Analysis of Companies’ Attitudes Towards Recruitment of Skilled Refugees in Finland

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Abstract

Migratory flows have escalated especially during the past year. In general, the current refugee crisis has formulated both negative and positive stances towards refugees. In consequence of various perspectives, it was seen relevant to spread awareness of the skilled refugees as potential workforce. Subsequently, this thesis concentrates on analysing companies' attitudes of skilled refugees’ employment in Finland. In relation to a recent German study, reflections towards refugees' employment are made.

The attitudinal scope of this thesis refers to the complexity of the topic. Companies' stances were examined by setting 'bipolar attitude pairs' to enable thematic analysis. The key findings suggest a strong indication to openness towards hiring skilled refugees. However, the results demonstrate a solid correlation with criticality in regard to the plausibility of skills. Facilitating employment of skilled refugees are not seen as a top priority for most of the companies, partially due to lacking multicultural work communities and the experience of hiring foreigners in Finland.

Keywords: attitude, company, employment, Finland, qualitative, recruitment, refugee, skilled, system 1 thinking, system 2 thinking.
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Thank you all!

In Uppsala on 26th of May 2016.

Sincerely,

Suvi Aaltonen Elina Rekilä

[Signatures]
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1. Introduction

1.1 Short Background Overview
Migratory flows have been evident for decades. Yet, in the past year the number of people seeking asylum in Europe has drastically increased by the thousands (IMF, 2016; The Finnish Immigration Service, 2016b; Wagstyl, 2015). The recent refugee crisis is a complicated issue to manage. Wagstyl (2015) argues that the flow of refugees is uncontrolled, whereas Vecchio (2016) claims refugees to deliver significant economic benefits to the country's economy. Consequently, the public's attitude towards the new demographic change seems to vary and often the opinions towards refugees receive a negative connotation (Vecchio, 2016). The negative projection of attitudes may cause tenuous employment opportunities.

Due to the recent demographic development, research regarding companies’ attitudes towards refugees' employment in Finland has not yet been carried out in depth. The employment issues of refugees have been researched in Germany by Battisti et al. (2015). Naturally, social, economic and political conditions are different between Germany and Finland. This thesis ought to broaden the Finnish perspectives towards seeing skilled refugees as a potential workforce. For this purpose, the study made by Battisti et al. (2015) is a great inspirational source to examine the situation in Finland. Battisti et al.'s (2015) results indicate that only a minority of the companies who participated in the survey could imagine hiring refugees as skilled workers and only a marginal minority saw potential in refugees for leadership positions. However, a greater minority would consider taking refugees for Traineeships and nearly a half as unskilled labour force. In addition, language barriers were considered as the main obstacles for employment. Similarly, the lack of other relevant qualifications and labour law requirements, as well as the law for minimum wages in Germany were found to be major hindrances for employing refugees.

The increase in multiculturalism within society brings with it an uncertainty, which leads to a grey area in companies’ attitude formations and decision making. Thus, the employment of skilled refugees may be a controversial issue within the society, and it
certainly brings vivid impressions to this thesis. Nevertheless, the complete utilization of refugees' skills is yet to be discovered.

1.2. Research Question
The authors seek to understand companies' perceptions when hiring skilled refugees in Finland. When referring to factors in the research question, the authors want to explore more about the impressions, social pressure, stimulus, and values that form attitudes towards employing skilled refugees. The research question examines:

*How do factors influence the recruitment process, when companies consider employing skilled refugees in Finland?*

1.3 Problem Statement
The increase of asylum seekers in Finland has escalated IMF's (2016) expectations of public spending to boost up the domestic demand and GDP. The overall economic impact is estimated to depend on the integration of refugees within the Finnish labour market (Ibid). The growth in public spending is likely to create new vacancies, where the newcomers’ skills can complement those of the native labour force. The unemployment percentage in Finland grew in 2015 up to 9,4% whereas it was 8,7% in 2014 (Statistic Finland, 2016). Contrastingely, ‘rootlessness’ can be argued to foster a higher chance of disconnecting foreigners from the society if the actions towards enhancing integration do not meet the current demands (Confederation of Finnish Industries, 2016). Rootlessness is already seen within second-generation immigrants, whose parents have arrived to Finland as refugees and these people have difficulties integrating into Finnish society (Ibid). Particularly, employing refugees against the unemployed Finnish population can be questioned. It is left to be discovered whether Finland can economically endure, or will Finland collapse into the EU's economic burden.

1.4 Research Purpose
The refugee situation is on-going and changes continually. This topic was chosen due to its contemporary nature. Societies are influenced by the mass inflow of asylum seekers in Europe, and Finland especially. Finland was prepared to take in approximately 3 000 asylum seekers, however in 2015 about 32 000 asylum seekers arrived to the country (Ministry of Interior, 2016). Comparable amounts of asylum seekers are expected to
arrive in 2016 (Ministry of Interior, 2016). Therefore, Finland has limited time to make resource amendments to improve the situation (Sitra, 2016). The majority of the asylum seekers in 2015 were men, whereas the minority were women (The Finnish Immigration Service, 2016c).

The purpose of this study is to compose reflections and analysis of the companies’ attitudes when employing skilled refugees by interviewing company informants about their views on this particular matter. In order to gain a thorough understanding about the employment of refugees, the authors of this thesis will make reflections towards immigration, as it has been researched to a greater extent. Evident from the outcome of this research, approximately half of the interviewed companies have experience of employing immigrants, yet indications of timid perspectives towards hiring skilled refugees were demonstrated.

In aspiration for meeting the research purpose, the authors of this thesis aim to engage by spreading awareness of the refugee crisis. This would require companies to see the situation from a wider perspective and take a more active role in the employment of skilled refugees. In order to receive a public good in both social and economic terms, employing refugees would not only benefit the society and the skilled refugees themselves, but simultaneously the companies could attain a competitive advantage. Thus, bilateral interests of both refugees and companies can be achieved.
2. Theory

The following chapter presents the theoretical framework of this thesis. First of all, guidance to the terminology applied in this thesis is provided in section 2.1. Further, the study conducted in Germany by Battisti et al. (2015) is explained more in depth in section 2.2. The relevant factors employed is discussed in section 2.3, whereas influence of system one and two thinking is expressed in section 2.4. Next, section 2.5 has elaborated the attitudes towards the employment of skilled refugees, which is followed by the principles and latitudes of employment. Finally, the theoretical framework is summarised in section 2.6.

In order to gain a better comprehension of the theoretical approach of this thesis, the Figure 1 demonstrates the concepts handled in the theoretical framework. When considering the research question, the factors this thesis focus on are: stimulus, impressions, values, and social pressure, which form attitudes towards hiring skilled refugees with the influence of system one and two thinking. To demonstrate events, experiences, motivation and stereotyping have a partial effect in shaping recruiters' perspectives. The attitude formation is eventually assumed to lead to one of the latitudes of acceptance (1), non-commitment (2) or rejection (3) introduced by Sherif et al. (1965), which may influence companies' stances towards the employment of skilled refugees. Feedback is present throughout the model, as an informative source enabling to achieve and form improvements based on corrective modelling (Wood & Bandura, 1989). However, it is important to notice that the actual decision of employment is not considered for this thesis.
Figure 1: Theoretical Framework.
2.1 Definition of Terms
In order to clarify key terms applied in this thesis, *asylum seeker* stands for a person seeking protection in a foreign state under the asylum procedure (The Finnish Immigration Service, 2016a). *Refugee*, on the other hand is defined as a foreign national who is persecuted for reasons of ethnic origin, religion, nationality or membership in particular social groups or political opinions (Ibid). Refugee status is granted to a person who has received an asylum (Ibid). *Reception Centre* is a faculty of accommodation where asylum seekers apply for international protection and beneficiaries of temporary protection (Ibid).

*Skilled refugees* can be distinguished by two concepts of novice and expert. According to Dreyfus and Dreyfus (2005), novice is given tasks in a context-free environment to practice features of the desired skills, whereas an expert is a proficient performer with the knowledge of procedures and execution. Länsisalmi et al. (2004) agree with previous statements where competence is seen as a result of the acquired knowledge and experience. Being skilful is widely interpreted as a perception of one's professional skills, which tend to develop over time. Lastly, Dreyfus and Dreyfus (2005) add that intuition is a fundamental aspect of expertise.

2.2 German Study
It is important to take into consideration that recently a similar study has been conducted in Germany by Battisti et al. (2015) from Ifo Institute, University of Munich. Battisti et al. (2015) carried out their research as a survey, in which 3148 companies from various industries participated. Battisti et al. (2015) pursued to answer two themes: in which forms can companies introduce employment activities for refugees and how do the companies assess the importance of certain hindrances of placing refugees at work. Thus, the interest was raised to examine the matter in Finland. One of the co-writers of Battisti et al. (2015), Professor Poutvaara suggested some topics for this thesis to explore.

According to the German study and further enquiry from the Poutvaara (2016), the challenge for refugees is to meet the language and educational standards. Although similar research has not yet been completed in Finland, it can be assumed, that meeting Finnish educational levels will turn out as a challenge for refugees. Due to the fact that
Statistics Finland (2015) presents the Finnish population to be highly educated, as a majority (70%) of the population aged 15 or over had completed a post-comprehensive level qualification (Statistics Finland, 2015).

2.3 Relevant Factors
2.3.1 Stimulus

The refugee crisis raises both positive and negative opinions among society towards refugees. However, diverse views and perspectives are key to communication between different stakeholder groups to facilitate information flow, experience and knowledge in order to make good decisions (Altinay & Okumus, 2010) in general. For companies, the challenge is to ensure employee's skills and know-how to be matched in accordance with utilization for ensuring innovation (Länsisalmi et al., 2004). Particularly, some scholars (O’Mahoney 2010, p. 237; Werr & Stjernberg, 2003) argue knowledge-intensiveness to be often considered as the core capability of companies’ competence and resource. In order to choose a suitable candidate, strategic planning is required (Marescaux et al., 2013) to evaluate candidate's characteristics, personality, values and qualifications (Pickens 2005, p. 67-68; Schlenker & Weigold, 1992). With attention to match the candidate and the company culture (Pickens 2005, p. 67).

Viitala (2007, p. 308) mentions multicultural workplaces to be more innovative based on diverse knowledge and skills of employees. In contrast, Länsisalmi et al. (2004) argue the general barrier of innovation to be the attitudinal obstacle presented as resistance to change. However, trust is argued to be a crucial factor in communication. Lack of trust can be argued to be a reason for being insecurity (Sharma et al., 2012). Simultaneously, Sieger et al. (2013) point out the so called problems which arise from incongruent interests of the employer and worker, where individual tendency is opportunistic, self-interested, risk averse and limited by bounded rationality. Such misalignments of interests or lack of trust lead to goal conflicts and simultaneously the worker’s behaviour deviates from the employer’s desires (Sieger et al., 2013). Globalization has enabled rapid communication flow, however, Viitala (2007, p. 309) claims prejudice towards multiculturalism to remain unaltered in Finland. In summary, the right alignment of knowledge and skills affect the company's core capabilities. Multiculturalism and
diversity in the workplace can boost innovativeness, thus there needs to be fluent communication and trust among the colleagues.

2.3.2 Impressions

Representative heuristics may represent one of the factors companies in Finland consider when employing skilled refugees and it may be influential in encoding messages. The representative heuristics becomes visual when people look for traits in individuals that correspond with previously formed stereotypes (i.e. the mass flow of asylum seekers to Finland). Stereotyping may provide overly generalized views of individuals or groups exerting from covert and strong influence in human behaviour (Pickens 2005, p. 62). More specifically, the recruiter should avoid generalizations based on groups and instead focus on individuals. Bazerman and Moore (2012, p. 8) note representative heuristics to offer a good first impression, drawing decision-makers attention to favourable options. Representative heuristics may lead to serious errors. Having various perspectives to weight options is necessary, instead of blindly assuming a situation to be as first considered (Harrison & March, 1984; March, 1991). On the other hand, representative heuristics work also on an unconscious level, causing for example race discrimination or other behavioural engagement otherwise considered morally reprehensible on a conscious level (Bazerman & Moore 2012, p. 9).

Basing choice of recruitment on subjective impressions is likely. Factors motivating the decision-makers’ perceptions are self-glorification (self-esteem maintenance & enhancement), self-consistency (validating the self by confirming self-beliefs) and self-authentication (learning the truth of individual by pursuing diagnostic information) according to Schlenker and Weigold (1992). In other words, first impressions of the candidates (skilled refugees) outline an image, which may influence the actual decision-making of whether the candidate is suitable for the vacancy at hand. Naturally, job seekers aim to construct a positive self-impression of themselves by controlling the information recruiters receive by means of impression management. Both deliberately and unconsciously, this actively used phenomenon bolsters or protects the self-image, which can either give a truthful image or exaggerate applicants’ competence (Ibid).
2.3.3 Values

Affective organizational commitment can be initiated by the treatment of companies’ employees or by the emotional result of judging a more favourable outcome from an employees’ perspective (Marescaux et al., 2013). Integration of values often correlates with salient beliefs (Bassili & Brown 2005, p. 547-548), where individuals strive to decrease the cognitive dissonance by eliminating the inconsistency that causes discomfort between their beliefs and the actual behaviour (Pickens 2005, p. 45).

Managers can underemphasise the importance for entry-level candidates concerning certain traits or competencies (Lange & Houran, 2009). When considering skilled refugees applying for vacancies in Finland, equality as a central value should be emphasised instead of endorsing one's beliefs. Therefore, employees' skills should be utilized to its' full potential to avoid brain waste (Mattoo et al., 2008). This means that employees have more skills than required in the position applied, however they do not get to utilize them. In general, equality has various societal levels of interpretations, which discuss the equality of basic liberties and opportunities. Consequently, Morand and Merriman (2012) believe that “all people are created equal”, which is a central tenet within the Western culture. On the other hand, Bandura (2002) believes humans to have selected learnability and plasticity for adaptive behaviour.

According to Pickens (2005, p. 47) cognitive dissonance theory brings various practical managerial implications to motivate employees and the theoretical basis originates from the equity theories of motivation. Managers’ ethical value orientations, consequentialism and moral awareness in certain situations influence the manner in which the manager will handle the situation (Verbos & Miller, 2015). Individual differences can explain various approaches how situations are perceived and thus the manner in which individuals behave (Bassili & Brown 2005, p. 544-545; Pickens 2005, p. 44). When making moral decisions, the significance of timing is necessary in exploring the role of emotions (Verbos & Miller, 2015). Wistrich et al. (2015) verify that even judges battle between emotional and rational judgements. Meaning that even the smallest thought may trigger emotional responses, which effects decision-making.
All in all, emotional judgement based believes shape the manner in which individuals perceive employment of refugees. However, in regard to the hiring process of skilled refugees, all candidates are equal on societal levels, basic liberties, capabilities and equality of resources. Nevertheless, Verbos and Miller (2015) allude organizational culture to influence manager's behaviour in accordance to the organization's interests. In light of refugee crisis, it can be argued whether anyone can truly make rational decisions. Particularly, organizations' values shape and may influence attitude formation to conform to refugees' manifestation in Finland.

2.3.4 Social Pressure

The worlds' events today influence the issue of distributive justice and the manner in which organizations might implement lawfulness (Morand & Merriman, 2012). The current migration flow affects society and companies to adapt to changes. In general, companies' need to be highly visible with their values, processes, strategies and operations in order for employees to collaborate and work effectively (Tapscott & Ticoll 2012, Chapter 4). Society creates progressively growing pressure towards more sustainable actions, which may affect the recruitment process. Businesses recognize more commonly the need for being responsible to engage in environment and social costs of doing business (Morand & Merriman, 2012).

Due to the lack of research conducted on the employment of skilled refugees, this thesis makes references to immigration. In general, immigrants tend to be disadvantaged in the labour market due to socio-economic differences between poorer and more developed economies (OECD, 2016). Heikkilä (2012) implies immigrants to be often recruited for lower paid occupations. Hence, Dustmann and Preston (2007) argue the economic consequences of immigration to be frequently adjusted according to the changes in economic situations. Immigration can stimulate both local consumption and local demand for labour (IMF, 2016). Balancing the supply and demand caused by the increase in population. Overall, transparency is not only a necessity as an external force, but an essential factor for the company's success.

In brief, the literature on immigration suggests refugees’ employment possibilities to be disadvantaged, even though the demand for labour and local consumption increases.
Businesses have consequently recognized the need for more transparency in terms of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

2.4 System One and Two Thinking

The relevant factors mentioned above are continuously manipulated by the dual-process theory subsystems: system one and two thinking (Bazerman & Moore, 2012; Kahneman, 2003; Wistrich et al., 2015). In accordance with cognitive functioning, the majority of decisions in life are made intuitively by system one thinking, which is automatic, effortless and emotional. Decision-making in system one thinking is often rapid, as emotions can cause immediate ‘snap’ judgements (Bazerman & Moore 2012, p. 10; Wistrich et al., 2015). Conversely, system two thinking is a slower process as decisions are made more logically and its logic should influence the most important decisions (Bazerman & Moore 2012, p. 3). In other words, system one generates ideas which are based on intuition of impressions, whereas judgements are always explicit and intentional (Kahneman, 2003). Hence, all judgements are categorized under system two, the only case when judgements can be related to system one thinking is in accordance to Kahneman (2003), when judgements are directly reflected to impressions.

All in all, system one and two thinking influence first of all the attitude formation of skilled refugees in regard to the above mentioned factors. Secondly, system one and two thinking may raise questions even after the choice has been made, which demonstrates the complexity of intuitive versus rationality of decisions especially in case of employing skilled refugees. Recruiting decisions are generally based on logical reasoning, yet emotional judgements may take lead to prejudice or 'snap' judgements not allowing skilled refugees to continue further in the hiring process.

2.5 Attitudes Towards Employment

Attitude formation is considered in this thesis to build up on the previously mentioned factors of *stimulus, impressions, values* and *social pressure*. Sherif and Sherif (1967, chapter 7) discuss attitude formation, as people tend to form judgements according to the content of messages, which are based on their individual anchors or categories (Sherif et al. 1965, Chapter 4). With this in mind, the term refugee is often immediately categorized and prejudice may be formed. According to Sherif and Sherif (1967, p. 119) ego-
involvement affects the formation of attitudes. This is due to the fact that individuals have commitments and stands that they get aroused by (Sherif et al. 1965, p. 65) like employing refugees. In addition, Pickens (2005, p. 45) proclaims that there is a constant transaction between a person's thoughts, feelings and behaviours towards the physical environment as well as the social surroundings.

Consequently, attitudes are formed through socialization process and it is depended on learning, but it is not innate (Sherif & Sherif 1967, p. 112). Class distinction within society is implied to lack innate learning, due to knowledge shortages, which may cause attitudinal differences between social interactions of various societal classes (Campbell 1967, p.16; Heikkilä, 2012). On the other hand, Dustmann and Preston (2007) believe cultural or racial prejudice to be highly involved in the formation of attitudes, when the concept of immigration is noted. Nevertheless, especially young individuals are exposed to higher probability of adaption levels of stimulus values (Campbell 1967, p.16) from different substantial areas of life such as social growth such as institutions, events, people and the experiences from self and others (Campbell 1967, p. 23; Pickens 2005, p. 56).

In essence, Wistrich et al. (2015) state that people’s attitudes, beliefs and inferential strategies are guided by emotions. People decide based on positive qualities that are in their favour while preventing to create negative associations in the decision-making process. With attention to refugees, decision-making can be strongly influenced by the environment and interactions between situational demands as well as self-referent factors (Wood & Bandura, 1989). The fact that, attitudinal differences especially in reference with age have a great impact reinforcing adaption to the new environment (Finland in this case). Finland has received many young individuals (The Finnish Immigration Service, 2016c), with quicker capability to integrate into the society.

2.5.1 Principles and Latitudes of Employment

The decision-makers referred in this thesis are recruiters from the interviewed companies who are deciding whether or not they regard skilled refugees as potential workforce. However, before continuing to the employment of skilled refugees, basic principles about decision-making ought to be reviewed. In accordance with the standard theories of choice decision for employment is formed according to the knowledge of alternatives (March,
Each decision varies in the alternatives and eventually in the complexity of judgements necessary on the nature of decision rules to be mastered (March, 1991). Moreover, Wood and Bandura (1989) explain one of the complexity aspects to concern number of relevant factors available with a large variety of information that decision-makers form their judgements on. Subsequently, the complexity of decision-making increases between alternatives when coordination's and trade-offs need to be made.

In contrast, March (1991) refers to a pool of alternatives to choose from. According to Harrison and March (1984) these alternatives differ in outcome as the values of alternative choices are not known with certainty, however they can be estimated. To exemplify, estimating the possible outcomes of skilled refugees in a customer service position, differ depending on the customer base. Consequently, when an activity or a situation is believed to exceed one’s coping capabilities, people tend to avoid such instances, however they undertake challenging activities gladly in social environments they believe to be able to cope in (Wood & Bandura, 1989; Brunsson, 1990). Namely, when decision-maker assess potential candidates, Lange and Houran (2009) note theory and practice to be in alignment to avoid mismatch and therefore keep the balance. The characteristics of the job seekers create either positive or negative attitudes and perceptions when decision-maker generates decisions partially based on March's (1991) standard theories of choice. Prior to making the actual decision of employing skilled refugees, the decision-maker ought to formulate a choice of preference.

Scholars (Sherif et al. 1965, p. 130; Sherif & Sherif 1967, p. 113) argue attitudes to be explained by cognitive, motivational-affective and behavioural approaches, which eventually lead to the refugee candidate's acceptance, rejection or non-commitment latitudes. Sherif et al. (1965) define the three stages of decision-making as latitudes. In accordance with Sherif and Sherif (1967, p. 115) latitude of acceptance (1) includes all the perceptions an individual finds acceptable. Latitude of rejection (3) includes the unacceptable ideas, whereas non-commitment (2) includes both the acceptance or rejection latitudes (Ibid) regarding skilled refugees’ integration to the Finnish workforce.

In summary, when a decision-maker forms a relationship based on the system one and two thinking, it is a mixture of the two. Researchers (Sherif et al., 1965; Sherif & Sherif,
point out that people formulate either positive or negative stances i.e. towards the assessed skilled refugee candidates. This is due to the fact that the decision-maker pursues to identify themselves according to their reference group (Sherif & Sherif 1967, p. 113). Thus, the decision towards employment is made with attention to intuitivism but also in regard with rationality of employing skilled refugees.

2.6 Summary of Theory

In pursuance of answering the research question: how do factors influence the recruitment process, when companies consider employing skilled refugees in Finland, the theoretical model (see Figure 1) explains the sequence in which the decision-maker generates a decision regarding the employment of skilled refugees. First of all, everything begins with a stimulus, which concerns the company's desire to gain competitive advantage on their core capabilities of competence and resources, while finding the most suitable candidate for a vacancy. Decision-makers have to also consider the stakeholders’ perspective when searching for the best candidate.

Consequently, representative heuristics and stereotyping are alike, forming initial choice for the recruitment, subjective on impressions based on system one thinking. Yet, in the recruitment process, the decision-maker should have various perspectives to weight the options. Generalizations for certain groups are sometimes made based on the behaviour of one or two individuals. Partially due to social pressure, people do not always behave in a rational manner. System one and system two thinking are set to explain the possible attitudinal differences in people's perspectives. With attention to values demonstrating beliefs in regard of the company culture, all of the four factors mentioned above shape the attitude formation by the creation of individual anchors. It is partially the ego-involvement of the decision-maker that may hamper with the commitments and the stands of both the decision-maker and the refugees to adapt to the new society.

The principles of the standard theory of choice eventually leads to the latitudes of acceptance (1), rejection (3) or non-commitment (2) explaining the decision for employment. The decision for employment includes all the factors. Lastly, two-way feedback follows the actual decision of employment, in order to learn from the previous recruiting mistakes.
3. Methodology

In the following chapter, data collection methods regarding both primary and secondary data sources are presented. This chapter provides information of applied thematic analysis for analysing the data. After, reliability and validity factors among with limitations of the chosen method are discussed.

3.1 Research Design

An exploratory research design was employed in pursuance to identify factors companies in Finland consider when employing skilled refugees. In this thesis, the exploratory study was chosen to obtain comprehensive understanding partially to the unexplored area of research and assess the phenomena in a new light (Saunders et al. 2012, p. 171). In order to combine the theoretical reflections in a way that would best explain the relevant evidence, both deductive and inductive techniques were applied. Thus, following the recommendation of Saunders et al. (2012), abductive approach was conducted in order to interpret the empirical data with the theoretical basis (Saunders et al. 2012, p. 143-149).

To analyse the empirical data, qualitative research design was employed. According to Yin (2011, p. 8) qualitative research enables scholars to cover contextual conditions where people live, thus contributing insights into existing or emerging concepts, which may explain human social behaviour. Therefore, this approach allowed to study the asylum seekers' and refugees' phenomena in Finland with richer understanding of the topic, which is of a current interest. Qualitative standpoint of measuring companies' attitudes towards employment might enumerate complexity as the attitudes have not yet been formed. Notwithstanding to explore the topic at hand, consideration of social constructionism and interpretation of the researches is vital (Saunders et al. 2012, p. 546).

The general outline for this thesis was to gather data in two steps (see section 3.2.1.2). Interview questions were originally build up on the theoretical framework, and after managing couple of interviews, various emerging themes started to rise. Thus, abductive approach lead to thematic analysis, in consideration of addressing not only the content but also the meaning, i.e. emerging themes and core ideas in the text (Saunders et al. 2016, p. 579).
3.1.1 Sampling
Companies' selected for this exploratory study represent various industries in Finland, such as banking, construction, food, hospitality, facility services, manufacturing and telecom. Most interview enquiries were made to known companies, out of which majority of the large companies (75%) declined to give an interview. The data for actual company interviews was collected by employing snowball effect which was employed as many company informants were acquaintances of the thesis authors. In contrast, some companies suggested other companies from various industries to interview.

3.1.2 Operationalization
While the nature of attitudes are psychological constructs the measurement needs to be contextualized in order to analyse informants verbal and non-verbal responses (Yin 2011, p. 20). The first step after gathering enough literature on asylum seekers, immigrants and refugees in Finland, was to start collecting theoretical concepts that would be useful for the study at hand. Simultaneously as processing literature on the topic, background information gathering began for the pilot studies (see section 3.2.1.2). Next, as the interview questions started to form, the company interview questions were created and the method was generated accordingly. Operationalization secures that the research objectives are answered in a way of transforming theoretical constructs into feasible measures (Saunders et al. 2012, p. 563).

The interview questions were set to discover frequency of the four factors mentioned in the theoretical framework, which were chosen to explore: how do factors influence the recruitment process, when companies consider employing skilled refugees in Finland. Stimulus probed the 'big picture' for attitude formation regarding skilled refugees. Secondly, questions that reflected impressions provided more detailed overview of the informants' attitudes towards employing skilled refugees as potential in Finland. On the other hand, values describe the ethicality of the decisions in the companies’ recruitment procedures and social pressure examined whether the informants experience societal pressure in their respective hiring processes of skilled refugees.
3.2 Data Collection Methods

In this thesis, both primary and secondary data collection methods were employed. In order to increase validity, triangulation was applied (Yin 2011, p. 81), as a variety of perspectives were gained by a field study of mapping asylum seekers backgrounds (see section 3.2.1.1) as well as interviewing experts (see section 3.2.1.3) to counterbalance interviews with companies and various individuals. Along with secondary data, primary data collection empowered a wider comprehension how companies in Finland view skilled refugees.

3.2.1 Primary Data

Primary data has been collected through a field study (see section 3.2.1.1) and by conducting 23 semi-structured interviews, out of which 16 were company interviews, three expert interviews and four individual interviews (see section 3.2.1.2). The flexible character of semi-structured interviews allowed to probe questions thereby enabling informants to elaborate their responses (Saunders et al. 2016, p. 408). Semi-structured interviews were seen appropriate as it allowed to explore and acquire vast understanding of informants’ feelings representing data of informants' self-report.

3.2.1.1 Field Study

In relation to the actual data gathering concerning the above mentioned company interviews, the authors of this thesis assisted a non-profit organisation called Startup Refugees by collecting data about asylum seekers backgrounds in Otaniemi Reception Centre. The organisation identifies the asylum seekers' potential and offers development possibilities in order to employ asylum seekers in terms of sponsorships and match-making. Business ideas are shared and actualised by investors and mentoring through the Startup Refugees' network.

Data gathering was conducted to increase the employment possibilities for refugees in Finland. The overall gathering of data from Startup Refugee organization resulted in approximately 1 000 asylum seekers' profiles out of which a slight minority (10%) were considered as skilled asylum seekers. The authors of this thesis collected approximately 110 responses during the three-hour visit in Otaniemi. In particular, asylum seekers were defined as skilled according to factors, which determined individuals' competence:
educational background, work experience, language capabilities and personal motivation. The mapping of refugees’ backgrounds was considered fruitful to find out the amount of actual skilled asylum seekers and eventually the possible refugees in Finland. This action was verified necessary by the authors of this thesis, as in general the Finnish Immigration Service have no record of the education backgrounds of refugees in Finland.

3.2.1.2 Pilot Studies

The two pilot studies were conducted particularly in order to gain deeper insight by various informants' considering the effects of the refugee crisis in the Finnish society. Thus, two different pilot studies were conducted. Step one: individual interviews, enabled the authors of this thesis to understand the refugee situation in Finland more in depth from an asylum seeker, immigrants and a director of a reception centre's perceptions. Step two on the other hand, empowered the authors to finalize the operationalization model (see section 3.1.2 & Appendix 3).

*Step One: Individual Interviews.* Due to the immaturity of research concerning the educational background of the refugees, pilot studies were conducted to gather background information from individuals to examine foreigners' experiences in Finland. Authors of this thesis considered asylum seekers and refugees’ likelihood of experiencing similar cultural impediments as the individuals elaborated. These interviews allowed to format the interview questions, as the authors received new perspectives to the matter at hand. The authors of this thesis interviewed Aaltje Bos (1), an immigrant from the Netherlands who had moved to Finland with family and later has researched and lectured newcomers about finding work in Finland. Osama Al-Ogaili (2), a skilled asylum seeker and entrepreneur, was interviewed via phone to gain better understanding as to whether refugees have the potential to work in Finland. Al-Ogaili has established a voluntary organization in cooperation with Red Cross to provide some activities for the asylum seekers and refugees to spend their time more actively.

Nafisa Yeasmin (3), Arctic Doctoral Programme ARKTIS, originally arrived to Finland as an immigrant, after settling in with her family Yeasmin started working actively researching immigration. Yeasmin is part of a project pursuing to employ protractedly unemployed immigrants. On the other hand, key person Ilkka Peura (4), Lieutenant
Colonel retired and the Director of Kauhava Reception Centre provided a brief introduction to their actions to create co-operative activities for the asylum seekers by establishing own bakery and rug factory, thus enabling better integration with employment opportunities.

**Step Two: Recognition of Emerging Themes.** The authors of this thesis drew ideas for the possible emerging themes after holding the first company interviews. In step two, two out of four emerging themes started to formulate after the step one was conducted. Firstly, the societal perspective was centralized as the lack of companies' "internationality" was questioned within the individual interviews. This lead to the occurrence of CSR (1) to be one of the emerging themes, as the authors of this thesis were intrigued to confirm, whether companies only aim is to promote themselves to be international, but they do not want to be international in reality. Further, plausibility of skills (4) occurred as the individual's indicated the locals in Finland to have doubts towards the skills of newcomers, which was also confirmed in the first company interviews. The other two emerging themes of commitment (2) and equality (3), were confirmed later during the company interviews. In conclusion, the pilot studies lead the authors of this thesis to gain broader perspectives for the study at hand.

**3.2.1.3 Expert Interviews**

Expert interviews were conducted to gain better comprehension to the employment of skilled refugees. Two governmental organizations were interviewed, one of these was Confederation of Finnish Industries, a leading business organization in Finland which represents the entire private sector as well as all company sizes. The other interviewed governmental organisation was Sitra, which operates under the supervision of the Finnish Parliament. These interviews were considered as significant information providers for this thesis, since they discuss the general perspective of Finland's situation regarding asylum seekers and refugees.

Panu Poutvaara, a Professor in University Munich and a Director of Ifo Centre for International Institutional Comparisons and Migration Research, is one of the writers of the German study (Battisti et al., 2015). Therefore, Professor Poutvaara is considered as an expert, as he provided more insight regarding the work of Battisti et al. (2015), which
was also used as an inspirational source for conducting this thesis (see section 1.1). Professor Poutvaara also suggested some interesting facts to be asked in the company interviews.

3.2.1.4 Company Interviews

The 16 semi-structured company interviews (see Appendix 2) enabled to observe the phenomena of attitude formation in greater depth. The length of the interviews varied from 30 to 45 minutes. The interview questions were set up in advance and anonymity was offered to all informants. Further, companies were informed that taking part in this study does not require any previous experience of hiring refugees. The interviews were held in Finnish, assuming company informants to provide higher quality of answers in their mother tongue. Due to geographical distance between Sweden and Finland, the interviews were held via video conferencing providers: Lync, WebEx and Skype. The interviews were recorded with the permission of the informants and were subsequently translated transcribed and from Finnish into English.

The questions for the semi-structured company interviews were set to investigate the companies’ attitudes towards employing refugees. The authors of this thesis interviewed Executives, HR personnel or Founders of the companies who all have significant role in workforce planning, hence preventing miscommunication.

3.2.2 Secondary Data

The German study was considered highly relevant secondary source for this thesis in order to explore to some extent, whether Finland has corresponding results with Germany. In spite of the varying conditions of Finland and Germany, the research approaches were different. However, as neither one of the thesis writers were native German speakers, interpretation of the Battisti et al.’s (2015) research was verified by native speakers. That study was considered the only recent and relevant in connection to the purpose of this thesis which gave support and shaped the formation of primary data. In addition, official statistics, publications by Statistics Finland and The Finnish Immigration Service were considered highly relevant to the research purpose due to the fact that these sources were recently published in 2015 and 2016 and easily accessible online.
3.3 Data Analysis Method

The qualitative data was analysed through thematic analysis to assess whether or not skilled refugees were seen as potential workforce by the companies’ interviewed. According to Saunders et al. (2016, p. 579), thematic analysis enables researchers to search for themes or patterns deriving from human attitudes and action. By analysing the interviews with thematic analysis, the qualitative data can be coded to symbolise or summarise the meaning (Ibid, p. 580) and for instance, reveal the strength of the opinion (Ibid, p. 583).

Thematic analysis enabled to identify attitudes (see Figure 2) which allowed the authors to evaluate the companies’ stances, to demonstrate the factors that go into each attitude category. Based on the attitude categories, the best suitable attitude was chosen in reference to the informants’ responses. The nodes were selected according to the emotion that best described the informants' feelings (arrogant, praising, impetuous, rational, critical and open) in the interviews. The feeling was transmitted through the informants' tone and the words the informant used to describe his or her answers. The actual analysis is grounded on the three categories of attitudes (see Figure 2), which can be multiple times present per question. Further, as mentioned before in section 3.2.1.3, company interviews were transcribed and thoroughly analysed based on the attitude categories. Each attitude category was established by using quantitative approach of counting the words that transmitted a specific feeling and summing the total words of the transmitted feeling of response. The thematic analysis was used to calculate the medium of companies' attitudes (arrogance vs. praising, impetuous vs. rationality, critical vs. open) during the interviews'. Within the formula below, x is the amount of words divided by y, the total count of words. After this, the percentage of each question was calculated accordingly:

\[
\text{Formula: } \frac{x}{y} = \text{percentage (\%)}
\]

Partial quantitative approach was seen necessary to report the attitudes of the interviews. Yin (2011, p. 150-151) argues feelings to be complex to record, therefore it is vital to
note specific behaviour, condition and event accounted for the occurred feeling. This enables the chance to collect other data regarding similar events, behaviour or conditions (Ibid). Hence, the word count of the transcribed interviews' attitudes was seen essential in order to report the companies' stances towards the interview questions. Consequently, Appendix four presents not applicable, low, intermediate and high attitudes recorded from the interviews based on each interview question.

3.4 Reliability and Validity

Interviewing company informants in a qualitative, semi-structured manner may turn out to provide socially desired responses (Saunders et al. 2012, p. 383-384). Due to the limited sample size, accomplishing high level of external validity in qualitative research is challenging (Bryman & Bell 2015, p. 410). Nevertheless, the sample provided the possibility to make important reflections of companies' attitudes towards skilled refugees. Further, companies may be sensitive towards providing reliable data concerning the employment of skilled refugees, due to unstructured exploration of the theme (Saunders et al. 2016, p. 397) in Finland. Also, companies may not have discussed their alignment towards the refugee crisis.

In order to make the chosen sample of companies more reliable, the company informants were either Executives, HR personnel or Founders of the companies. The quotes of the company informants have been equally distributed according to the interview protocol (IP1-IP16) in a random order to ensure the anonymity (see Appendix 2). In addition, Saunders et al. (2016, p. 399-400) mention the interviewer bias and interviewee response bias to effect validity and reliability, which need to be taken into consideration. Interview questions were sent to companies in advance and this gave the informants time to prepare their answer, which may have increased bias of the responses. Yin (2011, p. 19) suggests enabling scholars and individuals with interest to the subject at hand to scrutinize the work in order to increase validity.

In qualitative research, replicating the similar social situations and setting in its' absolute terms is impossible (Bryman & Bell 2015, p. 410). Therefore, lack of standardization may create concerns of reliability (Saunders et al. 2016, p. 397-399). On one hand, internal reliability can somewhat be met according to the assumptions the observers make
from what is seen and heard during the data gathering (Bryman & Bell 2015, p. 410). On the other hand, internal reliability was met as the authors' of this thesis drew their own conclusions first, before discussing the emerging themes and results. This may have hampered the interpretations of the interviews when analysing the responses. To exemplify, informants' stances of arrogance and criticality often turned out to be very similar in terms of analysing the data. Therefore, the interpretation of such similarities may have caused the low interpretations of arrogance throughout the interviews.

3.5 Limitations

Limitations of this thesis include time and resource constraints concerning data gathering and interpretation constrains concerning the analysis of the data. First of all, the refugee circumstances change constantly and different contexts and situations may influence the attitude formation towards the refugee crisis. The interviews were held during a four to six weeks’ time span, thus the companies' attitudes may have been reformulated during the data gathering period. Secondly, due to geographical distance between Sweden and Finland, interviews were organised through video conferences or via phone. Yet, facial expressions of the informants were not observed as in face-to-face interviews.

This leads to third limitation of ensuring correct interpretations of the interviews. It was a challenge for the authors of this thesis to interpret the tones and chosen words in a manner that best described the companies' views. Sometimes the interviews exposed informants' responses under two or three different attitude nodes (see Figure 2). Thus, the focus was on the tone of the informants' voice, such as enthusiasm or hesitation. The four emerging themes (see Appendix 4) sometimes intervened with the original operationalization concept (see Appendix 3). This meant, that the interviewees mentioned a particular emerging theme multiple times during the interview which lead the authors to re-code the material in an abductive manner.

Consequently, the process may have affected the formulation of the results and analysis. Even though, the response rate (80%) was beyond satisfactory, yet there could have been more company interviews and a larger variety of industries among the companies. Its' also important to mention, that the qualitative method has its' limitations as the main findings correlate the viewpoints of a limited amount of companies, thus generalisations
of this study for the complete Finnish population cannot be naturally drawn. Concluding, the qualitative data gathering and the data analysis does not enable the authors of this thesis to determine explicit results, even though the main findings aim to take equal stances regarding various standpoints of the informants'.
4. Results

In this chapter the results of the qualitative data are presented in pursuance to answer the research question: *how do factors influence the recruitment process, when companies consider employing skilled refugees in Finland?* Altogether, 51 companies, experts and individuals were contacted and the response rate was 80%. Almost half (45%) of the contacted companies provided interviews and referred to the topic being contemporary as well as interesting. Hence, a clear minority (20%) of the contacted companies did not reply at all to the interview requests.

4.1 Field Study

Regarding the visit to Otaniemi Reception Centre, the authors of this thesis assisted asylum seekers to fill out their competence profiles to the Startup Refugees' online platform. During this process, the asylum seekers' competence was observed in pursuance of determining their backgrounds, i.e. skills and education. Observations indicated low educational levels of the asylum seekers, as the majority did not pose a post-comprehensive level of education. However, learning through experience was detected among active mind-sets with towards entrepreneurship.

The interviews pointed out that the Finnish habits for branding self, demands more effort for the asylum seekers than they may be used to. In this respect, refugees' cultural differences might hinder the employment process in Finland. The particular matter was noticed when the asylum seekers were asked why they should be employed instead of someone else. Many of the asylum seekers stated that they have never had to apply for work in their respective home countries in a same way as it would be demanded in Finland without having one's personal network present. Establishing employment relationship with companies in Finland demands more work for the asylum seekers. Contrastingly, a few companies expressed the importance of self-initiative:

"I think everything starts from the personality, in case you're active, you'll win the people to your side" (IP_{16}).

4.2. Relevant Factors

The main findings of *stimulus, impressions, values* and *social pressure* were considered as the main factors of shaping *attitudes* towards employment of skilled refugees. The
overall attitudes towards employment of skilled refugees is indicated in Appendix 4, where the interview questions are organised according to emerging themes: CSR (1), commitment (2), equality (3) and plausibility of skills (4). In this thesis, majority refers to at least a half of the informants. Contrastingly, the term minority invokes less than a half of the informants to have a certain stance. All of the company informants had a major role in the recruiting process, where they possessed either Executive-, HR- or Founders-role in the companies.

4.2.1 Stimulus

*Stimulus* revealed that the refugee crisis has not affected the majority of the companies. Minority stated that the refugee crisis has positively affected their business mainly in terms of increasing their customer base. When discussing their stakeholder relations, majority of the informants did not see in which way, the refugee crisis could have affected their business. In contrast, marginal minority noted that the situation is only believed to be a positive matter.

A clear majority of the informants made a note that they see skilled refugees as a potential workforce, even though they do not have any previous experience of hiring them. Nevertheless, singular employment relationships with foreigners have been established approximately by half of the companies. Some of the informants specifically stated skilled refugees to be seen as a potential workforce in case they have the right skills for the vacancy at hand. The potentiality of skilled refugees was expressed with a very straightforward manner:

"I see very much potential. Of course there are a variety of different kind of people. For example, we have one Iraqi girl who dreams of her own restaurant in Finland and she is highly educated. So, she will for surely be employed later on. Naturally, there are those too who may not get employed so easily" (IP1).

Thought-provokingly, employing locals in the first place was seen more important by a marginal minority than hiring skilled refugees. Implication of a negative *stimulus* was given accordingly:

“*In the first instance, I'm not terribly worried about the employment of refugees as we have a shocking amount of our own youth without jobs at the moment*” (IP9).

Contrastingly, a positive *stimulus* was given as follows:
"I find it important that the cultural differences are also visible in our working environment as I experience them to be a matter of the heart and a source for great diversity" (IP_{11}).

A minority implied that the skilled refugees must prove their expertise in the labour market more than natives do to accomplish trust with the employer. Some further elaborated by adding, that the refugees' reputation among the Finnish society is not very high. One informant specified the stimulus:

"According to my observation, when one follows the common discussion in Finland, refugees are currently in the ‘lowest stairs’ of the society. Finns are so unaccustomed to this current change that we need to work hard to change this picture as there are several anxieties and fears, both real and imaginary" (IP_{12}).

4.2.2 Impressions

When examining companies’ impressions in consideration of employing skilled refugees, plausibility of skills emerged as a theme. Evidently, a majority of the informants focus mostly on the applicants' competence. In addition, approximately half of the companies emphasised the level of applicants’ education. There was only a minority who specifically stated that they focus on the outlook of CVs or they look for certain keywords from the applications. However, specific skills were not emphasised:

"The same requirements applies for both skilled refugees as to any other: the personal features and personal motivation are vital for acquiring a job" (IP_{4}).

Companies prioritized openness in their working culture towards skilled refugees, however the angle may differ among various layers of the hierarchy:

"To us it doesn't matter. Yet again we are a large company so everyone has their own opinions. In general, some may see refugees as positive or negative. But, considering the company's perspective, person's background does not matter" (IP_{15}).

Marginal minority did not want to make alignments on the word refugee having either a negative or positive connotation. Yet, a few informants denoted:

“'It's a fact that in Finland at the moment dark haired, well-tanned, 30-year-old young men are little scary” (IP_{7}).

\[1\] Refugee-word was considered negative by the majority. This was explained to be caused by its rather negative echo. IP_{13} felt, that the word refugee (in Finnish = pakolainen) reminds them of ‘forced to escape from somewhere’ (in Finnish = paeta).
Concluding, the responses related to a negative connotation with the word *refugee* were mostly elaborated with reference to media, which was seen to facilitate the formulation of negative connotations towards refugees in the common discussions. Yet, informants’ overall *impression* towards hiring skilled refugees strongly emphasised competence to be value adding. Plausibility of skills emerged from a doubting tone of the informants in regard to skilled refugees actually being competent.

4.2.3 Values

*Values* elaborated the manner in which the companies prevent the occurrence of possible prejudices in the recruitment process. Equality evidently rose as an emerging theme. Treating every applicant, no matter of the background, in an equal habit is the utmost important matter. The reaction was elaborated with the following comments:

"Strongly I and the whole company have an equal individual valuing approach. This is vital to keep in mind and it should not affect the hiring decision" (IP₄).

Contrastingly, the race or country of origin was not seen as an important matter in the recruiting process. However, a key factor between the employer and the employee relationship ought to bring added value for the company:

"Whatever people’s backgrounds or status in the society may be, it doesn’t matter, if the person is competent to bring profit for the company and provide additional value to a job, - then his or her background has nothing to do with it" (IP₁₅).

Interestingly, the theme of equality split up the opinions regarding financial support. A marginal majority strongly stated governmental support to be beneficial for their business, and it would contribute to the employment of skilled refugees:

"If we think about a situation where there would be two applicants and the other one would receive financial support, then the scale would benefit the one who receives the financial support. With this I mean, regular employee positions. For Expert and Supervisor positions, absolutely the best applicant is chosen" (IP₂).

“I believe that many companies would be interested in employing unqualified persons, but as more experienced people are always needed to supervise and educate the newcomers, companies cannot afford it. To lower the threshold, the employment relationship could be established with paying a Trainee-salary to the newcomers, for example with less than 10 euros per hour. Then, I believe that increasing amount of companies would have the possibility and willingness to employ skilled refugees" (IP₄).
By contrast, a minority of the informants specifically mentioned that a possible financial support would not affect for their decisions towards employing skilled refugees:

"Well, financial matters are not really the most important criteria for us in recruiting, as we are always looking for the best possible candidate for the job" (IP3).

A thought-provoking comment was pinpointed by a marginal minority that if financial support is received, it would place employees to different positions in the labour market. This would create unnecessary attention towards certain races, which could be seen as negative among the locals.

The equality matter was also revealed when the companies were asked whether they see possible benefits or hindrances when employing skilled refugees. Cultural differences were stated mostly by recognising customer service skills and knowhow. Examples of negative experiences were mentioned as follows:

"If we say see you tomorrow at 9 am, 9:05 is ok but 10 am is not. If you'll be late you inform about it" (IP7).

"We've had a case where a man could not take orders from a woman superior" (IP14).

4.2.4 Social Pressure

A clear majority indicated not having a specific CSR practises towards the refugee crisis nor any precise group of people. Contrastingly, only one noted their company having established practices towards refugees' employment. The importance of CSR was expressed:

"The current refugee crisis is a possibility for companies to adjust their social responsibility practises. By adjusting their practises, companies show their interest to employ also in a multicultural manner" (IP13).

Social pressure towards employment was stated in connection with low economy:

"I see the pressure especially for larger companies, who have already multicultural workforce and established practises, but also we need to make profit. So, we want to contribute with certain limits" (IP8).

"As financial resources are scarce; I believe that quite many companies think about their own recruitment based on their current needs" (IP8).

Also, critical perspectives were brought up:
"Why put others in a special position? Refugees may become the cheap labour reserve for Finland. And that is a new FEAR. Then, Finns lose their jobs or the wages go down" (IP_7).

4.3 System One and System Two Thinking
The results that derived from the thematic analysis demonstrated certain indications towards system one (impetuous) and system two thinking (rationality). The emerging themes of commitment and equality arose. As presented in Figure 3 (see Appendix 4 for the complete set of attitudinal results), rationality resulted at the highest level for the commitment in comparison to impetuousness. The attitude was expressed in the following manner:

"I feel, that the person's commitment towards the company is higher when she or he does not consider to be only a temp for the company" (IP_{16}).

Particular emphasis was seen in the rationality of responses as system 2 thinking was declared in multifaceted cases presenting almost all the different attitude indications. Rationality proved to be at its highest regarding the companies’ preference towards using employment agency in the recruitment process:

"When the hiring process does not become own fixed cost then the edge to employ refugees decreases as it is possible to get rid of employees in a day or a week" (IP_5).

On the other hand, system one thinking was as its' greatest in the emerging theme of equality. The word refugee's connotation was at the highest level of impetuousness, whereas rationality was at its' lowest level, since rationality had only one low (-):

"As the term, 'connotation' is quite fun, a civilized word. It's quite the same question that would we employ a deaf person, a left handed person or a person with a physical disability" (IP_2).

4.4 Attitudes Towards Employment
According to the thematic analysis, arrogance and criticality were indicated by the informants the least in all questions (see Appendix 4). Nevertheless, it is noteworthy to mention arrogance being least present in the emerging theme of
equality (see Figure 4), whereas in the other three emerging themes, arrogance is present to a greater extent. Figure 4 also pinpointed equality to have the highest two critical 'low (+)' to indicate the attitudes in this emerging theme. The equality issue was expressed:

"Yet, I wonder if the countries where the refugees come from, possess equivalent competence on our industry" (IP₁₆).

The emerging theme of plausibility of skills expressed praising the most. The results stressed the need for a high competence level, however the tone of the company informants often indicated doubts of the plausibility of the skilled refugees’ proficiency.

"The knowhow may be influenced if the refugee has been out of work for a long time, but on the other hand it may boost the motivation to start working!" (IP₇).

Openness on the other hand, was expressed the most in the emerging theme of commitment. Thus, the results indicated companies to be willing to commit hiring skilled refugees at least later on in the future. Concluding, companies seemed to be open towards hiring skilled refugees, yet the timing was not considered to be right for hiring them. The lack of experience for employing skilled refugees was indicated by the majority.

“At this initial stage, our company holds a positive attitude towards the refugee crisis, so we had the possibility to make this as a positive thing” (IP₁₂).

### 4.4.1 Principles and Latitudes of Employment

In the beginning of the employment, most of the companies would rather hire skilled refugees to a lower position than to an expert role. Yet, a reversed statement was made:

"We are willing to employ refugees to all positions" (IP₁₀).

As referred in section 4.3 a majority of the companies preferred to recruit for permanent positions by themselves rather than using an employment agency. In contrast, the usage of a recruitment agency is often seen beneficial especially for short-term recruiting. Alternatively, some suggested skilled refugees to start as a Trainees. As their level of knowledge develops or is verified by the company, then skilled refugees could be considered to other positions.
Only a minority responded that they are already employing skilled refugees, whereas a majority of the informants stated that they would consider employing skilled refugees either in the near future or later on in the future. A marginal minority implied that their company culture might not be ready for hiring skilled refugees. Contrastingly, only one company (IP9) responded that they do not see the employment of skilled refugees as a possibility due to the perception of skilled refugees lacking skills in their industry. Importance of the skilled refugees' own initiative, motivation and attitude expressed to ensure self-development.

As long as the job applicant fulfils the position's requirements and all the official permits are in order, the position ranking is not important for the companies. In consideration to the skilled refugees, the Leadership and Expert roles, quite often require the knowledge of both Finnish and English language, especially within sales-positions and customer service roles. Knowledge of Finnish received an important role by marginal majority of the companies. By contrast, a greater minority stated fluency of English to be sufficient in certain roles within the company. One company (IP6), stated that neither Finnish or English language skills are mandatory as long as any other common language is found in between the supervisor and the employee.

Concluding, it was evident from the interviews that a majority of the companies in Finland, do not have experience of employing skilled refugees. The results indicate fluent English being mandatory and those with both English and Finnish skills to be more suitable to the Expert-vacancies. Lastly, skilled refugees need to have a strong motivation towards the employment.
5. Analysis

This chapter analyses the emerging themes (CSR, commitment, equality and plausibility of skills) that derived from the interviews. Each of the themes are presented in more detail with regard to the factors forming attitudes towards employing skilled refugees.

The response rate to company, expert, and individual interviews was relatively high. Surprisingly, well-known companies in Finland did not want to participate in this study. In their responses, companies justified their declination of the interviews into the following three categories. Firstly, some companies claimed to have a lack of time due to current staff reductions, secondly, limited recruitment needs and thirdly, prioritizing on other relevant matters rather than participating in a 30 to 45 minute interview. On the other hand, some of the companies that denied interview requests emphasised the know-how of the Finnish market and Finnish language skills, which in contrast is a more rational excuse to decline the interview. This attitude was expressed in one of the denial e-mails:

"We currently have a very limited recruitment needs and even those are mainly targeted to only certain expert-vendor roles. Regarding these open positions, the requirement is to have Finnish language skills as well as know-how related to Finnish market" (IP_denied).

Regarding the expert interviews, Confederation of Finnish Industries (2016) noted that the entirely new phenomenon of the refugee crisis has bewildered Finland, which is why the refugee's integration has taken time. In line with this matter, the Finnish procedures are partially out-dated, which has caused a slow integration processes by making it inefficient (Sitra, 2016). Battisti et al. (2015) observed that in order to provide a quick integration for refugees, a rapid reduction of bureaucratic hurdles and a quick development of refugees’ qualifications (language skills) are particularly urgent. Similarly, Confederation of Finnish Industries (2016) argue that the speed and combined actions have a central role. In sequence to make the system more efficient, refugees should have the possibility to participate in language courses and apprenticeships simultaneously. The integration system should be built up so that it avoids refugees losing time in this process (Ibid, 2016).
5.1. Discussion of Terms Applied
During the interviews, the informants used the terms “asylum seeker”, “refugee” and “skilled refugee” interchangeably. Due to the similar nature of these words, the authors of this thesis clarified the difference between a “asylum seeker” and a “refugee” in the beginning of each interview. Yet, these concepts in general were mixed up in the informants’ responses. Furthermore, a minority of the informants questioned whether refugees are even willing to work in Finland. That is due to the fact that they are seeking asylums to increase their living standards, instead of experiencing fear or real danger in their respective home country. Nonetheless, it became clear from the interviews that the refugee situation awakens emotions, negative beliefs and thoughts, partially on account of societal discussions.

5.2 Field Study
The field study to Otaniemi Reception Centre demonstrated a low level of education that most of the inhabitants possessed. In general, the competence level of the inhabitants was high as many obtained various professional skills simultaneously in different fields like being a barber and a car mechanic, even though they had a low education. Minority among them were also highly educated, skilled lawyers, chemists etc. English language skills were weak especially with the older asylum seekers, whereas the younger ones were able to communicate sufficiently. Länsisalmi et al. (2004) agreed competence to be the sum of acquired knowledge and experience, which in this observation case would indicate a majority to be skilled even though they do not possess a post-comprehensive level of education.

Furthermore, possible conclusions can be drawn related to cultural differences in the employment procedures between Finland and the asylum seekers' countries of origin. Some of the interviewed asylum seekers showed more interest and enthusiasm towards integrating into the Finnish society, learning the local language and eventually starting to work in Finland. Dreyfus and Dreyfus (2005) state intuition to be a fundamental aspect of expertise, which was also indicated in all of the individual interviews. In general, self-branding was observed to be weak among the asylum seekers and only a few cases
determined otherwise. This was exposed by the fact of being self-driven to learn languages and apply for 'recognition of professional or educational qualifications' (European Commission, 2016) in order to work in Finland, for example as a lawyer. Such cases demonstrate according to Schlenker and Weigold (1992) self-glorification, self-consistency and self-authentication of the candidate. Also, the companies emphasised applicants' motivation and self-initiative towards being employed. Nevertheless, Viitala (2007, p. 298) stressed individuals' adaption to a new culture to be time consuming to overcome and it may create hindrances.

5.3 Relevant Factors
When considering employing skilled refugees, all of the company informants had a central role in the recruiting process, whereas the majority of the informants possessed either Executive or HR-personnel positions. Some of the informants were also Founders of the companies. Subsequently, the interviews can be considered trustworthy per se, yet socially desired answers were detected.

5.3.1 Stimulus
The overall stimulus factor indicated companies' willingness to employ skilled refugees. Majority expressed skilled refugees to be mostly seen as a potential workforce in Finland. However, there were clear differences in companies' stances regarding the actual potentiality of the skilled refugees. Mainly, particular views were related to multiculturalism. Even though, multiculturalism was seen as a positive matter in the workplace, cautiousness was visual from the responses. Generally speaking, minority of the informants' expressed their reluctance towards employing skilled refugees due to their perceived poor reputation, which was mostly acquired through various media channels and word of mouth. Some acknowledged their cautiousness to result in their recruiting behaviour. The companies clearly stated to choose the best applicant based on their competence and skills. Thus, both negative and positive stimulus was expressed.

In relation to Battisti et al.'s (2015) study and this thesis, both had a clear correspondence to the sensitivity of the current mass inflow of asylum seekers. Due to the sensitivity of the topic, the authors of this thesis did not always receive comprehensive answers to the questions. Therefore, concrete examples were occasionally requested. Sensitivity was
also visual in other areas. To exemplify from a multicultural perspective, the *stimulus* effect was stated by IP_{11} to be decisive when companies undergo changes, like acquisitions. At times, the change may require the personnel to adjust a new company philosophy within compressed time. IP_{11} was once a truly homogenous company with only local personnel. Then, basically over one night the company philosophy turned around having a sudden majority of multicultural personnel. Such change was not uncomplicated, instead it was experienced sensitive. Thus, the multifaceted knowledge appeared useful to tackle the problem with time. All in all, diversified knowledge was concluded to be a core capability in their business.

Companies comprehensively expressed the refugee crisis to have only a minor effect on their business or on their respective stakeholder relations. Some informants indicated that the refugee crisis is exclusively believed to be a positive matter, because of the boost in customer base and growth of variety within the labour market. Altinay & Okumus (2010), argue companies’ strategy to influence employee's behaviour by creating a certain mind-set. A majority of the informants stated that specific alignment towards (skilled) refugees has not been made. Thus, companies in Finland have not considered of benefiting from the refugee situation, which according to Altinay & Okumus (2010), would also strive the company for meeting its' goals with diverse workforce, opinions and knowledge.

Interviews indicated that trust ought to be earned, due to lack of experience of employing skilled refugees. Tapscott and Ticoll (2012, p. 105) discusses this aspect by claiming lack of trust between colleagues to make teams usually ineffective. Distrust was experienced among the informants due to varying cultural impediments and not having a common language with skilled refugees. On the other hand, knowledge sharing demands trust among stakeholders (Sharma et al., 2012). Tapscott and Ticoll (2012, p. 105) continue, that open culture makes companies internal communication up to three times more efficient. Thus, incongruent interests in between the employer and employee may conflict, leading the workers’ behaviour to deviate from the employer’s desires (Sieger et al., 2013). With reference to the results, majority of the companies indicated that creation of trust is born through positive experiences. Hence, individual's stances and anchoring might increase the possibility of employment for skilled refugees.
Informants implied refugees' reputation to be currently 'in the lowest stairs of the society' (IP_{13}), which requires a positive self-regulation to change (Schenkler & Weigold, 1992). Schenkler and Weigold (1992) refer attitudes and behaviours to be attempts of how person (i.e. skilled refugee) is perceived in beneficial circumstances. The observations from the field study (see 4.1) are noteworthy to mention, as motivation towards the employment of asylum seekers was evident. Yet, the attempts to brand one's self (Schenkler & Weigold, 1992) seemed to lack in regard to the Finnish working culture. As a result, if the skilled refugees manage to create a positive image of themselves, it might increase their employment opportunities, and the companies’ attitudes towards them might unfold.

5.3.2 Impressions

In consideration of the impressions factor, representative heuristics appear when people look for traits in individuals that correspond with previously formed stereotypes (Bazerman & Moore 2012, p. 8). The interviews did not demonstrate the race of the candidates or the country of origin to be an important matter in the recruiting process. However, the match of personal traits between the employee and the employer, were considered as significant determinants for the company. As the results suggested, the CV outlook can also represent traits that are crucial when searching for the right candidate. Recruiters often search for keywords and competence from the applications and CVs. Diverse knowledge and skills of the employees are claimed to be due to the innovativeness of multicultural workplaces (Viitala 2007, p. 308), yet interestingly the companies did not see skilled refugees having skills that the locals would not master.

Representative heuristics may have created doubts on the plausibility of the skilled refugees’ qualifications. This was not expressed directly by the companies, however, it was possible to hear from some of their tones that they had doubts on the plausibility of skills. Siegler et al. (2013) note that unobservable behaviour may be a result of moral hazard, where employee shirks their duties and could be hired on a misrepresentation of skills. Hence, it is understandable why companies want to verify competence of the skilled refugees in accordance to the Finnish standards.
Two companies provided nearly the same explanation regarding pros and cons of employing skilled refugees. To demonstrate the explanation of the IP₅ & IP₁₅: when hiring skilled refugees to a task that requires sufficient amount of knowledge regarding the Finnish culture, customers and markets, then the employment of skilled refugees might not be advisable for this specific task. Subsequently, in such case hiring skilled refugees for the position would make it a hindrance. Contrastingly, when the skilled refugee would be responsible for the market and customers of his region, it immediately creates an advantage to the company. The skilled refugee has the advantage of understanding his own culture much better than any Finn would. Besides, language wise the particular skilled refugee is more qualified to communicate in his local environment. Thus, the particular tasks and responsibilities determine, whether skilled refugees are suitable for the vacant positions that the companies in Finland offer.

In general terms, common connotations of the word refugee were safety issues such thefts and sexual harassments, whereas language skills like Arabic, Dari and Kurd were considered beneficial. Naturally, some companies pursued to remain neutral when referring to their beliefs or discussions influenced by the society and media into the interviews. Nevertheless, stereotyping provided generalized angles on individuals that influence human behaviour strongly (Pickens 2005, p. 62). To exemplify, dark haired, well-tanned young men especially appeared to resemble fright, due to their appearances, considering, all foreigners to be as dreadful as media often implies.

Interestingly, none of the companies thought the fact that young people are claimed to adapt to the new surroundings better. Namely, impressions expressed the connotations of the word refugee and implied doubts of the refugees’ competence levels. If the companies are open-minded towards skilled refugees regardless of the negative connotations, it does not mean that all the other employees are in the same belief. Viitala (2007, p. 309) mentioned prejudice to have remained unaltered in Finland regarding multiculturalism. Perhaps employees with such attitudes are resistant to change (Länsisalmi et al., 2004), which is a difficult issue for companies to deal with.
5.3.3 Values

Equality occurred as an emerging theme. The interviews revealed companies to have prejudice towards the skilled refugees. Heikkilä and Järvinen (2003), claim immigrants having hard time finding jobs in Finland. This matter was also noted in some of the company interviews in a way that some refugees may not even be interested in seeking jobs in Finland. On the other hand, the ageing population and Finland needing more labour force was noted. Therefore, it can be questioned whether Finland is open in reality towards employing skilled refugees, or did the companies just state socially desired answers. This is because Heikkilä and Järvinen (2003) claim Finns especially from small towns, to be narrow-minded and inexperienced with foreigners. In contrast, Viitala (2007, p. 308) argue that the country has not been exposed to multiculturalism in large amounts. The current demographical situation is slowly but firmly changing with the refugee crisis, which also requires attitudinal change throughout the country.

In consideration of pros and cons of employing skilled refugees, most of the companies did not see any specific differences within skills, as individuals are always individuals, no matter of one's nationality. Battisti et al. (2015) considered shortages in language skills and specialized trainings to be barriers. Contrastingly, in this thesis cultural differences between various nationalities is recognized. In some instances, skilled refugees may possess natural tendency for customer service, or knowhow for specific export market. Subsequently, time management is seen as a hindrance with inability to accept women leadership. Aside from those, Battisti et al. (2015) observed a major hindrance to be minimum wage. German companies saw the minimum wage as a major hurdle for the recruitment of refugees. For example, small construction businesses in Eastern Germany saw the minimum wage as decisive obstacle, whereas in this thesis an informant (IP6) claimed that they prefer to pay according to the Finnish collective agreement of their sector. Consequently, having skilled refugees work for minimum pay would decrease the equality concept. The minimum wages were a less important concern for larger companies, especially in the manufacturing sector (Battisti et al., 2015). In relation to this thesis, generous social benefits of Finland were mentioned to decrease the skilled refugee's interest for being employed.
Morand and Merriman (2012) found out affective organisational commitment to be favourable among employees, however feeling of being treated equally would beat the commitment perception. One aspect of the interviews demonstrated that the applicants are not hired based on any minority or majority groups. On the other hand, there is the issue of the monetary support from the government, which split companies' opinions in half. A vast majority suggested monetary support to be a beneficial perk or even an advancement in the recruiting process, which can be reflected with affective commitment, personal initiative and work engagement from the perspective of personalised employment arrangements (Marescaux et al., 2013).

Contrastingly, a minority of the informants strongly believed governmental support to bring inequalities to the recruitment process. When considering employing skilled refugees, Morand and Merriman (2012) pinpoint equality to be perceived through the lens of equity-based conceptualization. In contrast, it is all about the manner in which the managers act in specific situations demonstrating ethical values of the company and moral awareness (Verbos & Miller, 2015). Yet, there is hope for humans to use their selected adaptability and pliancy of behaviour (Bandura, 2002), which ought to enable more positive attitudes towards skilled refugees among the workforce.

In brief, values presented in the interviews were contradicting. Although a specific emphasis was given to equality, the possibility to receive financial support for employing skilled refugees seemed to put the applicants in different positions. Just as Yin (2011, p. 150) noted with reference to attitude measurement, it is difficult to verify the manner in which people act in the reality (Bassili & Brown 2005, p. 544-545; Pickens 2005, p. 44) in their respective recruiting processes. In essence, it is left to discover whether the companies actually stand behind their values of not discriminating any job applicant due to one's background.

5.3.4 Social Pressure
CSR in relation to the refugee crisis, was expected to play a major role in companies’ strategies. However, a majority of the companies did not experience social pressure or the need to adjust their respective CSR practises due to the refugee situation in Finland. Almost all of the companies noted that they do not have any specific alignments towards
the refugee crisis. Consequently, companies ought to start planning alignments towards the refugee situation, since the changing demographics should be viewed as permanent rather than transient (Confederation of Finnish Industries, 2016).

Social pressure towards the employment of skilled refugees was expressed with a concern to companies own financial resilience in times of current economic downturn in Finland. The companies admitted that the skilled workforce is needed and it ought to enhance country's economy. Although, companies’ actions towards contributing to the refugee crisis remained marginal. Enhancing workers’ skills has been stated to boost growth (OECD, 2016), thus attention towards releasing and investing to the potential of skilled refugees should also be considered as a way to increase economy. Moreover, it was evident from the interviews, that companies are only recently starting to realize the side effects of the recent demographic change. Yet, the effects have not been witnessed in companies' daily businesses. Dustmann and Preston (2007) argue welfare concerns to have a clear connection with the formation of attitudes towards immigration. In this thesis, such a connection was not indicated by the companies. However, Confederation of Finnish Industries (2016) pinpointed that immigration development may result in refugees' ‘rootlessness’ (see section 1.3). Difficulties might occur due to locals’ stance of accepting diversity in the working environments. Concluding, social pressure can be seen as bilateral transfer also in a way of preserving one's culture as a source of well-being (Heikkilä & Järvinen, 2003). It can be argued that refugees experience social pressure in order to fit into the mainstream and in relation to social capital, the situation develops through integration.

5.4 System One and Two Thinking

In order to justify system one and two thinking, Bazerman and Moore (2012, p. 138) believe people to behave more rationally when the stakes are sufficiently high. In consideration of the preference of using employment agencies, rationality ranked high due its relatively logical and procedural nature. Companies expressed their commitment in a way of supporting their employees to acquire more experience and competence while working. This matter was indicated when some of the companies stated they are willing to help skilled refugees' with languages by providing financial support and organising a mentoring-programme, which best fits the employees' abilities. Possibly, some
companies may have answered more rationally instead of in an impetuous manner due to the sensitivity of the topic.

The negative connotation of the word *refugee* received the most intuitive responses in comparison to the least rationally expressed reply (see Appendix 4). Subsequently, the intermediate response, may be reflected with the emotional 'snap' judgements and affect heuristics (Bazerman & Moore 2012, p. 10; Wistrich et al., 2015). Challenging situations require more effort, which is why decision-makers trust plausible judgements that come quickly to mind (Kahneman, 2003). The emerging theme of equality arose based on the impetuous rankings being the highest in that section. In general, individuals perceive identical information in situations dramatically differently, depending on their role of the situation (Bazerman & Moore 2012, p. 112; Verbos & Miller, 2015). In relation to the results of this study, a majority of the companies communicated their views neutrally. Even though, many referred to the external factors like media and societal discussions to have influenced the attitudes in regard to the negative connotations, the companies did not start to analyse the effect of these factors in a larger sense. Simultaneously, choices are strongly influenced by the environment and interactions that intervene with situational demands in regard to self-referent factors (Wood & Bandura, 1989), which may have influenced the formation of the answers in either direction.

All things considered, recruiters formulate positive or negative stances (Sherif et al. 1965; Sherif & Sherif, 1967) when considering the employment of skilled refugees. The relationship formed with either one of the stances is often a mixture of both system one and two thinking. Nevertheless, if even judges go along with emotional judgements as Wistrich et al. (2015) claimed to have discovered, how could recruiters avoid intuitivism in recruiting? It remains to be discovered, whether or not the companies' statements are in alignment with their actions.

### 5.5 Attitudes Towards Employment

A set of bipolar attitude pairs examined companies' stances through the thematic analysis. With the attitudinal pairs of arrogance, praising, criticality and openness in mind,
Bazerman and Moore (2012, p. 114) argue the basic emotions\(^2\) to activate feelings and appraisal tendencies, in order to respond in a certain manner. Arrogance was the least expressed feeling in the emerging theme of equality (see Figure 4) compared to the other three themes (see Appendix 4). As Appendix 4 refers to the companies’ perception of skilled refugees' potentiality, as plausibility of skills shadows arrogance with two Low\(_{(-)}\). In other words, this is a clear indication that the skilled refugees are seen as more incompetent workforce against locals. The only issue under the theme of equality that received an arrogant attitude of Low\(_{(+)}\), was the benefits and hindrances of employing skilled refugees. This may indicate the companies to believe that the refugees generally may not be willing to adapt to Finland nor start working. On the other hand, companies have the power to choose the best suitable candidate to match the vacancy at hand. With confidence of the skilled refugees' potential, companies need to take the initial step sooner rather than later, in order to gain positive experiences. That way, the threshold of employing skilled refugees would decrease.

Additionally, in the emerging theme of equality, criticality was at its’ highest towards employing skilled refugees. When inquiring about the companies’ methods to prevent prejudice, it received quite critical feedback with an attitude Low\(_{(+)}\). Companies claimed everyone to be equal. However, suggestions towards individuals’ perspectives were given, where prejudice may exist and the company itself cannot effect that.

Mastery of experiences was pinpointed by Wood and Bandura (1989) to develop self-beliefs of capability. Couple of companies brought up refugees to require extra effort during the first phases of the employment, and it was indicated that the companies do not have the resources or necessarily even the finances to momentarily contribute in skilled refugees' employment. As Bandura (2002) indicates lack of self-belief (in relation with experience) solely to effect judgements of personal capabilities, this may definitely hint towards various issues which prevent the employment of hiring skilled refugees. Naturally, such statements could verify doubts of the employment, even though companies at least claim to value equality. In comparison, Bazerman and Moore (2012, p. 114) believe, society's mind to be contaminated, whereas Campbell (1967, p. 16)

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\(^2\) Basic emotions include happiness, sadness, fear, disgust and anger (Bazerman & Moore 2012, p. 114).
suggests societal class differences to effect the way people perceive matters. Subsequently companies' attitudes were unavoidably effected by the societal discussions towards refugees in general. Thus, the companies may consider prejudice to exist until positive experiences occur among stakeholders or media.

Compassion and pride are more complex, however it is still in association with distinctive mind-sets (Bazerman & Moore 2012, p. 114-115). Praising was mostly expressed at the emerging theme of plausibility of skills. Even though the companies claimed to see potential in the employment of skilled refugees, after each interview, the authors of this thesis were left to wonder whether the companies truly meant that. There was something in most of the informants' tones that created doubts regarding their views for skilled refugees' proficiency. Marescaux et al. (2013), discuss differentiation and significance of strategic talent management to fill positions for highly competent employees, ensuring their commitment to the organization. Subsequently, that would create a sustainable competitive advantage for the companies, which was also implied in the interviews.

Above all, commitment stood out as one of the emerging themes, as the open attitude had its highest attitudinal expressions within this theme. In case the employee feels low commitment from the organization, then the strategic idea behind the recruitment would have been unsuccessful (Altinay & Okumus, 2010). Companies implied, that employees hired through the employment agencies are a temporary workforce, indicating low level of commitment in regard of maintaining the relationship between the employee and employer. A minority of the companies mentioned being open towards multiculturalism is perceived as an important attitude. Variety of workforce is needed in order to understand differentiation and to be able to appreciate it. In case, Finland would be genuinely multicultural, then society’s and employers’ perspectives could be more accepting. Contrastingly, Vecchio (2016), suggests that asylum seekers tend to create their own local and transnational network in contemplation of their ways to employ and support themselves. Further, the right attitude and personality among motivation to work and integrate to Finland were highly appreciated by the companies, thus ensuring employment demands self-initiative from the skilled refugees. As a marginal majority of the companies stated their interest towards employing skilled refugees, it can be taken as an indication of some companies wanting to have a positive social virtue, but at the same
time employing the best possible candidate of the pool of choices (March, 1991; Pickens 2005, p. 67). Concluding, attitudes in general are complex combinations of personality, beliefs, values, behaviours and motivations (Pickens 2005, p. 44).

5.5.1 Principles and Latitudes of Employment

When coming into a conclusion with the recruitment decision, Sherif et al. (1965) define the latitudes of acceptance, non-commitment and rejection to arrange the decision-makers' choice. This thesis discovered that a great majority of the companies would be willing to hire skilled refugees whereas Battisti et al. (2015) found out that minority of companies could hire refugees as skilled workers. Position wise Battisti et al. (2015) reported a marginal minority of the surveyed companies to consider employing refugee for management position. Similarly, in Finland hiring skilled refugees to management positions was mostly dismissed in the interview. The only comments the management position received reflected to the suitability. This could be explained by the heuristics people use to form biases and prone various tasks of judgements under uncertainty (Kahneman, 2003).

There was no direct answer to indicate the exact measures to positions to which skilled refugees could be hired. However, the manner most informants responded, indicated that even though they claimed to take the best suitable candidate to an Expert or Management position, yet there were doubts towards plausibility of skills. Lower positions would be more likely for initial employment than the skilled refugee’s actual competence. Lange and Houran (2009) would call this underemphasising certain traits or competencies, which causes underutilisation of skills leading to brain waste (Mattoo et al., 2008). Companies indicated that naturally skilled refugees have the possibility to acquire a higher position through developing their skills within the company. The company informants reasoned this choice to verify the competence and skills acquired from outside Europe, possibly from an unknown education systems and companies. On the other hand, when considering Battisti et al.'s (2015) findings, a greater minority of the German companies saw that unskilled labour could be used as potential workforce. Similarly, part of Heikkilä’s (2012) findings refer immigrants to often end up having lower paid jobs such as cleaning industry. This was also indicated by a minority of the companies interviewed. In contrast, Länsisalmi et al.'s (2004) main findings demonstrate companies
not making use of their best resources possessed in terms of their employees' abilities. Therefore, companies ought to improve strategical planning of the utilization of skills, in order to avoid brain waste.

Scholars (Heikkilä, 2012; Heikkilä & Järvinen, 2003) note that the employment rate increases for both locals and immigrants when the individual has a higher educational profile of a job position. Contrastingly, Dustmann and Preston (2007) argue highly educated people to be more liberal towards immigration, as low skilled workers are opposed to immigration due to the fear labour market competition. The fear was noted by the informant's in connection of refugees becoming the new lucrative workforce for Finland. Lack of experience of employing people from other cultures might hinder the employment as the relationship between experiencing skilled refugees as a productive workforce has not yet been fully established between locals and non-locals. Battisti et al.'s (2015) study declared refugees to be preferred workforce mostly as unskilled workers or to do apprenticeships. Trainee programs or apprenticeships were preferred by a greater minority in Battisti et al. (2015) study, whereas in this thesis, the Trainee perspective was shortly commented as some of the informants showed their self-initiated interest towards taking skilled refugees as Trainee's first, and then consider the more permanent employment after the traineeship. Thus, the company would then have the possibility to assess the skilled refugee's competence before making a long-term commitment.

Language was elaborated to be the most important factor as a common language with the supervisor was considered necessary. Language is often associated with cultural differences such as dissimilarities of national culture or ethnic background, values and beliefs (Sharma et al., 2012). According to the company interviews regarding the highly skilled ‘white-collar’ workers, fluent Finnish is often preferred, even though it was not seen as the most important factor. However, the companies stated, proficiency in English is a must. Only one company stated to accept refugees who do not have either Finnish or English language skills. Conversely, a marginal majority of all companies surveyed in Germany (Battisti et al., 2015) saw lack of language skills as a significant obstacle to the recruitment process of refugees. Improper level of competence of refugees was also seen as an important obstacle by majority (Ibid).
5.6 Summary of Analysis

The latitude of non-commitment was the dominating determinant of this thesis. Although, openness was expressed by the majority of the companies, yet criticality was evident in almost all of the answers. Suggestions towards partial doubts regarding companies’ objective perspectives were demonstrated. Also, after each of the interviews, despite how positive thoughts and ideas for employment the companies laid out, the concluding feeling was that the companies provided socially desired answers. That may be due to companies having no specific alignments on the refugee crisis at hand. Nevertheless, companies’ statements strongly referred to the skilled refugees in an open manner. Despite the fact, that the companies' attitudes were mostly open, a majority further elaborated their open-mindedness by still weighting the employment of skilled refugees. This was evident from the informants’ choice of words and tone of voice. Nevertheless, the issues behind the actions towards employing skilled refugees remain to be revealed.

In essence, the emerging themes guide the formation of how do factors influence the recruitment process, when companies consider employing skilled refugees in Finland. The findings of this thesis suggested companies being open to commit to employing skilled refugees, provided that their skills can be verified in accordance to the Finnish standards. The contradiction within the results and the companies statements are concealed within the emerging theme of equality. All the employees and job applicants are considered equal, regardless of race and religion, yet only a marginal minority seemed to have the guts to take the initiative of employing skilled refugees.
6. Conclusion

This thesis resulted in providing various stances to the employment issue of skilled refugees in Finland. The socio-economic environment and interactions continuously intervene with situational demands of companies and society, which evidently influences individuals’ attitudes. Even though, the attitudes of companies were determined to be open towards hiring skilled refugees, in practice these views were more passive. Out of the four factors (stimulus, impressions, values and social pressure) that shape attitudes towards the employment of skilled refugees, values received the most emphasis. Equality emerged as a main theme. The concept of equality indicated open-minded attitudes towards the recruitment of employees with diverse backgrounds. The value placed on diversity ought to present a greater variety of capabilities for companies. Particularly skilled refugees were seen as a potential workforce even though gestures of companies lacking commitment towards them was implied. Some companies suggested that the skilled refugees should begin from a lower position to verify their competence, rather than being recruited directly to a higher or leadership positions.

Companies’ attitudes towards the employment of skilled refugees seem to be still partly uniformed. Namely, society’s negative connotations against refugees in general may have intentionally influenced the formation of companies' perspectives of the skilled refugees' employment in Finland. However, it can be concluded that such attitudes will develop and evolve through experience and time. Subsequently, the benefits of having a multicultural workforce is well-known for some companies, although multiculturalism may be seen as timid behaviour facing the employment of skilled refugees.

6.1 Managerial Implications and Future Research

The high response rate towards this thesis suggests that the companies have an interest in employing skilled refugees, although the experience of employing them is marginal in relation to the current amount of asylum seekers in Finland. It can be argued that the mass arrival of refugees is an opportunity for unleashing the birth of new innovations. The surge of refugees is changing the demographics, and the cultural diversity poses a great chance to internationalise businesses in Finland. Hiring a more multicultural workforce can consequently enhance companies’ businesses. On the other hand, as the
field study indicated, entrepreneurial desires are high, thus suggesting that the incoming refugees may generate new businesses through organisations like Startup Refugees.

For the future research, it would be interesting to replicate this thesis, to see whether or not the companies' who stated they could employ skilled refugees in the future have actually done so. Another research suggestion would be to make a quantitative nationwide survey, enquiring about the employment possibilities of skilled refugees in Finland. This approach would allow domestic generalizations to be made and the attitude development could be monitored.

6.2 Limitations

The interpretations of companies' attitudes, in their actual terms, is limited to singular standpoints and current situational demands. Especially, the nature of the Finnish discussions over the refugee surge has culminated a sharp-worded dialogues against refugees' potential in the Finnish labour market. The timing to examine the attitudes may not have been optimal due to the refugee situation being very contemporary. In case this thesis would have been carried out one year later, the overall situation and attitudes towards the skilled refugees may be closer to being neutral. Therefore, the outcome of this thesis could turn out different.
References


Oy Teboil AB. April 26, 2016. Phone. Company interview.


X. April 19, 2016. Phone. Company interview.


Yin, R. K. 2011. Qualitative research from start to finish, New York: Guilford Press, pp. 3-348.
Appendix 1a.

Interview Guide: Haastattelurunko Suomeksi

Yrityshaastattelu: koulutetut pakolaiset potentiaalisena työvoimana Suomessa


1. Taustatietonne lyhyesti (titteli, rooli rekrytointiprosessissa)
2. a.) Suomeen saapui viime vuonna n. 32 000 turvapaikanhakijaa. Miten yrityksenne näkee asian?
2. b.) Miten tämä on vaikuttanut sidosryhmiinne?
3. a.) Onko teillä aikaisempaa kokemusta pakolaisten työllistämisestä?
3. b.) Pakolaiskriisiin viitaten, mitkä tiedot ja taidot näette tärkeiksi ominaisuuksiksi työnhakijoille?
4. Onko firmanne valmis työllistämään koulutettuja pakolaisia:
   a.) työllistämme tällä hetkellä b) voimme työllistää lähitulevaisuudessa c.) emme ole valmiit työllistämään.
5. Millaisella työsuhteella olisitte valmiit työllistämään pakolaisia:
   a.) asiantuntijatehtävä b.) esimiestehtävä c.) työntekijä?
6. Miten näette pakolaiset työelämässä: näettekö pakolaiset potentiaalisena työvoimana?
   Miksi, miksi ei?
7. Selatessasi työhakemuksia, kiinnitättekö huomiota johonkin erityiseen asiaan?
8. Hypoteettisesti ajatellen, mikäli yrityksenne saisi taloudellista tukea koulutettujen pakolaisten työllistämiseen, olisitteko kiinnostuneempia työllistämään koulutettuja pakolaisia?
9. Ottaisitteko mieluimmin koulutettuja pakolaisia töihin työnvälitysfirman kautta?
10. a.) Koetteko, että sanalla 'pakolainen' on kielteinen konnotaatio?
10. b.) Miten yrityksenne ehkäisee mahdollisten taistelujen vaikutuksen rekrytointiprosessissä?
11. Mitä etuja ja/tai haittoja näette koulutettujen pakolaisten palkkaamisessa? (esim. mahdolliset virkamarjat, kulttuurialaisuus, kielitaitot)
12. Mikäli työnhakijalla on kielitaidollisia rajoitteita (esim. suomen- tai englanninkielinen heikokohko osaaminen), mitkä ovat hakijan mahdollisuudet työllistymiseen yrityksessänne?
13. Näettekö, että yhteiskunnallinen paine vaikuttaa rekrytointipäättöksiin?
Appendix 1b.

Interview Guide: *Interview Questions in English*

Company Interview: Skilled Refugees as Potential Workforce in Finland

We are Uppsala University students writing our master thesis. The purpose of our study is to discover companies' decision-making process towards employing skilled refugees in Finland. In these interview questions skilled refugee is defined as a proficient performer with the knowledge of procedures and execution. We kindly ask you as a company informant to answer these questions from company perspective.

1. Please tell us your background (nationality, industry, title in the company). What is your role in the hiring process?
2. a.) Finland took 32 000 refugees in 2015. How does your company see this issue?
   2. b.) How much has this influenced your stakeholder relationships?
3. a.) Does your company have any previous experience of employing skilled refugees?
   3. b.) Considering the refugee crises, what qualifications do you see important for job applicants?
4. In which time period is your company willing to employ skilled refugees a) currently employing b) near future, c) later on in the future, d) never?
5. What type of employment could your company offer to skilled refugees? a) Expert b) Leadership c) Employee position
6. How do you view refugees in the job market? Do you see refugees as potential workforce? Why or why not?
7. In a recruiting process: are there any specific details that catches your attention when browsing through CVs?
8. Hypothetically considered, would you be more willing to employ skilled refugees if your company would gain financial support from the government?
9. Would you rather hire skilled refugees through employment agency instead?
10. a.) Do you see that the word *refugee* has a negative connotation?
    10. b.) How does your company prevent prejudice in your recruitment process?
11. What benefits or hindrances do you see in employing skilled refugees? (e.g. cultural, language, special skills)
12. In case the applicant has language constraints (e.g. Finnish and/or English), what are applicants’ possibilities for employment in your company?
13. Do you see that societal pressure influences your recruitment decisions?
Appendix 2

Interviewed Individuals and Companies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual Interview Type</th>
<th>Individual</th>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Informant’s Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Face-to-Face</td>
<td>Aalja Bos</td>
<td>Public Sector</td>
<td>Senior Advisor (expat) Business, Marketing &amp; Consulting for the City of Oulu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Phone</td>
<td>Osama Al-Ogaili</td>
<td>Voluntary</td>
<td>Salama-timu Co-founder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Skype</td>
<td>Nafisa Yaseen</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Researcher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Phone</td>
<td>Ilkka Peura</td>
<td>Social Welfare</td>
<td>Director of a Reception Center (for Asylum Seekers)</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company Interview Type</th>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Informant’s Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 WebbFX</td>
<td>TDR Finland Oy</td>
<td>Information Technology &amp; Services</td>
<td>Founder &amp; CEO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Phone</td>
<td>Hen A/Eik Työteknikapalvelu Oy</td>
<td>Employment Services</td>
<td>Founder &amp; CEO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Skype</td>
<td>Jouhupukki TV Oy</td>
<td>Media</td>
<td>Founder &amp; CEO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Phone</td>
<td>ISS Finland</td>
<td>Facility Services</td>
<td>HR Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Phone</td>
<td>Lääkärin Järjestys Aava Oy</td>
<td>Health Services</td>
<td>HR Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 WebbFX</td>
<td>SOL Palvelut Oy</td>
<td>Multiservice Provider</td>
<td>HR Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Skype</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Information Technology &amp; Services</td>
<td>HR Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Skype</td>
<td>Barona Group Oy</td>
<td>Employment Services</td>
<td>Director, Communication &amp; Community Relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Phone</td>
<td>Collector Bank AB, Finnish Branch</td>
<td>Banking</td>
<td>Team Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Phone</td>
<td>Likelaitos Oulun Servisi</td>
<td>Food &amp; Catering Services</td>
<td>HR &amp; Well-being Coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Lyne</td>
<td>Oy LM Ericsson Ab</td>
<td>Information &amp; Communications Technology</td>
<td>Business Development &amp; Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Skype</td>
<td>TC Vehicle Oy</td>
<td>Tourism</td>
<td>Chair Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Phone</td>
<td>Alliston Group</td>
<td>Paper &amp; Forest Products</td>
<td>Vice President, Group HR &amp; HR Business Partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Phone</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Pharmaceutical</td>
<td>Head of Finance &amp; Administration Finland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Phone</td>
<td>Oy Teboil AB</td>
<td>Oil</td>
<td>Head of Field Operations</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NPO Interview Type</th>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Informant’s Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 * Skype</td>
<td>From Waste to Taste ry</td>
<td>Food Services</td>
<td>Founder &amp; Board’s Chairman</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expert Interview Type</th>
<th>Expert</th>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Informant’s Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Skype</td>
<td>Panu Pouvaara</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Professor &amp; Researcher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Skype</td>
<td>Sitra</td>
<td>Foresight Agency</td>
<td>Head of Focus Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 WebbFX</td>
<td>Confederation of Finnish Industries</td>
<td>Employer Organisation</td>
<td>Senior Adviser</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The non-profit organization (NPO) is included into the count of the company interviews within this thesis.

Please Note: When referring to direct examples and quotes from the companies, IP₁ to IP₁₆ was applied to ensure anonymity.
Appendix 3

Operationalisation of the Theory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEORY</th>
<th>OPERATIONALISATION OF THEORY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interview questions aimed to examine factors for hiring skilled refugees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stimulus (2.3.1)</td>
<td>1. Please tell us your background (nationality, industry, title in the company). What is your role in the hiring process?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. a.) Finland took 32,000 asylum seekers in 2015. How does your company see this issue?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. b.) How much has this influenced your stakeholder relationships?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. a.) Does your company have any previous experience for employing skilled refugees?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. How do you view refugees in the job market; do you see refugees as potential workforce? Why or why not?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Impressions (2.3.2)</td>
<td>3. b.) Considering the refugee crisis, what qualifications do you see important for job applicants?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7. In a recruiting process: are there any specific details that catch your attention when browsing through CVs?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10. a.) Do you see that the word refugee has a negative connotation?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values (2.3.3)</td>
<td>8. Hypothetically considered, would you be more willing to hire skilled refugees if your company would gain financial support from the government?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10. b.) How does your company prevent possible prejudice in your recruitment process?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11. What benefits do you see in hiring skilled refugees (e.g. cultural, language, special skills)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Societal pressure (2.3.4)</td>
<td>13. Do you see that societal pressure influences your recruitment decisions?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes Towards Employment (2.5) &amp; Principles and Latitudes for Employment (2.5.1)</td>
<td>4. In which time period is your company willing to employ skilled refugees a.) currently employing b.) near future c.) later on in the future d.) never?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. What type of employment could your company offer to skilled refugees? a.) Expert b.) Leadership c.) Employee position?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12. In case the applicant has language constraints (e.g. Finnish and/or English), what are applicants’ possibilities for employment in your company?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9. Would you rather hire skilled refugees through employment agency instead?</td>
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</table>
Appendix 4

Attitudinal Results with Emerging Themes Classified

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Arrogant</th>
<th>Praising</th>
<th>Impetuous</th>
<th>Rational</th>
<th>Critical</th>
<th>Open</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. CSR</td>
<td>2. a) Finland took 32 000 asylum seekers in 2015. How does your company see this issue?</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
<td>Low (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. b) How much has this influenced your stakeholder relationships?</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Do you see that societal pressure influences your recruitment decisions?</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
<td>Low (+)</td>
<td>Low (+)</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
<td>Low (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Commitment</td>
<td>4. In which time period is your company willing to employ skilled refugees a) currently employing b) near future, c) later on in the future, d) never?</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
<td>High (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. What type of employment would your company offer to skilled refugees? a) inspector b) Leadership, c) employee position</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
<td>Low (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Hypothetically considered, would you be more willing to hire skilled refugees if your company would gain financial support from the government?</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Low (+)</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
<td>Low (+)</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7. Would you rather hire skilled refugees through employment agencies instead?</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
<td>Low (+)</td>
<td>High (+)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Equality</td>
<td>8. a) Does your company have any previous experience of employing skilled refugees?</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Low (+)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9. b) How do you see the word refugee has a negative connotation?</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
<td>Low (+)</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>10. c) How do you see the company prevent prejudice in your recruitment process?</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
<td>Low (+)</td>
<td>Low (+)</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11. What benefits or hindrances do you see in hiring skilled refugees? (e.g. cultural, language, specialist skills)</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
<td>Low (+)</td>
<td>Low (+)</td>
<td>Low (+)</td>
<td>Low (+)</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Plausibility of skills</td>
<td>12. a) Considering the “refugee category”, what qualifications do you see important for job applicants?</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
<td>Low (+)</td>
<td>Low (+)</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13. b) How do you view refugees in the job market: do you see refugees as potential workforce? Why or why not?</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
<td>Low (+)</td>
<td>Low (+)</td>
<td>Low (+)</td>
<td>Low (+)</td>
<td>Low (+)</td>
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<td>14. Are there any specific details that catch your attention when browsing through CVs?</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Low (+)</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15. In case the applicant has language certificates (e.g. Finnish and/or English), what are applicants’ possibilities for employment in your company?</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Low (+)</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
<td>Low (-)</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status of Attitude</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Colour Code</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>0.00 to 0.99</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low (-)</td>
<td>1.0 to 14.99</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low (+)</td>
<td>15.00 to 39.99</td>
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<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>40.0 to 60.99</td>
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<tr>
<td>High (-)</td>
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<td>High (+)</td>
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<td>Absolut Attitude</td>
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</tbody>
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