in school. The group was selected to represent high risk

individuals and teachers[10]. Participants for each of the focus groups were obtained by approaching contacts within the Portuguese-Canadian community and community leaders. Refer to Appendix B for a description of the participants.

The first focus group consisted of six individuals, ranging in age from 23 to 52. Most of the participants in this group were born and raised in the Lower Mainland in British Columbia. However, two participants were from Caribou, 100 Mile House. One of these two participants was born in Portugal and was a parent to two children that were raised in the Canadian education system. The second focus group consisted of Portuguese-Canadian teachers and attempted to gain a better understanding about what they feel is most needed to improve the educational attainment in the community, either formally through the education system or informally through the community.

I posed four general sets of questions for the participants in the first focus group. First is the level of support that each participant has received from their families. In cases where participants do not receive much support from their families, the hypothesis is that the student is less likely to finish high school. Support can take many forms, such as encouragement to achieve and parental involvement in the day-to-day activities of the respondents. The goal is to identify which types of support are more effective.

The second question attempts to gage the general support from the Portuguese community as a whole. The hypothesis is that if the individual is able to feel support from the community, they are more likely to do well in school. It is difficult to measure how connected an individual feels to the Portuguese community. The main measure of connectivity is the level of involvement in the Portuguese community, and the number of friends respondents may have in the community. Also, the level of community involvement is dependent on the participant's own conception of their involvement.

The third set of questions covers the general support from the participants' friends. While this relationship may be closely related to the support from participants' community, there is a subtle difference between the two. The main interest in this case is the support from friends with whom they attend school. The hypothesis is that a low level of support in education will lead to a low educational attainment. Particularly, this was measured by asking respondents their friends' attitude throughout school and how involved did they feel in school activities.

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[10] Initially, I attempted to conduct a number of other focus groups, in particular a group consisting of Portuguese-Canadian males. However, these focus groups could not be held due to scheduling problems and individuals changing their minds about participating. I also attempted to arrange a focus group by advertising through a Portuguese magazine called *Lusitania* and did not receive any responses.

The fourth topic explores the individuals' own attitudes and experiences with the education system. Here, the hypothesis is that negative attitudes toward the education system would lead to a higher drop out rate among the participants. It may seem obvious that negative attitudes would lead to a higher drop out rate amongst participants, but the goal of the study is to assess what caused the participants' negative attitudes towards education. It is highly likely that this final line of questioning is highly correlated with the previous three questions. This one may have to be extrapolated from the participants' viewpoints in the study.

The second focus group consisted of teachers attempting to identify a number of policy alternatives that may improve Portuguese-Canadian educational attainment. In particular, the discussion revolved around current policies in place directed towards dealing with diverse cultures and any suggestions they felt would be most effective in improving educational outcomes among different ethnicities. Participants were also asked to assess their experience in post-secondary school and their perceptions of how the Portuguese community assesses the value of post-secondary education.

4   Results

4.1   Binary Choice Model

The binary choice model[11] was conducted using a number of variables, including: age, gender, generation status, full-time versus part-time employment in 2000, yearly income from wages and salary in 2000, a stated knowledge of Portuguese language, household size, and the place of birth of the mother. Table 4.1 below shows the mean, median, minimum and maximum scores for all the variables in the binary choice model. A majority of individuals in the sample have a high school degree. Also, most individuals live in a household with two household maintainers. The sample is well distributed in age, with a mean and median score that is almost identical, and well distributed with an approximately equal share of individuals that are male and female. The majority of respondents have mothers born in Europe, and can be classified as second generation with both parents born outside of Canada. The majority of individuals work in part-time jobs and there are more individuals below than above the average income. Finally, more individuals are able claim they have knowledge of the Portuguese language than individuals who claim Portuguese as their mother tongue.

Table 4.1   Binary Choice Model Variable Averages

Binary Choice Model Variable Averages				
	Mean	Median	Minimum	Maximum
Graduation	0.74	1	0	1
Number of Household Maintainers	1.63	2	1	3
Age	32.06	32	19	49
Gender	1.48	1	1	2
Place of Birth – Mother	2.94	3	1	5
Generation Status	1.73	2	1	4
Full-time or part-time weeks worked in 2000	1.07	1	0	2
Mother Tongue	0.52	1	0	1
Knowledge of Portuguese	0.60	1	0	1
Income	21.71	18	0	170

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[11] Binary choice model conducted using SPSS v. 14 statistical software.

There are a number of variables included in the regression that are significant at the one-percent significance level. Table 4.2 below shows the results from the binary choice model. The model is able to explain 29.2 percent of the variation in the dependent variable, with a number of variables that have come out as significant and robust, and there are no indications of multicollinearity among the variables. Refer to Appendix C for correlation coefficients. There are indications that the model may contain some degree of autocorrelation with a low Durbin-Watson; however, the autocorrelation appears to minimal and may not be of great concern. In cases where the independent variable is categorical, the variable's base case for comparison is the top variable in italics in the second column. The third column shows the independent variable's coefficient with its standard deviation underneath in brackets. Females are more likely to graduate than males. This may indicate that males are more likely to be enticed to leave school by finding a job rather than attend school. This is in contrast to a 1984 report in Toronto, *The Portuguese Community: A Reflection of Current Trends*, in which researchers found that some Portuguese-Canadians were encouraged to leave school in order to be married early and that this practice was seen to be encouraged within the community.

Portuguese mother tongue has a large effect on the educational attainment of individuals who are of Portuguese ethnic origin. Portuguese migrants originate from the lowest socio-economic class in Portugal and often do not have access to higher levels of education. This shows that even those individuals who migrated from Portugal more recently still have a lower educational attainment than the rest of the population.

Table 4.2   Regression Results

Variable		Coefficient
Number of Household Maintainers	*One Maintainer*	
	Two Maintainers	-0.55*** (0.06)
	Three or more maintainers	-0.27* (0.15)
Age		-0.03*** (0.00)
Gender	*Female*	
	Male	-0.7*** (0.06)
Place of Birth - Mother	*Canada*	
	US	21.51 (3601.09)
	Europe	1.8*** (0.23)
	Asia	21.48 (1517.32)
	Other countries and regions	1.67*** (0.27)
Generation Status	*1st generation*	
	2nd generation: one parent born outside Canada	-0.08 (0.08)
	2nd generation: both parents born outside Canada	1.68*** (0.23)
	3rd generation and over	1.65*** (0.27)
Full-time or part-time weeks worked in 2000	*Did not work*	
	Worked mainly full-time in 2000	1.18*** (0.10)
	Worked mainly part-time in 2000	1.61*** (0.11)
Total Income		0.01*** (0.002)
Mother Tongue	*Other Mother Tongue*	
	Portuguese Mother Tongue	-1.3*** (0.10)
Knowledge of Portuguese	*No knowledge of Portuguese*	
	Portuguese known	0.61*** (0.09)
Constant		-0.01 (0.28)
Nagelkerke R Square		0.26
n		7447
Durbin-Watson		0.57

*Dependent Variable: Graduate High School (1), Did not graduate High School (0). *** denotes statistically significant at the 1% level and * denotes statistically significant at the 10% level. The standard errors are shown in brackets under the coefficient value.*

The number of household maintainers is also statistically significant. However, the result is unexpected. Individuals living in dwellings with two household maintainers are less likely to graduate than individuals with only one household maintainer. It may be that there are not enough observations for single household maintainers to make a clear judgement on the effect of single parent families on children for this particular community.

As expected, second generation children who have both parents born outside of Canada are more likely to graduate than first generation students. Third generation students are also more likely to graduate from high school than first generation students. While second and third generations have a higher educational attainment than first generations, third generation students do not attain a higher level in education than second generation students, which is consistent with Rong and Grant (1992).

Individuals who worked either part-time or full-time in 2000 are more likely to graduate than individuals who did not graduate. Generally, not completing high school is associated with higher rates of unemployment. However, individuals who worked mainly part-time were more likely to have graduated than individuals that worked full-time in 2000. This may indicate the close relationships and networking within the community in service oriented, low skilled jobs that do not require high school graduation for individuals to be able to find a job, despite their academic underachievement. Also, this may indicate that individuals are dropping out of school to work in low-skill construction sectors, where a high school degree would not be a necessity. Unfortunately, the limitations in the data do not allow a deeper analysis of the situation.

Knowledge of the Portuguese language shows a strong effect associated with higher educational attainment and is strongly statistically significant. The strong relationship between knowledge of the Portuguese language and educational attainment may indicate two things. There is a strong relationship between knowledge of the language and increased involvement and acceptance in the Portuguese community. A strong connection to one's community and culture means that Portuguese-Canadians may feel a greater sense of belonging in the community and may have better relations with older generations. Also, it may be possible that individuals who learn Portuguese have a stronger aptitude for learning. Given the strong push by Portuguese communities in Toronto to have Portuguese taught in schools, there is a strong possibility that this may well be the case.

Finally, the model shows a positive relationship between a mother's birth place and educational attainment. Individuals whose mother is born in Europe are more likely to graduate than individuals whose mothers are born any where else. Individuals with mothers born in

Europe is positively related to educational attainment, yet individuals with both parents born outside of Canada has a negative relationship, it may be that the father does not have as strong an influence on the child as other studies have shown for other groups (Bradley & Taylor, 2004).

4.2   Analysis of the focus groups

The focus groups were conducted to get a better understanding of the situation in British Columbia. I was quite fortunate with the groups that I was able to interview. The first focus group was comprised of six Portuguese-Canadians and reviewed their experiences going through the education system in British Columbia. A number of key issues arose in the focus group. During the focus group, I attempted to gain a better understanding of how the participants' community, family, and friends interacted with the school system through their years of education. In many cases, the sentiments of one person were shared with a majority of the group.

A number of key themes emerged over the course of the focus group:

- Early struggles from cultural differences, which continued on through high school.

- A lack of knowledge about the benefits of higher education.

- A high rate of employment in high school, affected their scholastic performance.

- An inability to convince parents to obtain tutoring services if needed.

- Inadequate access to Portuguese community youth groups that are not held through the Catholic Church.

- A relaxed attitude by parents about their child's education.

- Difficulty for parents to become involved in their child's education.

4.2.1   Early struggles from cultural differences

Many of the participants felt they lacked the necessary support they needed to ensure success in many of the foundational skills schools offer, in particular Math and English. Their early struggles carried on into their older ages and high school. Table 4.3 below shows some of the comments made during the first focus group. Early difficulty in English is a direct result of the fact that their parents' first language was Portuguese and their lack of exposure to English would set them back early in their education.

Table 4.3   Focus Group Comments on Early Struggles

Early Struggles in Education
In high school, I really liked drama and arts. I really found that I was good in the arts, not really good in sciences and math
Yeah, I basically failed Science 10. I had to go to summer school to actually make up for it.
I was left back in grade 2, and there was about 4 or 5 Portuguese kids with me in that year, and we all failed grade 2. We all moved back one year and the next year, we all like, we all failed. It was like all five Portuguese kids
Because when you don't do so well in something, you decide that you're not really interested in it and then it carries forward in to high school. For math, it was the modified math and I didn't take advanced or I didn't take calculus.

One participant cited being held back in Math with difficulty understanding long division. Her parents did try to help her do her homework and gain a better understanding of long division. However, growing up in Portugal, her parents learnt a different method of long division. The method of long division her parents were able to help her with would solve the problem by switching the direction of solving the problem. Instead of putting the answer over the number that is being divided and subtracting down, the method her parents were taught instead worked in the opposite direction. While the different method still works in obtaining the correct answer, it takes longer to finish one question than the traditional method that we are taught in Canada. Therefore, during quizzes and exams, the participant was unable to finish and would loose part marks. As a result, the participant failed the grade with a distaste for Math. This trend continued even through high school.

4.2.2 A lack of knowledge about the benefits of education

In high school, many participants cited that they did not know what types of job opportunities are available after high school. Since most Portuguese immigrants tend to be employed in low-skill sectors of the economy, the participants are not exposed to a wide range of professions and do not know what each profession would entail. The general lack of knowledge of the types of professions available would also help to explain why most students, even those

that go on to university, tend to be employed in professions that are clear and visible and they would have exposure to these professions, for example, teachers, nurses, and police officers. Table 4.4 below shows a variety of comments made on the current resources available for students to learn about options available to them through education.

Table 4.4   *Focus group comments on the lack of knowledge pertaining to improved educational attainment.*

The Degree of Knowledge About the Benefits of Education
There's one course in grade 11 or 12, its CAPP or something, Career and Personal Planning. It taught you a lot of different careers and made you do a quiz about what you're going to be when you grow up and what you're best suited for. So, that sort of opened my eyes up to some things that were out there. Although, the test that you did said that you should be this, which was kind of misleading and got you thinking that maybe I should be a teacher, but maybe that's not what's out there for me. But there was some courses out like that that helped out I think.
I did every single job that was in there…But, I didn't get into those jobs until after, later in my life. There were a couple of different options. But, you at least know that you would be good at something. But, as you grow up, you kind of change your mind.
But in high school, there really wasn't any tools that were available to us. We didn't know. There wasn't anybody there that would say you should take this or take that
Most Portuguese people that we know that went on education became teachers. Why? Because that's what we know. We know teaching and nursing. We know other teachers and nurses
My parents weren't very supportive of extracurricular things, except for work.

It was at this point that the conversation began talking about "breaking the bubble" in the Portuguese community. Most participants stated that they felt a general pressure to become employed in these stable, and known professions because they were the types of jobs that Portuguese people knew about. For those individuals not employed in these professions, they felt some frustrations when they tried to explain to family and friends exactly what they did for a living. One course offered by high schools now called Career and Personal Planning (CAPP) was

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particularly useful for most members of the group. However, they claimed that while CAPP was able to introduce them to new types of professions, the technique used to match individuals to jobs was not particularly useful in learning more about the career. Students are given an aptitude test to see what types of jobs best suits their skill level. However, beyond finding out the type of job best suited for them, it was up to the individual themselves to find out more about the profession. My own personal experience with this system is somewhat mixed. Based on my skill set in high school, I was supposed to become a garbage collector, a path very different from the one that I ended up choosing.

4.2.3   A high rate of employment in high school

There was also a common theme that many of the participants would work throughout high school as the comments in Table 4.5 below indicate.

Table 4.5   Comments from the focus group on education and work

Education and Work
I told my dad that I wanted to start working because they wouldn't buy me the Guess jeans that I wanted. The minimum wage at that time was about $4/hour and I got moved up to the front cashier position.
If you don't work, they think that you're lazy.
On my dad's side of the family, nobody worked because they figured that if you worked, then you would do poorly in school. Stella and I worked at Safeway; we were only allowed 8 hours/week. No more than that because they thought that my grades would suffer, so we were never allowed to work. But then, a lot of people in the community would be like, oh she doesn't work, so she must be pretty lazy even though they don't think of the work that we do as students.
My parents were like you're going to get a job and you're going to go to school. My first job I got when I was 14 years old and I actually got fired because I was too young to have a job and they rehired me after I turned 15. And they were like it's the law not to work.

Education and Work
My marks got worse when I got a job. They didn't get better. And then my parents made me quit and then I quit.

The most commonly cited reason for wanting to work during high school was to supplement their own income and purchase items they wanted for themselves, since their parents could not afford or were reluctant to purchase expensive items. The participants were also quick to point out that their grades in school got much worse after starting to work part-time. One participant stated that her parents did not want her grades to suffer in school and would therefore only allow her to work a maximum of 8 hours per week.

4.2.4   Inability to convince parents to obtain a tutor

Many participants stated that they would have benefited from tutoring services; however, participants stated were unable to convince their parents to pay for a tutor. Table 4.6 shows comments that were made during the focus group indicating that participants may have had greater success if they had increased access to tutors.

Table 4.6   Comments on the need for increases tutoring services

The Need for Tutoring Services
When they are young, that's when you have to help them. After, when they are on their own, like when they get to high school, I couldn't help them
My parents, they didn't know how to explain things good, so if we came home with math, my parents would explain it the wrong way.
So, I have a tutor now, and he's teaching me and I'm getting good at it. It's not a problem, it's an attitude. You have to say to yourself that this is not hard. You know what, its not that hard, its actually not that hard.

The need for tutoring services, especially at a young age arises from the need for extra help in school at an early age. Given that most parents have a limited amount of education and they have no experience with the Canadian education system, children who need help in school are not able to obtain the help they need. Participants stated that many of their friends would

have tutors and yet when they would suggest getting a tutor to their parents, they would be put down by their parents for asking for a tutor. There were also some sentiments about what the community would think if they were to find out that their daughter was getting help from a tutor. Also, participants stated that it was difficult to be involved in after-school activities. They stated that in many cases, they would have liked to participate in these activities but were unable to attend these activities because their parents were insistent on them coming directly home right after school. However, there were often very positive results when individuals were able to participate in after school activities.

4.2.5 Inadequate access to Portuguese community youth groups that are not held through the Catholic Church

Participants would have liked to have access to youth groups in which they could interact with other Portuguese children without having to actively participate in the Catholic Church. Table 4.7 below shows comments made by focus group participants on the lack of youth groups outside of the Portuguese church. Most of the participants felt that the church is extremely old-fashioned and that participating in the youth group would mean having to become involved in the old-fashioned community. Even today, one of the participants continues to be involved with the youth group through the church and claims that it becomes more and more of a chore having to deal with the old-fashioned values that exist in the church. However, this may not be the case. Today, there are some organisations that are arising looking out for the interests of young Portuguese, but not affiliated with the church. This was clear with the participant from the outside Vancouver. They felt that it was relatively easy to be involved in the Portuguese community without going through the church; however, it must be up to the individual to look for organisations and wish to be involved.

Table 4.7   Youth groups and community involvement in the Portuguese-Canadian community in Vancouver

Youth Groups and Community Involvement
I used to be the head of the Portuguese youth group at that church, and when I was there, it was always the same people. But when I did Jovens, there were so many different types of people that showed up from all over the province and it was always meeting new people. And that's what you want, you want to get people from all around

Youth Groups and Community Involvement
to get involved in the community
Now that you're talking about it, when I first got here, I thought that Portuguese community was really disconnected and I would look at other communities, like Italian and they are not as disconnected.
This is exactly why I started Jovens Vancouver which is a youth group that is not affiliated with any religious context whatsoever. Terry has principle reasons why people don't like him and the problem is that the church, because it's a Catholic church and some pettiness and cattiness, people will create rumours about people and people will just believe those rumours
Its even worse because the mentality of the Portuguese Catholic church is even more extreme than most Catholic churches and you see it in the fact that they don't want to support the magazine, they don't welcome a lot of people in very easily

4.2.6   A relaxed attitude by parents about their child's education

Some participants claimed that their parents often had a very relaxed attitude towards school. Table 4.8 below shows some of the comments made by participants in the focus group that relate to the parents' attitudes towards school.

Table 4.8   Parent's attitude towards school

Parent's attitudes towards school
When the teacher said that I failed, my parents just accepted it. Well, my other cousins failed so its not a big deal, you know.
My dad worked for a company all day, he used to come home at 4, eat dinner and then at 5 o'clock he'd be at his night job because he's an electrician. And then, for the first few years, when I first started St. Pat's, my mom would be home all day and then come pick us up at school. My dad would be home at 4, and then she would be out the door for her night job at the hospital, and then my dad would be us all night. I think that has a

Parent's attitudes towards school
lot to do with it.
It is an attitude, because my parents were always like its ok, you're not good at that.
When I was in high school, my mom was so proud that we were taking sewing. That was the thing that she showed off the most about was like, look at what they made sewing, look what they made cooking.
My parents were more proud of the fact that I worked rather than anything I ever did in school.

In some cases, the disinterest in their children's education is only a perceived disinterest. The parent is not often around enough to appear interested because they are working multiple jobs, or simply working too many hours to be around the house. In cases where the participant would not do well in school or in certain subjects, parents would tell the child that "It's OK, so you're not so good at school." Participants also claimed that their parents would pay more attention to activities that did not involve school and brag about those activities to their friends. For example, participants said their mothers were happier with items they made in home economics as opposed to having good grades in subjects such as English. Also, participants stated that many times their parents would be prouder about the fact that they worked rather than the fact that they were doing well in school.

4.2.7 Difficulty for parents to become involved in their child's education

It is difficult for parents to become involved in their children's education. Table 4.9 below shows some of the comments made with regards to some of the difficulties surrounding increased parental involvement. In many cases, it is not that the parent would not like to be involved in the child's education at school, but rather that they face their own insecurities about increased involvement and participation with teachers.

Table 4.9   Comments on the difficulties of increased involvement in Portuguese parents' involvement in their child's education

The difficulties of involvement in their children's education
It's funny, because sometimes I hear your mom complain that her English isn't good, and I will always tell her, "No, its not. What are you talking about?" And your mom will be like, "Oh, you know, o meu englis (My English)" and I will tell her that her English is fine. But she's embarrassed to talk to Allan, my husband, and she's sometimes embarrassed to talk to Ken, and I can see it in her.
There was this one girl there that was showing an aptitude for drawing and computers and I told her that she should consider going into graphic design and her mom was like, what the heck is that, she's not going to make any money off that. And I told her that my husband is doing graphic design and he makes a pretty good living. Andrea's mom was like that's silly, all she does is draw, and she was almost scolding her for drawing
I think with my parents, when I didn't do well in school, they would tell me that I was stupid, garbage, good for nothing. They used these really bad words that really affect you inside, especially when you're 13 or 14. It's not because they're bad people, but because they don't know any better. It's also got to do with the way they were raised too, right. I know that now, but at the time it was really devastating.

Many parents are not comfortable with their English skills to come to meet the teachers in a formal setting such as parent-teacher conferences. One participant stated that she talks to many members of the community and asks them why they do not get more involved with their child's education. They typical response tends to be, "Oh, não sabes, o meu englis (Oh, you know, my English)." In saying this, they are referring to the fact that they feel their English is not up to par with being comfortable enough to talk to teachers. However, this is not often the case, but often that parents would be too nervous to talk formally to a teacher. This was also a common theme among the focus group with teachers. Many of the teachers felt that it was those parents whose children really are not doing badly in school that tend to show up most often. They expressed some frustration in trying to reach out to the community. One teacher, in particular, was always mindful of reminding her students that she does speak Portuguese if their parents want to come down and that she would be happy to translate for their parents.

5   Policy Alternatives and Criteria

5.1   Policy Alternatives

For simplicity and to reflect the scope of the study, the policy alternatives have been grouped into two categories, targeted, and non-targeted alternatives. Targeted programs suggest what can be done through non-governmental organisations; whereas, non-targeted programs analyse what can be done through schools. Therefore, a two-pronged approach is needed to enlighten the community on the benefits of education and to look at what can be done within the education system. The targeted programs are:

- *Community Infrastructure Programs*

- *Tutor Program*

- *Increase Access to Portuguese Language Classes*

The non-targeted programs that would benefit the Portuguese-Canadian community and can be implemented in schools would also benefit students from other ethnicities. The non-targeted programs recognise that it is difficult to provide services for Portuguese-Canadians in schools. The non-targeted programs are:

- *Career Days*

- *Increase Training Programs*

The proposed alternatives, both targeted and non-targeted programs, are not mutually exclusive.

5.2   Targeted Programs

5.2.1   Community Infrastructure Programs

As stated earlier, there are currently a number of organisations designed to maintain the link between immigrants and the Portuguese culture[12]. These organisations work solely to ensure that Portuguese migrants are able to celebrate their culture at regular 'festas' (parties) and significant events in Portugal's history. These organisations are based mostly on volunteer work from community members and have been able to maintain ties between communities in Vancouver and Portugal. However, many of these organisations are not proactive within the political arena and are unsuccessful in raising public policy issues pertinent to the Portuguese-Canadian community. Many of the leaders of these organisations were born and raised in Portugal, especially in older organisations, and were raised under a dictatorship political regime. As a result, these organisations never developed the capacity to address public policy issues in a democratic system. Finally, these organisations often work contrary to each other, as they often represent different community interests. A coordinated effort between these organisations is needed successfully raise issues in the political forum that pertain to the needs of Portuguese-Canadian youth.

Working with the existing infrastructure would mean cost-savings for the Ministry of Education and would be the most effective way of reaching the Portuguese community. Since the Portuguese generally fall under a category of an 'invisible minority' these organisations would be able to bring out self-identifying Portuguese-Canadians and offer them services that may not be available through the education system.

There has been an increase in the past two years of not-for-profit organisations in Vancouver dedicated to addressing issues within the Portuguese-Canadian community. Some of the notable groups include: the Portuguese Benevolent Society, Jovens Vancouver, and LusaTeens. These organisations have been successful bringing young Portuguese-Canadians together in the Lower Mainland to discuss important issues. Along with bringing people together, these groups also provide scholarships and guidance to students who wish to pursue an education. These organisations depend solely on volunteer work; therefore, working with community leaders would be a low cost alternative to ensure that the Portuguese community understands the benefits associated with an education. One mechanism would be to provide funds for the Portuguese

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[12] These organizations are also referred to Luso-Canadian organizations. Under the Roman empire, the Portuguese were referred to as Lusofones. As a result, many not-for-profit organizations have chosen this label to pay respect to this tradition.

Benevolent Society to increase its scholarship donations. Currently, the Portuguese Benevolent Society offers two scholarships worth $500 each to Portuguese-Canadian students from British Columbia. These scholarships are given to any individual who decides to attend any type of post-secondary institution. The Ministry of Education could arrange a one-for-one match funding for these scholarships to ensure that these scholarships can cover more of the costs associated with post-secondary education. An agreement would need to be reached between the Portuguese Benevolent Society and the Ministry to define accountability issues and funding arrangements.

The Ministry of Education could also help provide funds to the group LusaTeens. This group was started specifically to help Portuguese-Canadian youth in the Lower Mainland come together to discuss current issues, without the Portuguese church's involvement. The Ministry can help this LusaTeens promote its existence throughout the school system and provide a base of funds per year for the organisers to run events intended to promote the Portuguese culture.

These organisations face many challenges to gain support from the 'traditional' Portuguese community. Despite these challenges, they have been able to achieve some successes in convincing some members of the Portuguese community about the importance of their efforts. Increased investment from the provincial government would allow these organisations to show the importance of their work to the community.

5.2.2   Tutor Program

A tutor program would have Portuguese-Canadians in post-secondary education get involved in the community and offer their services to current students enrolled in high schools and elementary schools. The program will allow students in post-secondary institutions to give back to the community and earn references for work, rather than being dependent on part-time, often service oriented jobs that post-secondary students depend on for a source of income. A pilot project should be established, using connections through community organisations, which would involve approximately 30 university students paid on average 8 to 12 hours per week at a wage between $15 to $17.50 per hour. This hourly wage should be sufficient to encourage individuals to tutor rather than the alternative of working a minimum wage job in retail at $8 per hour. The pilot project would allow the ministry to gage the demand in the community for tutoring services and examine if families would access these services if provided by community organisations.

Tutoring can be an effective means to improve educational attainment. Since many individuals have experienced difficulty in school in their early years, this program would

minimize early learning difficulties and provide useful services to high school students that may not have received the help they needed in elementary school. It also provides the younger generation exposure to post-secondary institutions. This secondary effect will allow individuals to learn more about the types of subjects these institutions have to offer. Since the requirement for tutors is that they are currently attending a post-secondary institution, it would be inevitable that the range of studies would vary over time, which increases the exposure for young Portuguese-Canadian students.

There may be a social stigma attached to the need for individuals to search out and find a tutor for their child. One of the main frustrations the focus group cited about dealing with the Portuguese community is how quickly rumours get spread within the community. It may be possible that individuals using this program will have a negative stigma attached that their child is 'too stupid' to learn. The possible social stigma associated with a tutoring program is one of the main reasons I have proposed a pilot project to assess the relative demand. Another alternative to minimize any social stigma which may be associated with tutoring is to have a brochure or pamphlet distributed through community members that describes the benefits to the child of participating in a tutor program.

5.2.3   Increase Access to Portuguese Language Classes

The Portuguese community church, Our Lady of Fatima, currently provides funds to provide a full day of language training for Portuguese-Canadians, collected through community donations. The language training is held on Saturdays and teachers are recruited from the Portuguese community. Students not only learn Portuguese, but instructors also teach students about their Portuguese heritage and culture.

Portuguese language training has been attempted in Toronto to improve the educational outcome of students in that district. In particular, there are two projects that have drawn the most success. The *Balanced Literacy Project* uses Portuguese to increase literacy among young Portuguese-Canadians. This project originally started in 10 primary schools may eventually extend to 221 languages. The *Best Practices Program* was developed in consultation with a Portuguese coalition fighting for better educational outcomes. The project monitored student development in numeracy and literacy. It worked to deploy human resources in schools in order to support school staff. In implementing this pilot project, an accountability framework was developed which split the accountability of the project between the Toronto School Board and the community (Januario, 2003). The binary choice model shows a positive relationship between

knowledge of the Portuguese language as a second language and educational attainment. However, many members of the community may not participate in attending the only available Portuguese school because it is too far from their homes. Many members of the Portuguese community no longer live near Sir Winston Churchill Secondary School[13]. Refer to Appendix D for the distribution of Portuguese-Canadians in Vancouver using census tracts relative to the Portuguese language training location. A school located closer to the majority of community members (e.g., in the City of Burnaby where many Portuguese families now live) might help increase participation.

The Ministry can work with Our Lady of Fatima to ensure that the school it is provided in such a way as to allow access to more Portuguese-Canadians. Our Lady of Fatima has provided Portuguese language training to the younger generations in Vancouver for the past thirty years. Portuguese language training schools can be located in the areas of higher concentration. Over time, the number and distribution of Portuguese-Canadians in Vancouver using census tracts and the location of Portuguese schools can change in accordance with the demographic changes.

5.3   Non-Targeted Programs

The relatively small proportion of Portuguese-Canadians in British Columbia poses a challenge to policy makers on ways to implement effective programs that target Portuguese-Canadians. Therefore, effective policies conducted through schools would also benefit all other students.

5.3.1   Career Days

The participants in the focus group stated that they really had no idea about the types of jobs are available to individuals with an education. The current course curriculum has a mandatory course for all Grade 12 students called Career and Personal Planning (CAPP). This course offers students an introduction into the types of jobs available by asking students to identify possible career paths in which they may have an interest. Students are required to volunteer in a field that is related to their career choice to find out if they are interested in this career. To help the students choose a career path, the curriculum offers an aptitude test that gages their ability and skill level. While the test does provide options for students, it does not give a clear understanding of the qualifications needed to be successful in the chosen career path. For

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[13] Sir Winston Churchill is located at 7055 Heather Street in the west end of Vancouver. However, Portuguese-Canadians are clustered on the east side of Vancouver.

example, if a student has the ability to become a teacher, the test does not distinguish what type of teacher that student would be best suited to become.

Career days would provide students with a more comprehensive understanding of the qualifications, skill sets, and abilities that would be needed to be successful in many types of careers. Career days have been used in the US to provide more information to students on the types of careers available. The number of students participating in these programs has been increasing since 1984 from 39% to 45% in 2002 (Parsad et al, 2004). This is an indication that these programs are useful for students to decide their career paths.

An incentive will be given to individuals who decide to participate in career days. Individuals will be given a charitable tax credit, which they can claim on their income taxes. There is a concern that more affluent schools will be able to attract more professionals with university degrees. These schools would be able to introduce their students to a wider range of professions. In an attempt to counter this effect, it would be possible to offer a higher tax credit to individuals that devote their time to schools with a higher concentration of lower income students or disadvantaged students. This system can be based on the foundational skills testing the province currently conducts on students. Based on these scores, schools will be given tax credit receipts that will be given to those individuals who participate in the program. Since the program involves tax credits for participation, the relative costs should be minimal.

Since it is not targeted to only one particular group and career days can be attached to the current course curriculum, then it will provide more information to all students in high schools. As a result, the benefits, both from the individual's perspective and a social perspective, will be greater than solely looking at the benefits to Portuguese-Canadian students. It would also be politically acceptable to implement this program, since all students would be able to benefit.

Under this model, schools would be responsible for attracting individuals from a variety of professions to participate in these career days. There are a number of ways schools can attract individuals to participate including, parent participation, recruit alumni, and work with industries to get professionals to talk to students. Less advantaged schools will mainly be dependent on parents and recruiting professionals in the short time period after the program is implemented. It will take them time before they are able to depend on their alumni to come back to the school. The model also puts more emphasis on the schools to be active participants in recruiting individuals. This could be a heavy workload for disadvantaged schools and it may be necessary to increase funding for these schools to establish the necessary infrastructure for these programs.

5.3.2   Increase Apprenticeship and Training Programs

The current funding scheme for all schools in British Columbia is based on a per student basis that does not take into account the type of courses for which students will register. In many cases, training and vocational programs are more expensive than regular academic classes. The funding system does not give the incentive for schools to offer these types of programs, since they generally do not have the necessary funds to support these programs. In order to give schools the proper incentive to provide these programs, there should be a top-up of the current funding to schools that provide vocational training. An apprenticeship program can be established in which schools work with the Industry Training Authority (ITA) to provide students with apprenticeships. To ensure that publicly funded schools are not seen as being compromised by the private sector, the Ministry of Education would help firms pay the labour costs associated with apprenticeships.

Most of the necessary infrastructure to run this program is currently in place and given school choice, schools would only provide this service if they feel there is a demand within their region for providing the service. A similar program was implemented in the 1990s called SkillsNow! A portion of the funding for this program was geared towards high schools to increase the number of vocational studies that schools offer. I have based my cost structure on the SkillsNow! cost structure. Under this structure, the program would cost in the range of $19 million. It would alleviate some of the current short-run shortages in the labour market and would give students an introduction into the challenges they would face with different professions.

An adjustment to the graduation requirements may be necessary to include the apprentice work that students complete to count towards their high school graduation. The German education system and the Government of Ontario both have systems in place that recognise apprenticeship work in their graduation requirements. It is important to maintain that students from any school district will have the same opportunity to go on to university. The new regulations in Ontario recognise the types of courses students in apprenticeship programs need to graduate and their apprenticing work. For example, if a student is registered in an apprenticeship program, they generally take lower level English and Math courses and any other introductory courses that they may require. The ITA works with industries and post-secondary institutions to develop curricula based on each industry's needs. The Ministry of Education must work with ITA to develop the proper criteria so that students have the necessary skills to enter the labour force.

5.4 Criteria

The criteria for this study have been developed through the literature review and through the consultations that have taken place in the focus groups. The criteria can be found in Table 5.1 below. The criteria have been subdivided into economic and feasibility criteria. The economic criteria will be evaluated on the basis of case studies that have been conducted in other regions of Canada such as Toronto, and in other areas around the world. Therefore, each alternative should be able to provide estimates of the actual cost of education programs. The industry costs will need to be inferred on the basis of economic theory and the value of labour. This will involve some possible estimates of removing labourers from the workforce to increase their educational training. The social benefits will be inferred from the value of increasing education by one additional year. There are many studies that have been conducted that calculate the value of increasing education by one year (Kalter & Granato, 2004; Dekkers, 2000; Patrinos, 1997). Also, there are a number of studies that have assessed the social benefits and costs of increasing educational attainment (Vernez, Krop, & Rydell, 1999). These studies will be used to infer the social benefits and cost of increasing educational attainment.

The analysis for the criteria has been developed through the teacher focus group for the feedback on the feasibility of the different alternatives. Political feasibility is assessed based on whether or not the Government of British Columbia has implemented policies on the basis of cultural identity. It will also be necessary to assess if the social benefit is greater than the social cost of each alternative.

It will also be necessary to assess whether or not there will be support from the Portuguese community. Culture and community are capable of playing a large role in policy development. In particular, if it is necessary to make it easier to involve parents, then it will be important to find a way to engage the community. Community organisations play a vital role in this effect. They can either encourage or discourage parental involvement by being an effective intermediary for the community.

Finally, it will be important to analyse how the general public will react to a possible change in policies. Ultimately, it would be preferable to survey the public to develop a general idea of public opinion to any policy alternative. However, that is not possible for this study, and it will be necessary to evaluate public opinion on the basis of any information that can be collected with regards to culturally based policies and public opinion.

Table 5.1   Criteria and Measures

	Criteria	Measure
Economic	Costs	What are the estimated costs associated with the alternative?
	Industry Costs	Will there be any costs on industries that hire individuals with low educational attainment? Does the alternative affect employment and wages in the industry and if so, will this affect graduation rates as individuals are enticed into the labour force because of higher wages?
	Social Benefits	Are there any social benefits associated with the alternative? Depending on how effect the alternative is in increasing graduation rates, is it reflected in lower unemployment payments/welfare payments, etc.
Feasibility	Political	Has the BC government ever proposed a similar alternative? Is the proposed alternative a 'drastic' change from the current system? What is the proposed budget constraint of the provincial government and would the proposed alternative be feasible given the costs associated with the alternative?
	Community	Would the alternative be acceptable by the targeted population? Would it be seen as beneficial on the part of the targeted group to undertake such a proposal?
	General population acceptability	Will the alternative effect the general population? How would this alternative effect the educational attainment of the general population? Can this alternative be used by other ethnicities?
	Teachers	Will this alternative mean increased work for teachers? Will they support the initiative? Analyse the teachers' union past unions if there is any documented position on these issues.

6   Analysis of Alternatives

In conducting the analysis of the alternative, particularly in analysing the costs of each program, it was necessary to make a number of key assumptions for each of the alternatives. The cost assumptions for each alternative can be found in Appendix E. While other Ministries may be involved, such as the Ministry of Children and Family Development, I have only focused on what can be done by the Ministry of Education to simplify the problem. A matrix of the alternatives relative to the criteria is available in Table 6.1and Table 6.2 below. Targeted programs have been assessed separately from non-targeted programs, which is the reason they have been presented in different tables. Targeted programs would have relatively lower social benefits than non-targeted programs since less people would benefit from the targeted programs than the non-targeted programs. Given the need to have both types of programs, it is necessary to divide the analysis along these lines.

Table 6.1   Policy Analysis Matrix for Targeted Programs

		Targeted Programs		
	Alternative	**Community Infrastructure Programs**	**Tutor Programs**	**Increase Access to Portuguese Language Training**
Criteria				
Economic	*Costs*	$25,000 - $45,000	$216,000 - $252,000	$0
	Industry Costs	Medium	High	Low
	Social Benefits	Medium	High	Medium
Feasibility	*Political*	Low	Medium	Low
	Community	Medium	High	Medium
	General population acceptability	Low	High	Low
	Teachers	Low	High	Medium

Table 6.2   Policy Matrix for Non-Targeted Programs

	Alternative	Non-Targeted Programs	
		Career Days	Increase Training Programs
Criteria			
Economic	Costs	$2500 - $5000	$19 million
	Industry Costs	Medium to High	High
	Social Benefits	High	High
Feasibility	Political	Medium	High
	Community	High	High
	General population acceptability	High	High
	Teachers	Medium to High	High

Community Infrastructure Programs

6.1.1   Economic Criteria

Costs – The calculation of the cost of this program has been done with only the Portuguese ethnicity in mind. If this alternative is accepted, it would be necessary to take into account that the ministry would need to do a similar process for all ethnicities. One cost-saving measure would be to extend the alternative only to those ethnicities that have a proven record of low educational attainment. Relative to the other community based alternatives, the monetary costs and the time allocation to this alternative are much greater since the ministry would have to be actively involved in building community infrastructure. However, this would be the most effective way to educate the community on the benefits of education.

Industry Costs – The immediate industry costs of the community infrastructure alternative would be low. As the community becomes informed on the benefits of education, it is possible that parents will no longer allow their children to work part-time in the worst case scenario. It may also be possible that parents would not allow their children to work beyond a

certain amount of hours. A medium score has been given since there is uncertainty about the community's reaction.

Social Benefits – A medium score has been given to the social benefits because increased community infrastructure would allow the current not-for-profit organisations to do more. The example given above has been the work of the Portuguese Benevolent Society. By offering a scholarship to Portuguese-Canadian students who decide to attend post-secondary education, they offer a positive incentive to students to work hard in school to get the scholarship. Students receive a sense of accomplishment when they receive awards such as scholarships. Also, the scholarship program offers individuals an opportunity to give back to the community in which they were raised.

In offering the Portuguese Benevolent Society matched funds on any scholarship donations they have raised, the ministry would be able to offer targeted scholarship funds to Portuguese-Canadians. The scholarship fund is already in existence, so the ministry would not have to spend any money on establishing new scholarships. Even if the community is able to increase their scholarships through donations, the ministry would have to spend money on advertising information to inform the community that they are starting a scholarship fund for Portuguese-Canadians.

6.1.2   Feasibility Criteria

Political – The Ministry of Education is not involved in capacity building for community organisations. While the ministry has worked with Aboriginal groups on issues of increased involvement in school boards, the Ministry of Education works with organisations that are already in existence. If the Ministry would be involved in organisational development, they would be required to become involved in the same way with all other ethnic groups that would qualify for this type of program. The Ministry of Education would also be required to invest a large amount of time and resources into building capacity for these groups to function.

The support of scholarships managed and operated by the Portuguese Benevolent Society means that the ministry would have to develop a new arrangement or agreement which would outline necessary requirements and guidelines for the Portuguese Benevolent Society to follow. It would also be necessary to draft an outline for accountability. The accountability framework would ensure that the recipient is a well-qualified individual, the recipient is chosen fairly, and who would be accountable if something goes wrong with the process. The accountability framework must be worked out before any agreements are made between the two parties.

Community – There are indications that members of the Portuguese community are willing to work collaboratively to assist the Portuguese youth in British Columbia. Also, there have been a number of organisations developed in the last couple of years, which indicates that there are a number of people concerned with improving the educational attainment of Portuguese-Canadians. Although recent, these organisations have started to create a link between different generations of Portuguese-Canadians. For example, Jovens Vancouver has become a mentor program that brings together young professionals and individuals who are just starting out in their careers or post-secondary education. These groups would welcome any increase in funding, since they mostly depend on volunteer work. As a result, it is mostly up to each individual to become a member of these groups since these groups do not recruit.

General Population Acceptability – Unless the Ministry of Education is willing to approach all organisations and groups with a low educational attainment, then the general population's acceptability would be quite low. If the system is meant to be equitable, then there must be equal access to all programs for individuals. If the ministry does become involved in the Portuguese community by capacity building, other ethnicities would expect the same and fair treatment from the ministry as well. As stated earlier, the ministry will be reluctant to implement a program that encompasses capacity building.

Teachers – Acceptance by the teachers also ranked fairly low. While the teachers support multiculturalism, using public expenditures to support capacity building may not be seen as an effective use of government funds. The benefits of the program may not be fully realized by teachers for some years to come.

6.2   Tutor Program

6.2.1   Economic Criteria

Costs – The costs of the tutor program are based on the assumption that the program starts as a pilot project. The pilot project will assess the demand for tutoring services. The project will employ 30 individuals at $15 to $17.50 per hour. It has been assumed that individuals will work on average 8 to 12 hours per week for 40 weeks. The costs are fairly high in relation to the other community alternative programs.

Industry Costs – The industry costs for this program would be potentially high relative to all the other alternatives. While the Portuguese-Canadian population is not a large proportion of the population, they are a large proportion of the young labour force, mainly because they have

the highest employment rate among students compared to other ethnicities. If the program is extended further to other ethnicities, the industry costs may become even larger. The tutoring program gives individuals who would normally work in low-skilled labour during school to apply the knowledge they gain in university. As a result, the experience they gain as a tutor would be better than the experience they would gain as a low-skilled service oriented job. Therefore, individuals would choose to tutor to obtain work experience, which means less people applying for employment out of university.

Social Benefits – The social benefits would potentially be very high for the tutor program. Struggling students receive lessons from a tutor who is capable of understanding the difficulties the student faces in learning the material. The student and the parent both also receive first-hand exposure on the benefits of going to university. Aside from the direct benefits that struggling students and parents would receive, tutors would receive the benefit of a job that looks good on a resume.

6.2.2   Feasibility Criteria

Political – The Ministry of Education has acknowledged the benefits to education. This past January, the ministry announced a plan where teachers would be available on-line to provide tutoring services for students in preparation for midterm examinations. While the ministry recognises the benefits of tutor services, it does not help disadvantaged groups obtain these services at a low cost. The use of university students for tutor services provides a low-cost alternative to provide these services. However, the alternative has received a medium score because the ministry has never implemented a similar program.

Community – The tutor program has received a high score for community acceptability. Both of the focus groups expressed a need for extra help for struggling students. One teacher expressed that they have been approached by friends and family asking them to provide extra help for their children. Tutor services provided through a formal system would allow teachers to concentrate on students in their own class rather than worry about teaching students part-time after school.

Jovens Vancouver is a group that brings together young professionals. Some of the members of this group are still in university. Jovens Vancouver also works as a mentoring project to help young students attain better education outcomes by promoting education in the community. This group would have access to individuals in university and these could be approached to start the program.

General Population Acceptability – Similar programs can be implemented for other ethnicities. This program can be used to analyse the current demand, and can also be used to measure the benefits of a tutoring program. There may also be spin-off effects of tutor services. The portion of Portuguese students who obtain tutor services could help those students who do not receive these services. Similar results are seen with peer groups, when one student helps another student.

Teachers – As I stated earlier, most teachers would be supportive of an initiative that offers extra help to students. Teachers understand the importance of providing students with the necessary help and tools they need to be successful. The number of students that need extra help is growing. However, the number of teachers to help them has remained relatively constant. The teachers I have talked with would welcome any extra help.

6.3   Increase Access to Portuguese Language Training

6.3.1   Economic Criteria

Costs – Increasing access to Portuguese language training would be the least costly alternative out of the community infrastructure programs. The Portuguese community already contributes the funds needed to provide this service through Our Lady of Fatima. However, the course is held in a high school where there are very Portuguese community members in sight. The class would be much more effective as a method to encourage early learning among students through parental involvement if the classes are held in a central location around the Portuguese population.

Industry Costs – It is anticipated that this alternative would not have a large effect on the industries that hire students. Portuguese language training is generally conducted before students are 15 years old. Since these individuals legally are unable to work, then there is not anticipated immediate effect on these industries.

Social Benefits – The social benefits associated with increased Portuguese language training for Portuguese-Canadians would not be as large as the benefits associated with the other alternatives. The private benefits for the individual would be great, as students have an opportunity to learn their culture and their language. The social benefits would mostly be realized within the Portuguese community since older and younger generations would find it easier to communicate with one another.

6.3.2   Feasibility Criteria

Political – The British Columbian government has never undertaken anything like this alternative. The ministry and government officials do not have the background necessary to work with the Portuguese church. The only precedent for this type of involvement is the ministry's involvement in promoting Aboriginal language and culture in schools. However, since Portuguese school is outside the formal education system, the Ministry of Education would be reluctant to involve itself.

Community – Two possibilities might occur from increased involvement by the Ministry of Education. First, it may be possible that the Portuguese church will reject any involvement by the government in its affairs. Second, it may be possible that the church will welcome any help that the ministry is willing to offer. In all likelihood, there is a greater probability that the first reaction would be the one received by the ministry. In order to understand this, there must be an understanding about the Portuguese church. In the focus group, the one thing that came out about the church was that it was extremely old fashioned and has a mindset of doing everything the way they want to do it without any interference.

General Population Acceptability – While the rest of the population may not be happy that the Portuguese community receives special treatment from the ministry, the ministry will be able to justify their involvement because the community already runs the current language program. The funds are coming from the Portuguese community, but the ministry is helping with administrative support. Other ethnicities can receive the same treatment if their community puts the money upfront and finds its own teachers. The ministry is only there to ensure that the course is offered in a school which is central to the group's population, maximizing the number of people who can access the course.

Teachers – In this case, the reference to teachers is only to those teachers employed under the British Columbia Teacher's Federation. Increasing access to Portuguese language training is not anticipated to have a large effect on teachers; therefore, this category has been given a low score.

6.4   Career Days

6.4.1   Economic Criteria

Costs – The costs of the program have been based on the assumption that a tax credit will be given to participating professionals. Although it may not be necessary to give a tax credit for

participating, the proper incentive scheme could help ensure that all schools have equal access to all types of professions. Without an incentive to attend poor performing schools, it may be possible that individuals will only visit schools with a higher performance record. If this is the case, students in disadvantaged schools would not receive the information about different types of jobs that are available with an education.

Industry Costs – The industry costs have been labelled as medium to high for this alternative. The medium to high rank reflects the fact that it would be dependent on the level of involvement that industries want to partake in the program. If there are a lot of industries partaking in the program, then there is a possibility that there will be some immediate costs on the industry to allow employees enough time to talk to students. However, industries will be able to return some of this loss by recruiting students into their professions through the increased information available to students.

Social Benefits – Career days should benefit all students. The benefits will not only be realized by Portuguese students, but by all students who decide to attend. These career days could be added to the school curriculum through CAPP, which would mean that all students would be able to benefit from career days. The increased exposure to all students would increase the social benefits of the program.

6.4.2   Feasibility Criteria

Political – The provincial government has never actively undertaken integrating career days into CAPP. However, there has been a recent push to have more industry involvement in the education system. This could be one possible means to increase the industry's involvement and meet a number of students. Rather than having the students come to the industry, the industry would have the opportunity to meet students, who could become future employees.

Community – The community would be in favour of increased industry involvement to teach Portuguese students of the available opportunities. The first focus group conducted indicated that they were unsure of the types of jobs available through education. They stated that they often had to find out about jobs on their own, and were dependent on help from councillors to learn about occupations and education.

General Population Acceptability – Since all students in high school are able to benefit from the program, the general population should be in acceptance of the alternative. All students

will obtain a better understanding of the types of jobs available to them after high school, trade school, college, or university.

Teachers – Teachers would be expected to expand their network to include organisations that would participate in career days. With the help and support of the ministry and the school board, these relationships can foster over time, and eventually teachers will not need to invest a large amount of time.

6.5   Increase Training Programs

6.5.1   Economic Criteria

Costs – The costs of this program are based on the SkillsNow! policy developed by the BC NDP in the 1990s. This program had a start up cost of $19 million, but there are cost-savings available to the provincial government if they develop a new program with the Industry Training Authority (ITA). While this program was implemented in the 1990s and the costs of education have increased, combined with school choice not all schools will have to provide training programs since students can easily move from one school to another if they are interested in industry related training.

Industry Costs – Industry costs would be low because there would an increased number of individuals available for work if the program is run as an apprenticeship program. The apprenticeship program will provide low cost labour to industries while students are in high school. Once they have graduated from high school, these students will be able to enter the labour force with some training at a regular wage. Therefore, industries will be able to get individuals with some work experience right after they have left high school, a benefit to the industry.

Social Benefits – The social benefits of increased training programs can be very high. Many Portuguese-Canadians that have not graduated from high school still had some level of training. By simply including apprenticeships as part of high school graduation, the graduation rate could potentially increase. Another social benefit would be a decline in the number of accidents in the workplace. Increased training and education is correlated with a lower accident risk on job sites, which is a social benefit since it puts less pressure on the Worker's Compensation Board to pay benefits. Finally, a better educated and trained population would be less susceptible to negative employment conditions in the economy.

6.5.2   Feasibility Criteria

Political – There is a strong political will to implement and increase access to new training programs. The British Columbian economy has been booming in recent years on the strength of the construction industry. This industry has been in high demand for high skilled workers to be employed in the industry. However, there is a shortage of these workers in British Columbia, which has created a need to increase the number of training programs available to students to ensure they graduate with the necessary skills to be successful in the construction and other similar high skilled industries.

Community – The community should be very supportive of this initiative. The focus group stated that they had difficulty escaping the bubble of traditional work and school within the Portuguese community. In some sense, this perpetuates the image of Portuguese in low-skilled construction and retail services trades. However, the community would at least push their children to do well in school in order to get into these programs. They would be able to tell their children the amount of money that many of these trades make and point out the benefits of high school graduation with an apprenticeship program.

General Population Acceptability – Since the program would be open to all ethnicities, the general population would be accepting of this alternative. The general population would be able to share in the same benefits as the Portuguese community.

Teachers – In the focus group with the teachers, many teachers expressed concern that training programs were being cut by schools which negatively affects minority students such as Portuguese-Canadians. Implementing a program to increase the available training programs in schools would address some of these issues raised by teachers.

7   Recommendations

The above analysis has looked at alternatives that could be carried out through community organisations and through the education system. There are two recommendations that are made given the above analysis. One recommendation will be made with regards to the community alternatives. The second recommendation is made with regards to the school system alternatives.

7.1   Recommendation #1

The Ministry of Education should implement a pilot project in which Portuguese-Canadian students in post-secondary education are hired to tutor children in elementary and secondary schools. While this alternative is associated with the highest cost within the community based approaches, the alternative fosters community involvement and may have the potential to provide the highest net benefit out of all the proposed alternatives. As a pilot project, the Ministry could implement the program for four years and would apply to individuals between grades 3 to 7. These years are chosen because the Ministry will be able to monitor student's progress through the Foundation Skills Assessment conducted by British Columbia schools in Grades 4 and 7.

Jovens Vancouver, the Portuguese Benevolent Society, and LusaTeens alls work with youth to provide services and contacts within the Portuguese communities. These organisations work in favour of fostering pride in the Portuguese heritage and community, and the improvement of the educational attainment of Portuguese-Canadians. These groups have been active promoting education in the Portuguese community and have ties to teachers, who would be instrumental to ensure that tutors are prepared to help students.

The ministry would be able to save money on this alternative if they are able to work with the existing infrastructure. They will not have to develop new contacts or new groups to control where tutors will be placed. An agreement must be made between these organisations and the Ministry of Education to ensure that all accountability issues are addressed. It is recommended that the ministry adopt a shared accountability framework.

7.2   Recommendation #2

The Ministry of Education should adopt a process to begin negotiations with the ITA to develop a new training and apprenticeship program for high school students. The new program would have to be linked to graduating from high school in order to be effective. If students do not complete the requirements of the program, they will not be able to graduate. Since the ITA already works in conjunction with British Columbian post-secondary institutions to ensure that these institutions are able to provide the necessary training needed by industries to be successful. The ITA already has the expertise and the connections needed to provide services for high school students. By using the existing system, the ministry will be able to save money on their alternatives.

On February 6, 2006 the provincial government announced ACE IT, a program very similar to the one recommended here to increase apprenticeships through the ITA. This paper and analysis was conducted between September, 2005 and January, 2006. It has reached the same conclusion on the benefits of increased apprenticeship training. However, the provincial plan has budgeted only $1.2 million, much less than the $19 million I use to estimate the cost of this program.

The program has been implemented for students in Grade 12 only. However, most post-secondary requirements in British Columbia will look at a minimum Grade 11 before deciding on acceptance. Generally, individuals have a fairly good idea about whether or not they wish to enter a trade by Grade 11. The provincial government should work with the ITA to implement ACE IT to include Grade 11, or possibly Grade 10 students. This would bring the province's budget number much closer to my own numbers that I have estimated for this project.

8   Conclusion

The above analysis has shown two things. First, Portuguese communities in British Columbia have a low educational attainment similar to other English speaking regions where the Portuguese have migrated. Second, there are a multitude of issues that face the Portuguese-Canadian population in education. In many circumstances, these issues are similar to issues that have been identified in studies in Toronto and Britain. Unlike in Toronto, the number of Portuguese students currently enrolled in elementary and secondary schools does not account for a large proportion of the total population, which makes it increasingly difficult to provide the proper tools necessary to address the problem through schools. Community organisations must have a role to improve the educational attainment of Portuguese-Canadians.

The tutoring program could be used to improve the educational attainment for other ethnicities as well. If the pilot project is successful, it can be extended to other ethnicities, especially those that show a relationship between increased involvement with the individual's heritage and community to their educational performance.

Increasing access to vocational skills training programs has been recommended, but the Portuguese will not be the only community that will benefit from the alternative. While it is preferred that individuals proceed to post-secondary education, recognition of the need for vocational skills training acknowledges that not all individuals will move on from high school and into post-secondary education. Increasing access to vocational skills training gives those individuals who do not plan on attending high school a head start to find a job in an industry they are interested.

One issue that was mentioned in the focus and has also been mentioned in the studies in Toronto is that Portuguese-Canadian students are the most likely ethnicity to work while in high school. Unfortunately, this study has not been able to focus on the educational attainment of individuals who work part-time during high school. The relationship between employment during high school and policy options to avoid the harmful effects of employment on high school studies is one possible area of future research.

Appendices

Appendix A – Descriptive Statistics

Graduation	Frequency	Percent	Age	Frequency	Percent
Did not graduate	1963	26.36	19	260	3.50
Graduate	5485	73.64	20	223	3.00
Total	7447	100	21	409	5.49
Number of Household Maintainers	**Frequency**	**Percent**	22	297	3.99
One Maintainer	3112	41.78	23	260	3.50
Two Maintainers	4002	53.74	24	297	3.99
Three or more maintainers	334	4.48	25	260	3.49
Total	7447	100	26	149	1.99
Gender	**Frequency**	**Percent**	27	372	4.99
Female	3892	52.26	28	149	2.00
Male	3555	47.74	29	372	4.99
Total	7447	100	30	296	3.97
Generation Status	**Frequency**	**Percent**	31	259	3.48
1st generation	3441	46.21	32	444	5.96
2nd generation: one parent born outside Canada	2967	39.84	33	222	2.98
2nd generation: both parents born outside Canada	631	8.47	34	185	2.48
3rd generation and over	408	5.48	35	370	4.97
Total	7447	100	36	444	5.96
Full-time or part-time weeks worked in 2000	**Frequency**	**Percent**	37	148	1.98
Did not work	1037	13.93	38	148	1.99
Worked mainly full-time in 2000	4815	64.66	39	333	4.47
Worked mainly part-time in 2000	1595	21.41	40	111	1.49
Total	7447	100	41	258	3.47
Mother Tongue	**Frequency**	**Percent**	42	185	2.49
Other Mother Tongue	3559	47.79	43	333	4.47
Portuguese Mother Tongue	3888	52.21	44	74	1.00
Total	7447	100	45	148	1.98
Knowledge of Portuguese	**Frequency**	**Percent**	46	74	0.99
No knowledge of Portuguese	2965	39.82	47	111	1.49
Portuguese known	4482	60.18	48	221	2.97
Total	7447	100	49	37	0.50
			Total	7447	100

Income	Frequency	Percent	Income	Frequency	Percent
0	1334	17.91	21	74	1.00
0.012	37	0.50	22.381	37	0.50
0.197	37	0.50	23	37	0.50
0.244	37	0.50	24	185	2.49
0.5	37	0.50	25	223	2.99
0.6	37	0.50	26	111	1.49
0.982	37	0.50	27	37	0.50
1	74	0.99	28	74	1.00
1.4	37	0.50	28.059	37	0.49
1.8	74	1.00	28.234	37	0.50
1.844	37	0.50	29	74	0.99
3	74	1.00	29.8	37	0.50
3.524	37	0.50	29.9	37	0.50
3.569	37	0.50	30	222	2.98
4	37	0.50	30.853	37	0.50
4.267	37	0.50	31	37	0.50
4.473	37	0.50	31.2	37	0.50
4.5	74	1.00	32	74	1.00
5	37	0.50	32.5	37	0.50
5.619	37	0.50	33	37	0.50
6	37	0.50	33.385	37	0.50
7.2	37	0.50	35	259	3.48
7.576	37	0.50	35.16	37	0.50
7.613	37	0.50	35.846	37	0.50
7.68	37	0.50	36	37	0.50
8	111	1.50	37	74	0.99
8.647	37	0.50	38	74	1.00
8.749	37	0.50	38.9	37	0.50
9	37	0.50	39	37	0.50
9.134	37	0.50	39.869	37	0.50
9.5	37	0.50	40	148	1.99
9.52	37	0.50	40.714	37	0.50
10	111	1.49	41.826	37	0.50
11.6	37	0.50	42.155	37	0.50
11.62	37	0.50	42.934	37	0.50
12	37	0.50	44	37	0.50
12.459	37	0.50	46	74	1.00
12.74	37	0.50	47	148	1.98
12.815	37	0.50	50	148	1.98
14	186	2.49	51	37	0.50
15	148	1.99	51.747	37	0.49
15.342	37	0.50	52	37	0.50
16	74	1.00	53	37	0.50
17	37	0.50	57	37	0.50
17.519	37	0.50	57.5	37	0.50
17.767	37	0.50	60	37	0.50
18	222	2.99	65	74	0.99
19	37	0.50	76.527	37	0.50
19.14	37	0.50	80	37	0.50
20	111	1.49	81	37	0.50
20.548	37	0.50	95.316	37	0.50
20.666	37	0.50	170	37	0.50
			Total	7447	100

Appendix B – Description Statistics of Focus Group Participants

<table>
<tr><td colspan="11">Focus Group 1</td></tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Brothers</td>
<td>Sisters</td>
<td colspan="2">Did any of your siblings attend post-secondary?</td>
<td>Municipality where attended high school</td>
<td>Graduate (Y/N)</td>
<td colspan="2">Parental Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Trades School/College</td>
<td>University</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Father - High school</td>
<td>Mother - High school</td>
</tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td>28</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>0</td><td>Vancouver, BC</td><td>Y</td><td>Y</td><td>N</td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td>23</td><td>1</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>0</td><td>Cariboo, BC</td><td>Y</td><td>Y</td><td>Y</td></tr>
<tr><td>3</td><td>52</td><td>5</td><td>1</td><td>1</td><td>0</td><td>Montalegre, Portugal</td><td>Y</td><td>N</td><td>N</td></tr>
<tr><td>4</td><td>28</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>0</td><td>0</td><td>Vancouver, BC</td><td>Y</td><td>N</td><td>N</td></tr>
<tr><td>5</td><td>30</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>Vancouver, BC</td><td>Y</td><td>N</td><td>N</td></tr>
<tr><td>6</td><td>31</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>0</td><td>0</td><td>Burnaby, BC</td><td>Y</td><td>Y</td><td>Y</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><td colspan="11">Focus Group 2</td></tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Brothers</td>
<td>Sisters</td>
<td colspan="2">Did any of your siblings attend post-secondary?</td>
<td>Municipality where attended high school</td>
<td>Graduate (Y/N)</td>
<td colspan="2">Parental Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Trades School/College</td>
<td>University</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Father - High school</td>
<td>Mother - High school</td>
</tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td>26</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>Vancouver, BC</td><td>Y</td><td>N</td><td>N</td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td>28</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>Vancouver, BC</td><td>Y</td><td>Y</td><td>N</td></tr>
<tr><td>3</td><td>32</td><td>2</td><td>0</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>Burnaby, BC</td><td>Y</td><td>Y</td><td>N</td></tr>
<tr><td>4</td><td>30</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>Vancouver, BC</td><td>Y</td><td>N</td><td>N</td></tr>
</table>

Appendix C – Correlation Coefficients

Variables	Constant	Two Maintainers	Three or more maintainers	Age	Gender	US	Europe	Asia	Other countries and regions	2nd generation: one parent born outside Canada	2nd generation: both parents born outside Canada	3rd generation and over	Worked mainly full-time in 2000	Worked mainly part-time in 2000	Wages and Salaries	Mother Tongue Portuguese	Portuguese Known
Constant	1.000	-0.026	-0.067	-0.420	-0.243	-0.303	-0.760	-0.686	-0.248	-0.313	-0.150	-0.043	0.000	-0.690	0.000	-0.648	0.152
Two Maintainers	-0.026	1.000	0.214	0.058	0.063	0.023	-0.092	-0.068	-0.287	-0.242	0.117	-0.129	0.000	-0.081	0.000	-0.028	0.030
Three or more maintainers	-0.067	0.214	1.000	-0.012	-0.125	-0.141	-0.053	0.039	0.018	0.028	-0.008	-0.045	0.000	0.062	0.000	0.070	0.063
Age	-0.420	0.058	-0.012	1.000	0.133	0.468	0.030	-0.111	0.052	0.006	-0.013	-0.079	0.000	-0.174	0.000	-0.166	-0.262
Gender	-0.243	0.063	-0.125	0.133	1.000	0.135	0.048	0.072	0.015	0.097	0.187	-0.036	0.000	0.029	0.000	0.028	-0.243
US	-0.303	0.023	-0.141	0.468	0.135	1.000	0.169	0.052	0.081	-0.015	0.288	0.029	0.000	-0.197	0.000	-0.043	-0.202
Europe	-0.760	-0.092	-0.053	0.030	0.048	0.169	1.000	0.717	0.149	0.183	0.166	0.135	0.000	0.697	0.000	0.691	-0.026
Asia	-0.686	-0.068	0.039	-0.111	0.072	0.052	0.717	1.000	0.009	0.058	0.134	0.111	0.000	0.771	0.000	0.737	0.023
Other countries and regions	-0.248	-0.287	0.018	0.052	0.015	0.081	0.149	0.009	1.000	0.624	0.002	-0.006	0.000	0.044	0.000	0.031	-0.503
2nd generation: one parent born outside Canada	-0.313	-0.242	0.028	0.006	0.097	-0.015	0.183	0.058	0.624	1.000	0.021	-0.026	0.000	0.179	0.000	0.064	-0.178
2nd generation: both parents born outside Canada	-0.150	0.117	-0.008	-0.013	0.187	0.288	0.166	0.134	0.002	0.021	1.000	-0.356	0.000	-0.096	0.000	0.104	-0.111
3rd generation and over	-0.043	-0.129	-0.045	-0.079	-0.036	0.029	0.135	0.111	-0.006	-0.026	-0.356	1.000	0.000	-0.097	0.000	0.103	0.045
Worked mainly full-time in 2000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Worked mainly part-time in 2000	-0.690	-0.081	0.062	-0.174	0.029	-0.197	0.697	0.771	0.044	0.179	-0.096	-0.097	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.772	0.042
Wages and Salaries	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000
Mother Tongue Portuguese	-0.648	-0.028	0.070	-0.166	0.028	-0.043	0.691	0.737	0.031	0.064	0.104	0.103	0.000	0.772	0.000	1.000	0.058
Portuguese Known	0.152	0.030	0.063	-0.262	-0.243	-0.202	-0.026	0.023	-0.503	-0.178	-0.111	0.045	0.000	0.042	0.000	0.058	1.000

Appendix D – Concentrations of Portuguese in Vancouver by Census Tract
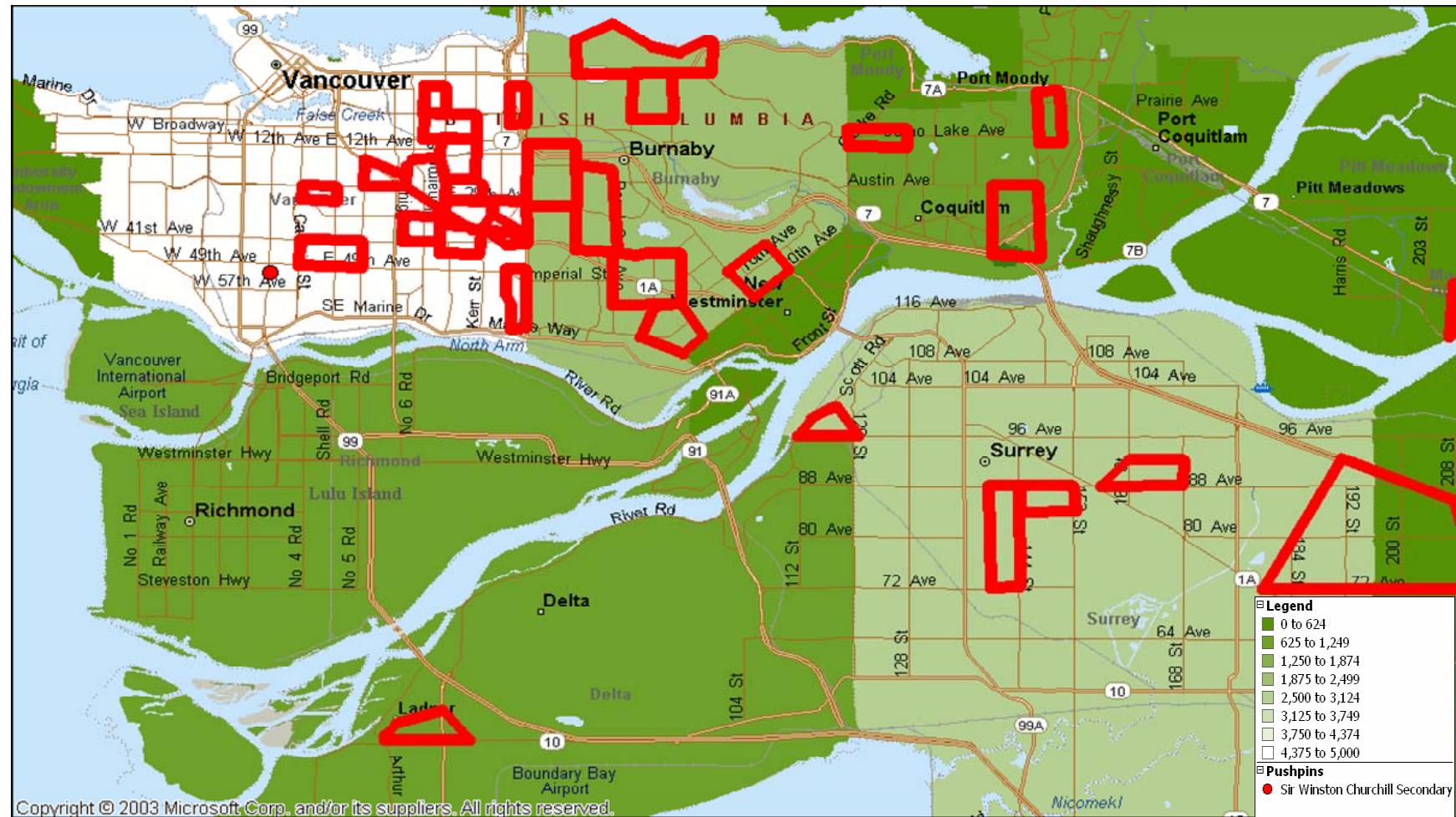
Concentration of Portuguese in a Census tract is any census tract with more than 100 Portuguese.

Appendix E – Costing Assumptions

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Cost Assumptions</th></tr>
<tr><th>Program</th><th>Assumptions</th></tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Infrastructure Programs</td>
<td>

- Increase in scholarship donations, between $2,000 to $3,000 per year
- Events for youth group, particularly payment for meeting areas
- Assume that organisations remain volunteer based
- Ministry of Education's opportunity cost of negotiating with organisations between $20,000 to $25,000

</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutoring Program</td>
<td>

- Assume the program is run by volunteer organisations
- Start with 30 tutors
- Earn wage between $15 to $17.50 per hour
- Work an average of about 8-12 hours per week throughout the school year

</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase Access to Portuguese Language Training</td>
<td>

- Low cost because the infrastructure is already present
- Ministry can track Portuguese-Canadians by Census, but also collect this data through schools (the Ministry can use either of these sources)

</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Days</td>
<td>

- Estimate cost of a tax credit to the Ministry of Finance
- Cost estimate developed in consultation with Certified Accountant Paulo Santos, BDO Dunwoody.

</td>
</tr>
</table>

Cost Assumptions	
Increase Training and Apprenticeship Programs	- Cost estimate derived from SkillsNow! Policy (Lackey, 2004) - Policy developed with current infrastructure through Industry Training Authority - As such, inflation and start-up costs are not taken into account, since these would both account for a relatively small proportion of costs with the infrastructure in place

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