

TOURISM WORK AND IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION: THE CASE OF FINLAND

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Tourism Research

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Abstract

The tourism industry in Finland provides many employment opportunities, which is ideal for many immigrants seeking work in the country. Employment is one of the major factors that can affect their integration into local society, due to exposure to the local work culture, building relationships with coworkers, and learning. This paper aims to analyse how working in the tourism and hospitality sectors in Finland has affected immigrants' integration process, as well as any opportunities for their career development.

Immigration is a very relevant topic, and as such has been widely studied in the past. The challenges immigrants face in their new society, whether social, economic, or health related have been documented thoroughly. The host society's attitudes towards them as well as measures that have been taken to meet the needs of all parties have also been widely studied. In regards to integration processes when working in a specific field, such as tourism, not much discussion has been generated. It is thus important to analyse how the working environment of a specific sector can influence an immigrant's integration into local society. This essentially means finding out how employers belonging to that sector (in the case of this paper, tourism and hospitality) approach the matter of integration via employment. This paper will focus on the tourism and hospitality sectors of Finland.

This paper will approach the subject based on the theory of the "two-way integration". While there is no concrete definition for two-way integration, this theory largely suggests that proper integration of immigrants requires action from both them and the host society. It provides an excellent opportunity to look into how immigrants try to integrate via their work, while also showing what action employers take to satisfy such needs. The main research question is: How has working in the tourism sector in Finland helped immigrants with integration into society? Sub-questions include: What challenges did the immigrants face while working? How were those challenges addressed? In what ways do employers affect an immigrant's experiences in the work environment?

Research was conducted by referring to previous literature on the subject and interviewing immigrants currently working or residing in Rovaniemi, Finland. The immigrants must be working or have worked in the tourism/hospitality sectors (or sufficiently related) in Finland. The interviews were conducted in April – June 2023.

It was found that immigrants' experiences with their tourism jobs depended largely on how welcome their employer made them feel. Due to many jobs in the sector requiring close coordination with coworkers, some employers invested in teambuilding, which resulted in creating circles of trust between the immigrants and their coworkers. It also allowed them to work without the immediate need for learning the Finnish language, although it is still a problem when job-hunting. One employee was left dissatisfied with the employer, but they managed to learn a lot of things about how Finland's tourism sector operates. Overall, working in Finland's tourism and hospitality sector proved to be beneficial for the interviewees' integration, for the reasons just mentioned. The results of this research could be used as reference to what employers in the tourism industry can do to facilitate immigrant integration, and why such steps are important for tourism in particular.

Key words: tourism, immigrant, integration, two-way process, work environment

1.	INTRODUCTION	5
1.1	Introduction	5
1.2	Immigrants in Finland.....	7
1.3	Structure.....	8
2.	LITERATURE REVIEW	9
2.1	Tourism work.....	9
2.2	Immigrant integration	10
2.3	Work environment and employment.....	11
2.4	Entrepreneurship	12
3.	THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	14
3.1	Theoretical framework.....	14
3.2	Research questions	15
3.3	Research methods and analysis	15
3.4	Definitions and theories.....	16
3.4.1	What is immigrant integration?.....	16
3.4.2	Kallen’s structural integration model	19
3.4.3	Belonging	20
4.	RESEARCH DATA AND ANALYSIS	22
4.1	Methodology.....	22
4.2	Interviews.....	22
4.3	Content analysis.....	23
4.4	Ethics.....	24
5.	INTEGRATION.....	26
5.1	Into the work environment.....	26
5.1.1	Benefits of a good work environment	26
5.1.2	Workplace challenges	27
5.2	Relationships.....	32
5.2.1	Teambuilding.....	32
5.2.2	Relationship with superiors	35
5.2.3	Effects outside of work	36
6.	LANGUAGE	40
7.	FUTURE PROSPECTS.....	45

7.1 Career	45
7.2 What should employers do to improve integration?	46
8. CONCLUSION	49
REFERENCES	54
APPENDIX A	60

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Seeking employment opportunities abroad is very common in today's society. As a member of the European Union and Schengen, Finland allows freedom of movement, education, and employment with almost all other member states. Without a doubt, opportunities for people of different nationalities, even for those coming out of Schengen, exist. But despite all that, how just are they truly? This paper will focus on Finland's tourism and hospitality sector, a major source of employment opportunities. Finland is experiencing a labour shortage, which extends to the tourism and hospitality sector. As such a lot of emphasis is put into attracting foreign/immigrant workers to fill in gaps. The need for immigrant workers is not created solely because of gaps in the labour force, however. International tourism to Finland has been a major source of support for the need of immigrant workers. (Harju-Myllyaho, Satokangas, Vieru, Vähäkuopus, Lindström, & Paavola, 2022). Hall and Rath (2007) observe that immigrants who work in the tourism sector generally work in "low skill" positions or are entrepreneurs and create their own business. Immigrants working low-skill jobs fill gaps in the labour force, but have a smaller prospects for upward social mobility. As such, finding a good work opportunity is only one side of the coin for the immigrants seeking them, as the job itself might prove challenging for integration. The tourism and hospitality industry in Finland is generally considered low-wage; it does not require too many skills or high education, making it easily accessible. It creates plenty of job opportunities for immigrants, but its low-wage nature presents some challenges in terms of financials or being valued less by employers. (Harju-Myllyaho et al., 2022). Integration into Finnish society might thus prove troublesome. Immigrants are expected to adapt to their new "host society" in various ways, though it is not only them that must adapt. Society must also be ready to welcome them, and employers should be ready to meet their needs. So given the labour shortage and the increasing need for foreign workers, the importance of integration becomes even more clear. It is thus important to study how immigrant integration is currently taken into account, especially in the tourism and hospitality sector, where work tends to be mostly seasonal.

Upon arrival in the country immigrants may often see employment as priority. As will be shown, work and integration go hand-in-hand, as the working environment provides an

excellent opportunity to experience the reality of living in that country first hand. It provides an opportunity for dialogue between all the cultures and is thus a major contributor to integration. The effects of the work environment can be seen in many aspects of life, with a stressful and harsh one potentially hindering a smooth integration. So I find it important to find out to what extent immigrant integration is taken into account in Finland's tourism and hospitality sectors. This study will focus mostly on the working environment, although employment process and career advancement will also be considered. In addition, I will use the two-way process theory to analyse how each party goes about improving integration.

Integration and assimilation are terms that may sometimes be used interchangeably, but in the context of immigration they differ. Migration Policy Institute (MPI) defines integration as "Immigrant integration is the process by which immigrants and their children come to feel and become participants in the life of their country of destination, and in its schools, workplaces, and communities". Assimilation on the other hand is defined as "Assimilation, sometimes known as integration or incorporation, is the process by which the characteristics of members of immigrant groups and host societies come to resemble one another" (Brown & Bean, 2006). In other words, integration mostly refers to immigrants adjusting their life in ways that would make living in the new country easier for them, without compromising their own culture and identity, to whichever extent possible. Assimilation implies a certain change in identity, to allow the immigrant to become more like the people of the host society. For the purposes of this paper, I will use the word integration, as it better fits the overall goal of smooth coexistence despite differences.

In addition, the word "immigrant" is one that "is often used as a term, but is rarely defined as a concept" (Entzinger & Biezeveld, 2003). In public debate and even among specialists it is used interchangeably with the term "migrant", even though dictionaries define them both differently. Their uses may also differ depending on whether they are used by the public, the media, the government, or others. (Anderson & Blinder, 2019). This inconsistency may then give an unclear picture of who can be considered an immigrant, and who not. For the sake of simplicity and consistency, this paper will use the term immigrant to refer to all types of people who move to Finland indefinitely, be they migrants, refugees, or asylum seekers.

1.2 Immigrants in Finland

To properly understand the extent of immigration in Finland, it is important to see the numbers. Statistics Finland (Tilastokeskus) has been studying Finnish immigration and emigration since the 1990s and their findings provide a great basis for understanding the current situation. Finland experienced a large surge of immigrants in the early 1990s, peaking in 1991. Free movement within the EU contributed to an increase in immigration to Finland in the 2000s, which kept increasing in the 2010s. Statistics Finland estimated that 50.000 people moved to Finland in 2022, which was an increase of over 13.000 from 2021.

In terms of numbers, Statistics Finland does not provide a count for “immigrants” in the simplified sense which is used in this paper. They are divided into foreign citizens, persons born abroad, foreign-language speakers, and persons with foreign background. The latter can be considered the closest to this paper’s usage of the term immigrant, as it encompasses all people both of whose parents were born abroad. Based on this metric the number of immigrants in Finland was 508.000 in 2022, 422.000 of which were first-generation immigrants. The majority of immigrants settle in the south of Finland, especially in Uusimaa, near Helsinki. Most common nationalities include people from the former USSR, Estonians, Iraqis, Somalis, and Chinese. However, those of working age (15-64) were most commonly from Thailand, the Philippines, United Kingdom, China, and Nepal.

Statistics Finland’s findings do an excellent job showcasing all the different kinds of people and their cultures that can be found interacting with Finnish society and within the work environment. Considering immigrants are 508.000 so about 9% of Finland’s total population, of which 76% are of working age, it becomes clear how many people would directly benefit from proper integration. Granted, Statistics Finland’s report takes into account all individuals of foreign background that fill their simple birth-related criteria, meaning how well they have managed to integrate and in what ways is irrelevant overall to the report.

For the purposes of this paper it would be ideal to find out how many immigrants work in the tourism and hospitality sector in Finland, and compare the numbers. However, as Veijola (2013) points out, tourism work is a very broad category of work that extends to many different fields, and is thus difficult to accurately define and measure. As the validity of any numbers presented may be questioned, I considered it preferable to not present any numbers relating to tourism work and its employment of immigrants. Lith (2007), when researching

immigrant-created firms in Finland based on Statistics Finland's statistics points out possible inaccuracies as to the true number of such firms may exist. This is mainly due to how Statistics Finland classifies immigrant-created firms, for instance firms whose creator has a foreign background but has acquired Finnish citizenship do not count towards it. Nevertheless, despite such exclusions the reported numbers for immigrant-created firms in the hospitality sector is the third highest, with over 1.100. Even if the presented number may not show the whole picture, it does provide an idea of the significance of immigrant work in Finland.

1.3 Structure

This paper is divided into eight chapters. In chapter two the focus is on studying previous research by other authors to shed light on important issues regarding immigrant integration and employment. The literature covered in chapter who is examined from the point of view of tourism work, immigrant integration, work environment and employment, and entrepreneurship. In chapter three I will explain the theoretical background of this research, as well as relevant theories. Chapter four is research data and analysis, which details via what methods this paper's results will come to be, and presenting my research questions. Ethical considerations are also discussed in this chapter. The actual results of the research begin in chapter five, covering answers interviewees presented and analysing them via the help of relevant literature. Chapter six is essentially that, but focusing more on issues and possibilities stemming learning or not learning the local language. Chapter seven is focuses on the future prospects of the interviewees, when it comes to their career, as well as what employers could do to help with integration. Chapter eight is discussion and conclusion.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Tourism work

Tourism related work and jobs have increased and multiplied due to the industry's growth and global changes to working life (Veijola, 2013). Such growth and changes have certainly been noticed, and have become the subject of much research. However, defining what tourism work exactly entails, and thus who could be considered a tourism worker is a tricky question to answer. As Veijola (2013) states, the diversity of the industry and the wide range of social ties makes it difficult to define an employee of the tourism industry. Tourism can happen anywhere, and all products and services can be used by both tourists and locals. So while jobs such as hotel manager and tour guide are certainly within the sphere of tourism work, others such as bus driver, bar owner, or sometimes even police officer could be considered part of it too. (Veijola, 2013).

Despite tourism work being hard to define due to extending to many aspects of society, certain characteristics have been observed. Valkonen and Veijola (2008) find that tourism work is often seasonal, part-time, freelance-based, and not highly valued. However, this is despite requiring many skills, high responsibility, and simultaneously both flexibility and commitment. Certain jobs like safari tour guides require a wide array of skills and responsibilities from the worker, to ensure everything goes as smoothly as possible. Responsibilities include helping customers dress as well as possible for the cold, teaching them the basics of a safari tour, handling emergency situations, effective distribution of equipment and more that may not be apparent during the tour itself. The customer places their trust on the tour guide. (Veijola, 2013). Despite such pressure, the worker is expected to put aside anything that may get in the way of their work, such as a difficult emotional state, essentially requiring complete separation of job and personal life (Valkonen & Veijola, 2008). Veijola (2013) describes it as a performance, one that puts all of the worker's skills on display for the customers to judge. Overall, tourism work differs from other a lot of other fields of work because of its unique relationship between worker and customer. How the

tourism worker fares in their job has direct influence on the company and tourism in the area as a whole. (Valkonen & Veijola, 2008).

The variety of skills tourism workers are required to have is partly attributed to the unpredictable nature of a lot of tourism jobs, such as service jobs. Sometimes workers may work inside, other times outside, and weather and other circumstances can influence the work situation a lot. (Valkonen & Veijola, 2008). This unpredictability factor applies to the tourism sector on a larger scale as well, as the industry is generally volatile and sensitive to any sort of change, such as local or global events. Not every aspect of the industry is affected equally though, some might be able to cope and adapt better than others. (Verhelä & Lackman, 2003).

2.2 Immigrant integration

The study of immigrant integration into society is by no means new or exclusive to the tourism industry or Finland. Zigo et al (2017) have found the process of integration to society to be a complex one. Legal integration is an integration process that would allow all the opportunities in the first place, while major integration factors include acceptance by colleagues and locals. Anything preventing them from feeling welcome is a major strike to their successful integration, which has been found to greatly affect morale and motivation (Zigo et al, 2017). As Brovc et al (2009) discovered by researching foreign workers in Slovenia, immigrants in poor health suffered from severe stress, often caused by societal factors. A general feeling of unwelcomeness or difficulties in adopting the local language may result in immigrants landing jobs that do not reflect their true level of education or expertise (Privara & Kiner, 2020).

Immigrant integration in Finland has also been researched from various angles. Kunwar (2020) assesses the effectiveness of immigrant integration into Finnish society by using six measures of integration: psychological, linguistic, economic, political, social, and navigational. Each aspect of integration represented by these measures presents a different challenge for immigrants, and factors such as education, age, length of stay in Finland can affect integration in regards to these aspects.

Additional challenges are also often faced in regards to finding employment, as Nordic labor markets' high minimum wages and high employer costs create less room for unskilled industrial- or service sector jobs. As a result, immigrants with less education or poor language skills will have more trouble finding a suitable job. (Forsander, 2004). Sjöblom-Immala (2012) finds that Finnish employers have strict language and foreign degree requirements, which makes it more difficult for skilled immigrants to put their skills and knowledge to good use. At the same time, immigrants with less education are also needed for more practical jobs, and they can move from one sector of work to another more flexibly.

2.3 Work environment and employment

Satisfaction in the work environment has been the subject of research for decades, with Herzberg et al (1959) still providing a relevant description of factors contributing to employee satisfaction. He describes factors such as healthy work environment, adequate pay, and good relationships with coworkers as being critically important for satisfaction in the workplace; trust, freedom, and career advancement opportunities are also considered important. These all apply to immigrants as well, although additional requirements also exist.

Ertorer *et al.* (2020) argue that immigrants tend to feel integrated to the workplace when their skills and expertise are valued. The phenomenon of deskilling is prevalent however, where immigrants with higher education may often get jobs not befitting their qualifications (Avramov, 2009; Privara & Kiner, 2020). This is further exemplified in cases where immigrant workers are deemed fit for a specific job due to stereotypes and not qualifications (Ertorer et al., 2020). Careful integration of immigrants is shown to have long-term benefits in regards to integration of future immigrant workers, who tend to feel more welcome in a diverse work environment with other foreign workers (Bygren, 2004; Ertorer et al., 2020).

Employers' experiences with hiring immigrant workers have also received some attention in literature, with much focus being put on highlighting their positive experiences, as well as challenges that come with hiring immigrants. The employers' attitudes towards hiring immigrant workers vary in many ways, with some having had positive experiences with their immigrant employees, while others had negative or neutral experiences (Lyytinen & Toom, 2019). Positive experiences tended to relate to employees' "diligence, motivation, strong work ethic, commitment and cultural knowledge, especially in those fields where the clients

also have an immigrant background”. The liveliness they brought to the work environment was also brought up as a positive. Negative experiences often were related to the lack of those aforementioned qualities, as well as language skills. (Lyytinen & Toom, 2019).

Of particular importance for immigrants is employment, which Heikkilä (2017) describes as the foundation for successful integration. Although much research focuses on the point of view of immigrants and their needs, there have also been studies focusing on the employer and their stance towards hiring immigrant workers. Some employers may like hiring immigrant employees because they see them as cheap, flexible and docile, as their limited options in the labour market makes them more vulnerable (Friberg & Midtbøen, 2018). Others like hiring immigrant employees due to labour shortages, where they play a crucial role in filling the positions affected (Hurstfield *et al.*, 2004). However, as Lyytinen and Toom (2019) found, some employers may simply see hiring immigrant/refugee workers as a positive contribution to society, which they see inherent value in. Just like with hiring, reasons for not hiring immigrant workers are numerous. The most common reason is a lack of Finnish language skills, as in some sectors, especially customer service, communication is of utmost importance. Many employers also did not consider the immigrant learning the language while working to be a feasible option, but rather it was expected for them to have learned already. (Lyytinen & Toom, 2019). Among refugees, we also notice the problem of many employers being afraid or uncertain about hiring them. This uncertainty stems from not being sure of the legal status of the refugee or their permits, as well as potentially having to deal with extra bureaucracy or lack of skills (OECD & UNHCR, 2016).

2.4 Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship of immigrants and refugees has also been a matter of discussion. Alrawadieh, Karayilan, & Cetin (2018) found that entrepreneurship encourages immigrants to learn local customs and laws, boosting integration. They may also face unique challenges, from financial and socio-cultural to legislative. This also holds true for entrepreneurs who have not managed to find a local customer base, and mostly rely on other immigrants or tourists for business (Kwak & Hiebert, 2007).

Fornaro, Maliranta & Rouvinen (2019) conducted research on entrepreneurs of foreign backgrounds in Finland. A common theme of the research was comparing entrepreneurs of

foreign backgrounds to those of Finnish background. No significant difference in degree of entrepreneurship between the two groups was found, although there was a smaller degree of difference between men and women entrepreneurs among those with a foreign background. Entrepreneurs with a foreign background also act as employers less often than those with a Finnish background. Yet, while this is the case in Finland, it is not true everywhere, as Bayari and Iwu (2018) find in their study about immigrants in the hospitality sector of South Africa. They found immigrant entrepreneurs to be important for South Africa's economy, as they create small and medium-sized companies which generate new jobs. Such companies also represent a key source of innovation, increase in domestic production and a decrease in poverty and unemployment (Fairlie & Lofstrom, 2015). Perhaps the immigrant was driven to entrepreneurship due to poor labor market position, and so their current work does not necessarily contribute to the creation of more jobs. Immigrants establishing their own companies due to their poor labour market position is a phenomenon that has been reported, such as by Lyytinen and Toom (2019). Among their interviewees was an entrepreneur of immigrant background who had personal experiences with discrimination after applying for jobs for a long time. He eventually felt his only chance of finding employment was to start his own business.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Theoretical framework

Immigrant integration into Finnish society will be studied as a two-way process. Integration as a two-way process does not have any established definition, but based on prior research and literature on the subject it could be summed up as follows: Integration as a two-way process aims to ensure both the immigrant and the “host society” do their part to contribute to smooth integration. It stems from the belief that both parties need to work together and do whatever they can to make the integration process easier. The process is however multi-dimensional, with actions required from the federal level to the local level, although most changes tend to happen locally (Strang & Ager, 2010). In other words, in the context of immigrant integration, two-way process emphasises that everyone should do their part in helping them feel welcome. Everyone’s needs are not always the same however, especially on a personal level. Two-way process needs to stretch across all levels of society to satisfy everyone’s complex needs.

This two-way process is also applicable to the work environment, throughout the interview, recruitment, and working processes. Employers are encouraged to lay the groundwork for simpler integration, as they have the power to make important decisions regarding the subject. For instance, they may opt for a simpler employment process, or more thorough training, or just increasing flexibility to meet immigrants’ demands. As such, it is important to understand that the two-way process is always important, but it is not always equal. Depending on the situation, one party may need to work harder than the other, or as is often the case with employers, one party may hold all the power. This power dynamic of the two-way integration is a complex issue that immigrants may often get the short end of the stick of. Given all this, integration into the work environment will be thoroughly analysed using the two-way process.

3.2 Research questions

The aim of this research is to shed a light on the integration processes, and the condition of those processes, of immigrants into Finnish society through working in the tourism and hospitality industries using the two-way process theory. The main research question is as follows: How has working in the tourism and hospitality sectors in Finland helped immigrants with integration into society? Sub-questions include: What challenges did the immigrants face while working? How were those challenges addressed? In what ways do employers affect an immigrant's experiences in the work environment?

3.3 Research methods and analysis

Since tourism is a big industry in Finland, and especially in Lapland, and because there are many immigrants of working age living in the country, I found it wise to conduct interviews with relevant individuals. As such, interviews (Appendix A) with immigrants currently working (or who used to work) in the tourism and hospitality sector in Finland were conducted. The aim was to gain a better understanding of the situation locally by listening to first-hand accounts of immigrants' personal experiences. Three interviews were conducted, all in Rovaniemi, Finland. Rovaniemi was deemed ideal for these interviews due to being the most convenient option for the interviewees, and also due to it being relevant for this research thanks to its strong tourism industry. The questions presented included asking about their work environment, what challenges they faced, what their relationship with their coworkers and superiors was like, how it all compares to previous work they've had, how it all helped them with other aspects of life, and their future prospects.

The research was primarily conducted by analysing interview material based on relevant literature from the field of tourism covering immigrant integration (content analysis).

Literature covering workplace integration received additional focus. While no literature was specifically about the tourism or hospitality sectors, they still provided valuable support in the analysis of the interviews.

The analysis was able to provide a small glimpse of the reality of working as an immigrant in the tourism and hospitality industries not only in Rovaniemi, but in Finland as a whole.

Finally, the results from the interviews were analysed in conjunction with the literature in

order to find relevant comparisons, common themes, and help find their relevance in a broader context. Hopefully it will prove useful for possible future research on the subject.

3.4 Definitions and theories

3.4.1 What is immigrant integration?

Immigrant integration has been a hot topic of discussion in the EU for years now. Therefore, the term “integration” does see much usage in formal contexts within the EU. In simple terms, it “can be described as the processes that take place after an immigrant has moved to a new country” (Givens, 2007). More commonly however, immigrant integration is generally understood to mean the ability of settling persons to be able to retain their own (cultural) identity whilst simultaneously participating in the social, cultural, economic, and political life of the society. (Valtonen, 2008). Integration also includes easier access to transportation, housing, banking services and others (Creticos, Schultz, Beeler & Ball, 2006).

Similarly, immigrant integration as a two-way process is a concept prevalent in many discussions on the topic. Yet despite its popularity, it does not have an exact agreed upon definition. The European Council on Refugees & Exiles (ECRE) considers integration to be a dynamic two-way process, stating that:

“It places demands on both receiving societies and the individuals and/or the communities concerned. From a refugee perspective, integration requires a preparedness to adapt to the lifestyle of the host society without having to lose one’s own cultural identity. From the point of view of the host society, it requires a willingness to adapt public institutions to changes in the population profile, accept refugees as part of the national community, and take action to facilitate access to resources and decision making processes” (ECRE, 1999).

In particular, ECRE highlights that integration should not be done entirely by the immigrants, but the host society should also integrate by facilitating change in all its members and providing opportunities. This sort of dynamic where society essentially integrates into itself shows that integration by all parties is a basic characteristic of any society, and is usually described as social cohesion. The more integrated a society, the better all its different groups

and individuals can relate to one another. (Entzinger & Biezeveld, 2003), Ideally, nobody involved has to compromise on freedoms and cultural expression. For example, Bouchara (2021) views the integration of muslims into western societies as a responsibility of everyone involved. Muslims must make an effort to separate the cultural and religious aspects of islam so they can be able to practice it, while also embracing their new home country's differences, be theyr social, political, economic, etc. The host society on the other hand must make an effort to be tolerant and welcoming to avoid muslim isolation from society.

The two-way process as an approach to integration highlights the responsibility all parties bear to getting rid of the concept and feeling of "otherness". Otherness is a feeling that can stem from many different sources, such as having to acquire the right to work or study, getting citizenship, struggling with the local language and other cultural differences. Otherness can also stem from not properly understanding regional differences and nuances. Indeed, most of the necessary changes happen at the local level: the host country may contain many regional differences and policies, which may differ greatly from the federal ones. National or international integration programs must thus contain many different levels of support to account for such local niches (Strang & Ager, 2010). Authorities in Barcelona, Spain explain how the Spanish government and organizations may sometimes fail to take into account the regional differences of Catalonia in regards to immigrant integration (Hellgren, 2015). Understanding of the local identity is what will help with building relationships with locals and lead to better social cohesion and mutual benefits (Strang & Ager, 2010). This is in line with ECRE's statement from 1998 where they stated that '(Integration is) ... a two-way process (whereby) immigrants change society at the same time as they integrate into it'.

Immigrant integration as a two-way process is thus a multi-dimensional and deceptively complicated concept where state-wide laws and general cultural characteristics are just as important as regional/local cultural characteristics. A two-way process in employment, for instance, would ensure immigrants' needs are met in all stages of employment: interview, recruitment, work. A two-way integration is therefore also important on a small scale.

Immigrants are expected to integrate into their new environment, but the members of the host society also need to integrate in whatever ways are relevant to them.

But it is also important to acknowledge that immigrants are not always representatives of their culture trying to fit in a foreign one, but rather, individuals with their own ambitions, expectations, and values. This becomes apparent in the work environment, where both the

immigrant and company at large need to work together, using the immigrant's knowledge and skills as an individual. (Lyytinen & Toom, 2019). This individuality calls for means to tackle immigrants' workplace challenges on an individual level. Supervisors specifically trained to help immigrants with their workplace needs one such solution. A culturally intelligent and trustworthy supervisor who is ready to help and address concerns as well as offer feedback, goes a long way. Supervisors can help immigrant workers on an individual level; feeling valued by superiors might lead an increase in morale. Relationships within the workplace create a sense of appreciation and belonging, leading to less of a need to isolate.

It is clear, therefore, that a two-way process is ideal for making the relationship between immigrants and other parties work. If all parties put in the work needed, the result is beneficial for society as a whole. However, proper integration cannot happen without the right opportunities to do so. An immigrant worker might try their best to integrate into their new work environment, but if their education and experience are disregarded in favor of a stereotypical "foreigner" position, there is only so much they can do. Similar scenarios can occur in any aspect of society. A proper two-way integration makes sure society offers immigrants fair opportunities to showcase their value, contribute, and ultimately, integrate.

However, integration cannot be treated as a dichotomy where one is either integrated or not integrated, as it's a dynamic concept that depends not only on multiple social and economic factors that may lead to vastly different experiences and outcomes (Latcheva & Herzog-Punzenberger, 2011). Given its unpredictability as a social phenomenon, integration is therefore something that is next to impossible to measure; it is something that depends entirely on each individual's experience. This point of view of individual experiences is however taken into account. As Lyytinen and Toom (2019) found when interviewing employers, many emphasised the fact that immigrants are all individuals just like everyone else, which each individual having their own strengths and weaknesses. Therefore, one can never be sure how easy or difficult it would really be for an immigrant to integrate.

3.4.2 Kallen's structural integration model

Kallen's (1995, as cited in Valtonen, 2008) model of integration mostly covers structural integration. Structural integration refers to "the access people have to common resources and main institutions of society, such as education, labor market" (Gentin et al., 2019). Kallen (1995, as cited in Valtonen, 2008) considers primary structural integration to entail participation of different ethnic groups (or collectivities) in the private sector of others. Secondary structural integration refers to participation in other aspects of society, such as legal, educational, political or economic. Finally, identificational integration is an aspect of integration that combines structural and cultural integration, according to which a different ethnic group forms ties strong enough to one's own to become the primary reference group.

In terms of long-term integration, Kallen's (1995, as cited in Valtonen, 2008) model showcases the wide range of factors and activities that can overall contribute to immigrants' integration. Secondary structural integration essentially includes aspects of society all people are encouraged to participate in, making it, in terms of long-term integration, very important. However, while related, integration into one does not necessarily mean integration into the others. Thus immigrant may choose to prioritise different aspects of all three dimensions. Ideally involvement in such aspects of society will help with social mobility by increasing opportunities, although these are all general concepts that may vary greatly in application.

Kallen's model of two-way integration process is largely based on the idea of balance between immigrant groups and "dominant" groups. In theory, an imbalance in society (generally in terms of being able to express one's culture) would heavily favor dominant groups, eventually resulting in the "weaker" immigrant groups becoming indistinguishable from the dominant groups. In reality, such a scenario could be considered rather extreme, as immigrants more often than not have an option to choose what to compromise and what not to, depending on what the host society allows. Although in general host societies don't demand immigrants to give up too many aspects of their culture. (Valtonen, 2008). Imbalance and inequality may exist, but not often to such degree.

Overall, Kallen's structural integration model seems suitable for categorising different aspects of society into primary, secondary, and identificational and analysing their effects on integration, as well as immigrants' priorities when it comes to those. Although Kallen's model will not play a major role in the current research due to not really being applicable to

the interviewees, it makes abundantly clear that integration into society is not a black and white process. There can be multiple layers to it, each influenced by the level of the immigrant's involvement with different parts of society, as well as the society's different parties' attitude towards them. As such, structural integration helps with understanding the depth of the integration process, which is influenced by a huge variety of factors but in the end is a largely personal process.

3.4.3 Belonging

Belonging, as expressed by Filstaad, Traavik & Gorli (2019) is an essential human need. While there is no agreed upon definition, there are multiple ways to interpret its meaning. On a basic level it relates to being accepted or at least not rejected by those around one. In reality it is a concept deeply intertwined with that of identity, meaning some experience belonging differently from others. A sense of identification and belonging may be built upon the feeling of acceptance and value to their surroundings. (Filstaad, Traavik & Gorli, 2019). Belonging is directly related to integration as it could be said to be integration's endgoal. As with integration, a feeling of belonging can relate to belonging in society, in the workplace, or in any community.

Filstud, Traavik & Gorli (2019) even say:

“belonging to the workplace and belonging at work is linked to the possibility of sharing practices in community, creating meanings, participating in common goals, learning through participation, grasping new shapes of identity through relationships with others and changing personal investments, representations and growth”

We can conclude that belonging has deep meaning to individuals, but how that meaning was constructed is up to the individual. The creation of meaning to enhance one's sense of belonging could include any number of things, from social relationships and common interests to even something tangible. Meaning and identity are aspects that may help enhance a person's sense of belonging. They are crucial aspects of belonging although not the only ones, and should so not be studied separately; everything contributes toward the feeling of belonging. (Filstud, Traavik & Gorli, 2019).

Belonging is however, also a two-way process, as it is based on acceptance from society or other communities and groups. Simonsen (2017) finds that when it comes to gaining citizenship of a country, the feeling of belonging immigrants experience is proportional to that of the locals. In other words, when a country's people consider citizenship to be a big deal as an indication of national membership, it increases immigrants' sense of belonging.

The concept of belonging is a critical part of immigrant integration, even if it is not taken into account in research. In many ways, everything integration builds up to is a sense of belonging in the host society. For this research, it concerns a sense of belonging to the workplace through positive experiences involving coworkers/superiors, fair treatment, opportunities, which then paves the way to belonging in society overall.

4. RESEARCH DATA AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Methodology

This paper's results are based on interviews conducted with immigrants residing in Finland at the time of this study. Their personal experiences are supported by relevant literature from the field. In other words, this is a qualitative research based on phenomenology, and hermeneutics, aiming to provide a more direct understanding of immigrants' experiences with working in the tourism and hospitality sectors.

This method of research was selected primarily due to feeling like the most appropriate way to study the subject. Phenomenology is concerned with the study of lived experience, and experience is a core aspect of tourism (Pernecky & Jamal, 2010). Interviews provide insight into relevant viewpoints which are crucial for understanding the subject. Studying the answers properly requires deep knowledge of the subject, and as such relevant literature was employed. In addition, hermeneutical phenomenology will be used to highlight the interviewees' experiences as effectively as possible. Pernecky and Jamal (2010) state that in tourism studies, hermeneutical phenomenology has served as a theoretical avenue towards describing or understanding the experiential, and lived existence of tourists/guests, locals/hosts, service providers and any other stakeholders that take part in the tourism phenomenon. They also state that unlike other types of phenomenology, hermeneutical phenomenology focuses on "experience from the perspective of meanings, understandings and interpretations". This falls exactly in line with the objectives of this paper, thus the reason for its use.

4.2 Interviews

Interviews offer one the opportunity to hear others' first-hand experiences and opinions on a certain subject. This could prove very valuable to research on immigrant integration through tourism and hospitality work in Finland, as the interviewees could offer valuable insight that is otherwise difficult to gather. For this purpose, semi-structured one-on-one interviews have been conducted in Rovaniemi, Finland. They were conducted either in person or online prioritising the availability and comfort of the interviewee. All questions were shared

amongst interviewees, so all answers were accounted for and play a role in the research. Despite this, flexibility was also a priority, with the interview process sometimes resembling a conversation, where interviewees were able to express their views and offer additional information freely. The primary language used was English, with Finnish also having been an option.

The interviews took place from April to June 2023 with three interviewees. The interviewees were chosen based on whether they have worked in the tourism/ hospitality sector in Finland, and whether they were of foreign background. The interviewees have all come from a different country and worked in tourism or hospitality sectors in Finland at some point in their lives. They were recommended as potential interview candidates after contacting various relevant parties for assistance with the interview process. Subsequently, they were contacted by email and asked if they'd like to contribute to the research by being interviewed and providing their experiences.

Interview questions (Appendix A) were structured and based on my own knowledge and research on the matter. Questions focused on understanding what the interviewees' relationship with their coworkers and superiors was like, how that affected them at work or in general, what they found useful for integration as well as what they consider to be good integration methods. Additionally, they were asked about challenges they faced, how those were addressed, and possible career advancement opportunities. Though limited in scope, such questions together with the interviewees answers should help shed light into some issues and opportunities that exist within the tourism and hospitality sectors for immigrants in Finland.

4.3 Content analysis

A content analysis of previous literature on the topic of immigrant integration in the tourism and hospitality sectors allows the interview answers to be put in a broader context. Through careful and objective analysis, the broader context of the topic unfolds, allowing for an identification of common themes, ideas, and concepts. It assists in understanding previous researchers' findings and comparing them to one's own. It more broadly contextualises the current research making it easier to understand its value.

In addition, the purpose of the content analysis was to use it in conjunction with the interview material to reach a conclusion. The interview provides first hand experiences of those interviewed, but is limited by many contextual factors. A more accurate representation of the current situation can be reached by combining the answers from the interviews with findings from relevant literature. When it comes to challenges facing immigrants in Finland today, literature helps identify the broader cause of those challenges, whereas the interviews describe how those same challenges affect people individually.

The works used for this thesis draw attention to many different aspects of immigrant integration. Crucial aspects of integration that came up prominently in the interviews were well documented and provided valuable commentary and context to the interviewees' statements. Literature concerning immigrant integration into Finland was somewhat limited, so works that covered the same topic but for other countries was also used, whenever appropriate. Priority was placed in analysing and dissecting interviewees' statements, to find common themes and deeper meanings. Despite some similarities in their experiences, their viewpoints were largely different, which called for a more thorough review. After the analysis, emphasis was put on finding literature that best described and contextualised everything.

4.4 Ethics

Within the interview process, there are several ethical considerations taken into account. Firstly, as the interviewees will be of foreign descent, I shall prepare myself adequately to avoid any possible insensitivities. Second, although this paper is written in English, questions will have both English and Finnish versions, allowing interviewees to choose whichever option they prefer. Interviewees had several options on how to be asked the questions (face-to-face, online call, e-mail) to make it more convenient for them. They participated with the full knowledge that their answers will be used for the purposes of this research, after giving consent. Despite that, the nationalities of these interviewees will not be revealed as consent was not asked for that.

During the interview process, I made sure to pay close attention to the interviewees' words. As Mortari (2008) states, in phenomenological ethics it is important to perceive the other party as the only important one in existence, and for proper attention to be paid to what they

say without thinking about other things. The interview process was just that, a discussion that focused on letting the interviewees express themselves not as research subjects, but human beings whose experiences provide valuable knowledge.

Lastly, my research aims to analyse the interview answers, find common themes and contextualise them with the help of pre-existing literature. However, Burnard (1991) warns against mindlessly linking common themes that appear in interviews, as each person's different experiences, values, and worldviews might not necessarily make the theme common. The researcher should realise the complications of simplifying interviewees' experiences. Indeed, even between the interviewees who all worked in the tourism sector in Rovaniemi, Finland, there is a lot of hidden nuance in their experiences that may be impossible to accurately pinpoint, but must be taken into account regardless. This is why this paper does not attempt to explain all the reasons for the interviewees' experiences, but only those they themselves expressed.

5. INTEGRATION

5.1 Into the work environment

5.1.1 Benefits of a good work environment

Integration into the work environment can be considered a pivotal first step to integrating into society proper. Naturally, after being granted entry into the country for residence, one of the first things to be done is secure income. As with most people, the priority in finding a job is to get a stable income, although for the immigrants who just relocated and may have little in terms of possessions or experience living in the country, a stable job becomes even more important. After all, a basic income, housing, and good health are areas that could be considered pre-conditions for immigrants' participation in society (Huddleston, Niessen & Tjaden, 2013). Employment covers the first, but the latter two proper integration into the work environment can contribute towards. The work environment often also immigrants a chance to showcase their abilities and connect with other people.

Meeting new people can be considered one of the main strengths of employment, particularly for immigrants. Establishing connections with people can prove fruitful in many ways. Even simple interaction can provide a window to witness local culture and ways of thinking firsthand.

A proper work environment helps create a network of people that have something in common, that being their job, and potentially establish close relationships between people. In other words, it should establish a sense of belonging for all employees, immigrant or otherwise. How much effort is put into shaping the working environment and establishing relationships between workers plays an important role as well. Most importantly, it treats everyone fairly and equally. Recognition of an immigrant's abilities will not only go a long way in making them feel appreciated, it may also increase their future career prospects. Such a work environment is likely to lead to prosperity, where both employees and employers are left satisfied. Such a scenario may often clash with reality, for reasons such as immigrants receiving low-paying jobs with few benefits or connections to be made (restrictive work environment), employer vs employee interests clashing, or any number of social reasons.

Many things are not under employees' (and thus immigrants') control, which may lead to frustrating situations.

It is clear however, that employment is vital. Valtonen (2008) explains that employment not only has important socio-economic implications for individuals and their families, it is also a key indicator of roles, status, and vitality of ties in society. Additionally, employment relations create ties to public life and increase social cohesion. Without employment, immigrants run the risk of becoming socially vulnerable or powerless, since an individual's position in the labour market carries significant weight. Prolonged unemployment runs the risk of social exclusion. (Valtonen, 2008). Although the consequences of unemployment will not be covered in this research, they are of course quite significant.

5.1.2 Workplace challenges

Immigrant workers' workplace challenges typically do not begin from the first day at the job, but rather way earlier, the employment phase. Putting aside obvious issues like discrimination, employers may find it difficult to properly satisfy some immigrant workers' needs, such as language training, teambuilding, flexibility, or clear communication, while the immigrants simultaneously do not satisfy the employer's criteria. Or that is how it would seem at least. It is not uncommon for well educated immigrants to land jobs not suitable for their level of knowledge and skills. Recognising and validating foreign credentials is challenging, and many employers choose to not look into them further. (Creticos, Schultz, Beeler & Ball, 2006). Although this could certainly be called one of the bigger problems with immigrant employment nowadays, it is only one aspect. The interviewees provided their perspective for challenges faced in the work environment itself.

All 3 interviewees were asked to point out specific challenges they faced in the work environment, as well as how those challenges were addressed. The 3 interviewees displayed significantly different experiences; one of them didn't experience any challenges at all, another a few, and another a lot. As will become clear, this drastic difference between them is mostly due to the employer.

Interviewee 1, who worked at a restaurant, reported minimal challenges with integrating into the work environment. This was attributed to the fact that her employer was also of immigrant origin and were therefore more open to hiring non-finnish speakers to work for

them. She added that the employer's immigrant background made them understand the challenges they (the employees) could potentially face from personal firsthand experience, thus making sure the transition into the work environment is as smooth as possible. This was achieved through hiring other immigrant workers as well as teaching everyone to be supportive to each other through teambuilding, and being open to helping the employees in anyway they needed, even in matters not concerning work. As a result, many of the typical challenges were avoided altogether.

Interviewee 1's perspective brings into light a very interesting phenomenon about immigrant entrepreneurship. Immigrant entrepreneurs sometimes favor hiring other immigrant workers, creating many new employment opportunities and establishing networks (Light, Bhachu & Karageorgis, 1989). This preference could exist for any number of reasons, and due to the complexity of the labour market it is hard to draw definitive conclusions. Through the interview it does not seem like the employer in this case was too one-sided on the matter, with both Finnish and foreign workers having been employed. Nevertheless, interviewee 1's example highlights how immigrants who have successfully integrated and thrived could prove valuable for the employment prospects of other immigrants.

Contrasting that, interviewee 2 faced multiple challenges. Her job had her together with her colleagues interacting with a large number of tourists every day. She mentions working with multiple coworkers from many different countries, some of which were from Finland. Despite this multinational environment, training and instructions were minimal, with no additional help provided to foreign workers.

*"It wasn't **training*** training I would say, we just did a tour around the workplace and we almost did nothing. That caused a lot of problems on the first day because we didn't know anything about what to do and how to use the register and so on"*

*author's emphasis

She goes on to explain that instructions on how to use some machinery were very brief and written on a piece of paper. This caused them to go around asking each other how to use the register, with nobody really knowing.

Language barrier was another challenging aspect about her job. As she didn't speak Finnish much, situations would arise where the customer only spoke Finnish, in which case a coworker who spoke it had to be called. She noted that speaking Finnish was not a

requirement for the job, as she herself had asked them if her limited Finnish was ok, and they considered it acceptable. In practice however it proved to be necessary in some situations. Additionally, her job did not allow employees to carry their mobile phones during worktime. There were times where customers, mostly from Russia, visited but spoke neither Finnish nor English, and due to not having access to their phone and therefore a viable way to translate, they were forced to use hand gestures to communicate.

She also notes how some Asian coworkers of hers were complaining about the workload. She speculates that it could be for cultural reasons (where they might take advice as criticism) or because they were being treated differently from the Finnish workers. She does not go into further detail about the latter statement, although it signifies a certain dichotomy between native and foreign workers existed.

Lastly, she noted how her place of work was not great in terms of pay:

“(Place of work) is like, how do we say, taking advantage (...) I would say, because how they treat the workers is not so good, and the salaries are not, like, we are not being paid well for what we are doing”

Her disappointment was shared among colleagues, many of whom quit halfway through because of feeling overworked and underpaid.

The job in question attracts many prospective employees, even from abroad. It is therefore interesting to consider the possibility that certain jobs, such as this, potentially use their fame and international appeal to attract new seasonal workers to work for them for a low wage. The interviewee stated that she wasn't aware that the pay she received was considered low by Finnish standards, as it is quite normal in her country. It's easy to imagine this sort of ignorance being rather common among foreign workers. At the same time, the seasonal nature of the job attracts people who only wish to work for a limited time, and migrants who get temporary jobs may sometimes be indifferent to low wages due to it being temporary (Campbell, Tranfaglia, Tham & Boese, 2019). From the interviewee's statement regarding the total lack of training it is reasonable to conclude the job also not requiring high skills. All these may be contributing factors to the low wages received at the job. Interestingly, Valkonen and Veijola (2008) found that a few decades ago, seasonal work in Finland used to be rather lucrative; it required many skills and paid very well. So well, in fact, that seasonal workers could take the rest of the year off with no issues.

While it is hard to say whether the job in question is popular among Finnish people, interviewee 2's description of it falls in line with Přivara and Kiner's (2020) findings about the nature of seasonal hospitality/tourism work. It demands lots of seasonal workers who get paid little due to the job not requiring high skills, while simultaneously working under difficult conditions. However, such jobs may offer the opportunity to learn new language or customer service skills, and as such can be useful stepping stones for career advancement. (Přivara & Kiner, 2020). It is then unfortunate that development of useful skills is hindered by employers who cause frustration by overworking and underpaying employees.

Interviewee 3 fits somewhere in the middle of the spectrum of the previous 2 interviewees. She worked as a tour guide for a safari company, and she did face a few challenges, although mostly because of the unfamiliar climate. In stark contrast with interviewee 2, she received extensive training to prepare her for the job.

The main challenge she expressed was the seasonal nature of tourism in Finland as opposed to her home country. There, tourists can arrive at any time of year so there is no particular "spike" in tourist numbers. Finland however sees most tourists arrive in the winter (mostly December), which creates lots of demand during a short period of time. In her case, it ended up adding more pressure to her workload.

This sudden increase in demand (and therefore work) was coupled with the harsh conditions of Finnish winter and led to some challenging situations:

"Well for me it was hard to work in winter because it was very dark and when you work with other people you give them so much energy and emotions, so when you actually come back from work and you have your own time you feel so empty (...). So for me it was really challenging to balance my personal life and work life, and sometimes when you come to work and you feel completely empty emotionally, you still need to smile to guests, you still need to be in a good mood because you need to provide good services for them"

This complete separation of body and mind, isolation of emotions, is what Valkonen and Veijola (2008) found to be a key requirement for service workers, particularly tour guides. As guiding work can be seen as a performance, the worker must put aside anything that could prove problematic for their performance and expectations of the customers. Interviewee 3 notes however that this mostly only applied for the "high season" of December and that later such as in March when there was more sunlight and less tourists, days were much more relaxed.

Interviewee 3's case highlights the importance and effectiveness of proper training (and teambuilding). She was not seen as just another seasonal worker, but a proper member of the team who was qualified to provide their customers the best experience. As a result of the efforts of the employers to ensure her proper integration, she was able to avoid most job related challenges. The challenges she described in her interview were all moreso related to the unfamiliarity with the conditions of Finnish winter and how it affected her mentally. It is difficult to say whether there was something the employer could have done about that, although they indirectly did. Their teambuilding efforts allowed interviewee 3 to trust her colleagues, who helped her during her troubles.

All 3 interviewees worked for the tourism/hospitality sector in Finland at some point, and all of them had vastly different experiences from one another. Some challenges, such as the ones faced by interviewee 2, are up to the employers to fix. As illustrated by interviewee 3's example, an employer can make sure their foreign workers don't face many issues while on the job, but it doesn't mean everything is up to them to fix. Nevertheless, employers' motivations for training or not training immigrant employees may vary greatly. Creticos, Schultz, Beeler & Ball (2006) state that improving training to account for immigrants' skills and needs can lead to them bringing better energy and new ideas to the workforce, as well as said training benefitting native workers as well in terms of specific needs being targeted. On the other hand, in regards to seasonal workers specifically, companies might consider the allocation of resources into proper training to be a risk, as the company will not benefit from training them for very long. In fact, the possibility of one of their seasonal employees working for a competitor next season is enough to discourage them from it. While the motivations behind the interviewees' employers to train or not to train their (immigrant) workers remain unknown, it is clear it was a deliberate decision, likely based on assessment of risk and allocation of resources. Of course, the stereotypical and widely discussed topic of many employers viewing immigrants as cheap labor is ever-present, especially regarding interviewee 2's comments about her job. This was already apparent from her and her coworkers being overworked and underpaid (although there is no reason to believe her Finnish coworkers were not treated the same way), but perhaps Creticos et al.'s viewpoints on risk assessment provide some insight as to the employer's motivations.

Challenges faced by immigrant employees go beyond the experiences of the interviewees. Indeed, work is only a part of life in the country overall, and any cultural differences, local attitudes, financial issues etc. can carry over to affecting an immigrant in the workplace. And

that is not all: It has been noted that immigrants may face financial problems similar to those of low-income workers, plus some additional ones due to lack of familiarity and trouble with obtaining documents or licenses (Creticos, Schultz, Beeler & Ball, 2006). There is no short term quick fix to the challenges of workplace integration. There are many dimensions to it; besides the aforementioned ones, one of high relevance is also the political aspect: can the different institutions be of help in addressing challenges? What limitations and priorities exist? what policies exist and what do they cover?. Creticos, Schultz, Beeler & Ball, 2006).

5.2 Relationships

5.2.1 Teambuilding

Good relations with other coworkers and superiors are considered essential for a worker's satisfaction with their job (Herzberg, 1959). Such satisfaction is potentially helpful for immigrant integration not only in the place of work, but society as a whole. Strang and Ager (2010) state that in order for "bridges" to be built between people groups, opportunities to meet and exchange ideas and resources in mutually beneficial ways are needed. The work environment could be considered a context where such an exchange happens.

Communication is an essential tool for achieving positive relationships in the work environment. Kiviholma and Karhunen (2022) consider communication [in the workplace] to be important for all employees, but especially those of foreign origin or background, because it helps with improving relations and avoiding stereotypes. Additionally, they state that closeness with colleagues has positive effects on social life. Communication comes in many forms, such as instructions, advice, feedback, casual talk etc. Ideally, it will all contribute to creating trust between the immigrant worker and their colleagues and superiors. Yap, Holmes, Hannan & Cukier (2014) find that good relationships with colleagues allows immigrants to gain access to valuable information about their job/career, as well as participate in discussions regarding possible promotion and career advancement options. For immigrants, having someone to trust and discuss all sorts of matters with in a potentially unfamiliar environment can go a long way in making them feel welcome.

To increase communication and cooperation between coworkers many employers incorporate teambuilding as part of employee training. All 3 interviewees reported their training including

some kind of teambuilding activity, which had varying degrees of success in terms of building relations between them.

Interviewee 1 stated her training included “activities to build up team spirit and get to know each other”. Details about the activities were not provided, although it is clear that it succeeded in its goals, as she reported positive experiences. Although she was already feeling welcome from her employer being immigrant friendly, she also described her Finnish coworkers as “very supportive”. They helped her learn basic Finnish to make serving customers easier, and were also helpful in non-work related matters such as KELA.

“...my coworkers were really helpful towards us, and whenever we had questions related to for example KELA or some other social related stuff they were really open to answering us any questions that we had”

Interviewee 3 had a similar experience. She found her Finnish coworkers to be very supportive due to them understanding the difficulties associated with moving to a new country and having to deal with the extreme climate.

“Whenever I needed help, I would go and they would always help me, even if I had some troubles during safaris or some safaris weren't really great (...), they would always understand that and they would try to fix the situation together”

Interviewee 3 faced some challenges with her job, mainly the extreme weather, which she found in many ways taxing. However, she notes that her excellent relationship with her coworkers greatly helped her deal with that. She even mentions that they were friends outside of work too. The support of her colleagues, and the knowledge that she would be supported by them, helped her avoid issues she might have otherwise had.

“If you would be just alone in this type of work when it's so busy it would be really hard. Like, I think many people would have quit even. The team wouldn't be, like, so good”

She implies that at her job, good relationships between coworkers made all the difference in terms of employee morale and achieving results. In fact, she mentions how some employees went back to work at the same place the next year, simply because they really liked how good the team was. Despite the work's seasonal nature, some choose it again due to the friendships created during it. This is beneficial in the long term for the employer as well, as experienced workers they helped train, decide to bring their talents back into the company. This proves similar to Enchautegui's (2015) findings that “employers stand to lose when immigrants have

skills gaps but directly benefit when they upgrade their skills". In the case of interviewee 3 the skills were upgraded by participating in teambuilding, which then gave many employees a reason to return, benefitting the employer with their new skills. It is then no coincidence her employer makes teambuilding an essential part of training; in many ways, it proves useful to both the employer and the employees. Creticos, Schultz, Beeler & Ball (2006) suggest that one reason seasonal employers may not put much emphasis into training or teambuilding for their employees is due to the season making the worktime short, or because it may lead to training potential staff for their competitors. But as interviewee 3's example shows, even seasonal jobs can have employee retention, provided the work environment is one they'd actually enjoy being a part of.

Interviewee 2's perspective again proved to be quite different from that of the others. She mentions that despite the complete lack of job training, there was some teambuilding that happened. The results of that ended up being rather mixed. She mentions how despite her being introverted, she managed to get to know and get along well with some of her foreign coworkers. However, she didn't feel quite the same way with her Finnish coworkers, and did not manage to reach the same level of trust with them as the other interviewees. This is because she remembers them mostly speaking Finnish with each other, instead of using English which everyone could understand. She also mentions many of them being high school students, so much younger. This further signifies a certain dichotomy existed between foreign and native workers. The teambuilding provided by the employer was good enough for interviewee 2 to be able to establish connections with some of her foreign coworkers, but it failed to bridge the gap between them and their Finnish colleagues. Given that interviewees 1 and 3 praised their Finnish coworkers for their helpfulness, perhaps this gap between foreign and native workers was a significant one.

When comparing interviewee 3's case with that of interviewee 2, it becomes clear that some employers put more emphasis into teambuilding than others. Teambuilding also tends to go hand-in-hand with training for the job, meaning it is subject to the same sort of risk and resource evaluations as that. Employers will not consider putting resources into proper teambuilding if they see no benefit to it.

Overall, it is evident that despite some shortcomings on interviewee 2's case, teambuilding proved useful for all 3 interviewees. Benefits of good teambuilding can extend to both employers and employees. Results may include flexibility, faster decision making, better task

distribution and focus on organisational goals, and increase motivation, as well as synergy among team members (Isik, Timuroglu & Aliyev, 2015). Interviewee 3 proves that motivation is a major factor that can very well be affected by one's relationship with their coworkers. Because her coworkers were so supportive, she was able to find the motivation to work despite the difficulties of the weather. This allowed her to continue serving customers to the best of her ability and thus effectively focus on goals set by her employer, proving helpful to the employer directly.

However, teambuilding is no recipe for success; as proven by interviewee 2's experiences, it can be flawed and leave something to be desired. Therefore, it has to be carefully planned. If the goal of the team is not clear, if members are given too many responsibilities, if not enough time is given, if there isn't a climate of participation and trust inside the team, and if management is too controlling of many of the teambuilding's aspects, it is less likely to produce positive results (Isik, Timuroglu & Aliyev, 2015). In interviewee 3's case her lack of familiarity with working in Finland led to some mental strain due to the climate, but it was effectively countered by her supportive coworkers.

5.2.2 Relationship with superiors

One aspect that teambuilding may fail to cover is the immigrant employee's relationship with their superiors, which also plays a huge role in integration. Since superiors hold more power within the company than employees, they are able to make important decisions which may have an effect on immigrant workers' experiences. This means they play a very big role in the work environment, so them having the trust of the immigrant employees can be significant in many ways. Yap, Holmes, Hannan & Cukier (2013) find that an employee's relationship with their manager/superiors is crucial for career satisfaction, and that lack of good leadership and support leads to dissatisfaction. Supportive managers who communicate effectively as well as provide guidance and feedback can greatly enhance an employee's experience in the workplace. Despite all this, the 3 interviewees did not have much to say about their relationship with their superiors.

The interviewees were asked about their relationship with their superiors at the same time as they were asked about their relationship with their coworkers, which left little room for new answers. However, a general feeling of satisfaction was conveyed.

For instance, interviewee 1 was grateful that her superiors were knowledgeable about the difficulties immigrants may face, and were thus able to make working for them enjoyable by satisfying their needs. They also expressed willingness to help with anything that might be needed. Interviewee 1's superiors were able to establish themselves as trustworthy from the beginning, by making sure the work environment made her feel welcome.

Interviewee 2's relationship with superiors was a lot more pragmatic in nature. She seemed to not have any strong feelings towards management, but noted how she was able to ask for whatever she needed help with without issues. This strictly professional kind of relationship works if the superiors are helpful, like in this case. However, as with many other aspects of interviewee 2's job, they seemingly did not go the extra mile; they were simply doing what they had to.

Interviewee 3 talked about her employer, the company, rather than focusing on superiors she interacted with while on the job. Nevertheless, she expressed satisfaction with the way her employer company deals with foreign employees, as she states that the company has a lot of experience with hiring them and understanding what kind of support they need. It was noted how her employer put a lot of emphasis on teambuilding, which served multiple purposes: cooperation between employees was essential for the job, which teambuilding helped employees to achieve, but it also provided the support immigrant workers needed to have a good working experience.

5.2.3 Effects outside of work

After describing their experiences in their work environment, the interviewees were asked to describe how those experiences affected them outside of work, in society. Unsurprisingly, relationships established during their work proved to have a significant effect on them in varying ways. The challenges they faced also received some focus, namely in regards to what they learned from them. Through their experiences in the work environment, they were able to gain important knowledge to help them with further integration.

Integration into society is what immigrant integration aims to ultimately achieve. For it to be possible, most if not all major challenges have to be addressed in some way. Challenges may vary depending on each immigrant's circumstances, although easy access to transportation, housing, banking, healthcare, services etc. can be considered crucial regardless.

Again we find that relationships created in the work environment are extremely important. The effects of trusting relationships, or lack thereof, inevitably carry over to their life outside of work. For example, interviewee 1 states that she felt “more connected” to Finnish society partly because of her great relationship with her coworkers. The work environment is a great way for immigrants to create a network of connections. If the country they moved to is in a lot of ways unfamiliar, establishing connections helps rectify that. Since employment is likely going to be an immigrant’s priority, the work environment and its ability to create a network of connections becomes even more significant.

But is not only important for those with no connections outside of work. Interviewee 1 states the importance of having multiple networks; for instance work and non-work related connections. This, as she states, serves to avoid becoming overreliant on a single network. This was another contributing factor to her feeling more connected. The work environment can be seen as a stepping stone for greater and easier communication outside of work, and thus more effective integration.

Interviewees 1 and 3 both felt their workplace connections affecting their lives outside of work, albeit in different ways. Interviewee 3 mentions how mentally draining her job was, which naturally carried over to her everyday life. Had it not been for her colleagues/friends, things would have potentially been even worse:

“Yeah it [mental drain] would be much more because sometimes you just need to come and talk to someone and tell us what’s going on and if you have any problems to share with them, and it is much easier. (...) we were basically friends as well out of the working time, and it gives you great connections with people and you feel that you can tell them whatever you want, how bad or good you feel, and they would support you”

Interviewee 1 and 3’s cases were perfect examples of why the overall effects of good relations in the workplace are not to be understated; because they extend to the immigrant’s life outside of work and can be very significant from the viewpoint of integration. Learning how to apply for housing, set up a bank account or deal with issues regarding KELA gives valuable insight into the nuances of living in Finland. It is an aspect one might not immediately think of when thinking about living in Finland, but regardless an important one that has the potential to be a headache for new immigrants. Trustworthy coworkers who are willing to help with such issues go a long way. In interviewee 1’s case her coworkers were very open to helping her with anything she needed in regards to things like KELA. However,

she learned how to apply for housing or set up bank accounts through her external connections (not related to her work). In employee 1's case, this meant her partner, who is Finnish and has knowledge about how things work. Through her external connections, she was not only given advice on how to handle bureaucracy, but also felt more connected to Finnish society due to having multiple networks of connections. Interestingly, while interviewee 1's example shows the significance of having multiple, independent from one another, networks of connections, interviewee 3's example blurs the line between them. Her closeness with her coworkers led to friendships that extended outside the working time. In cases such as that, it becomes a lot less clear cut where the line between work related and non-work related networks is drawn.

Interviewee 2's less than stellar experiences, on the other hand, helped her in a much more unorthodox way. It opened her eyes to a real issue plaguing certain jobs in Finland; that many companies are not great places to work at for foreign workers. This directly relates to her experiences at her workplace, in which she felt the employer "was taking advantage" of foreign employees with low pay:

"Well I got to know that 9 euro [an hour] is not really, like, good salary in Finland which is quite decent in my home country, so then I was kind of tricked that working in (company) isn't that bad"

What is considered decent pay in her home country is in fact low in Finland. This is something that foreigners would not necessarily know, hence why she felt tricked and that the company was taking advantage of immigrants' labor. Pay is only one part of it however, because as seen earlier, adequate teambuilding was also not provided despite it being necessary for the job, leading to a dichotomy between Finnish and foreign workers. Due to these experiences, she now knows that not every company in Finland offers good pay and advantages, so she will be more careful in the future.

Interviewee 2's example provides a perspective on how experiences like this could be considered both positive and negative: positive because she gained important knowledge about the labour market of the tourism sector in Finland, but negative because the experience itself was unpleasant and painted a more negative picture of employment in Finland. However, the social impacts of her experiences do not become apparent, outside of the future employment side of things. Other interviewees expressed positive workplace experiences that helped them overcome many everyday challenges, in addition to acquiring more knowledge

about the finnish labour market. When compared to the other interviewees, interviewee 2's experiences do not show as much social impact.

6. LANGUAGE

It is difficult to talk about integration without bringing up the topic of language in some form, as can be observed through relevant literature (Přivara & Kiner, 2020; Avramov, 2009; Bouchara, 2021; Heath & Schneider, 2021; Carrera & Atger, 2011). For those who change their cultural and social environment (such as immigrants), language is considered a fundamental obstacle to integrating and understanding the way of life in the new environment (Lukšič-Hacin, 1995, as cited in Žigo, Gabruč & Juvan, 2017). After all, the native language is usually found in every aspect of life, often playing a huge role in establishing local connections or exploring opportunities. The lack of native language skills may lead to difficulties accessing important information, as well as make it difficult for immigrants to express or stand up for themselves (Nawin, Gjokaj, Aghenyiga & Grace, 2012). This can have effects particularly noticeable in aspects such as education, health, and political participation. Learning the host country language brings the immigrant closer to the community and contributes towards successful integration, seeing as language is most often of big importance for locals.

An important factor in language learning is exposure to the language, seeing it used in an everyday context. Examples include consuming media in that language or engaging in day-to-day activities within the community. Isphording (2015) finds a positive relationship between how time is spent in the host country and language acquisition skills. Not engaging with the local community much by staying in cultural enclaves tends to have negative effects in regards to learning the language (Espenshade, 1997). This is because there is no immediate need for it, since those communities develop ways to satisfy immigrants' social and cultural needs in their mother tongue (Mesch, 2003).

That is not to say that immigrants should be entirely responsible for their language skills. Language training and programs are available for immigrants coming to Finland, as well as courses about Finnish culture. In addition to that, a major opportunity to be exposed to and acquire better language skills is the work environment. Working in unison with Finnish colleagues exposes one to language learning in a professional context, and potentially speed up the learning process with their help. However, employers tend to value mastery of the native language in their employees, so they may favor simply not hiring immigrants rather than hire and help them develop their language skills.

Ideally, language learning becomes a natural process, where the immigrant, through interacting with the local community and participating in the workplace, is able to steadily learn the native language. It will make it easier for the immigrant to gain access to transportation, housing, banking, and other services more easily, which is a major step towards proper integration. As shown by interviewee 1's example some of these issues can be rectified with proper connections, such as when she received help with KELA and other unspecified issues.

Learning the local language can prove challenging in many ways, and for a language like Finnish, the motivation to learn it is key. Motivation and incentives vary from person to person, as language learning can be largely seen as an investment. It requires a lot of time and effort (potentially also resources), and is expected to provide returns in the form of making aspects of life easier. The 3 interviewees expressed language being their main obstacle for advancing their careers, which they were motivated to overcome. They are thus mostly incentivised by economic factors. Typically known as economic incentives (Mesch, 2003; Chiswick & Miller, 1995), immigrants tend to have them to help improve their labor market situation. In addition, economic incentives for learning the language are closely related to the immigrant's length of stay; those who decide they want to stay for a long period of time are far more likely to learn the local language as it will have longterm benefits those staying temporarily wouldn't feel the need to acquire (Chiswick & Miller, 1995). The 3 interviewees plan to stay in Finland longterm to, among other reasons, work on their careers.

While the interviewees don't mention any problems their lack of Finnish speaking skills may cause them for life in general, all 3 believe it will determine their future careers. Dustmann (1994) finds that immigrants' speaking and writing fluency of the local language affects their earnings. Not only do many employers require such skills in order to be considered for a job, access to important career information is also more readily available. Qualifications may also be easier to communicate to potential employers.

Bauder & Jayaraman (2014) explain that immigrants tend to have a tough time advancing their career and getting higher-up positions for many reasons, a major one being by what some may perceive as being foreign characteristics, whatever those may be. The inability to speak the local language could perhaps be considered one of them. While English is widely spoken by most Finns, it is only the case outside of work, as it is rarely the "office" language. Therefore, competency in the Finnish language is essential for integration into the job market.

(Clarke, 2014). Dustmann (1994) describes how language barrier can be hugely problematic for an immigrant's employment prospects, and thus financial situation. This is supported by Enchautegui's (2015) findings that learning the local language allows for more flexible work schedules due to being able to engage in more demanding customer interactions, having the option for dayshift instead of just nightshift, as an example.

The issue of language came up in all interviews, with the 3 interviewees believing it to be their biggest obstacle for career advancement opportunities. They have all experienced the language barrier in different ways, leading to varying perspectives about the language's necessity.

Interviewee 1 has found difficulties in getting a job, as most employers seem to require a certain level of proficiency in Finnish. Something she found particularly frustrating is that many job advertisements are also written in English, which gave her the impression the job was English-friendly and didn't require Finnish speaking skills, only to later find out that was not the case at all:

"(...) you see the advertisement that it's in English so you're hoping like "ok well this is it I can apply for this" and then they're asking for Finnish language and you're like "ok well, that's a bummer" and it's a little bit misleading but also it's making me feel unmotivated when looking at jobs, so it's a bit hard"

Interviewee 3 reported a similar issue, but, interestingly, the languages were switched around. In her experience it is also common for employers to advertise positions perfectly suitable for foreign employees in Finnish. This makes it so immigrants looking for jobs will not pay the advertisement any mind, even though in reality there isn't necessarily any real language restriction.

This is an aspect of job hunting that seems to have remained relatively understudied, despite its rather deceitful nature. Due to encountering numerous job advertisements like this, interviewee 1 became hesitant to apply for new positions in fear of them just being similar cases. Her example proves that such misleading job advertising can discourage immigrants from applying for jobs. However it is also known that sometimes employers use native language proficiency as an arbitrary requirement. Many jobs offered may not necessarily require fluent native language skills, but the exact proficiency requirement could be kept vague as a way for the employer to use it as a justification to filter out anyone they feel. It is

difficult to say whether the advertisements interviewee 1 saw concerned those kinds of jobs, although it is not unlikely.

Interviewee 2 has also found it challenging to find a decent job as a foreigner. Based on her experience working in her previous job, she suspects many companies and businesses that hire foreigners who can't speak Finnish don't offer good salary. Overall, she compares the high demand for Finnish speakers to the situation in her own country; there, too, was the ability to speak the native language a big priority for employers. Given such demand for the Finnish language, she hopes that working in the tourism sector, and thus interacting with many foreigners, will reduce the need to rely on Finnish for communication. However, she is still trying to learn the language.

Interviewee 3 also sees the issue of Finnish potentially being relevant to her future career. She explains that while working at the tour company, the office language was English, so there was no need to understand Finnish. It is possible that if she succeeds in getting a higher position within this company and continuing her career there, there won't be much of a need to learn it for professional purposes. However, she is very aware that in other jobs the office language could be Finnish, and that it would provide significant advantages in terms of career advancement:

"I feel that you can find work with English only of course, but (...) you would probably just stay at the same, like, stage of your development, you wouldn't grow, because if you wanted more then you need to speak Finnish, you need to communicate with people, read and papers and so on. You need to work in the language the country is working."

She also expressed that Finnish would be important for her future career due to the seasonal nature of tourism in Finland. She was able to find a job where the office language was English, but that was only a seasonal job. She would like to be able to work full-time all year round, however she feels like the opportunities for jobs like that are limited for those who do not speak Finnish.

Although the importance of learning Finnish is evident for the interviewees, their positions in their tourism and hospitality jobs didn't require such skills. Interviewees 2 and 3 express the possibility of being able to continue working in the tourism sector without having to seriously commit to learning Finnish, although they understand the risks that would bring. The emphasis put on interacting with foreign customers is a major reason for such opportunities

existing. Though as interviewee 2 made clear, some customer support situations call for knowledge of the Finnish language, so some level of proficiency still seems ideal.

7. FUTURE PROSPECTS

7.1 Career

Just like most workers, immigrant workers have certain career goals they wish to achieve. However, achieving those goals might prove more challenging than, for instance, native workers. The 3 interviewees were asked what they were hoping to accomplish in the future careerwise, as well as what they thought could get in the way of that.

When asked about their future careers, all 3 hoped to continue working in the tourism sector in Finland. Additionally, all of them expressed an interest in tourism planning and development specifically. Interviewee 1 would like to work in tourism planning, be it for improving tourist experiences or just focusing on what a specific area can offer. Interviewee 2's ultimate goal is to aid in tourism development in the Northern Karelia region. She hopes to be able to mostly target customers from her country in order to promote the area to them, since the number of tourists from there visiting the area is low. Interviewee 3 sees herself potentially getting a higher position in the tour company she is currently working at, expressing that she would love a managerial position. However, she is also hoping to broaden her understanding of tourism, by developing strategies of tourism development.

One thing of note about the 3 interviewees is that they do not only have experience working in the tourism or hospitality sectors in Finland. They have also studied and attained a certain level of education in the country.

While Finnish is certainly the biggest obstacle for the interviewees' careers, it is not the only one. Year-round job opportunities for tourism in Lapland are scarce, making options quite limited, as expressed by interviewee 3. Interviewee 1 considers her lack of experience working in the tourism sector an additional challenge. Interviewee 2 felt that there is potential for some cultural differences to arise, since she is from far away, although she wasn't sure what those could be. She does mention the fact that Finnish people tend to express themselves in a very direct way, as opposed to her home country where people tend to put up an image of politeness, as something she has learned and personally even prefers but still needs to get used to. While seemingly irrelevant to career building, it may still have an effect.

7.2 What should employers do to improve integration?

Interviewee 1 first and foremost suggests that employers educate themselves in matters of immigrant integration. Gaining a better understanding of their backgrounds and different work cultures makes it easier to understand the immigrant's specific needs and help with their adaptation in the work environment.

“It's a little bit different than having just your Finnish workers because immigrants might have a different background and different work environment (...) and different workculture. (...) Also the employers need to understand that people come from different backgrounds so then also their working culture might be different, so then explaining how it works in Finland and kinda trying to help those immigrants to adapt to the working culture in Finland”

Naturally, trying to understand the general workculture of different countries is no easy task, and may many times lead to generalisations or misunderstandings. The same is likely to happen if one tries to explain “Finnish work culture” to another. So while it is impossible to precisely understand what an immigrant's experienced “work culture” might include, such deep understanding might not be needed. The point is employers becoming aware of potential issues they might face or measures they must take by studying foreign work cultures. This allows employers to be prepared for scenarios where they will have to accommodate immigrants' special needs. Interviewee 3 also emphasised the importance of employers and coworkers being accomodating to those with special needs, such as religious needs.

A common phenomenon among highly educated immigrants is the underestimation or lack of recognition regarding any of their foreign credentials, whether education or prior work experiences. Reasons for this range from employer indifference to ignorance, as it is often difficult to verify and validate foreign credentials. (Creticos, Schultz, Beeler & Ball, 2006). As a result of this, many immigrants find their talents underutilised in jobs not befitting their level of education (deskilling) (Avramov, 2009; Přívara & Kiner, 2020; Hack-polay, Dal Mas, Mahmoud & Rahman, 2022). The interviewees possess credentials not just from abroad, but Finland as well. The latter seemingly carry more weight with employers, but it is difficult to tell if they could be considered an advantage. Interviewee 2's experiences indicate that some employers see their foreign workers as cheap labor rather than valued employees who receive proper training and opportunities to enhance their skills. Interviewee 3 on the other hand was seen as a valuable member of the team and received plenty of training and support, which

helped her develop in many ways. Both interviewees possess prior work experience, and thus credentials, on the field of tourism, but only one is likely to impress future employers with her skills. That is not to say that either of them is lacking in credentials; experience is simply valued a lot by employers, and interviewee 2 did not receive an opportunity to become experienced in a meaningful way. This is not deskilling itself as her job was meant to be only temporary and she was still studying, so credentials weren't much of a factor. Despite all of this, analysing the credentials presented in the interviews does not provide an accurate prediction as to whether the interviewees will fall victim to the phenomenon of deskilling.

Employers can combat this phenomenon by treating immigrants' foreign accomplishments with more respect; by not dismissing them simply because of their uncertainty. However, proper assessment of immigrant credentials requires expertise in comparative education, significant physical resource materials and a familiarity and ongoing contact with international educational systems. Enchautegui (2015) suggests several ways to improve the situation, such as employers training/hiring staff members to properly assess foreign-acquired skills, partnering with immigrant credentialing organisations, and developing company-specific guidance and interview protocols geared toward eliciting more information about the content of foreign-acquired credentials. Employers' uncertainty often stems from not meeting these criteria adequately. (Creticos, Schultz, Beeler & Ball, 2006). This gives the employer access to a larger pool of potential foreign candidates, many of whom will not be sought after by less prepared competitors. While this would overall prove helpful to immigrants and make them less susceptible to deskilling, it is highly doubtful that employers are ready to commit to it to such a degree. The seasonal nature of tourism and hospitality work in Finland presents certain risks for employers if they were to allocate a large amount of resources into research and training, such as employees not coming back next season or being hired by competitors. Interviewees 2 and 3 have provided two examples of how differently seasonal workers are seen by various employers. Although it is worth noting that all 3 interviewees' jobs were entry-level or close to it. From their experiences it is therefore difficult to determine how things regarding credentials work in higher-up positions, especially those that work year-round planning for the next winter season.

Failure to properly assess immigrants' credentials and skills leads to not only loss of a potentially great employee, but overall loss to national economy (Creticos, Schultz, Beeler & Ball, 2006). An additional problem could be loss of human capital, which tends to occur

when immigrants are not able to readily transfer their diplomas, licenses, and work experience (Enchautegui, 2015).

Not everything that plays into deskilling is related to or up to employers however. For example, immigrants with a license for a certain occupation abroad are not necessarily automatically entitled to that position in Finland. Some professions, such as engineers or healthcare professionals, are subject to reassessment due to potential differences in practice or other reasons. While something like that may not be an issue for immigrants in the tourism or hospitality sectors, bureaucracy is ever present.

Employers can instruct immigrant employees on how to handle bureaucracy and acquire certain licenses or documents, even if said licenses/documents are irrelevant to the job. Although it is worth noting that it is not only employers that can provide help with that, coworkers can too. Interviewee 1 was able to build positive relations with her coworkers, who in turn offered to help her with aspects like that.

Sufficient research into the topic of immigrant integration helps employers to also understand what possible opportunities their business could offer to potential immigrant employees. Candidates with sufficient skills for the job are certainly available, but it is likely they will be denied for reasons discussed earlier or due to lacking in Finnish skills. Employers can make use of their skills and capital while also encouraging them to learn Finnish while working. A work environment that actively supports and encourages language learning will likely make it easier for the immigrants to learn it.

8. CONCLUSION

Immigrant integration is not a simple, one-dimensional phenomenon that should be expected to naturally happen over time. Immigrants are expected to integrate into most if not all aspects of society, be they linguistic, political, economic, or any other. Each aspect of society presents its own challenges that the immigrant must overcome to receive the benefits proper understanding of that aspect of society brings. Yet, at what point could someone be considered integrated? There is no way to measure integration after all; it is difficult to determine who could be considered integrated or not. Yet if the goal is to integrate immigrants into society, how do we determine what has or has not been achieved? There is no simple answer to questions like this, but it could be said it depends largely on the immigrants themselves and how they feel. The feeling of belonging is one that plays a crucial role in integration, as it is exactly what integration aims to achieve. Establishing connections, creating meanings, working towards goals, getting invested in different practices, sharing experiences, feeling a certain change in identity; these are all aspects of belonging that immigrants are likely to experience through successful integration.

The work environment can be a major contributor to an immigrant's successful integration as well (Heikkilä, 2017). The immigrant is very likely to prioritise seeking employment before most other things upon settling in their new home country, assuming they didn't simply travel for a job they have already secured. Whatever the case may be, the work environment provides a crucial first impression. Work can help the immigrant familiarise themselves with many aspects of living in Finland, such as cultural and social cues, relationships with many different parties, exposure to the local language, and get a general idea of how things operate. They are expected to do their best to learn and adapt to many of these aspects, which most will probably try. However, employers can provide valuable assistance in many of these matters to bolster integration not only to society, but the work environment itself.

As evident by the statements of the interviewees, the way employers view their (foreign) workers plays a huge role in regards to feeling welcome in the workplace. Especially in Finland, where tourism is very seasonal, related jobs are only available for a limited time. The interviewees were able to provide insight into different approaches taken by employers in regards to seasonal tourism jobs in Finland. One of the employers mentioned took proper training and teambuilding seriously for all workers, whether foreign or not. This ultimately proved to be extremely beneficial for both the immigrant employee and the employer. The

teambuilding activities brought all employees closer together which made their job less stressful as a result of their trust. The employer enjoyed higher customer satisfaction and skilled employees who were willing to return to their positions for next year's season. Thus, proper teambuilding and integration resulted in fewer turnovers, better productivity, company loyalty, and the potential to create a managerial class from within. These were the exact advantages that Enchautegui (2015) found employers experience when they engage in immigrant integration. Another interviewee found her job less satisfactory in terms of training, teambuilding, and salary. While the former two did happen, they were executed in largely ineffective ways, as a divide between Finnish and foreign employees still existed. This, coupled with low salary, left many foreign employees very disappointed.

All three interviewees highlight certain aspects they found crucial for their integration into the work environment, which could also assist them with integration into Finnish society. They all heavily emphasise the creation of positive relationships between themselves and their coworkers and superiors. While all interviewees participated in teambuilding activities, only two of them saw results from it in the form of establishing good relations with their colleagues. They were able to trust them with their problems and work together towards solving them. One of the interviewees even mentioned how they became friends outside of work. They mentioned how such relations with coworkers made them feel more welcome in the work environment. In contrast, another interviewee felt like she and other foreign coworkers were not treated the same as Finnish workers. The interviews paint positive relations within the workplace to be important not only for their integration into it, but also life in Finland in general.

In terms of challenges, all interviewees believed their lack of fluency in the Finnish language to be their biggest one to overcome. Some of them already faced problems applying for jobs, either because employers require (or at least claim to require) decent skills in Finnish, or because job advertisements utilise language in deceptive ways. Working in the tourism/hospitality sector helped reduce their reliance on having to learn Finnish as soon as possible, as the office language was English. The sector's focus on interacting with foreign customers is something the interviewees hope will reduce the need to focus on learning the language in the future. Despite this, they don't deny it is their biggest obstacle in terms of integration and for their future careers.

All of them expressed willingness to continue working in the tourism sector in Finland. They each have an idea regarding what they'd like to do, as well as what could get in the way of achieving that. All three were interested in tourism planning and development, although the ways in which they'd approach that differ.

The advantages of working for an employer who understands and addresses challenges faced by immigrants are very clear. However, many employers do not do this, which creates a need for more employers that do. There are numerous things that can be done by employers to improve immigrant employees' well-being in the workplace, or their future prospects. The interviewees encourage employers to do more research regarding not only how to satisfy immigrants' needs, but also what advantages they could bring to the business. The three interviewees have all expressed a desire to stay in Finland longterm, and have thus taken measures to make their own integration process smoother. They all received some form of higher education in the country, and have taken steps towards learning the Finnish language. Through their stay in the country they have also encountered numerous differences to their home countries, some of which caused them slight problems that they did their best to overcome. Some of these challenging differences carry over to their workplace, where they go from personal issues to work issues as well. Two of the three interviewees expressed satisfaction with how their job handled two-way integration by taking their needs into account and making their working experiences a lot smoother. One on the other hand expressed dissatisfaction due to the lack of measures taken by her employer, essentially leaving many to fend for themselves.

As a result of their experiences with their jobs in the tourism and hospitality sector in Finland, the interviewees ended up benefitting from them in their life outside of work in various ways. The ones that expressed satisfaction with their job were able to establish networks of connections and create friendships, which they consider to be the main benefit overall. Other benefits included additional sources of help in matters of bureaucracy, as well as reduction of stress and mental drain. The interviewee that was dissatisfied with her employer also ended up benefitting from the experience, although in an unpleasant way. She became more knowledgeable about the reality of some seasonal tourism jobs in Finland and their less than ideal treatment of seasonal workers. She also became more aware of the average salary in Finland. Her experience taught her to be more careful with her future job-hunting.

It is difficult to say to which extent these results were because of the interviewees working in the tourism and hospitality sector. Some aspects such as the seasonal nature of their jobs are a direct consequence of how those industries function in Finland. Linguistically the interviewees were rarely challenged due to the language most used at work was English. Some hope was expressed that their future careers in the tourism sector might reduce the need for Finnish. The tourism and hospitality industry proved to be easy to integrate to linguistically, mostly due to its reliance on interacting with people of foreign backgrounds. Although given that they believe their lack of Finnish language skills to be a major obstacle in the future, this could prove to be a double-edged sword. Interviewee 3 was able to get somewhat used to Finland's extreme winter climate thanks mostly to her coworkers, but also her job which had her to work under such conditions. Interviewee 2 gained a lot of additional knowledge relating to the tourism industry in Finland and how it often works.

This research was flawed in many aspects. There weren't many interviews conducted, and because of that the interviewees did not cover a varied enough demographic to produce more thorough material. The questions they were asked were also perhaps limited to a smaller number than optimal, leaving plenty of gaps in the research. Overall though, this research finds several benefits relating to working in the tourism sector in Finland in terms of immigrant integration. Future, more well thought out research could focus on a different sector to help give a better idea about the benefits each sector can provide to its immigrant workforce.

This study was concerned with finding out how the workplace in tourism and hospitality sector in Finland affected immigrant integration. The analysis was conducted by conducting interviews and using content analysis for past literature. Three interviews were conducted overall.

The interviews shed light on many challenges immigrants might face in the work environment, and how an employer's action or inaction affects them. The main issues discussed concerned language and relationships within the workplace: the former being considered the biggest obstacle for integration and future employment, while the latter was considered essential for a good experience in the workplace.

The tourism sector in Finland is largely seasonal, which comes with its own unique challenges which the interviewees had to deal with. Some employers see all seasonal employees as not worth investing resources into since they work for such a short period,

leading to much dissatisfaction and additional problems for the immigrant employees. Other employers see value in proper training and teambuilding, which often ends up proving beneficial for all parties involved, and makes it easier for immigrant workers to get settled more comfortably.

This research shows that immigrant integration into Finnish society through working in the tourism and hospitality sector can prove uniquely challenging. Immigrants' fundamental needs remain the same, but unexpected ones that may arise, such as trying to get used to the weather are some that the tourism industry can satisfy. This research was not able to dive deeper into more issues, but perhaps future research that focuses on the effects other sectors' work environments have on immigrants will help contextualise this.

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APPENDIX A

- Have you had previous experience working in tourism/hospitality abroad? How does it compare to your current career?
- Have you faced any challenges in your working environment? (Were those challenges addressed?)
- Was anything done to make you feel welcome?
- What has your experience with your superiors been like?
- What has your experience with your co-workers been like?
- Have your interactions in the workplace affected you in other aspects of life?
- What are you hoping to accomplish in the future? (career advancement etc.) What do you think could get in the way of that?
- In your opinion, what do you find important for integration into the work environment?
- Is there anything you'd like to add or feedback to give?