

Immigrant Women in the Labour Market in Finland Hurdles, Options and Empowerments

Dr Tytti Steel

Postdoctoral Researcher, University of Helsinki

Pressure as a catalyst for change?

WeAll Seminar, Hanken 24 Nov 2016

Tytti Steel & Marjut Jyrkinen: Combined Capabilities and the Future Working Life of Immigrant Women in Finland (article in review process)

- Qualitative study, based on 7 interviews conducted in 2016
- Focus on
 1. the combination of immigrant women's internal capabilities to find employment and
 2. the external conditions, in this case the services offered by the employment office and an NGO (a non-governmental organisation)

Interviewees

Women with immigrant background, some are jobseekers, some working. All have taken part in activities organized by the NGO.



- aiju 2015
TARJA ARKIP, APANA:
TYÖT JAKAUTUVAT

- “It is definitely an advantage for me that I am from [a European country] that is well-developed. But I am surprised that even I have such a strong immigrant label in this country [Finland]. And the attitudes about immigrants are sometimes really harsh.”

Hurdles

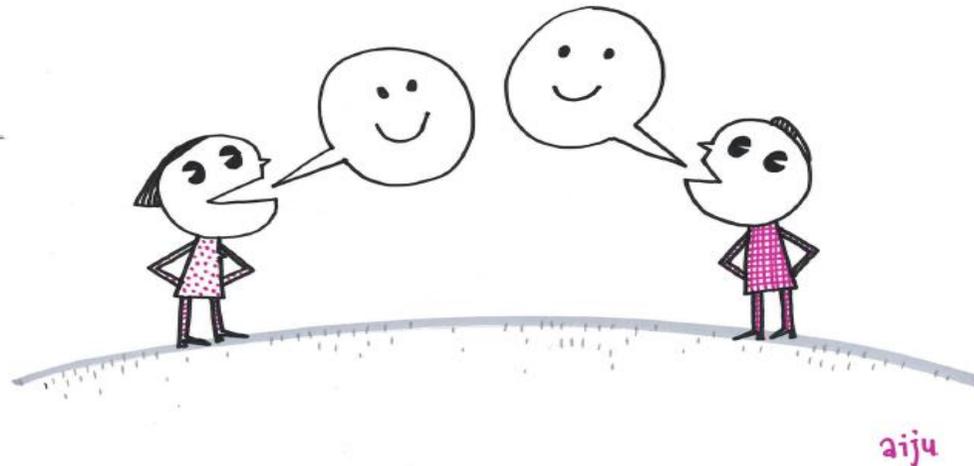
- Age (>35)
- Combining care and work
- Language requirements
- "Wrong name"
- Circle of placements, work trials and periods of unemployment
- In too many cases, practically non-existing services by the employment office
 - Considerable problems even with the digital services

Face to face with the employment office

- “I was in a shock. Because why, I had my diploma with me, and then the only thing I could do was to choose an occupation from a list. I looked at the list and didn’t know what to say.”
- “But this person was passive, too. The official only wrote down that we had met and noted if some decision was positive or negative. But the official never gave any advice or presented any possibilities.”

Options and Empowerments

- Support by the employment services
- Support by the NGO
 - “The only help I ever got”
- Support of family (spouse) and friends



Proposals for action

- Employment services should improve their abilities to recognise degrees from foreign education systems.
- The digital system used by the official employment offices needs to be developed further so that it is easier to use and more responsive to a person's background.
- There is a need to develop the capabilities of employment office personnel at being able to meet the needs of immigrant job seekers. It is crucial that they know how to identify, for example, stress, symptoms of burnout and other situations that might negatively impact the ability of personnel to serve customers.



WEALLFINLAND.FI

The Project is funded by the Strategic Research Council (SRC) at the Academy of Finland. SRC provides funding to long-term and programme-based research aimed at finding solutions to the major challenges facing Finnish society.

WWW.AKA.FI/EN/ABOUT-US/SRC/

