



CHALLENGES FACED BY NON-EU IMMIGRANTS IN THE SWEDISH LABOUR MARKET

A SECONDARY ANALYSIS STUDY

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Abstract

Immigrants in Sweden are often problematized in political and media debates especially in relation to lack of integration into the labour market. This study is based on secondary data analysis on the challenges that highly educated non-EU immigrants face in the process of integration into the Swedish labour market. Previous knowledge on the topic was found at the Malmö and Lund University Libraries and their databases. The aim of this study is to identify the challenges for non-EU immigrants to integrate into Swedish labour market, and to find out if the jobs they get is compatible to their academic qualifications obtained from their home countries. Also, it is to identify measures taken by the government to facilitate immigrants' access to the labour market. The theories I used in this study are integration, human capital, and discrimination. The findings revealed that, poor knowledge of the Swedish language, lack of social network, discrimination and lack of recognition of immigrant's educational qualifications were the main obstacles faced by highly educated immigrants from integrating into the labour market. Also, the findings reveal that the job positions of the highly educated immigrants in the Swedish labour market were lower than the educational qualifications they have from their countries of origin. In addition, the government had identified some of these challenges and have discussed plans for possible policy development to tackle these challenges.

Keywords: Integration, non-EU immigrants, discrimination, Labour market, Sweden, human capital, highly educated.

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Chapter one Introduction

According to Righard (2015, p. 20), international migration is the movement of people across state borders. There are many reasons why people migrate, Righard (2015, p. 28), mentioned a theory that is called push and pull theories. Push theories involve negative factors that make people want to move to a new area. This can be because of poverty, war, disaster, unemployment and pull theories are positive factors that attract people move to a new area. Some examples of pull factors are better living conditions, better jobs, stable finances, or family reunions. According to the Swedish Migration Board (2019), people move to Sweden every year for different reasons. The most common reasons in the year 2020 was for family re-union and for work, but there are also other reasons such as to study, to seek asylum, to meet a love partner and others (Migration Board statistics 2020).

Righard (2015, p. 22) mentions that in the year 2013, there were 1,5 million foreign born immigrants in Sweden which made up 16% of the population. 1/5 of this group of immigrants came from Syria, Somalia and Poland. Also, Grand & Szulkin (2002 p. 1) indicate that because of this high influx, it is important for scholars to improve their knowledge about immigrants and their children especially in the labour market to better integrate them.

When immigrants move to a new country, it takes a lot for them to become a part of the new society on both the individual's level and the community's level. Immigrants must be willing to integrate, and the new country must have measures put in place to help integration go easy and faster. In Sweden, the goals of integration are equal rights, opportunities for all, regardless of ethnic or cultural background. The government strives for immigrants to be integrated into society in a short time. They provide extra support to newly arrived immigrants during their first year in Sweden and the purpose of this is to give immigrants a good chance to live independently (government.se, 2009).

The state through the Swedish employment services has the responsibility to produce introductory programs for newcomers. This program includes the individual's previous education and work experiences, courses in Swedish, knowledge about the Swedish society and employment preparation activities (government.se, 2009). In Sweden, the program can last for up to two years. If you are among those eligible for the introductory program, you will receive a plan containing various activities that will help you get a job (informationssverige.se, 2018).

All the above sound so simple but it can be more complicated to apply integration itself due to some obstacles that immigrants might face, and this is what I will be researching on in this essay.

Problem formulation

Immigrants in Sweden are often problematized in political and media debates in relation to lack of integration into the labour market, housing, and education (Eliassi 2017 p. 8). According to the Organization for Economic, Co-operation and Development (OECD 2014), the immigrant population in Sweden has been growing for many years. In 2013, almost 16% of the Swedish population was born abroad, which made Sweden one of largest OECD countries with foreign-born population. The results of the labour market for immigrants are also often behind Swedes. In 2004, OECD made a review of the Swedish system for integrating immigrants into the labour market and found their results to be unfavourable.

They recommended measures such as improving the language, vocational education and providing a clearer labour market focus for integration policy. Sweden is well advanced when compared to other OECD countries in terms of policies for integration of new arrivals. Despite this, there is still room for improvement in integration especially in the labour sector (OECD 2014).

According to Andersson et al (2014 p. 2), there is both a problem of low employment rates and underutilization of skills among non-Western immigrants in Sweden. Also, Dalhstedt's findings in 2015 showed a substantial evidence to suggest that, occupational mismatch was higher for the parental immigrants generation than their descendants and an explanation to this is that the descendants have obtained most of their education in Sweden and are thereby not affected by the devaluation of human capital that their parents experienced when they migrated (Dalhstedt 2015, p. 44).

In addition, Montesino (2015, p. 53) called immigrants a social disability group and mentions that this group find it difficult to integrate into society and that an expansion of social work at national and international level is required to meet these challenges. Also, Kamali and Jönsson (2018, p. 282) mentioned that, issues of structural racism and discrimination need to be addressed in both education and work. She insists that the development of anti-racist perspectives is necessary in order to create a social work that goes beyond we-and-them thinking (Kamali & Jönsson 2018, p. 288).

Some immigrants have had a smooth road to integration, while others have had many challenges. One of the challenges is the long time it takes for immigrants to integrate especially in the job market. Some immigrants may have managed to get jobs but not a job that corresponds to their educational credentials. In this study, I will focus on challenges of highly educated immigrants in relation to the Swedish labour market.

Aim of study

The purpose of this study is to identify the challenges that highly educated immigrants face in the Swedish labour market and to see if the jobs they get matches their educational qualifications.

Also, to look at the measures taken by the Swedish government to improve immigrant's access to the labour market.

Research questions

What are the challenges that highly educated immigrants face in the Swedish labour market?

Does immigrant's position in the Swedish labour market correspond to their qualification?

What are the measures taken by the Swedish government to improve on immigrants' access to the labour market?

Relevance of this study to social work

International Federation of Social Work provides global definition of social work as a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people. In addition, the principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to social work. It is also mentioned that social work engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance wellbeing (IFSW.org, 2020).

Important elements involved in this definition are social change and development, empowering, liberating people and enhancing their wellbeing (Payne 2015, p.28). Solving human problems to improve the wellbeing of people is one of the tasks that social workers have, and among these problems are employment challenges faced by immigrants as identified in this study. These challenges can be involved in the country's policies and new policies can be made to facilitate economic integration for immigrants and improve on the wellbeing.

This study is relevant to social work because, it raises awareness of the existing challenges faced by highly educated immigrants in the employment sector in Sweden. In addition, the results of this study provide a platform for social workers to fight against unfavourable policies in the country which may affects the rights of educated immigrant and thereafter, formulate better policies to promote social and economic equality. Also, it presents opportunities for social workers and other actors to advocate for anti-discrimination policies on issues that are slowing down integration of educated immigrants in the job market.

Delimitation of the essay

There are about 1.5 million people in Sweden who are immigrants, I will limit the study to highly educated immigrants between the ages of 25 and 55 years. This study will mainly focus on immigrant from non- EU countries both men and women who come to Sweden to work or reunite with their families. It will focus on the time immigrants get their worker's permit until the time they get a job that matches their academic qualifications. The study will also focus on the challenges they face in the Swedish labour market and if the jobs they get correspond to their qualifications.

Key words and definitions

Integration

Integration is the process of immigrants becoming part of the social life of the host country. Through integration, immigrants have the possibility to gain access to full participation in the different areas of actions and interactions in the host country (Diaz 1993, p. 17). Diaz mentioned that full integration into the host country means a state of complete similarities between immigrants and the native people in their participation in the socially distribution of valuable resources (Diaz 1993, p. 17).

Immigrant integration

Immigrant integration is the process of economic mobility and social inclusion for newcomers and their children. It touches on the mechanisms that promote development and

growth within a society, including early childhood care, elementary, postsecondary, and adult education systems. It also includes workforce development, health care, provision of linguistic diversity, and much more. Successful integration builds communities that are stronger economically and more inclusive socially and culturally (Migrationpolicy.org 2020). Eliassi (2017, p. 13) describes integration in Sweden as a desirable condition in which immigrants are included without displaying too many cultural and religious differences.

Highly educated immigrants

According to an article by Statistiska Centralbyrån (SCB) on (*Utrikes föddas utbildningsbakgrund*), highly educated immigrants are persons who migrate to a country with at least a three years post-secondary education, like university degree (SCB, 2017 p. 8). People who immigrated to Sweden to work and study during the last twelve years have a high level of education while persons who immigrated to Sweden as refugees during the same period have a lower level of education (SCB 2017, p.6). Also, according to the article, the proportion of people with post-secondary education is equally high among those born in Sweden and those from abroad. The difference between foreign-born and domestic-born is that there is a greater proportion of foreign-born who have a maximum of upper secondary education, 20 % compared to 9% (SCB 2017 p. 11).

Swedish labour market

Labour market means the availability of employment in terms of demand and supply. According to Petersson (2009 p. 87), labour market in Sweden focuses around full employment, and the right or obligation to work. According to the article on labour market in Sweden, labour market policy in Sweden aims to ensure that all those who can work should have the possibility to take part in a working life. The policy also aims to create security and possibilities for transition in the labour market. This includes measures to get young people into work, matching of jobseekers and job vacancies, labour market policy programmes, unemployment insurance and the European Social Fund (government.se, 2019). In addition, the policy may be delegated to the municipal level, but the content is formulated nationally. The difference in the employment rate between Swedish-born and foreign-born people is still too large, particularly for women. The Government therefore proposes providing some money to the employment institution to help new arrivals quickly get into the labour market (government.se 2019).

Outline of study

This essay is made up of 6 chapters. Chapter 1 is the introduction, problem formulation, aims of the research and research questions. Chapter 2 is the methodology. It contains an explanation of how I got my materials, which ones are included and excluded, ethical aspects etc. Chapter 3 is the theoretical framework. I used three theories: integration, human capital and discrimination. Chapter 4 is previous knowledge on the topic. Chapter 5 presents the findings and analysis of the study, while the last part, chapter 6 is the discussion and conclusion of the essay.

Chapter two Methodology

In this study, I have used qualitative research method and specifically secondary analysis of previous knowledge on the topic. I had planned to conduct interviews with highly educated immigrants from non-EU countries in the beginning, but things changed because of the coronavirus pandemic that occurred at the same time and recommendations were put by public health authorities to practice social distancing. I had also thought of doing interview through calls and emails, but it was hard to get a suitable time to make long calls, and it was not convenient for some of the people I had planned to interview, so I have chosen to use secondary data instead.

Secondary Analysis

My analysis is based on secondary sources and existing literature on integration of highly educated immigrants and challenges they face in the labour market in Sweden. According to Bryman (2016, p. 309), Secondary data analysis entails the analysis of data that others have collected by other authors. These sources include databases available at Malmö and Lund university libraries. Specifically, I have used books and articles from Libsearch, LIBRIS, Google scholar, PsycINFO, Sociological Abstracts and SwePub to find relevant materials for my studies. According to Bryman (2016 p. 90), this stage of research is a crucial one and the aim is to establish what is already known about the topic and to use it as a background and justification for the investigation.

In this review I have tried not to include purely historical or informational material from common websites, instead I have included useful Information from reputable websites, such as government and state sites and this is mostly in my introduction.

In addition, I used mostly articles and books that are peer reviewed. I have not included long and extended quotation and have avoided writing phrases directly as they are in the texts, instead, I have paraphrase what I deem relevant for the studies.

Materials selected for my Essay

Books from authors like Payne (2015), Montesino & Righard (2015), Westin (2015), Petersson (2009), Diaz (1993), and Bryman (2016) were found relevant for my studies. I used some materials from these books and I also searched and found relevant articles from various databases from the Malmö and Lund Universities. To choose the articles, I checked the titles and read the abstract. The sources that appeared to be interesting in title and abstract were read through before being used in this review of knowledge. The first search was done via the Libsearch database, with the keywords "integration" and "labour market". It gave me 11,882 results. The search needed to be more specific, so I added immigrants and Sweden to the search, and it gave me 302 results and all of them were peer reviewed.

The next search included highly educated which resulted in 37 hits. I added challenges but did not get any results, so I concentrated on the previous search. The selected materials that could help answer my questions were from Bevelander (2004), Sandberg (2017), Dingu-Kryklund (2005), Dahlstedt (2011 & 2015), Le Grand & Szulkin (2005). The other searches on Google scholar, Swepub, Sociological abstract and psychinfo with the same key words gave almost the same results, so I selected the ones that were useful in the study. I also got

information from several websites which I found relevant for this study, like Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD.org), government.se, migrationsverket.se, information.se, UHR.se and some others.

Advantages of the secondary analysis method

According to Bryman (2016, p. 310), The advantages of secondary analysis includes the fact that, the researcher has the possibility to have access to good quality data for a limited resource involved in carrying out data collection. Secondly, the data mostly used is of high quality and it also offers the opportunity for longitudinal research which is rare in social science because of the time and costs involved.

In addition, there is an opportunity to study sizeable subgroups within a short time and comparable studies can also be done too. More to the above one has more time for data analysis because data collection can be time consuming and the possibility of reanalysis of data may offer new interpretations. Lastly making data available for secondary analysis enhances the possibility that fuller use will be made of the data (Bryman 2016, p. 312).

These advantages named by Bryman applied to this study because it was less costly and less time consuming for me. This is because, I did not have to go out to carry on interviews nor spend money for transportation to meet the interviewers.

Disadvantages of the methods

The disadvantage of this method is that there is lack of familiarity with the data since it was collected by others and some of the data may be quite complex. The large volume can present problems with the management of information. In addition, one does not have control over the quality of the data since data may not have been collected on an aspect of the topic that would have been of considerable interest. Lastly the absence of key variables is a limitation of this method. The inability to examine the implications of a theoretical important variable can be frustrating (Bryman 2016, p. 313).

In this study, it was difficult for me to find the material needed directly to enable me to answer my research questions. I had to try several key words in the databases before getting what I needed, whereas if it was an interview, I would have been able to ask my questions directly and get possible answers to my research questions.

One disadvantages in this study is personal influence of the author on the study and the reflections of personal experience on the analysis and the results of the study. This is because the author has a similar experience as the immigrants from previous studies. However, I have done my best to exclude the influence of my personal experience and focus on the interpretations of the materials gotten from previous research.

Validity and reliability

Bryan (2016, p.383) mentions mason's idea that reliability, validity and generalizability are different kinds of measures of the quality, potential of research, which are achieved according to certain methodological and disciplinary principles. Validity refers to whether the researcher is observing, identifying or measuring what they say they are doing. Since I am using secondary data like books, articles and journals that are already published, I have no connection with the participant or contact with writers who provide information, I have remained neutral to the information I gathered from the secondary sources. In addition, I have

chosen my materials and theories carefully in order to ensure reliability of my research. This is also because, I will be using these same materials later in my analysis.

A description of how the material has been analysed and delineated

According to Bryman 2016, p. 584, thematic analysis is one of the most common approaches to qualitative data. A good research essay should include interpretations and explanations for the data collected. Bryman mentions that one of the most common ways to identify themes is by reading through your work and identifying topics or themes that recur again and again. It is also important that the themes are related to the research questions (Bryman 2016, p. 586). I have analysed the materials by reading through the work detailly and looking for major and sub-themes. My themes have revolved around my objectives and research questions and the sub-themes will be created from the major themes to give a detail description of the themes. I have used previous knowledge on the topic and theories like integration, human capital and discrimination in my analysis.

Ethical considerations

According to Bryman (2016, p. 121), Ethical considerations in social research describes the role of values in the research process. It revolves around how we should treat the people on whom we conduct research and which activities we should or should not engage in our relations with them.

As I mentioned earlier, I will not be having contact with the public of participants because I am using the secondary data analysis method, so there will be nothing like harming the participants or invading anyone's privacy.

My experience

I moved to Sweden to study and re-unite me with family. While in Sweden, I was hoping to have a greater job opportunity since I had migrated from a developing country to a developed country, but after my studies, it was difficult getting into the labour market. I applied for different jobs that matched my qualification and working experience but got no reply. I decided to study the language and apply for jobs in Swedish instead of English. I started studying the Swedish language in an adult school where I met other immigrants from different part of the word who were studying too. I registered with the unemployment office and tried to make more connections with some Swedish friends to improve my chances and help me integrate into the labour market easily but it was still difficult getting a job that matched my qualifications so I did the simplest jobs I could get like cleaning and care work. Now I am studying again at the university in Swedish and it is a program in social work which I believe will give me more opportunities in the job market.

As a non-EU immigrant in Sweden, I connect to this study because of my experiences in the labour market and I reflect throughout this research as I analyse the challenges faced by other immigrants who struggle with labour market integration. My experience of the problem help me get a better understanding when analysing the problem and I have tried my best not to be bias or let my experience influence my judgements and analysis of this study.

Chapter Three Theoretical Review

According to Bryman (2016, p. 18), theories are important because they provide a justification for the research that is being conducted. They also provide the framework within which social phenomenon can be understood and the research findings can be interpreted.

The theories of this research will be based on three theories which are integration, human capital and discrimination theory. Through the presentation of these theories, readers will be able to understand the main ideas on which the analysis is based.

Integration

Diaz (1993 p.7) mentions that integration is the elimination of all differences in cultural and behavioural standards. For integration to take place, there must be qualitative increase of participation of minority members in systems of social interaction and relations within the majority society. This is a process that takes place after the immigrants have arrived in the host country. Integration is sometimes confused with assimilation but there is a difference. Diaz (1993, p. 16) mentions Bernard's idea that assimilation is the process of becoming like the native population in terms of action orientation and interactive relationship with people in the host country. On the other hand, integration is achieved when migrants become a working part of their host society and participates freely in its activities but at the same time retain a measure of their original identity and ethnicity.

In this study, I have focused both on economic and social integration because I see them relevant in answering my research questions. Economic integration is seen as a process where both immigrants and the natives can participate equally in the labour market and receive incomes that reflect educational qualifications and working skills. Many comparative studies on employment and wage outcomes between immigrants and natives show a remarkable difference.

Also, social integration of immigrants is particularly important in the host country. According to Diaz (1993, p.122), building new ties to the community life, social networks and social relationships is mostly a long-term process and it is a difficult experience for most immigrants. Social integration for immigrants is an important aspect which affect the economic integration of immigrants in the host country. Social integration helps immigrants to expand their social networks as it may help them and facilitate the access to the job market in host country.

Westin (2015, p. 66) mentions that, a key criterion for effective integration is immigrant's participation in the labour market, the educational system, the social life and the political system. According to OECD 2014, Sweden's immigrant population has been growing for many decades and Sweden was among the OECD countries with the largest foreign-born population. Integration of immigrants and their children is therefore of key importance for the Swedish economy and society and this has been at the centre of many political debates.

Human capital

Human capital is a measure of the skills, education, capacity and attributes of labour which influence people's productive capacity and earnings potential (Pettinger, 2019).

Tan (2014. p. 3) mentioned Marginson's description of the line of assumptions in Human Capital Theory. He states that, individuals acquire knowledge and skills through education and training, which is called human capital. These knowledge and skills increase the individual's productivity in the workplace. This increase in productivity will in turn bring a higher wage to the individual since the wage of a person in the labour market is determined by the person's productivity. Tan insists that, people who invest in education and training increase their human capital and this leads to a higher productivity rate and higher wages.

Based on this reasoning, it can be claimed that education and earnings are positively correlated and thus education and training should be promoted (Tan 2014, p.3).

Bursell (2015, p. 287), mentions a neoclassical explanation as to why immigrants perform poorly in the labour market. This explanation states that immigrants are not as productive as the natives because they lack human capital. Based on this assessment, human capital is an essential tool for all individuals to possess so they can be productive in the labour market. Human capital involves education, working experience, social network and good health etc. Among the above, education is seen as the most important tool needed for integration (Bursell 2015, p. 287). In addition, Bursell mentions Borjas idea that, although human capital is particularly important for integration, migrants suffer a temporary loss of it when they move from one country to another and it takes a few years to replace this in the new context of the country they find themselves in (Bursell 2015, p.287). According to Bevelander (2004, p. 20) due to changes that occurred in the Swedish labour market, employees of industrial companies are mostly required to have a university education as well as specialised manpower. Meanwhile in the service sector, the same need for education and Swedish language is expected and this makes the labour market entry very difficult for immigrants.

Discrimination

According to Diaz (1993 p. 193-194), discriminating attitudes and behaviours amongst the host population and institutions create obstacles in the process of integration. Discrimination has a negative effect on the quality of immigrant's integration into the society. He states that unfavourable treatment seriously affects the participation of minorities in primary, secondary and tertiary forms of social relations.

Herz and Johnssons (2012), describe the experiences of young immigrants who even though are Swedish citizens and have lived most of their lives in Sweden they still have to deal with patterns of racism and discrimination everyday.

According to Bursell (2015, p. 292), Structural discrimination is a common type of discrimination that affects immigrants. This type of discrimination is involved in the labour market in Sweden. A case is seen where most employers rely on information about individual's observable characteristics to make conclusions about the characters they cannot see because they do not have the resources to fully access each applicant's qualification. An example is that some employers believe that people with names from a certain background on average have less knowledge of the Swedish language than people with Swedish names. However, it is basically not true that people with foreign names have less knowledge of the Swedish language than people with Swedish names (Bursell 2015, p. 298).

Another example is the widespread practice of recruitment through personal networks. Immigrants usually receive little knowledge of domestic-born jobs because they are not included in employers' social network. Even when discrimination is not intentional, the practice of network recruitment leads to immigrants excluded from the chances of applying for many jobs (Bursell 2015, pg. 298). Ethnocentrism which deals with the evaluation of merits is another aspect where discrimination is exhibited. Employers and authorities have the assumption that Swedish education and Swedish qualifications are better than foreign ones (Bursell 2015, 289).

According to OECD (2014, p.13), discrimination generally takes two forms. The first is statistical discrimination which occurs when employers avoid hiring an employee because of lack of information about the candidate's qualifications. The second is taste-base discrimination, where employers simply prefer to hire candidates from certain countries.

Chapter Four Previous Knowledge on the topic

The subheadings of this chapter have been formulated as follows: A background on Swedish labour immigration, economic integration of immigrants, the challenges that immigrants face in the labour market, educational qualifications of immigrants versus the job they get in the labour market and lastly measures taken by the Swedish government to tackle these challenges.

Swedish labour immigration period (1945-1975)

Lemaitre (2007) in his article (*The integration of immigrants into the labour market*), provides a background of the Swedish immigration's periods. He mentions that Immigration in Sweden began with the Second World War, when they received refugees from the Nordic, Baltic and other European countries. After the Second World War, Swedish industry had an advantage because of its infrastructure and production capital (Lemaitre 2007, p. 12).

They also had high consumption demand and low production cost, both nationally and internationally which resulted to a significant demand for labour in manufacturing. Labour migration to Sweden has generally been dominated by Nordic citizens. During the 1950s, workers also came from Germany, Austria and Italy and in the 1960s from Yugoslavia, Greece and Turkey. In 1950 every fifth employee in the hotel and restaurant sector was a foreign citizen (Lemaitre 2007, p. 12).

The women migrants worked mainly in the textile industry and in the home care sector. The need for skilled labour was extensive and skilled foreign labour was recruited. Majority of labour migrants who came to Sweden as tourists, found employment after arriving. Immigration to Sweden was free in the early 1950s, a liberalisation that was induced by the need for foreign labour. In 1954 the Nordic Passport Union was established which Guaranteed a common Nordic labour market (Lemaitre 2007, p. 12).

Righard (2015, p. 26) mentions that towards the end of 1960, there was a change of situation. The population of migrants was rising and there was shortage of work so restrictions were put in place to stop non-Nordic citizens from entering the country if they did not have a working permit. Labour migration from the Nordic countries subsided with the oil crisis in 1973. Lemaitre (2007, p. 13), also indicate that, an economic slowdown in the beginning of the 1970s led to increasing unemployment among certain groups such as youth, women, foreign labour and the handicapped. From 1950 to 1970 general economic growth had been 4% on average. But from 1970 to 1990 growth decreased to an average level of 1.7%. One of the reasons for this decrease was the increasing competition from abroad. The decline lessened the need for labour with the result that Sweden became withdrawn to employ more workers (Lemaitre (2007, p. 13).

Refugee immigration period (1970-2004)

After the oil crisis, followed by the industrial downturn in the mid-1970s, labour immigration reduced, and refugees became the main source of immigrants. From 1973 asylum seekers mainly came from Latin America and during the 1980s persons fleeing from war from the

Middle East made up most of the refugees coming to Sweden. In the beginning of 2000, asylum seekers from Iraq were the largest group (Lemaitre 2007, pg.13).

Over time, the number of asylum seekers gradually increased, and only Nordic and EEA citizens were guaranteed free access to Sweden and the Swedish labour market. On the other hand, persons in need of protection, including quota refugees and convention refugees could be granted a residence permit. Other grounds for receiving a residence permit, whether permanent or of limited duration, include family reunion, adoption of foreign children, those with a work permit and those who came to study (Lemaitre 2007, pg. 13)

Economic integration of immigrants in Sweden

According to Diaz (1993 p.78), the economic life and labour market are two most important dimensions of an organised social life in which the immigrant's integration into the host society takes place. He describes integration as the qualitative increase of participation of minority members in the system of social interaction and relations within the majority society (Diaz 1993 p.7).

Diaz mentions that after a certain period of staying in the host country, immigrants have the possibility to achieve functional resources and be able to utilise existing opportunities in the host country to improve on their social, cultural and economic situation. It is expected that under favourable conditions, some immigrants should move from odd jobs to more skilled and well-paid jobs in the labour market. Also, immigrants' acquisition of cognitive resources such as education, training, language and getting information is important for structural integration. Investment in education tends to facilitate cultural and social opportunities and overcoming different barriers for gaining entrance into the labour market (Daiz 1993 p.79).

Bevelander (2004) in his article (*Immigration patterns, economic integration and residential segregation*) provides finding about s structural change in the Swedish economy. He mentions that there had been high employment rate for immigrants during the 1950s and 1960s. Unemployment was quite low in Sweden in the past as compared to most other OECD countries but in 1977, the unemployment rate for foreign citizens was double that of Swedish citizens and in the 1990s, unemployment rates of both Swedish and foreign citizens increased dramatically, mainly because of the deep crisis in the Swedish economy. From 1993 to 1995, unemployment among foreign citizens was three times higher than for Swedish citizens (Bevelander 2004, p. 15-17).

In the same article, Bevelander mentions that many studies dealings with the economic integration of immigrants use human capital theory as their approach to explain the labour market integration of immigrants. Education is seen as an investment by the individual to increase his or her productivity, which results in improved labour market careers. Differences in the level of education could therefore explain variations in the employment integration of immigrants (Bevelander 2004, p. 19).

In addition, Bevelander (2004, p. 20), mentions that, some studies suggest that demand factors, and not only supply factors, may help to explain the differences in labour market attachment, and for some immigrants, their demand factors may be characterized as very weak. This is because there has been a structural change of the economy, where a declining industry sector has given way to an increasing service sector and this requires a higher education and language proficiency. This means that the number of low skilled industry jobs have been decreasing steadily in recent years, and these were positions filled by immigrants.

Bevelander concludes the same article mentioned above by indicating that human capital, personal skills, structural changes in the labour market, various types of discrimination and integration policies towards immigrants in general are all factors that can be seen as increasing the challenges for immigrants relative to the Swedish natives to adjust in the labour market (Bevelander 2004, p.24).

He emphasizes that, structural change of the Swedish labour market into a service society demands higher general skills and language skills. These are likely to increase the cost for new immigrants to acquire these skills. Potential employers are placed in a position of increasing hiring costs and this affects the discrimination towards certain groups of immigrants. Exclusion from the labour market will necessarily increase the total cost of social assistance (Bevelander 2004, p.24-25).

In addition to the above, Bevelander and Irastorza did another study on "The labour market participation of highly skilled immigrants in Sweden" and their findings showed that Swedish native with low education have higher employment levels than highly educated immigrants. Also, they mention that years of residency in Sweden improve highly educated immigrants' employment rates and earnings, but they never catch up with those of natives. The study also showed that highly skilled immigrants have greater employment levels, relative earnings and jobs equivalent to their education as compared to less educated immigrants (Bevelander & Irastorza 2017, p. 22).

Recognition of foreign educational certificates

The Swedish Council for Higher Education (UHR) is responsible to evaluate foreign qualifications in order to support people looking for jobs in Sweden, to those who want to study and for employers who wish to employ people with foreign degrees. For immigrants to access their foreign qualifications, an application is made through the UHR website and after evaluations, a recognition document is sent to the applicant showing what their qualifications correspond to in the Swedish education system (UHR.se 2020).

Dingu-kryklund (2005) in her article (*Migration and recognition of foreign diplomas in Sweden*) gives an overview of recognition of diplomas and the integration process. She mentions that, full access to the labour market is the most advanced form of social integration for immigrants (Dingu-kryklund, 2005, p.3). Many of the educated immigrants have had major difficulties in finding any job within their educational background. Some end up with mean jobs just because they must take care of themselves and their families. Dingu-kryklund mentions that, it is important to have one's professional competence validated and recognised to make it valuable and acceptable in the labour market and in the host society. The evaluation leads to professional recognition, not specifically regulated by any laws but in relation to a specified set of regulated professions. Other professions requiring a licence to practise, as in the case of the medical profession or certain fields of technology, are validated by competent authorities in that field (Dingu-kryklund 2005, p. 6).

According to Dingu-kryklund (2005, p. 6-7), the greater number of highly educated immigrants during the 1970s led in 1983 to an official investigation on the need to create a specialised independent body, who will be able to handle issues of the growing demand for appropriate instruments to evaluate foreign degrees. In 1992, the Higher Education Service Authority was created and took over the validation task until 1995, when a new legislation shifted this authority to the National Agency for Higher Education (Dingu-Kryklund 2005, p.7). The validation approach meant that many of the educational curricula completed abroad were considered inferior, as they could not be accepted as the same to the Swedish

educational curricula. A standard formulation was that, for foreign education to be same as that of Swedish education, it must be completed. This formulation proved to be a genuine problem in practice, as interviewed employers considered that they were not given the kind of information that will encourage them to consider employing such a person (Dingu-kryklund 2005 p.7).

Based on the fact findings and data analyses of the general situation of highly educated immigrants and the evaluation of their qualifications in the Swedish context, some answers may be provided related to questions in the media debate. Among these, suppositions that immigrants face informal discrimination in attempting to enter the labour market, as even highly educated immigrants are often forced to accept positions well under their professional qualifications (Dingu- kryklund 2005, p. 16).

An important part of integration of immigrant in the Swedish society is based on the necessity and assumption of formal and informal equality in the society. Unfortunately, there are indications of structural discrimination, and it is important that this phenomenon be known to find adequate ways to counteract it. It is equally important to find ways to change these perceptions, perhaps by finding adequate ways to create a climate of genuine mutual understanding, respect and tolerance (Dingu-kryklund 2005 p.16).

According to Lemaitre 2007, Swedish employers do not seem to put much trust in foreign educational qualifications and work experience. In some cases, recognition of foreign educational qualifications means a downgrading of foreign qualifications relative to Swedish ones and immigrants need to take time to pursue further education, to obtain recognition of equivalence, time that would be better spent acquiring work experience.

Challenges faced by immigrants from Less Developing Countries in the Swedish labour market

Sandberg (2017, p.5) mentions that the greatest challenge lies in labour market integration of refugees and their families. According to him, Sweden has performed poorly in terms of labour market integration, particularly for non-European refugees. It is argued in the article that the relatively slow integration is particularly driven by matching problems, labour market marginalization, and together with residential segregation reproduces social exclusion. It is also mentioned that, slow integration is as a result of Sweden's structural transformation from an industrial economy to one dominated by services and information which requires higher human capital like which the foreign born do not have (Sandberg 2017, s. 6).

In the same light, Rydgren (2004) identifies three mechanisms of exclusion in the integration of immigrants in the Swedish labour market. They were statistical discrimination, network effects and institutional discrimination. He mentions that these mechanisms are interrelated in many ways, and it implies that all of them must be considered when considering possible solutions to the problem of ethnic discrimination (Rydgren (2004, p.17).

Manhica et al. (2015), in their article (*Dynamics of Unemployment Duration Among African Migrants in Sweden*), mention Åsplund's findings which states that African and Asian migrants experience disadvantages in the labour market in terms of long-term unemployment, lower wages and unhealthier jobs (Manhica et al. 2015, P. 194-195).

One of the explanations given by Manhica et al. as to why African immigrants have a disadvantage in the Swedish labour market is lack of appropriate human capital, stereotype

and discrimination based on ethnic identity, and gender. In addition, they state that some scholars acknowledge the fact that there is gender discrimination when it comes to the labour market. Women migrants in Sweden are subjected to both ethnic and gender discrimination, thus they face double negative disadvantages in the labour market (Manhica et al. P. 195).

Comparatively, Africans who marry native Swedish could be in a more advantageous situation when it comes to integration as compared to other immigrants and refugees who marry partners from their home countries (Manhica et al. 2015, P. 19). This is because they are more exposed and through their partners, they have a better social network situation and integrate faster than the other immigrants.

According to Le Grand & Szulkin article on (*Permanent Disadvantage or Gradual integration*, 2003), immigrants are at a clear disadvantage in the labour market at the time of arrival in a new country. This is because they lack the country's specific skills to work, for example they lack language proficiency and other culture specific knowledge that facilitates interpersonal communication (Le Grand & Szulkin 2003). The earning differential and wage gaps between the foreign born and the native born are interpreted partly as a result of discriminatory treatment of immigrants. Most times the employers discriminate during employment and wages which makes the earnings of immigrants to be lower as compared to native born workers with similar production capacities (Le Grand & Szulkin 2003 P. 3).

Employers may devalue education undertaken in foreign countries when they make decisions about recruitment, reward allocation and promotion. People with similar educational credentials are treated differently depending on the country the education was taken from (Le Grand & Szulkin 2003 P. 5).

Le Grand and Szulkin's results of the study indicated that, a strong selection mechanism exists that prevents immigrants especially those from less developing countries from entering the Swedish labour market. Therefore, there are reasons to believe that a selection bias affects the results of earnings for immigrants (Le Grand & Szulkin 2003 P. 9). They also found out that immigrants are overrepresented in the private sector of the Swedish economy while the native born were represented in the public sector. In addition, the findings also show a large degree of wage inequality based on ethnic background and some groups of immigrants have high unemployment rates as compared to the native born (Le Grand & Szulkin 2003 P. 9).

According to Lemaitre (2007, p. 31), jobs may be found not only through formal means like employment offices, but also through networks or contacts of friends and relatives. These contacts would generally be wider for persons born in the country than they would be for immigrants. The existence of such networks can facilitate job search but may also see as factors that limit access to the job market for immigrants.

Challenges were also identified in a workshop held by the Swedish ministries of employment and finance and OECD in 2014 and some of them were: Poor knowledge of Swedish language can be a big obstacle to integration because language is an essential tool used to form networks with the native-born population and search for a job. Also, they saw a strong need for efficient and credible recognition of immigrant's qualifications. Validation of formal and informal competences is only gradually developing in Sweden and bridging courses are underdeveloped.

In addition, there is low motivation for Swedish employers to employ immigrants. Poor information limits employers' understanding of migrant skills and qualifications. Another challenge was the difficulties in tackling discrimination especially in the labour market. An

example is employers who hire only through specific channels uncommon to immigrants, this also enables stereotypes, which are also at the root of discrimination. Immigrants have fewer networks that are relevant to the labour market, as such the reliance of job matching on informal networks in Sweden puts them at a disadvantage because it limits their access to jobs (OECD 2014).

Educational qualifications of immigrants versus the job they get in the labour market

In their study on (*Overeducation among immigrants in Sweden, 2014*), Andersson et al. (2014 p. 2) indicate that, there is both a problem of low employment rates and underutilization of skills among non-Western immigrants in Sweden. It is often assumed that due to limited transferability of human capital an initial mismatch, or overeducation, among immigrants can be expected (Andersson et al. 2014, p. 2) In the case of immigrants, it can also be argued that some employers might require a stronger formal education for the same job from an immigrant applicant than from a native application (Andersson et al. 2014, p. 2). The findings in their study showed that non-Western immigrants face a higher risk of being overeducated once they enter the labour market and lose more from being incorrectly matched with the jobs they get. The mismatch outcomes for western immigrants are not as bad as those from non-western countries, but still worse than that of natives (Andersson et al. 2014, p.16).

Dahlstedt's study on (*Occupational Match 2011*) show that Most educated and skilled immigrants end up with jobs lower than their academic qualifications. When compared to the natives, it is proven that job mismatch is larger among immigrants than among natives (Dahlstedt 2011). Another study carried out by Dahlstedt in 2015 on (*Over-education amongst the children of immigrants in Sweden*) finds out through statistics that, the first generation of immigrants have a higher chance of an occupational mismatches when compared to their children and this is as a result of several reasons (Dahlstedt 2015, p.44). One reason given is because, the first generation of immigrants get their education and work experiences from outside Sweden which make them more likely to be affected by a devaluation of their human capital, while most of the descendants get their education in Sweden and thus are not affected by the devaluation of human capital. Furthermore Dahlstedt (2015p.44) mentions that due to limited knowledge of Swedish language and lack of the labour market information, the first generation of immigrants have higher odds of mismatch occupations than their children. Dingu-kryklund (2005, pg. 3) mentions that many educated immigrants have had major difficulties in finding any job within their educational background. Some end up with mean jobs just because they must take care of themselves and their families.

Measures taken by the Swedish government to eliminate these challenges:

To tackle the challenges of migrant's integration in Sweden was, a workshop was held by OECD and the Swedish authorities on the 28th of April 2014. In this workshop, critical issues facing migrant's integration into the Swedish labour market were discussed. They identified seven themes which they focused on. They were: Basic skills and Swedish language for adults, Validation and recognition, Employer demand, Discrimination, Networks and job search, School-to-work transitions and Co-ordination among actors. Each of these seven thematic areas was discussed in small sub-groups and possible solutions proposed (OECD 2014).

To improve the shortcomings in the attainment of SFI (Svenska för invandare), the government introduced a performance-based bonus in 2009, to motivate migrants, payable to newly arrived migrants achieving a passing grade within a specified time period. Also, SFI was made flexible so that it can be studied alongside vocational jobs. Support for immigrants lacking basic education was provided with a basic knowledge of the Swedish language to equip those who cannot read and write with these fundamental skills (OECD 2014).

Possible direction for future policy in the area of recognition and validation of foreign diplomas included: A plan that aims to individualise the integration process based on the immigrants' background. Validation undertaken early is of fundamental importance to build an appropriate introduction plan and find an appropriate job. Highly qualified immigrants who enter employment that does not utilise their qualifications are no longer among the unemployed. As such, they are not qualified support. Without support, immigrants may struggle to identify appropriate bridging courses and, subsequently, to find employment in the field in which they are qualified (OECD 2014).

Efforts are currently underway to enhance employer involvement and it is important to make sure that they are an integral part of the certification procedure. The government has allocated additional resources to maintain the number of places on bridging courses for a selected number of regulated professions such as teachers, lawyers, doctors, nurses and dentists. Possible direction for future policy development in the area of encouraging employers demand for immigrant workers are creating awareness of existing initiatives, co-operation with employers, Efficiency of wage subsidy administration, Support to employers' recruitment and Employment of migrants in the public sector (OECD 2014).

To tackle discrimination, it was proposed to raise awareness of discrimination as a problem especially to employers and those in key positions who practice it without even being aware of it. This could help them improve their way of thinking about immigrants (Rydgren 2004, p 17). Statistical discrimination which is based on inadequate knowledge about a person's abilities could reduce if awareness is raised. Broader integration measures that bring immigrants into contact with employers such as mentoring, and traineeships was proposed to help overcome information deficit that often underpins discrimination.

According to the ministry of employment (2019), some measures to get more people to work and for better integration was a continued expansion of the adult education initiative and an active business policy. In the budget bill for 2020, the government proposed initiatives worth about 1.3 billion so that many people can acquire knowledge and experiences that are in demand in the labour market. Also, the government want it to be possible for more people to run companies (government .se 2019).

Chapter Five Findings and Analysis

The main aim of this study was to identify the challenges faced by non-EU immigrants with higher education in the Swedish labour market. It was also to find out whether the jobs immigrants get matches to their qualifications. I have analysed these results using previous knowledge on the topic and the theoretical framework of the study. To answer the research questions, this section is divided into three main themes.

First, the challenges faced by highly educated immigrants from non- EU countries in the Swedish labour market were identified.

Secondly, the findings of whether immigrants get jobs in Sweden corresponding to their educational and academic background from their previous countries were provided.

Thirdly, measures taken by the government to tackle these challenges were looked at.

Challenges that non-EU immigrants face at the Swedish labour:

From previous research, it shows that there are some challenges and barriers faced by immigrants in the Swedish labour market. The major ones were poor knowledge of Swedish language, lack of social network, discrimination and lack of recognition of their educational qualifications and skills.

Lack of good Swedish knowledge

In Sweden, the official language is Swedish. It is used in education, work and other fields of work. One of the challenges according to authors like Le Grand and Szulkin, Bevelander (2004), Lemaître (2007), is lack of fluency in the Swedish language. The proficiency of the language of the host country is an essential factor which opens many doors for social and economic integration. According to my studies it is seen that lack of proficiency in the Swedish language is a major obstacle that prevents immigrants from getting a job especially a qualified job that matches their academic backgrounds.

Most of the jobs in the Swedish labour market required for immigrants to master the Swedish language, so that they can communicate better. Le Grand & Szulkin (2003, Pg. 2), mention above that immigrants are at a clear disadvantage in the labour market because they lack the country's specific skills to work and face difficulties in interpersonal communication. This show that poor knowledge of the Swedish language is a major barrier for immigrants to integrate economically.

Also, in the workshop held by the Swedish authorities of employment and OECD in 2014, Swedish language was identified as an essential tool used to form networks with the native-born population and search for a job. It can be seen here that proficiency in Swedish is the most critical requirement in the Swedish labour market as most of the jobs available required mastering Swedish, especially when it comes to professional, managerial, and administrative work.

Lack of social network

One of the common and fastest ways of getting a job is by using personal contacts and personal relationships. According to the laws in Sweden, available jobs must be reported to the employment offices (Lemaître 2007) but as many as two thirds of jobs are occupied through informal recruitment methods and this is because the largest job matching channel is through social networks. Diaz (1995, pg.122), mentions that building new ties to the community life, social networks and social relationships is a long-term process and it is a difficult experience for most immigrants because it takes them a long time to build relationships. This puts the immigrant in a disadvantage position especially in the job market.

Social integration helps immigrants to expand their social networks and facilitate the access to the job market in host country. According to Lemaitre (2007, pg. 31), jobs may be found not only through formal means like employment offices, but also through networks or contacts of friends and relatives. These contacts would generally be wider for persons born in the country than they would be for immigrants. The existence of such networks can facilitate job search but put the immigrants at a disadvantage position because they have limited social network. Many migrants rely on the public employment service as their primary source of job search support and this makes it difficult for them to get a job because very few job vacancies are posted on the public employment website.

Lack of human capital

Human capital, as defined by Bursell (2015), refers to a group of skills and characteristics of the worker like education, working experience, social network and language proficiency that increases the productivity and opportunity of work. It is true that human capital play an important role in the labour market integration in terms of ensuring that the individual obtains a job or receives high wages, unfortunately from previous knowledge, it can be noted that immigrants, especially those from non-EU countries have their human capital devalued because it was not obtain in Sweden.

The study shows that immigrants with university education background as well as work experiences faced difficulties in transferring these skills to the Swedish labour market. It is mentioned in Bursells article that migrants suffer a temporary loss of human capital when they move from one country to another and it takes some years to replace this in the new context of the country they find themselves in (Bursell 2015, pg.287). These studies indicate that immigrants do not find equal opportunities like natives in the labour market of the receiving country because they lack the skills required for the labour market. The skills immigrants possess does not receive the same value as that of the natives.

Bevelander (2004) mentions that structural change of the Swedish labour market into a service society demands higher general skills and language skills which can take a long time for immigrants to acquire and this puts them at a disadvantage position. Lemaître 2007 further explains that Swedish employers do not seem to put much trust in foreign educational qualifications and work experience. In some cases, recognition of foreign educational qualifications means that immigrants must pursue further education, to obtain recognition and equivalence in the Swedish system.

In addition, according to Sandberg (2017 p.21), it is important to identify measures to break the circle of social exclusion. He mentions that the Swedish Government's successful integration of immigrants in to the Swedish labour market will depend on capacity to enhance a means to quickly integrate qualified migrants in existing jobs because according to his study in 2015 only some 76 percent of foreign-born 25–64-year-olds with postsecondary education worked, while 6 percent were unemployed This was compared with natives of the same age and education where some 90 percent work and only one percent are unemployed. Also, Sandberg (2017) mentioned that successful integration of immigrants into the labour market will depend on the government's capacity to adequately train, educate, and enhance human capital among less qualified immigrants. He insists that Sweden would rapidly increase human capital among migrant groups or create jobs for those with low educational background (Sandberg 2017 p.21-22).

Discrimination

Another obstacle that immigrants face in the Swedish labour market is discrimination. This study reveals that, immigrants find it difficult to get jobs because of their ethnic background and the stereotype thinking that the employer has about their low productivity in the labour market. This is referred to as structural discrimination as mentioned by Bursell (2015), and it occurs when selection of employees is based on what employers believe to know about a group of people. Discrimination is also seen when most recruitment is done through personal networks which immigrants usually have little knowledge of because they are not included in employers' social network. An example named by Bursell is that employment based on names. Just by the names of the applicant, the employer already decides in his mind if the applicant will be productive or have a good knowledge of Swedish.

According to Rydgren (2004 p. 3), the key actors holding key positions in the labour market discriminate against migrants in two ways. First by making decisions about recruitment based on stereotypical, often prejudiced, beliefs about group-specific characteristics rather than on individual merits. Also, they discriminate by choosing people they know or who have been recommended by someone they know for vacant positions.

In addition, it is mentioned by Le Grand & Szulkin that most employers in the labour market do not recognize the academic achievements and skills that immigrants have. This is obvious when immigrants apply for a job and find it difficult to obtain it due to employer's negative opinion on their productivity (Le Grand & Szulkin (2003 Pg. 5).

To conclude this part, one can observe from previous studies that discrimination is one of the main factors that have created inequalities in job positions and wages between natives and immigrants. Most of the studies mentioned that ethnic background plays important role when it comes employment especially in high qualified jobs.

Lack of recognition of foreign certificates and foreign job experience

Lack of recognition of foreign educational qualifications and experience have contributed to the disadvantages that skilled immigrants have in finding qualified jobs. From the findings, it shows that educated and skilled immigrants have not been able to have their educational certifications recognized by the assessment body as equal with the Swedish educational qualification.

Findings from Dingu-kryklund (2005) and Lemaitre's (2007) study shows that foreign credentials of immigrants have played little or no role in helping them secure jobs that match their educational qualifications. These authors mention that, one of the factors that makes educated immigrants unable to find a job that matches with their educational qualification is their lack of academic experience in Sweden and that Swedish employers do not seem to put much trust in foreign educational qualifications and work experience.

In addition, there is a complementary educational service available at the Swedish universities, but the requirements needed to enrol in these programs takes too long. This is because immigrants must complete all of the Swedish courses and then study like one or two years to get their educational qualifications validated in Sweden. Dingu-kryklund (2005 p.7) mentions that, the approach of completion meant that many of the educational curricula completed abroad were considered inferior, as they could not be accepted as the same to the Swedish educational curricula. A standard formulation was that, for foreign education to be

same as that of Swedish education, it must be completed with a complementary study as explained above.

In addition it can be noticed from the studies that there exist prejudices in the Swedish labour market because some employers perceive that people from Africa, Asia and Latin America have difficulties coping with new jobs when compared to immigrants from Australia, Europe and North America. This makes their professional skills devalued thus reducing their chances of getting a job. One of the explanations given by Manhica et al. (2015 pg.195) as to why African immigrants have a disadvantage in the Swedish labour market is lack of appropriate human capital, stereotype and discrimination based on ethnic identity.

Employers crave more skills from immigrants especially in the social services

In recent years employers in Sweden have been craving more skills from the employees especially at the service sector which makes it difficult for immigrants to meet up with these demands. Bevelander (2004), mentions that, due to structural change in the Swedish labour market into a service-oriented market, society demands higher general skills before employment, like a university education, specialised manpower and language skills. This may take a long time for immigrants to acquire these skills making their chances of employment extremely low. In addition, some employers may devalue education undertaking in foreign countries when they make decisions about recruitment, reward allocation and promotion.

Le Grand & Szulkin (2003) mention that People with similar educational credentials are treated differently depending on the country the education was taken from. Educational qualifications from non- EU immigrants are devalued when compared to those from EU countries. It can be noticed that, educated immigrants with a university education as well as work experiences have difficulties in transferring skills gained from their countries to the Swedish labour market. This may be because the education systems and working conditions are different and are considered low in Sweden. This makes it difficult for non-EU immigrants to have a job without first doing a completion study.

Jobs gotten by highly educated immigrants versus their qualifications

From the previous knowledge above, it is seen that highly educated immigrants have not been able to obtain jobs in the Swedish labour market that match their educational background. This is because the employers downgrade their human capital in Sweden, and it is difficult to transfer the human capital from their home country to Sweden since there is a difference in the labour system. To get jobs that match their qualifications takes some time because they must study all the Swedish language courses and study some more courses at the university to complete their studies to be eligible for the job market. Lemaitre (2007) mentioned in his study that in some cases, recognition of foreign educational qualifications means immigrants need to take time to pursue further education to complete their studies to meet up with the standards expected in Sweden. This shows highly educated immigrants must invest in education in order to improve their qualifications and knowledge, thus increasing the opportunity of getting a qualified job in Sweden.

Dahlstedt's studies in 2011 showed that job mismatch was greater amongst immigrants than the natives and this makes educated immigrants to end up with jobs lower than their academic qualifications. Also, Dahlstedt's study in 2015 showed a higher job mismatch for the first generation of immigrants when compared to their children because the first

generation brought their human capital from outside Sweden which was often downgraded by employers in Sweden.

Chapter six Discussion

In this part of the study, I will summarise my findings and analysis. This essay had 3 major questions. The first one was to identify the challenges faced by highly educated immigrants from non-EU countries in the Swedish labour market. As I have elaborated above, the main challenge was lack of Swedish language proficiency which prevented immigrants from getting jobs and especially jobs that match their educational qualifications. Also, the negative stereotype attitudes of employers in Sweden towards immigrants like downgrading their academic qualifications from their countries was a major obstacle for immigrants in the labour market. In addition, other challenges included lack of social network, discrimination, lack of required human capital were all obstacles that immigrants face in the Swedish labour market.

The second question was to find out if jobs gotten by highly educated immigrants match their academic qualifications. From previous research in this study, it is seen that the Swedish labour market does not recognize the work experience and skills of the immigrant from non-EU countries and this makes it difficult for them to find jobs that matches their academic qualifications. It can also notice that, to obtain a qualified job, the immigrants must study all the Swedish language courses and other courses at the university to increase their opportunities and chances in the Swedish labour market.

The last question was identifying the measures taken by the Swedish government to eliminate these challenges. It was realised that most of the challenges mentioned in this study were identified in a workshop held in Stockholm between the Swedish authorities and the OECD in 2014. Possible direction for future policies were proposed. Some of them were to improve the quality of SFI (Svenska för invandare) and make it flexible so that it can be studied alongside vocational jobs.

Also, a plan was made that aims to individualise the integration process based on the immigrants' background and validation was to be undertaken early to build the right introduction plan and find an appropriate job.

Efforts are currently underway to enhance employer's involvement in the certification procedure. The government has allocated additional resources to maintain the number of places on bridging courses for some professions such as teachers, lawyers, doctors, nurses and dentists. Raise awareness of discrimination, tackling stereotypes and integration measures that bring immigrants into contact with employers such as mentoring, and traineeships will help to overcome the information deficit that often underpins discrimination.

Conclusion

This essay was based on the challenges that highly educated immigrants from non-EU countries face in the Swedish labour market. It is a qualitative study based on secondary analysis of previous knowledge on the topic. The aim was to find out the obstacles faced by highly educated immigrants in the Swedish labour market, and to see if the jobs they get match their academic qualifications. Also, to know what the government was doing to eliminate these challenges.

According to the findings of this study, the main obstacles they faced in entering the Swedish labour market was poor knowledge of Swedish language, poor network and discrimination. In addition, lack of trust of the employers in the qualifications of these immigrants was also an obstacle, as employers think that their educational qualifications are lower than that of Sweden, and therefore cannot perform well at work. The finding of this study also revealed that the human capital of immigrants is devalued in the Swedish labour market, so they could not benefit from their skills and work experience in finding a job in Sweden. The importance of social network in Sweden is also important in facilitating access to jobs and avoid unemployment. According to the study, positions that immigrants got, did not match their educational qualification and so to obtain a qualified job, they must go through studying some university courses and all the Swedish language courses.

Despite all these challenges, immigrants have had many opportunities in Sweden like free study of the Swedish language, job training opportunities and even supporting some employers financially to employ immigrants but all this is still not enough because immigrants still lag behind in terms of employment especially when compared to the Swedish native. It is evident from the study that the government has identified some of these challenges and is making room for improvement to facilitate access for skilled immigrants in the labour market, so they are in the right direction.

To sum it all, integration take a long time especially economic integration and the process involves many challenges as named above, but most immigrants gradually tend to acquire the country's specific skills by learning the language, gaining the labour market experience, making connections with natives, and adapting to their new environment.

Suggestion for Future Research

Based on the findings of this thesis, which showed that the Swedish government had identified most of these challenges and were working on the solutions to facilitate economic integration for immigrants, it would be interesting to conduct a research on how far the government have gone to implement the future policies proposed at the workshop between the OECD and the ministries of employment and finance and if the solutions are working.

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