



Minna Lahtinen

Diaconia University of Applied Sciences
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“THAT YOU ARE TREATED EQUALLY ON WORK WITH OTHERS”

Disabled immigrants in the labour market

ABSTRACT

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This thesis aims to raise discussion about disabled immigrants in Finland. The research objective was to study the employment of disabled people in Finland, emphasizing individuals' experiences of possibilities to affect employment opportunities and processes. The societal aspect was also an essential point of view in the study as employment is a correlative process and examining the topic comprehensively is vital.

This thesis was done in co-operation with Hilma, the support center for immigrant persons with disabilities and long-term illnesses. Mixed methods were used in this study with an emphasis on qualitative research methods. The data consisted of an online questionnaire and three personal semi-structured interviews.

Key concepts of the study were employment, agency, and motivation. The important viewpoint was how an individual could enhance employment opportunities. Agency and motivation aimed to view the person's role. Agency was examined through versatile theories and connected to concepts like self-efficacy and relational agency. Motivation was recognized as a diverse and questioned term but viewed here as an internal state that pushes people towards action. Motivation was also connected and viewed with an idea of adult's lifelong learning.

The findings indicate that there are experiences of possibilities to affect own employment processes in Finland. Especially the significance of own attitude, being active and trying are emphasized. Nevertheless, also discrimination and barriers are experienced during the employment processes or in working life. Particularly, the need to examine and discuss attitudes is highlighted in this study. The perspective of this thesis is also to emphasize individuality when referencing groups like disabled people, people with long-term illnesses, or immigrants.

Keywords: Disabled immigrants, Employment of disabled people, Possibilities to affect, Agency, Attitudes

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1 INTRODUCTION

There is still little researched information about immigrants with disabilities and long-term illnesses in Finland (Finnish Institute for Wealth and Welfare 2019 a). This thesis aims to raise discussion about disabled immigrants in Finland and bring an essential topic, employment of disabled people, to the spotlight. The thesis was done in cooperation with Hilma, the support center for immigrant persons with disabilities and long-term illnesses. Hilma aims to enhance the rights and equal participation options for immigrants with disabilities and long-term illnesses in Finnish society. (Hilma- the support center for immigrant persons with disabilities and long-term illnesses n.d.)

The objective of this thesis was to researching individuals' experiences of possibilities to affect employment opportunities and to hearing opinions or experiences from practice. The thesis aimed to study how an individual could enhance employment opportunities and processes. The key concepts of the study were agency and motivation, which aimed to view the person's role in the process of searching for meaningful employment opportunities. The agency was examined through versatile theories and connected to concepts like self-efficacy and relational agency. The motivation was recognized as a diverse and questioned term but considered here as an internal state that pushes people towards action. The motivation was also connected and viewed with the idea of adult' lifelong learning. Learning was incorporated into research as it can be viewed meaningful part while aiming to find opportunities in a new country. The societal aspect and affections of surroundings were also essential point of views in the study as employment is a correlative process.

Mixed methods were used in this study with an emphasis on qualitative research methods. The data consisted of an online questionnaire and three personal semi-structured interviews. The sampling remained small which is discussed in the report of the thesis.

While viewing the topic and the target group, it remains essential to emphasize that immigrants are not one homogeneous group, but the backgrounds, reasons to move to Finland and all other factors are individual (Finnish Institute for Wealth and Welfare 2019a). There is a vital need to emphasize individuality when referencing groups like disabled people, people with long-term illnesses, or immigrants. Even universality is

also needed, especially while speaking about services or rights, but it is also essential to highlight individuality. No one should not be only to viewed as a part of some defined group.

Also, it must be emphasized that the amount of disabled people is only based on rough estimations. World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that: "About 15% of the world's population lives with some form of disability, of whom 2-4% experience significant difficulties in functioning." (WHO 2011.) As there are no accurate statistics available, in this thesis, the rough estimation is done by comparing the estimation of WHO (2-15%) for the number of foreign- language speakers in Finland end of 2020, 432 800 (Statistics Finland 2020). According to this estimation, around 8 656- 64 920 foreign-language speakers in Finland live with some form of disability.

Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment of Finland conducted a report last year, 2020 -Structural barriers to employment of persons with disabilities, which survey barriers and practices holistically that limits people with disabilities out of job markets for the first time (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment of Finland 2020). Disability organizations have been working and raising the importance of the employment topic from the perspective of disabled people for a longer time. However, broader discussion with different operators must continue and ensure that policies and attitude environment will also be developed.

2 BACKGROUND OF THE RESEARCH

The thesis process started by summarizing essential and interesting topics supported by my professional interests and background. I became familiar with Hilma, the support center for immigrant persons with disabilities and long-term illnesses which this thesis has been done in co-operation. This chapter introduces Hilma and description of the thesis process.

2.1 Introducing Hilma

Hilma is the support center for immigrant persons with disabilities and long-term illnesses. Hilma is a non-profitable organization aiming to enhance the rights and equal participation options for immigrant persons with disabilities and long-term illnesses in Finnish society. Hilma provides information about the services and rights, counseling, peer support groups, materials, organizing education for students or professionals, and offering consultation and education services for other organizations and officials. Hilma is also doing development- and advocacy work. The services of Hilma are free of charge, and all the language groups are served. The roof organization of Hilma is The Finnish Disability Forum. (Hilma- the support center for immigrant persons with disabilities and long-term illnesses n.d.)

Next, the aim is to introduce Hilma's operations in short in 2020. The short-term counseling of Hilma served 276 persons and personal counseling of 100 persons. Hilma reached customers from 17 different language groups. The biggest language group was Arabic speakers. Three different peer support groups were gathered during 2020. Hilma also coordinated Hilma networks which gathered five times. The group consisted of experts by experience, representatives of TE-officials, representatives from disability and multicultural organizations, workers from disability and immigrant services from the capital area and Hilma's workers and students. Also, a network for intellectual disabilities was established. Fifteen lectures were held in different organizations, and different kinds of co-operation and networking were concentrated during the year. In 2020, in Hilma's webpage were 7106 visitors, and materials Hilma produced were watched over 1000 times. Hilma's Facebook page had 1040 followers at the end of 2020. (Hilma- annual report 2020, 1-6.)

2.2 Process description

My two professional interests, immigration, and disabilities strengthened the idea of conducting a thesis in co-operation with Hilma. The viewpoint was also that the discussion of disabilities needs comprehensive research. The co-operation started by communicating with Hilma's coordinator. Different kinds of topics were considered, but I suggested the employment theme to acknowledge the subject of the master studies and think of a current valuable and less researched topic. The employment theme was also chosen for the importance of the topic and the need to bring versatile views for the employment discussion of immigrants.

As a start, I conducted a literature review to widen the ideas about the topic and build the theoretical background. Theoretical perspectives were applied and strengthened during the process developed. First, I concentrated on searching articles about immigration, disabilities, and employment. The search brought results, but I discovered that very few articles were including all three themes. There was literature about immigration in Finland and abroad, some about immigrants' employment or employment of people with disabilities but without immigration context. As individual possibilities to affect raised the central theme of this thesis, I chose to view the individual's role through the agency. Agency can be understood from various theoretical perspectives, and it can get many shapes, but it is a concept that can be connected for individual capacity to conduct the action, and it aims to discover what may affect the person's choices and possibilities to act. Using the agency as a central term offers an opportunity to research the individual action comprehensively. More closely, individual possibilities to affect chose to be discovered through concepts like self-efficacy, motivation, and lifelong learning, for example, through the studies of Albert Bandura, Boeran (2017), and Ford (1992). Later, I deepened my understanding about versatile agency and connected the meaning of professional agency for example, through articles of Eteläpelto, Hökkä, Paloniemi, & Vähäsantanen (2014) and Honkasalo, Ketokivi, Leppo (2014). Later, also relational agency became a meaningful concept. The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment of Finland (2020) report -Structural barriers to employment of persons with disabilities in Finland also offered valuable information for this thesis.

The original plan to collect the data was to publish a questionnaire and organize two participatory workshops where the research topics would have been discussed in a group. Ongoing COVID-19 pandemic forced to edit the plan, and participatory workshops were replaced with personal semi-structured interviews. In September 2020, the questionnaire was published on Hilma's webpage and Facebook, and during October-November 2020, semi-structured interviews were conducted. We kept in touch through emails, calls, and meetings with Hilma's coordinator during the process. The changes in the plan and different phases through the process were discussed together.

In May 2021, I presented the research at an online meeting organized for Hilma's customers. The purpose was to introduce the study, present some views from results, and discuss employment. The meeting was held in English and translated into Arabic and Kurdish. In total, 14 persons participated in this meeting. During the meeting, some ideas and questions were raised. Few persons from the target group pointed the struggle of getting employed, and the need to find solutions for these questions was discussed. Also, critical voices were heard towards the results, and a small sampling of this research was discussed. During the meeting, some ideas for Hilma's future actions were represented and collected related to the employment theme from the target group.

In October 2021, I will also participate in a meeting organized for Hilma's networks and partners, which will consist of different operators. This presentation will aim to present the thesis process and the results and continue discussing the topic.

3 PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN THE WORKING LIFE

This chapter aims firstly to discuss the multidimensionality of defining disabilities and long-term illnesses and bring some statistical data and estimations about disabled people in general and disabled immigrants in Finland. Secondly, the opportunities and challenges of employment will be viewed shortly.

3.1 The multidimensionality of the definitions and statistics of disability

For this thesis, it is appropriate to define disability and long-term illnesses shortly. Definitions here are only to give a frame about the target groups. The purpose of this thesis was to collect experiences from the target group of Hilma from the persons who define themselves as one or both target groups without a strict need to focus on diagnosis or the type of disability. A more significant focus of this thesis was on people with disabilities.

Creating statistics of disabilities should not be simplified. Different kinds of information gathered on disabilities are giving only one part in the overall picture. "Disability is always defined in relation to a specific situation or happening (for example, the need for services, need for modification due to the environment, and own experience of the situation.)" (Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare n.d.) Disabilities can be viewed differently. Disability can be a matter of identity question or a need to modify the environment to be accessible for different kinds of people. A person with disabilities also uses the same services as others and does not automatically use specific services. (Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare n.d.)

World Health Organization (n.d. a) is defining disabilities in the following way:

"Disabilities is an umbrella term, covering impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions. An impairment is a problem in body function or structure; an activity limitation is a difficulty encountered by an individual in executing a task or action; while a participation restriction is a problem experienced by an individual in involvement in life situations."

The United Nations Convention on the rights with persons with disabilities (2006) says:

"Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others."

Disability is an umbrella term and can take many forms according to personal needs or limitations in the ability to function. Thus, the need for a person with a disability must be evaluated individually, where societal and environmental barriers must be evaluated and removed (World Health Organization n.d.a). It is needed to ask and evaluate how limited and unfunctional societies create disability and how much it is an individual feature.

Statistics Finland (n.d.) defines long-term illness in the following way:

"Illnesses for which the respondent receives regular care or for which he or she is monitored by a physician or the health care in general. It can also be a question of allergy. Long-term here refers to a period of at least six months: the person has been bothered by the problem for at least six months at the time of interview, or it will probably continue so long that its duration will be at least six months."

Multidimensionality is also reflected in disability statistics. There is no accurate information of the number of disabled people in Finland, excluding people with visual impairments, around 55 000. Other estimations are rough: people with cerebral palsy around 6 500, people with speech disorder around 65 000, people with hearing impairment 740 000, deaf people using sign language 4 000, and people with intellectual disability 45 000. (Vesala & Vartio 2019, 9.)

The number of disabled people can also be perceived through statistics of Kela, the unemployment office of Finland (Te-services), and employment pension companies. Kela is the Social Insurance Institution of Finland, which provides social security coverage for Finnish residents. Social security benefits include, for example, disability benefits, basic unemployment security, basic pensions, rehabilitation, health insurance, and family benefits. (Kela n.d.) According to the statistics, recipients of Kela's disability benefits over 16 years (disability allowance and pensioner's care allowance) were in 2019 **228 157**, and recipients of Kela's disability pension at the end of 2019

were **141 000**. Persons receiving disability pension of employment pension companies at the end of 2019 were **134 000**, and persons with partial work ability in TE services: (disability or long-term illness) / unemployed among them May 2020 were **64 200/ 35 800**. Based on the estimation of the Social and Healthcare Ministry, persons using disability services is around 100 000. There are no statistics available, how many of them are employed or aiming to get employment. (Kyröläinen 2020, 16-18.)

A person with a disability may also have a partial working ability. However, here must be acknowledged that there is no one definition of partial working ability. A person might have a partial working ability due to different reasons like disability, long-term illness, a crisis in life, or long-term unemployment. (Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare 2019b.) According to Statistics of Finland (2011), even around 1.9 million Finns of working age counted to have of disability or chronic disease. A third of them, or about 600 000 persons, evaluate that the disease or disability affects their work or work opportunities. Around 300 000 persons with partial working ability are continuously employed. (Mattila-Wiro & Tiainen 2019, 9-14.)

As can be predicted, information on disabled immigrants in Finland is still scarce (Finnish Institute for Wealth and Welfare 2019a). Only rough estimation can be done, for example, by comparing statistics of foreign-language speakers in Finland on the estimation of the World Health Organization that "about 15 percent of the world's population lives with some form of disability, of whom 2-4 percent experience significant difficulties in functioning." (WHO 2011.) The number of foreign-language speakers in Finland in end of 2020, 432 800, (Statistics Finland 2020) compared the estimation of WHO (2-15%) gives an estimation that around 8 656- 64 920 foreign-language speakers in Finland lives with some form of disability. As acknowledged, this is only one possible way to view the estimations and not based on accurate data. It must also be noted that numbers of immigrants can be based on different point of views (cf. foreign-language speakers and people with immigrant backgrounds) when the amount to compare with WHO's estimation already may differ. Finnish Institute for Wealth and Welfare (2019a) also points out that undocumented people are out of official support systems and like that also out of these kinds of estimations. Also, exiting the origin country and seeking asylum might be more challenging for disabled people, which might influence the numbers (Finnish Institute for Wealth and Welfare 2019a), but it

must be noted that immigrating to Finland can also happen from other various reasons like due to family, study, and work.

3.2 Challenges and opportunities of employment

Finland signed The United Nations Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities in 2007 and ratified it in 2016 (Vesala & Vartio 2019,7). The United Nations Convention on the rights with persons with disabilities article 27 starts (n.d. b):

“States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to work, on an equal basis with others; this includes the right to the opportunity to gain a living by work freely chosen or accepted in a labour market and work environment that is open, inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities.”

Equal human rights and the right to work and earn offers a vital base for discussion.

Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment of Finland conducted a report (2020) -Structural barriers to employment of persons with disabilities in Finland. The report survey barriers and practices holistically that limits people with disabilities out of job markets for the first time. The report recognizes structural and legislative barriers that set disabled persons in an unequal position in participating in working life and emphasizes the need to increase knowledge of disabilities in working life context and discuss limitations and possibilities. (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment of Finland 2020.)

The report- “Structural barriers to employment of persons with disabilities in Finland” describes the meaning of developing, for example, transportation- personal assistant- and translation services and the system of disability pension, to ensure more equal possibilities for disabled persons to attend working life. Also, the need to strengthen the knowledge of TE officials about the employment of disabled persons was acknowledged. For example, the need to increase the information that customers with disability pension have a right to get services. It was also pointed that support services like a subsidy for arranging working conditions and pay subsidy could be used more. It is important to make these kinds of support services more accessible and more comfortable for employers. Lack of knowledge to use different kinds of support services is

seen to increase recruitment thresholds. Generally, the attitude environment is seen as creating recruitment thresholds, and the need to increase the knowledge of employers was pointed out. For example, insufficient information related to accessibility or special arrangements might increase negative attitudes towards hiring disabled people. Generally, improving the accessibility of services and environment is seen as valuable to increase equal opportunities to participate. (Kyröläinen 2020, 21-43.)

The report “Structural barriers to employment of persons with disabilities in Finland” is covering the topic in the Finnish context while it must be acknowledged that immigrants with disabilities might not always have the same access to information or jobs because of the language barriers or lack of information about Finnish systems and the individual rights, and responsibilities. They can also be under threat to face even more attitude issues or recruitment threshold than the mainstream.

The employment of immigrants, in general, is an increasingly emphasized topic. Still, it is also known for facing hardship for several reasons like language barriers (The report of Ministry of Interior Finland 2011, 18-21) or discrimination related to the immigrant status, like foreigner name (Ahmad 2019, 19-20). People with immigrant backgrounds are also doing more part-time or seasonal work than mainstream (Sutela 2015 in Pasila & Sutela 2019). Different sides, obstacles, and needs must be acknowledged while viewing the immigrant’s employment. Disabled immigrants need to be included for discussions of employment and different needs and possibilities also examined and offered. Above all, it is vital to include members from the target group to discuss and develop employment opportunities and to describe the needs and ideas.

Attitude development can be considered as an important perspective that needs a comprehensive discussion around the employment theme. The report “Structural barriers on employment of persons with disabilities in Finland” emphasizes the need for attitude change by increasing the visibility of disabled people as equal members with others, not always as a separate group or emphasizing the disability itself. The role of media can be seen as significant while aiming to change attitudes, and for example, bringing disabled persons more visible in different contexts, such as specialists, could be seen as necessary actions. Increasing this kind of comprehensive visibility can be seen to positively affect disabled persons themselves and create self-efficacy feelings as complete members of society. (Kyröläinen 2020, 43.)

4 KEY CONCEPTS OF THE RESEARCH

The important viewpoint of this thesis is whether people with disabilities experiences possibilities to affect employment opportunities and how they could enhance their employment in Finland. This chapter introduces the key concepts of research, agency, and motivation. Motivation is examined together with life-long learning. Agency and motivation are multidimensional terms and cannot be simplified, but the aim is to view the person's role through these concepts.

4.1 Diverse agency

The term agency is used to examine the role of the person. Agency can be understood from various theoretical perspectives and can get many shapes. Next, the aim is to bring perspectives to create an understanding of agency and how it is viewed in this thesis.

Tucker (1998, 80) presents Anthony Giddens's thoughts of agency to mean that person is "reflexive, able to monitor his/her experiences and give reasons for his/her actions." Eteläpelto (2011) references Giddens's thoughts (1984) by saying that agency can be seen in a person when he/she can choose and could have been able to act also another way than what happened. Agency creates the ability to bring about the effect, and agent always uses power. (Eteläpelto 2011, 6.) Pierre Bourdieu emphasizes that objective structures or individual actions can not be separated from each other, but more to be understood that structures affect individual actions while the action is not something the individual is able to choose freely, but it is also not something only built outside, more both interacts. (Bourdieu 1990; 2000 in Honkasalo, Ketokivi, Leppo 2014, 366). Pragmatically tuned view usually connects agent and agency to concrete situations or environments that change and need to be re-evaluated continuously. In an ethnographical view, the agency arises from the social, political, and cultural dynamics in a particular time and place. (Honkasalo et al. 2014, 368-369.) Eteläpelto et al. (2014, 21-22) recognizes the multiple ways of determining the agency but emphasizes it to be a process which is in many cases related to the activity, initiative, participatory, and the feelings of a possibility to affect and control the own life. Agency can be examined also from the view of working life. According to Eteläpelto et al. (2014), the

professional agency is related to possibilities to influence and participate, being innovative, and review the professional identity. Besides, workers need to develop professionally; there is also a need to develop the practices and structures of the organization. (Eteläpelto et al. 2014, 17-18.)

In social sciences, agency has been described with different orientations. Some orientations are emphasizing the role of the agency less, and it is more discovered as a part of a whole. Some are viewing it as a conceptual tool for interpreting and performing activities. Macro historic orientation says that the culture system produces individuals with different interests where individuals execute different orientations or actions with a broader collective purpose. Moreover, some orientations emphasize the effects of individual agency more and possibilities of the individual to orientate the life even life is recognized to be a more complex and a result of different kind incidents and powers. (Macmillan 2007, in Martin 2016, 42-43.)

In psychology, agency is often connected to self-efficacy. Classical theorist and psychologist Albert Bandura created a Theory of Self-Efficacy as part of a Social Cognitive Theory. Self-Efficacy Theory emphasizes the role of a person's beliefs towards his/her self-efficacy. Self-efficacy beliefs affect a person's thinking, feeling, motivating, and acting. The core claim is that self-efficacy beliefs contribute to human motivations and attainments. (Bandura 1995, 1-3.)

Bandura (1995) divides personal efficacy expectations into four sources of information; 1. Mastery experience, 2. Vicarious experience, 3. Social persuasion, 4. Physiological and emotional states. Mastery experience emphasizes the meaning of experiences to build better self-efficacy. To create a resilient sense of efficacy requires getting experiences in overcoming obstacles through perseverant efforts. (Bandura 1995, 3-4.) This idea can be linked to different areas in life and could be viewed as all perseverant efforts to overcome obstacles that strengthen self-efficacy. The vicarious experience is emphasizing social models of creating better or worse self-efficacy. While feeling similar to the model, a person's self-efficacy beliefs are affected by this model's success or failures. Social persuasion raises the meaning of positive or negative persuasion and the affections of it for self-efficacy. It does not mean only a positive persuasion verbally but also creating situations that can raise people's believes in their capabilities and self-improvement. Physiological and emotional states speak

about the meaning of physical status, stress, and emotional tendencies for self-efficacy feelings. It is important how emotional and physical actions are perceived and interpreted. (Bandura 1995, 3-5.) The report “Structural barriers to employment of persons with disabilities in Finland” points the self-efficacy as one influential factor to progress the employment of disabled people. There is a discussion of the need for more comprehensive visibility, for example, by representing disabled persons as working life specialists to strengthen the self-efficacy feelings as full members of society. (Kyröläinen 2020, 43.)

Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory "subscribes to a casual structure grounded in triadic reciprocal causation (Bandura 1986). In this triadic codetermination, human functioning is a product of the interplay of intrapersonal influences, the behavior individuals engage in, and the environmental forces that impinge upon them (Figure 1)". (Bandura, 2012, 12.)

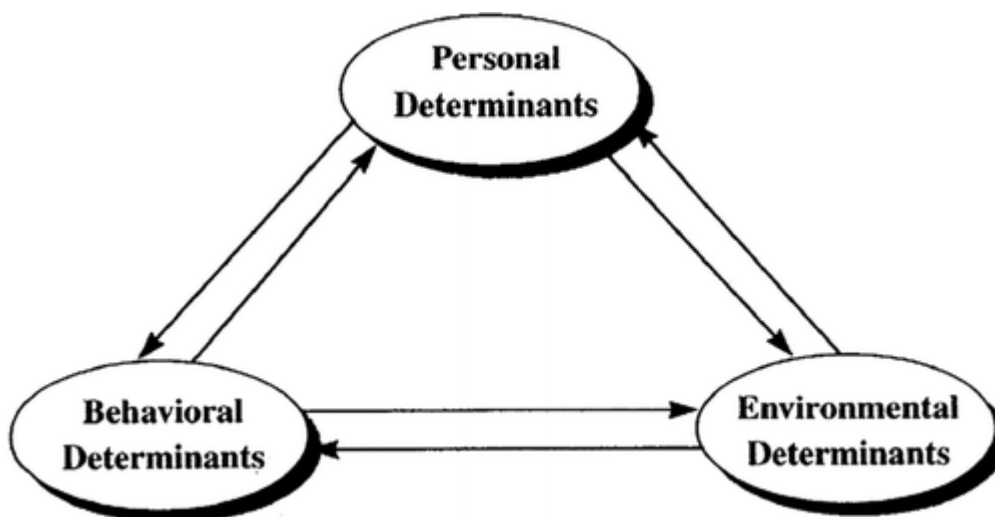


FIGURE 1: Schematization of Triadic Reciprocal Determination in the Causal Model of Social Cognitive Theory. (Bandura 2012)

The Social Cognitive Theory distinguishes three different forms of agency: personal, proxy, and collective. Personal efficacy is centralized. Theory "adopts an agentic perspective in which individuals are producers of experiences and shapers of events. Among the mechanisms of human agency, none is more focal or pervading than the belief of personal efficacy. This core belief is the foundation of human agency." (Bandura 2000, 75.) Perceived efficacy directly affects behavior, but it can also impact

other determinants like goals, outcome expectations, and possibilities in social environments. Efficacy beliefs are seen to affect the efforts chosen towards the action, how resilience is the adversity, and guiding the person's way of thinking; optimistically, pessimistically erratically, or strategically. When individuals do not have a straight control over social or institutional activities, or they do not want to load themselves with the work needed to develop required competencies, responsibilities, and stressors that the exercise of control entails, they can seek solutions through the exercise of proxy agency. In proxy agency, individuals get other people with the needed skills or knowledge to perform the desired outcome. Third, collective efficacy recognizes the need to work also together to achieve goals. As people are communal and do not live in individual autonomy or sometimes do not have straight control to affect conditions in their lives, other people and cooperation are needed to achieve some goals when a proxy or collective efficacy is used. Conjoint believes towards collective capability is a crucial part of achieving common goals in collective agency. (Bandura 2000, 75-76; Bandura 2006, 165-166.)

The Social Cognitive Theory has two main approaches to measuring group perceived efficacy; individual members estimate their capabilities to execute the functions in the group, or members estimate their group's capability to operate as a whole. Personal efficacy can be seen to connect other members by enabling or impeding activities. Interactive group dynamics affect individual efficacy, but individual efficacy also affects the group and its performance. (Bandura 2000, 75-76.)

The relational perspective also emphasizes recognizing social relations and interaction with them while viewing an agency. Humans live and belong in different kinds of social networks and are implementing agency in correlative processes with others. (Juvonen 2013, 41.) Toiviainen (2019, 42) determines relationality to mean that people are understood socially anchored, where identities are molding between the context of social relations and social structures like ethnicity, class, or gender. Agency and action have active and passive, receiving sides, and action is a correlative process (Honkasalo 2008 in Toiviainen 2019, 42). The relational agency raises the need to understand humans and actions depending on and affecting each other.

In conclusion, an agency can be viewed by emphasizing the individual qualities and opportunities to affect or to be seen to be built in collective processes and

environments. It can be seen as an interaction of the time and place where politics, cultures, and social reality interact, or it can be seen as an individual action, power to act, which can also be affected by different orientations from in- or outside. The viewpoint in this study examines the agency as an individual action or chance to influence and conduct the action. However, it also adapts the relational view where social reality affects and gives its impact. Social reality, other people, and circumstances affect the action and agency and create possibilities or limitations. Critical viewpoint is also to examine that strengthening the agency can mean a possibility to strengthen the individual's role. In this thesis, meaningful terms are self-efficacy, relational agency, and motivation.

4.2 Motivation and lifelong learning

Motivation is examined as part of this study as it can be linked to agency and actions in different ways. Motivation can be argued to be one influential factor in the employment process and employment itself. Here, motivation is also viewed as part of the possibilities to affect.

Motivation is diverse, sometimes simplified term and can be viewed from various perspectives. In daily spoken language, it is used often, and both internal and external motivation factors are recognized. Different factors motivate different people, and it can be seen affected, for example, by background, personality, societal status, time, and place. Motivation can be discovered as an internal state that pushes people for action and engages in certain activities (Ormrod 2004 in Schreiber 2016, 2; Lehtinen, Lerkkanen Vauras 2007, 177). Motivation is seen to influence what kind of choices a person makes between different options and how he/she feels or thinks towards the task/action (Lehtinen et al. 2007, 177). Schreiber (2016, 14) links motivation and behavior together as he views that it is valuable to figure out why behavior occurs eventually. Motivation is also linked to different parts of life. Kanfer, Chen & Pritchard (2008, 3) discuss work motivation and determine it as a psychological process that unifies cognition, affect, and behavior. Motivation research is diverse, dispersed, and also defined as problematic. Motivation has been referred to in many contexts; however, it is not considered uniform why some researchers have been giving up on using the term. (Lehtinen et al. 2007, 177-178.)

In his Motivational Systems Theory, Martin Ford (1992, 78) determines the concept of motivation “as the organized patterning of an individual’s personal goals, emotions, and personal agency beliefs.” All three, personal goals, emotions, and agency beliefs, are interdependent and affect motivation. In this theory, Ford (1992) also argues that effective functioning is combined with four conditions: motivation, skills, biological structure, and responsive environment. Achievements and competence are the results of these four. As summarized, a person needs to be motivated to initiate and maintain activity and skills to construct and execute the activity. Also, the biological structure needs to support achieving motivation and skill components, and a responsive environment to support progress towards the goal or at least not preventing to accomplish the goal. Ford (1992) represented the idea in the following formula.

$$\text{Achievement/Competence} = \frac{(\text{Motivation} \times \text{Skill})}{\text{Biological Structure}} \times \text{Responsive environment}$$

Motivation can also be linked to learning. For example, Boeran (2017) has been researching adults’ lifelong learning participation and why some participate in it, and others do not. The view is discussed here as learning can be connected to better employment and economic opportunities, especially since working demands continuous learning. Also, the need for lifelong learning participation like re-education and language studies can appear, especially while moving to a new country and building a life there.

Why do some adults participate in lifelong learning activities and others do not? Adults’ lifelong learning research started focusing on individual motivation to learn and attitudes to participate but has understood nowadays to be more of interaction of different factors and not solely as individual decisions. Boeran (2017) has studied adults’ lifelong learning participation and suggests the multi-layer model examining the topic. The model includes three levels; micro (individual), mesa (learning providers), and macro (countries). Boerans (2017) views that the model can explain why some adults participate in lifelong learning and others do not. (Boeran 2017, 161-167.)

Micro-level examines the role and possibilities of an individual. At the micro-level, the importance of motivation is discussed and linked to confidence, attitude, and self-efficacy. Still, Boeran (2017) discusses the need to recognize social inequalities as an

explanatory factor why some participate, and others do not. At the mesa-level, education and training providers significantly enhance the multiple opportunities by understanding the market needs and replying to those. It can be discovered how accessible, expensive, or supported it is for individuals to participate in lifelong learning activities. Boeran (2017) also mentions that most lifelong learning activities occur within the workplace, emphasizing the meaning of a workplace to maintain it. At the macro-level, country variation challenges a country's policies and discusses variations between the countries. The education system, social policies, robust welfare system, investments and innovations, and equality versus inequality were highlighted as contributory factors. (Boeran 2017, 164-167.) Boeran (2017) represents the idea that all three cogs need to be turning around; achieving participation will be harder to reach if one block. Boeran (2017) suggests the need to studying adults' lifelong learning participation more from these three levels to understanding it comprehensively and examining how to operationalize that way of thinking into real research projects and activities. (Boeran 2017, 168-170.) Below, represented the multi-layered model.

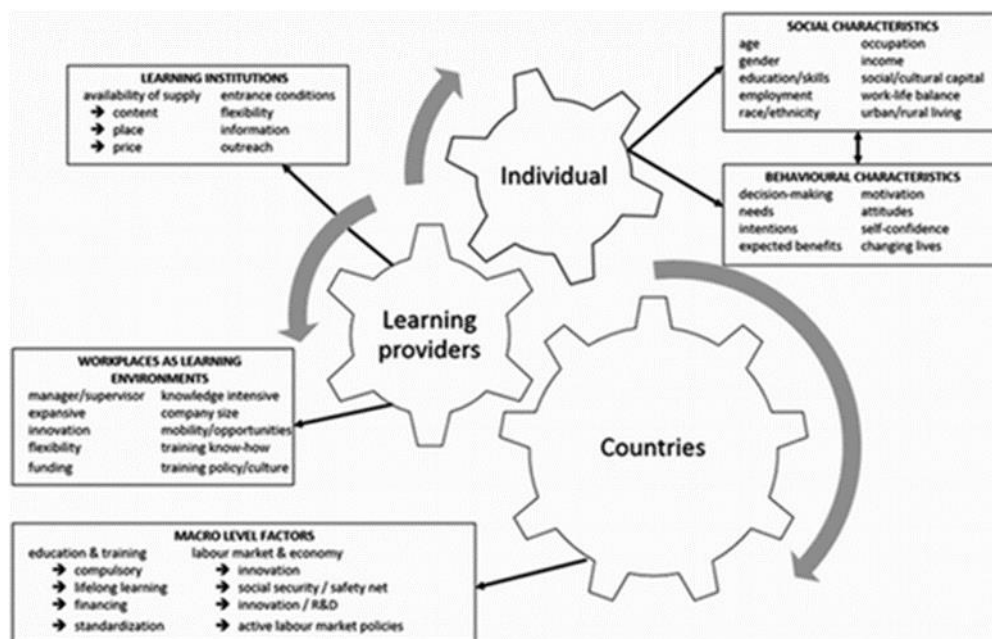


FIGURE 2. Comprehensive lifelong learning participation model. (Boeran 2017)

In this thesis, motivation is examined as an internal state that pushes people towards action, and it has a role while aiming to implement the action. This research also adapts the idea of Ford (1992) that motivation is affected by different kinds of internal factors like emotions, personal agency beliefs, and biological structures, but also external factors like environment as a society and existing circumstances impact. An essential

point of view is to examine motivation as a correlative process and not simplifying it too much. Learning is adapted as part of this study as it is viewed as one factor affecting possibilities and orientating for life in a new country. Boeran's (2017) micro-meso-macro thinking is a valuable point of view to be considered while thinking about how to enhance learning and, through that, also employment opportunities for disabled immigrants in Finland.

5 RESEARCH CONTRIBUTION & METHODOLOGY

This chapter introduces the research objective and methodology. The process of data collection and analysis of the results is described. In the last chapters, ethical consideration and reliability & validity of the research are discussed.

5.1 Research objective

This research aimed to view ideas and opinions from disabled immigrants about employment in Finland. The main objective was to research individuals' experiences of possibilities to affect and to hear opinions from practice. The societal aspect was also an essential point of view in the study as employment is a correlative process.

Research questions:

1. What kinds of experiences of persons participated in this study have about the possibility of influencing employment in Finland?
2. How to reinforce the agency and participation of immigrants with disabilities in working life in Finland?
3. What kinds of development ideas did this study found of how society could support disabled immigrants in the working life context?

5.2 Research methodology

This thesis is applying mixed research methods and triangulation. The mixed methods are combining qualitative and quantitative research methods. In quantitative data, concepts can be measured on a numerical scale when qualitative data is not aiming for the numerical measure. However, the data can be, for example, textual, visual, or observational. Mixing the research methods can make more reliable inferences and find more comprehensive information about the studied topic. Also, more divergent findings can occur while using both methods to address different aspects of the studied topic and research problem. Social sciences have been using both methods. (Hall 2020, 3-4, 14.) Some core characteristics of mixed methods research are that researcher

collects and analyzes both data based on research questions, mixes both data by combining them by having one build on the other or embedding one within the other, priorities to one or both forms of data, according to what research emphasizes, connects philosophical and theoretical views for procedures and combines the procedures for chosen research design that guiding the plan for conducting the study (Creswell & Clark 2011 in Ivankova 2015,6).

Triangulation means using multiple research methods to offer a broader understanding of the topic. Triangulation is also used to increase the credibility and validity of the study's interpretation and results. (Hall 2020, 238; Ivankova 2015, 208.) In this study, triangulation was used while collecting the results and applied the way possible while analyzing the data to increase the validity of the research.

In this study, qualitative method and data dominate as planned to be the primary emphasis of the research. Qualitative research is a universal term for a set of ways to implement research. It can be understood from various perspectives, so it can not be simplified (Hirsjärvi, Semes & Rajavaara 2013, 161-163; Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2011, 25-56). One basis for qualitative research is to describe phenomena that can not be measured with quantitative methods like personal experiences or feelings. It can be said to describe real-life by understanding the diversity of life and researching the target holistically. The role and the values of the researcher must be noted while viewing the data and results. (Hirsjärvi et al. 2013, 160-161.)

5.3 Data collection

The data collection consisted of an online questionnaire published on Hilma's webpage and Facebook and individual semi-structured interviews. Individual interviews are the primary data of this study, which was analyzed with content analysis. The results of the questionnaire were transferred and analyzed in Excel.

The first part of the study was to collect data about the theme by publishing a questionnaire online. Questionnaires can be found in appendices 3, 4 and 5. This method was chosen to reach persons from the target group and with the aim to collect broader opinions and experiences about employment and the possibilities to impact it. Another

purpose of starting the research by publishing the questionnaire was to advertise the study and reach people interested in participating for the next step to collect the data with qualitative method.

The questionnaire was published in three languages, Finnish, English, and Arabic, in September 2020 as planned. Publishing the questionnaire in three languages aimed to ensure that the survey would be accessible enough considering the target group. Questions varied according to whether the informant was working or not or if not working were willing to find opportunities. Some questions like statements were the same despite the working status. The questionnaire was created in Webropol, and replying time was one month.

The questionnaire was published on Hilma's Facebook channels and webpage. Also, before publishing, it was advertised to Hilma's networks by email newsletter. After publishing, the researcher advertised the questionnaire and the research by calls or emails for places that could reach the target group. Afterward, it was concluded that besides Hilma's networks and channels, advertising could have been planned broader while understanding that the target group is a minority and possibly hard to reach.

Seven persons replied to the questionnaire, three employed and four unemployed. All four who were not employed were willing to find employment opportunities. The questionnaire left the opportunity to leave contact details if interested in participating in the study's next step. All who left contact details were contacted by emails or calls by the researcher.

Semi-structured interviews formed the second part of the data collection of this study. Interview questions can be found in appendix 1. Original plan to collect the qualitative data through participatory workshops needed to be changed due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and some difficulties in reaching enough participants from similar language groups. Interview as a data collection method is commonly used in qualitative research. There are different types of interview implementation, and the structure level can vary from unstructured to semi-structured to highly structured. (Leavy 2017, 139.) Interviews' benefits are the flexibility and the direct connection with the interviewee, leaving the space for targeted information acquisition. Interviews also allow the interviewee to be the active party in the situation, who create meanings. Using the interview

as a method can also work well if the studied topic is less researched or want to be placed in a broader context. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2008, 34-35.)

The interviewees were found through the questionnaire or Hilma's networks. All who announced interest to participate in the workshops were offered a possibility for personal interviews. However, all did not lead to interviews for reasons beyond the researcher's control. Interviews were conducted in English or Finnish in October and November 2020.

A semi-structured interview is usually built on themes based on the research framework and which the researcher has determined in advance. Under each theme, a set of questions is planned, but the questions' structure and order might vary according to the study. Still, a semi-structured interview focuses on the chosen research topic and themes as the aim is to find meaningful answers according to the planned research purpose and problem. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2011, 75.) A semi-structured theme interview emphasizes the interviewee's reality. It is based on the assumption that individuals' beliefs, thoughts, and experiences can be researched using this method. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2008, 48.)

The themes for semi-structured interviews of this study were guided according to the research questions to get the data for the planned research objective. This study was interested in hearing the thoughts and ideas of the target group, which is why there are questions about feelings and personal experiences. Agency and the forms that may affect it, like self-efficacy, also played an important role in determining the themes. The agency is one of the central research terms and aspects of this study. Categories chosen were own feelings/ experiences, self-efficacy, chances to affect, motivation, and networks. With these categories, the aim was to bring personal views and experiences, agency perspective, and external factors like opportunities and other people all part of the questions pattern. The topics are not processed broadly as the aim was more to create different perspectives for the study.

The categories were not separately introduced to interviewees but mentioned as the interview progressed. A few slides introducing how agency is viewed in this study were represented before the interviews started. Slides can be found in appendix 2. Introducing agency was meaningful as this research aimed to view an individual's role

and possibilities to impact, and here agency has connected the possibilities to affect. Agency is also a diverse term that needed to be introduced shortly to orientate for the research purpose. Agency was introduced as a trust in him/herself and own capabilities and an experience of a possibility to influence and control own life. Referencing Albert Bandura's (1995) Self-Efficacy Theory, self-efficacy was explained as an experience of own capabilities and the feeling of handling; also, good self-efficacy to be something that can affect a person's motivation, feelings, or actions. The meaning of motivation and the influence of others were also discussed. Agency was also connected to work life through the study of Eteläpelto et al. (2014), which discussed what professional agency can be related to and what could be important factors to strengthen it. Individual development of an employee and the development of work society and methods were both discussed. Feelings and possibilities to influence and participate and the possibility to be innovative was explained. These slides aimed to lead the interviewee to the topic and explain simply what the agency, for example, means in this study.

As employment is a correlative process where individuals and society interact, society's meaning for employment was also part of the questions. The roles of society were discovered, for example, through experiences with services, service providers, and attitudes. The questions about society were included under different themes. Even societal perspective is an essential part of the research; the study did not aim to give an overview of society's role and responsibilities. The aim was more to give space to discuss and point critical factors that affected employment opportunities. This viewing also gave the opportunity to point to essential aspects of developing opportunities for disabled immigrants to find meaningful employment opportunities in Finland.

Interviews were held online by using Zoom or Google Meets. In advance, the accessibility was discussed with interviewees, and the possible needs or arrangements were asked. Interview questions varied a bit in each interview, and some additional questions were also asked according to the answers. Finally, the data consisted of three interviews conducted in Finnish or in English. All three interviewees were employed and have lived in Finland for a longer period of time.

5.4 Data analysis

The data analysis aimed to mix both quantitative and qualitative results by still emphasizing the qualitative data. However, as the quantitative data remained low and could not be measured as quantitative, numeric data, combining the methods remained light in the analysis. Both methods of collecting the results are still acknowledged in the analysis.

Interviews were analyzed through data-based content analysis. The qualitative research data is trying to describe the researched phenomena, and content analysis aims to write out a clear description of it. The data-based analysis is based on deduction and interpretation of the researcher, where the analyzed data aims to offer a more conceptual description of the researched phenomena. The data needed to be disassembled by re-documenting, categorizing, and creating theoretical concepts for reaching conclusions. Through categorizing, these theoretical concepts can be distributed to sub-main and head categories. Finally, an integrative classification can also be found. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2011, 107-113.)

All interviews were recorded, and later researcher transcribed the interviews. In total, 272,12 minutes were recorded, and 34 pages were transcribed from word to word, excluding pauses, hesitations, or irrelevant fillers. Reading the transcription allowed examining the topic from different perspectives and finding similarities or differences from the answers. First, the researcher reduced the data by reading the transcribed interviews and summarizing the meaningful information from original expressions for pieces considering the research questions. By summarizing and simplifying the original expressions, 28 categories were created. The number of original expressions on each category was compared with each other to point out the categories that came up more than the others. Afterward, the researcher connected similar kinds of categories and deleted some that did not offer enough information to draw conclusions. First, categories were summarized as seven main categories and 20 sub-categories. Through re-reading and summarizing multiple times, four main categories consisting of eight sub-categories were created. In this analysis, the main and head categories are overlapping and not divided. A descriptive example of how categories were created can be found in appendix 7. However, as the transcribed material was quite large, the example aims to present the process simply.

The questionnaire consisted of quantitative and qualitative, open-ended questions. The answers were transferred to excel, where they were analyzed. As the questionnaire did not reach more than seven repliers, the sampling remained too low to analyze with a quantitative method or draw conclusions. In this study, the questionnaire data is used only lightly to compare if there were found similarities with founded categories with qualitative data and draw some perceptions of the topic. Especially, the statements were compared with founded categories from interviews, and some supportive elements were found, which are described in the results. The results also described some relevant information from the questionnaire data, such as how many informants were employed/ unemployed. Two open-ended answer was cited in the results. The questionnaire's purpose was also to collect some pre-data and ideas about the topic from the target group and advertise the study, making it an essential part of the research.

5.5 Ethical consideration

This study aimed to reach immigrants with disabilities and long-term illnesses. However, the terms disabilities, long-term illnesses, and immigrants are only hypernyms for features, conditions, or backgrounds that can get various forms or meanings. Disabled immigrants or immigrants with long-term illnesses can not be seen as a homogenous group. Thus, this thesis did not want to simplify a broad topic for which different people can relate to different reasons. It aimed to raise discussion about immigrants' employment with different needs and bring some voices from the persons who consider themselves for these target groups. There is also a lack of researched information among these target groups (Finnish Institute for Wealth and Welfare 2019a), highlighting this thesis's importance and creating a special ethical responsibility. To concern this ethical responsibility, the aim was to explain that this thesis is not offering a broad understanding of the topic and underline the small sampling of this research. The aim was to bring voices from the target group to the discussions and inspire, in particular, to increase attention and discussion on the topic.

Ethical principles were considered throughout the whole research process. As the researched target group can be regarded as a small and minority, no more detailed background information was described in the thesis report to ensure the anonymity of

interviewees. The objective and purpose of the research were aimed to explain verbally and in a written presentation to ensure that the meaning of the study is clear. The researcher also communicated personally with all interviewees before interviews by email. The voluntary consent (see appendix 6) was also described and asked before starting the interviews. There was also reminded that withdrawing from the study at any point is possible if they wish to do so. The questionnaire was anonymous and handled by the researcher. The questionnaire left a voluntary opportunity to leave contact details if interested in participating in the next research phase. The answers to the questionnaire were inspected together in Excel with one supervisor of the thesis. However, for this Excel version, the voluntary contact details were removed by the researcher.

The data was aimed to be collected through participatory workshops but needed to be changed for personal interviews due Covid- 19 pandemic and with some difficulties to reach enough participants from similar language groups. The need to edit the research setting from the original setting was taken into account when planning the question pattern for interviews. It was recognized that the method of collecting the data changed from group to individual. Also, advertising workshops as a method of collecting the data may leave some space for misunderstandings that this research offers job counseling, especially if there are still some problems understanding the research concepts in Finnish or English. For this consideration, the researcher tried to pay attention from the beginning while advertising the research through the questionnaire and emphasizing its purpose while communicating with persons interested in participating. The researcher aimed to emphasize the change of the plan and still, before starting interviews, introduced the research and its purpose as described before.

Using many languages brought both opportunities and threats for this study. Broader use of languages could have reached more people and offers a way to speak about the topic in one's native language or other fluent ones. There was an aim to use a translator in the workshop to ensure that the communication and data collection would be fluent and reliable. However, as the plan was changed for the personal interviews, the researcher conducted them alone, which left the opportunity to use only English or Finnish, which decreased the accessibility of this research. For the Arabic part of this research, the researcher got help from native Arabic speakers, and Hilma's worker also inspected the questionnaire. Generally, the idea that informants or interviewees use

possibly a second language in some stage of this research, especially with the concepts, is not necessarily easy to understand, left the possibility for some misunderstandings. The researcher asked for feedback in different phases to edit the questionnaire and the interview questions for this consideration. The questionnaire was tested with test persons and Arabic versions also with some native speakers before publishing. In interviews, the researcher aimed to discuss and help determine some more complicated terms if needed before asking the question. Still, the risk for some language misunderstandings was part of the data collection and must be accepted as a part of this study. It can be asked if studying a little researched topic is more critical than being too afraid of possibilities for some language misunderstandings. The researcher also used ethical consideration to leave one interview out from the research while analyzing the results as there were some apparent misunderstandings about the purpose of the interview or the research itself. Like this, the researcher aimed to increase the validity of the research and its results

5.6 Validity and reliability of the research

The research aimed to increase the validity and reliability through triangulation using different data collection methods and benefit both qualitative and quantitative methods while analyzing the results. Triangulation and mixed methods aim to draw a broader understanding of a studied topic (Hall 2020, 4, 14, 238; Ivankova 2015, 208). As the questionnaire sample remained small, it did not leave any opportunity to analyze the questionnaire results or draw reliable conclusions as quantitative. Still, using triangulation in the research setting benefitted the research from some points of view. The data of the questionnaire supported some founded categories from the primary data. Also, through the questionnaire, the research reached both employed and unemployed persons and persons who were not that familiar with Hilma before, which increased the accessibility. The failure to collect data through a questionnaire was also analyzed. Considering the target group to be a minority, the possibility that the data remains low was a recognized risk. Also, the employment theme was recognized to be possibly complex. The lack of proper existing data about disabled immigrants in Finland left the study to take a risk with a low response percent. Also, the need to advertising it more versatile was discovered afterward and pointed in the study.

The validity aspect that needs to be considered while universalizing the results is that all interviewees were employed part- or full-time, and they have been living in Finland for a longer time. Interviewees to be only employed were not deliberately chosen but by chance, and all persons interested in participating in the study were contacted by the researcher. However, it does not decrease the importance of hearing personal experiences or decrease the validity of this research as the objective was to bring some voices of immigrants with disabilities. As all interviewees were employed, the questionnaire succeeded in reaching some unemployed and bringing some different perspectives for the study. Some supportive results from the questionnaire data could be combined with the primary data. Also, all unemployed persons who replied were interested in finding employment opportunities that reflect the importance of researching the topic more comprehensively to develop the possibilities of disabled immigrants in job markets. At the same time, the small sampling can reflect the hardness of reaching these target groups or the need to cause more discussion about the topic among the target group.

As mentioned earlier, the employment or the employment opportunities of disabled immigrants are not researched much, which increases the validity and importance of this thesis. Immigrants' employment generally is causing increasing attention in the public discussion (cf. Yle 2021, Ahmad 2019, Pinomaa 2020), making it valuable to include different kinds of views and groups of immigrants in these discussions.

6 FINDINGS

This chapter introduces the results of the data analysis. The data collection consisted of an online questionnaire published in Hilma's networks and three individual semi-structured interviews. The primary data consist of three interviews analyzed with data-based content analysis. The results of the questionnaire are presented shortly in the context of the content analysis.

6.1 Introducing findings

Based on the data-based content analysis of semi-structured interviews, four main categories were found; 1. possibilities to affect, 2. studying & networking, 3. attitude environment, and 4. accessible services, which each were created through sub-categories. The table below represents both main- and sub-categories.

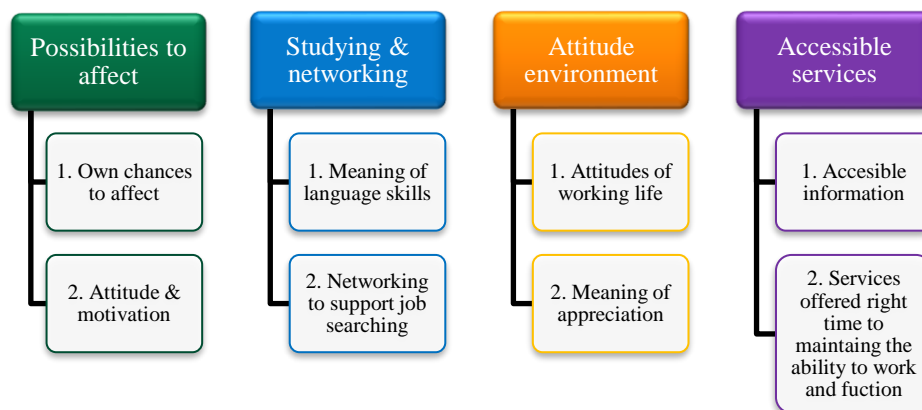


FIGURE 3: Founded main- & sub-categories of findings

This research is aiming to answer and view three research questions through founded categories. The table below represents the research questions and which of these main categories aim to reply to each.

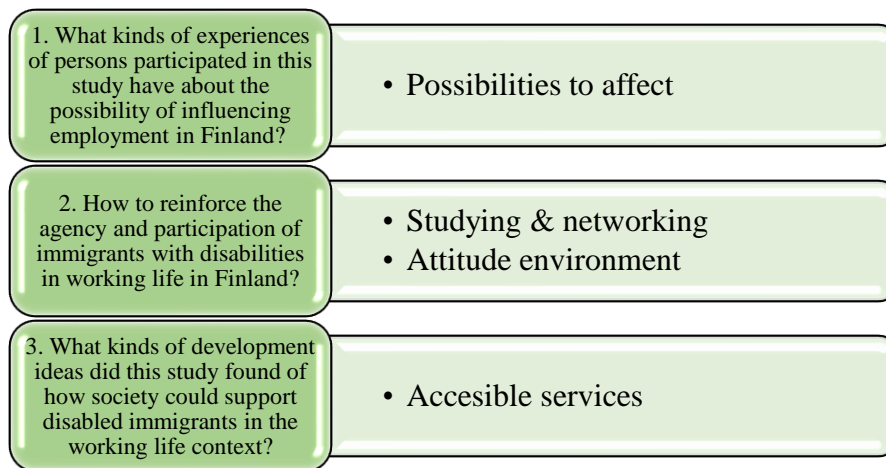


FIGURE 4: Research questions & main categories

Answers to the questionnaire were analyzed and used lightly in this study as the sampling remained low. However, some similarities can be found in the answers to the questionnaire with the categories found from interviews. The questionnaire was opened 68 times, but from that number must be subtracted an estimated 4-5 times when the researcher opened it for testing purposes. The questionnaire was started to answer 16 times while the same calculation must be used as previous. Finally, seven persons replied to the questionnaire; three were employed, and four were not. All who were not employed were willing to find employment opportunities. Some questions varied in the questionnaire according to if the person was employed or not. Seven represented statements were the same for all. Open-ended questions were commented on 11 times. Importance of language education and feelings of own possibilities to affect raised. Simultaneously, employment seemed difficult, and barriers to employment were perceived. Some open-ended answers also raised the importance of getting help while seeking employment and getting help to maintain the ability to work and function.

6.2 Possibilities to affect

Main category possibilities to affect aims to reply to the first research question; what kinds of experiences of persons participated in this study have about the possibility of influencing employment in Finland? Possibilities to affect are divided into two sub-categories; own chances to affect and attitude & motivation. The two sub-categories are also partly overlapping.

Interviews strengthened the idea that there are experiences of possibilities to affect for own employment or the steps towards employment. Especially the meaning of own attitude, being active and trying were emphasized. Despite the disability, there were experiences of possibilities to strengthen the employment opportunities in Finland. In the questionnaire, six informants out of seven partly agreed that they have opportunities to affect their employment in Finland.

“Being active of course, also. And you have to search other information in addition to your own profession.”

“Even I have a disability but have to search something suitable for my situation.”

The interviewees were asked how the roles and responsibilities between individual, and society are compared while seeking the jobs. Interviewees emphasized that an individual, a job seeker, should take the responsibility to look and apply for jobs. Also, the meaning of an attitude and being willing to work was reflecting in the answers.

“I think the individual got to take responsibility for looking for a job. They got to want to work.”

“Have to search, go to the interview, send application and from this channel it is possible to get a job.”

“So individual or jobseeker’s responsibility is first maintaining the profession or professional skills. Or if there are no professional skills then seek it.”

Interviews also point out that being a disabled person brought barriers to getting jobs, and it was recognized not to be that easy. There were some experiences that, while mentioning the disability, affected getting a job interview or the job itself. Sometimes, this was related to employers' attitudes and sometimes to the idea that a specific disability itself prevents working in some places. In the questionnaire, five informants out of seven fully disagreed that an immigrant with disabilities or long-term illnesses can easily find employment opportunities from Finland.

Also, the term underemployment was raised. It was related to both being a disabled person and not being a fluent Finnish speaker together but also separately. Underemployment here means that the career did not take the development it could take in some

other circumstances, or possibly the current profession does not reflect a person's actual education. The experiences of underemployment were connected to the possibilities to affect the employment opportunities, but it was related to lowering or removing some job opportunities but not all.

Self-confidence and the need to empower self-confidence was also a pointed factor. In the questionnaire, for example, next practical suggestion was commented:

“Employing a special techniques that could enhance the ability of hearing impaired person for inclusion in the market in a manner that eases the barrier of fear from discrimination and empower the self-confidence.”

In interviews, the idea of "being too disabled" to do some things was raised in discussions in different ways. For example, there was an experience that when a disabled person is active in different areas in life, like at work or in hobbies, some other person with disabilities might view this person as a "super," which was referencing for a very capable person. Self-confidence and attitude on how people with disabilities are viewing their opportunities raised as an essential factor from interviews.

“What is even more important that he/she trust him/herself. He/ she is not thinking at all this negative point but thinks all the time the positive.”

From the motivation factors, salary and support from others were meaningful. The feedback from managers was highlighted, and there were some experiences that managers could give more positive feedback and, like this, support the worker.

6.3 Studying & networking

Main category studying & networking aims to reply to the second research question; how to reinforce the agency and participation of immigrants with disabilities in working life in Finland? This category summarizes two sub-categories; the meaning of language skills and networking to support job searching.

As already widely discussed and recognized, meaningful language skills are essential in immigrants' employment in Finnish society. Finnish skill was also raised in the

interviews and was a pointed factor helping in getting employed. It was recognized that without Finnish skills getting employment might be more challenging. English language skill was also pointed as an asset, especially when moving to the country and communicating in working life. The meaning of participating and being active was also reflected in some answers while seeking language skills.

“I started to listen audiobooks at the beginning but by using the language I learned the best.”

“I did not have any language problem at the beginning because I am pretty good in English. “

In the questionnaire, four informants out of seven were partly agreeing the language education helping to get employed in Finland.

The possible effects of a disability of complicating learning the language were raised. While planning and implementing Finnish teaching, the different needs of different students should be noticed and supported. The effect, for example, of visual disability or hard of hearing, complicates the studying. Also, a class studying in a big group is not necessarily possible or the best way to learn for everybody. One meaningful solution to this could be to offer small group classes for the students whose disability complicates typical learning methods. Equal possibilities to learn language skills can be seen to equalize other opportunities in Finnish society in general.

In addition to language skills, the meaning of education and professional skills were highlighted. Interviews also strengthened the idea that there is a need to seek education and knowledge in different ways, such as through education that is not directly related to the current profession. The meaning of being active, participating versatile activities or studying was seen to helping or increasing opportunities.

The other sub-category, networking to support job searching, was discussed, how networking widens the possibilities while searching for new opportunities. It was also pointed out that networking should be versatile. There is a need to seek different kinds of people to the network as this can open new opportunities. It was recognized that a disability might complicate the possibility of creating networks as there can be some excluding elements that make it harder to communicate with other people. The

importance of different organizations, such as disability organizations, was also emphasized when creating networks or seeking help. However, not in all cases, disability organizations were not recognized for doing sufficiently effective work. Finally, networks were also seen as important encouragers.

“Obviously, if you have a good network of people in the same field, a large network of people with you can talk about things then obviously they can put you in touch with jobs or may be known about the job that is available. But they can also give you the encouragement, that hang on, you have been really good at this and if you had the feeling that someone else believes you to be good at this task, they obviously encourage you along.”

6.4 Attitude environment

The main-category attitude environment aims to continue responding to the second research question; how to reinforce the agency and participation of immigrants with disabilities in working life in Finland? The main category attitude environment is divided into two sub-categories: attitudes of working life and the meaning of appreciation. As in the first chapter of findings, an individual's attitude was highlighted and pointed as a valuable factor. Here the attitude environment is concentrating the attitudes towards disabled immigrants in working life.

The attitude environment in working life reflected from the answers in multiple ways, making it hard to draw a clear conclusion. Still, the discussions of attitudes raised as an essential theme, why it will be covered. According to the answers, it can be said that employers and working society have a meaningful role while viewing how to increase the opportunities of disabled immigrants to participate in working life. There were experiences with good and supportive environments and managers and feelings of possibilities to affect the working society itself. However, also glass ceilings (obstacles) related to the attitudes of employers were raised.

“I think there are clear glass ceilings if you are an immigrant and more glass ceilings if you are disabled immigrant.”

Different kinds of obstacles were faced in working life. Biases in job interviews but also working life were experienced. For example, the meaning that interviews are

accessible, considering the possible limitations of the disability, can play an essential role in equalizing disabled persons' opportunities to try. Also, some biases were faced even before the interview while mentioning the disability. Sometimes the feelings of hidden or even subconscious attitudes from colleagues or managers came issue to participate.

The other sub-category the meaning of appreciation was also discussed and pointed. The importance of getting feedback and appreciation from work was raised as an essential factor. Managers were seen to have a role as supporters, and meaningful feedback from work could be given and presented more to support the worker.

“And that you are treated equally on work with others. Also, that your work is appreciated.”

The willingness to listen and aim to understand the possible affections of the disability and how it is of being as a disabled and immigrant were raised while discussing the meanings of managers and work society generally. Also, the importance of considering and aiming to understand the different backgrounds of different kinds of workers was pointed out.

“At least relate understandingly towards these workers and considering all these backgrounds.”

6.5 Accessible services

The main category of accessible services aims to reply to the last research question; what kinds of development ideas did this study found of how society could support disabled immigrants in working life context? The main category is divided into two sub-categories; accessible information and services offered at the right time to maintain the ability to work and function. This research question does not aim to cover the role or meaning of society comprehensively. This question is viewed as part of the research for the need to examine the role of jobseeker/ employees versus employers/ society as a correlative process. The aim is also to present views and possible development ideas that came out of data, how society should help and what is the meaning of services or how they could be developed.

The data pointed out that the aids & equipment and different kinds of services offered by society were essential factors to maintain the ability to work and function. It was essential to be able to get aids & equipment, and rehabilitation. In some cases, aids & equipment offered the base to work, especially in specific professions, and in other cases, they were used as a tool to work. The possibility of different kinds of technical aids & equipment and the chance to use, such as taxi or personal assistant services offered to disabled persons, was seen necessary. These kinds of services enable, facilitate but also equalize the possibilities to attend working life.

“But if we speak generally what could be important is the transportation services.”

“Rehabilitation worker helped me and helped also to get some aids & equipment’s.”

Also, the meaning and possibilities for rehabilitation opportunities in different stages through the working career was pointed. The possibility that the effects of the disability may vary through time or may affect differently in different professions or workplaces needs to be noted. Working ability may sometimes change due to different kinds of reasons related to disability or long-term illness. In the questionnaire, a comment was raised that no one seems to follow up individuals’ capability to continue working, and that must be sometimes proved catastrophically before anyone takes notice, and even getting fired is more likely than getting help. Different kinds of rehabilitation or career adviser services are essential to be offered at the right time if needed. Rehabilitation services may also offer a way to find a new profession if the current situation with disability prevents working in the old one.

Another sub-category - accessible information offers another valuable point considering disabled immigrants in the working life context. The data pointed out that there may be a lack of accessible information to know the possibilities and rights in Finland. Lack of information can be seen lowering the chances to attend. There was discussion that these services may have been progressing gradually, but there is still a need for better accessibility.

It also was pointed out that there could be more equal services for immigrants with different immigrant statuses, especially while considering the access to information on living in Finland. There was an experience that people with a refugee/ asylum seeker status are getting more targeted services and information through their processes than immigrants with other statuses. Increasing and developing the services for other immigrants, especially when moving the country, was seen as necessary.

The role of society generally was seen to offer possibilities, help, and information. Society needed to be able to offer help or information if the person needs or asks it. Also, listening and understanding how the disability affects the possibilities to work was a discussed factor. Among the questionnaire informants, the feelings of getting help to find employment in Finland varied as three informants out of seven totally disagreed with getting help, but at the same time, the other three informants partly agreed to get help. In interviews, both experiences came out but more there were feelings of getting help and with this help to progressing in life.

7 DISCUSSION

7.1 Possibilities to affect employment

This thesis discusses whether immigrants with disabilities experience possibilities to affect their employment options in Finland. The study also aimed to find the experiences or ideas about the meaning of society in employment processes. As the sampling of this thesis, survey with low response percent and three personal semi-structured interviews, remained low, the aim is not to draw clear conclusions, but more to increasing discussion around the topic with the themes raised in different ways during this thesis process. It is also vital to emphasize that disabled people are not and can not be seen as one homogenous group, but always individuals with individualistic situations even some topics are discussed in a broader context.

According to the results, the chances of an individual to affect own employment process in Finland were experienced. Especially the significance of own attitude, being active and trying were emphasized for reaching better employment opportunities. Being a disabled immigrant was not seen to remove chances to work, but it was connected to affect possibilities, removing some opportunities and, in some cases, increasing prejudices while seeking employment or when acting in the working life. Practical ideas to enhance own possibilities that raised were, for example, versatile networking and individual responsibility to seek different kinds of education and participating in different types of activities. Experiences of how networks supported or helped to find work or how own activity and skills to adapt and change the plan if needed were in some cases leading to new career opportunities. Shortly summarizing could be said that being active in different areas in life was also seen increasing job opportunities. It is also valuable to point here that different stages are seen to be steps forward, not necessarily straightforward solutions to getting a job.

In the questionnaire, six informants out of seven partly agreed that they have opportunities to affect their employment in Finland. Simultaneously, five informants out of seven fully disagreed that immigrants with disabilities or long-term illnesses can easily find employment opportunities from Finland. There were feelings of possibilities to affect, but it was recognized not to be easy. I view that these results reflect the need to examine this topic versatile by understanding the meaning and the role of an individual

as well as emphasizing the need to enhance the policies and opportunities. Discussion of the attitude environment should be discovered from different sides and can not be highlighted too much. In this thesis, the attitude environment raised in multiple ways and the meaning of attitudes to develop immigrants working possibilities to be something that society should re-evaluate.

In this thesis, the employment of disabled people in Finland was viewed through the report of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment of Finland (Kyröläinen 2020). The report brought up that barriers and inequalities exist, but it also emphasized solutions to enhance the working life options of disabled people. Immigrants with disabilities may also have language barriers, education or degree-related issues, fewer networks, lack of knowing the Finnish systems, and opportunities why they might face even more prejudices in working life. These are valuable points that can not be ignored while thinking about developing the opportunities. However, here the topic was examined that also a person has a meaningful role and possibilities to impact in different ways for taking steps towards employment.

I represented the idea of adults' lifelong learning in the theoretical framework and how it should be evaluated with a multi-layered model (Boeran 2017), emphasizing the meaning of individuals, education providers, and countries policies together to enhance the better participation for adults' lifelong learning. Bringing the view of lifelong learning for this thesis can be seen necessary as continuous learning can be connected for better employment opportunities, especially as today's working life condemns much adapting and the capacity of learning new skills. Also, when moving to a new country, the role of lifelong learning can be emphasized. In the multi-layered model, the individual has a role and responsibility, but also it recognizes the responsibility of learning providers and states by emphasizing the interaction between different actors. Social inequalities also need to be taken into account inside the society. The results of interviews in this study also support the need for learning and studying. The meaning of language education or skills was seen to increase opportunities, and the need to actively seeking education was recognized. Service providers, employers, and the state have their roles and responsibility in the processes indisputably.

The theoretical framework of this thesis emphasizes the meaning of examining the theme as a correlative process. A person is in interaction with the surroundings, and

both internal and external factors impact actions. This point of view also reflects in the results of this thesis. An individual has seen to have personal opportunities to take some steps towards employment, but society impact possibilities or limitations. It is reasonable to point out that society was seen both increasing and decreasing opportunities. Society can, for example, increasing opportunities through services offered for disabled persons or immigrants and decreasing through attitudes.

7.2. Strengthening the agency

As represented, the agency is a diverse term. It can be seen, for example, as an interaction of the time and place where politics, cultures, and social reality interact, or it can be seen as an individual action, power to act which can also be affected by different kinds of orientations from in- or outside. In this thesis, the aim was to research the meaning of the agency as one part of seeking employment.

The results of this thesis recognized the role and the possibilities of an individual to affect while seeking employment. Concepts like believing own skills and self-confidence were raised to be necessary. Also, the meaning of trying and seeking options despite the possible limitations of a disability was seen as valuable while seeking employment. Still, it is needed to recognize that disability may mean some form of functioning limitation which, some can be helped or crossed with technology, some by adapting the attitudes or environment to be more accessible, but the disability still may have an impact, which also must be dealt with when discussing the employment of disabled people.

Self-efficacy feelings were raised in different ways during the process. Here, self-efficacy feelings can be connected to themes that came out from the results, such as self-confidence, trying, and seeking options. Discussions reflected some ideas or experiences of "being too disabled" of doing some things in life. These ideas may express some lack of believing own skills or opportunities or can be seen as something that society or collective aspects advocate. For example, Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory speaks of the need for experiences in overcoming obstacles with personal efforts to build a stronger self-efficacy, and Social Cognitive Theory sees perceived efficacy affects behavior directly, but in addition, it can give impact other determinants like

goals, outcome expectations, and possibilities in social environments. Efficacy beliefs are seen to affect a person's way of directing the thinking; optimistically, pessimistically erratically, strategically, the efforts chosen towards the action and the resilience of adversity.

In conclusion, self-esteem and self-efficacy beliefs could be a valuable part of the discussion of how to develop employment opportunities even though the process of getting employed is more comprehensive and complicated. It is also vital to connect the other side, society, and employers for the discussion. When speaking about self-esteem or efficacy feelings, there remain expectations that surroundings also support those, for example, through attitudes or by offering opportunities.

Also, the report- "Structural barriers to employment of persons with disabilities in Finland" points out the need for more comprehensive visibility of disabled people in the media and public discussions; for example, disabled persons could be represented more as specialists in the working life. Comprehensive visibility could be seen to affect positively also for self-efficacy feelings as a full member of society. (Kyröläinen 2020, 43.) It is valuable to ask how it affects self-efficacy beliefs but also attitudes on how disabled persons are viewed and represented in public and informal discussions. How much individual potential, education, professional skills, or knowledge are getting space in the discussion comparing the possible challenges or needs? Or is a classification of belonging for a specific group with possible special needs complicating the chances to build a more resilient self-efficacy? Or how much the classification may limit opportunities to create a professional agency based on personal skills, educational background, or work experiences? Suppose the viewpoint would be principally to see an individualistic situation: skills, knowledge, needs, and challenges. Would it create more possibilities than view the person as part of a specific group? Interviewees of this thesis were all employed part- or fulltime with different kinds of educational backgrounds and career stories. This setting was not chosen purposely for this study, but I view it as speaking on behalf of skills and opportunities even obstacles, prejudices, and problems were recognized and experienced. As raised, there could be a need for a discussion of self-esteem, self-efficacy, and personal possibilities to affect but also the need to examine customary ways of classification.

The need to develop work-life holistically remains a valuable part of the discussion. According to Eteläpelto et al. (2014), the professional agency is related to the possibility of influencing and participating, being innovative, and reviewing the professional identity. Besides, workers need to develop professionally; there is also a need to develop the practices and structures of the organization. (Eteläpelto et al. 2014, 17-18.) To build a professional agency for the idea that a person is an active, important part of work and working culture supports the need to strengthen an individual's role. Second, building a professional agency must also be viewed as a correlative process. Individual professional development is essential, and there is also a need to develop the practices and structures of organizations—roles of both need to be acknowledged.

In the discussion of self-efficacy and believing one's opportunities is also valuable to connect the meaning of society and surroundings, like attitudes, responses from others, and accessibility. The result of this thesis also emphasizes the importance of support from others, public services, aid and tools, and rehabilitation opportunities that were seen to enable or help working despite the possible limitations the disability causes. It is a meaningful part of the discussion about self-efficacy of how society responds and views its members.

7.3 Roles of society

The roles of society and services came out in different ways in the results of this thesis. Society's role was seen to offer, for example, services equalizing opportunities to work, information, and aids & equipment. Aids and equipment but also accessibility was seen to be essential factors for better employment opportunities. The importance of language skills came out, which led to some discussion about the methods of teaching. It was recognized that typical teaching methods might not work for all when more versatile and individualistic teaching methods should be available. Also, some interviewees pointed out that the effects of the disability may vary through time or affect differently in different professions or workplaces, when rehabilitation services, re-education, and possibilities to adapt the work or working hours can come as essential. The importance of employers being interested in workers and how they are doing in life and at work was pointed out.

Accessible information was also raised as a valuable factor. Immigrants have an obvious need and right for information while moving to a new country. Immigrants with disabilities or long-term illnesses also may need to understand the social and healthcare services, like disability services which increase the importance of accessible information. Different kinds of disability services can offer a tool or way to work and equalize opportunities in life. There was also a discussion of the need for more equal services for immigrants with different immigrant statuses, especially while considering the access to information on living in Finland. There was an experience that people with a refugee/asylum seeker status are getting more targeted services and information through their processes than immigrants with other statuses, like moving to the country through family- studies- or work-related reasons. In 2020 and 2019, the most common reason for immigrants to move to Finland was work (Finnish Immigration Services 2021).

In a Disability Action Plan (2006), European Council announces that people with disabilities from minorities and migrant communities may experience disadvantages because of discrimination or lack of familiarity with public services. There is a need for cross-cutting responses to ensure the inclusion and acknowledging cultural background, language, and particular needs. Barriers and challenges faced by each of these groups need to be noted by policymakers. It should be ensured that policies include actions to remove barriers and help individuals reach their full potential. (Council of Europe Disability Action Plan- summary 2006, 24.)

The report "Structural barriers to employment of persons with disabilities in Finland" points out that applying for a job is multidimensional, entirely affected by employment services, support system, a personal capacity to function, aids & equipment, and other available services. Noteworthy is also that the environment is built to be accessible, employer attitudes, and digital accessibility. Also, social- and employment services should not be exclusive to one another. (Kyröläinen 2020, 36.)

The last point to raise was the discussion about attitudes which has already been mentioned several times. The importance of acknowledging society's attitudes and working life can not be disregarded while discussing equal opportunities. The results of this thesis raised the meaning of the attitude of a person but also the attitudes of others. It got versatile levels in the discussions, but for example, the meaning of employer's

attitudes was seen as a significant factor enabling employment or help to develop in the career. Discrimination and obstacles were faced in the employment processes as well as in working life. Still, also positive attitudes and support from work society or employers raised in the discussion about experiences. The report- "Structural barriers to employment of persons with disabilities in Finland" (2020) raised the topic of attitudes towards disabled people in Finland. The attitude environment was seen as creating recruitment thresholds, and the need to increase employers' knowledge was also pointed out. For example, insufficient information about accessibility or special arrangements might increase negative attitudes towards hiring disabled people. Generally, improving the accessibility of services and environment is seen as valuable to increasing equal opportunities to participate. (Kyröläinen 2020, 40-42.)

8 CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

Firstly, this chapter describes the conclusions of the thesis. Secondly, the professional development and competence of the researcher during this thesis process are discussed. Finally, some recommendations are represented.

8.1. Conclusions

This thesis aimed to bring up some views and experiences of disabled immigrants about employment in Finland. The study also emphasized the need to discuss the employment opportunities of disabled people. The unique perspective of this study was to research experiences of individualistic possibilities and responsibilities to affect employment processes. Agency, opportunities, and self-efficacy feelings were raised to the discussion. However, the employment process is multidimensional entirety why it was viewed as a correlative process between individuals and society.

The study's aim to ask experiences of possibilities to affect employment from the members, including themselves, belonging to the target group, was fulfilled. A problematic part of the study was the lack of getting unemployed interviewees, which can lower the chances to draw versatile conclusions from the results. A questionnaire sampling also remained low, which did not allow to analyze of the data as quantitative. However, the questionnaire still succeeded in reaching both employed and unemployed persons. Primary data consisted of three semi-structured interviews analyzed with data-based content analysis.

According to the results of this study, there are experiences of possibilities to affect for own employment. Especially the significance of own attitude, being active and trying are emphasized. The language skills, especially Finnish and English, and education are experienced to be important as could be expected. However, discrimination, obstacles, and underemployment are the themes that also want to be pointed out, and the employment process is not always experienced to be easy or fair. The attitude discussion highlights in many ways during the thesis process, and for example, the meaning of employer's attitudes and support for the workers are experienced to be important. It is meaningful how society views its members.

According to the results, the meaning of society generally is seen to offer possibilities, help, and information. The role of services like aids and equipment or rehabilitation are experienced essential to help progress with the career and equalize opportunities. Getting accessible information, especially while moving to the country, is seen as necessary, and that process could still be developed more.

The critical view of this study was to examine that would strengthen the agency mean a possibility to strengthen the individual's role. As mentioned, the agency was used to examine the person's role in the employment processes and was a significant part of research questions. Agency was connected, for example, self-efficacy feelings, motivation, and relational agency, which notes that surroundings effect for person's possibilities to act. The results can be seen to support the idea that agency is a meaningful point of view to be examined in employment processes. During the thesis process, it was discussed in different ways that it is essential to keep trying and be active despite the possible limitations of disability to increase own opportunities. Results raised the need to believe own skills and being active, which were seen to affect some while aiming to find meaningful employment. When it comes to the question, is it essential to strengthen the agency to strengthen individuals' opportunities to find more employment opportunities, there was no self-clearance conclusion to be done based on the results, but supportive elements can be found. For example, strengthening the self-efficacy feelings in different ways can be connected to enhance the chances to act. Self-esteem and self-efficacy beliefs could be a valuable part of the discussion of how to develop employment opportunities even though the process of getting employed is more comprehensive and complicated where also society and surroundings can be seen to be in an influential position. Society should support a person to act by offering opportunities and help. Help can be connected for the means to provide aid and equipment, create accessibility, information, and services. It can also be connected to the need to developing more positive attitudes towards a disabled person as an employee.

Also, the report- "Structural barriers to employment of persons with disabilities in Finland (2020)" points out the need for more comprehensive visibility of disabled people in the media and public discussions; for example, disabled persons could be represented more as specialists in the working life. Comprehensive visibility could be seen to affect positively also for self-efficacy feelings as a full member of society.

(Kyröläinen 2020, 43.) This thesis also highlights the importance of comprehensive visibility.

Finally, there is a need to remember to emphasize individuality when referencing groups like disabled people, people with long-term illnesses, or immigrants. These terms are only hypernyms, and the variety of people are as many as many persons considered to belong to these groups. Even universality is still needed, especially while speaking about services or rights of a specific group, but it is also essential to highlight individuality and the need to value individual skills, background, limitations, and personality. No one should not be only to viewed as a part of some defined group.

8.2 Professional competence

My professional competence developed during this thesis process. Working with a little researched topic increased professional knowledge and understanding. This kind of thesis setting also offered a chance to develop a set of project skills. The research setting of this thesis tested the professional capacity from different levels as it challenged to use mixed methods, edit the plan due to the circumstances, and deal in a multilingual entity.

This thesis has been done as a part of the Master's Program- Community Development & Conflict Resolution. The thesis aimed to reach different kinds of communal levels and emphasizes the need to bring different kinds of people for discussion to develop services and communities as well as society broader. Here has also connected the meaning of the role of individual and community/society together, which are both needed in sustainable community development. Collecting theoretical frameworks also increased a lot for professional knowledge and improved analytical skills.

The process also offered multiple lessons to be learned. Especially the proper planning of the project emphasized and the skill to be able to adapt if needed. Later on, I also became aware that a broader use and advertisement of the questionnaire would have benefited this thesis more. Still, it was beneficial to create a questionnaire in many languages and practice its use. The very inspiring and educational part of the project

was to interview people with different backgrounds and experiences and, at the same time, practice the interviewer's role. The difficulty of finding data about disabled immigrants was accurate, which caused challenges to implementing the thesis. The lack of data also emphasizes the need to discuss the positions of disabled immigrants and highlight the need to develop opportunities for them in Finland.

I view that this thesis is essential opening to a research minor and little researched topic more. It also offers a point of view for the topic researched last year by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment of Finland, as the Ministry conducted a report –"Structural barriers to employment of persons with disabilities in Finland." This report surveys barriers and practices holistically that limit people with disabilities out of job markets for the first time. This thesis aims to emphasize the need to include different kinds of people and groups in the discussions.

8.3 Recommendations

Finally, I will represent some recommendations for continuing studies about the employment of disabled immigrants. Generally, the life of disabled immigrants and immigrants with long-term illnesses in Finland offer plenty of options to conduct more research or projects.

As the life and employment of disabled immigrants in Finland are still little researched, there are many research options to continue. This research did not aim to offer a holistic picture of disabled immigrants' employment or respond to the need to do more accurate research, which leaves plenty of options to continue. It could be valuable to research the topic by targeting more accurate numbers of how disabled immigrants are employed in Finland and what are the main possibilities, obstacles, or needs as more specified numbers. During the thesis presentation for Hilma's customers, I was asked few times what could be done for the presented issues that employment opportunities are not that easy to find or there are obstacles in the employment processes. These questions offer platforms to continue the studies and could also be meaningful to connect institutes like Kela or employment services to co-operate.

This thesis raises the attitudes for discussion in different ways. The claim is that attitude research needs continuous viewing and can also be connected with the topic of employment. It would be valuable to examine the attitude's working life has towards disabled immigrants as employees. Also, less-heard opinions from the unemployed or the people who struggle to find meaningful employment would be valuable to be heard to ensure sustainable development of equal opportunities. Finally, it would be essential to hear more about how persons from the target group would develop more positive visibility of disabled people and highlight the possibilities and skills in the labour market. With this topic could be organized an exciting project or campaign.

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APPENDIX 1. Questions: Semi-structured interview

Interview questions

Why are you or feel of being a part of the group this research is targeting? Short introductory.

Age:

Working status:

Disability & illness:

Country of origin:

Year of coming to Finland:

Own feelings/ experiences:

1. What does employment mean to you? If you are not working, why would it be important for you to get employed?
2. How getting employed has been affecting your life?

Self-efficacy

3. What skills or assets do you have related to working life?
4. What kinds of concrete skills did you need when looking for a job? What kind of concrete skills have you been needing in working life in Finland?
5. What kinds of concrete advice do you have on how to improve working life skills?

Possibilities to affect:

6. Can you influence your employment in Finland? Why can you? Why can you not?
7. How can you influence your employment in Finland?
8. Does Finnish society support disabled immigrant's possibilities to get employed? In which way?
9. Do you feel you have chance to develop your professional skills and working society at your working place?

Motivation:

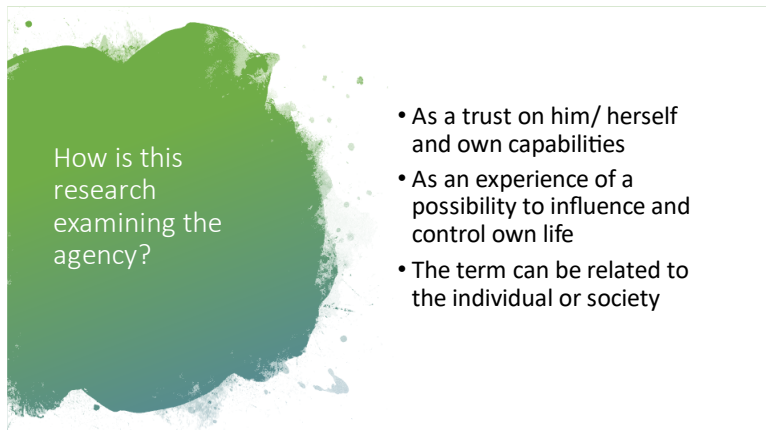
10. How does your own initiative/motivation effects getting employment?
11. What maintains initiative/motivation?
12. What is the responsibility of a job seeker in the process of searching / getting employed?
13. What is the responsibility of society in the process of helping disabled immigrants of getting employed?

Networks:

14. Where did you get help related to job searching/employment?
15. What kind of help did you need to get employed?
16. Can your example have a positive/negative effect on the employment of others?
17. What else would you like to add, ask or comment related to these topics and themes?

APPENDIX 2. Slides

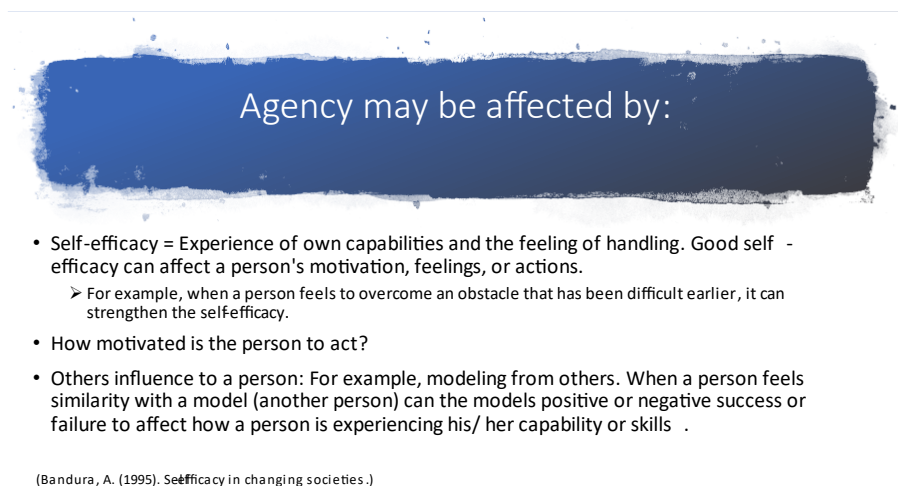
Slide 1



How is this research examining the agency?

- As a trust on him/ herself and own capabilities
- As an experience of a possibility to influence and control own life
- The term can be related to the individual or society

Slide 2

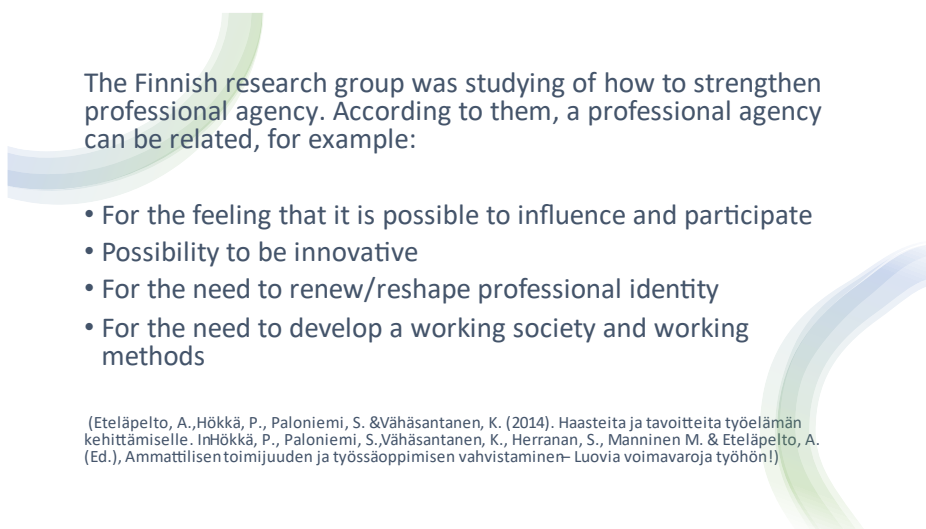


Agency may be affected by:

- Self-efficacy = Experience of own capabilities and the feeling of handling. Good self - efficacy can affect a person's motivation, feelings, or actions.
 - For example, when a person feels to overcome an obstacle that has been difficult earlier, it can strengthen the self-efficacy.
- How motivated is the person to act?
- Others influence to a person: For example, modeling from others. When a person feels similarity with a model (another person) can the models positive or negative success or failure to affect how a person is experiencing his/ her capability or skills .

(Bandura, A. (1995). *Self-efficacy in changing societies.*)

Slide 3



The Finnish research group was studying of how to strengthen professional agency. According to them, a professional agency can be related, for example:

- For the feeling that it is possible to influence and participate
- Possibility to be innovative
- For the need to renew/reshape professional identity
- For the need to develop a working society and working methods

(Eteläpelto, A., Hökkä, P., Paloniemi, S. & Vähäsantanen, K. (2014). Haasteita ja tavoitteita työelämän kehittämiseksi. In Hökkä, P., Paloniemi, S., Vähäsantanen, K., Herranen, S., Manninen M. & Eteläpelto, A. (Ed.), Ammatillisen toimijuuden ja työssäoppimisen vahvistaminen- Luovia voimavaroja työhön!)

APPENDIX 3: Online questionnaire- Finnish. Not authentic copy from Webropol

Vammaisten ja pitkäaikaissairaiden maahanmuuttajien työllistyminen

Hei,

Olen Minna Lahtinen ja opiskelen Diakonia ammattikorkeakoulussa Helsingissä ylempää ammattikorkeakoulututkintoa Community Development & Conflict Resolution. Tämä kysely on osa lopputyönä suoritettavaa opinnäytetyötäni. Kyselyn kohderyhmää ovat maahanmuuttajataustaiset henkilöt, joilla on vamma tai pitkäaikaissairaus. Vastaathan siis kyselyyn vain, mikäli kuulut kohderyhmään.

Opinnäytetyössä tutkitaan vammaisten tai pitkäaikaissairaiden maahanmuuttajien työllistymistä Suomessa. Tutkimuksen kohteena on henkilön omat vaikutusmahdollisuudet työllistymiseen Suomessa. Sen aikana pyritään selvittämään kohderyhmän näkemyksiä työllistymisestä Suomessa sekä pohditaan sitä, miten työllistymiseen voisi vaikuttaa itse.

Opinnäytetyö tehdään yhteistyössä Hilman, vammaisten maahanmuuttajien tukikeskuksen kanssa. Tuloksia käytetään maahanmuuttajien työllistymisen edistämiseen sekä hyödynnetään Hilman toiminnassa.

Suosittelemme vastaamaan kyselyyn tietokoneella. Vastausaikaa on 30.9.2020 asti. Kyselyn vastaukset käsitellään luottamuksellisesti eikä tuloksista pysty tunnistamaan vastaajia.

Mikäli sinulla on kysyttävää tutkimuksesta, voit ottaa yhteyttä sen tekijään osoitteessa: (tutkijan sähköpostiosoite) tai ohjaaviin opettajiin (ohjaavan opettajan sähköpostiosoite) tai (ohjaavan opettajan sähköpostiosoite). Kiitos ajastasi ja avustasi!

1. Ikä?

2. Sukupuoli?

Nainen

Mies

Jokin muu

En halua vastata

3. Mistä maasta olet kotoisin? *

4. Mikä on äidinkielesi?

5. Minä vuonna tulit Suomeen? *

6. Minulla on: (Voit valita yhden tai useamman vaihtoehdon.) *

Liikuntavamma

Näkövamma

Kuulovamma

Puhe- tai kielihäiriö

Kehitysvamma

Sairaus

Mielenterveyden sairaus

Ei mikään näistä

Joku muu. Mikä?

7. Oletko palkkatyössä tällä hetkellä Suomessa? *

Kyllä

Ei

8. Työskenteletkö Suomessa: (Voit valita yhden tai useamman vaihtoehdon.) *

Kokopäiväisesti

Osa-aikaisesti
 Satunnaisesti
 Minulla on oma yritys
 Jokin muu vaihtoehto, Mikä?

9. Työskenteletkö koulutustasi vastaavassa ammatissa? *

Kyllä
 Ei
 Jossain määrin

10. Mitkä tekijät auttoivat sinua löytämään töitä Suomesta? Voit valita yhden tai useamman vaihtoehdon. *

Koulutukseni
 Suomen kielen taito
 Oma osaamiseni
 Suomalaiset tuttavat
 Maahanmuuttajataustaiset tuttavat
 Valtion tai kaupungin palvelut
 Jokin muu. Mikä?

11. Kerro kokemuksistasi, mitä olet oppinut työelämästä Suomessa?

Ei-vastauksen kysymykset:

12. Haluaisitko tehdä palkkatyötä Suomessa? *

Kyllä
 Ei

13. Kerro lisää, mikä vaikuttaa siihen, että et halua työskennellä Suomessa?

14. Mikä vaikuttaisi haluusi työllistyä Suomessa? Voit valita yhden tai useamman vaihtoehdon. *

Se, että saisin työn, josta olen kiinnostunut
 Se, että saisin työn, johon minulla on koulutus
 Se, että saisin työn, josta saa hyvää palkkaa
 Se, että tulen paremmin toimeen vammani tai sairauteni kanssa
 Se, että suomen kielen taitoni paranee
 Se, että minua arvostetaan työntekijänä
 Joku muu syy. Mikä?

15. Miksi et ole mielestäsi löytänyt töitä Suomesta? Voit valita yhden tai useamman vaihtoehdon. *

Kielitaidon puute
 Koulutuksen puute
 En tiedä miten Suomessa haetaan töitä
 En osaa sanoa, miksi en ole löytänyt töitä
 Työhaastatteluun on vaikea päästä
 Vammani tai sairauteni takia minua ei palkata
 Jokin muu syy. Mikä?

16. Mikä auttaa sinua löytämään töitä Suomesta?

17. Vastaa seuraaviin väittämiin ja valitse mielestäsi parhaiten sopiva vaihtoehto.

*

Täysin eri mieltä
 Osittain eri mieltä
 En osaa sanoa
 Osittain samaa mieltä
 Täysin samaa mieltä

- 1.Pystyn vaikuttamaan itse työllistymiseeni Suomessa
- 2.Kielikoulutus auttaa työn saamista Suomessa
- 3.Suomessa on helppo kouluttautua
- 4.Olen saanut apua työnhakuuni Suomessa
- 5.Vammaisen tai pitkäaikaissairaana maahanmuuttajan on helppo löytää töitä Suomesta
- 6.Olen kohdannut ennakkoluuloja muilta ihmisiltä liittyen työllistymiseeni Suomessa
- 7.Työelämässä Suomessa osataan huomioida hyvin vammaiset työntekijät

18. Mitä muuta haluaisit sanoa liittyen työllistymiseen Suomessa?

Kiitos vastauksistasi! Tutkimuksen aikana järjestetään myös kaksi työpajaa, joissa on tarkoitus pohtia ryhmässä omia vaikutusmahdollisuuksia työllistymiseen Suomessa ja tuottaa tietoa tutkimukseen. Jos olet kiinnostunut osallistumaan näihin ryhmätyöpajoihin, voit jättää yhteystietosi alle niin otamme sinuun yhteyttä.

Henkilötietoja ei yhdistetä vastauksiin eikä tietoja anneta ulkopuolisille.

Mikäli et halua jättää yhteystietojasi kyselyn yhteydessä, voit laittaa sähköpostia myös suoraan tutkimuksen tekijälle: (tutkijan sähköpostiosoite)

Työpajat järjestetään Helsingissä syksyn 2020 aikana. Työpajoihin tullaan valitsemaan 6-8 henkilöä.

Kiitos osallistumisestasi!

19. Yhteystiedot työpajoihin osallistumista varten. Yhteystietojen antaminen on vapaaehtoista.

Nimi

Sähköposti

Puhelinnumero

Puhutko suomea?

Puhutko englantia?

APPENDIX 4: Online questionnaire- English. Not authentic copy from Webropol

Employment of immigrants with disabilities or long-term illnesses

Hi! My name is Minna Lahtinen, and I am studying for a Master's Degree in the program of Community Development & Conflict Resolution in Diaconia University of Applied Sciences in Helsinki. This survey is a part of my final thesis and targets immigrants who have a disability or long-term illness. Kindly notice that we are only asking you to reply if you belong to the target group.

The thesis examines the employment of immigrant persons with disabilities or long-term illnesses in Finland. The purpose of the thesis is to research one's own possibilities to affect becoming employed in Finland. The thesis examines the opinions related to employment and aims to discover how people belonging to the target group could better become employed.

The thesis will be done in cooperation with Hilma, the support center for immigrants with disabilities. The results will be used to promote the employment of immigrants and to develop Hilma's operations.

It is recommended to reply to the survey with a laptop. The response time is until September 30th, 2020. The answers to the survey are treated confidentially, and it is not possible to identify attendees from the results.

If you have any questions about the research, kindly contact (researchers email address) or Supervisors (supervisors email address) or (supervisors email address)

Thank you for your time and help!

1. Age?

2. Gender?

Female

Male

Something else

I do not want to answer

3. Country of origin? *

4. What is your native language?

5. Which year you moved to Finland? *

6. I have: (You can choose one or multiple options.) *

Physical disability

Visual impairment

Hearing impairment

Speech or language disorder

Intellectual disability

Illness

Mental health disorder

None of these options

Something else. What?

7. Do you work in Finland at the moment? *

Yes

No

8. Are you working in Finland: (You can choose one or multiple options.) *

Full time

Part time
Occasionally
I have my own business
Something else. What?

9. Do you work in a profession for which you have an education? *

Yes
No
Somewhat

10. What helped you to find a job in Finland? You can choose one or multiple options. *

My education
Finnish language skill
My own skills
My Finnish friends
My immigrant friends
Government services
Something else. What?

11. Kindly share your experiences. What have you learned from working life in Finland?

12. Would you like to work in Finland? *

Yes
No

13. Kindly tell more about why you do not want to work in Finland?

14. What would affect your willingness to work in Finland? You can choose one or multiple options.
*

That I would get a job which I am interested
That I would get a job which I am educated for
That I would get a job with a good salary
That I get along better with my disability or illness
That my Finnish language skills will improve
That I am appreciated as a worker
Something else. What?

15. Why do you think you have not found a job from Finland? You can choose one or multiple options. *

Lack of language skills
Lack of education
I do not know how to apply jobs in Finland
I do not know why I have not found a job in Finland
It is difficult to get a job interview

I will not be hired because of my disability or illness
Some other reason. What?

16. What would help you to get a job in Finland?

17. For the following statements, select the most appropriate option *

I fully disagree
I partly disagree
I can not say
I partly agree
I fully agree

- 1.I have a possibility to influence my own employment in Finland
- 2.Language education is helping to get a job in Finland
- 3.It is easy to get education in Finland
- 4.I have got help for my work search in Finland
- 5.It is easy for an immigrant person with a disability or long-term illness to find work in Finland
- 6.I have faced prejudices related to my employment from other people in Finland
- 7.Disabled people are well considered in working life in Finland

18. What else you would like to comment related to the employment in Finland?

Thank you for your answers! Two workshops will be organized as a part of the research. Workshops will be based on group discussion. The focus will be on a person's own possibilities to affect getting employed in Finland. The workshops aim to produce data for the research, and the data will be utilized in the results.

If you are interested in participating in these workshops, please leave your contact details below, and we will contact you. If you are not willing to leave your contact details here, you can also send an email to the researcher, (researchers email address) Personal information will not be connected to the answers or will not be disclosed to third parties.

Workshops will be organized in Helsinki during autumn 2020. Six to eight participants will be chosen for the workshops.

Thank you for your participation!

19. Please, leave your contact details here if you are interested in participating in the workshops. Giving contact details is voluntary.

Name

Email

Phone number

Do you speak Finnish?

Do you speak English?

APPENDIX 5: Online questionnaire- Arabic. Not authentic copy from Webropol

توظيف المهاجرين اصحاب الإعاقات او اصحاب الامراض المزمنة

مرحباً! اسمي Minna Lahtinen، أنا أدرس للحصول على درجة الماجستير في برنامج تنمية المجتمع وحل النزاعات في جامعة Diaconia للعلوم التطبيقية في هلسنكي. هذا الاستطلاع هو جزء من رسالتي النهائية للماجستير ويستهدف المهاجرين الذين يعانون من إعاقة أو مرض طويل الأمد. يرجى ملاحظة أننا نطلب منك الرد فقط إذا كنت تنتمي إلى المجموعة المستهدفة. تتناول الأطروحة توظيف المهاجرين ذوي الإعاقة أو الأمراض طويلة الأمد في فنلندا. الغرض من الأطروحة هو البحث في إمكانية الفرد التأثير في عملية التوظيف في فنلندا. تدرس الأطروحة الآراء المتعلقة بالتوظيف وتهدف إلى اكتشاف كيفية توظيف الأشخاص المنتمين إلى المجموعة المستهدفة بشكل أفضل. يتم التعامل مع إجابات الاستبيان بسرية تامة، ولا يمكن تحديد الحضور من النتائج. ستتم الأطروحة بالتعاون مع Hilma، مركز دعم المهاجرين ذوي الإعاقة، والأمراض طويلة الأمد. سيتم استخدام النتائج لتعزيز توظيف المهاجرين وتطوير عمليات Hilma يوصى بالرد على الاستبيان بجهاز الكمبيوتر. وقت الاستجابة حتى 30 سبتمبر 2020. إذا كان لديك أي أسئلة حول البحث، فيرجى الاتصال (بالبريد الإلكتروني للباحث) او (البريد الإلكتروني للمشرف علي البحث).

شكراً لوقتكم ومساعدتكم .

1. السن؟

2. الجنس؟

انثي

ذكر

اخر

لا اريد الاجابة

3. بلد المنشأ؟*

4. اللغة الام؟

5. سنة المجيء الي فنلندا؟*

6. عندي! بأماكنك اختيار اجابة واحد او اكثر*

اعاقة جسدية

قصور بصري

اضطراب سمعي

اضطراب في التخاطب

اعاقة ذهنية

مرض

اضطراب نفسي

لا شيء من هذه الخيارات

شيء اخر، ما هو؟

7. هل تعمل في فنلندا حالياً؟*

نعم

لا

8. هل تعمل في فنلندا؟ يمكنك اختيار خيار واحد أو عدة خيارات*

دوام كامل
دوام جزئي
من حين لآخر
عمل خاص
شيء آخر، ما هو؟

9. هل انت حاصل على تعليم في مجال عملك؟*

نعم
لا
الي حد ما

10. ماهي العوامل التي ساعدتك علي الحصول علي عمل في فنلندا؟ يمكنك اختيار خيار واحد أو عدة خيارات
*

تعليمي
مستوي اللغة الفنلندية
مهارات شخصية
من خلال صديق فنلندي
من خلال صديق مهاجر
من خلال الخدمات الحكومية
شيء آخر، ما هو؟

11. شاركنا بخبرتك. ماذا تعلمت من الحياة العملية في فنلندا؟

12. هل تريد العمل في فنلندا؟*

نعم
لا

13. شاركنا برأيك لماذا لا تريد العمل في فنلندا؟

14. ماهي الاسباب التي قد تشجعك للعمل في فنلندا؟ بأماكنك اختيار سبب واحد او اكثر؟*

الحصول على وظيفة اريدها
الحصول على وظيفة امتلك تعليمها لها
الحصول على وظيفة بمرتبة جيد
أتعاش بشكل أفضل مع إعاقتي أو مرضي في حياتي اليومية
تحسين مستوى اللغة الفنلندية
ان انال التقدير كموظف
شيء آخر، ما هو؟

15. لماذا في رأيك لم تجد فرصة عمل في فنلندا؟ بأماكنك اختيار سبب واحد او اكثر*

ضعف مستوي اللغة
ضعف المستوي التعليمي
لا اعرف كيفية التقدم للحصول على وظيفة في فنلندا
لا اعرف لما لم أستطع ايجاد وظيفة في فنلندا
من الصعب الحصول على مقابلة عمل
لن احصل على وظيفة بسبب إعاقتي او مرضي المزمن
شيء اخر، ما هو؟

16. ما الذي قد يساعدك في الحصول على عمل في فنلندا؟

17. ما رأيك في العبارات الآتية؟*

اعترض بشدة
اعترض جزئياً
ليس لدي رأي
أوافق جزئياً
أوافق بشدة

أستطيع التأثير في ايجاد فرص العمل في فنلندا
تعليم اللغة يساعد في الحصول على عمل في فنلندا
من السهل الحصول على التعليم في فنلندا
حصلت على الدعم لإيجاد فرص عمل في فنلندا
من السهل للمهاجر من ذوي الاحتياجات الخاصة او المصاب بمرض مزمن ايجاد عمل في فنلندا
لقد واجهت تحيزاً من الآخرين لإيجاد فرص عمل في فنلندا
ذوي الاحتياجات الخاصة يتم وضعهم في الاعتبار ببيئة العمل في فنلندا

18. هل تريد اضافة تعليق عن التوظيف في فنلندا؟

شكراً لإجاباتك. سيتم تنظيم ورشتي عمل كجزء من البحث. ستستند ورش العمل إلى مناقشة جماعية. سيكون التركيز على إمكانيات الشخص للتأثير على الحصول على عمل في فنلندا. تهدف ورش العمل إلى إنتاج بيانات للبحث، وسيتم استخدام البيانات في النتائج. لن يتم ربط المعلومات الشخصية بالإجابات أو لن يتم الكشف عنها لأطراف ثالثة. إذا كنت مهتماً بالمشاركة في ورش العمل هذه، فيرجى ترك تفاصيل الاتصال الخاصة بك أدناه، وسيصل بك الباحث. إذا لم تكن على استعداد لترك تفاصيل الاتصال الخاصة بك هنا، فيمكنك أيضاً إرسال بريد إلكتروني إلى الباحث. سيتم تنظيم ورش العمل في هلسنكي خلال خريف 2020. وسيتم اختيار من ستة إلى ثمانية مشاركين

19. برجاء ملء بيانك ادناه اذا اردت الاشتراك في ورش العمل

الاسم
البريد الالكتروني
رقم الهاتف
هل تتحدث الفنلندية؟
هل تتحدث الانجليزية؟

APPENDIX 6: Consent for participation in research

Consent for participation in research: That you are treated equally on work with others.
Disabled immigrants in the labour market.

Name of the program: Community Development & Conflict Resolution

Author of the study and contact information: Minna Lahtinen

University: Diaconia University of Applied Sciences

Supervisor and contact information:

I have been told about the purpose and the research methods used for the above research. I am aware that participation in the study is voluntary. I am aware that the interview will be recorded, and the answers will be used for analyzing purposes. I am also aware of the fact that participation in the study will not cause me any cost, my identity remains only the attention of the researcher, the material is only used on the research and the material was disposed of investigation has been completed.

I may want to suspend participation at any time without having to justify my suspension.

Place and date

Signature

APPENDIX 7: Example of data-based content analysis

Descriptive example of using data-based content analysis creating a category; possibilities to affect (adapted from Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2011, 108-112)

| Original expression | Simplified expression | Sub-category | Main-category |
|---|---|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| <p>For the individual, I think the individual got to take responsibility for looking for a job. They got to want to work</p> <p>So individual or jobseeker's responsibility is first maintaining the profession or professional skills. Or if there are no professional skills then seek it.</p> <p>Being active of course, also. So, you must search other information in addition to your own profession.</p> | Individuals' responsibility while aiming to find employment | Own chances to affect | Possibilities to affect |
| Yes, many many kinds of works. (Next, interviewee describes different work places he/she has been working) | Immigrants has many kinds of workplaces | | |
| When we moved here, I did not have savings or anything so I had to get a job. That was the motivation, I did not have any other mindset. | Motivation factors | Attitude & motivation | |
| Even I have a disability, I need to search something suitable for my situation. So it's great for me to work every day. | Attitudes affections for employment | | |
| People say that hey I am too disabled, I cannot work at all. But other person with the same disability, same level but active and is searching. Of course, it depends on person. So yes, they can. Disabled person can affect his/her own life. | How to view own options despite the disability | | |