



**THE CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY AFRICAN
IMMIGRANTS IN THE SWEDISH LABOUR MARKET**

A Case of Ugandans in Sweden

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Dedication

To my friends and family who have encircled me with endless love, support, and encouragement. Special thanks go to my friend Per Johansson, thank you for standing with me in thick and thin along the way to success.

I wish to further appreciate my lecturers who have done in me a tremendously job.

I further appreciate my family who have encouraged me to make it this far.

Thank you all for your support and kindness.

God bless you all

Abstract

African immigrants in Sweden are often problematized in political and media debates, especially in relation to the lack of integration into the Swedish labour market. The study is based on primary and secondary data analysis of the challenges Ugandan immigrants experience during the process of navigating themselves in the Swedish labour market. The aim of this study is to examine the challenges experienced by Ugandan immigrants in and within the Swedish labour market.

My empirical material was based on the primary data gathered from interviews (semi-structured interviews), which are real-life experiences from immigrants and secondary data from the literature review that formed the study's theoretical background. The theories used during research are human capital, social capital, and integration. During the study, findings revealed that discrimination, the lack of social network, lack of human capital poor knowledge of the Swedish language, and non-recognition of foreign academic qualifications and skills were the major barriers experienced by Ugandan immigrants from entering the Swedish labour market. However, the Swedish government has been able to acknowledge some of those challenges and considered plans have been put in place to tackle these challenges.

Key words: Sweden, Ugandan immigrants, Swedish labour market, discrimination, networks

Abbreviations and definitions of Swedish words

Arbetsförmedlingen.....	Swedish Public Employment Service
Svenske för invandrare (SFI).....	Swedish for Immigrants
Arbetsministeriet	Ministry of Employment
Biltvätt Diplom.....	Car Wash Diploma
Förmåga att kommunicera tydligt.....	Ability to communicate clearly
Flytande Svenska.....	Fluent Swedish
Svenska som andraspråk.....	Swedish as a second language

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Human migration can be voluntary. However, it is often spurred on by factors beyond individual human control. One thing is certain; the consequences of migration and the experiences of migrants are different across contexts. It is commonplace that in and out-migration have been fraught with several challenges for both the receiving territories and for those who have arrived in the new social contexts. While some have moved for better economic opportunities, other reasons such as educational acquisition, family reunification, and sight-seeing among others, wars for example Syria war and now Ukraine war, account for migration within and across national borders (Castles et al, 2014). Research has shown that unemployment, racism and discriminatory attitudes, social and economic exclusion, refugees, and homelessness are outcomes of migration among and across national borders (Phillips & Robinson, 2015). It is therefore against this backdrop that this paper examines the labour market experiences of Ugandan immigrants in the Nordic country of Sweden, based on interviews with some Ugandans living in the Swedish city of Malmö as samples for the study but born in Uganda.

Sweden is a country that has gained a reputation for its openness toward different types of immigrants, with better integration policies, and has been ranked ahead of Germany, Australia, Canada, and Switzerland in terms of openness and multiculturalism (CDI, 2018). Integration of immigrants in Sweden has become a major political issue. The Swedish government started working on the integration of immigrants, through the introduction of Swedish language programs for immigrants (SFI) in the mid-1960s (Wiesborcok, 2011). Sweden's approach to the integration of immigrants focuses on language acquisition and promoting the labour market participation of immigrants in the Swedish labour market. Along with these integration measures, Sweden has promoted cultural pluralism by encouraging the maintenance of the culture and identity of immigrants and not like other European countries for example France and the United Kingdom (Wiesborcok, 2011). Regardless of these integration measures in Sweden, segregation between immigrants and native Swedes in living quarters, workplaces, and schools is evident. Segregation reduces the interaction between immigrants and the Swedish native population which further results in an increased social division in the Swedish society (ibid).

Sandberg (2017) states that, historically, Sweden has had poor labour market integration for non-EU immigrants. As of 2016, Statistics show that Sweden had 15.3% of working population between native Swedes and foreign-born. As of September 2017, the

unemployment rate for foreign-born increased to 22%, then for natives to 7% (Sandberg, 2017, pp. 18-19). Sandberg argues that there is an increase in social exclusion in Sweden. Traditionally the Swedish labour market, education policies, and interventions turn out to constitute rather blunt instruments in efforts to the successfully integrate immigrants (Sandberg, 2017, p. 21).

Sandberg goes on to mention that Sweden should find steps to solve the issue of social exclusion (Sandberg, 2017, p. 21). He suggests that the successful way for the Swedish government to integrate immigrants into the labour market can depend on the capacity of two areas.

- Firstly, the Swedish government should quickly integrate qualified migrants into the existing jobs (Sandberg, 2017).
- Secondly, for less qualified immigrants to obtain training, education, and enhance human capital. He states that those can be good moves for successful integration of immigrants and increase human capital hence, creating employment for immigrants with low academic backgrounds (Sandberg, 2017, pp. 21-22).

However, research by Andersson states that the lower participation of immigrants in the Swedish labour market cannot only be measured by their human capital like education, language skills, and experiences (Andersson, 2007, p. 70).

This research sets out to contribute with critical depth and understanding to the challenges experienced by Ugandan immigrants into the Swedish labour market. Exclusion and inclusion are universal to immigrants but experienced very differently in different ethnic and national contexts in the labour market. For this research paper, I intend to focus on both the economic and social-cultural integration of Ugandan immigrants in Sweden as both categories are key factors in answering the research questions. Based on previous scholarship, they are defined below.

- Firstly, economic integration is referred to as a process in which both migrants and natives have equal participation in the labour market (Carling & Kristian, 2013, p. 944).
- Secondly, social integration is referred to as the degree to which people can relate to each other in a social group (Kearns & Whitley, 2015, p. 2110). Social integration of migrants is especially important in the host country as it leads to the development of

trust, safety, social relations, and a sense of community among people (Kearns & Whitley, 2015).

This chapter will present the background to the study and problematizes this area of research. Subsequently, the purpose of the research will be indicated, the research process and framing, the aim, and objectives of the study, and the research question to guide the study.

1.1 Research problem

This study examines the challenges experienced by Ugandan immigrants in the Swedish labour market. In 2019, there were 5,021 Ugandans living in Sweden which had a population of 10.18 million people in that year (Statista, 2019). Whilst this seems like a small number of cases, the situation for the Ugandan population is reflective of what the larger African population in Sweden has been documented to experience

1.2 Research process and framing

This research concerns the reported experiences of Ugandan immigrants in the Swedish labour market. In Sweden, migrants often have difficulty in getting a foothold to enter society as language issues, employment, lack of integration, etc (Ayuk, 2020), are interconnected, and achieving access to one often requires having already achieved access to another.

This research process was developed with clear research approaches based on Aditi Garg's steps of research approaches (2012) as per figure 1.1

Defining the research and the viewpoint of the problem.

- a) Reviewing the literature on the problem.
- b) Formulating the defined research study from the aims and objectives.
- c) Developing the research design.
- d) Gathering information and data collection
- e) Analysing the data or information gathered.
- f) Interpreting the data and developing a report

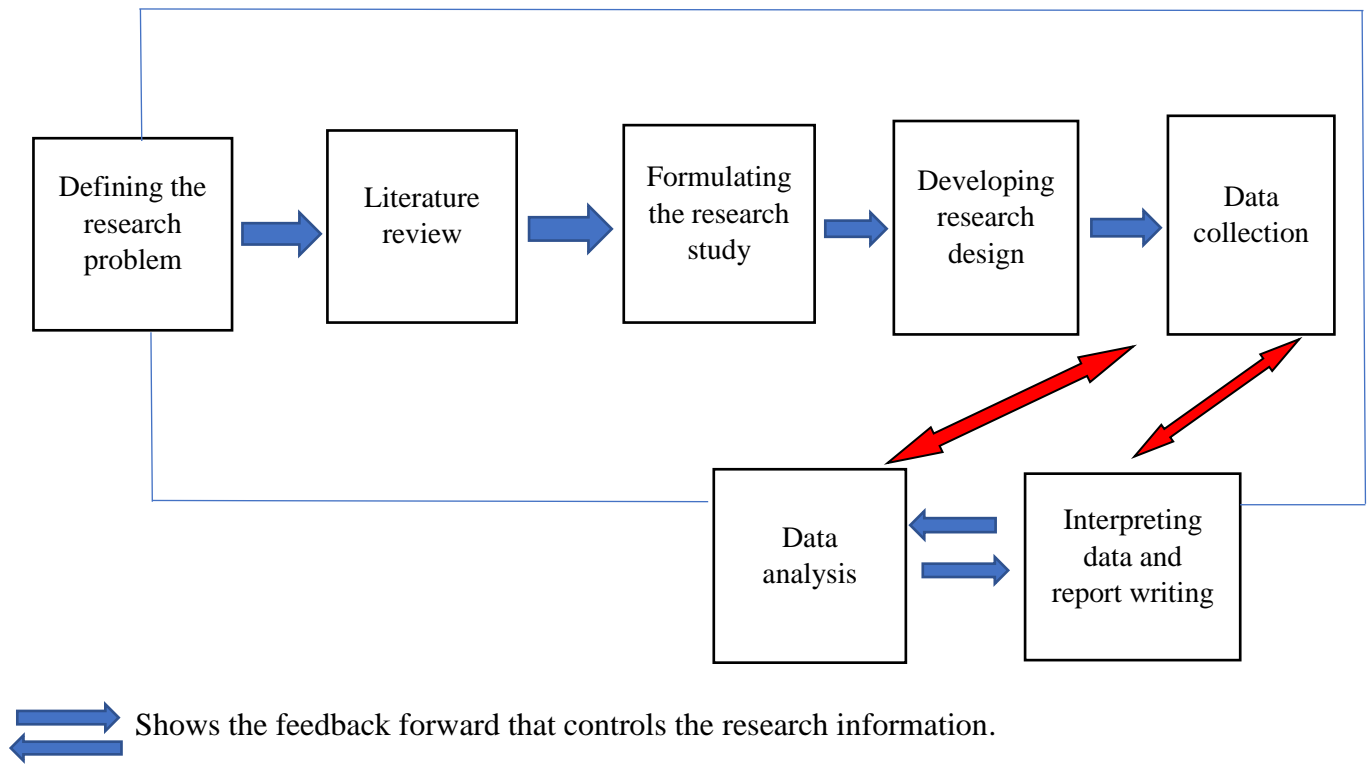


Figure 1.1. Represents the research process as adopted from (Garg, 2012)

1.3 Aim and Objectives of the study

The aim of this study is to understand the challenges experienced by Ugandan immigrants in the Swedish labour market. Hence, this study seeks to explore how Ugandan immigrants navigate themselves within this new context and the hurdles they experience.

The objective of this study is:

To study the challenges experienced by Ugandan immigrants into and within the Swedish labour market.

1.4 Research questions

The research question posed to investigate is:

What are the challenges experienced by Ugandan immigrants in the Swedish labour market?

Chapter 2: Literature Review (exclusion in the labor market)

The following section reviews the literature pertaining to research on economic integration of immigrants in Sweden, and finally challenges experienced by immigrants into the Swedish labour market. Due to a lack of research on the Ugandan diaspora in Sweden, the literature covered focuses mainly on the African diaspora and immigrants in general.

2.1 The economic integration of immigrants in Sweden

Labour market diversity and economic integration play a key role in the integration of migrants in the host country (Lester & Nguyen, 2015, p. 46). However, Lester & Nguyen argue that “income alone does not fully capture the concept of integration. Alternatively, economic integration could be measured in a broad, multidimensional manner by using a combination of indicators, such as income, homeownership, and children’s educational attainment” (Lester & Nguyen, 2015, p. 46).

Labour market diversity can be used as a tool to measure the economic integration of immigrants (Lester & Nguyen, 2015, p. 46). Waldinger (2005 as cited by Lester & Nguyen, 2015, p. 46), argues that newly arrived immigrants at first tend to cluster in occupational niches. However, when immigrants make economic progress and assimilate, they become dispersed throughout the labour market (ibid).

Evidence from scholars like Ekberg (1983); Ohlsson (1975); Wadensjö (1973 as cited in Bevelander, 1999) states that, during the 1950s and 1960s, immigrant economic integration into Swedish society resulted in high labour market participation, leading to high employment rates and relatively high incomes amongst immigrants in Sweden (Bevelander, 1999, pp.446-447). During the 1970s and 1980s, Sweden was characterised by extremely low immigrant employment rates which in turn, evidenced a lower level of economic growth in comparison to the 1950s-60s. There was a structural change in the economy towards a large service sector at the expense of industry. Due to these economic developments, there was high demand for educated and skilled employees.

Scott (1995 and Bevelander 1995, 1998 as cited in Bevelander 1999) notes that the structural change in Sweden also created an obstacle for immigrants to obtain employment, despite having similar levels of human capital as native Swedes. Broome et al (1994 as cited in Bevelander 1999) suggest that the structural change led to less cultural proximity to the Swedish society which resulted in more statistical and direct discrimination against immigrants by public authorities, employers, and employees (Bevelander, 1999 p.447).

The structural changes of the Swedish labour market in the service society require high skills and a good knowledge of the Swedish language which are obstacles for immigrants (Bevelander, 2004, pp. 24-25). For immigrants to pursue further education, their foreign academic qualifications need to be recognised and equated to the Swedish system. Swedish employers and the Swedish labour market has been shown to undervalue foreign academic

qualifications and work experience relative to native qualifications and experience. Lemaître (2007:33) notes that employers in Sweden do not seem to trust and recognize foreign academic qualifications and immigrant work experiences as compared to the Swedish academic qualifications. The formal recognition of foreign educational qualifications helps in solving the issues mentioned above, as immigrants may require more time to complete further education in the field, they are already experienced in (Lemaître, 2007, p. 33). For immigrants to obtain educational qualifications recognition of equivalence, it would be better for them to use that time to gain work experience. However, recognition can be of good use in cases where licensing requirements are required (ibid).

Dustmann (1994 as cited in Bevelander 1999) mentions that the need for informal competences like language skills, different patterns of expected behaviour in working teams, and in relations with public authorities and labour market organisations are important for economic integration of immigrants in Sweden (Bevelander, 1999, p.447). Further evidence by Irastorza and Bevelander, (2017) indicates that high skilled immigrants have a greater employment level and education-to-job match than immigrants that are less educated. They went on to state that, highly educated immigrants who have residency in Sweden, over time are able to improve their employment rates and earnings, although they never catch up with those of the native Swedes (Irastorza & Bevelander, 2017, p. 22).

2.2 Challenges experienced by Ugandan immigrants into the Swedish labour market

Studies based on visible minorities, such as African immigrants, experiences of discrimination in the labour market have identified several factors that may limit their access; include non-recognition of foreign identifications, lack of Swedish labour market experience, language barriers, lack of social networks, bias against non-native seeming names (Amoah, 2014; Boyd & Thomas, 2002; Creese & Wiebe, 2012; Ertorer, Long, Fellin, & Esses, 2020; Zaami, 2012) as cited in (Zaami & Madibbo, 2021).

Rydgren (2004) characterizes the Swedish labour market as consisting of three mechanisms that are being used in the exclusion of immigrants in Sweden, which are statistical discrimination, network effects, and institutional discrimination. When addressing the problem of ethnic discrimination, all three mechanisms need to be considered (Rydgren, 2004, p. 712).

According to Chiswick 1978; Borjas (1985 as cited by Manhica et al, 2015), migrants can be disadvantaged in the labour market when they lack the appropriate human capital that is

required in the host country. Human capital describes a person's level of education, experience, qualifications, and/or abilities (Manhica et al, 2015, p. 194-195).

This study focuses on the challenges experienced by Ugandan immigrants to enter and within the Swedish labour market. Scholars (Arai et al. 1999; Arai et al. 2006, etc) highlight that African immigrants in Sweden can often be more disadvantaged as they face long term unemployment or may only be offered low wages with poor working conditions (Manhica et al, 2015, p. 194-195).

Important to mention, inter-marriages among African immigrants and the native Swedes can be advantageous as it assists with the integration among immigrants and the native Swedes. African immigrants who marry native Swedes tend to expand their social network and integrate faster into Swedish society compared to migrants and refugees who marry partners from the same country of origin (Manhica et al, 2015, p. 194-195).

Swedish society is based on the necessity and assumption of formal and informal equality, which is an important part of immigrant integration (Dingu-Kyrklund, 2005, p. 138). Boyd & Thomas (2002; Mensah, 2010) mention that immigrant's foreign academic qualifications and work experience from their country of origin are devalued in the host country. Additionally, Dahlstedt (2011) notes that immigrants' employment mismatch in Sweden is greater compared to those of native Swedes, therefore, educated immigrants end up with employment that is lower than their academic qualification levels although these levels differ considerably among different immigrant groups (Dahlstedt, 2011). Dahlstedt (2015) points out that, there is a higher employment mismatch of the first generation of immigrants as compared to that of their children. The literature on experiences of visible minorities' exclusion in the labour market has reiterated that immigrants who acquires higher academic qualification are still relegated to jobs for which they are overqualified (Nichols, Ha, & Tyyskä, 2020; Wilson-Forsberg, Masakure, Shizha, Lafreni`ere, & Mfoafo-M'Carthy,2019) as cited in (Zaami & Madibbo, 2021). Those scholars point to barriers such as the requirement of Swedish work experience and skills used to discriminate against immigrants, thereby limiting their access of gaining employment in their job fields. Furthermore, Le Grand & Szulkin (2002) highlight that employers prefer not to recognize immigrants' foreign academic qualifications and work experience skills in the labour market. However, scholars such as Block and Galabuzi (2011) mention that although racialized immigrants are willing to work, they have a harder time

finding employment, and when they do find employment, they are more likely to be insecure, lower-paying, or part-time employment (Block & Galabuzi, 2011).

Scholars like Reitz (2007; Schugurensky & Slade, 2008) suggest that immigrant's social capital is the key to their access to the labour market. Other scholars, who have focused on immigrants' experiences of exclusion in the labour market, state that immigrants need to have some form of social capital and cultural capital for their success in the labour market (Schugurensky & Slade, 2008; Wilson-Forsberg & Sethi, 2015). Schugurensky and Slade (2008) state that new immigrants in the host country tend to lose their social capital that they have had before immigrating and must have to find new ways of building new social networks. Bourdieu (as cited in Schugurensky & Slade, 2008) notes that immigrants need new and secure institutionalized networks (social capital), cultural capital (linguistic knowledge), and institutionalized capital (academic and professional credentials) to find the employment that matches their qualifications (Schugurensky & Slade, 2008).

Immigrants experience the challenge of lack of social networks. In Sweden by law, all jobs must be advertised through the Swedish Public Employment Service (Lemaître, 2007, pp. 29-30). Although, commonly an individual obtains jobs through personal networks or contacts of friends and relatives. Two-thirds of job opportunities in Sweden are through informal recruitment means since the largest recruitment methods are through the social network system (ibid). According to Zenou, (2008) employment opportunities are usually passed on from one individual to another through network or contact of friends and relatives. This can be used as a tool for job search among immigrants since it is a word of mouth from their close friends and relatives (Zenou, 2008, p. 5). However, it is a long-term process for immigrants to build up new ties in the host communities, social networks, and relationships (Diaz, 1993). Due to a long process time to develop relationships, this is a challenge to most immigrants that can result in a disadvantage for them in the labour market (ibid).

Some scholars have expressed concerns of bias regarding foreign-sounding names which may exclude visible minorities from the labour market. Khosravi's (2011) study, *White masks/Muslim names: immigrants and name-changing in Sweden*, shows that the labour recruitment process in Sweden does not often favour immigrants with a non-Swedish sounding name more of those coming from Asian, African, and Slavic countries (Khosravi, 2011, p. 66). Bursell (2007) mentions that immigrants with non-Swedish names have fewer opportunities to obtain job interviews, or their resumes are more likely to be ignored by

employers (Bursell, 2007, p. 14). Thus, Ugandan immigrants with foreign Ugandan names are being forced to change their names to Swedish-sounding names in order to fit into the Swedish labour market standards.

Immigrants also experience a challenge of language barriers (Swedish). Previous research by Chiswick (1991) and Delander et al. (2005) suggests that proficiency in the language of the host country is one of the most important tools in the integration process, especially when it comes to labour market integration. Moreover, Chiswick & Miller (1996:19) have noted that knowledge of and proficiency in the language of the host country not only hasten the integration process, but also enhance the immigrant's possibility of economic success.

Swedish is the official language that is spoken in Sweden and used in all spheres of life such as in academia, labour market, etc. The Swedish government offers free Swedish programs to immigrants through Swedish for Immigrants (Svenska För Invandrare: SFI). According to OECD (2010), SFI provides the basic knowledge of the Swedish language and knowledge to immigrants about the Swedish society, helping immigrants to improve their performance in the Swedish labour market. This is echoed in other research which highlights the problems faced by immigrants with language barriers and learning Swedish (Lemaître, 2007, pp. 23-24). Has shown that immigrants in Sweden who lack sufficient knowledge of the Swedish language corroborates the finding of this study. This can thus impact their job acquisition and other aspects of their lives and survival in Swedish society. This is because, when migrants can communicate in the language of the host country, they can more easily integrate socially and economically into the society (Vandeyar, 2010, p. 350). When an individual does not know the language of the host society, the person may feel excluded or unwelcomed by the community (Vandeyar, 2010, p. 356).

However, Wiesborcok (2011) argues that the SFI program, "integration courses might increase the segregation of immigrants" (ibid, p. 59). Immigrants that take part in the introduction programs are being separated from the everyday life in the host country as a fact they only meet other immigrants (Wiesborcok, 2011, p. 59). Thus, the concept of a United Invitation helps to keep immigrants connected with the host country, as it also offers immigrants an opportunity to practice their Swedish.

Chiswick and Miller (1995) argue that for immigrants to reside in communities where the majority of inhabitants are natives, they are obliged stop speaking minority languages that

hinder them from becoming fluent in the host society's language (Chiswick & Miller, 1995, pp. 249-250).

Le Grand & Szulkin (2002), suggest that immigrants who lack specific skills for a host country have a clear disadvantage in the labour market. Specific skills can be learning a new language, accumulating work experience, and establishing connections with natives of the host country. This creates a big gap between immigrants and natives. Therefore, specific skills are very important in the increase of human capital for the immigrant's economic growth (Le Grand & Szulkin, 2002, p. 40). This can be interpreted that the poor knowledge of the Swedish language among immigrants is a big challenge to their economic integration in Sweden.

Finally, immigrants experience the challenge of discrimination in the Swedish labour market, similar to other parts of the world. Immigrants find it very difficult to obtain employment in the Swedish labour market due to their ethnic backgrounds and stereotypes of low productivity held by employers. As Knocke and Hertzberg (2000 as cited in Burns, 2011) state, statistical discrimination is evidenced during the recruitment process.

Manhica et al (2015) states that African immigrants are disadvantaged in the Swedish labour market due to stereotypes and discrimination. Gender discrimination is also a factor as many female immigrants can be disadvantaged due to stereotypes of their religious, ethnic, or racial background, or even due to a lack of employment due to childcare commitments (ibid). For many immigrant women, lower levels of human capital mean they have higher levels of unemployment or if employed, it is often in specific sectors in the labour market in Sweden – such as cleaning, housework, cooking etc., that may be beneath their ability level or potential (Manhica et al, 2015, p. 194-195).

Discrimination is the unfair treatment of people due to their gender, race, religion, or ethnicity in any given social group. Kraal et al state that 'ethnic discrimination' is a negative treatment towards someone believed to be belonging to a different ethnic class or group. The three scholars suggest that gender, race, and ethnicity act as the central dimensions of inequalities in the labour market (Kraal et al, 2009., p.12).

Diaz (1993) states that the discriminating behaviours and attitudes towards immigrants by natives and institutions are obstacles to the integration process into the host country.

Discrimination negatively impacts how immigrants can integrate into the host country. The

unfair treatment of minorities affects their participation in social relations tertiary Diaz, 1993, pp. 193-194).

Rydgren (2004, p.707) classifies discrimination of immigrants in Sweden into three mechanisms of exclusion; statistical discrimination (based on stereotypical thinking), network effects (ethnically homogeneous networks), and institutional discrimination. Statistical discrimination is a wide category of discrimination affecting immigrants (Rydgren, 2004, p. 708). For example, employers make decisions based on beliefs about the stereotypical characteristics of an individual belonging to a certain group of people. This leads to decisions made based on assumptions about a socio-ethnic group rather than on an individual's skills (Rydgren, 2004, p. 708). Rydgren (2004) states that key actors hold the key positions in the labour market discrimination of migrants in two ways:

- Firstly, by making decisions about the recruitment process that is based on stereotypical, often prejudiced, beliefs about group-specific characteristics rather than on individual merits (Rydgren, 2004, p. 698).
- Secondly, by choosing individuals that have been recommended by someone from their network recruitment.
- Finally, the state programs and legislation sometimes do have unintended consequences which may lead to institutional discrimination against immigrants (Rydgren, 2004, p. 698).

Network effects are another widespread practice that is common in the recruitment process enacted through networks of individuals (Rydgren, 2004, p. 711). "Those who are in a position to employ or promote people, etc. are likely to choose someone belonging to the same network" (Rydgren 2004, p. 711). Due to the disintegration of ethnically based immigrant networks in Sweden, on average such networks have fewer resources due to the fact they lack strong ties to high-status personnel holding positions of power (Rydgren, 2004, p. 711).

Rydgren (2004, pp. 711-712) refers to institutional discrimination as the unjust and discriminatory mistreatment of an individual or group of individuals by society and its institutions. As noted by Rydgren, institutional discrimination is evidenced in the Swedish labour market by requiring a good knowledge and understanding of the Swedish language (spoken and written) as the most important requirements. Höglund (2000: 27 as cited in Rydgren 2004) states that "moreover, as was stressed above, discrimination can also be a

result of unmotivated, exaggerated, and/or vague and perfunctory criteria for ‘social and communicative competence’, which sometimes are conflated with ‘Swedish social competence’ (Rydgren, 2004, p. 712). However, Bevelander (2004) notes that when immigrants are excluded from the labour market, this increases the total cost of social assistance the Swedish government needs to provide to those who are unemployed (Bevelander, 2004, p. 25).

In summary, one can reflect from the literature review that discrimination and other factors have contributed to high levels of unemployment among Ugandan immigrants in Sweden. Thus, this has created inequalities in employment positions and wages among immigrants and native Swedes. In this paper, I have examined and investigated the challenges that hinder access to meaningful employment for Ugandan immigrants in Sweden.

Chapter 3: Theoretical overview

Three concepts; human capital, social capital, and integration are outlined below to establish a theoretical framework to examine the challenges Ugandan immigrants experience within the Swedish labour market. These concepts are taken from previous studies of migration and integration and used to analyse the responses of participants interviewed by me.

3.1 Human Capital.

Human capital can be measured in the form of an individual’s social networks, health, language, education, qualifications, and working experience. Of everything mentioned above, education is stated to be the most significant tool required for integration (Bursell, 2015, p. 287). Human capital is an individual’s skills, education, capacity, and attributes of labour that affect people’s productive capability and earning potential (Pettinger, 2019). Marginson (1989, 1993 as cited in Tan 2014) explaining the Human Capital Theory asserts that, individuals through education and training can acquire knowledge and skills which is been referred to as human capital. Through the knowledge and skills, individuals can increase their productivity in their workplaces. “This increased productivity will bring a higher salary to the individual since the wage of a person, in the ideal labour market, is determined by the person’s productivity” (Tan, 2014, p. 413). Human capital is usually increased by people who invest in education and training which results in higher productivity rates and higher wages. Based on the above statement, it can be argued that earnings and education are positively associated and thus there should be the promotion of education and training to immigrants in the host country(ibid).

The neoclassical justification for the poor performance of immigrants relative to natives (Bursell, 2015, p. 287) is, it is claimed, due to a lack of human capital - there is poor productivity of immigrants compared to the natives. Human capital is important for individuals to obtain to be productive and attractive in the labour market (ibid). Nevertheless, Bursell suggests that Borja's idea of human capital is very useful for immigrants' integration. However, immigrants experience a temporary loss of it due to their movement from one country to another and it takes them some time to replace this in the new context of the host country (Bursell, 2015, p. 287).

3.2 Social Capital

Human capital theory operates in relation to social capital theory. Sobel (2002, p. 139) states that social capital can be used by individuals in groups and networks to secure benefits. According to Pierre Bourdieu (1986 as cited in Sobel, 2002): "Social capital is an attribute of an individual in a social context". An individual can obtain social capital through purposeful actions that can be transformed into conventional economic gains (Sobel, 2002, p. 139). Social capital is based on the social relationships of an individual in the host country and can only be evidenced when there is a specific social relationship change between immigrants and natives (Coleman, 1990, p. 262).

Putnam (2000: 19 as cited in Leonard, 2004, p. 928) suggests that "whereas physical capital refers to physical objects and human capital refers to properties of individuals, social capital refers to connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them". Putnam notes that neighbourhoods with a 'good' stock of social capital are likely to have lower crime figures, better health, higher educational achievement, and better economic growth (Leonard, 2004, p. 928).

Coleman (1988: 98) further argues that "social capital is viewed as a resource that can be drawn upon" (as cited in Leonard, 2004, p. 928). Social capital encourages certain actions that enable the success of equal benefits (Leonard, 2004, p. 928) but can be harmful to other individuals (Häuberer, 2011, p. 40). Individuals are being drawn into social structures characterized by high levels of outstanding obligations and effective sanctions. Therefore, social capital in the family and community plays a crucial role in creating human capital (individual skills and abilities) for the next generation (Leonard, 2004, p. 928).

There are many dimensions to be concerned with when dealing with social capital. However, Putman (2000: 22) critique by making a difference between "bonding (exclusive) and

bridging (inclusive)” social capital (Leonard, 2004, pp. 929-930). Those social relations are very important and have an impact on an individual’s life, determining their productivity and employability in society (ibid). Bonding social capital takes place in homogeneous populations, it is parochial and only helps those with internal access. It is an effective resource for groups of people (ethnic minority groups) who create niche economies, and its benefits are limited (ibid). Bonding social capital is developed by tight bonds of trust and solidarity. Briggs, Putnam (2000: 23) quotes that “bonding social capital is good for ‘getting by’ but bridging social capital is essential for ‘getting ahead’. It is this notion of bridging social capital that has captured the imagination of policy makers” (Leonard, 2004, p. 930). Putnam suggests that bridging social capital creates a way for obtaining other forms of capital like financial or human capital (ibid).

3.3 Integration

Integration is when an individual is willing to adopt the new values and pattern behaviours of the host country to match with the majority group of people (Berry, 2001, p. 619). The lack of an individual’s interest in cultural transformation leads to exclusion and poor integration of migrants which can be referred to as marginalization. Berry (2000 as cited in Berry, 2002, p. 619) states that integration is possible when the host society is open and inclusive in its orientation toward cultural diversity.

Bochner (1982 as cited in Ertorer, 2016, p. 1865) notes that the integration of individuals enables them to reach a synthesis between their home culture and host culture. Integration results in the promotion of intergroup harmony on the macro level, while, on the personal level, integration leads to the development of both personal growth and cultural preservation (Ertorer, 2016). Scholars like Zheng and Berry (1991) report that there is a lower experience of acculturative stress among the integrated individuals (Ertorer, 2016, p. 1865). Thus, integrated individuals feel a sense of belonging and are inclusive of the host culture.

Wessendorf & Phillimore (2019, 125-126) define social integration as a process that accepts new immigrants to be incorporated into the social structure in the host country. Through social integration, migrants are able to build new ties, social networks, and social relationships in the host country. Social integration results in increased social capital, hence leading to the economic integration through immigrants’ social networks that help them to gain access the labour market in the host country (Wessendorf & Phillimore, 2019, pp. 125-

126). Andersson (2007, p. 70) argues that the immigrant's access to the native networks is advantageous for their participation in the labour market.

Andersson states that residential areas and neighbourhoods have effects on immigrants' performance in labour markets. He goes ahead to mention that immigrants inhabiting in their ethnic communities in Sweden's three largest cities that are Stockholm, Gothenburg, and Malmo have disadvantages in income development (2007). "Andersson (2007) raises two main factors: a) external stigmas stereotypes of non-European immigrants by Swedish and (b) less functional informal networks of immigrants than those of native Swedish (p. 82). For these reasons, immigrants who live in segregated cities have difficulties in finding jobs and increasing their income".

3.5 Summary of the theoretical framework

Human capital, social capital, and integration are used as theoretical concepts to interpret and analyse the reported challenges experienced by Ugandan immigrants in the Swedish labour market. The concepts complement each other and give insight that bridges several related but distinct realms; integration and social order are useful concepts to examine and understand the opinions and experiences of the Ugandan immigrants into and within the Swedish labour market. Using only one theoretical concept would not yield as rich an understanding of the experiences of Ugandan immigrants, which is the aim of this research. Therefore, in this case, each of these concepts plays a vital role in processing the data received during the interviews with the participants.

Chapter 4: Methodological Framework

This chapter describes the methods, and techniques employed in collecting data for the study. It entails a description of the research design and the areas within which the study was conducted. It also highlights the sampling design, data collection methods as well as the sample size used for this study. The final section addresses important ethical and methodological concerns brought up during this research. The validity of this research and my role as a researcher (an 'insider') in this study is highlighted.

4.1 Research design

The methodological approach adopted for this study was the qualitative research method. Qualitative research is "an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts

the study in a natural setting” (Creswell, 2009). The qualitative research design helps to clearly appreciate the meaning people give to, and how they make sense of, their social realities (Pitse, 2010); As put forward by (Babbie & Benaquisto, 2002) it produces information that is richer in meaning.

4.2 Sampling technique

In this study, the purposive sampling technique was used to select participants. The mode of selection was criterion-based (Mason, 2002); Participants were chosen because they had “particular characteristics that will facilitate a detailed exploration of the central themes I seek to study” (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003, p. 78). Participants were purposefully chosen based on their Ugandan ethnicity to provide information relevant to the study.

The maximum variation and snowball sampling are the types of purposive sampling techniques that have been employed in this study to “understand how a phenomenon is seen and understood among different people, in different settings and at different times” (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006).

Snowball sampling was used to recruit participants for the study by asking them to help locate other members of that population whom they know in the area of primary data analysis. The main advantage of the snowball sampling method is that it can be used to recruit from the ‘hidden population’ of participants who would otherwise be difficult to find and recruit. The snowball sampling belongs to the set of link tracing approaches used in studies of hidden populations (Spren, 1992, pp. 47-49). This helps in taking advantage of an individual’s social network that is associated with the early identified participant, therefore, there is an existing link between the first participants and other potential participants who are being accessed via the early participant (ibid).

4.3 Sample size

The interviews were conducted with participants of Ugandan ethnicity residing in Malmö,

- Five participants aged between 20 to 45 years of age.
- Three male and two female participants.
- Have lived in Sweden for over 5 years.
- Employed or unemployed and with or without families,
- All the participants reside in Malmö.

However, because of the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, it was difficult to conduct interviews in person. Interviews were, therefore, conducted via Skype or Zoom. These interviews were recorded after the consent of each participant was obtained. I interviewed the same people two times, and the first interviews were conducted in November 2011 well as the second interviews were conducted between March and April of 2022.

4.4 Data collection

Reliable and varied research depends on the sources and methods of collecting information, and the use of available data. Data for the study was, therefore, collected from two main sources that are: Primary and Secondary sources

4.5 Primary Data – using semi-structured interviews

Primary data for this study was gathered through interviews as noted earlier. A semi-structured interview guide was designed based on the research questions and the objectives of the study to aid in the detailed exploration of the themes in the study, see Appendix 1. Three of the five interviews were conducted in the participant's native language, Luganda (the local language spoken in Uganda) which is also spoken fluently by me, instead of using English or Swedish. The interviews on average sessions lasted for about thirty minutes. The audio recordings were later transcribed into English.

Interviews are an efficient way of getting information “straight from the horse’s mouth” (Moses & Knutsen, 2012). The researcher functions as a key instrument during the interview sessions as he or she collects data and examines documents but must also keenly observe the behaviours of participants by interviewing them (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

In this study, I used the semi-structured interview approach. An open-ended interview strategy was employed to allow for further discussion and follow-up questions, adding more depth during the research process. By using the qualitative semi-structured interview method, I was able to inquire into each participant’s background, biography, and the challenges experienced by Ugandan immigrants to obtain jobs within the Swedish labour market.

Luganda contributed to the quality of the interviews as both parties understood each other very well, and the interviewee chose with which language they were most comfortable and expressive. However, there were some limitations during the research process that should be considered herein.

- Firstly, there was difficulty in finding participants due to a small population of Ugandan immigrants in Malmö. After agreeing on the scheduled interview time, some participants later declined while others did not have time to participate which led to the rescheduling of the interview time.
- Secondly, the research may suffer from confirmation bias because I also had similar experiences and backgrounds as the participants (Creswell, 2009).

The interviews were recorded and transcribed into English to generate the primary data. The data from all the interviews were well structured. Several vital concepts and topics were chosen from a review of the literature. While the theoretical framework was identified in accordance with the transcripts of the interviews.

Though the sample size of the interviews was small, it was suitable for the purposes and resources of this research. Interviews were conducted to gain a perspective on integration into Swedish labour market that encompassed the experiences of the five participants. Data from the interviews reflected individual experiences and events of the interviewees in relation to the answers they gave during the interviews. Analysis and conclusions to the research were then gleaned from the data collected during the research (May, 2011).

Background Characteristics of Participants: Ugandan Immigrants

Participant's Pseudonym	Age	Place of birth	Length of Stay	Swedish level	Education level	Employment	Quotes
Mary	28	Uganda	9 years	Beginners level (introduction to Swedish at university level)	Master's degree in social work	Bus driver	"One needs a good knowledge of the Swedish language to obtain a job as a social worker"
Niclas	32	Uganda	6 years	Studied SFI to level C	3 master's degrees in psychology and Medicine	Was a cleaner for 2 years, but for now his jobless	"My plan is to start up my own business but for now am a student"

Kenneth	45	Uganda	10 years	Finished SAS 1	Bachelor's in Finance & Accounting	IT assistant	"Applying for Finance roles and I can not find jobs in this field"
Linda	35	Uganda	8 years	Still studying SFI	Master of Science, MBA, and Post Doctorate, From UK	Cleaner (Run her own cleaning company)	"Planning to leave Sweden for UK, or Canada since they are English speaking countries"
Stefanos	24	Uganda	7 years	Finished SAS	Taxi driver and Cleaner in hotel	Biltvätt Diplom	"Am moving to UK next year as there are more opportunities for me than in Sweden"

Table 1.1 shows the participant's integration in the Swedish labour market

4.6 Ethical Issues

The foremost ethical issue considered was the risk of harm to participants vs my quest to know (Bryman, 2012). Participants gave their consent which was obtained in written form, after the aim and significance of the study had been explained to them. Each participant was informed that participation was purely voluntary, and that consent could be revoked by them at any time. In an interview-based approach, reliability, validity, and ethical concerns of research rely on clear communication between me and the interviewees (Gajjar, 2013).

- Firstly, the participants could stop at any time if they felt uncomfortable.

- Secondly, I was aware of all my participants age, gender and cultural background involved in the study.
- Thirdly, I anonymized all my participants

4.7 Validity of the study

Silverman (2014) notes that validity can be improved through triangulation. Other sources of data may be used to validate the results after the initial data collection (Silverman, 2014).

Data can be confirmed by comparison to other, similar studies being identified in the literature review and used in the data analysis section.

With interview reliability, results should corroborate findings in previous research conducted under similar circumstances (Creswell, 2009, p. 271). Although qualitative methods may not always be easily reproducible, they contribute to a wider research literature and deepen scholarly understanding of a topic. In this case, challenges experienced by Ugandan immigrants in and within the Swedish labour market.

4.8 My role as a researcher in qualitative methods

Here it is important to discuss the role of the researcher vis-à-vis objectivity and subjectivity. Qualitative methods are more suited to deepening an understanding of a phenomenon or set of phenomena, and this cannot be done from a purely objective standpoint.

My role as a researcher was to realize, reflect and ask questions. Despite all the attempts of being objective during the research, there was no doubt that my subjective position had influenced the way that interviewees understood and interpreted the research questions. This was made possible by the insider position I have had as a researcher. Since I am also a Ugandan immigrant in Sweden so, this made it possible for me to reflect on and make meaning of the experiences of these participants.

The benefits of the insider perspective to qualitative studies have been highlighted in research. May (2011) argues that it is very important for the researcher to be familiar with the problems that are being researched, because he or she must be aware of the content of the data they record and analyze. As I am also of Ugandan ethnicity living in Sweden there was a pre-existing understanding of the specific context (May, 2011).

As Silverman (2014) notes, ethics are an important concern to be considered during research, especially qualitative research as a researcher should endeavour not to misrepresent the views and experiences of those they study. Of course, any qualitative researcher, by virtue of not

denying subjectivity, runs the risk of becoming unscientific or becoming something other than research (Silverman, 2014). This can be remedied by following the principles of ethical qualitative research, ethical safeguards, and taking seriously the ethical complications inherent in qualitative research. This necessitates ethical guidelines to interpret within particular contexts (ibid).

4.9 Research bias

With my own experience of the issues discussed, this research has been conducted as objectively as possible. Having personal experience with a subject is both advantageous, granting easier access and familiarity with the subject, and disadvantageous as having a personal investment in a politically and socially controversial subject can risk producing biased analysis. However, I have endeavoured to correct my own bias, and as this research is more qualitative and interpretive in nature than quantitative and positivist, the epistemological claims of this research are not as dependent view from nowhere.

However, I was able to overcome my own biases by

- Not reporting non-existing data which were never done during interviews (data fabrication).
- As an insider, I tried to control my feelings and emotions by remaining calm. As I took deep breaths and focusing on the positive part of my research.
- I made sure to analyze all my data, even if it didn't seem useful.
- I used indirect and open-ended questions during my research.
- I avoided drawing conclusions about the causality.
- I avoided drawing conclusions about the values outside the range of the observed data (extrapolation) during my research.
- I made sure not to overgeneralize my study conclusions to the entire general population.

Simundic (2017:15) notes that “bias in research can cause distorted results and wrong conclusions”.

4. 10 The research process as a whole

It is important to note that this study is iterative, in the sense that both inductive and deductive research approaches were used in forming the focus of this research, and in developing a theoretical framework that works best to analyze the interviewees' transcripts.

Topics that were identified from the literature review such as the economic integration of immigrants in Sweden, and challenges experienced by Ugandan immigrants in and within the Swedish labour market. Theoretical concepts and theoretical framework, human capital, social capital, and integration as shaped the semi-structured interview questions.

Chapter 5: Analysis and Discussion of results

The analysis of results is arranged according to the theoretical framework and key concepts of human capital, social capital, and integration. Processes of acceptance and rejection occur constantly within the social realm. My focus for this research was to examine the challenges experienced by Ugandan immigrants within the Swedish labour market.

5.0 The challenges experienced by Ugandan immigrants in the Swedish labour market:

Evidence from the previous research indicates that immigrants experience discrimination in the Swedish labour market due to poor knowledge of the Swedish language, non-Swedish sounding names, lack of social network, lack of human capital, discrimination in the hiring process, and non-recognition of immigrant foreign academic qualifications and skills.

5.1 Discrimination in the hiring process

Regarding the experiences of discrimination against immigrants in the hiring process, some of the participants indicated negative opinions about their skin colour. Blackness affected their chances of having access to the Swedish labour market. For example, one participant was of the view that when she spoke with her potential employers on the phone, she felt that the interview had gone on well as she was granted a second face-to-face interview. She indicated that the employers' facial impressions changed upon seeing her. When I asked her to describe those facial reactions, Mary had this to say:

"I applied to a company that dealt in social work with family and children, he called me for an interview, and when I got there, he was shocked to see that I was Black-skinned. The interviewer said, "you did not sound Black; you did not speak like a Black person, you were frequent in Swedish?" And my response was, that I am dark-skinned. You know what? I did not feel comfortable going on with the interview again due to that statement".

Some immigrants had to change their surnames to Swedish-sounding names to improve their attractiveness in the Swedish job market, Niclas stated:

"I changed my surnames after applying for a bunch of jobs and always received a negative response stating, 'that the employer had moved on with other participants' or no response at all. But after

changing my Ugandan surname to a Swedish-sounding one, out of ten jobs I apply for, I can receive between four to eight positive responses calling me for a job interview”.

Kenneth believes that having a foreign name reduces the chance of being called for an interview when one applies for a job. He stated

“My son was born and grow up in Sweden; despite he obtained a bachelor's and master's degree in technical science from Chalmers University, he found it difficulties to find a qualified job that matches his academic qualifications due to his perceived foreign name, after his graduation when he changed his name and family name to the Swedish sounding names he could easily found a qualified job, and currently he has a high position at his workplace”

Research shows that the labour recruitment process in Sweden does not often favour immigrants with a non-Swedish sounding name more of those coming from Asian, African, and Slavic countries (Khosravi, 2011, p. 66).

It is believed by some of the participants that there is a ‘Swedish systematic labour market inequalities’ that exists due to the discrimination suffered by immigrants in the hiring and wages paid. Some explained that discrimination is based on the ethnic gap that exists between the ethnic minority and ethnic majority. As explained by the participants that the differences in cultural and social norms of immigrants and that of the native Swedes might make employers employ a native Swede instead of an immigrant that has a different cultural norm. The employers believe that employing a native Swede with Swedish labour experience will lead to maximum profitability.

Linda thought that she has not been discriminated against in the Swedish labour market, but she believes that ‘ethnicity plays a big role in the Swedish labour market because employers do not appreciate people who are different from them in the labour market. She said

“The employees choose individuals who have Swedish labour market experience or choose a native Swede, and it is understandable that they can feel more comfortable with native Swedes rather than immigrants”

Kenneth and Stefenos believe that discrimination is one of the main factors that have created inequalities in wages and job positions between native Swedes and immigrants. They mentioned that the ethnic background of an individual plays an important role when it comes

to highly qualified jobs. Niclas said that it is hard to notice direct discrimination when immigrants are searching for employment.

“I felt that I have been discriminated but it is hard to see it, or it is difficult to prove. I believe that discrimination is one of the factors responsible for immigrants not finding qualified employment”
(Niclas)

Mary also believes that discrimination is the ‘biggest factor’ preventing immigrants from having qualified employment. She said that the Swedes are xenophobic as she notes

“Ethnicity plays a big role in an individual’s life, especially for those who come from Africa.... many Swedes do not want immigrants to have a high position over them even they do not want you to have the same position as them. They like immigrants to work in the low positions so they can order them”

5.2 The poor knowledge of the Swedish language

Three of the participants believe that the lack of the Swedish language is one of the main ‘obstacles’ limiting immigrants from finding qualified employment. Mary believes that not being fluent in the Swedish language is the biggest obstacle to her finding a qualified job while the other participants believe that their poor knowledge of the Swedish language is one of the obstacles limiting her from finding a qualified job, but not as a major factor.

Linda who is still studying her Swedish language course (SFI) at the final level and can speak, read, and write well Swedish for communicative purposes, believes that the Swedish language is one of the main barriers limiting her from finding jobs that are commensurate with her education. She claimed;

“Studying SFI has no sure guarantee to gain a job in Sweden more so in the more professional arena. I wish to have a suitable job, but having a suitable job means having good skills in the Swedish language that is impossible.”

Kenneth who completed the Swedish (SAS) in which the individual must be able to speak and write Swedish well enough believes will help him to get employed in the Swedish labour market. He stated that working as an IT person does not require a high level of fluency in the Swedish language since many IT companies are using English as the working language; knowing (speaking and writing) Swedish only gives an individual a better chance to find qualified employment and a better position in the Swedish labour market. Kenneth believes that the Swedish language was one of the obstacles that prevented him to find employment in Finance & Accounting sector. He stated

“Swedish Language is one of the obstacles that an individual has to overcome in order to be capable of having competitive opportunities in the Swedish labour market”

The above excerpts highlight that while getting the first foot into the Swedish labour market for immigrants is difficult, the introduction of SFI has not translated into increased job opportunities and greater employment rates for immigrants. This could be because it provides only basic comprehension and speech of Swedish, which does not meet the requirement of jobs in Sweden. According to the researcher’s scan of job announcements on Arbetsformedlingen, the country’s public work agency for the support and labour market integration of immigrants, almost all the job listings demanded mastery of Swedish and communicative competence.

Stefanos who has completed all his Swedish language courses (SAS) believes that his language skills still are not measured at a high professional level. He believes that the Swedish language is one of the biggest barriers to his not finding a qualified job in Sweden.

“I would have got an employment that will pay me higher salary alongside better position and with a career opportunity if I had better Swedish Language skills”.

Kenneth who has completed (SAS 1) believes that Swedish is one of the main obstacles limiting him from finding a suitable job. He explained that his Swedish language skills are well enough for lower-skilled employment, but when it comes to employment that is related to his educational level, he feels that his Swedish language skills are not good enough to get him a job as an accountant. He pointed out

“To find a qualified job you need to have high Swedish language skills. For instance, in employment as accountant high skills in the Swedish language are needed. In this case, many Swedish accountant companies do not want to hire individuals that are not fluent in Swedish to do accounting for their clients”.

Stefanos who also completed (SAS) which is one of the requirements to the Swedish labour market as employers always include this in the requirement section when advertising job opportunities, believes that the Swedish language is the key to integrating into the Swedish labour market because he believes that the Swedish language is one of the main barriers limiting immigrants from finding qualified jobs which correspond with their academic qualifications. He claimed

“The poor knowledge of the Swedish language leads you unemployment or to hold lower-skilled employment in Sweden that does not match immigrant’s academic qualifications as of all the professional jobs in Sweden requires good knowledge of Swedish language”.

This implies that knowledge of the Swedish language is one of the most important skills an individual should possess to get a job and subsequently integrate into the Swedish labour market, irrespective of one’s academic credentials and the type of job.

This indicates that the lack of proficiency in the Swedish language is one of the main challenges that limit immigrants from obtaining jobs that match their academic qualifications. Swedish is one of the requirements requested into the Swedish labour market, which means immigrants need to have a clear knowledge of it to communicate and gain employment.

Ugandan immigrants in Sweden do not speak the Swedish language regularly and they continue to use Luganda and English instead of Swedish for communication.

Mary stated that.

“When I meet up with my fellow Ugandans, we communicate in Luganda or English and with other people we communicate in English rather than Swedish”.

Findings indicated that the majority of the native Swedes can understand and speak the English language. Nevertheless, it is not enough for immigrants to only understand the English language as most of the employment sectors prefers using Swedish as the main means of communication in workplaces. Consequently, immigrants’ good knowledge of the Swedish language opens more opportunities for them in the Swedish labour market. Niclas lamented that.

“It is not easy to learn a new language and speak it like a native, and most people in Sweden speak English so, there is no pressure with studying Swedish, not like in the Arab countries where few Arabs can understand and speak English”.

5.3 The lack of social network

According to participant's experiences ‘social network plays an important role’ in immigrant employment in the Swedish labour market all of them felt that they were unable to get suitable jobs since they lacked social networks as they felt that lack of contacts was one of the significant problems restricting them from getting suitable employment. The participants noted that the role of social networks should not be undervalued because human beings usually belong to one or another group.

“One of the ways of gaining easy access to the Swedish labour market is through having a good social network with the Swedish natives” Linda Said

The participants explained that most employers would prefer to employ a person that was referred to them by an individual they know of. More so, three out of five of my participants said they found their jobs through personal contacts (social contacts) while two of them got their first jobs through applying on the Swedish Public Employment Service website- Arbetsförmedlingen. Kenneth claimed

“Having social network helps in boosting the value of an individual thereby assisting him/her in getting a job through one of his/her social network contacts”.

Furthermore, participants mentioned that it is difficult making friends with the native Swedes in order to be able to create contacts that could help them in finding jobs that they are qualified for. They explained that creating contact with the native Swedes is very difficult due to the homogenous nature of Sweden as they noted that ‘Swedes are not so sociable’.

According to Mary and Stefanos, they are unable to establish contact with the native Swedes because they reside in a segregated area of Malmö mainly inhabited by foreigners.

Mary noted that she felt anxious and uncomfortable speaking with native Swedes due to fear of using language phrases that could make them unhappy.

“I think I lack information about the Swedish cultural and social norms, this limits me from making friends with Swedes”.

Some Participants reported that ‘the lack of information about cultural and social norms’ makes them unable to integrate into Swedish society. Niclas claimed,

“Native Swedes are not informed of immigrant cultural and social norms as well as immigrants are also not familiar with Swedish culture hence making it almost impossible for the two groups to be friends with each other”.

Linda who had found the lower-skilled job through her contact believes that having a social network with the right individuals can be extremely helpful. She argued that she has had good enough contact with native-peer Swedes and her partner is a Swede, but she could not take advantage of them in getting a suitable job because most of her contacts are individuals who work in lower-skilled employment, well as her partner works in a different field that he cannot offer her any job. She claimed

“I have a Swedish partner, many Swedish friends, but do not have a personal contact that can help me to find a job, since most of my friends are employed in low skilled jobs like me, with no job offers for me. My Swedish partner works in a different field; she works in the field of economy and accounting she cannot help me with a job offer”.

Kenneth and Stefanos were able to find jobs through contacts with individuals who have an immigrant background. They revealed that if they have contact with native Swedes who work in a qualified job, they could be more helpful to find qualified jobs. All the two individuals argued that social network is main the channel for finding suitable employment in Sweden.

Kenneth

“Many times, finding a job depends on the personal contact you know, for instance, if you have social networks with the individuals who work in lower-skilled employment there will be only lower-skilled employment chances available for you, if you have contact with individuals within high qualified employment, there will more opportunities for you to find qualified employment in the Swedish labour market”.

Mary indicated that having good social contact with individuals who work in a qualified job for example those who work in the education field is of extreme advantage for her in finding a qualified job. She mentioned that

“My husband has formed a social network with some teachers and the principal at Malmö International school where he works as an English teacher, this social network has given him a job as a teacher”.

All five participants argued that lack of social contact is one of the ‘major challenges’ preventing them from finding qualified employment that matches their academic qualifications in the Swedish labour market. As they believe that in Sweden high skilled jobs can only be gotten through social network contact with individuals in high-skilled jobs.

As Mary mentioned,

“One of the times I had been in a work conference organized by the Swedish Public Employment Service it was told that nearly 60 percent of individuals in Sweden find a job through personal social networks”

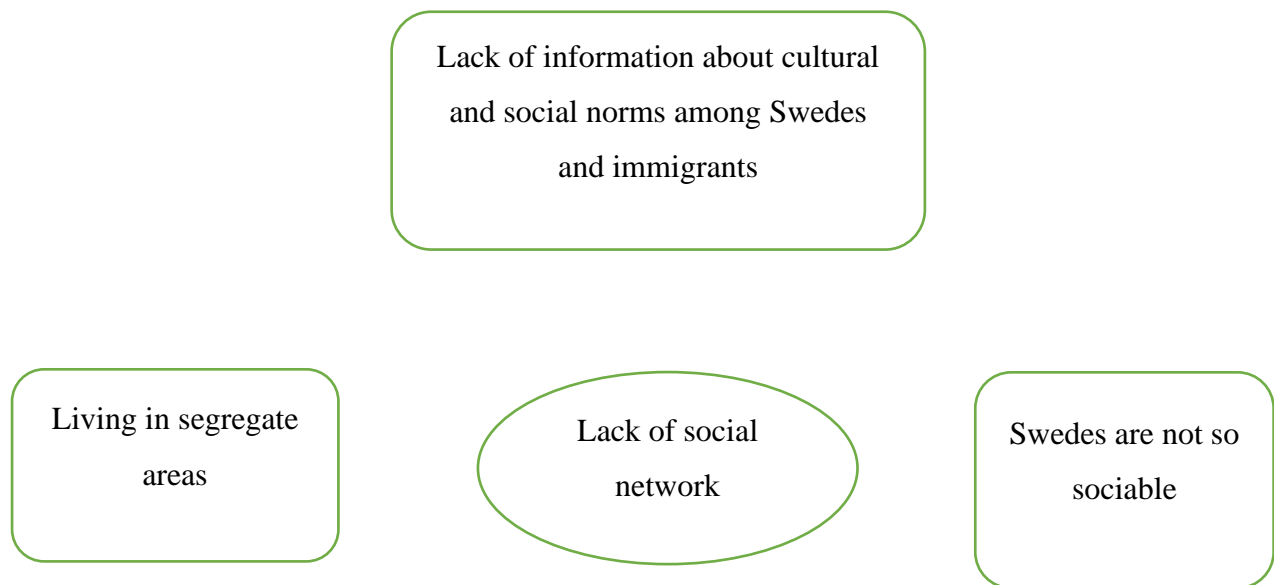


Figure 1.2: Factors that hinders participants from creating social network with native Swedes.

5.4 The lack of human capital

Human capital are skills that an individual has and includes academic qualifications, work experience, language proficiency, social and relationship networks which help to increase an individual productivity and employment opportunities. It is true that human capital plays an important role in the Swedish labour market integration in terms of ensuring that the individual obtains employment, unfortunately from previous knowledge, it can be mentioned that immigrants, especially those from African countries have their human capital devalued because it was being obtained outside of Sweden.

Linda claimed that;

“Although I am having a Master of Science, MBA, and Post Doctorate that I obtained from the United Kingdom unfortunately I cannot make good use of it here in Sweden. Since I lack good knowledge of the Swedish labour market in terms of Swedish work experience, Swedish work skills and social networks”.

She went ahead to note:

“Additionally, immigrants can be required to study some courses in order to be employed in certain departments in the Swedish labour market, instead of using that time to search for jobs”.

My study has shown that immigrants with university education backgrounds as well as work experiences have found it difficult in transferring their skills to match the Swedish labour market standards. It is stated in Bursell's article that migrants suffer a temporary loss of

human capital when they migrate from one country to another and it may take them some years to replace those in the new context of the new host country (Bursell, 2015, pg.287). These studies indicate that immigrants do not have equal opportunities like natives in the labour market of the host country because they lack the skills required for the labour market standards. As the skills, immigrants acquire do not receive the same value as that of the natives in the host country.

“I obtain a master’s degree in social work and I was working as a social worker with families and children support in Uganda. Since I came to Sweden, I failed to obtain an employment under my fiddle of academic qualifications and now working as a bus driver”. Mary

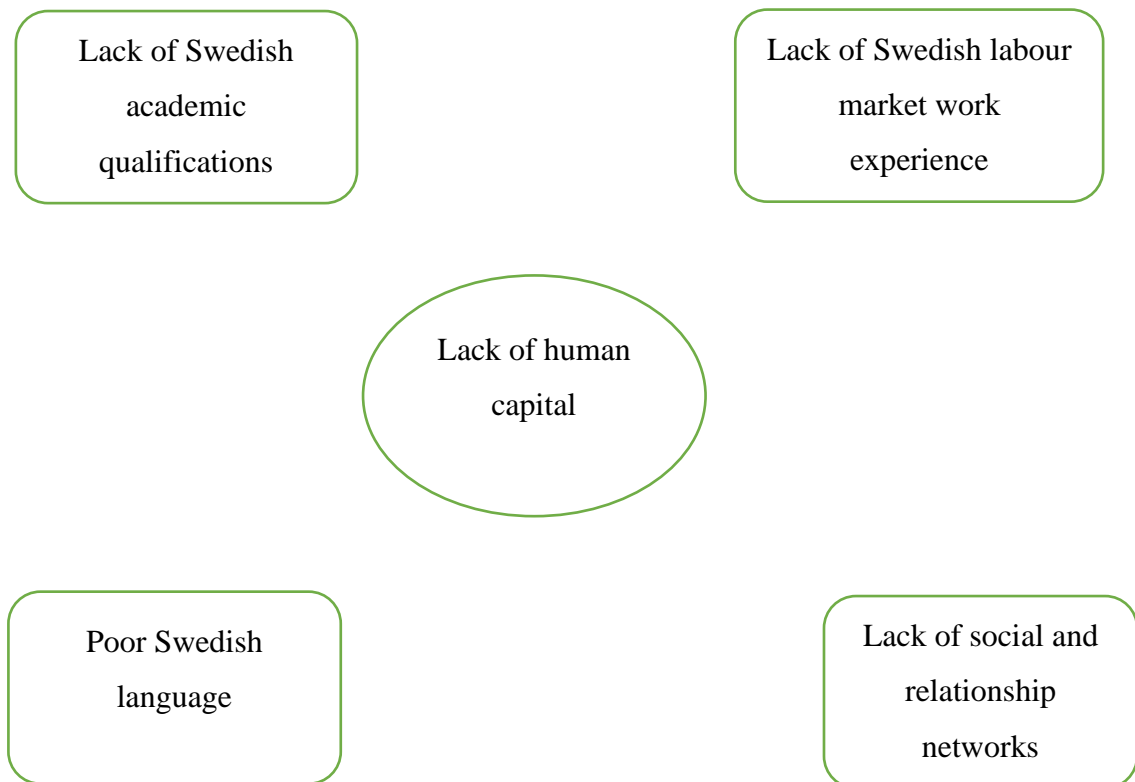


Figure 1.3: Factors that indicating why participants are lacking human capital.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

I have presented in this paper the participants' experiences of exclusion in the Swedish labour market through the social, human capital, and integration lens. Based on the data of this paper, Ugandan immigrants find it difficult to navigate their way into and within the Swedish labour market as discrimination being the main challenge, they experience among others which include, the lack of social network, non-Swedish sounding names, poor knowledge of the Swedish language, and the non-recognition of foreign academic qualifications and skills immigrants obtain from other countries. Based on the literature review by Lemaître (2007) showed that Swedish employers seem not to trust foreign academic qualifications as employers think that they are low to match the Swedish labour market standards. Thus, immigrants are believed to have poor performance in the Swedish labour market.

Additionally, the study revealed that there is a devaluation of human capital in the Swedish labour market. Immigrants are often unable to benefit from their skills and employment experiences to obtain employment in the Swedish labour market. A social network is an important factor for immigrants in Sweden. Through social networks, an individual can get quick and fast access to employment, thus helping to reduce the unemployment rate among immigrants in Sweden. Foreign immigrant academic qualifications usually do not match the Swedish labour market standards, and this requires them to go for further studies at the university so, as to obtain qualified employment.

According to my study, immigrants experience a challenge of language barriers, Swedish is the official language that is used in all spheres of life in Sweden as well as one of the requirements an individual must obtain to integrate into the Swedish labour market. Immigrants are required to study Swedish programs (SFI) for them to have a good knowledge of the Swedish language to be able to effectively communicate with others at work by reading, speaking, and writing. Employers require Swedish as one of the essential requirements needed when hiring employees. However, Ugandan immigrants participating in the integration measures in Sweden such as studying SFI, and introduction programs are prevented from using this time more efficiently in job seeking or taking part in everyday Swedish life since they only meet other immigrants. In that way, integration courses may result into increased segregation rather than the promotion of integration of Ugandan immigrants and native Swedes as criticized by Wiesbrock (2011: 59).

Nevertheless, my study indicated that many Ugandan immigrants with non-Swedish names are being forced to change their names to Swedish-sounding ones for them to obtain employment. This clearly shows that structural discrimination exists in the Swedish labour market as employers tend to employ individuals with Swedish names than those with foreign names. This is an obstacle limiting Ugandan immigrants from applying for jobs.

Most immigrants slowly tend to obtain the host country's specific skills such as language learning, creating social networks with natives, and gaining labour market experiences. Also, employing Ugandan immigrants can be of economic value to Sweden as their participation in the Swedish labour market can lead to the economic growth of the country; Swedish employers should consider this fact when discriminating against Ugandan immigrants in the process of hiring in the Swedish labour market. Immigrants face a challenge of informal discrimination in attempting to navigate their way into the labour market, for example highly educated immigrants are often forced to take on positions that are under their professional qualifications

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Appendix 1: Interview guide in English language

A. Background information

1. When did you come to Sweden?
2. How old are you?
3. Are you married or single?
4. What is your level of education (primary, secondary or tertiary)?
5. What degree/s have you achieved? In which country did you obtain this education?
6. What was your profession in your country of origin?
7. Are you able to use your education from your country of origin? If not, why?

B. Language skills

1. Can you fluently speak and understand the Swedish language? (You can please choose. fluent/close to native, good, poor, I am the beginner)
2. Please explain what has influenced the level of your language proficiency
3. How long did it take you to study Swedish?
4. Did you study SFI?

C. Economic integration. Please make sure not to answer merely "yes" or "no". Try to be as detailed as possible in your explanations.

1. What is your current job in Sweden? Is it within your line of profession?
2. How long did it take you to obtain that job? What was helpful in obtaining it and what were the obstacles you faced?
3. Are you pleased with your current job? If yes, why? If not, why?

4. With your own personal experience, do you think that the Swedish labour market is welcoming to Ugandan immigrants? May you explain what can make you think so?
5. What kind of human capital do a migrant need to have to enhance their participation into the Swedish labour market? (Skills, academic qualifications, experience etc), How does that enhance the immigrant's participation into the labour market?
6. Form your personal experience, do you think the introduction programs offered immigrants enhance their chances of again access into the Swedish labour market? (Studying of Swedish (SFI) What do you have to say?

Yes, those introduction programs help immigrants as they try to navigate their ways into the Swedish labour market.

D. Social integration: may you provide details as possible in your descriptions.

1. Do you have many close friends in Sweden?
2. How many of you close friends are Swedes?
3. How did you get to know those Swedes? (From school when studying SFI or workplace)
4. Are you involved in any associations here in Sweden (political, hobby, athletic etc)? why are you?
5. What language do you speak with your Swedish friends? Why?
6. From personal experiences, what are your impressions about Swedes' attitudes towards immigrants? What do you have to say about it?
7. Do you think having social networks is important for someone to succeed into the Swedish labour market? why?

E. Those questions focus on the challenges that have been experienced by immigrates onto the Swedish labour market. Please provide details as possible in your descriptions.

1. What challenges do you experience onto the Swedish labour market?
2. In your own personal opinion, how can an individual resolve those challenges



Appendix 2: Consent form

Approval to take part in this research study

Name of department: Global political studies

Title of the study: The Challenges experience by African Immigrants in the Swedish Labour Market: A Case of Ugandans

I confirm that have read and understood the information about the project as provided in the participant information sheet by the research dated 15/03/2022.

I confirm that I have had the opportunity to ask questions and the researcher has answered any questions about the study to my satisfaction.

I understand my participation is voluntary and that am free to withdraw from the project at any given time, without having to give a reason and without any consequences. I can also withdraw my data from the study at any time.

I understand that any information recorded in the investigation will remain confidential and no information that identifies me will be made publicly available.

I consent to use of the data in research, publications, sharing and archiving as explained in the participant information sheet.

Participant Name.....

Signature of Participant..... Date.....

Interviewers Name.....

Signature of Interviewer..... Date.....