

Commitment to Emotional Wellbeing in the Finnish Labour Market

A Service Design Concept to Redress Economic Captivity of Undervalued Migrants in Finland

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Abstract

International migration is a very old phenomenon that has become inevitable due to increasing globalisation and economic connectedness matters of nations. As western societies begin to experience ageing demographic, apparent labour shortages pose a real threat for the nations to be able to maintain economic progress that has been attained over the years. The Nordic region, and by extension Finland, has not been spared from this subterranean wave of change. Consequently, we have witnessed varying extents of social mitigations meant to attract and even retain international migrants within the Finnish borders. A recent example is the reforms instituted by Finnish Immigration Department (Migri) to international student residence permit requirements. The requirements have become more liberal, opening doors to substantial numbers of student migrants into Finland.

Further to the above, and perhaps as proof for an insatiable appetite towards positive migration on the side of the Finnish government, express entry of highly skilled labour migrants coming directly into the Finnish labour market, is also among the key changes to the previous immigration regime. Although most of such "express" labour migrants come from information technology (IT) and health care backgrounds, the need for migrant talent beyond these sectors is real and widespread. This entire shift is happening in the backdrop of a country previously known for quite stringent immigration policies.

Particularly for the international student, the above immigration regime changes have been more convenient when compared to previous value propositions. The key aim in this instance is to attract the right student population and retain them as international talent to boost the Finnish labour market shortages upon completion of their studies. Be that as it may, the reforms solve only part of the problem in the quest for integrating the migrants successfully within the Finnish economic landscape. There are noticeable limitations in resolving key emotional wellbeing issues necessary to shape a new sense of being and optimism among migrants, assuring them a promising future in Finland.

It would appear from investigations that the impetus for attracting migrant talent in its various shapes and forms by the Finnish government, is not at tandem with that of the Finnish society

on the same issue. The drive for now, remains to be only a political one, and failing substantially to advance tangible economic opportunities for these migrants. Facts and anecdotal evidence on the ground show a steep curve that is yet to be undergone by interested parties before the interventions can yield any meaningful fruits. The average Finnish employer for now appears to be quite reluctant to utilize skilled migrant talent, contrary to a noticeable government drive to globalise the Finnish labour market. Skilled migrants, even those who completed their studies in Finland or those from equally advanced societies are being subjected to exclusionary employment, which does not make use of their professional training. The kind of jobs they get are those that pay very little and are manual in their nature.

In this thesis, empirical investigation was carried out on the skilled migrants in Finland. These consisted of students doing their bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees, and those who had just recently graduated. When asked why of all places they chose Finland as their host destination for their higher education, 38% cited their pursuit for more international exposure they believed Finland offered, driven by the narrative from the Finnish government. A further 16% believed at the time that Finland is a progressive society that would be more accepting, 19% believed their need for a more secure future was suddenly taken care of if they could relocate, and 13% were in pursuit of excellent education Finland is known for.

When asked what their feelings were at the time of the interviews, an overwhelming 52% felt frustrated, 24% mentioned downright anger, whilst a paltry 8% felt hopeful that they had made the right decision. Trying to unpack their topmost cause of frustration 43% of the interviewees cited an unwelcoming demeanour from Finnish people as the main issue, whilst 23% mentioned inward looking society, 9% mentioned dismissively over-confident nation that wants to be "left alone", whilst another 9% lamented on overpromising narrative from Finnish government concerning the country's readiness for skilled migrants.

When asked what they felt could be done to resolve the reality on the ground, 40% of the skilled migrants cited the need for wider public engagement on the value of skilled migrants to future ambitions of the country, 20% believed language was only used as a scapegoat and suggested the need for more intensive language induction as a mandatory part of the curriculum, whilst 16% believed more incentivised uptake of skilled migrants might help. The researcher intended to understand if there could be anything skilled migrants were satisfied with regarding their stay in Finland, 22% mentioned great nature, 19% pointed out high public safety, 15% mentioned great education, another 15% cited efficient public transport, whilst 11% talked about Finland as generally a future focused nation safe for the issue of skilled migrant integration.

Finally, when skilled migrants were asked what their career plans for the next 5 years were, an overwhelming 40% mentioned the decision to restart their career back in their home countries whilst only 20% felt they planned to stick around and probably explore the entrepreneurial route. When probed further to understand if they felt the monies spent relocating to Finland was well spent, 60% felt totally cheated, whilst 12% felt it was worth it, and 28% thought that the money spent was somewhat worth it.

Going by the above findings, the perceptions created towards the skilled migrants trying to attract them to Finland, are indeed far removed from the prevailing reality once they have started relocating. An opportunity exists with the strategic deployment of service design thinking to devise a new pathway for migrant talent utilisation, presenting a positive narrative for demonstrable economic evolution. The ultimate vision in this instance is to make human-centred win-win solutions for skilled-migrants whilst at the same time giving Finnish employers reason to believing in this emerging resource.

The purpose of this thesis is consequently to provide a service design concept targeted at delivering pertinent solutions for skilled migrants in Finland. What these solutions will be specifically, shall be discovered later in this document. As for now let it suffice to state that the solutions essentially will involve access to career-based employment and peripheral interventions that can enhance subjective wellbeing of migrants in their host nation. Subjective wellbeing of migrants is a big business opportunity as migrants are actively seeking enablers to assure them of a positive future in their new country.

The resulting concept will be simultaneously tackled as a startup proposal under the Business Turku's "Business-Up" Accelerator programme. Overall, the idea is that the suggested service design proposal will help skilled migrants build a new, more enjoyable, and dignified life in this Nordic state. This should be done in ways that help them identify and build their own unique and much more profound social legacies better than if they had remained in their own countries. That is what is in it for them.

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1 Introduction

The abstract just presented captured the general content of this thesis. The following chapter is an introduction to the thesis so that the reader can understand where the researcher comes from with the idea of this thesis, scope, focus, commissioner, general motivations, and expectations behind this research journey.

1.1 Background of the Thesis

Shifts in global demographic patterns, particularly aging working populations are redefining the way Western nations currently think about migration and global talent. Finland, as well as other Nordic countries, is not by any means cordoned off from this imminent wave of change. There is a subterranean rumble of time regarding the way Western leaders imagine their economic futures in the context of aging population and the potential availed by skilled migrants. As a result, skilled migrant talent in Finland is increasingly becoming part and parcel of the socio-economic and political vocabulary.

The number of people living in Finland as of the year 2020, who had foreign background stood at about 450 000 (Nichols & Virsinger, 2021) in relation to the overall population of about 5 550 000 people. These numbers tell us that people of migrant origins to date constitute about 8.1% of the total population of Finland. The number would have slightly increased given the recent flexing of immigration regime.

During the regime change just mentioned, an influx of migrants, especially those on a student residence permit increased exponentially. The Finnish National Agency for Education estimates that the number of students with immigrant or foreign background studying at Finnish higher education institutions more than doubled between the year 2010 and 2020. It would be worth highlighting further this scale of increase. In 2010, the report reveals, the number of students in Finnish higher education institutions who were not Finnish citizens was 8500 compared to about 17 500 in 2022.

The above figures represent an astounding 51.4% increase in foreign student influx over a twelve-year period. In effect this means that the number of foreign student population in Finland is at the date of this document growing at an annual average of

about 4.3% against the national average annual population growth of about 0.3%. The growth in influx of this migrant talent can therefore not go unnoticed.

As regards regime changes to Finnish immigration, we have also seen provisions being made for expedited processing channel for highly skilled migrants. These are ones who would have secured employment in highly pressed categories of the Finnish labour market such as healthcare and integrated communications technologies (ICT). Ideally it would take such individuals only two weeks to be in the country once they submit their express application for a work permit.

All in all, it has been planned that by 2030 the current labour migration target for Finland will be doubled to 50 000 immigrants with 10 000 being received annually thereafter (Mattila 2021). The Finnish Economic Research Institute (Etlä) supports this view but imagines Finland to need 44 000 migrants annually (with immediate effect) if it is to arrest the decline of its economic growth, financial sustainability, and public finances needed to fund the welfare state.

In terms of new foreign students, the plan is to have the target tripled to 15 000 new foreign university and polytechnic students by the same year above. To leverage the potential of this influx of talent, measures were suggested on how to retain 75% of the above students within the Finnish labour market.

All the above facts granted, migrant talent in Finland has a gross track record of being underutilised. Highly educated and skilled migrants face real challenges in Finland. Instances of finding master's and doctorate degree holders working in blue collar jobs as casual labourers or as janitors and garbage collectors are a grotesquely common scene. A lot still needs to be done to reconcile the demands of the Finnish economy with the aspirations and the intentions of the average Finnish employer.

There is no doubt that international migration is a major issue facing the world today and it is (McAuliffe & Ruhs, 2017) a complex issue that touches on a multiplicity of social, economic, and security aspects.

This thesis is an attempt to unpack the current issues around Finland's poor utilisation of skilled-migrant talent. A special emphasis is on how service design thinking might be deployed to propose meaningful solutions that create a better future for Finland and the skilled migrants alike.

Preliminarily, the thesis was based on the following assumption:

That by virtue of the skilled-migrants undergoing exclusion in career-based jobs, they are, by extension, also being financially excluded from accessing mainstream financial instruments such as loans. This was of course given their assumed paltry income levels based on their type of jobs and often rudimentary contractual arrangements. The thesis was to therefore focus on how to seamlessly solve talent absorption issues of skilled migrants alongside developing new typologies of financial solutions. The latter was targeted at giving migrants better access to financial sources as they establish themselves in a foreign land.

As the research unfolded, it became apparent from literature review that access to financial instruments is not an issue at all. Migrants do have access to financial instruments that are proportional to their levels of income. The instruments may be limited when compared to those enjoyed by career working individuals with better income. However, it suffices not to openly declare any form of exclusion on that front.

In view of the above, once the idea of talent absorption can be resolved, the doors are wide open for skilled migrants to upgrade their relationship with financial institutions and access better instruments. They would then enjoy financial liberty that is befitting.

It is for the above reason that the actual focus of this thesis now hinges primarily on **career access and emotional wellbeing of migrants** rather than **career access and financial inclusion**. A lot of interventions and money is currently being directed towards career access. This unfortunately narrowly looks at the demands of skilled migrants as though getting a job is a panacea to everything.

It is not enough to address career access alone. Migrants' needs are quite complex with their wellbeing demands tracing back to the heritage driven sociological aspirations in their own countries. There is often adamant need to build social impact in their countries through the proceeds of their new life in their host nation. This is an integral part of their happiness in their host nation. Any solution that takes a wider view of what makes migrants happier beyond getting a professional job is likely to resonate more. This is because it helps migrants build a legacy for their communities rather simply getting career-based employment. Just to give an example, getting career-based employment in a country like Finland where salary income is heavily taxed to finance

the welfare state might lead to quite short-lived air of jubilation if a job is the only point of focus.

In Finland skilled migrants appreciate the best education and the top medical facilities they have access to, but they have a genuine predicament in that their attention is also needed where they come from. It is naïve to assume that skilled migrants can assimilate to a point of forgetting where they come from. The reality is that part of migrants' need for social expression in their ambition exists in their own home countries. This realisation, therefore, demands a more holistic intervention for migrants if they are to enjoy their stay in the host country. In this sense career access needs to probably be tackled together with associated emotional drivers that positively validate migrant's decision to have moved to a host nation.

The latter focus revolutionises the thesis and makes it even more interesting. A lot of initiatives have lately been offered by both the Finnish government and non-profit making organisations to enable access to careers by migrants. There are real opportunities for a whole array of new solutions that can persuasively hem in skilled migrants into the Finnish labour market while equally helping them build necessary social capital in their home countries. These are interventions that level-headedly take cognisance of the hybrid orientation of skilled migrants in a foreign land.

The latter approach would be far from assimilative postures that we have seen in other European countries regarding migrant integration. In the suggested approach it will be about appreciating migrant talent whilst candidly appreciating them for who they are. The approach can appreciate the need for skilled migrants to make economic contribution in Finland and the roots that need to be anticipatively watered all the way to their heritage ground.

1.2 The Commissioner

The thesis project being undertaken here is self-initiated. The author has close to 20 years of work experience working for both multinational corporations, medium enterprises, and parastatals. The author has even run businesses.

Outside Finland, the author possesses academic qualifications from the United States and the United Kingdom. He is a true global citizen who fits the archetype of a highly

skilled migrant in Finland. The project therefore affects him directly. Hence there is an adamant and candid desire to create new solutions to changing the status of migrants in Finland. The aim is to turn potential solution into a business idea targeting the peculiar needs of this group. Such stance firmly supports old time intentions of the author to interface his design career towards a more global audience in one of the European countries. If among the author's many aspirations, there is such an opportunity, this thesis project is the one.

The thesis being presented in this document is meant to be scholarly yet being anchored on practical entrepreneurial thinking. Such delicate balance and flexibility across the two knowledge spectrums are necessary to maintain. The author is already working with Business Turku (formerly Turku Business Region) regarding his ambition to set up a business to resolve the issue at hand. He is privileged to be among a few startup entrepreneurs admitted into the prestigious business acceleration programme for the latter organisation in 2023.

The acceleration programme is a 10-week intensive business development programme. It is meant to resolve startup business ideas from aspiring entrepreneurs in Southwest Finland through an ecosystem of result-oriented mentors in Finland and internationally. The programme culminated in pitching rounds before some angel investors who are always on a hunt for the next unicorn. It will be a real opportunity to throw this thesis to actual entrepreneurs to help shape it further for real world application.

2 Research Approach

In the following chapter the problem area forming the crux of this research topic is explored together with key research question, research goals, and theoretical framework for the thesis. This gives the reader a proper footing from which to mentally page through the document.

2.1 Problem Area

The problem area for this thesis is social exclusion in the context of how the Finnish labour market rejects adoption of skilled-migrant talent. Social exclusion is a complex societal ill with multilayered thought structure.

The European Union (EU) Department of Migration and Home Affairs defines social exclusion as a situation whereby a person is prevented (or excluded) from contributing to and benefiting from economic and social progress. Social Exclusion is one of the deadliest emotional weapons that can be deployed towards certain social groups within societies. Routinely, social exclusion is deployed (whether consciously or unconsciously) to thwart socio-economic potential of certain groups and fundamentally relegate them to the peripheries of the main society. Social exclusion is a socio-political act with profound impacts on the economic, social, and emotional wellbeing of those it is directed towards.

By unpacking the phenomenological and social dimensions of exclusion as regards employability of skilled migrants, this thesis will delve deep into the Finnish social psyche to understand key hindrances to the adoption of skilled-migrant talent. A lot of questions may already be arising to the reader. One such question would be why there is apparent divergence in perspectives between what the government, key business groups, and employers see as the future of Finland's economic growth. Clearly there is a love hate relationship between the Finnish society and the migrants.

The idea of migrants coming into Finland touches a real personal nerve. There is seemingly a collective declaration at an individual level to "block them out" (the migrants). How could such a mindset be so pervasive to a point of universality in the labour market? Are these the issues that are talked about at the dinner table to become the cultural nuances defining the Finnish society and by extension, the labour market rejection towards migrants? This thesis will attempt to unpack this phenomenon.

2.2 Research Question

In view of the above social dynamics as regards the nature of social exclusion in Finland, the following question is proposed as a mental guide for the research activity on the subject:

What service design intervention(s) can be proposed to unlock access into the career-based job market by skilled migrants in Finland?

2.3 Research Goals

My cursory understanding of the research area chosen has led to the following research goals, which have been amplified through further literature study as well as empirical discovery of insights from actual migrants in their own context. The goals of this research study are as follows:

- To understand actual migrant experiences in the Finnish labour market to unveil firsthand insights into their key pain points.
- To investigate the extent of social exclusion among the skilled migrants in Finland.
- To unveil key emotional drivers and motivations for migrating and wanting to settle in Finland.
- To discover perceptions and motivators that hinder Finnish employers from the uptake of skilled-migrant talent.
- To develop Service Design solution(s) to repackage social-economic value of skilled-migrants in Finnish labour market.

2.4 Theoretical Frame of Reference

A theoretical framework or frame of reference is developed by researchers as the basis for explaining phenomena, drawing connections, and making key predictions (IEducator, 2021). In most cases a theoretical framework challenges existing knowledge and expands it into new dimensions limiting it within critical bounding assumptions.

Theoretical Framework anchors the research and acts as an illustration that the investigation is based on established notions. In terms of this thesis, three theories act as the foundations of the Theoretical Framework. These are Relational Cultural Theory, Pain Overlap Theory, and Social Domain Theory. The theories rationalise the idea of Social Exclusion as it relates to labour market rejection (which is a form of Social Exclusion) in the case of Finland. Suddenly a whole lot of perspectives are unpacked on why in Finland, people are routinely hellbent on excluding those from outside their social spaces. This is often irrespective of the skill, knowledge, or the capacity they may

possess as they are excluded. Figure 1 below shows theoretical framework for this thesis.

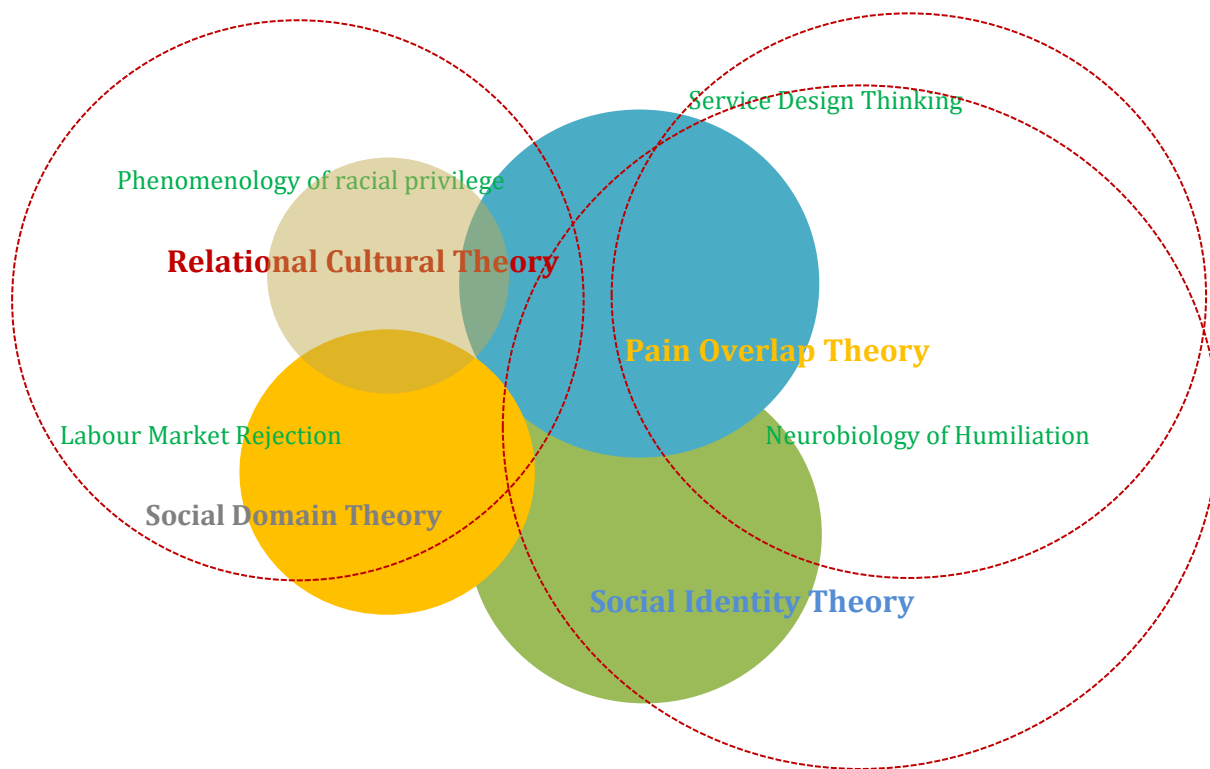


Figure 1: Theoretical Frame of Reference.

It is worth appreciating that the above theories are not in themselves sufficient in the absence of understanding general contextual facts around the issue of social exclusion in the Finnish labour market. It is for this reason that the author further lubricated the stated theoretical background with general literature perspectives on the topic area. Key topics to be explored are labour market rejection, neurobiology of social humiliation, and finally the concepts and methods of service design thinking.

Collectively, the above body of knowledge shall form the theoretical frame of reference for this study. The frame of reference in a research project can be further defined as a set of ideas, conditions, and experiences that affect how an issue is thought about and understood (Britannica, 2023). This kind of approach to building one's argument on key knowledge pillars, helps in focusing research ideas on certain ideologies to derive the researcher's own unique perspectives on the subject. The theoretical frame of reference hence is the lens through which the researcher views facts and issues on a particular research topic. The main aim is often to form own understanding of the

theoretical interdependencies between issues. Below are details on the nature and the importance of each aspect of the frame of reference:

2.4.1 Pain Overlap Theory

Social Pain Overlap Theory was proposed by the American social neuroscience researcher, Naomi Eisenberger in the early 2000s. The theory explores the overlapping neural mechanisms involved in both physical pain and social pain. An assessment from this theory concluded that humans are social animals that greatly rely on conspecifics and groups for satisfaction of direct and indirect survival needs (Spoor & Williams, 2007). These survival needs include food, shelter, attachment, and opportunity for mate selection and reproduction. In other words, without affiliation to a social group, humans are unable to function. Humans effectively have a fundamental need to belong (Baumeister & Leary, 1995).

In view of the above context, exclusion, and rejection from opportunities to mingle and derive social meaning from your own kind creates some form of social pain with far reaching ramifications. Pain Overlap Theory in this context posits that social and physical pain activate similar neural regions and share the same neuro circuitry (Ferris, Jetten, Hornsey, Bastian 2016). Routinely, social pain may even last much longer than physical pain (Zhang, Zhang, Kong 2019). For example, the pain of you being denied a well-deserved promotion based on your ethnicity may prevail for many years much more than the last time you hurt your fingers with a piece of machinery in that same job.

Social pain carries the same unpleasantness that is experienced in response to physical pain (MacDonald & Leary, 2005). The authors maintain that what is shared between the two types of pain is salience, threat, and unpleasantness and not necessarily the pain itself. Pain operates in the same physical pain signalling systems, utilizing shared neurochemistry and brain activation patterns (Eisenberger 2012a, 2012b). It is for this reason that we often talk about “broken hearts” or “breaking down into tears” or “being torn apart” as though the pain experienced is a physical infliction. The truth according to Pain Overlap Theory is that social pain though not effected at a physical level has a scientifically proven physical footprint.

Within a specific viewpoint of this thesis, Pain Overlap Theory helps us appreciate the extent of damage brought about by social exclusion and rejection in the labour market. As matter of fact, social exclusion may well be regarded as an act of violence because it subjects recipients to the same harm brought about by physical harm. In the secondary research section of this document, which shall follow in Chapter 3, more detailed analysis of social exclusion as it regards labour market rejection in Finland shall be discussed.

2.4.2 Relational Cultural Theory

One concept that is relevant to this thesis is that of Relational Cultural Theory. Here the theory presupposes that people grow through and towards relationships throughout their life span (Jordan, 2017). The theory proposes that interpersonal connections established based on mutual empathy routinely led to a life full of zest, worth, augmented creativity, and the desire for more connections. It is for this reason that chronic lack of connections creates a life of isolation and disempowerment. This theory in a way makes indirect affirmations to the assumptions made by the Pain Overlap Theory elaborated at item 2.4.1 above.

Whilst human beings cherish their individuality, there is a constant desire to initiate meaningful relationships with others to extend our invitation for others to play a significant role in shaping our emotional and social behaviours. Although researchers are only beginning to understand the power of human-to-human connections, it is increasingly becoming apparent that humans have evolved as social creatures with interwoven brains and biologies (Cozolino, 2014).

2.4.3 Social Domain Theory

The third theoretical pillar that is linked to this research process is that of Social Domain Theory (SDT). The latter is a theory of moral psychology and makes affirmations that people acquire moral concepts about fairness, physical or psychological harm, other's welfare, equitable distribution of resources, freedom and rights beginning from early childhood into childhood and adolescence stages. This means that the idea of morality as a human principle; that of what is 'good' and what is 'wrong' is almost an innate part of the human psyche.

Moral reasoning is distinct from other forms of knowledge such as societal and psychological knowledge on others. In other words, people are born with almost immediate recognition of 'good' and 'evil'. As an example, when young children in school were asked if it would be fine to hit others if the teacher did not have a rule to not hit, a great majority of the children by default understood such to be unacceptable. In research experiments carried out children as young as three and half years old understood that hitting others is wrong. This is based on the understanding inherited through a process of experience, abstraction, and evaluation on the part of the child.

Parallel to the above knowledge domain is the societal one where people develop certain knowledge based on regulations designed by the society to promote smooth functioning of social groups and institutions. Issues of certain activities being appropriate to certain genders fall in such categorisation. This kind of knowledge is not a given, but it is merely psycho-social concepts that influence our decisions based on what we absorbed from the society in its pursuit to organise itself.

The third and the last knowledge is a purely psychological one, which involves appreciation of self, others, and beliefs about autonomy and individuality. How people navigate their decision making within the above knowledge domain is quite complex. Depending on the situation at hand, individuals weigh several considerations that determine the priority for which type of the knowledge domains above (moral, societal, psychological) drives their decision making about themselves and others during that moment in time.

The conclusion that can be drawn from this theory as regards social exclusion in the Finnish labour market is that such rejection does not pronounce lack of morality on the part of those responsible for recruiting migrants. They are aware that it is wrong to segregate equally capable migrants based on their ethnicity and cultural background. However, the decisions at that point are driven not by morality alone but overwhelmingly by psycho-social cues the society has used to define and label competences of those people that originate from outside the Finnish society. This perspective brings us to the next theory known as Social Identity Theory, which will be the focus of the next section.

Assessing the above theories from a point of view of social exclusion and labour market rejection two perspectives begin to emerge. The first perspective is that by being

excluded from credibly participating in meaningful career-based jobs, migrants' perception of self-identity in their chosen career path is untruthfully foreshortened. This makes them accept a twisted reality of themselves that is likely to have far reaching implications in terms of their self-esteem.

The second perspective to be derived from these theories is now pointed to the Finnish recruiters and the institutional identities they represent. The theories help us understand how they unconsciously use individual and group identities to develop conceited, almost sanctimonious view of Finnishness, in the process heavily discounting the intrinsic value of the global education, skills, and professional experiences of the migrants.

This thesis project is therefore rightfully placed to reimagine how to use service design thinking to redress the above injustices, social fallacy, and anomalies within the current Finnish labour system.

2.5 The Thesis Structure in Brief

The systemic issues visible in the Finnish labour market and rationalised through the above theories as the frame of reference within which key assumptions will be made shall be addressed through this thesis. The document has ten (10) chapters touching on various aspects of the research and design synthesis process. Care has been taken to ensure that key learnings from all the courses of the Master of Business Administration (MBA) programme of which this thesis is in partial fulfilment of, have been reflected in the content of this research process.

Chapter 1 of this document is an introduction to the research project. The chapter touches on the background and the essence of this thesis. Motivations of what brought about the interest in the problem area are depicted as well as the commissioner (or the lack thereof) of the thesis.

Chapter 2 goes on to explain the research approach adopted for the thesis. Effectively this looks at the goals of the research and a synopsis on the problem area. The chapter takes the reader into the research question to be satisfied and concludes by discussing the theoretical frame of reference to be utilised in the study.

Chapter 3 is the Literature Review of the process. This is secondary research intended to solicit insights from existing sources regarding the problem area from both practical and academic standpoint. The academic side is mostly about models of approaching certain problems and not about theories-such have already been dealt with during the Theoretical Frame of Reference. In this chapter enough detail will be given regarding the overall context of social exclusion, how it leads to labour market rejection, Finland and migrations issues, global talent recruitment, and diversity approaches.

Chapter 4 is about the service design process model to be used in this thesis project. Service Design as an organisational wide process of value creation has various models of engagement, some more intense than others. It is for this reason that various types of projects will demand specific process models depending on their ambition and complexity. Chapter four proposes a service design process model suitable for a project of this type. This model will serve as a blueprint that guides the reader and provides mental flow into the actual steps of the design process.

Chapter 5 is about empirical research methods adopted for this thesis. These are methods help understand the broadness of the problem, understand its dynamics, and unveil key deal breakers that need to be addressed to offer more meaningful solutions to the problem.

Chapter 6 is dedicated exclusively to identifying key stakeholders for the proposed service design interventions. Stakeholders, depending on their radius of interest against their influence have the power to make or break what is essentially novel initiatives. There is often a need to have deliberate management framework for identifying, categorising, and engaging them in ways that take cognisance of their presence towards the achievement of project goals.

Chapter 7 focuses on developing a design concept for the new service design solution. Here service design methods and tools are used to unpack the problem and extract customer value based on human-centred sensibilities of the user. Some of the methods and tools applicable in this instance are empathy maps, customer value proposition canvas, user stories, etc.

Chapter 8 dwells on auxiliary recommendations that are essential to setting the right stage and tone for the proposed service design solution to thrive contextually, with

main impediments taken care of. Design, however brilliant its solutions exist in a specific socio-cultural and economic bubble. The elements of this bubble contribute to either the failure or the success of the solutions proposed.

Chapter 9 is the last chapter of this document, and it is more reflective in orientation, providing almost a kaleidoscope of the entire thesis. It talks about lessons learned now; what is successful, what could have been executed better and finally suggests pathways for future research on the subject. This way there is evident closure to the thesis so that it is not left hanging in balance.

3 Secondary Research and Theoretical Insights

The following section is walkthrough into general topic area for skilled migrant talent, their rejection into the Finnish labour market and overall contextual issues driving perceptions and motivations around the subject.

3.1 International Migration and Rapidly Globalizing World

As the economic future of Finland hangs in clouds of uncertainty, we have witnessed varying extents of social mitigations meant to attract and even retain international migrants within the Finnish borders. The Finnish Immigration Service (Migri) recently relaxed its immigration regime for the country to make it more attractive and competitive to international students.

A recent example of the above is reforms instituted towards international student residence permit requirements. Suddenly Finland became open to migrants who were given continuous residence permit, the duration of which would be as long as their study right. The migrants are offered an opportunity to bring along their families. The stipend requirements for this migration made very affordable for migrants from all corners of the globe. Additional reforms include the number of part-time working hours for international students being increased from twenty to thirty hours per week during their study period. This offer falls marginally below the standard forty hours per week regarded as full-time employment.

In furtherance to the just stated reforms, express entry of highly skilled labour migrants coming direct into the Finnish labour market was also among the key changes to the previous immigration regime. Most of such labour migrants come from information technology (IT) and health care backgrounds though the need for highly skilled migrants is apparent and widespread.

The above scenario ideally means that the student population in Finland can advance their education whilst being productively utilised by the labour market to ease up apparent labour shortages. Further, once the international students graduate, they have the leeway to look for more permanent employment on a two-year residence permit basis that can be extended further to a point of permanent residency after four years.

Particularly for the international student, the above immigration regime changes have all things convenient when compared to previous value propositions. The key aim in this instance being to attract the right student population and retaining them as international talent to boost the purported Finnish labour market shortages upon completion of their studies. That said, the reforms solve only part of the problem to integrate the migrants successfully within the Finnish labour market. An average Finnish employer is still adamant on all things Finnish. There is disparity of thought prohibiting tangible commitment to agreeing with the government on the type of future that lies ahead for the country in the absence of positive migration.

Employers in Finland too often cite language barrier as a key impediment to successful absorption of migrant talent. At face value this sentiment may have an element of truth as indeed the exclusion sweeps across to impact also non-Finnish speakers such as job seekers from other western countries. However, anecdotal evidence has shown that even for job roles that require no apparent need for native language skills, preference is still given to Finnish speakers. Further, those who happen to speak Finnish fluently, but their names do not sound Finnish routinely get the raw end of the stick. Some job seekers out of desperation have even gone as far as changing their names to those sounding Finnish. The results suddenly became positive, and they were able to land their first job.

There has been a further twist to the above illustration. In some instances, actual Finns who schooled and worked outside Finland in equally industrialised and developed nations have often also struggled to penetrate the Finnish job market. Although their names sound Finnish and they do speak the language, what works against them in this instance is the type of education and experience that is regarded “foreign”. This probably affirms the author’s views about the overly nationalistic tendencies towards all things Finnish. The above shows a multi-structured anatomy of a problem in which lack of language proficiency is only loosely used as a scapegoat. In the actual sense it is the inaccessible social posture and the circles that define it, which deny access to skilled job seekers outside Finland. Employers in Finland are willing to forego real opportunities for cross pollination of ideas, multi-culturalist experiences, and approaches to solving problems in the workplace primarily based on a nativist mindset.

As horrific as the above illustrations are, perhaps they help the reader to understand the tumultuous underpinnings of the current rejection of integrating skilled migrants meaningfully within the Finnish job market. That is why doctorate and master’s degree holders with global experience can often be spotted as bus drivers, housekeepers, and refuse collectors. There is this extreme obsession with Finnishness that makes the society undervalue migrant talent. This is a real issue that must be addressed if Finland is to remain as competitive as during the era of Nokia and its innovations in mobile telephony. Ironically, Nokia as the poster child of the Finnish success in the 90’s today has half of its recent hires as people of foreign origin.

The idea that Finland is a progressive nation cannot be discounted in any form possible. The country has got a fair share of successes as manifested by its quality of education, advances in medical discoveries, and of late, consecutive lead as “The World’s Happiest Place”. Be that as it may, Finland as a competitive nation operating in a global context has got a range of shortcomings. Such could be circumvented by bringing in migrants with a more diversified perspective of how elsewhere the world might function.

The above can still meet existing ethos of how Finnish people view and appreciate how life ought to function. Such position of open mindedness to external views could help form a unique intellectual alloy for Finland that is in tandem with global realities. The maverick nationalistic inclinations that currently permeates the Finnish views of the

world have the potential to isolate the country once more as the rest of the world geopolitically opens to different nationalities and the diversity they bring.

In view of the above, it suffices to say that being open to external ideologies is part of intellectual cross pollination of ideas that drive innovation and positive change. Such allows one to become global in thinking whilst maintaining their own unique contention of how the world ought to function. There is an opportunity that is missed by an individualistic path Finland has increasingly become so comfortable with. An illustration in this sense can be made with some of the British high street banks such as Barclays, Standard Chartered, HSBC, etc. The banks have maintained a much wider global reach because of the openness of the British society towards utilisation of global talent. The financial houses discussed are now big global entities that pay substantial tax dollars for the benefit of all British citizens.

Where Finland is not yet ready for the heterogenous society to be brought about by the inclusion of migrants, the vision should be at least be an outward looking one. In this scenario, migrants could be integrated in career-based jobs so that once they are seasoned enough into the Finnish working ethos, they are dispatched to their respective countries to drive expansion for Finnish businesses in various parts of the world. For country with a population of just under 6 million people, such an approach is likely to bring massive economic potential for Finland and migrant countries of origin.

The idea that skilled migrants must understand the Finnish language before they can be fully adopted by the Finnish labour market is not substantive. In the EF English Proficiency Index Report of 2022, Finland ranks number 8 in Europe just after Sweden out of 35 European countries in terms of the non-native proficiency for speaking, reading, and writing in English. The EF English Proficiency Index (EF EPI) ranks countries by their equity of English language competences amongst adults who took the EF test. The test is a product of EF Education First, which is an international education company with a footprint in several countries all over the world. The company draws its conclusions of the ranking based on data extracted from English tests available and taken voluntarily on the internet. In 2022 (the period for the above report) this test data was obtained from 1.7 million test takers (Wikipedia, 2023).

Although the EF English proficiency testing has been without criticism based on its methodology; that instead of testing English proficiency from random population sample, it rather relies on self-selected research subjects and such it is argued does not give a fair reflection of language competences. Some have even criticized it based on its potential to drive language imperialism. Be that as it may, the argument from the sponsors of this initiative is that English an international medium of communication that so entrenched in the global psyche.

Whilst good content can be produced in any language, routine non-English content can only have a very narrow reach. English takes charge in media, on the internet, business contractual agreements, research, and academic papers, etc. Figure 2 below shows Finland's ranking in terms of English proficiency relative to other European nations.



Figure 2: EF EPI Across European Countries (EF Education First, 2023).

The most popular platforms for sharing content such as Twitter feeds, Facebook, LinkedIn, and YouTube channels are all in English. It is for this reason that countries such as Sweden and the Netherlands, though English is not their official language, operate fluently in English. As a matter of fact, one does not need to fear living in these places for lack of integration an overwhelming majority of the people speak fluent English.

There is a big problem if Finland ranks comparably capable from a point of view of the EF English Proficiency Index, yet there is such a steep climb for skilled migrants demanded to learn the language and develop the right proficiency before they can be accepted in the labour market. If the EF ranking is anything to go by, then it shows very little commitment of the side of the Finnish society to meet migrants halfway in their effort to integrate and become productive members of the society. Perhaps due to the historical geopolitical and economic status of Finland, this Nordic has become adamant in cultivating and nourishing their own vernacular and ensured that it permeates everything the nation does. The idea of Finnishness is much of a cultural devotion as it is a psycho-social movement.

A lot of sensitisation needs to be initiated to illustrate the fact that skilled migrants unlike asylum seekers do not come to a country to take. They often come to a country to give as much as they may take. Most of the skilled migrants who come into the Finnish borders pump significant capital into the Finnish education sector through their tuition fees. There after they spend money in the economy for their living day -to-day living requirements.

Learning a new language in a new country is part of a long process of cultural adjustment, which researchers believe can take up two years. There are other phases a migrant must go through before enough comfort levels can be reached and the motivation to successfully integrate through language begins to become a priority. The following diagram shows multiple stages a migrant must pass through in a host country before they can start to integrate in the culture and by extension, have the courage to learn the language. Figure 3 below is a pictorial depiction of the stages migrants go through in their ability to navigate through the emotional stages of shock before they can feel fully settled in a host nation.

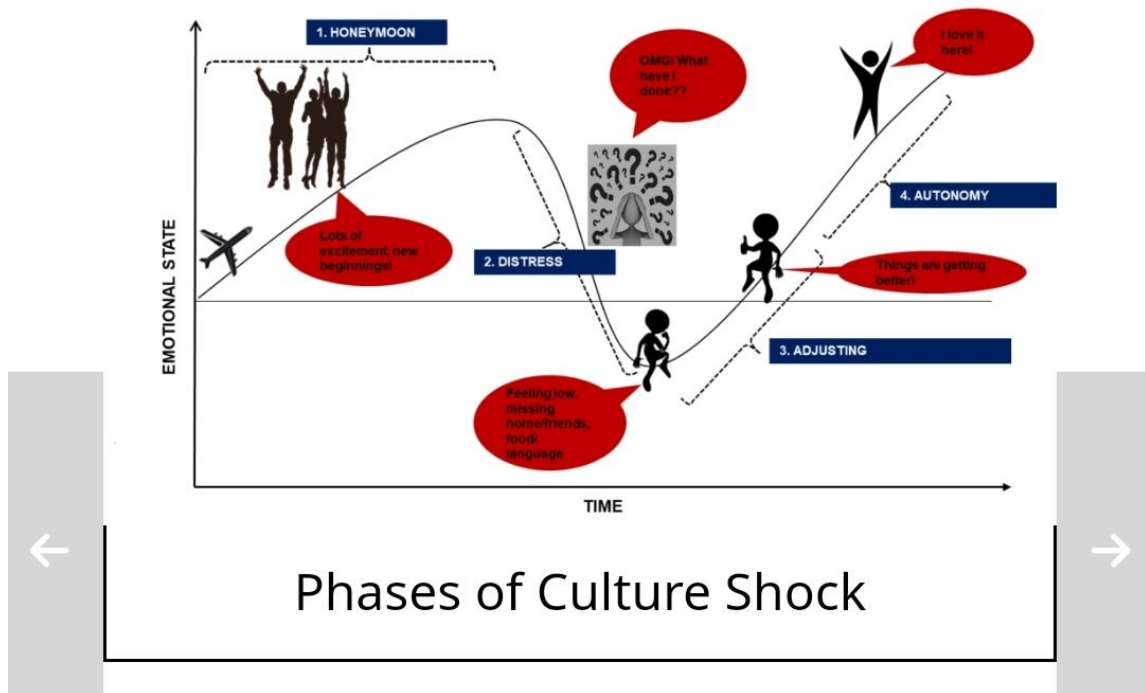


Figure 3: Cultural Adjustment Curve (International Student Pathfinder, 2023)

It is worth noting that countries like the United States and the UK remain in economic leadership position to date because of their open mindedness to global talent mostly from skilled migrants. In the US the world richest man, Elon Musk who has completely revolutionised the world of electric mobility through his battery powered vehicle brand-Tesla, was not born in America. Elon Musk was born in South Africa to a South African father and a Canadian mother. He would only move to Canada at the age of 18 to acquire Canadian citizenship through his mother (Wikipedia, 2023).

Elon Musk transferred to the US for his higher education after the completion of which he started to be involved in the US startup scene. Had America exhibited the standoffish posture to migrant talent such as is the case with Finland, the US would have lost out on a great intellectual asset. Today such an asset is a driver of hundreds of jobs to American citizens and an incontestable affirmation of America as one of the most innovative nations in the world. Tesla can be seen in numbers throughout cities in Finland as do the rest of the Nordic region. As a matter of fact, the brand is highly cherished due to its sustainability credentials that resonate well with the Nordic

appetite for sustainable consumption. Figure 4 below show typical Tesla dealership now regarded as premium brand.



Figure 4: Tesla Motor Corporation Outlet.

Another example of how foreign talent has power to drive growth is the case of Luis Vuitton, which is the highly adorable brand for the globally successfully French luxury superpower; LVMH. Luis Vuitton recently appointed Pharrell Williams, the famous African American singer and fashion designer as its creative director for its men's line (Luis Vuitton, 2023). Pharrell Williams replaced another African American creative director; Virgil Abloh who passed on a few years ago after many years of illustrious input into the Louis Vuitton brand direction. New York Times at some point touted Abloh as the "most powerful black executive in America". Now, had the LVMH family shied away from embracing non-French talent and shunned deploying the creative prowess and global ability to influence and drive subcultures, Luis Vuitton would have most probably missed quite a huge opportunity to remain competitive as a global force in the fashion department. Figure 5 below shows how Luis Vuitton has become an integral part of daily fashion vocabulary in high street.



Figure 5: Men's Clothing Line by Luis Vuitton (Luis Vuitton, 2023)

A few months ago, Germany, a country that has for quite some time maintained a tough position on migration has had to go on a helter-skelter mode to arrest labour shortages. According to the Institute of Employment Research (IAB), in 2022 Germany's labour shortage rose to an all-time high with about 1.74 million vacancies that cannot be filled available throughout the country. A new legislation has recently been passed to open Germany to the world outside the European Economic Area as its economy struggles to get back to the pre-Covid times.

Irrespective of the language barrier, German employers have now become amenable to the fact that learning a language is a long-term process, which should not be allowed to negate economic progress. Also, Germany now gleefully recognises academic qualifications obtained elsewhere in the world other than Germany if it has been endorsed at the country of origin. This is a welcome development for Germany although these reforms came very late as a costly lesson for this progressive European nation. Figure 6 shows the picture of German parliament where the new immigration law was passed.



Figure 6: Picture of the German Parliament (InfoMigrants, 2023)

In the same token as the above, Finnish employers can adopt a very optimistic posture towards migrant talent provided there is a decisive cultural wherewithal to have candid conversation around the pros and not just the cons of work-based immigration. In the above context, migrants could no longer be viewed as products of “hostile cultures” with very little to nothing in the offering. A lot more systemic issues are unfortunately at play fuelling this perception towards skilled migrants.

Earlier this year a report published by the Swiss-based International Institute for Management Development (IMD) marked a drop of three places (compared to the previous year) of Finland in Global Competitiveness Rankings. The ranking explored competitiveness of 64 countries based on how countries managed their competencies to achieve long-term value creation. The ranking breaks down such perspectives into four entities being economic success, public administration efficiency, business performance, and infrastructure.

In terms of the above report, the Achilles’ heel against successful performance has always been Finland’s dismal economic performance. However, this year’s slide in rankings has also been attributed to the internal performance of Finnish companies, particularly in terms of the ranking of attitudes and values, as well as overall business management. With regards to values, the weaknesses, particularly the lack of openness of Finnish companies to external ideas; how flexible and adaptable people are when

confronted by new challenges, and how companies are moving into the digital transition were at the pivoting point of the overall assessment. The lesson in this instance is that as the world increasingly globalizes it is no longer an option to become and act as part of a bigger and more diversified global society in the way external ideas are embraced and harnessed for success.

Having said the above, to vividly understand the current resistance to adopting skilled migration and its intellectual benefits into the Finnish labour market, it is worth visiting the historical foundations of immigration in Finland. This should help unpack some of the geopolitical factors that may be contributing to the current demeanour towards migrant career access.

3.2 Finland and International Migration

It would be an omission to talk about skilled migrants and their rejection in the Finnish labour market without zooming in to understand the history and the dynamics of migration into Finland. This chapter takes the reader through key concepts and moments defining migration in terms of Finland.

3.2.1 Overview of Recent Migration History

Migration in Finland is becoming increasingly becoming a topical subject. Over the last few decades, the number of non-nationals in Finland has increased exponentially. Finland has for quite some time been somewhat ethno-culturally homogeneous and isolated until very recently (Ahmad, 2005), due to its various historical, geographical, and economic factors.

As far back as from the beginning of the twentieth century until as late as the 1970s, Finland experienced tremendous outflow of its nationals, who for lack of better opportunities in their home soil, went off to several economically prosperous countries such as Canada, and the United States. As an example, the Finnish were highly sort after in these countries especially in the areas of mining and forestry industries. As if that was not enough, particularly by the end of the 1960s Finland had also seen a significant

influx of its nationals into Sweden still looking for better opportunities because of the prevailing poor economic conditions in the country at the time.

In as much as the Finnish nationals have trotted the globe in substantial numbers emigrating to comparably more conducive economic environments, on the other hand, foreigners and refugees have always been viewed in Finland (as does elsewhere in the Nordics) as constituting a threat to Finland's security due to its geopolitical position (Paananen, 2005). Particularly after the Winter War between Finland and Russia, the former's immigration policies have always been characterised by strict border controls to tightly manage influx of 'unknown substances' into the Finnish borders. This geopolitical posture in a rather rapidly globalising world was a result of a society shaped by a long period of isolation and a national identity driven by cultural homogeneity.

In the later part of the 20th Finland would see tremendous economic growth, which not only led to the adoption of the welfare model but resulted in the country building a stronger case to migrate to. Education and healthcare in this small Nordic state was top notch and all taken care by the state. Finland suddenly became attractive to people inside and outside the European Union (EU). This development however, failed to change internal view, which for the longest time perceived Finland for the longest time as a country of emigration rather than that of immigration. The idea of immigration has often been an odd one to most Finnish people because based on a historical account, there were "many reasons to emigrate from Finland but there were no sensible and acceptable reasons for immigrating into the same (Forsander & Trux, 2002).

As things stand now, the impetus to attract more credible talent into Finland has never been relevant. Finland currently is more than ever besieged with some worrying economic mist. The country is experiencing negative trade surplus, young people are earning less than their parents, the country lacks rapidly growing business entities that can anchor the next generation by increasing their living standards in par with skyrocketing inflation, rising interest rates, as well as increasing food prices, etc. Above all this the working population in Finland is rapidly aging leading to high labour shortages.

Today Finland has real issues it finds itself grappling with and consequently painting a very gloomy picture to the average citizen. Such observation is not misplaced especially within a backdrop where government budgets are no longer in surplus and the country's economy is continuously performing poorly in relation to its Nordic peers. There is eminent pressure to evolve Finland from a country historically built on emigration towards that which is to base its future on level-headed adoption of migrant talent to leverage its notable but of late, a sagging success.

3.2.2 Finnish Migration in the Context of the Nordic Region

To the extent that that migration in Finland is a universal trend in the Nordic region, policy initiatives to usher in migrants and assure their labour market integration vary from country to country. Some of these policies and initiatives being somewhat nominal in their significance whilst others becoming increasingly more accommodating. As an example, Sweden leads the pack followed by Norway when it comes to ease of integration of migrants in the labour market. At the bottom is Finland followed by Denmark. From this illustration Finland still has got a long way to go to turn around its economic virtues on strategies based on migrant talent.

3.2.3 Finland and the Issues at Stake

In a recent report by the business backed think tank; Etna Economic Research Institute, it is estimated that the yearly net migration needed to reverse Finland's labour market virtues is somewhere around 44 000 persons annually (YLE News, 2023). The research further highlights that if such migration levels are not achieved, the working age population will shrink by a whopping 20% by the year 2070 due to the aging population. The report views this as early warning signs to the kind of pressure to be subjected on the sustainability of the Finnish public finance system as income from taxes and public fees is reduced. This is against an increase in life expectancy, which will hike up the costs of health treatment and care services.

It would appear for reasons articulated above that the appetite for attracting migrant talent in its various forms by the Finnish government is rightfully placed under the prevailing circumstances. That said, such perspective does not seem for now to be in tandem with that of the Finnish society on the same issue. The vision for now remains to be only a political and economic pipe dream on the policy front. Facts and anecdotal

evidence on the ground show a steep curve that is yet to be experienced by interested parties before the interventions can yield any meaningful fruits.

The Finnish labour system is not helping in ensuring that the government efforts to regularize labour shortages can succeed. The interventions by the Finnish government on the prevailing issues have been trivialised by the society as mere “moral posturing”. This is ironic in the sense that even though the interventions are soberly intended to safeguard the very welfare state and the economic value system the society is defending, they are hiddenly facing collective rejection.

Consequent to the above, migrant talent in the great majority of the cases seem to be relegated towards the realms of exclusionary employment, which adds very little meaningful value for mutual gain. This is irrespective of the migrants’ qualifications and professional experience accumulated outside Finland. It needs to be highlighted that this societal tendency is possibly not an issue of racial discrimination as some may think. This is since even migrants from other Western civilisations tend to experience similar sense of exclusion as migrants from the so called Third countries. Ultimately, there is a far cry in national leadership circles that Finland is yet to fully harness the economic power of the skilled migrant communities at her disposal. Such is true even in instances where the latter is a product of Finland’s reputable education system.

Lamentably the picture of late is not looking very good as far as government’s effort to catalyse positive migration goes. According to ETLA Economic Research Institute 40% of student migrants in Finland have an intention to leave the country as soon as they have completed their studies (YLE News, 2023). The students cite lack of long-term career prospects and poor ability to crack into the Finnish social circles as the main cause.

In totality of the undergoing circumstances, the need for vitality in the economy, which must be catalysed by maximising innovation through strategic adoption of migrant talent cannot be over emphasized. It is agreeable based on the prevailing conclusions that migrants are key in boosting the Finnish talent base towards her economic turnaround. Finland is on the verge of losing out on a massive opportunity to reinvent itself, thinking globally whilst acting within previously established local ethos that have led to previous successes.

3.2.4 Can Finland Learn from its Neighbours?

The Nordic countries already highlighted earlier in this document share several commonalities, for instance, they share welfare states, with active labour market policies, and a universal approach to financing and distribution of benefits and services (Greve, 2016). It is for this reason that in the author's review of exploratory literature sources, the policy documents for the above nations were utilized. Such was helpful in assessing the extent of commonalities with regards to the countries' vision for international migration and integration. Initial discovery from this assessment affirms that the struggle to integrate is not just an issue for Finland. Although the Nordic countries vary as their position in the migrant integration curve, all the countries are still experiencing difficulties in this regard.

It is surprising to reckon that in as much as rhetorically the governments of these nations appear to be embracing and adopting international migration, on the ground, migration and integration is an extremely contentious topic. It may well be that what is alarming the citizens of these nations in collective terms, is the sharp increase in the number of migrants. In the overall Nordic region, there has been an increase of about 60% in net migration since the year 1990 (Pyrhönen, et. al., 2017). The number of migrants, however, differs across the countries as a proportion of their individual population.

Preliminary discovery shows the efforts for international migration and integration in the Nordic countries to have been rather a top-down approach digressing from the daily appetite of the citizenry.

In closely going through the policy documents for the above countries, it is evident how expert discourse and rhetoric appear to be the most dominating in the content. Also, a picture where the migrants are deemed to be passive recipients of social services and nothing more significant comes to the fore. The documents portray a less open-minded posture towards the probable capacity and capability of migrants in substantially contributing to the growth and development of the nations concerned. Finland, perhaps due to its expedient need to initiate structural changes to its labour market had during the previous administration only now began to see things differently from the rest of its Nordic peers.

Compared to other Nordic countries the idea of migrant integration in Finland had just begun to be explored with sincerity and under mutually beneficial grounds than before. The Sanna Marin administration had gone against the grain by fending off deep-rooted beliefs the Nordic societies hold about skilled migrants and their ability to make any worthwhile contribution to their respective societies. In a stark contrast, the current administration however, is likely to reverse the virtues attained over the last couple of years if their proposals for immigration regime changes will see the light of the day.

In the process of integrating migrants in the Finnish labour market, a lot more could be achieved if there can be dialogue mechanisms between the Finnish government and the existing citizen structures. Whilst not intending to sound pre-emptive, this might well be the main issue that is hindering the successful attempts by the Finnish government to meaningfully drive acceptance of migrant talent by the Finnish labour market. The mechanisms will ensure that the socio-economic pressure to view migrants differently for the real potential they carry is felt, and that such initiatives are not done from the top down as in other Nordic countries.

Finland needs to integrate migrant talent quickly and it needs to carry the citizens along so that it can be exemplary to other Nordic countries. This macro solution to the problem is huge and will not be the focus of this thesis. A stakeholder management strategy for helping Finnish government better engage its multiple constituents as regards the urgent need to integrate migrant talent may be an answer to the current confusion. Empirical evidence will tell later in this document if such a plan is what could be a steppingstone towards the new profile for Finland's prosperity. If the findings are affirmative, the strategy will be a rather complex undertaking that cannot foreseeably be dealt with in a master's thesis this project has been conceived as.

My thesis at this juncture only attempts to address residual ramifications of lack of the just described broad scale engagement mechanisms. Even if the project takes such a narrow path, the opportunity for meaningful solutions through service design is still abundant.

3.2.5 Why Skilled Migrant Might be Facing Rejection

What is social exclusion? This is a term that is multi-layered and often contested among scholars of social policy. Not only is social exclusion used to refer to a wide

range of phenomena and social processes, but the term is increasingly used to describe a wide range of categories of excluded people and places of exclusion (Peace, 2001).

Having stated the above, in the context of the European Union (EU), the Department of Migration and Home Affairs defines social exclusion as a situation whereby a person is prevented (or excluded) from contributing to and benefiting from economic and social progress. In case of the labour market, it means that those excluded are sanctioned systemically from accessing an ecosystem of rights and privileges afforded by being employed. Social Exclusion is one of the deadliest emotional weapons that can be deployed towards certain social groups within societies. Social exclusion is routinely dispensed (whether consciously or unconsciously) to thwart their socio-economic potential and relegate them to the peripheries of the main society. Social exclusion is a socio-political act with profound impacts on the economic, social, and emotional wellbeing of those it is directed towards.

Researchers suggest four main functions for social exclusion. The first and foremost function of social exclusion is that it is a way of maintaining social rules. Societies operate on rules that apply to various situations (IresearchNet, 2023). As and when certain members of society break these rules, they are routinely excluded from certain social activities. An example is criminal convicts who break the law and consequently carry a social badge that prohibits them from partaking in some social activities.

The second function of social exclusion entails issues of group identity, which often are used to nourish justifications for discrimination. The need to belong has often been touted as an important basic human need, wherefore, group identity is fundamentally a way of fulfilling this need. Group identity categories in most cases are formed along the biological factors (e.g., race, sex, etc.), socially constructed factors (e.g., social class) or perhaps personal beliefs and opinion systems such as religion and politics. These social constructs lead to an “us and them” mindset that often is mentally used to reinforce group identity and keep dissimilar groups in the fringes.

The third function of social exclusion is the one based on the idea of increasing the strength or solidarity of a group. By excluding certain members from a group who are perceived to be weakening its strength and social robustness, the group sees that as a way of reducing collective vulnerability of the rest of the group. This decision,

therefore, strengthens perceived strength of this group and provides immediate sense of power, control, and cohesiveness.

The fourth and the last function of social exclusion is that of distribution of resources to group members. Resources by their nature are often limited in supply. The group in control of these resources hence have a natural prerogative to decide and prioritise which of the members get to receive those resources. Where certain members are profiled by the majority to be unfit for the social exchange, they may be excluded from benefiting accordingly from accessing such resources and associated social interactions.

There is an obvious overlap with regards to the above functions. Whilst in theory they form distinct mental partitions, they overlap in forming the social exclusion profile of key groups. This may be also true concerning causes of social exclusion in Finland. This stated, the focus of this thesis is for now propelled by the last function as it relates directly to shareability of resources, in this instance, access to mentally fulfilling and socially impacting careers in Finland. Empirical research will unveil further the overall profile of social exclusion in Finland as regards the degree of blending in the four functions stated above.

3.2.6 Mechanics of Social Exclusion

Social Exclusion takes place where certain groups are excluded by mainstream society from fully participating and contributing in economic, social, and political life. Social exclusion as a process involves systemic denial of benefits, privileges and entitlements to resources, services, rights, and privileges to participate on equal terms in social relationships.

Social Exclusion as both a process and a phenomenon assert that the need for belonging and relationship for a person are obstructed due to being rejected by someone or a particular social group (Williams, 2005). It is understood that people generally rely upon social relationships to strengthen their physical and psychological wellbeing (Wesselmann & Williams, 2017). It therefore follows that establishing and maintaining social connections with others is one of the most basic human needs (Abraham, 1943), which when fulfilled aids in nurturing their emotional wellness and wellbeing. Social

exclusion is therefore a threat to this basic human demand and borders on preventing the attainment of basic human need.

In societies such as the Nordics known widely for well publicised credentials in human rights, sustainability and equal opportunity, social exclusion of any form is a travesty to the moral heritage they have worked so hard to build over the years.

It is within the above context that the extent of exclusion of migrants in the Finnish labour market will need to be understood. The pain points can be unveiled with an eye for necessary service design interventions. Access to career-based employment by migrants is a good indicator of an inclusive society as it proves the open-mindedness to take note of talent other than their own.

In the following section we shall look at the global best practices when it comes to recruitment and integration of migrants. The idea is to understand how Finland fares in relation to these best practices.

3.3 Finnish Recruitment System and Global Workforce Diversity

Job market in Finland consists mostly of hidden jobs. These are vacancies that are not advertised anywhere but potential candidates are fought through other channels such as referrals, or head-hunters, and other networks. Hidden jobs account for about 70-80% of the jobs in the Finnish labour market. (Ekonomit, 2023).

Instances where a hidden job might be created is when a capable person offers their skill and expertise just at the right time. The employer will then create a role for the person even though there was no prior intention to recruit for that position in the business. Another scenario might be when an employee resigns from their role and asked, as it is the case among Finnish companies, if they know someone in the industry who might be a capable replacement.

Especially during the economic downturn, hidden jobs help employers save time and money since a capable and suitable candidate is found through relatively cost-effective channels. Also, for the job seeker, hidden jobs great opportunity for more active role in job seeking where the job seeker creates chances for themselves. This is contrary to

the norm where one must wait for job advertisements to appear publicly before they can apply.

Part of why it is difficult for migrants to easily get employment in the Finnish job market (aside from language barrier) is because the success of entering recruitment system through hidden jobs is not passive in nature. Hidden job seeking needs one to acquire information about target companies, follow information on their success stories, shortfalls, business innovations, and appointments. These tactics should above all be supported by great aptitude for networking.

Although the above recruitment system looks like a win-win solution for both the recruiters and the job seekers, it unfortunately curtails global practices for diversity recruiting. The latter is practice of hiring of that aims to find the best possible candidates and is structured to give all deserving candidates an equal opportunity. Just because somebody was proactive in seeking a role or was recommended does not mean they are the best talent available. Especially in a closed society such as in Finland, where not only language is the first stumbling block, but also the interpersonal and social posture is rather rigid amongst the people, it means that getting a hidden job becomes a tall order. For one to get a hidden job they must crack a code into key social networks that act as the last bridge into the job offer. In this sense diversity recruitment neutralises the platform and avails opportunities to as many candidates as possible.

Workforce diversity is the fastest growing employment trend in the business world. In as much as it is a good moral undertaking, it does have tangible benefits driving performance, innovation, and productivity to those organisations that practice it. Workforce diversity particularly has the following immediate benefits for organisations:

- Wider skill base and experience among the teams.
- Increased language and cultural awareness.
- Larger and more varied candidate pool giving more hiring flexibility.

Globally, research has shown that:

- Companies with diverse management teams are 21% more likely to achieve high profitability.
- Diverse companies are 17% more likely to be innovation leaders in their category.
- 3 out of 4 employees have more affinity towards working for a more diverse company.
- Diverse companies have been proven to be 35% more likely to financially outperform their less diverse competitors.

The above statistics clearly illustrate why the idea of opening the labour market in Finland for the absorption of migrant talent holds more advantages than disadvantages. Where Finland needs to make migrant talent a greater part of its national labour market strategy, a lot will need to be done to ensure that migrants have access to career based jobs. This type of employment is instrumental in assuring necessary life satisfaction that drives and ensures long term psychological integration and willingness to settle within the Finnish society.

3.4 Employment, Migrant Wellbeing, and Willingness to Settle

The idea of migration is often tied to the need for better opportunities, which one's home country is unable to offer to the migrant. It is for this reason that happiness is a key determinant in every plan for one to leave their country, sometimes reluctantly separating from their friends and family. In the context of lack of access to career-based employment, verbal anecdotes proof an unceasing sense of unhappiness for the migrants and pessimism regarding their future in Finland. The following diagram shows different facets of the notion of happiness. The presentation will begin to illustrate how successful employment and its related aspects greatly impact on the overall happiness, life satisfaction, and subjective wellbeing of skilled migrants. Figure 7 below illustrates the multilayered nature of happiness and subjective wellbeing.

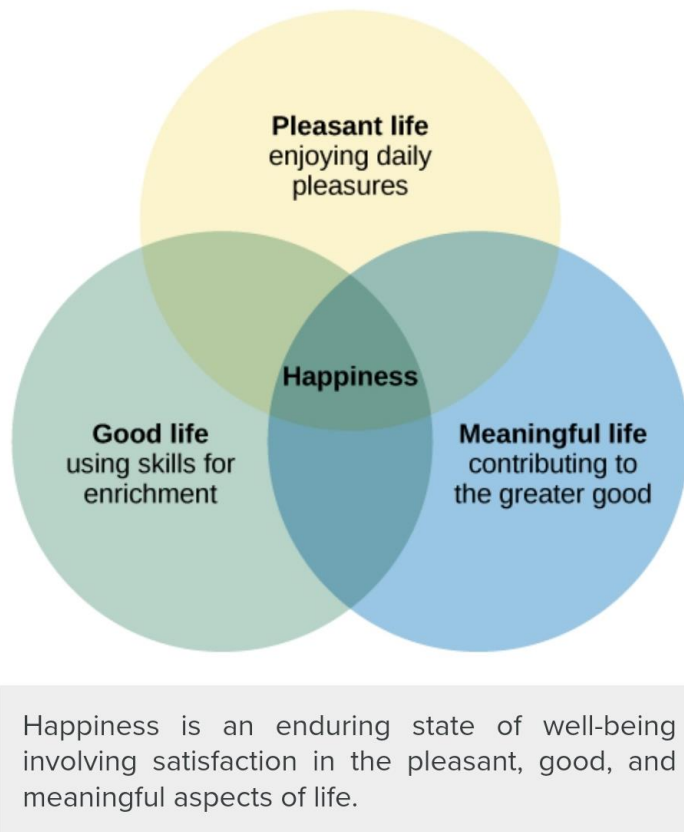


Figure 7: Psycho-Social Facets of Happiness (Lumen Learning, 2023)

What is immediately noticeable in the above diagram is that happiness in a host country is not just a product of enjoying daily life pleasures and conveniences. To a skilled migrant, occupational status, and the ability for one to use their skills and talents successfully is a key pillar for enriching their lives and keeping them satisfied. Migrants feel even better if they can be made to believe that not only are they using their skills, but they are using them for a greater social good. In other words, it isn't just about migrants having any job that can keep them satisfied and happy with their lives in a host country. There is an element of status and fulfilment that should be pegged to the job. As the Finnish labour market adamantly relegate migrants towards exclusionary types of employment, migrants, who in most cases are often overschooled from staggering one degree after the other, become disillusioned and disenfranchised.

A good job supports the notion of happiness in that it reinforces the feeling of subjective wellbeing. This is a state of mind where migrants feel they are better off, and

their lives are moving in the right direction than before. A good job is necessary in that migrants support their families back home through remittances that are availed as a portion of their employment income. When such income is in direct relation to their calibre of education and experience, it would mean even improved wellbeing and happiness. Migrants would appreciate their progress in the host country even more as they become empowered to assist in building social capital back in their home countries.

Just to indicate how seriously multifaceted the idea of life satisfaction is for skilled migrants in relation to the type of job they do, global remittances at the end of 2022 is estimated to be an \$800 billion market, the World Economic Forum says. Just to put things into perspective, some remittances amount to as high as 50% of the GDP for some of the migrant countries of origin. It is from this perspective that getting career-based employment that corresponds to a skilled migrant's education is key. Skilled migrants' life satisfaction requirements transcend migrants' stay in their host country.

In view of the above, skilled migrants come to Finland with genuine mutual hopes for more holistic empowerment. When these expectations are not met, they result in unhappiness, which leads to a decision to not stay in the country any longer. This is not a good position for Finland if the country is genuinely basing its long-term competitiveness around skilled migrant participation. Migrants are demanding more for the education and the professional experience some do possess.

The above type of economic segregation and its disillusionment is leading to an emotionally polarised society that is defined by anger for the victims against a preponderous sense of privilege from the beneficiaries. This is the same scenario that has led to the recent migrant riots in France during which damages worth millions of euros were caused. Migrants in France felt left out and angry as they routinely got pushed to the fringes of the society. They have open heartedly adopted France as their own, even if by way of cultural assimilation. Finland with a long track record for the respect of human rights cannot afford to evoke this type of social storm.

3.5 Key Development Prospects from Literature Review

Among all the information that has been gathered in the massive body of literature around the idea of skilled migrants in Finland and their subjective wellbeing, Figure 7

(Psycho-Social Facets of Happiness) in the preceding chapter becomes the epicentre from which to extract potential ideas for development at least from a point of view of secondary research. The diagram depicts key motivators for migration in the first place. Identifying unmet needs within the illustrated continuum of happiness facets almost immediately resolves that which migrants deem to be the pertinent hygiene factors for their positive stay in their host nation. In this sense, the diagram is a catchment area of all the needs one can imagine around migrants living in a foreign country.

In view of the above, three facets of happiness provide opportunity for the development of a range of service design possibilities around migrants' subjective wellbeing. Access to career-based employment is a component of subjective wellbeing. The following facets of happiness act as preliminary design drivers to inform future possibilities for service design concepts in this thesis:

Work – This involves the notion of occupational status and job satisfaction. It is the key issue at the heart of this thesis project.

Financial Situation – This facet includes income through job access and the power to maximize earning potential to build wealth. Financial situation is therefore tied largely to the first facet (work). Service Design solutions in this area are of paramount importance.

Community and Friends - Finland is one country where skilled migrants find it extremely difficult to break into existing social circles. Accessing a job in Finland, even the menial type depends a lot on referrals from a circle of friends and companions therefore creating solutions around this facet is a steppingstone to driving absorption of migrant talent in the Finnish labour market.

This thesis now goes into the empirical mode with the above possibilities in the background, inspiring imagination around the research methods to be deployed of course canvassed by the stipulated research goals.

4 Service Design Process

Key factor that differentiates a service design thesis from a general thesis is the inclusion of specific design methods, processes, and tools. It is expected that such form part of the research activity as indeed they talk to the inclusion of criteria about users, and the human-centred approaches that begin to define value around the problem identified. This chapter explains the service design approach that will be integrated into this thesis journey.

4.1 Service Design Thinking and Adopted Design Process Model

A lot of knowledge has been attained in the last few chapters trying to understand the underlying factors that define and shape labour market of migrants in Finland. In this chapter the focus is now on the process that is guiding this research activity until it can be synthesised into service design solutions for the problem at hand.

The research activity in this thesis follows a Double Diamond methodology. This is a universally accepted depiction of the design process (Design Council, 2023) and visually represents the steps adopted in any innovation project, the adopted methods and tools put aside. The Double Diamond framework is illustrated in Figure 8 below.

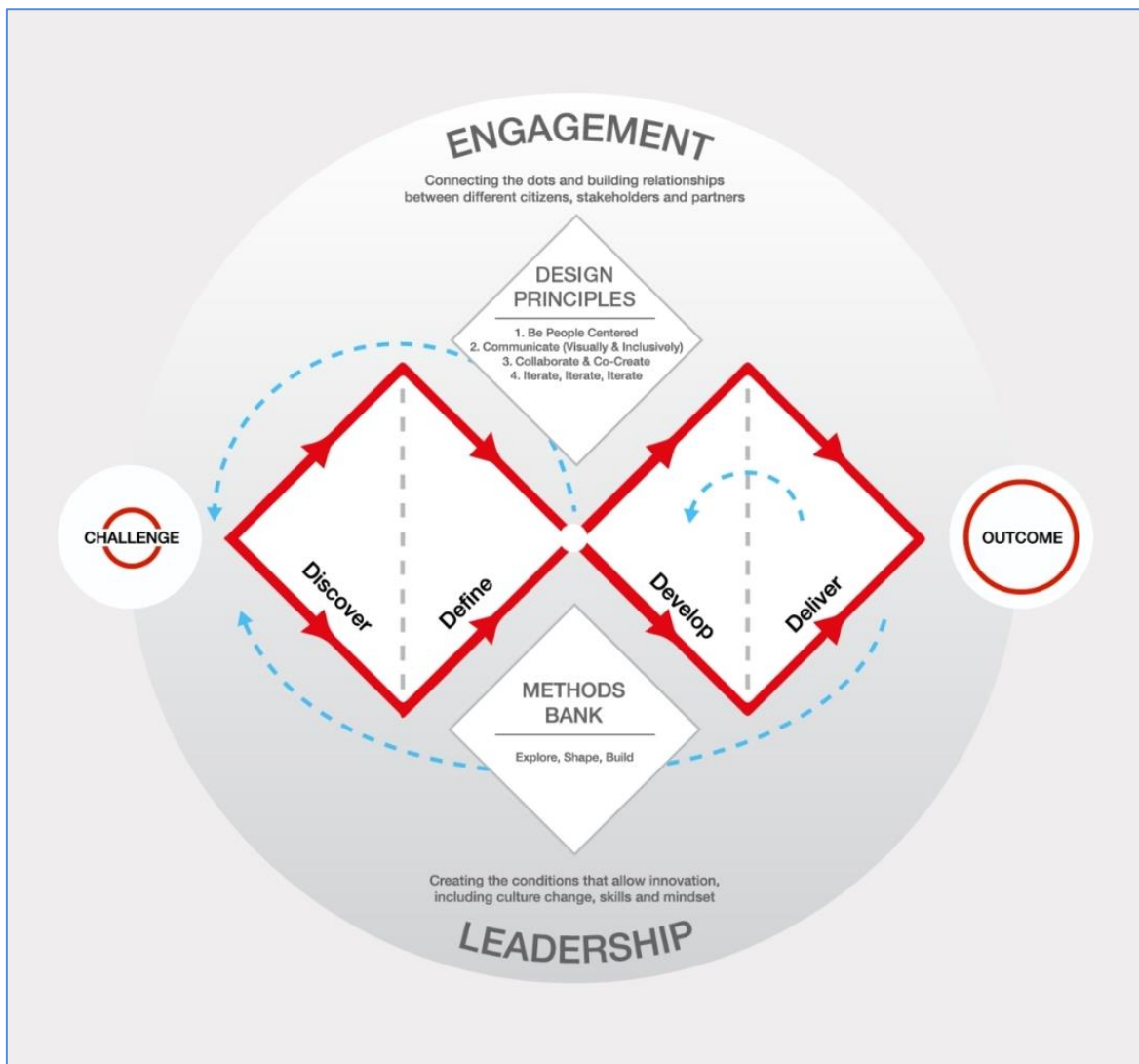


Figure 8: The Double Diamond Design Process Model (Design Council, 2023).

The Double Diamond process starts with a challenge (key issue) and end with an outcome (design solution). From this perspective one can immediately notice the practical inclinations of this method. It is solution rather than rhetoric driven action-based process. In between the challenge and outcome, the process consists of four phases namely, discover; define; develop; and deliver and such are explained below but first let us briefly touch on the “challenge”.

Beyond the simplicity depicted by the Double Diamond visualisation when it comes to the idea of the “challenge”, there is often very complex criteria that goes into defining what the real challenge should be. Such criteria cover key useability, competitive, brand, strategic, economic, environmental, social issues, etc., which might be signalling

the skeleton of the issue. The four phases are then adopted to amplify the challenge detected so that it may be understood with much more precision.

Below we expand on what each phase of the four Ds of the Double Diamond entails:

Discover – In this phase key insights are gathered to expand on the early gestures of the problem detected. Here findings from literature to uncover what other people have discovered about the problem are availed. A lot of knowledge can be obtained from these secondary sources to help look at the problem from a different perspective relative to the initial one. It is about developing a much more educated guess on the extent and depth of the problem rather than making assumptions. This may also involve cursory conversations with key stakeholders to get ideas of what they genuinely believe the key challenge is and how subjectively they think the solution could be.

Define – Following the discovery phase comes a defining moment where conventional research methods are deployed to seek empirical evidence around the problem. The evidence is put side by side with insights from the discovery phase to begin to understand if there is noticeable correlation between the two spheres of knowledge. Whatever the gaps there are will be subjected to further scrutiny until the challenge is fully defined.

Develop – This is the first part of the second diamond. Here the thinking once again is opened to key stakeholders. With a defined problem they now co-create solutions based on that specific lens with which the problem is viewed. Here key design methods are used to creatively synthesize solutions to the defined problem. The develop phase involves visualisation and prototyping of key solutions providing variability of thought and imagining possibilities from different angles.

Deliver – In this phase the above solutions are then tested with target users and tried out at a small scale, deriving learnings, and soliciting feedback to be integrated into the final solution.

Underpinning all the above process are key leadership and change management processes that allow successful engagement and alignment of stakeholders towards the final solution. What needs to also be emphasized is the iterative nature of the process. Even though on paper the Double Diamond appears to consist of rather linear,

mechanically fixed mental steps, in actual practice it is a fluid process that moves back and forth at any moment and cross-referencing insights and cross-pollinating ideas obtained across the stages. The image below (Figure 9) better illustrates the interdependencies between the phases of the Double Diamond process mentally emphasizing its fluidity.

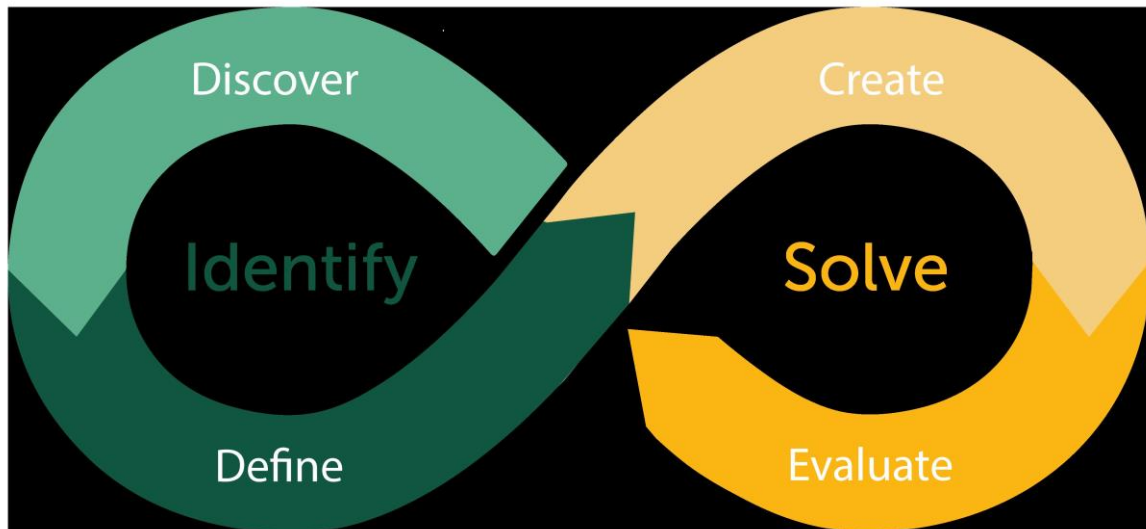


Figure 9: The Design Thinking Framework (Ukrop Studio, 2023)

4.2 Human-Centred Design: Basis for Service Concept Development

The Interaction Design Foundation defines Human Centred Design as a practice where designers direct their efforts towards four main aspects of the design process. Designers in this sense manipulate design thinking and methods towards understanding people and the context, they seek to solve not just problems but the right problems on the basis of their root cause, they create solutions with the understanding that everything is a complex system with interconnected parts that create a whole, and finally that solutions are not finite, they demand constant iterations that are prototyped and tested on real people to ensure that the solutions resonate with their needs.

Service Design Thinking adopts an innovation process following the four phases of the Double Diamond methodology and guiding the thinking through the application of the

principles of human-centred design just described. Unlike conventional thinking based on logic, this type of thinking is innovation led and is anchored around the user, systemically looking at problem within a wider context of interdependencies.

5 Primary Research and Empirical Insights

In this thesis, conventional research methods coupled with service design thinking methods and tools are applied. The first set of methods focus on soliciting empirical insights whilst the second set drives definitive understanding from human-centred design point of view. Our approach to seeking empirical insight was as follows:

- Learn from those already actively involved in migrant talent integrations as experts and opinion makers in this area.
- Hear from migrants regarding the daily struggles they must go through in their pursuit for getting employed in career-based jobs.
- Indulge in exclusionary employment into which migrants end up giving in to get firsthand experience of successes and pain points that render such jobs inappropriate.

In correspondence with the above approach, the following research methods were then adopted to give required results:

- Exploratory expert interviews
- Auto ethnography
- Netnography

In addition to the above methods, the following service design tools were used:

- Service Ecosystem Mapping
- Empathy Mapping
- Customer Value Proposition Canvas
- User personas

These tools are not in any way exhaustive and will evolve as the thesis moves towards completion. The data collected with the help of these methods is analysed using

selective coding, affinity diagramming, mind maps and word clouds. All these methods and tools are elaborated below:

5.1 Discover

The following research methods focus on the solicitation of empirical insights as far as discovering the magnitude and the shape of the migrant labour market rejection in Finland is concerned. As stated elsewhere in this document, the findings in this section will be put side by side with those from literature search and validated through methods from human centred design as the research is synthesized into appropriate service design solutions.

5.1.1 Exploratory Interviews

Stickdorn and Schneider (2011, 162-163), assert that contextual interviews are often conducted with relevant stakeholders in their own environment or actual context in which the research issue is taking place. For this thesis, the contextual interview technique has been utilized for both the expert interviews knowledgeable on career access issues for migrants in Finland as well as the migrants themselves actively undergoing non-career employment.

Supported by preliminary findings from literature search during the secondary research part of the thesis, the discovery phase of this thesis project was initiated by conducting the total of eight sets of interviews using a semi-structured interview guide. An example of the interview guide is presented in Appendix 1 and 2. The interviews were categorised into two types amplified through group discussion for more conversational elaborations of issues on the ground.

The first type was a simple one-on-one type of open-ended **expert interview** administered through a semi-structured instrument. Expert interviews are widely utilised qualitative research method targeted at soliciting pertinent information about a specific field of action.

In this context an expert is anyone who is considered knowledgeable of a particular subject and is identified based on their knowledge, their position in the community, or

their status around the subject matter (Döringer, 2020). The roles and organizations of the interviewees are presented in Table 1 below:

Interview Category	Role and Responsibility of Interviewee	Organisation Represented
<i>Expert Interview</i>	Critical skills development and training	Saranen Consulting
<i>Expert Interview</i>	Migrant integration, talent attraction, guidance, and counselling	Turku International House
<i>Expert Interview</i>	Skilled migrant job search training and mentoring	Integrify
<i>Expert Interview</i>	Career mentorship and contact administration	Åbo Academy
<i>Individual Interviews</i>	Actual migrants narrating their day-to-day job searching experiences	Integrify Mentees
<i>Group Interviews/Conversations</i>	Actual migrants narrating their day-to-day job searching experiences	Integrify Mentees

Table 1: Exploratory Interview Profiles across Key Stakeholders.

Following the expert interviews above, the researcher attended **job seeker's mentoring sessions** by Integrify; the nonprofit making Migrant Job Seeker Coaching and Mentoring organisation that was funded by the European Union at the time. This indulged the researcher into casual conversations and verbal anecdotes around professional job seeking frustrations skilled migrants go through daily in the Finnish labour market. The group approach was necessary to provoke a sense of dynamism

and cross referencing of opinions across the potential interview subjects. This provided more reliable discoveries, which otherwise were not going to be possible to obtain from individual interviewing alone.

The above sessions further helped pave the researcher's journey into a one-on-one interviewing opportunity with the migrants. These **One-on-One Interviews** used semi-structured research instrument the questions for which were inspired by verbal anecdotes obtained during the Integrify mentoring sessions. The one-on-one interviews were almost zooming in into to the stories listened to and anecdotal evidence obtained during the sessions.

The above provided rich opportunity for triangulating insights obtained during expert interviews and those to be solicited through **Contextual Inquiry** sessions with individual migrants working in the field at their exclusionary employment to augment insights unveiled during the **Autoethnographic observations**. During the latter sessions contacts of the migrant participants were then sort and later 30 individual interviews were conducted. Such were to probe more detailed responses to specific questions that best supported the key research goals of this thesis project and could not be asked in an organised fashion during the attended sessions.

Key insights from the interviews

➤ Expert Interviews

Responses from the four expert interviews were analysed through thematic analysis. In this instance, recurring themes across interview responses were mapped to begin to group them into sensible chunks. These helped in best unpacking the dynamics of lack of career-based employment by Migrants in Finland. The following themes surfaced to the analysis of the responses:

- Relational Serendipity
- Stuck in the Norm
- Cultural Disposition
- Social Privilege

- Core Recruitment Differentiators

Below the above themes are elaborated upon to better relate them to the crux of the problems facing migrants in their quest to access careers within the Finnish labour market.

Relational Serendipity – Oxford Dictionary defines serendipity as the occurrence of events by chance in a happy and beneficial way. Both the four expert interviewees point to the fact that Finland has traditionally operated in the Finnish language and to some extent Swedish. As global forces exerted by aging population takes place, the shortage of skilled labour can be resolved ideally through migrants. However, the real residual challenge brought about by this shift is in how suddenly hiring a non-Finnish speaker alters the tempo of the discussions in conversation spaces. These can either be in the meeting or coffee room.

People naturally find it easy and more comfortable to relate with those whom they can effortlessly express themselves to, in a common language that can build mutual understanding nuances and issues expressed. If suddenly this dynamic is disturbed, it creates a mental burden, which makes it difficult to hire migrants in key roles irrespective of their qualifications and levels of experience. The proximity of grasping key notes in a conversation is widened by the lack of speaking same language. It is not that Finnish employers do not believe migrants have something to offer or even that they do not want to try out migrant talent. The employers are facing a very steep curve of how to best adopt them into a Finnish work environment.

Stuck in the Norm – In as much as the younger generation of the Finnish society do understand and speak English, the fact that such is not a language of communication in most Finnish companies pose a problem. People become better with language the more frequent they practice it. Unfortunately, over the years the Finnish people have operated simply fine with their native language and there was little incentive to use English. This meant an interruption to the fluency of the language and now even younger people do not necessarily speak English as second nature. Except in highly cosmopolitan cities such as Helsinki where there are more multinational companies based and hence the need to embrace diversity, the rest of Finland where small

companies drive the economy, migrants appear to be misfits solely based on their poor proficiency in the local vernacular.

Cultural Disposition – The interviewed experts to a varying degree alluded to the docile disposition of the Finnish people. Their society is not easily trusting as a cultural trait. Emotional access to a typical Finn needs to be earned when one's credibility is demonstrated overtime. This social trait has meant that migrants have extremely limited social circles to provide beneficial integration into working life. In a labour market that is mostly made up of hidden jobs that are filled through referral and recommendation, a typical migrant struggles to find a break into this type of recruitment system.

Social Privilege – The expert interviewees were asked why Finnish employers seem to be more at peace hiring migrants in exclusionary employment though there is still an issue of language barrier. The indication in this instance was that such are jobs that make the economy run as they are at the bottom of the value pyramid. When there are no cleaners, hotels and offices cannot successfully deliver their services, for example. Due to the nature of these jobs value is added manually relying less on sharing of ideas and driving conversations.

It is for the above reason that inherently the ability of the worker not able to speak native language does not pose much risk in their ability to dispense their duties. Furthermore, because of the physically demanding nature of these jobs, a lot of Finnish people, mostly well-educated and with a pronounced privilege to pick and choose, do not find many motivations doing those jobs. This leaves a huge vacuum in the job market that needs to be filled and who else is there to fill in the gap besides migrants? The desperation of the employer meets that of the migrant and the gain is mutual.

Lately the only fortress for migrants (exclusionary employment) has been threatened by a new trend - the gig economy. In this setup employers do not want to commit to long term contracts with migrants. As the war in Ukraine brought in an influx of refugees, there is now over supply of labour in the labour market. Employers have so much choice to the extent that they rely increasingly on work for hire (on demand) contractual arrangements. This they believe works best for them because they no

longer have the burden for permanent employees and the legal implications that surround it.

The above is a new ordeal for an educated and skilled migrant who already had lowered their expectations to try and get into the labour market. Migrants in this instance feel quite aggrieved and used as tools of production than asserts that add value to the Finnish employer. Juxtapose this emerging feeling of migrants with the proposed changes in immigration regime then one gets a real picture of the grotesque employment landscape of migrants in Finland. Skilled migrants in Finland are limping with hopelessness and some of the stated dynamics add way too much salt to their injury.

Core Recruitment Differentiators – In this theme expert interviewees now looked at the weaknesses for migrants themselves. The assertions are that Finland though small, is quite a significant European Economy. The Finnish economy is fluent in technology and recruitment in businesses increasingly rely on technology for precision in recruiting the right candidate for the job. The interviewees collectively pointed to the fact that most migrants coming from economies that use less tech in their recruitment have not developed skills to succinctly match their competences to the job advertisement. They come from recruitment systems that routinely rely on intuition and personal judgement to select the right candidates. Although there are issues already discussed such as language barrier when seeking a job in Finland, getting right your competences, and marrying them relevantly to the job advert can set one in the right direction when they are called for an interview. Without mastering this skill, the possibilities remain quite dampened.

➤ **Job Seeking Mentoring Sessions**

The researcher actively listened to verbal anecdotes uttered by job seeking migrants during their job coaching sessions with the mentors at Integrify. The mentors were looking at lack of access to career led employment from objective specifics such as the need for migrants to fine tune their resumes, LinkedIn profiles, and related networking tactics. On the other hand, the migrant job seekers whilst appreciative of these

shortcomings, sentimentally reasoned their failure along three key themes that defined the essence of the discussions during the meeting.

The themes raised within which migrants viewed their perceived reluctance of Finnish employers to give them access to career led employment opportunities were categorised along the dimensions of race, powerplay, and attitude towards those from outside. Below such themes are expanded based on how they were elaborated by migrants through examples of job seeking experiences they go through. Thematic review of the issues raised is visually captured below in Figure 10.



Figure 10: Thematic Review of Migrant Job Seeking Anecdotes.

Race – In this dimension migrant job seekers believed that in as much as there would be the need to refine their tools for job search to better match the competitive nature of their new job market, their job profiles are subjected inherent racial discrimination. The migrants believe that Finnish recruiters are extremely conceited to a point of xenophobic in their evaluation of credentials from non-Finnish applicants.

Although one may be tempted to loosely dismiss the above as misguided sentiments uttered out of frustration by skilled migrants, it must also be appreciated that job acquisition is not an entirely mechanical process that relies on the precision of job application tools alone. There are soft aspects of the process that often hinge on interpersonal, social, and political factors invisible in the same process.

In view of the above, the idea of discrimination based on racial inclinations in Finland is a brewing storm.

It is important now to highlight that several researchers have also indirectly corroborated the above migrants account of rejection in the Finnish labour market. One such researcher is Akhlaq Ahmad at the University of Helsinki. This researcher went about setting up an experiment of how being Finnish drives favourability when it comes to access to employment. The above researcher's results have convincingly proven that in Finland, "Ari Pöyhönen" finds it much easier to get a great well-paying job than "Karim Mohamed" even though the latter may be equally qualified or even more experienced.

Akhlaq Ahmad's conducted a large-scale experiment between 2016 and 2017 (Ahmad, 2020) in which 5000 fake applications to advertised jobs under Finnish and foreign names were sent out. The objective of this research was to find out how the name of the candidate affected the probability of them being invited for an interview. The attributes of the applicants were such that all of them in similar fashion as those with Finnish names, had strong competences and experience, had schooled in Finland, and spoke excellent Finnish language. The assumption here being that if interviews were solely invited for based on competences, both applicants would have been afforded an opportunity for an interview.

The result for the above experiment were startling. Emerging was a clear hierarchy in which applicants who were women and Finnish afforded more opportunity whilst men who happened to be Somali ranked poorly and at the bottom of the opportunity scale. Applicants with Finnish names received 390 interviews from a thousand applications, Iraqis 134 interviews, whilst Somalis got only 99 interviews out of the same thousand applications. Ahmad results are not just some political sentiments from a migrant researcher lamenting to find his feet in a foreign land. The results have been peer-reviewed and published in key journals, attesting to their credibility of execution. Below (Figure 11 and Table 2) are some statistics building up to the above researcher's findings:

Interview invites per 500 job applications

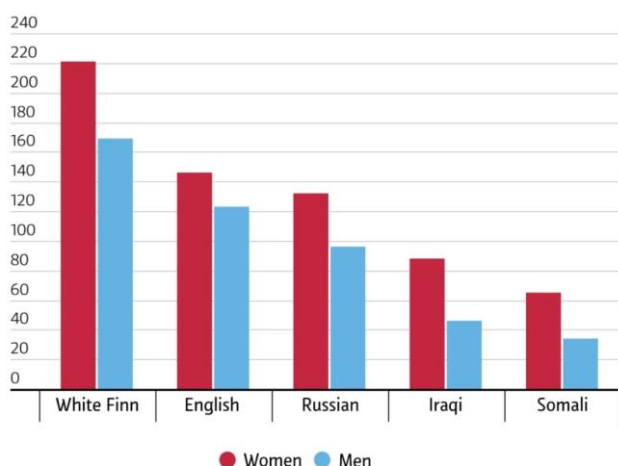


Figure 11: Interview Invitations based on gender/name origins (Ahmad, 2020)

	Callbacks (n)	N	Callback rate, % (n/N)	Estimate	Std. error	zstatistic	Sig.
Panel A: Aggregated sample							
Finnish name	390	1000	39.0				
English name	269	1000	26.9	0.552	0.096	5.728	0.000
Russian name	228	1000	22.8	0.771	0.099	7.763	0.000
Iraqi name	134	1000	13.4	1.416	0.113	12.522	0.000
Somali name	99	1000	9.9	1.757	0.124	14.178	0.000
Total	1120	5000					
Panel B: Male applicants							
Finnish name	169	500	33.8				
English name	123	500	24.6	0.447	0.140	3.185	0.000
Russian name	96	500	19.2	0.762	0.147	5.169	0.000
Iraqi name	46	500	9.2	1.609	0.181	8.908	0.000
Somali name	34	500	6.8	1.934	0.200	9.663	0.000
Total	468	2500					
Panel C: Female applicants							
Finnish name	221	500	44.2				
English name	146	500	29.2	0.651	0.133	4.889	0.000
Russian name	132	500	26.4	0.790	0.135	5.833	0.000
Iraqi name	88	500	17.6	1.307	0.148	8.847	0.000
Somali name	65	500	13.0	1.662	0.160	10.378	0.000
Total	652	2500					
Parameter estimate for gender							
Male applicant invitea				0.455	0.071	6.417	0.000

Notes: At 95% confidence level: LR goodness-of-fit test of the model: 6.175, df=4, p=0.186. The model: callback ethnicity gender callback*ethnicity callback*gender. As this test indicates, the differences by gender are not different by ethnicity and the model fits without the interaction term. However, for descriptive purposes the table is given in the current form. The parameter estimate with test is given at the bottom of the table.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics by applicant's name and race (Ahmad, 2020)

Racial discrimination in the labour market is not just an issue in Finland. Several European countries especially in the Nordics struggle to accept that people of fair to dark skin may just equally possess the same level of intelligence that may be harvested from a native job applicant.

As we witness the rise of the right-wing political fanaticism in Europe against aging demographics and economic performance decline driven by skyrocketing food prices and vertiginous propulsion of inflation, Finland particularly needs to rethink the way its society perceives and embrace migrant talent. A lot more needs to go into educating the average Finn on the importance of warming up to this new reality. Compared to its Nordic counterparts, the Finnish economy is struggling, and the society needs to open to external talent, which is necessary to bring in a new lease of life into the socio-economic status of this Nordic state.

Powerplay - The third theme word that arose from verbal anecdotes of migrants during the Integrify mentoring workshop was that of powerplay. Migrants believe that their rejection from career-based employment is an issue of power. They are convinced that the Finns believe that if they can be given access to credible career jobs, they might end up becoming too powerful in their own country. With a good job they assert, comes good income, which opens doors to a plethora of channels of economic empowerment. Migrants perceive this to be quite an unsettling issue for an average Finn to the extent that they did express this concern when a sizeable majority voted the Finns Party to represent their views in the Finnish parliament.

➤ **Migrant Interviews**

Based on the above anecdotes more focused one-on-one interviews were conducted as semi structured questionnaires to those migrants who attended the Integrify job seekers' mentoring sessions. Their emails had been collected in two occasions the researcher attended the mentoring session. A total of 35 questionnaires were mailed out and only 25 responses were received to form the basis of the findings below. Of the 25 respondents 16 were male between the ages of 27 and 40 years of age while 9 were females between the ages of 24 and 35 years. 55% of these respondents had come to Finland as families.

Of the 25 respondents interviewed 70% indicated to have come to Finland to pursue their master's degrees, have had a professional job for several years, and were still pursuing their respective programmes while remaining 30% was split between those

completing their undergraduate studies and those who had completed their master's education within the last 3 years. The latter would naturally have also had a professional job before their post graduate studies. The responses from this survey were put in Excel spreadsheet to extract key themes that emerged in the process of analysing the responses. The themes were assigned codes that were later used to determine the frequency of each theme across each respondent. This helped quantify what was otherwise open-ended qualitative data and the quantification what is presented in this section of the thesis project.

The most fundamental issue the researcher needed to understand was why the respondents chose to come and pursue their studies in Finland. This was a valid starting point in the sense that migration as a global phenomenon is highly competitive landscape. As more western countries experience changing demographics, the battle for migrants has never been fiercer. Migrants not only come in as potential economic participants, but they most importantly bring with them substantial amounts of money to pump into the economies of their host nations. Finland has decisively embraced this trend when over the years it ceased offering free education to migrants. Currently migrants must pay tuition and it has been touted that such is sizeable amount of money the national treasury intends to bank of to manage the cost of educating the Finnish citizens.

Below are the key migration drivers (Figure 12) for which migrants indicated to have been the basis for selecting the small Nordic state as their host nation.

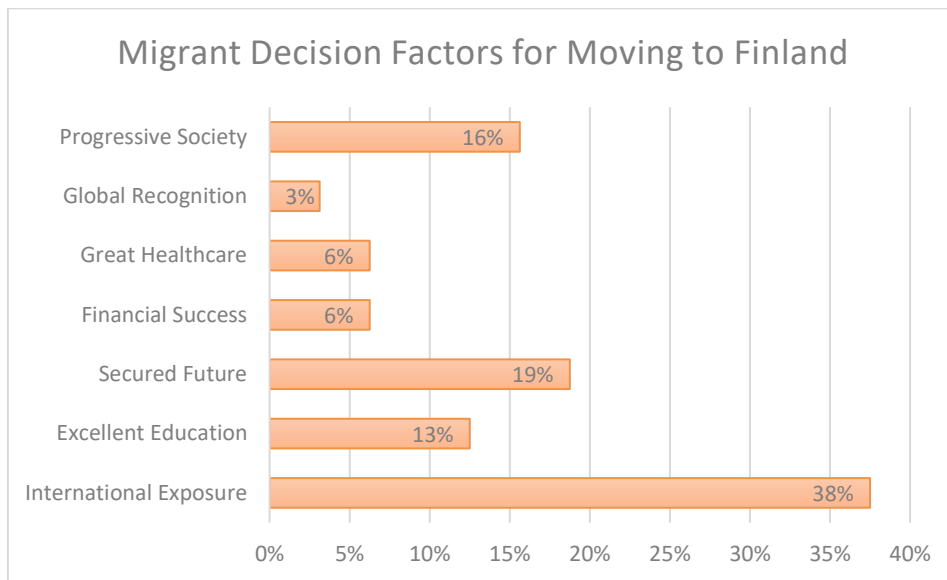


Figure 12: Migrant Decision Drivers for having Migrated to Finland.

In the interpretation of the above bar chart three migration factors stand out as key determinants for migration to Finland by skilled migrants. The main issue migrants chose Finland was the international exposure (38%) of a first world country in Europe. They believe this to be able to offer them an opportunity to be part of a progressive modern society (16%) where they may have their future appropriately secured (19%). When the issue of lack of access to employment comes into play, these fundamentals are challenged to the agony of the migrants. What their move to the new country stands for is challenged from the foundation.

The second aspect the research needed to understand was the migrants' topmost important expectation as they embarked on their journey to this Nordic state. It is critical to understand key expectations migrants hold Finland against so that we may begin to imagine their sources of frustration in case these expectations are not met.

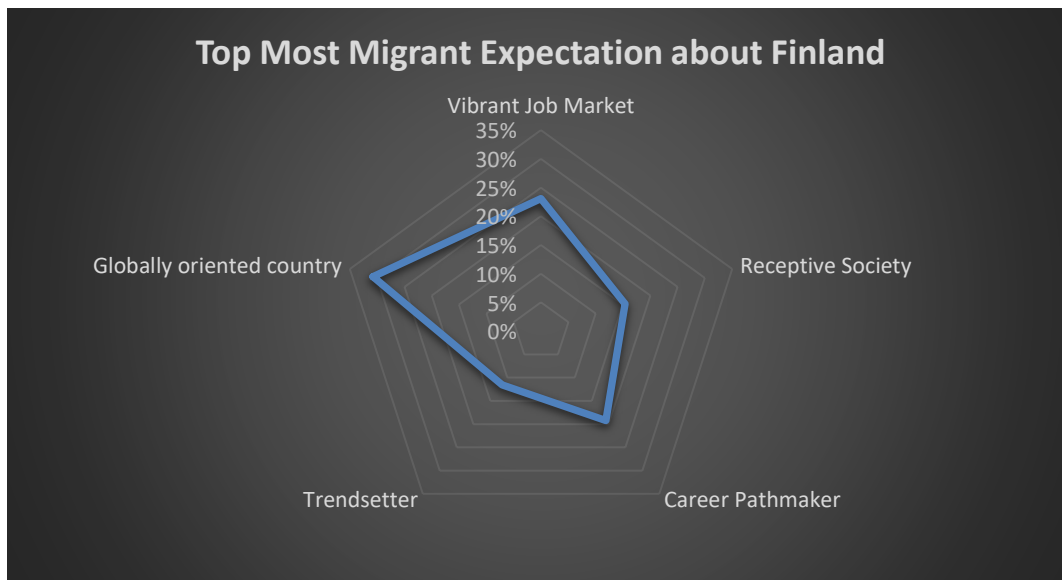


Figure 13: Key Fundamentals Migrants Expected from Finland.

Viewed from the above diagram a vast majority of the respondent (31%) expected Finland to be a globally oriented society with vibrant job market (23%) where the society is most probably receptive to migrants (15%), and someone can build excellent career path (19%). These expectations are not misplaced considering the changes in immigration regime discussed earlier in this document. The basic understanding that was driven by these changes was that Finland has labour shortages and needs external talent to remain competitive as majority of the work force begins to age and retire.

When migrants were asked the extent to which their expectations have been met 52% expressed complete frustration with the reality on the ground whilst 24% were felt shortchanged and downright angry with the kind of circumstances they currently happen to be exposed to. The diagram below visually presents migrant views on this dimension of their expectation:



Figure 14: Migrants Views regarding the Extent Finland met their Expectations.

Going deeper the research was determined to understand the topmost outstanding issue those migrants who feel frustrated and downright angry are confronted with. A great majority cited the unwelcoming demeanour of the Finnish people (43%) followed by inward looking tendencies of the society (23%) coupled with overpromising narrations of the Finnish government when inviting them into the country, as well as bureaucratic systems, and dismissively over-confident society that sees no substance in the migrants' ability to participate meaningfully (9% respectively).

Some of the respondents illustrated how it took them 3 months just to open a bank account, whilst others cited the way they waited a full year to have the Finnish immigration issuing resident permits for their family members to come and join them in the country. This they emphasised does not show genuine commitment towards integration of migrants as co-equal partakers in the migration deal. The diagram below captures the migrants' spectrum of sentiments of this matter.

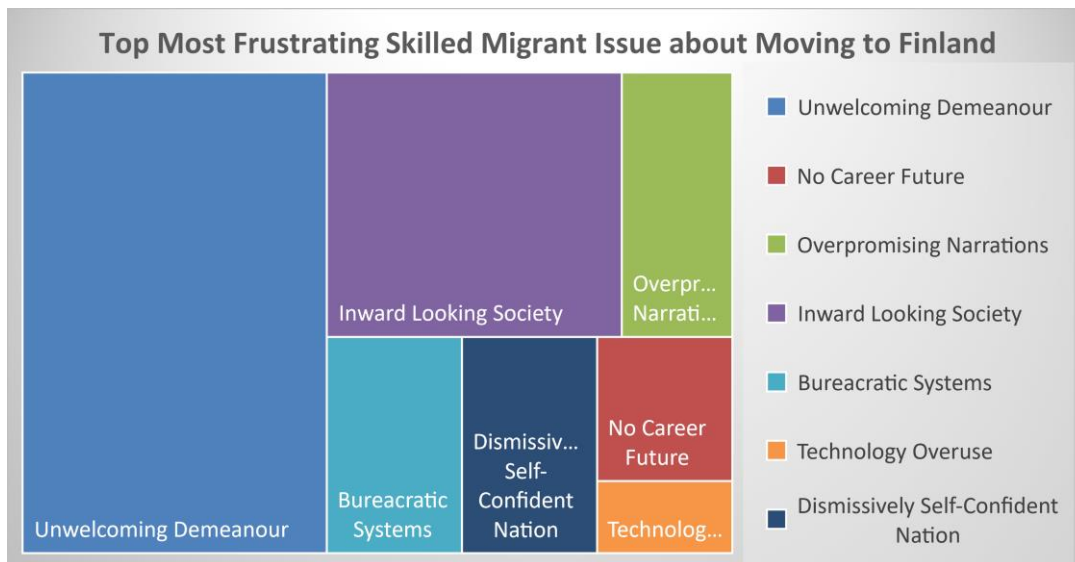


Figure 15: Issues Frustrating Migrants upon their Arrival in Finland.

The research probed the respondents further and asked how they feel their current frustrations may be resolved to make their stay in Finland meet their expectations. An overwhelming majority of the respondents (40%) suggested active public engagement by the Finnish government to be key in highlighting Finland's current economic and social challenges, how migrants come into the picture, and most importantly their value as equally skilled professionals.

Mandatory induction of the Finnish language in both undergraduate and post graduate programmes was suggested by 20% of the respondents, 16% mentioned incentivised migrant uptake schemes targeted at employers, whilst 12% suggested improved migrants' protection laws that prohibit eminent exploitation of migrants by employers. There have lately been instances of migrants being exposed to horrific employment conditions in Finland. Against this background proposed immigration legislations suggesting deporting of migrants if they cannot find another job in three months upon termination of an exciting offer opens migrants to real abuse.

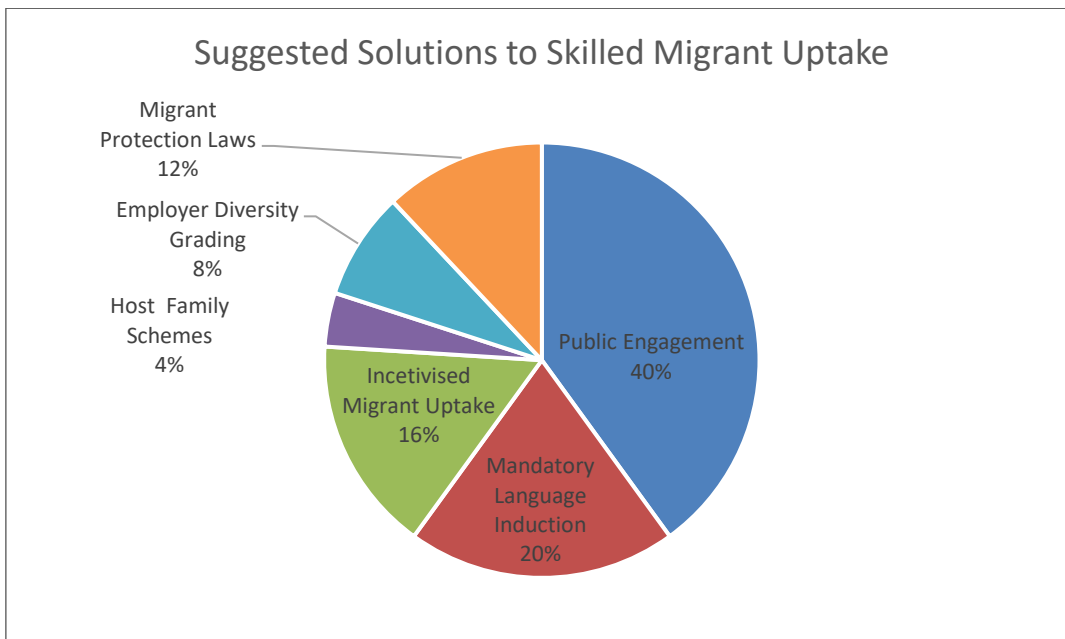


Figure 16: Suggested Possible Solutions to Migrants Frustrations.

While Finland as a country may be having issues successfully integrating skilled migrants in its labour market, the Nordic state have a lot to offer to its residents. The research in this instance was curious to know what aspects of Finland skilled migrants find appealing to them. In this instance 22% of the respondents cited great looking nature as the most satisfactory aspect of Finland. This was followed by high public safety (19%) making Finland a place to raise one's family without fear. The other satisfactory determinants were great education (15%), efficient public transport system (15%) and a society that is future focused (11%) such as Finland's efforts in sustainability and circular economy matters. The figure below presents full details of the satisfactory drivers raised by the respondents.

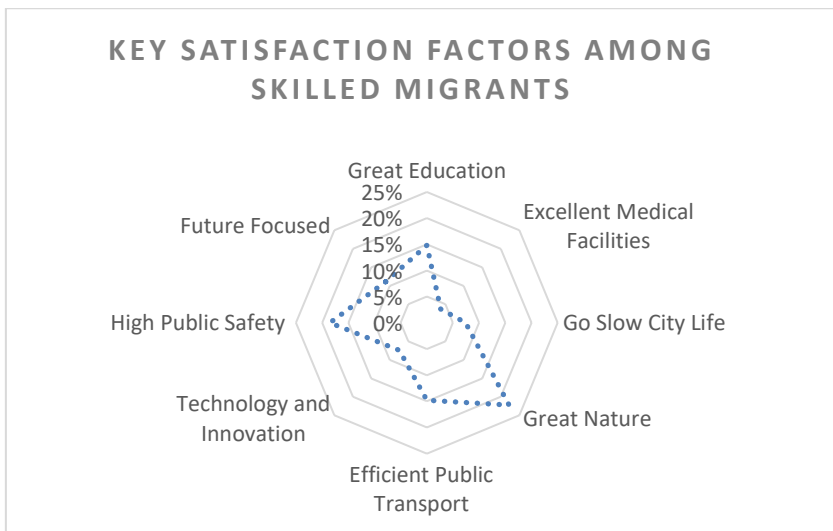


Figure 17: Satisfactory Drivers of Finland as Viewed by Skilled Migrants.

The above said the above satisfaction drivers are irrelevant in the absence of key hygiene factors such as access to career-based employment. Without proper sense of purpose and ability to obtain sufficient income, which validates one's self esteem and broaden their capacity to provide to their families, great looking nature, good education, and the feeling of safety mean little to keep skilled migrants quite happy in their host nation.

In yet another instance the respondents were asked about their feelings of their career prospects in Finland. The following diagram depicts the inner truths skilled migrants hold about their career prospects in their host nation.

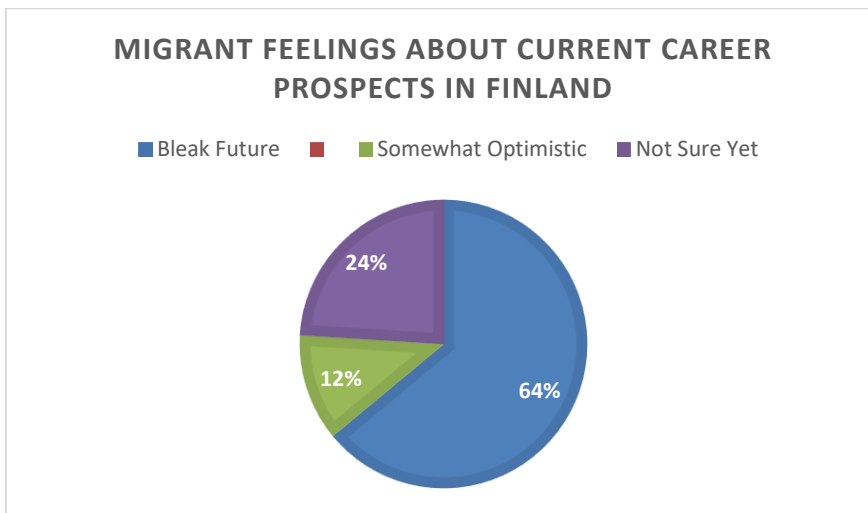


Figure 18: Migrants Feelings of Current Career Prospects in Finland.

As can be deduced from the above pie chart, 64% of the respondents feel that their career future in Finland currently remains quite bleak, 12% find it promising, and 24% remain unsure of what the future holds for them in terms of their career prospects. It is important to highlight the fact that these sentiments are emerging in the backdrop of key expectations that were presented earlier on what skilled migrants expected in their decision to move to Finland. It can now be seen how wide a gap is emerging between initial expectations and the reality on the ground.

The researcher wanted to probe further and understand if given the frustrations, skilled migrants would be ready to leave to a new country where they hope to be more welcome and their skills satisfactorily utilised. The views in this instance remained quite divided. 28% of the respondents were yet to decide on their next move. Interestingly 20% would remain in Finland irrespective and explore other channels of career development other than job seeking. Such included setting up survivalist enterprises within the Finnish economy. At 16% each were respondents who felt they are ready to move to any receptive country whilst other cited Germany as the latest prospect. More details can be seen in the bar chart presented below:

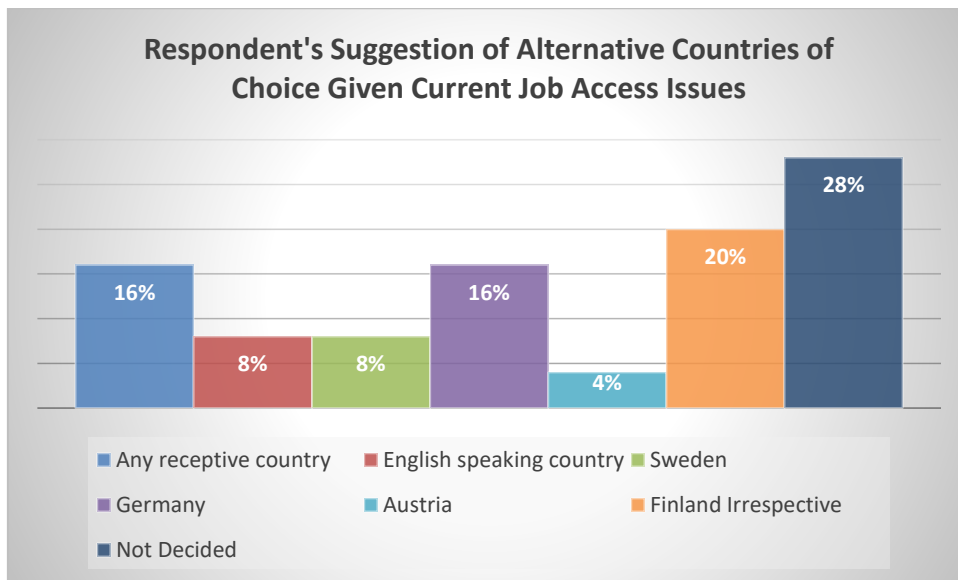


Figure 19: Respondents' Alternative Countries of Choice.

The respondents yet in another instance were asked about their career plans in the next 5 years. This seemed contradictory given the sentiments most of them had already provided. However, the idea here was to understand the longevity of those who might opt to stay in Finland or any alternative country as migrants. Migration is not a very easy feat. Migrants are not in their own territory, and they face many hindrances as already illustrated in this survey results. That said, here the aim was to have a glimpse of the extent of damage (social pain) skilled migrants had to absorb given the frustrations.

In this question 40% of the respondents indicated they would have gone back to their own country to re-establish their careers given the great education they have received in Finland, 20% hope to stick around in Finland exploring the business world, whilst 28% were yet to reflect on their horizon.



Figure 20: Migrants Career Plans in the next 5 years.

As can be seen from the above illustration, 4 in 10 skilled migrants are likely to have decided to have gone back to their country in the next 5 years if the issue of access to career-based employment is not resolved. The figure could be much more given that 28% of the respondents are yet to decide. If Finland is genuine about integrating migrants in Finnish labour market, this is a worrying statistic that needs urgent attention.

The Finnish government and the European Union have lately spent significant amount of money on language integration. Several Finnish universities such as the University of Vaasa have active language courses running during the most part of the year. The courses are free to migrants, but the Finnish government pays fees to the providing institution. This is a welcome development, but the issue of migrants as indicated in the results of this survey needs a much broader introspection beyond just the language as a barrier.

Finally, the researcher was eager to find out if migrants feel their decision to move to Finland was worth their while particularly looking at the costs they have incurred in the process. A lot of migrants are coming from countries with much unfavourable exchange rates when their home-based funds are used to service their stay in their host

nation. The issue of cost versus benefit is there perfectly appropriate as a parting shot. In this instance a vast majority of the respondents (60%) felt cheated and shortchanged. This is because what they were mostly promised by Finnish government was simply political intentions that are not aligned with the public appetite on the ground.

Some of the respondents even indicated that had it not been the Finnish government over selling the prospects available if any, they did not need to further their education because they were doing perfectly fine in their careers back home. Worst, the new government administration threatens to make things even harder than they are. 28% of the respondents had divided views on the issue whilst 12% felt that purely based on the level of education they have obtained, the cost of moving is justifiable. Their contention is that other countries charge a whole lot more for the same or even lesser quality education. The job market access difficulties and the over promises granted, with the type of education obtained one is empowered to go elsewhere to establish a new career path.

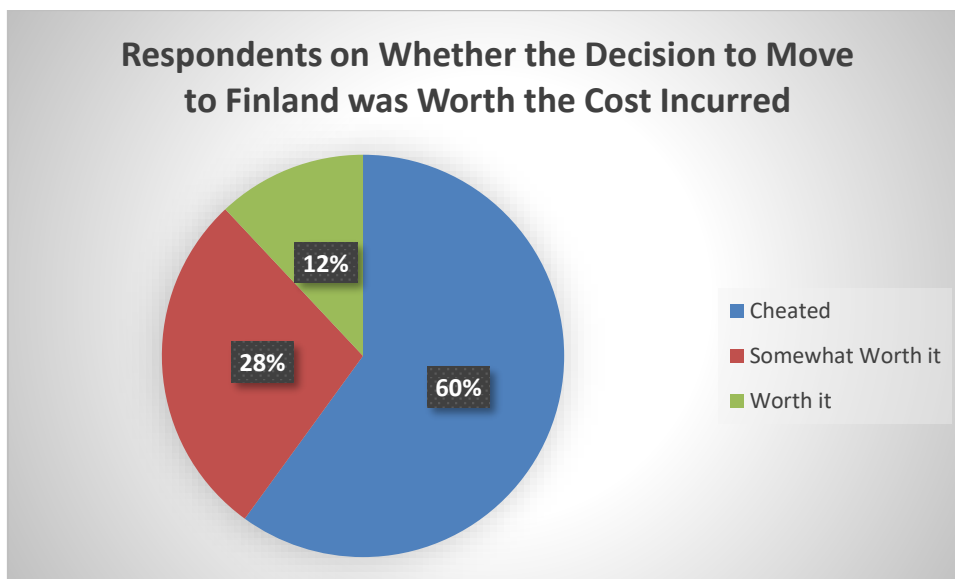


Figure 21: Migrants' View of Cost to Benefit of Moving to Finland.

5.1.2 Immersion Research -Autoethnography

At this point of the empirical insights journey, the researcher has background understanding of key issues obtained through literature review, expert interviews, and one-on-one semi structured interviews to skilled migrants coupled with verbal anecdotes obtained through job search mentoring sessions with the researcher acting as a participant.

The next stage is intended to walk the research through into the daily realities of exclusionary type of employment. Here a research method known as **autoethnography** was deployed. This is an approach to research that systematically analyses and describes personal experience to discern cultural experience (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner 2011). Autoethnography is a qualitative research method that uses researcher's personal experience to describe and critique cultural beliefs, practices, and experiences. Where auto means self as in "autobiography", autoethnography means the type of ethnographic observation that depends on the research's own observations and interpret his/her discoveries through established theories of why certain things may be happening in a certain way.

Main Goal - The main goal of this research component was to experience pains and gains skilled migrants go through when absorbed in exclusionary employment rather than career-based one.

Background of the Engagement - The researcher spent 18 weeks from beginning of April 2023 until the second week of August 2023 working as a housekeeper in one of Finland's serviced accommodation providers. The researcher worked for two different cleaning companies subcontracted for the room service. The first 12 weeks were spent with one company, which after filing for bankruptcy, the researcher continued with a new subcontractor for the remaining 6 weeks.

The Research Process - Daily experiences were documented in a diary with moments of surprises elucidated through **contextual inquiry** to provoke a sense of conversation around certain issues together with fellow housekeepers. 14 out of 18 housekeepers (78%) were interviewed through contextual inquiry to make sense of the epiphanies as they arose. This helped remove some bias in how the epiphanies were rationalised

as the degree of rationalisation was widened across several participants to improve the veracity of the interpretation.

In the first subcontractor the researcher was among a team of 8 housekeepers servicing 12 properties throughout the greater Turku region. Of the 8 team members two were migrants from Morocco, one from Iran, one from Azerbaijan, whilst 5 were Finnish natives. In terms of the percentage split, 66% were females and 34% of these cleaners were male. Work included making up of the beds, cleaning kitchens, bathrooms, dusting off equipment and furniture in the room.

The following is an extract from the actual weekly diary recordings of key moments and revelations during the house keeping activities.

Key Epiphanies:

Week 4: Life on the messy lane



ACTIVITY	COMMENTARY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly Cleaning for existing guest 	<p>In this scenario the researcher and another housekeeper were undertaking cleaning for a guest whose contract was still in situ at Kakolanmäki aparthotel. The images above are snapshots of the condition of the room as it was found.</p>
	<p>Kakolanmäki is not cheap accommodation. The guest frequenting this property pay more than €100 per night. Most of the guests in this property are executives working for established national companies such as shipbuilders in the Turku harbour area. They come to the city either from outside the country or from other cities in Finland for</p>

	<p>specific engagement and they make this property their home away from home.</p> <p>In Finland cleaning job remains the most popular amongst the migrants. Very few Finnish people like to do this type of work and most of the workers are hence migrants especially those who are studying and do the job in between their studies.</p> <p>The condition of this room typifies the daily horror cleaners go through in this type of vocation. It almost seems as if the guest to these properties deliberately puts everything upside down because there is a cleaner to take care of everything. One finds a room in this state, and they are expected to deliver the service within specific time window. Meanwhile the room is not approachable. There are things you can touch and those you cannot touch yet ensure the guest is happy.</p> <p>It is complete trauma for one to come to Finland having worked in a career-based job in their country and suddenly exposed to this type of environment. One begins to feel like they are suddenly existing at the bottom end of the value chain where their dignity matters no more. One begins to suddenly see how privilege defines power and class in a society.</p>
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When skilled migrants working with the researcher in this type of exclusionary employment were asked what it is they like about the cleaning job, all the 14 respondents stated to not like the job at all. When asked further what is it that gives them horror in the morning when thinking of going to the same job, 50% stated routine brought about by repetitive tasks as the main soul destroyer whilst 22 percent stated that cleaning job is demeaning. Below is a chart showing full details of what skilled

migrants feel about doing exclusionary jobs, in this instance working as a housekeeper in a hotel setup.

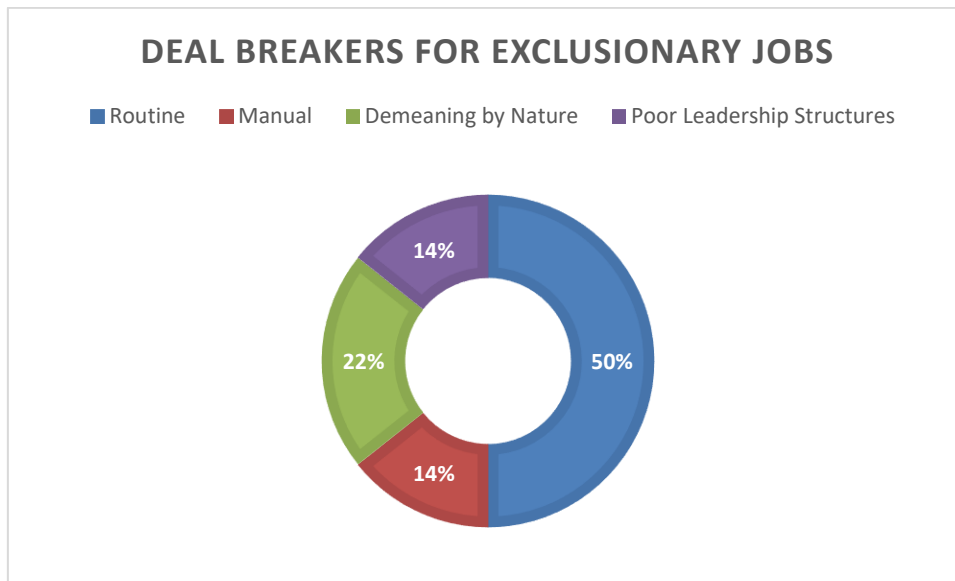


Figure 22: Skilled Migrants Views of Deterrents to Working as a Housekeeper.

The respondents believed that for one to do this type of job they have to throw their self-esteem out of the window and deliver what they are required to do. It is no surprise in this sense that most job adverts looking to recruit cleaner always stress the need for applicants who are “positive minded” and “have the right attitude”.

Week 6: Greasy hands, creamy dirt



ACTIVITY	COMMENTARY
<p>Overhaul Cleaning</p>	<p>In this type of cleaning a guest who had been living in this house at least two years had just ended the contract. The image in the middle shows tens of dirty linen supplied weekly as part of room service that has been shoved in the top wardrobe drawer without being returned for cleaning. The linen piles up for months until it is discovered at the end of the contract.</p> <p>The image on the left shows how dirty the bathroom was when we entered the house.</p> <p>The image on the right shows how the cleaning team scrubbed all the kitchen drawers and the pots to make way for a new guest.</p>

Week 9: Lunch in a dungeon



ACTIVITY	COMMENTARY
<p>Lunch break in the storeroom</p>	<p>In the above scenario the researcher had to break for lunch and the only place a lunch box could be opened was in a storeroom full of bed linen and cleaning chemicals. Here boxes of inventory were used as seating. It must be highlighted that the researcher as an individual had held a senior management role in various global companies before coming to Finland. Suddenly he is having to downgrade to the bare bone where his lunch place is a storeroom filled with bed linen boxes of chemicals. The researcher represents a segment of skilled migrants who would have come to Finland and find themselves confronted with the same scenario</p>

The above scenario needs to be viewed from the concepts conveyed by the Pain Overlap Theory discussed earlier in this document. Reducing someone who overtime had built certain level of self-awareness and by extension created noticeable degree of self-esteem and subjecting them to this level of social pain is tantamount to a criminal

activity. The pain endured in this kind of exclusionary setting where one must completely redraw a new self to be able to salvage the leftovers of the mainstream society leaves bruises that have the same neurological footprint as someone subjected to physical harm.

It is therefore appropriate that in interviewing skilled migrants regarding what they believe could be solutions for their subjective happiness in Finland 12% of the 25 respondents during the one-on-one interviews pointed to the need for migrant protection laws. It defies logic by all possible standards of imagination why somebody with years of work experience and qualifications from a Finnish university can find themselves in this type of arrangement. By so excluding these people to this level of outcast the ego, the intellect, and the self-esteem of these migrants is being corroded to a point of no repair.

When one's self esteem is damaged to this level it becomes very difficult to believe in new possibilities again. That is probably why when fellow migrant housekeepers were asked what sort of career future, they see for themselves in Finland in the next 5 years 7% saw themselves as stuck in this type of exclusionary employment. Even though they had the experience and the qualifications to do something of more added value they had stopped believing in themselves and accept the ugly reality that they are what the Finnish society defines them to be. An angry segment within the Finnish society is slowly mushrooming. If skilled migrants continue to have no access to career based employment and are relegated to the fringes of the society that may be a recipe for disaster.

The problems that we saw in France a few months ago where rioters went rampant of police brutality on a migrant teenager are symptomatic to the sad reality of two societies that exist in one. In France migrants have often felt undervalued and neglected whilst mainstream French society lived proper. It was only a matter of time before the bomb went off. We are seeing the same pattern almost coming into being here in Finland should the 7% of migrants who have given in grow bigger. That is a section of the society that will become bitter yet highly sophisticated because of their education and global exposure.

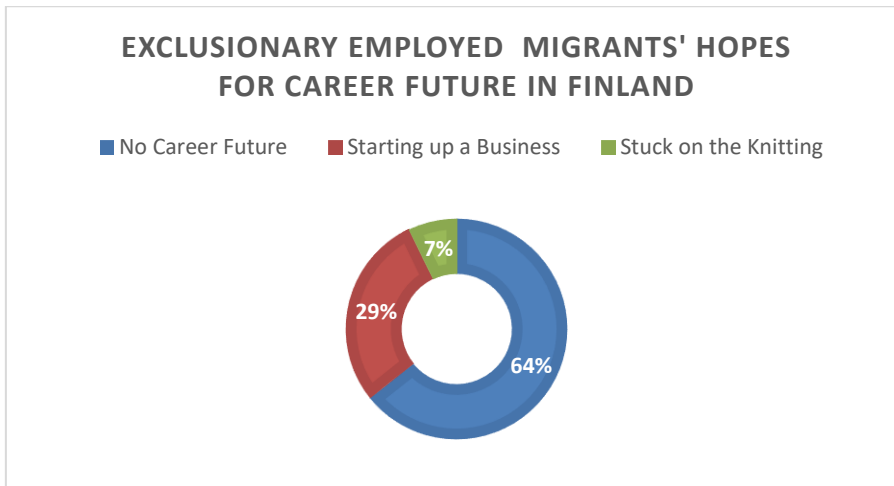


Figure 23: Migrant Housekeepers' View of Career Future in Finland.

Week 13: "I have a housekeeper after all..."



ACTIVITY	COMMENTARY
<p>The Cleaner is paid to do the job</p>	<p>In the above scenario the researcher was exposed to instances that show great sense of entitlement among the guest. In a society where people can afford for even the basic services, negligence appears to be a new form of luxury. The above image is one instance where it under normal circumstances once one has showered and there is hair on shower drain, they could decently remove and throw into the sanitary bin. Unfortunately,</p>

	<p>such has often been left for the housekeepers to take care of.</p> <p>The above is just one example of the many. In most cases even the toilet bowls were often left in quite unsanitary state waiting for housekeepers to take care of. Questions that came to mind but could not be answered even by fellow migrant workers or even our Finnish counterparts was why a whole educated professional living in a four-star equivalent of serviced accommodation live side by side with a messy toilet bowl waiting for the cleaner to come in?</p>
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Week 15: Will I have anywhere to sit?



ACTIVITY	COMMENTARY
<p>A Cleaner is as much part of the dirty linen</p>	<p>The above scenario shows one of the many instances where the researcher had to be squeezed in a tiny space together with dirty linen form serviced apartment around the city. This was no malice of any form as the car in the picture belonged to fellow housekeepers. They had been authorised by the employer to use their car to service the apartments based on the daily schedule.</p>

	<p>What is unfortunate, however, is how ill-considered the employer had on the mobility of the workers given the nature of the job. That there is linen to be carried in the car and that there is a certain number of workers in the car who may not have space to sit once the linen comes into the picture.</p> <p>The wellbeing of migrant workers in this type of exclusionary employment is routinely not considered at all. The workers are seen as tools of production with no emotions. It takes an iron hearted character with a robust vision of who he is to have done a professional job and suddenly finds themselves doing these types of exclusionary jobs. Unfortunately, such people are probably very few if any.</p>
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Week 17: Mom and daughter call the shots



ACTIVITY	COMMENTARY
The dooms day for the researcher	In this instance the researcher had only been working for a new sub-contractor for few weeks after the first employer decided to close shop. When the latter terminated contracts for the employees, researcher was quick to find out which company will be taking over and that is how a new role was found. The new

company was new in the serviced apartment space and the researcher negotiated a very good contract. It would appear as though this employer accepted the terms of the contract out of desperation to learn the requirements from the researcher.

As work unfolded the sectional manager to whom the researcher reported directly to had delegated her own daughter to be an intermediary as the mother had challenges with English language. This is a big private company, and, in this instance, both the mother and the daughter are ordinary employees.

This arrangement went so blurry to an extent where one would not know who between the mother and the daughter was the actual supervisor. The job routine was clouded with a fine blend of bullying, secrecy, and ulterior motives. This brooded a toxic working environment that led to the researcher being unprecedentedly dismissed under the disguise of the trial period.

Somewhere in our one-on-one interviews, the respondents alluded to poor management structures as part of the dissatisfaction factors when it comes to exclusionary jobs. The above episode is one such example in that a mother and a daughter work in the same department and almost own that department without any checks and balances and thrive out of privilege to put migrant workers at their mercy. In an ideal corporate world such impenetrable fortress cannot be allowed to exist because that is not how companies are professionally ran. This was not the only occurrence where a mother and daughter had the reigns over migrant workers. In the first employer that existed to a certain degree, but the daughter only truly existed as a coworker than a mirror image of the supervising mother.

Being a job seeking migrant in Finland is an emotionally traumatic expedition. A lot needs to be done to ensure that skilled migrants are integrated into the labour market in a dignified fashion.

5.1.3 Netnography

In addition to autoethnography described above, the researcher has subscribed to two Facebook pages dedicated to the foreign community in Finland. Here the idea is to identify topical issues regarding migrants' lack of access to career-based employment. One such Facebook page is "Foreigners in Finland" administered from Helsinki. Approximately 4 weeks has been spent frequenting the Facebook pages and creating a logbook of issues that frequently coming up. A lot of information is being obtained from this covert social engagement, giving exposure to real issues as they arose. The researcher plans to continue compiling these anecdotes for the next 2 weeks at least. After this the issues will be aggregated through affinity mapping to culminate into a Word Cloud that visually profiles the issues raised. The idea in the end is to see points of concurrence between different research methods. That will be a defining moment for what kind of issues truly confronts the skilled migrants in Finland.

5.2 Define

In this phase of the research process, all the empirical research findings gathered were now cross checked through design research methods and techniques. The goal in this instance being to ascertain the plausibility of the findings from a human-centred point of view. Qualitative and quantitative research methods only lay the groundwork from which to intimately discern pertinent user needs through more humanistic approaches offered by design research.

Design research is a human-centred approach to understanding users as people in their own environment to uncover:

- Who they are as users
- The problems they are facing, understood in more emotive ways
- Ways they might want to resolve certain needs or usability issues

Design research allows teams to acquire in-depth understanding of their users' expectations and usage contexts, helping them better understand user requirements (Fard, 2023).

The first design research tool to be deployed in this instance is the construction of user personas and such is covered in more detail in the following section.

5.2.1 User Personas

In the process of gathering empirical data from the research respondents as presented in earlier in this document, the researcher began to identify key data clusters through affinity mapping that highlighted noticeable group of people with similar set of issues. These clusters were used to derive fictitious personalities that better capture specific people within a broader group of respondents, representative of key segments to be addressed once we develop design solutions for the problem at hand.

Personas bring in more details based on psychographic understanding of potential users. Below, user personas based on the empirical insights obtained are presented. As and when the research insights are synthesised into a service design solution, the personas will be key users to whom the solution should respond to. User personas are a tool based on a fictional character, which often is created out of the insights gathered during the research phase of the service design process. An instance might be during observation, design probes and interviews (Goodwin 2009; Stickdorn & Schneider 2011; Tschimmel 2012; Cooper et al.)

Personas are a highly beneficial tool especially in identifying relevant consistencies in the customer's behaviour, motivations, goals, desires, and needs (Goodwin 2009; Ojasalo et al., 2015). Personas represent the interests of a particular group with which the design team can indulge. Personas extremely effective because humans have great affinity with using models, and personas encourage the design team to relate to the customers in ways that are uniquely human.

Although personas are fictional characters, their underlying motivations, goals, and reactions are real. In other words, personas represent real-world perceptions captured through feedback and insights collected in the empirical research phase of the design project (Stickdorn & Schneider, 2011). Below the personas derived from the empirical research process are presented.

5.2.1.1 User Persona 1 – Aaron Ture

The first persona comes in the name of Aaron. He is a successful professional in the IT sector from one of the Third countries but currently based in one of the oil rich Muslim countries. He is married and the wife is equally educated. They come from Christian families, and they are also Christians. Attracted by the idea of Finland as “The World’s Happiest Place”, and a legacy of respect to human rights, they have made up their mind to seek new employment opportunities in Finland whilst they are still in their current jobs. In their mind getting a job shouldn’t be a daunting task looking at the number of tech companies Finland is known for, and the impressive resume Aaron has as a software engineer.

Aaron Ture
Software Developer

Gender: Male
Age: 35

✉ aaronture@gmail.com 📞 +19 0000 0000

Address: Kuwait

BIOGRAPHY

Aaron Ture is a Kenyan national currently living and working for one of Kuwait's top oil companies as a Software Developer. He is married to a Clinical Psychologist and have 2 kids. He speaks no Finnish and his language aptitude leaves a lot to be desired.

MOTIVATION

Aaron has been attracted by Finland's growing reputation as the world's happiest place and would like to look for a job in Helsinki in the increasingly growing games development sector.

PERSONALITY

- Analytical
- Problem Solving
- Public Speaking

FAVOURITE BRAND

BMW, Google, Apple, Microsoft

User Persona 1 – Skilled Migrant Job Seeker based Outside Finland.

5.2.1.2 User Persona 2 – Harumi Kayastha

The second persona we have discovered in our research findings is a typical one. Here we see an international migrant who came to Finland for their studies. She also comes from a Third country where she had worked in a career-based employment before

coming to Finland. At this juncture she has now completed her studies. Her attempt to look for a career-based employment have proven quite futile. Out of lack of options she seeks a job as a cleaner in the hotel and catering sector. She has already invested significant amount of money moving to Finland in terms of her tuition and living expenses whilst studying. She remains optimistic that soon she would get a job in line with her studies.

Harumi Kayastha
Data Scientist

Gender: Female
Age: 28

harumikayastha@gmail.com +19 0000 0000

Address: Tampere

BIOGRAPHY
Harumi Kayastha is from Nepal and graduated from Tampere University 3 years ago with a Masters degree in Fintech and Data Science. She is currently working as a cleaner in one of the national cleaning companies as she actively looks for a career led role. Her Finnish is poor but improving.

MOTIVATION
Harumi is motivated the evolving waves of change brought about by big data and artificial intelligence. She believes it is the future of tomorrow's business growth.

GOALS

- Looking for a career led role as a data science in travel and hospitality industry where she happens to be working as a cleaner and sees big opportunities to use data.
- To settle in Finland and develop as a professional whilst taking care of her folks back home.

PERSONALITY

- Communication
- Problem Solving
- Public Speaking

FAVOURITE BRAND

Deloitte. LinkedIn Google

User Persona 2 – Skilled Migrant Graduated in Finland and having Exclusionary Job.

5.2.1.3 User Persona 3 – Heidi Seppanen

The third person in our discovery is an odd one. Here we see a quintessential Finn who has been living outside the country for some time trying to come back home and permanently establish their life in their own soil. They have been away studying in other developed countries and even practiced their career there for several years. They try to penetrate the Finnish job market, but they are, to their dismay, in for a rude

awakening. They simply cannot find employment that is in line with their qualification and experience.

Heidi Seppanen
Investment Analyst

Gender: Female
Age: 38

✉ heideseppanen@gmail.com 📞 +19 0000 0000

Address: Helsinki

BIOGRAPHY

Heidi Seppanen is quintessential Finnish national who studied in the US and worked as a Financial Analyst for the past 15 years. She served in various companies including JP Morgan and Bloomberg in NYC. Heidi recently returned home to take care of her ailing mother.

MOTIVATION

Heidi is looking forward to getting back home and settling among her folks. She loves her career and the prospects for growth in New York City were written all over the wall.

Heidi oozes and has been the ambassador of the true spirit of 'sisu' that is typical of the Finnish people. This is a trait that has made her quite an achiever.

PERSONALITY

- Communication
- Problem Solving
- Public Speaking

FAVOURITE BRAND

Ford FedEx Corporation TESLA amazon

User Persona 3 – Returning Finnish National Who Schooled and Worked Outside.

5.2.1.4 User Persona 4 – Noah Boateng

This persona represents someone whose parents originated from a Third country. He came Finland in his adolescent stage and obviously speaks the language fluently to a native standard. Him and the parents are now bona fide Finnish citizens. He is only associated to migrants by way of his family's origins. The system in place does not soberly regard him as a "true Finn." He just graduated successfully from one of the Finnish universities. It is now time to look for a career -based employment and his origins unfortunately are not giving him much advantage in his job seeking expedition.

Noah Boateng
Social Media Specialist

Gender: Male
Age: 32

noahboateng@gmail.com +1 9 0000 0000

Address: 12 Linnankatu Turku FI20100

BIOGRAPHY

Noah Boateng originates from Ghana. He recently graduated with a Masters degree in Digital Marketing and Analytics from University of Eastern Finland. He moved to Finland at the age of 12 with his . He is single and speaks fluent Finnish.

MOTIVATION

Noah is actively looking for a job as a Social Media and Analytics specialist in the future focused labour market of Turku. He hopes to one day setup a digital business linking Finnish companies to markets in West Africa.

PERSONALITY

- Analytical
- Problem Solving
- Public Speaking

FAVOURITE BRAND

twitter Meta Instagram Youtube

User Persona 4 – Finnish National Borne out of Migrant Parents.

5.2.1.5 User Persona 5 – Jonathan Patterson

This persona represents a citizen of another First world country who desires to build life in Finland. He has moved inland based on his family ties. He has a fiancée who is a Finnish native and decided to follow her along. He brings lots of international experience working for global companies that are quite successful brands. He hopes to easily use this experience to re-establish his career in Finland as he and the fiancée decide on the next steps of their relationship. He is hoping to meet new friends and build key career contacts as he settles in Finland.



User Persona 5 – Skilled Migrant from a Western Country Recently Moved to Finland.

5.2.2 Empathy Mapping

An empathy map is a visual tool that articulates what we know about a given user identified in terms of generalised needs. These are depicted from what we understand about this user in terms of what they say, think, do, and even feel about a particular need scenario. Empathy maps are the basis from which we may begin to narrate distinct use scenarios based on specific circumstances across a range of users. Below is a preliminary empathy maps for each identified persona used to capture key user needs emergent in each user segment.

5.2.2.1 Empathy Map for User Persona 1 – Aaron Ture

The following empathy map depicts key pain points encountered by our first persona; Aaron Ture as he goes about his job search in Finland from abroad. He had hoped that with his kind of work experience and the high demand of software engineers in Finland,

it would be easy to get a job and relocate immediately with his family. Mapped from his verbal anecdotes and empirical insights, the following are the pain points Aaron needs to endure before he can get his first response from a recruiter:

Key Pain Points

- Closed job market where advertisement on popular job boards appears to be mere formality.
- Applying from outside the country means that he has little to no available professional contacts he can use as referrals for what is a hidden job market.
- He does not have any knowledge of potential recruiters he can track from time to time and approach directly to make proactive job application.

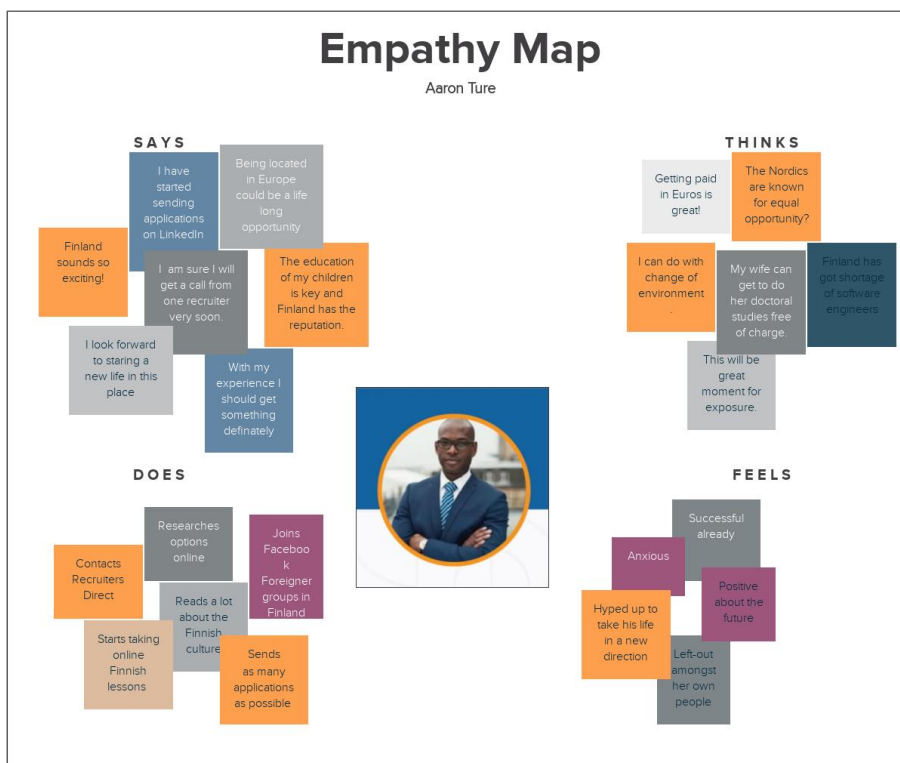


Figure 24: Empathy Map for a Skilled Migrant Intending to Move to Finland.

5.2.2.2 Empathy Map for User Persona 2 – Harumi Kayastha

Unlike Aaron Ture our second persona lives and has studied in Finland as a migrant. She has faced an uphill battle trying to penetrate the career-based job market until she resorted to work as a housekeeper in one of the local hotels. Key pain points arising from this persona are as follows:

Key Pain Points

- Lack of professional contacts to amplify and guide her job search.
- Poor Finnish language proficiency is touted as one of the key impediments to successfully landing an ideal job.
- She believes that existing job platforms do not give her an opportunity to actively demonstrate her capabilities in the absence of a professional social support structure.

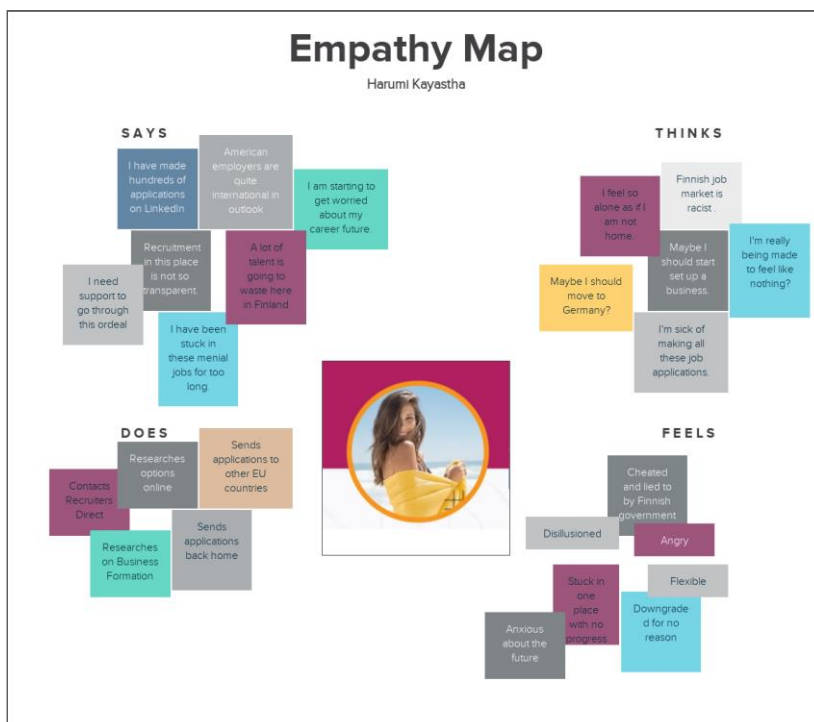


Figure 25: Empathy Map for a Typical Skilled Migrant in Finland.

5.2.2.3 Empathy Map for User Persona 3 – Heidi Seppanen

Our third persona is someone who ideally shouldn't struggle to get a job in the sense that she is quintessential Finnish. The only hiccup contributing to her struggles is the fact that she grew up professionally and honed her competences outside the Finnish labour market. In a job market system that thrives on a who-you-know is who-you-are social adage, she is being confronted with some real challenges in reestablishing her career in her homeland.

Key Pain Points

- Little social network to impactfully strengthen her job search. Most of her companions are childhood friends whom because of her long stay overseas, appear to now have very little in common.
- Heidi needs a way to exhibit her capabilities so that they may overshadow her lack of referrals in her new recruitment system.

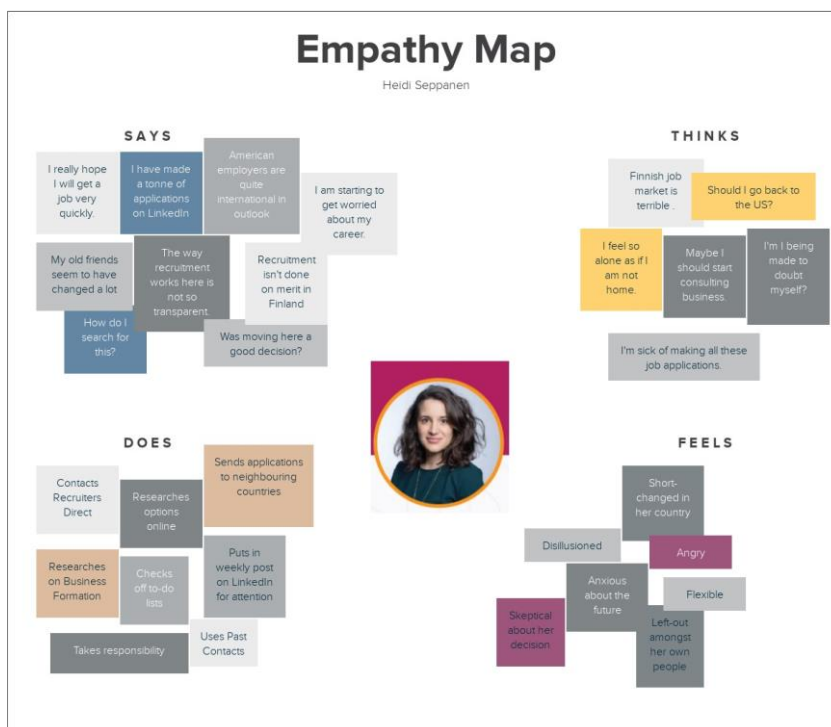


Figure 26: Empathy Map for a Returning National Job Seeker.

5.2.2.4 Empathy Map for User Persona 4 – Noah Boateng

The fourth persona is a migrant who is fully integrated in the Finnish society. He grew up in Finland even though he comes from a family of migrants from a third country. The fact that he speaks Finnish fluently and has even gone to school in this country the greater part of his life should ideally give him an advantage in the career-based job market. Unfortunately, things are not unfolding as smooth as they should be. When his pain and frustrations were plotted on an empathy map, they are as follows:

Key Pain Points

- Bias on his capability and competences as a person of colour in a European country although he spent most of his life in the same country, is well integrated, speaks the language and has acquired the same education same as that of any Finnish national.
- Needs a war of proving his capabilities in a way that can dispel myths that exist.

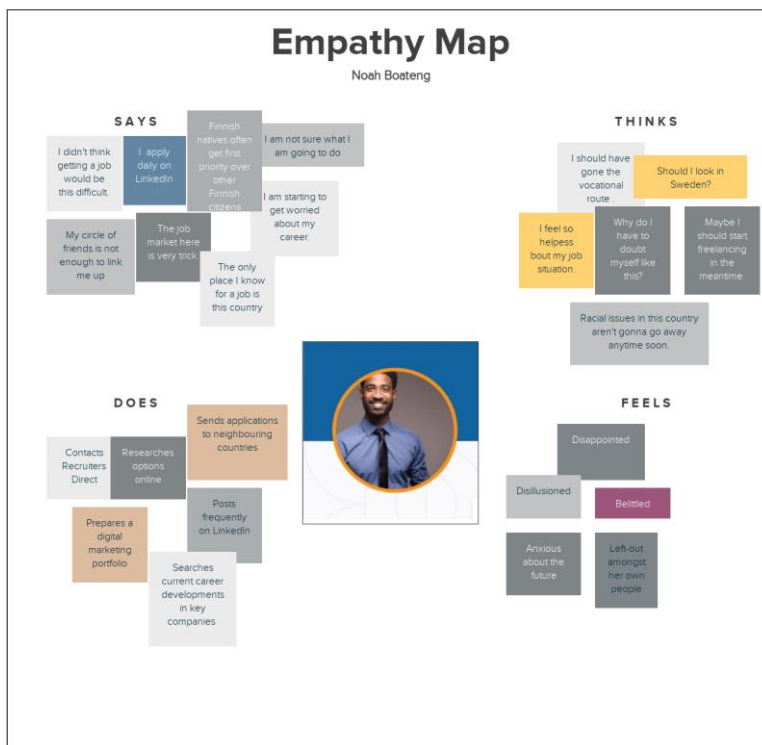


Figure 27: Empathy Map for a Foreign-born Finnish Citizen.

5.2.2.5 Empathy Map for User Persona 5 – Jonathan Patterson

Our fifth persona; Jonathan Patterson's pain points when put on to an empathy map reveal the same need structure as our third persona; Heidi Seppanen. The latter may be Finnish by origin by she schooled and worked outside Finland in the same way as Jonathan. Here we see the need pattern point to the following pain points:

Key Pain Points

- Lack of social support circle in Jonathan's pursuit for career-based employment.
- With tonnes of experience in global companies as an executive, the Finnish job market still prefers to choose someone sent on a referral than him. He goes for months without any hope for employment and even start thinking of applying to companies in his own country and work on remote basis as he spends life with his Finnish partner.

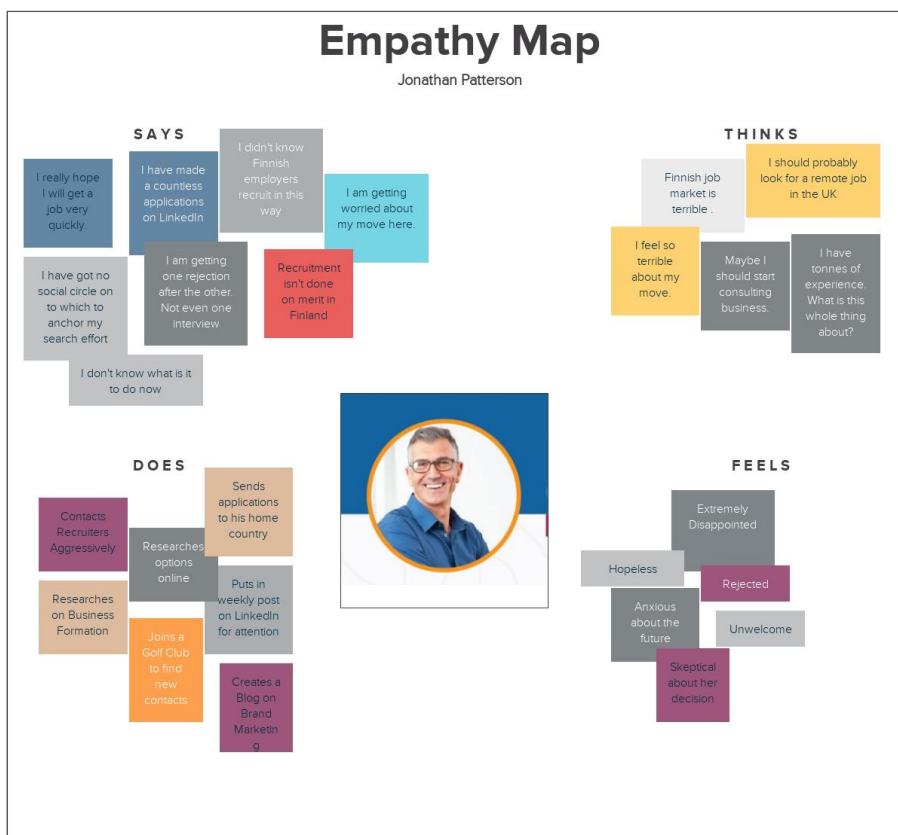


Figure 28: Empathy Map for a Western-born Skilled Migrant in Finland.

In the next section we will now take the above personas and plot their job seeking expedition onto a Customer Journey Map. Customer Journey Map is a synthetic depiction illustrating how the user interacts with a service system (Service Design Tools, 2023). The whole process is then mapped empathetically from a perspective of the user to unveil all steps, interactions, and touchpoints the user encounters. Negative and positive emotions are also captured to signify areas of potential pain points that represent opportunities for improving user experience as a result.

5.2.3 Customer Journey Mapping Workshop

Below a Customer Journey Map for a typical skilled migrant job seeker in Finland is presented. The map was populated on Concept-Board with a group of 10 skilled migrant job seekers feeding in key segments of the map based on their own unique narrations and experiences. These were a portion of the group that was subjected to semi-structured interviews earlier during the empirical part of the research process. The participants were randomly selected based on their willingness to participate in the customer journey workshop. This was the first of our various co-creation workshops we organised for this thesis project. The workshop was carried out completely online and the output is what is captured in the customer journey map below.

It became apparent as we analysed potential job seeking process for all the above user personas that they all follow the same process in their job seeking efforts. What is different is their individual expectations based on their own unique circumstances and social paths from which they are embarking on the job seeking process. It is for this reason that we propose an amalgamated customer journey map cutting across all the user personas in their pursuit to seek career-based employment in Finland.

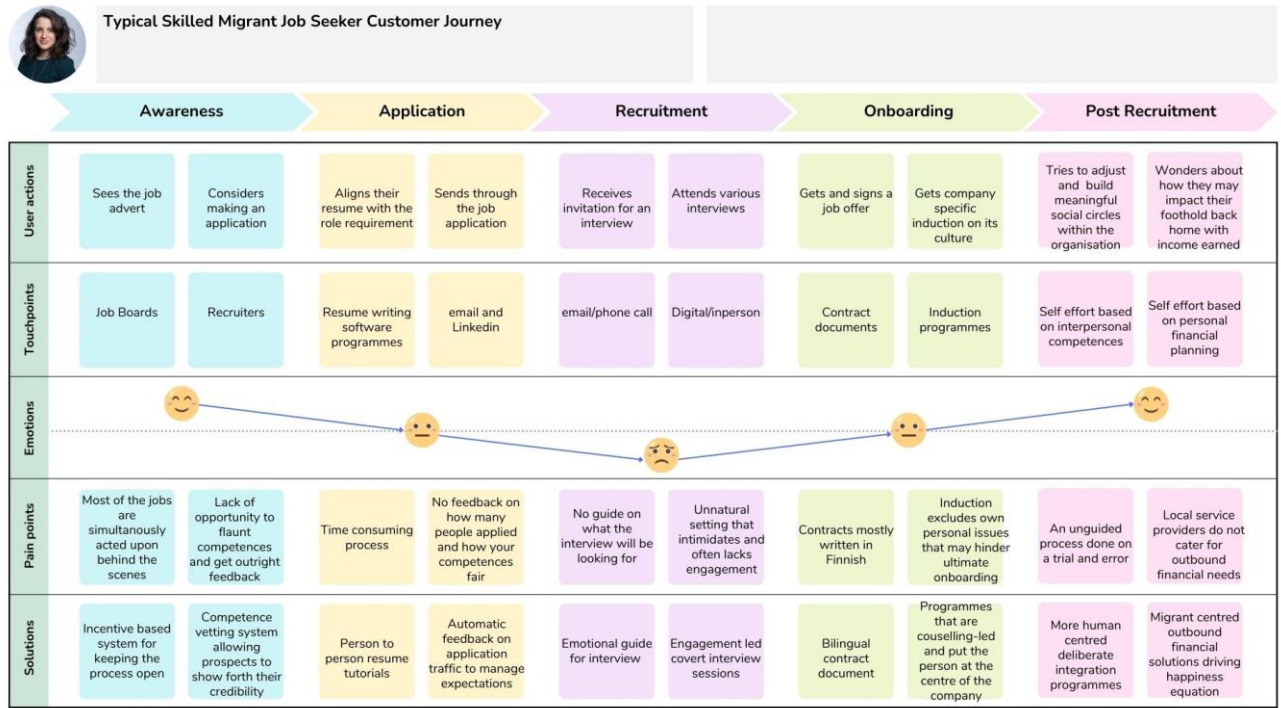


Figure 29: Skilled Migrant Job Seeker Customer Journey.

The above Customer Journey shows five journey steps in the process of job seeking, which skilled migrants must go through. These are awareness, application, recruitment, onboarding, post recruitment. A lot of pain points and possible solutions on how the status quo could be challenged across the five steps were generated. The pain points were then subjected to Dot Voting technique in which participants were given just a few minutes to put a dot on those pain points they believe could deliver meaningful change if resolved. Those pain points that were voted for are captured in the table below.

STAGE	PAIN-POINT
Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Below the line recruitment process antagonising formal recruitment system visible to the rest of the job seekers • Lack of pre-interview opportunity to prove the job seeker's competences beyond a LinkedIn profile, the presence of which could help override the need for referrals and social contacts as jobs can be offered based on merit
Application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time consuming resume writing software packages when trying to match one's profile to the role • No feedback on how steep the competition is based on the number of applicants who equally put through their application. This is necessary to help the job seeker manage their expectations on the outcome of the application
Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews are a punitive a punitive ambush that intimidate the job applicant and not necessarily allow them to covertly unveil their personality and competences.
Onboarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment contracts often in Finnish though they are binding to both parties. • Generic induction programmes removed from the needs of a migrant who not only has to fit into a new company but is probably dealing with adjusting in a new country
Post Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The process of fitting into a new organisational culture is left to its own devices and allowed to go unguided to the frustration of a skilled migrant. • Migrant money matters and requirement are not addressed by the existing financial ecosystem though such is one of the key considerations for driving happiness levels from the job

Table 3: Skilled Migrant Job Seeker Pain Point.

5.2.4 Actionable Insights and How-Might-We Inspirations

The second session of the customer journey mapping involved taking the above pain points and subjecting them to “How-Might-We” questions, which drive imagination and inspirations around possibilities for resolving the issues confronted by skilled migrant job seekers.

How-Might-We is a design thinking method that uses the power of words to evoke imagination. The understanding is that your words influence your thoughts and solutions to problems are based on the words we use to recognise the same problems. For example, there is a huge difference in the outcome to a problem whereby by somebody acknowledges that “This conversation is unproductive” and the other one asking, “How Might We make this conversation productive?” The latter question provokes an appetite of resolutely thinking about possibilities with stern believe that there are solutions to the problem whilst the other one conveys a feeling of resignation. Below are How-Might-We questions to pain points selected and possible solutions to the problem. Table 4 below shows different creative possibilities generated through the How-Might-We method.

PAIN POINT	“HOW-MIGHT-WE” SCENARIO	POSSIBILTIES
Below-the-line recruitment processes	How might we coerce Finnish recruiters to disclose available jobs and give equal chance to all potential candidates?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devise risk and reward system that compels recruiters to be more open
Lack of opportunity to exhibit competences before actual interview beyond the LinkedIn profile.	How might we augment CV to highlight competences downplayed in the write up and increase chances of being invited to an interview?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video resumes • Skills Challenges
No feedback on the competitive profile of the job responses	How might we reinvent the experience in waiting time between job application and feedback?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback mechanisms • Personalised updates • Interactive learning modules on company culture, industry, or skills development

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills challenges • Work community engagement with other applicants and current employees
Generic Programmes migrant challenges	Induction removed employee	<p>How might we provide more relevant onboarding experience for a skilled migrant worker?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broad based cultural integration schemes • Mentorship and Buddy Systems • Resource Guide and Support Networks • Adaptation assistance

Table 4: How-Might-We Inspirations towards Identified Pain Points

5.2.5 Conceiving User Stories

The final leg of the journey mapping workshop was to create a User Story. Interaction Design Foundation describes User Stories as short statements about a feature, product, or service written from a user's perspective. The idea is not to spell out definitive solutions that may pre-empt possibilities for out-of-the-box thinking but paint a picture to the development teams on what is it they are trying to create and why does it matter in the eyes of the user.

In view of the above, the researcher had extracted all key insights first through empirical research that ascertained whether there was a problem at all. Such was then followed by design research to get up close and personal with the identified problem. Lastly it was now time to rationalise future responses to the problem by painting a vivid picture of the responses' credibility through User Stories. In the same vein as one customer journey was used to cut across all the five user personas, it made sense to create one User Story for all the personas. Based on the customer journey mapped, the personas almost share the same fundamental issues that need to be addressed.

User Stories should be guided by the research findings, and they are put together with the users as the name innately suggest. The most common format of framing the story is:

“As a [user], I want [goal or action] so that [outcome or reason]”

User Stories routinely have a title, the story as framed based on research insights, and acceptance criteria indicating key aspects that qualify the credibility of the solutions responding to the story.

Below is the suggested User Story (Table 5) drawn by participants during the Customer Journey Mapping workshop:

<p>Title: Skilled Migrant Seeks Dignified and Equitable Recruitment in Finland</p> <p>User Story: As a skilled migrant, I require a transparent recruitment system in Finland to access job opportunities aligned with my expertise. Additionally, I seek support and resources for successful integration into the Finnish work culture. Simultaneously, I need guidance and platforms enabling me to invest or send remittances back to my home country so that my socioeconomic growth and holistic wellbeing in Finland and my home country can be productively fostered.</p>

Table 5: User Story for Skilled-Migrant Job Seeker in Finland.

Design Drivers:

- Job listings and application processes are openly available for access by all and provide assessment based on equal merit.
- Accessible guidance on cultural nuances and integration into the Finnish work environment.
- Networking opportunities and forums connecting migrants with local professionals and communities.

- Financial platforms or programmes providing guidance on investments or remittances to contribute towards building socio-economic footprint in the home country.

The design drivers above determine what information and capabilities the customer personas require to accomplish their goals. The design drivers are not features or detailed specifications of the product or service. Instead, they address the customer's needs and objectives (e.g., functional needs, qualities, and experience attributes) and guide the detailed design of the service. (Cooper, 2014)

5.3 Reframe

The Re-framing stage looks back at all the gathered insights and confirms whether the hypothesis driving the research question or goals qualifies the problem statement the research is addressing. In terms of this thesis, the initial assumption has always been that skilled migrants are exposed to social exclusion in for of labour market rejection in Finland. In this sense, literature search coupled with empirical findings positively support the fact that indeed this is a problem worth solving.

Globally the competition on migrant talent is real. As western societies age and labour market demographics shift fundamentally, Finnish employers stand to lose out if they do not change their attitude to the idea and positivity of skilled migrants. It is for this reason that the research exercises reported above now culminate in the following Need Statement, which is the basis for the service design execution work.

5.3.1 The User Need Statement

User Need Statement, also known as Problem Statement or Point of View Statement are a critical tool in the “define stage” of design thinking process in that they align points of view in readiness for the ideating sub-process. Below the User Need Statement (Table 6) for this project is suggested.

“Revolutionise the job-seeking experience of skilled migrants by **crafting an online community that seamlessly showcases their talent to Finnish employers**. We must entice these employers to openly disclose open vacancies, fostering equal access for all qualified seekers. But we won’t stop there. We will **integrate financial tools empowering migrants to nurture their financial standing back home**, elevating their overall wellbeing and happiness in Finland. It’s not just about a job; it’s about a holistic empowered journey.”

Table 6: User Need Statement for Skilled-Migrant Job Seeker in Finland.

5.3.2 Customer Value Proposition Canvas

In this section what skilled-migrants demand as a solution to relieve them of their pain points has been captured succinctly through the User Need Statement presented above. The author is now empowered to know in what form actionable insights obtained in both empirical and design research should be package to deliver value to the skilled-migrant job seeker. This being the case, it is still necessary to ensure there is optimal service to market fit for whatever the solution that will be proposed. This is when it becomes necessary to use one more user research tool known as Customer Value Proposition Canvas.

The above tool has got two components to it. The first component on the right is the actual user who in this case is the skilled-migrant seeking career-based employment in Finland. Here we need to think about actual jobs-to-be-done. These are problems to be solved in the eyes of the user to address the underlying pain points and identifying what gains the user is likely to have once those jobs are done. After this we then go to the box on the left, which represents the requirements for a product that needs to address the need state painted by the user on the right-hand side of the model.

In the above instance, we can start imagining potential products and services that can talk to jobs-to-be-done to understand if there is any sense of alignment between the two. In other words, are the products and service proposed talking to the problems the user believes should be addressed. We further go into unpacking how the proposed product become the pain relievers for the pain points highlighted pertinently by the

user on the right. Last, we need to discover what features of our products and services are driving the gains (gain creators) to be enjoyed by the user. In other words, what aspects of the products and services respond to the question, “what’s in it for me?” Below is the Customer Value Proposition Canvas (Figure 30) illustrating the issues and likely solutions skilled migrants have in their quest for career access in Finland. The canvas together with User Story and The User Need Statements are key creative instruments that encapsulates the spirit of the problem to be reimaged through a tactical service design solution.

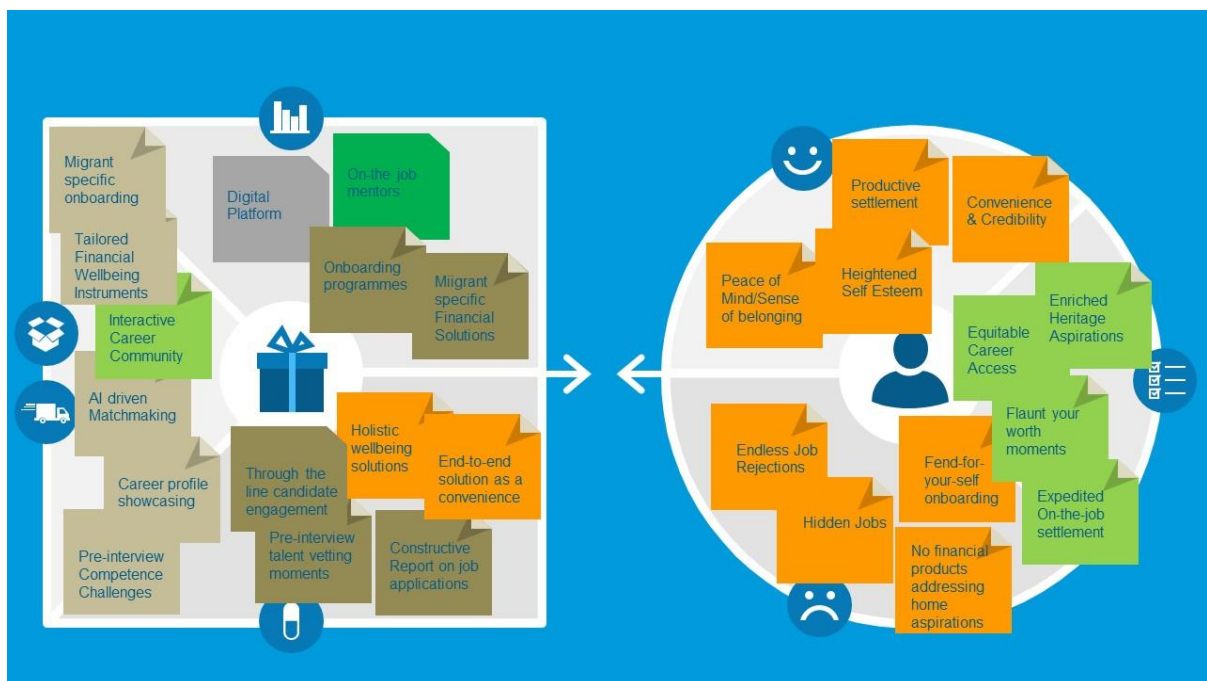


Figure 30: Customer Value Proposition Canvas for Skilled-Migrant Job Seeker.

In the following chapter we are going to explore stakeholders for our service design solution. Stakeholders have got the power and vested interest, which if not managed can either sabotage was would have been an excellent initiative or the developer of the service design solution might miss out on an opportunity to obtain credible guidance from certain stakeholders.

6 Identifying Stakeholders for the New Solution

Traditionally Stakeholder Maps consists of three rings sitting inside of each other representing categories of key stakeholders. The latter are grouped as internal, connected, and external stakeholders.

Internal stakeholders are those having direct bearing on the success of the project. In this instance it will be the skilled migrants and, the employers we are targeting with our solution. Connected stakeholders are those connected to the project but are not directly involved, whilst external stakeholders are those who are neither working directly on the project nor connected to it in anyway. If anything, theirs is only vested interest in seeing how the project will involve. There are management techniques available that need to be in place to gauge the interest levels of these stakeholders against their ability to thwart necessary progress. The idea is to keep all these stakeholders informed and kept happy every step of the way.

In our map below an approach where stakeholders we identified based on what role they bring to the project was opted for. The believe is that it is more effective to manage stakeholders and regulate their interest to power levels. At this point one must understand the nature of damage they can cause to the project rather than just blindly managing and engaging them as stakeholders. In this instance, the categorisation of the stakeholders in this project revolves around five solution development pillars. The stakeholders for this project are categorised below.

- Stakeholders who help us build understanding and expertise around project goals.
- Those who help build acceptance and support for the solution to be developed.
- Stakeholders who assist us in meeting statutory obligations for the solution.
- Those who help us in building credibility and trust for the project to be delivered.
- Those who give guidance in identifying potential pitfalls and solutions for the project.



Figure 31: Stakeholder Map of the Envisaged Migrant Job Seeker Solution.

6.1.1 Prioritising and Engaging Stakeholder Segments

In the following diagram the identified stakeholders have been mapped on Mandelov's Matrix. This is a tool that is used to anticipate or analyze stakeholders and their reception of the project based on their interest levels against their locus of power and influence.

The matrix (Figure 32) has four quadrants that can be interpreted in the following manner:

Scenario 1: Stakeholder has high interest in the project and equally, they possess quite noticeable levels of power and influence based on the professional or social position they occupy. In this instance it means that since the stakeholders are interested in the project and do possess necessary power, the project managers must find ways of engaging these stakeholders and ensure that their power is used towards advocating

for the success of the project. This is the quadrant on the top right hand of the matrix. The general rule in this instance is to “Work Together” with the stakeholders every step of the way.

Scenario 2: This is the quadrant on the bottom right hand of the matrix. Here you find stakeholders who have elevated levels of interest in the project but possess very little power and influence to make the project succeed. By virtue of their positivity these stakeholders need to still be consulted and engaged as they are supportive of the project and can provide adequate input whenever needed.

Scenario 3: This is a quadrant of stakeholders who are not keen on the project for their own reasons but also, they do not have the power and influence to derail or lobby against it in any way. These people are still stakeholders, and they just might have reasonable grounds for being against the project. Sufficient effort must be made to listen to these stakeholders’ concerns and at least woo them into the next quadrant (discussed in scenario 2) as their interest will have been raised.

Scenario 4: The last of Mandelow’s quadrants is one where stakeholders have sufficient power and or influence, but their interest is low in the project. Based on the power this stakeholder group has it is ideal that they are kept satisfied with the new changes on a win-win basis.

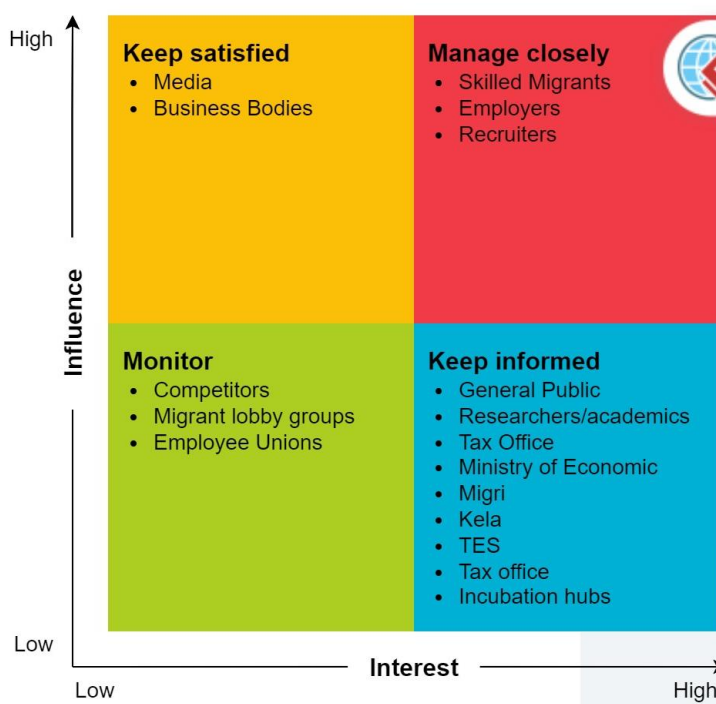


Figure 32: Mandelow’s Stakeholder Prioritisation Matrix.

7 Developing Potential Ideas

At this point the author had all that is needed to initiate the tactical design journey to manifest the service design thinking that was the main activity during the design research part captured in the previous chapters. A thorough understanding of the needs of the skilled migrant job seekers is now in place coupled with stakeholders that form the power relations around the solution to be created.

The above said, Service Design is a cross disciplinary vocation that demands creative competences, which sometimes sit outside the scope of the service designer. The situation takes an extreme end where the service designer has got no prior design training. In such event the final solution ends up being rather amateurish because of the limitations of the service designer to express true potential of the final concept.

It is the contention of the author that Service design is a cross departmental process that is intended to morph together capabilities from across the departments to orchestrate due customer value. In this perspective, it is self-defeating for a service design researcher in an academic setting to try and do everything by themselves throughout the entire process. It is the argument of the research that such approach does not reflect real life scenario of how a service designer work. As a matter of fact, it robs the process the quality it deserves in executing the final solution.

Within the spectrum of value creation, a service designer with his or her leadership role assumes cannot be both a referee and a player. A lot of loss in strategic foresight of the solution will happen if a service designer operates at both insights, strategic, and executional phases of the project, putting aside being not feasible to have all the required competences.

In their seminal book, “The Experience Economy”, (Pine & Gilmore, 2011) introduces five roles of a designer in the creation of service experiences:

- **Champion** – advocating for the creation and delivery of exceptional customer experiences in an organisation. The role of a champion in this sense is to drive focus and commitment to deliver the exceptional experiences.
- **Innovator** – continuously generating new ideas and concepts to enhance the experience being offered, keeping it fresh and engaging.

- **Orchestrator** – orchestration involves coordinating various elements and touch points within an experience, making sure they work together harmoniously to deliver a coherent, impactful, and differentiated experience.
- **Provider** – this role involves making sure the designed experience is brought to life. This involves issues of budgets, project management, negotiation of key resources, etc.
- **Guide** – making sure users derive maximum value from orchestrated offering.

As has been illustrated above, service designers have a much bigger role already to be bogged down into executional duties of the design scope. It is for this reason that in this project we delegated the executional design role to an independent designer as deemed fit to support the realisation of the service design solution. The results of this collaboration are presented below.

7.1 Manifesting New Possibilities through Design Delegation

The researcher's rationale above in which he sees a service designer more as a conductor and orchestrator of the innovation of service experiences gave the author the impetus to subcontract a Communications Designer to help visualize the design vision set forth through Service Design Thinking. In this instance the latter is not relinquishing the project. He is operating at a more strategic level in leadership position where he provides necessary guidance to the Communications Designer. That is the reality a Service Design operates within even in real world projects. Delegation is a necessary component for successful leadership.

A Service Designer as explained earlier cannot possess all the spectrum of creative design expertise needed to manifest service design projects. The Service Designer must collaborate at some point with other design experts to co-create in the same manner co-creation takes place with the users. In this instance a Service Designer acts as a leader and a manager of an ecosystem of creative input from across key stakeholders, armed with thorough understanding of pertinent user needs explored through both empirical and user research.

7.1.1 Proposed Service Design Solution

First it is important to understand what is it that is being developed. The solution proposed is an online community that supports talent, employment, and holistic wellbeing of skilled migrants in Finland. Skilled Migrants struggle to find supportive community of people with the same job seeking issues where they can extract necessary energies to push on relentlessly until they can get their first break. Being alone in a foreign land with no hope of ever making it into a worthwhile career opportunity can be very overwhelming position to be in.

Skilled migrants need real connections and interactions where they can share their frustrations and get to learn about coping mechanisms from others who might be doing slightly better. It is for this reason that an online community made sense as the fulcrum onto which other solutions will revolve. The virtual nature of this community would also mean easy access from across the country therefore expanding the footprint of this community for better and more fruitful interactions. The key components of the proposed design solution are illustrated in Figure 33 below.

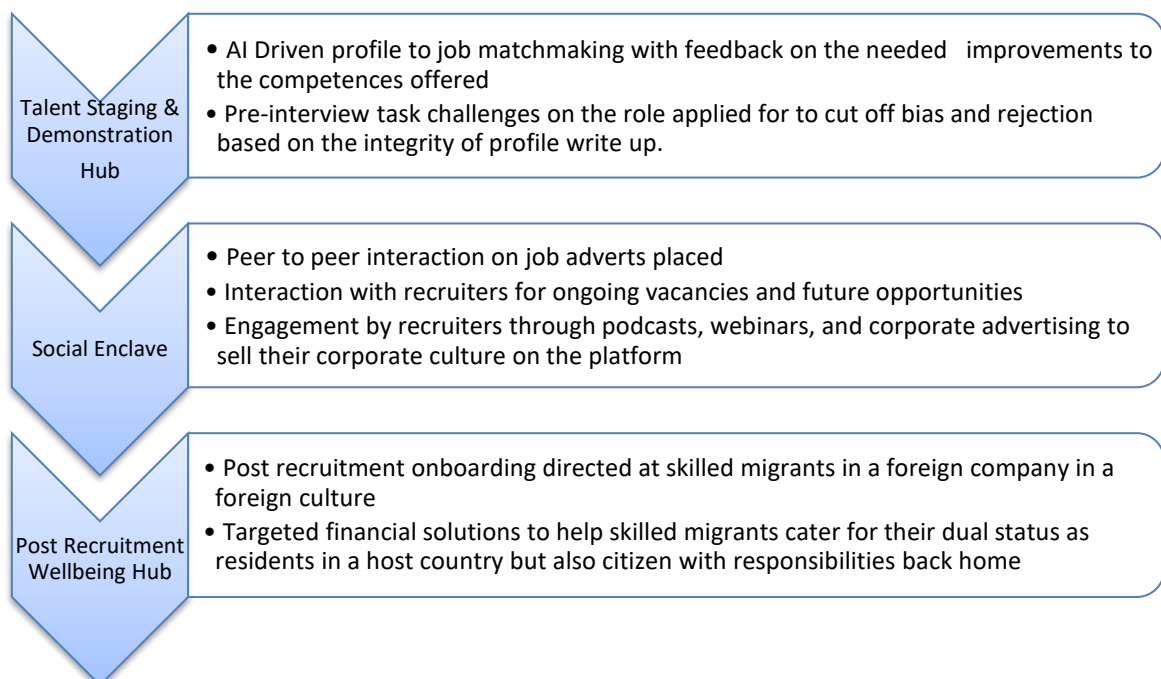


Figure 33: Key Components of the Proposed Service Design Solution.

Figure 33 above shows the essence of the proposed service design solution for skilled migrant job seekers in Finland. As stated earlier, the proposed solution is an online community, which consists of three nodes. Each of these three nodes is a profit centre. These nodes are Social Enclave, Talent Staging and Demonstration portal, and lastly, Post-Recruitment Hub. The role for each node is implied below when the mechanics of the solution are explained.

7.1.2 How the Proposed Service Design Concept Works

To illustrate how this service design concept works, the author here uses the User Persona 2 (see section 5.2.1.2) to map how she might have her needs met through the proposed online community, as a skilled migrant living in Finland. Harumi Kayastha is from Nepal. She has a master's degree in Fintech & Data Science from Tampere University.

How might she meet her needs through this online community?

Step 1 – Talent Staging and Demonstration

She logs in to the online community to put together her professional profile and alert the system that she is currently looking for a job based on her profile. Simultaneously employer X is looking for a Fintech analyst and they also log in to the talent staging hub of the online community to generate a job advert. AI driven algorithm notices that the job advert matches Harumi's profile. It sends a message to Harumi to check out the advert. Harumi is very interested and immediately applies for the role. The system sends through her application, evaluates it based on how she fares in relation to other applicants and which competences she might have to amplify to improve her odds of success.

Next the algorithm asks Harumi to setup a date for an online task challenge based on the requirements of the job advertised. Harumi agrees and later takes the challenge, which intends to see her hard skills combined with her personality in how she approaches certain issues. The task is complete, the system again gives her feedback on how she has done, and it sends a report to the recruiter after a few days based on the profile and pre-interview challenge, comparing Harumi with other applicants.

Based on this report the recruiter now can invite Harumi for an interview if she has done well. We assume here that indeed she has.

Recruitment Implications: Harumi gets an opportunity to show case her capabilities beyond a simple profile. A lot of employment rejections happen outright simply based on the integrity of how the curriculum vitae (CV) or online profile has been done. This may result in loss of very capable and competitive talent never given chance to go further in demonstrating their capability.

Stage 2 – Waiting for Feedback

Whilst Harumi is waiting for feedback from the employer immediately after sending through her job application and subsequent stages during the interviewing process, she is lounging with other skilled migrants in the Social Enclave. Here she gets opportunity to interact with other migrant job applicants, and can even set up a meeting with key employees of the company she is interested in to ask more detailed questions regarding the culture at employer X.

The environment exposes the applicant to other job adverts like the one she already applied for, targeted news on her potential employer such as skills improvement training or even further skills challenges to check her competences on areas that are not coming out clearly yet. The enclave provides a whole array of engagement from peer-to-peer psycho-social and professional support to employer try-outs building into the final decision to give her an offer.

Recruitment Implications: The waiting period from when a candidate sends through her application until final decision to employ her is made is often a wasted resource for employers to engage candidates and sell their corporate culture to the candidate. Talent competition is fierce, and employers can no longer believe talent acquisition to be a one-way street. As employers actively try to acquire talent, candidates are also deciding whether that is an organisation they would like to work for. Also, it may be that other employers are vying for the same candidate.

The kind of engagement proposed here results in quite rich talent, which Finnish employers will be compelled to access through this online community as it empowers

them to filter through the competences of the skilled migrant to their satisfaction. This is contrary to the current approach based on personal connections, referrals, and hidden jobs. It is not helping Finnish employers get the best talent and acquire it based on merit.

Stage 3 – Post Recruitment Wellbeing Hub

In this node Harumi would now have gotten a well-deserved job as a Fintech Analyst from employer X. She starts her new role in this company. Everything is new and even the work ethic is totally different from how he is used to in her own country. She needs to be guided into being part of this culture. Her needs are much more distinct from those of an average native employee joining the company. Harumi needs a support system that is wider than the company itself. How does she get her first apartment? What is it to do and not to do if you are to get along with your colleagues in this company? How does she navigate power relations in this new space as a migrant worker? The list goes on.

In this section of the online community employers will be able to purchase tailored onboarding solutions for their new skilled migrant worker where Harumi can sit digitally with dedicated mentors who will help her navigate her way into the new employer.

Another part of this online community is the financial solutions that empower Harumi to maximise her income into building a proper financial footprint in her home country. For example, all candidate employed through this online community may be able to borrow interest money from one another for emergency situations on a peer-to-peer lending basis. The online platform gets paid transaction fees for this arrangement. Other migrant focused financial services such as insurances, investment services tailored in partnership with existing financial services providers will become part of a holistic wellbeing for skilled migrants acquired through the online community.

Recruitment Implications: Existing company onboarding programmes will need to be tailored towards the unique demands of the skilled migrants as their channel is opened and more Finnish companies feel more comfortable to try them out through this online community.

7.1.3 Socio-economic and Moral Significance of the Concept

The online community proposed above is pioneering a transformative pathway for skilled migrants in Finland. It isn't just a platform; it's a promise – an end-to-end solution supporting talent, employment, and holistic wellbeing of skilled migrants. The online community is not just solving career access employment problem for this increasing growing segment of the Finnish society. The online community is sculpting a new narrative for global mobility, empowerment, and belonging.

7.1.4 How the Concept Might Look Like

The above inner workings for the proposed service design concept were what was used to brief the Communications Designer discussed earlier in this presentation. Upon meeting with the Communications Designer, it was agreed that an online community such as the one suggested will need to be a properly branded service offering so that it can cut off the online visual clutter, resonate more with the target and better build emotional connection with the prospects. Already there are existing platforms, which even though they are not dedicated specifically to skilled migrants, command a lot of presence online. If the proposed online community is to draw attention of the Finnish employers particularly, it needs to pose a rather professional look and feel that affirms its professionalism and sense of commitment in what it promises to deliver.

In view of the above, the researcher sat with a communications team to brainstorm a name for the online community with which the Communications designer started to explore ideas for the visual brand identity with which the online community would begin to present itself to its multiple constituents. The brainstorming meeting took place on teams with several names were proposed. Ultimately the name "Wallow" was proposed.

Wallow is a depression on the ground made by a big animal such as an elephant as they wallow about. The depression collects shallow water during the rains. Some of the animals begin to quench their thirst from this water before proceeding to bigger water sources. This scenario seemed to encapsulate the soul of Wallow based on the dryness skilled migrants must go through now. The day they can access even the most entry level of career-based roles through Wallow, it would bring the same quenching effect felt by animals that get to sip the first waters of rain from the depression (wallow) on

the ground made by one of the “big five” as some of the big animals are sometimes referred to. With the above name the Communications Designer began to explore various option of how to imbue it with a sense of semantic meaning and aura. Figure 34 below shows some of the conceptual explorations.

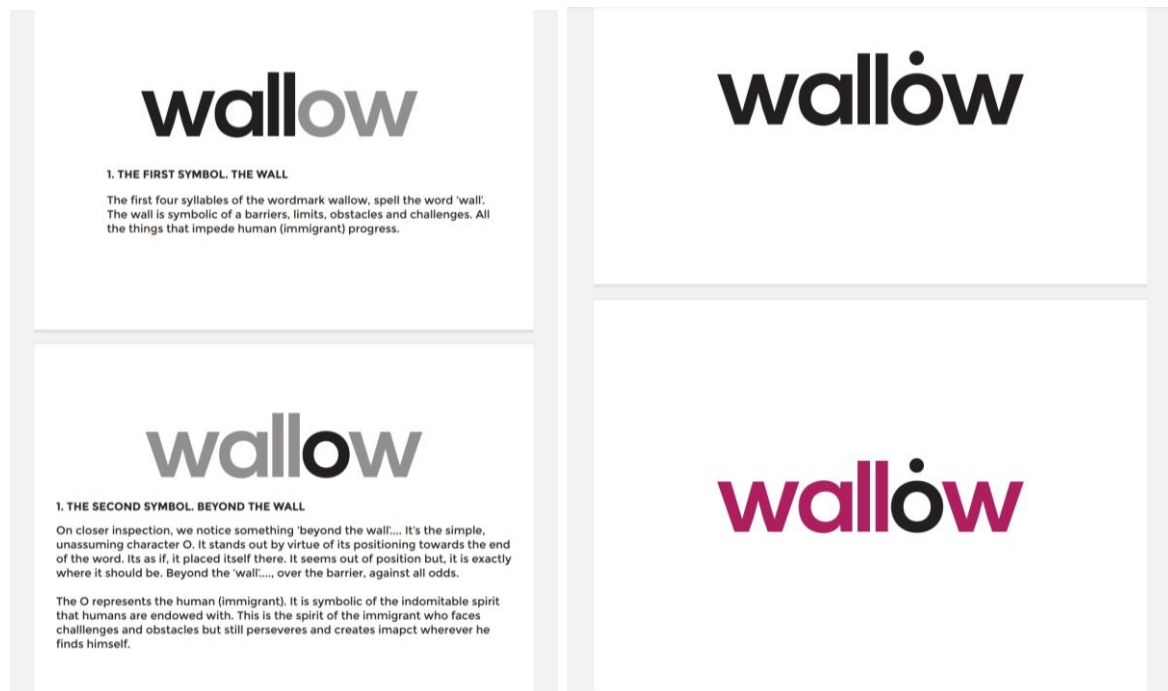


Figure 34: Initial Identity Design Ideas.

7.1.4.1 Visual Interpretation of the above identity

The idea behind this creative exercise was to tell a story about what the online community stands for and why it exists. Brands are built on fundamental system of beliefs, which are encapsulated in a visual stimulus to communicate meaning and the essence behind these beliefs that should resonate with the target. In this instance the key goal was to take the name “Wallow” and unmask hidden symbols embedded in the word itself that are not immediately noticeable at a casual glance. It is quite easy to miss the symbolism embedded in this word.

wallow

If one looks at the word “Wallow”, it is composed of two blocks of words. On the left we see the word “Wall”. This is a metaphorical wall skilled migrants currently must bang their heads against to access career-based employment in Finland. On the right is a letter “W”. this letter visually is beyond the “Wall”. In the middle there is a letter “O”. At first this letter looks rather lost and misplaced because seems to be out of rhythm. After careful observation one can notice that this unassuming character “O” belongs there. It is not lost. It is the skilled migrant who possesses all the competences and capabilities to belong in a Finnish career market only if they can be helped to go past the wall that is in front of them. The letter “O” not only symbolises the skilled migrant, but it also captures the indomitable spirit humans are endowed with to confront challenges but remaining resolute in the face of rejection and animosity.

To complete the human symbol (letter “O”), which is not just the centre piece of the identity but also the primary reason of being for Wallow, a dot was put on top to create resonance.



Figure 35: Studies for the Visual Resonance of letter “O”.

7.2 Confirming New Possibilities with Key Stakeholders

The identity designs were taken through various refinements before being presented to the skilled migrants and fellow business accelerator colleagues at Business Turku for comments and appreciation. The general feeling was that the name “Wallow” was easy to remember and flowed easily in the tongue. The colour scheme proposed was also appreciated for its creative yet professional posture, signifying the online community to become a professional business built on strong creative ethos. With this general feedback the research handed back the baton to the Communications Designer to now apply this identity to the online community pages and the rest of corporate ephemera.



Figure 36: Validation Session for Wallow Online Community.

7.3 Interim Service Solution

In the next section we will now see how the whole concept came together when applied to the online community pages as well as corporate collateral materials. This should show the power of creative collaboration in making tangible what would have otherwise remain quite abstract ideas with nothing on their end to suspend disbelief.



Figure 37: Identity Design Application Across Touchpoints.

7.3.1 Interim Online Community Static Pages

The application of the identity proceeded to the basic pages of the online community proposed below. The idea was that these would be handed over to a UX/UI Designer to transform them into fronted development of this online community such that the pages can be interactive across devices. Such interactive proposal can then be used to validate the actual concept by key Finnish employers. Their feedback will in this instance be solicited for further refinement prior to fully fledged development of the algorithm and other backend processes. Also, the employers can then make non-committal gesture concerning their willingness to embrace such a platform in one way or another. One option would be to have some internationally postured employers to headline the online community initially as a corporate social responsibility to help inspire other employers to jump on board for successful monetisation in the end.

Below is a presentation on how the basic pages for the online community might look like. It is the believe of the researcher that this now paints a vivid picture of what the proposed solution for skilled migrant job seekers is all about and differentiated it is from the rest of the job boards and social media platforms.



Figure 38: Wallow Landing Page.

wallow About Us **For Recruiters** For Job Seekers Community Wellbeing Services Contact Us [LOGIN / SIGN UP](#) [CREATE AN ACCOUNT](#)

Search jobs

We help various business sizes and industries reach the right human resource.

If you are looking for part-time or full-time and freelance employees, you can find them on Wallow.

GET STARTED NOW

Hire employees, fast and easier.

We will send you notifications when candidates who meet your criteria create an account. Reach out to candidates with email capabilities built directly in the platform.

CREATE JOB ADVERT **LINK CORPORATE VIDEO** **DEFINE SEARCH PROFILES** **ENGAGE BEST CANDIDATES** **TALENT STATISTICS**

FEATURED JOBS

<p>Software Engineer Softtech (Pty) Ltd</p> <p>Full time Helsinki \$ 100k-150k</p> <p>1 month Tue 23 May 2023 View More</p>	<p>Marketing Coordinator Barome LLC</p> <p>Full time Helsinki \$ 100k-150k</p> <p>1 month Tue 23 May 2023 View More</p>	<p>Social Media Specialist Purple Rose</p> <p>Part time Kuwait \$ 100k-150k</p> <p>1 month Tue 23 May 2023 View More</p>
<p>Medical Assistant Binford Private Hospital</p> <p>Full time Helsinki \$ 100k-150k</p> <p>1 month Tue 23 May 2023 View More</p>	<p>Web Developer Unilevel Technologies</p> <p>Full time Tampere \$ 100k-150k</p> <p>1 month Tue 23 May 2023 View More</p>	<p>Data Scientist Infinity Laboratories</p> <p>Part time Helsinki \$ 100k-150k</p> <p>1 month Tue 23 May 2023 View More</p>

VIEW MORE..

wallow The World is Getting Better

QUICK LINKS
For Recruiters
For Job Seekers
Community
Well being Services

COMPANY
About Us
Create an Account
Log/ Sign in

SUPPORT
Contact Us
Help Center
FAQ's

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Figure 39: Recruiter Page Interface.

wallow About Us For Recruiters **For Job Seekers** Community Wellbeing Services Contact Us LOGIN / SIGN UP CREATE AN ACCOUNT

Search jobs

Get connected

with full time or parttime, freelance and remote jobs that are suited just for you and meet your prerequisite.

[CREATE AN ACCOUNT](#)

Find your job better & faster.

Search and find your dream job now easier than ever, you can simply browse and find a job if you need it.

Search Jobs, keywords, companies | Enter location or "remote"

[Upload Your Resume - Get noticed by top employees](#)

Popular Searches

[Administration](#) [Advertising](#) [Engineering](#) [Finance](#) [HR](#) [IT](#) [Marketing](#) [Manufacturing](#) [Mining](#)
[Others](#)

CANDIDATES PROFILES

 <p>Aaron Ture Software Developer Kuwait \$ 100k-150k View Profile</p>	 <p>Noah Boateng Social Media Specialist Tampere, Finland \$ 100k-150k View Profile</p>	 <p>Jonathan Patterson Business Developer JYVASKYLÄ \$ 100k-150k View Profile</p>	 <p>Harumi Kayastha Data Scientist Tampere \$ 100k-150k View Profile</p>
 <p>Heidi Seppanen Investment Analyst Helsinki \$ 100k-150k View Profile</p>	 <p>Name Surname Profession Location \$ Salary View Profile</p>	 <p>Name Surname Profession Location \$ Salary View Profile</p>	 <p>Name Surname Profession Location \$ Salary View Profile</p>

[VIEW MORE..](#)

wallow The World is Getting Better

QUICK LINKS
 For Recruiters
 For Job Seekers
 Community
 Well being Services

COMPANY
 About Us
 Create an Account
 Log/ Sign in

SUPPORT
 Contact Us
 Help Center
 FAQ's

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[In](#) [f](#) [t](#) [@](#)

Figure 40: Wallow Job Seeker Page.

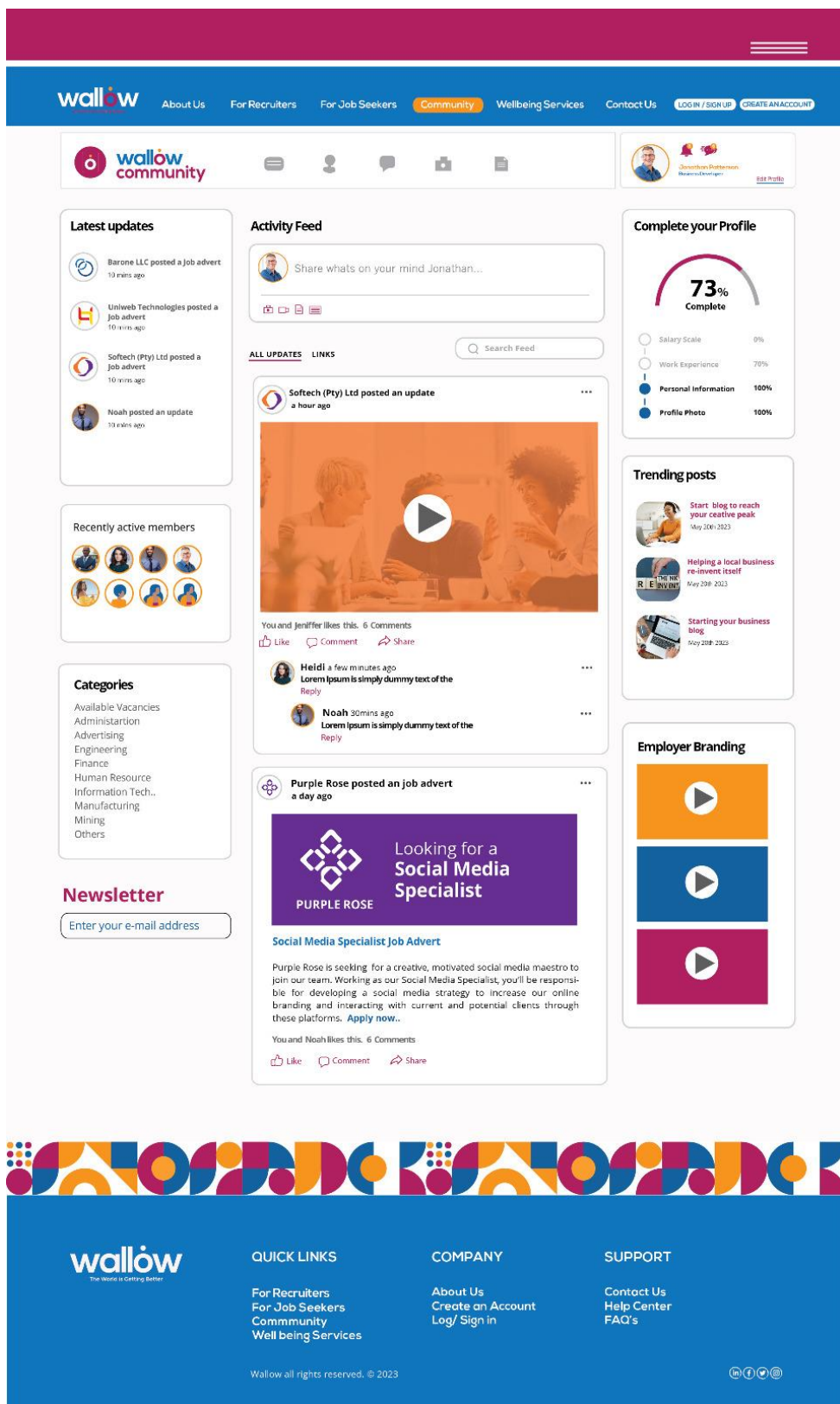


Figure 41: Wallow Community Enclave.

wallow About Us For Recruiters For Job Seekers Community **Employee Wealth Services** Contact Us LOGIN / SIGN UP CREATE AN ACCOUNT

BE A LENDER **BE A BORROWER** **SEND MONEY**

SEND, BORROW & LEND money with Wallow Money

The Wallow Money is a financial empowerment platform (deal broker) for Wallow community members which offers an opportunity for individuals to have control of their finances.

SEND MONEY
- Local transfer
- International transfer

LEND MONEY
- Peer-to-Peer lending
- Micro Lending

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES
- Smart Investing

Wallow Money - Sign up & Send/ Borrow/ Lend!

Every day, employees around the Finland encounter unexpected expenses that they had not budgeted for, but find they are ignored by traditional lenders. Creditworthy people need money quickly and only for a short period of time, but they often find they have nowhere to go for quick, safe, and reliable funds. The closer we looked at this problem, the more we felt that we could help provide a solution by connecting creditworthy borrowers to trustworthy lenders who can borrow and lend short term money directly to one another.

Send Money

Whether you need to transfer money to friends down the street or family across the globe, Wallow Money gets your funds there quickly and reliably.

[Read more >>>](#)

Lend Money

We enable credit-worthy individuals to borrow directly from others in Wallow community. Wallow Money lend for a term and at a rate that works for you.

[Read more >>>](#)

Smart ways to invest

Whether you're just starting out or looking to brush up on your investing skills, we'll help you make smarter decisions about saving, investing opportunities and protecting your money.

[Read more >>>](#)

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QUICK LINKS
For Recruiters
For Job Seekers
Community
Employee Wealth Services

COMPANY
About Us
Create an Account
Log/ Sign in

SUPPORT
Contact Us
Help Center
FAQ's

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[in](#) [f](#) [t](#) [@](#)

Figure 42: Wallow Peer-to-Peer Financial Solutions Page.

7.3.2 Competitive Landscape

Wallow faces like any business does not exist in a vacuum. The online recruitment market is a growing segment that is fiercely contested. The market has a proven track record of living up to its promise and with increasing culture of digitalisation across organisations all over the world, fuelled partly by the advent of Covid19, organisations have become very comfortable with doing their recruitment online. With various players each delivering innovative strategies to meet client goals, the market is yet to grow into a huge opportunity.

Globally the online recruitment market was valued at 33.2 billion USD in 2022 and is expected to grow at a CAGR of about 8.1% to reach about 52.9 billion USD in 2028 (Research Industry Network, 2023). It is not yet clear what Finland or the Nordic's share of this market is but based on the projected influx of foreign students to come into the Finnish borders, Wallow is certainly a business opportunity worth exploring.

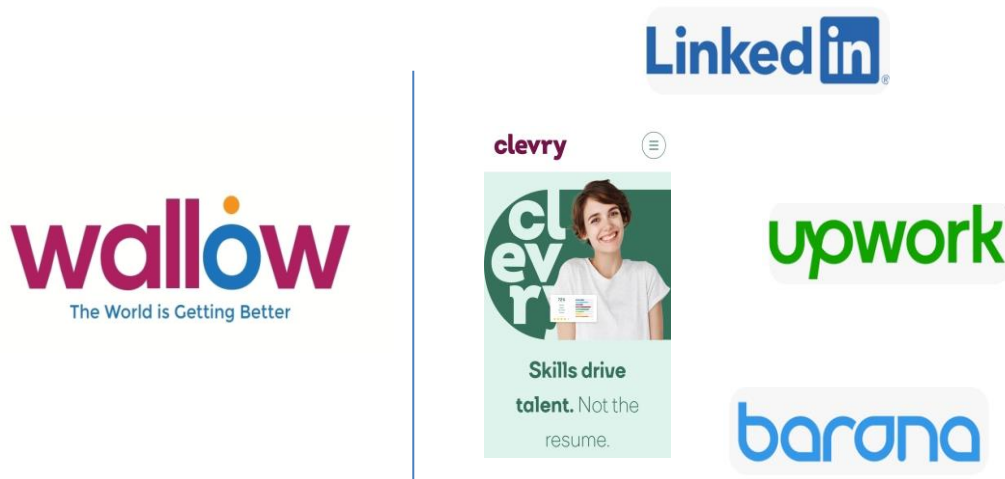


Figure 43: Competitive Landscape for Wallow.

Whilst the above are not exhaustive, what is clear is that none of these players is committed specifically to creating an emotional sanctuary for skilled migrants. The

platforms offer aspects of job opportunity, networking, and partial support of migrant job seekers. However, none of the players offer an end-to-end solution catering for holistic wellbeing of migrants including post-recruitment interventions including nourishing of migrant heritage aspirations to preserve their cultural relevance back in their own countries through targeted solutions. This is not only an innovation on the side of Wallow, but also a competitive advantage!

7.4 Altering the design – feedback from international coaches

The above service design solution was presented to international business coaches from Spain, Estonia, and Lithuania during the International Coaching Day organised by Business Turku. The coaches evaluated the idea based on its originality, the value it offers to the customer, and scalability.

Collective feedback from the coaches suggested:

- That resolving access to career-based employment through a digital platform and extending that scope into responding to heritage based financial needs of the skilled migrants, was too broad a focus to be adequately catered for in a single business model. The coaches recommended narrowing down the focus.
- One of the coaches who happened to be a business angel based in Spain believed that though our solutions tackle a genuine issue of national and regional concern, more was still needed to bring in a surprise factor in terms of the business model.

With the above recommendations, the business model has since evolved as per Figure 44 below.

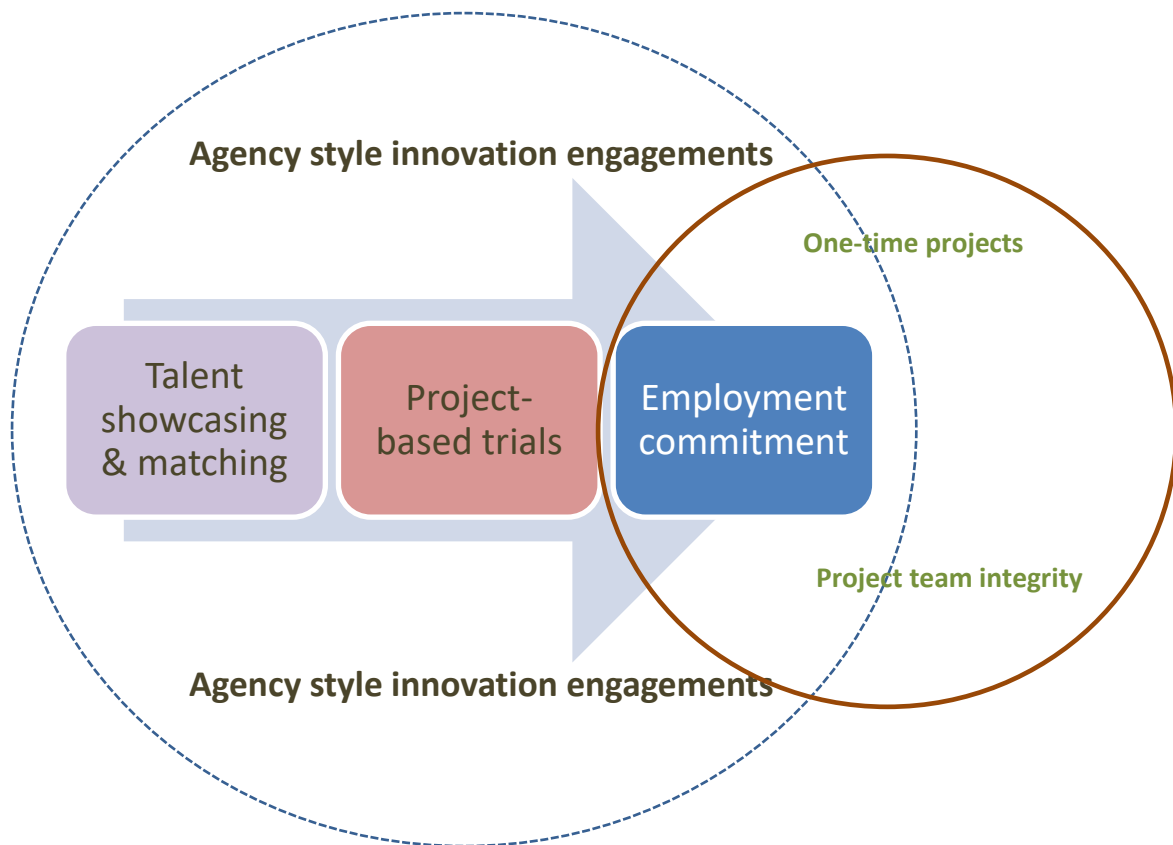


Figure 44: Revised Business Model for Wallow.

7.5 The Final Solution for Skilled Migrants

Wallow is now positioned as a global talent marketplace providing a trial ground for skilled migrant talent by Finnish employers. There are systemic issues hindering absorption of skilled migrant talent as already highlighted in this document. One key impediment to the uptake of this talent is lack of a hand holding system that can delicately usher employers into confirming and testing existing crop of talent. This is a market gap which Wallow is poised to focus on.

7.5.1 How the Final Concept Works

Wallow structures how skilled migrant talent is showcased, proven, and trialled to boost innovation capacities for innovation driven organisations in Finland and the rest of the Nordic region postured in developing global orientation and competitiveness.

Skilled migrants are best suited to this global competitiveness appetite for innovation. Skilled migrants possess unique cultural competences that view innovation challenges from outside established dogma of their host nations. Innovation activity within companies has been chosen as it is the sweetest spot in every aspect for business competitiveness. Wallow targets innovation focused professionals such as designers, engineers, marketers, communication specialists or storytellers, project managers, etc. In addition to their professional profiles, they do possess tangible proof of their skills in the form of project portfolios and repositories of their previous works. This is a point of leverage that suspends any form of disbelief in their ability to deliver results once employed. A lot of recruitment platforms throw away great talent based mainly on how poorly written they are. This, the author contends, is not the best way of accessing and assessing talent.

Wallow as digital platform has got two wings. On one hand, there is a wing for job seekers where traditional professional profiles are uploaded by job seekers together with their portfolios. On the other hand, the platform has a wing for employers where they load projects, which they are about to embark on together with selected team members, highlighting their competences. The platform scrutinises (using artificial intelligence and machine learning technologies) the integrity of the team competences based on the requirements of the project and the ability of the team competences to deliver pertinent innovation solutions.

Next system suggests skilled migrant talent assets existing in the platform that can be used to fill in the competence gaps. This approach facilitates a more distinct and tangible way of approaching the organisations and talking about talent diversity. Wallow can suddenly begin to have convincing conversation about their projects and how innovation can be embedded in their execution using skilled migrants. Also, the fact that the platform punches holes in the project briefs and team makeup for suggested projects is enough value proposition. It compels organisations to disclose their projects hoping for constructive feed from the platform.

Finally, when the project organisation is convinced, suggested talent is trialled on an actual project. Performance matrices built into the platform tracks the performance of the skilled migrant being trialled across all the project deliverables. Upon successful delivery of the project, the relationship transitions into fulltime employment for the

skilled migrant. As can be seen from this illustration, this is the safest approach to accessing and utilising migrant talent, which none of the competitors listed above delivers to date. There is a lot of room to embed analytics on the platform to offer even more value to recruiters, authenticating Wallow as a partner and facilitator for innovation.

7.5.1.1 Leveraging Talent Assets within the Platform

A lot of talent assets accumulated in the platform, which cannot be trialled into organisational projects at a given moment in time, are channelled toward high-value innovation sprints for target organisations. This not only leverages existing talent within the platform but offers organisations an opportunity to access skilled migrant talent in an integrated manner. Advantages for this include the ability for these organisations to maintain lean development teams knowing there is partner who provides contingency talent should the need to expand capability arise.

7.5.1.2 Pitching of the Business Idea during Business Turku Demo Day

The business concept for Wallow and how skilled migrant talent can be structured for better showcasing, access, and utilisation to boost innovation capabilities for innovation focused organisations in Finland and the rest of the Nordics was finally pitched before pre-seed capital investors at Business Turku. The event took place in form of a “Demo Day” and was held on the 24th of November before 80 well-wishers and four well-known investors. While Wallow business concept was not the winner of the event, real insights were obtained from highly experienced venture capitalists who have been involved with hundreds of startups for many years. One key recommendation was that while Wallow is solving a problem that is a currently a very topical subject, there is a need for a working prototype to aid further validation from employers.

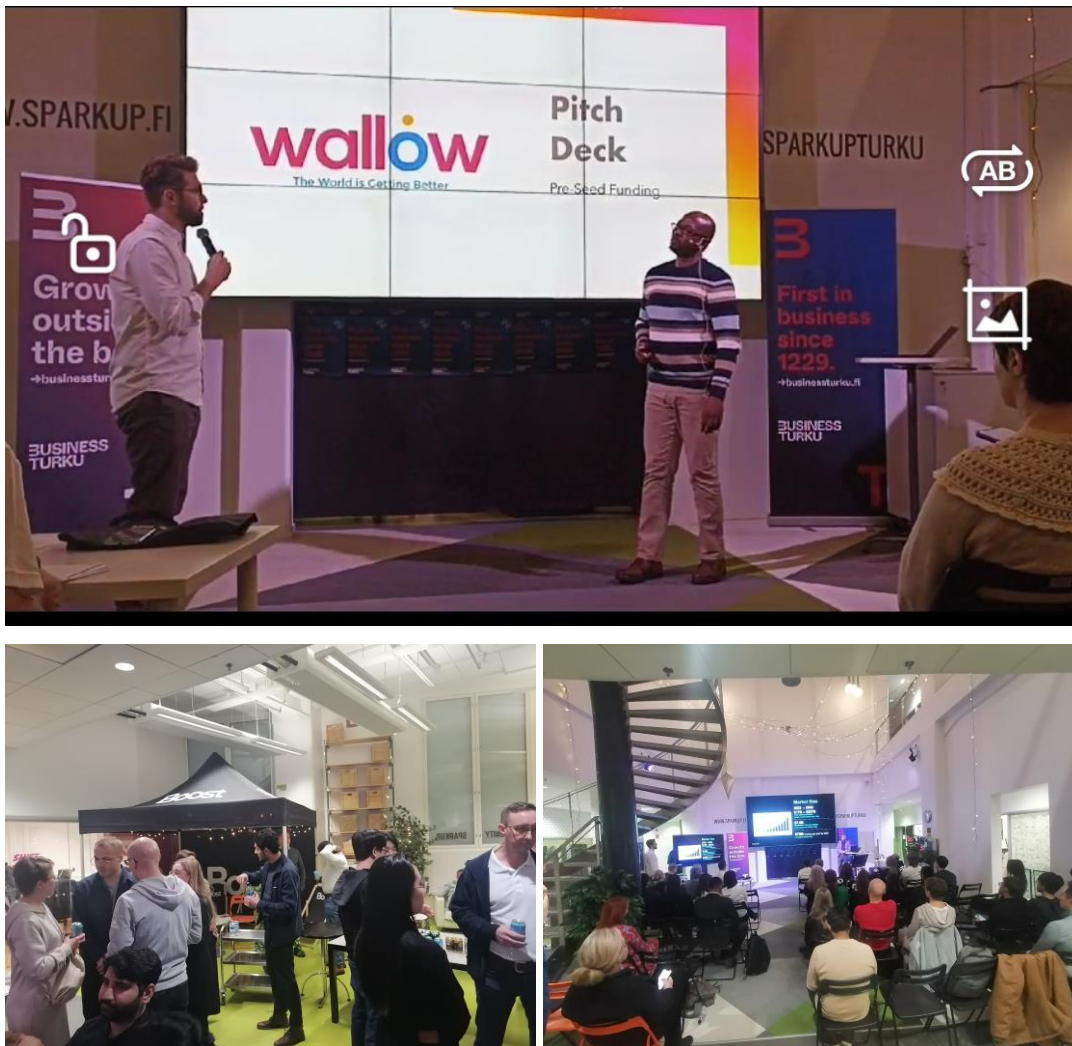


Figure 45: Pitching Sessions at Turku Business' Demo Day.

7.6 Realism through Prototyping

In view of the multilayered nature of the service design solution proposed in this thesis, the easiest and the most feasible prototyping technique would be to create interactive presentation of the online pages on Figma to solicit feedback from both the users and the employers. At the time writing this document, the researcher was working with a UX developer in India to take the static pages presented above and make them interactive enough stakeholder presentation and feedback. This is appropriate as the thesis has got a life outside the academic walls as it is intended to be a business under the guidance of Business Turku. In this sense the prototyping method was chosen

based on its ability to provide credible feedback with its near completion feel. This way the idea becomes more believable and key stakeholders can believe on its feasibility.

7.7 Business Model Canvas

The Business Model Canvas below shows how the overall business concept for the digital platform comes together. It is a kaleidoscope morphing all the aspects of this research into a one-page synopsis of what the entire business concept entails. The model specifies the key value proposition, customer segment demands, strategic relationships needed to build key customer value, harness key partners capabilities to build competitive advantage, and finally, the revenue streams that provide certainty that the concept can be a bankable business proposition.

The model below (Table 7) was presented to business coaches and other entrepreneurs to interrogate it for both competitive advantage and scalability.

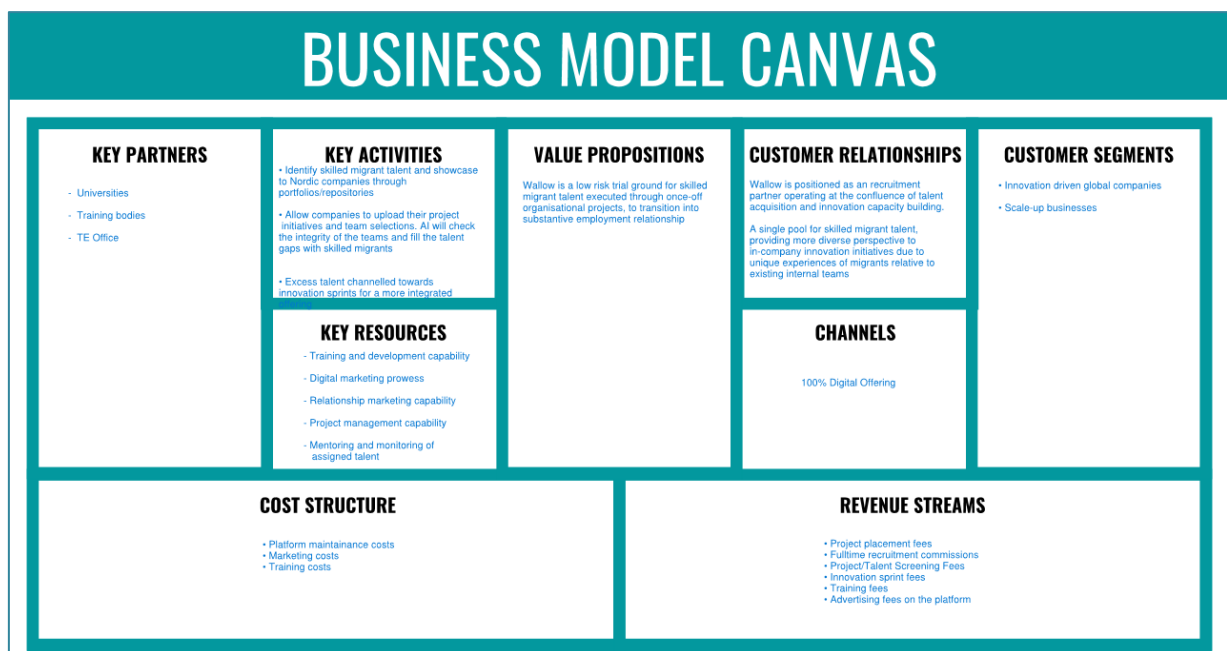


Table 7: Business Model Canvas for the Proposed Service Solution.

8 Other Recommendations

The service design proposal offered in this thesis is only part of the solution. There needs to be total mindset change amongst Finnish recruiters in the manner they view

skilled migrants. The caricature of all migrants being people from unworthy nations with no progressive point of view, as rooted on the asylum-seeking migrants the nation is familiar with, is counterproductive to the future of Finland. The new migrant coming into the Finnish borders is self-sufficient, educated (sometimes over educated), and skilled enough to contribute meaningfully to the Finnish labour market. In this perspective, few recommendations come to mind as regards broad scale interventions that can be made in the backdrop of the proposed online community. These are beyond the scope of the online community itself; but certain governmental agency or professional body needs to step up to the plate to see them through:

- **Legislation and Policy Advocacy** – Advocate for and support policies that promote transparency in hiring practices. Encourage regulations that require job openings to be publicly advertised and hiring decisions be based on qualifications and merit rather than personal connections and word of mouth referrals. The latter is not ideal for a sophisticated nation such as Finland.
- **Transparency Campaigns** – Launch public awareness campaigns emphasizing the benefits of transparent hiring practices. Highlight how such practices lead to more diverse and skilled workforce, fostering creativity and innovation.
- **Collaboration with Recruitment Platforms** – Collaborate with job boards and recruitment platforms and agencies to encourage recruiters to post job openings openly. Incentivize, grade, and support companies that follow these practices.
- **Training and Awareness Programmes** – Offer training and resources to recruiters and hiring managers about the importance of unbiased hiring approaches. This training should focus on fair assessment methods, unconscious bias awareness, and the value of diversity in the workplace.
- **Job Market Monitoring** – Conduct regular assessments of the job market to identify potential cases of undisclosed job openings or biased hiring practices. The perpetrators should be named and shamed until such conduct is widely deemed unacceptable. The data obtained should be used to reinforce advocacy for fair hiring practices and transparent job postings.

- **Inclusive Hiring Initiatives** – Encourage companies to implement affirmative action policies or diversity hiring initiatives that aim to provide equal opportunities to underrepresented groups. By actively seeking diversity, companies can widen their talent pool and reduce bias in hiring.

9 Conclusion and Reflections

This thesis touched on very sensitive issues. The sensitivity of the issues emanates from the fact that on the side of the Finnish recruiters, it is very hard to openly admit prevailing social perceptions that discredit skilled migrants. If anything, such a conversation unproductively enters an atmosphere of nationalistic entitlement, which renders it futile. On the side of skilled migrants, the status quo represents real frustrations.

The Finnish government is pushing a different narrative that is antagonised by the reality on the ground. Promising a burgeoning job market, which remains to be only an illusion is not sustainable in the long term. Already, a great majority of skilled migrants are prepared to exit Finland as soon as they graduate. They are rather worried about the future of their careers if they are to remain in Finland. In the end, skilled migrants had to bear a lot of cost to relocate from their own countries.

It is worth highlighting that a lot of skilled migrants moved with their families hoping for a better life. Some left their professional jobs to come and further their studies hoping to operate at an international level thereafter. Some even sold their valuable properties in pursuit of a dream unlikely to be achieved. This creates a very socially charged atmosphere likely to blast soon.

The existing challenges surrounding opaque hiring practices and the prevalent reliance on referrals in recruitment significantly impede the creation of fair and equitable job market. The reluctance to disclose job openings soberly and the favouritism towards referrals not only limit the opportunities available to a diverse pool of candidates but also perpetuates barriers against fair hiring practices based on merit.

The solutions outlined in this document including the online community presented earlier, constitute key steps towards fostering a more inclusive and merit-based hiring landscape. Implementing the suggested ideas is not only a matter of rectifying the current deficiencies but it is a crucial stride towards driving diversity, meritocracy, and equal opportunities within the Finnish job market. Not implementing these solutions has dire implications to the image, credibility and social equity Finland has created globally over many years. The time to act boldly is now!

9.1 Prospects for the Future

The researcher is not ruling out the possibility in the future to set up a non-profitting advocacy organisation tackling the systemic issues around recruitment in Finland. The organisation will try and implement the recommendations just suggested above. Such can be done alongside the implementation of the online community, which itself, will be a profit-making business entity. Addressing structural issues alongside managing the online community is an intelligent thing to do so that the hostile ground within which the online community exist can be regularised.

As already demonstrated, a lot of skilled migrants from around the world are frustrated about the current recruitment reality in Finland. It will be easy to find collaborators with whom an advocacy organisation can be set up to change the narrative around skilled migrant talent. Furthermore, there are a lot of grants available to fund such an initiative. If Service Design Thinking is used as a strategic tool to manifest the mission and remit of this organisation, a lot of great things can happen.

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Appendix I: EXPERT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What do you believe are key motivators for migrants to choose Finland as their host nations?
2. What issues are migrants currently having to deal with in Finland?
3. Are there any noticeable gaps in terms of professional competences that make it difficult for migrants to access career-based employment in the Finnish labour market?
4. What do you believe are the main three (3) issues that make a typical Finnish employer think twice when thinking about recruiting a skilled migrant?
5. What solutions can be provided to make it easier for skilled migrants to access career-based employment in Finland?
6. What unique work ethic does a typical Finnish employee have which migrants may struggle with?
7. Is there anything that Finnish employers can gain by employing migrants in career-based employment?
8. Why is it that Finnish employers find it easy to provide exclusionary employment to migrants as opposed to career-based type even though most may be qualified for the latter?
9. Do you believe most jobs require the knowledge of Finnish language in the career-based job segment?
10. Why is language often mentioned as the main hindrance for migrant access to career-based employment?

Appendix II: SKILLED MIGRANT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Reason in Finland_____ Age____ Sex_____

Marital Status_____ Family size in Finland_____

Children back Home_____ Years in Finland_____

Education_____ Specialty_____

Employment Status_____ Role/Sector_____

1. Why have you deemed Finland to be the most suitable host nation for you?
2. What were your topmost important expectation when you decided to move to Finland?
3. To what extent have your expectations been met?
4. What is the topmost noticeable frustration you are currently experiencing as a migrant in Finland?
5. How do you see your current frustrations being resolved?
6. What is the topmost satisfaction factor are you currently experiencing in Finland?
7. What are your feelings about your future career prospects in Finland?
8. If you were to live in any country in Europe, which one would it be?
9. What are your career plans for the next five (5) years of your stay in Finland?
10. Do you believe your decision to move to Finland was worth the cost?

Appendix III: EXCLUSIONARY EMPLOYMENT

CONTEXTUAL INQUIRY QUESTIONS

Nationality_____ Age_____ Sex_____

Marital Status_____ Family size in FIN_____

Children outside FIN_____ Years in Finland_____

Education_____ Specialty_____

Employment Status_____ Role/Sector_____

1. What made you look for this job?
2. How did you get the job?
3. What is it you like about the job?
4. What is it that gives you horror in the morning when you think about this job?
5. What are your hopes for your employment future?