



Integration Trainings for Immigrants: Strengths, Challenges and Needs for its Improvement

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ABSTRACT

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Finland has experienced accelerating migration in recent years. Immigrant population has become more diverse. Compared to earlier times newcomers have moved to Finland for rather various reasons from different parts of the world. Increasing and diverse immigrant population has driven researches examining the effects of integration trainings to promote social inclusion of foreigners.

This study joined urgent discussion on the topic with the goal to explain integration trainings efficiency. The research aimed to describe strengths of integration measures, scrutinize challenges and present identified needs for improving its functionality.

The analysis is based on face-to-face interviews with 22 respondents. The sample represented the whole group of 14 experts working with immigrants at Employment and Economic Development Office in Tampere, 3 teachers and 5 management representatives from 4 training providers what depicted all levels of modularized trainings.

Research findings indicated that integration trainings were efficient for motivated skilled immigrant learners with no particular needs. However, results showed that integration services were not ample for heterogeneous customer groups. Furthermore, the study proved that rigid training schedule, limited courses, and fixed number of learners to enroll in groups, reduced flexibility in service selection and negatively affected use of the fullest potential. Overall, the findings reflected the general stance that outcomes of integration trainings depended on many factors and only those services were not enough to achieve all set objectives.

Those results show that in order to make integration trainings more efficient, it is necessary to provide versatile services and various options considering the stages of integration and diversity of immigrant customers. In addition, objectives must be reconsidered to delineate realistic expectations and goals for trainings.

Key words: integration, immigrant, training, TE-office, Tampere

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Migration inflow in Finland has been rising from year to year. According to OECD (2018) Finland has been one of the fastest growing countries with regard to immigrant population in the OECD. Upward trend is expected to continue. Immigration will rise to a new record within coming years.

As stated in the Government Resolution on the Integration Programme (2012) foreign inhabitants will increase up to half a million by the 2030. Based on study on regional development, Association of Finnish municipalities forecasted that foreign language population increases by 2 times if immigration flow remains at least the same as it is today. Strongest growth is expected in Helsinki metropolitan area, but secondly largest cities are Turku and Tampere. (Kuntaliitto 2020.)

Furthermore, immigrant population in Finland has become more diverse. While the number of asylum seekers have reduced compared to the previous years, legal changes made migration to Finland easier for other groups of students, experts, and entrepreneurs (Migration review 2019). There has been significant increase in labour and family migration from various parts of the world (Statistics Finland 2018; EMN 2018; Finnish Immigration Service 2019).

In the light of growing immigration and greater heterogeneity in immigrant groups, the efficiency of integration trainings has attracted much attention. Those trainings are considered to have significant role in facilitating immigrants' incorporation into Finnish society by providing necessary skills and guidance to newcomers (Ohranen, Vaarala & Tammelin-Laine 2017, 274).

Speaking Finnish is believed to be important for overall integration. It is accepted that proficient language skills bring better access to education, employment, and social interaction with mainstream society (Intke-Hernandez & Holm 2015; OECD 2018). On the other hand, workplaces mixing immigrants

with locals are assumed to support best language learning and understanding of Finnish culture (Uusikylä, Tuominen, Reuter & Mäkinen 2005; Kotouttamisen toimivuus 2019; Karinen, Kortelainen, Luukkonen & Jauhola 2020a).

Accordingly, standard procedure of integration starts from language learning, but it includes various trainings to enhance immigrants civic and working life skills necessary to cope up with their new life in Finland.

However, how trainings achieve its objectives, what are its real effects and potential had been an issue of a long-standing debate.

Although considerable amount of research has been conducted on integration trainings, big part of them demonstrate opinion extremity. Some of the researches tend to be more oriented to critiquing the whole process while the other part, mostly study reports done by or for the Finnish government focus on the positive sides and good practices first and present suggestions without pointing out concrete failures. This ends up in conflicting data what is difficult to understand and interpret impartially but gives reasons for prejudices depending who the reader is.

There are two major perspectives on functionality of integration trainings. As a researcher of antiracism and social justice Kurki (2018) argues, integration measures are going round in circle. Similarly, Masoud, Holm and Brunila (2019) claimed that performativity-based integration measures often become reason for doing things just for doing while possibilities are limited to predefined choices. The same authors describe integration trainings as form of external influence over immigrants to intendance their integration rather than avail skill development (Masoud, Kurki & Brunila 2020).

Moreover, integration measures implemented as labour market trainings with a focus on language proficiency and employment is much criticized for two key reasons. First, it is argued that language is not enough for integration. Kärkkäinen (2017) stated directly that language to be key to integration is invented and imaginary. In addition, number of studies suggest that different language skills are needed in different situations (Tarnanen, Rynkänen &

Pöyhönen 2015; Kärkkäinen 2017; Kotouttamisen toimivuus 2019). Therefore, Finnish level B1 as set target for integration trainings is conceded incoherent.

Employment is also explained as a result of rather broad-ranging reasons than enough professional or language skills gained during integration trainings. Krutova, Lipiäinen and Koistinen (2016) asserted that immigrants labour market integration should be understood as a long process relating to immigrants' social positions, life situations, individual resources among many other factors.

Accordingly, language and job placements could not be considered as reliable and accurate indicator of trainings efficiency and immigrants' integration. In addition to above mentioned critique, unequally distributed services, lack of appropriate trainings, poor guidance and selected matchless measures with immigrants' needs is discussed as weakness of integration trainings (Viren, Telkki & Voutilainen 2011; MEE 2016; Karinen et al. 2020a; Karinen, Kortelainen, Luukkonen & Jauhola 2020b; Karinen, Luukkonen & Oosi 2020d).

However, there are number of reports claiming that competent staff, interaction with customers, advising and considering their abilities and motivations are key strengths of integration services (Sarvimäki & Hämäläinen 2016).

Mostly reports done by or for Finnish government evaluates trainings positively in general, although recognizes development needs. The recent survey by Karinen et al. (2020c) conducted as part of the project *At home in Finland* coordinated by the Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for Uusimaa asserted that integration trainings worked well and were beneficial in most cases. However, as it is explained in the report immigrants' satisfaction with those measures depended on many factors among them immigrants' country of origin and educational background.

Observations presented by NAOF (2018) suggested that integration trainings were rather efficient in terms of language learning compared with voluntary studies. At the same time, audit findings showed that less than 35% of participants achieved set target of B1 in the years of 2013-2016.

Language often becomes a barrier for immigrants to continue professional studies or move to work life. As stated in OECD report (2018) immigrants cannot benefit diverse possibilities available for them without sufficient common of Finnish language.

Such observations lead to the assumption in public discussion and within immigrant groups that integration services are not that efficient. Saukkonen (2016) adduced that one of the reasons for that doubt and dissatisfaction by the integration measures could be higher promises of Finnish multiculturalist policies compared against real accomplishments.

Those discussions presented above shows that researches on functionality of integration trainings abound, but findings are contradictory. Conflicting results of previous studies has thrown up questions in need for further investigation. At the same time new types of migration pressures expanding in diversity arouses wide interest to explore how to get prepared for changes and improve measures in order to meet changing needs of immigrant population.

Integration trainings and its potential to better support integration process has been central issue in recent years. The topic gains increasing importance day by day.

Previous studies indicate that consistent, systematic and continuous researchers are needed to explain integration training efficiency and to understand how functional they are based on different indicators. NAOF (2018) concluded that there was not enough evidence to evaluate integration trainings impact on language skills development and employment as objectives of the measures. Similarly, Report of the Audit Committee approved by the Parliament (Kotouttamisen toimivuus 2019) convinced that information was insufficient to describe integration measures functionality for individual and different groups of immigrants.

Existing body of data presents quite perpetual arguments on strengths, challenges and development areas for integration trainings. Many hypotheses seem to be generalized under recognized topics. Discussions about immigrant

diversity is limited to bigger groups such as refugees, women or people with no prior education. Concrete, individual examples are not delineated sufficiently to show what happens in everyday practices. Individual context when explaining diversity is still lacking. Studies give big picture of integration practices but little details what might be significantly influential in the process recurring daily is obviated and ignored. Less attention is given to trivial facts what experts of integration services at Employment and Economic Development office (TE-officer) and integration trainings educators observe and consider to be important.

Along with heterogeneity, majority of studies name lack of financial and human resources to be one of the key limitations to provide better services matching diverse needs of immigrants (Karinen et al. 2020a). However, detecting various versions and perspectives what could be done with the same resources but in different ways is not discussed thoroughly.

One of the main problematic issues based on previous studies is lack of communication and collaboration between parties. While researches have potential to help building better connection by passing knowledge and messages in various directions.

The question how integration trainings function in practice needs meaningful and deliberate understanding. There is need for additional studies what brings awareness on factual and visible strengths and weakness of integration trainings along with sensible and pragmatic suggestions possible to implement for all practical purposes.

To change the reality for better it is vitally important first to realize the truth about success and failures beyond experiences. What works well in practice, where major challenges are and why, how to improve future prospects through collective experience remains unclear.

1.2 Research objectives, questions and relevance

The major goal of the study was to describe functionality of integration trainings in relation to its priority objectives. The research focused on three themes: strengths, challenges, and recognized needs for improvement of integration services. The first theme described core reasons why integration measures were considered effective. Next theme explained major challenges in the process and how they impacted final outcomes. And lastly, possible suggestions were presented by informants to serve identified needs for better practices.

The study employed qualitative research method. Taylor, Bogdan and DeVault (2015) described qualitative research as a possibility to get “first-hand knowledge – – unfiltered through operational definitions.” Considering the objective of the current research to provide descriptive phenomenological knowledge based on informants’ lived experiences, the method was most suitable.

Data was collected through semi structured interviews. Thematic open-ended questions were prepared beforehand. The focus behind that flexible method was to provide the freedom to informants in expressing their views (Kuada 2012) in order to identify new ways of understanding research topic.

Using purposeful sampling the research explored everyday authentic experiences of those people, who had been in direct contact with immigrant customers. The study informants were management-level representatives and trainers from different providers of integration trainings representing each level of modularized path, and whole group of experts of integration services at Employment and Economic Development office in Tampere (TE-officers). Those people knew best the truth about immigrants needs and its relativeness with potential of available measures. The informants described real-life cases and gave factual examples which could have been unnoticeable on the surface, however important to determine what and why happens in real settings. Based on their narratives the research portrayed reality beyond intentions, expectation, and beliefs about the outcomes of integration training.

To adequately address the research problem, the general question was divided into three themes: strengths, challenges and needs for improvement of integration trainings. The following questions were used during the interviews:

- a. How effective are integration trainings for immigrants in terms of achieving its expected outcomes?
 - What are the strengths of integration trainings? describe those strategies that work
 - What are other purposes of best practices?
 - Why exactly those trainings and module-based approach are most reasonable?
 - When do you speak about integration trainings as being successful?
- b. What are those common and prevalent challenges in achieving intended outcomes of integration trainings for immigrants?
 - Based on everyday practices and experiences, how often you face those challenges?
 - How those factors impact customers experiences? Why they matter for effectiveness of integration training process
 - Who are mostly affected by those challenges?
- c. How to improve integration trainings efficiency and effectiveness?
 - what is needed to increase efficacy? Give your suggestions of possible changes in existing practices or maybe something extra and new?
 - How to deal with existing challenges? Explain why you think so
 - What or who are needed to make it happen? who are responsible for those changes and why?

The results of the study indicated that although on a general level, integration trainings and services were considered to work well, its functionality in terms of achieving intended outcomes varied depending on various factors. Immigrant customers' heterogeneity, their prior experiences and life backgrounds, the challenge of communication between different actors involved in integration services and limited possibilities in service selection due to lack of courses and time-limited schedules were the primary causes determining effective impact of integration trainings. However, the results showed that the key reason for

unsatisfied results was unrealistic expectations and same outcome goals for diverse immigrant groups.

The findings of this research are of practical relevance to utilize in the process of improving and redesigning integration trainings. The valuable information it brings provides a chance to benefit from experiences and competences gained for years by trainers and TE-officers.

1.3 Overview of the report

The report is organized in the following order: In this chapter I described increasing trends of immigration reflected in expanded diversity, presented contradictory results from previous studies, and demonstrated the need for the current research. The chapter defined study objectives, research questions and relevance of the topic.

In chapter II I present established knowledge and discuss the findings of preceding researches. This includes different perspectives on integration trainings functionality from various sources. The chapter covers reports done by or for Finnish government and studies conducted by independent researchers. Chapter III describes research methodology followed by analysis of policy documents in chapter IV.

The results of my study are presented in chapter V. The next chapter VI provides analysis and discussion on research findings. Finally, chapter VI wraps up conclusions and recommendations.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Integration trainings and its efficiency has been extensively studied in recent years. Albeit there is no single interpretation of its functionality as to ensure basic needs of immigrants and promote their social inclusion through enhancing employability and language acquisition.

Despite different arguments whether integration measures work with purpose for the greater good, the major commonality in discussions about the topic, is that integration is multidimensional, and outcomes depend on a far wide range of factors. Accordingly, analysis of the existing literature endorses that integration could not be limited to any concrete measures.

Thus, explaining good practices or challenges in integration process requires understanding of those prominent issues what influence actual outcomes of integration trainings.

Literature suggests that integration happens differently in each case. As Lindfors and Suominen (2014) explained it is individual process where support provided at various levels is important (THL 2018). Tarnanen et al. (2015) made remarkable note that integration perhaps never ends.

Nevertheless, language proficiency and employment are considered to be key in promoting immigrants' civic engagement and integration (Viren et al. 2011; Intke-Hernandez & Holm, 2015). Accordingly, integration trainings with its general objectives focusing on developing necessary language, professional and life skills in order to enhance employment, social inclusion and further education is important step for immigrants to pathfind own way into new life and culture (Kotoutamisen toimivuus 2019).

However, potential advantages of integration measures depend on various factors. Based on previous studies, experiences of immigrants' integration is shaped by newcomers background, prior education and work experience, reasons for moving to Finland, their preparedness to study and work, social skills

and life situation, physical and psychological conditions before, during and after the migration process (Kerkkänen & Säävälä 2015; Tarnanen et al. 2015; Krutova et al. 2016; Sarvimäki & Hangartner 2017; Saukkonen 2017; International migration 2018–2019, 2019).

Immigrants individual motivation and active involvement in integration process play important role in successful outcomes of integration trainings (Kotouttamisen toimivuus 2019). As Sarvimäki and Hangartner (2017) claimed even citizenship and longer residence permit might have significant impact on overall integration because those lead to fear and uncertainty about future.

Considering multifaced nature of integration, any attempt to evaluate efficiency of integration training would be shoddy without understanding its interrelation with those major factors what impact quality of integration practices.

In the next sections, I present themes identified to be critically influential for achieving specific goals of integration trainings. I discuss findings of earlier studies about recognized strengths and challenges in integration services and their effect on intended final results on the whole.

2.1 Dominant perspectives on efficiency of integration trainings

There are different perspectives on efficiency of integration trainings. Multiple viewpoints lead to contradictory results and make it difficult to prove the one without factual or logical argumentations.

However, findings could be generalized in two major stands. First, when integration trainings are described as efficient and important in the promotion of integration (Kotoutumiskoulutus n.d; Aho & Mäkiahho 2017; NAOF 2018; KASPA 2019). It is supported with more emphasis on positive aspects by eliminating direct criticism and pointing to performance gap through development suggestions.

Good example is the recent online survey by Karinen et al. (2020c) with its goal to support development of integration services. From one point the results tell that integration trainings are functional and beneficial based on immigrants' experiences who participated in the final stages of those trainings. Nonetheless, the report speaks about lack of appropriate services and poor guidance resources. It is suggested that immigrants' viewpoints should be taken into consideration and services might be more adapted to their different needs.

Immigrant customer's satisfaction seems to be one of the key factors for demonstrating efficiency of integration services. The executive summary of UTH survey (Statistics Finland 2018) stated that every three persons out of four had received enough and helpful support during various integration measures.

Another important reason in the explanatory sense of functional integration services is its potential and comparison with independent studies (OECD 2018; Kotouttamisen toimivuus 2019; Karinen et al. 2020a). NAOF (2018) noted that participants of labour market trainings had better possibility to achieve higher language skills than those participating in voluntary trainings. However, it reminded that outcomes depend on immigrant learners' background and initial language skills.

None of above-mentioned factors are enough evidence to demonstrate strengths of integration trainings without concrete examples of achieved intended outcomes. Even more, this positive assumption of functional integration measures contradicts the fact that immigrants' employment remains lower while little part of them reaches set language goal B1 (OSF 2017, table 1; OSF 2017, table 2; NAOF 2018).

The second major slant in discussion about integration training efficiency is toward critique finding faults openly in integration practices and policies. Here major emphasis comes on concept of integration rather than skills or social status as an end-result. It is worth to mention that such extreme negative assessment is done mostly by the same researchers with interest in antiracism and social justice.

Kurki (2018) asserted that integration trainings are continuous string of activities driving to no actual results. In her recent work with Masoud and Brunila (2020) they described integration services as a form of power to make immigrants more Finnish-like. The same authors explained focus on employment and performativity in integration services as mis-integration with the goal to fix immigrants all the time (Kurki, Masoud, Niemi & Brunila 2018; Masoud, Holm & Brunila 2019).

It is not that easy to decide on reliability and consistency of any of those perspectives but perhaps the key problem is lack of concrete knowledge on real strengths of integration trainings in relation to challenges to see how existing potential could be used for best. This kind of information would make possible to look holistically at integration process and understand prospective possibilities of integration services in that.

2.2 Respective strengths of integration trainings

Several studies enunciate that competent staff and functional process make integration trainings efficient. Staff expertise is described in their skills and ability to interact efficiently with customers, understand cultural differences, assess customers' needs and readiness to study and direct them to appropriate services (MEE 2016; Karinen et al. 2020a). Sarvimäki and Hämäläinen (2016) conveyed that competent caseworkers managed well to send immigrants to meaningful services. They affirmed that there was a good match between immigrants needs and selected measures.

Undoubtedly, TE-officers professionalism and competence affect many facets of integration services. Their ability to determine immigrants' needs is crucial to progress effectively. However, describing TE-officers as highly qualified imposes more evidence considering the diversity within immigrant groups, complexity of processes and conflicting findings of other studies.

Bigger part of studies reveals that guidance and service selection do not work that well. As the recent survey by Karinen et al. (2020c) delineated integration

plan did not function always as interactive tool to help immigrants understand benefits of integration measures. Similarly, other studies alleviate that immigrants are inefficiently communicated over objectives of integration trainings and they are not provided with relevant information on available options (Viren, Telkki & Voutilainen 2011; MEE 2016; Kurki 2018; Kurki et al. 2018). As a result, they cannot participate in planning their own activities to improve favourable experiences in integration services.

Karinen et al. (2020d) implied that counselling and guidance for immigrants in Finland are fragmented and arduous. They urged to provide easily accessible guidance where immigrants can ask any time any questions, they need help with.

Furthermore, studies speak that most effective measures along various projects facilitating immigrants' access to employment and education (example SIB project, koto-SIB, International Skills Centres) are not utilized by TE-officers. OECD (2016, 14) presumed that subsidized wages, work experience and vocational labour market training promote immigrants' position in the Finnish labour market. At the same time, it divulged that immigrants rarely benefit from those programmes due to the fact that they are directed to integration trainings at first place.

This already gives enough reason to contemplate TE-officers expertise and efficiency of initial assessment, if after all, mostly immigrants take the same path in their journey to integration.

However, one of the reasonable explanations provided in recent survey by Karinen et al. (2020a) could be that good guidance does not mean much if there are no choices of appropriate services to offer. Hievanen et al. (2020, 5) denoted that often immigrants were directed to trainings only because those were available with enough study places.

Need for various paths and services is evidenced in other studies as well and discussed as barrier in implementation of integration trainings objectives (Viren et al. 2011; Ala-Kauhaluoma et al. 2018; Karinen et al. 2020b).

Similarly, those challenges of limited access to unequally distributed integration trainings, lack of tools to identify immigrants' prior competences and its development, long routes to education and work life were reported in various studies against integration trainings functionality in practice (Mutta, Lintunen, Ivaska & Peltonen 2014; MEE 2016; The educational tracks and ... 2016; Kurki 2018; The educational tracks and ... 2019; Karinen et al. 2020d; Oosi, Jauhola, Rausmaa & Haila 2020).

In most cases, shortage of financial resources was identified as a reason beyond those problems (Saukkonen 2016).

Efficiency of language instruction was another mostly discussed topic in researches about integration trainings. From one point, there is a consensus of thought that language instruction should happen alongside other studies, at workplaces and in everyday life situations (Tarnanen et al. 2015; Supporting immigrants in ... 2017; Sahradyan 2017). However, as Ronkainen and Suni (2019) contested learning language at workplaces does not happen automatically but it needs workplace guidance and support of the whole working group to find effective instructional solutions.

Emphasis on teaching models what provide more opportunities to use language and language-minded teaching was similarly proposed by other studies to be paid more attention (Tarnanen et al. 2015; The educational tracks and ... 2016). Another major point of criticism in instruction was ethnocentric approach. Intke-Hernandez and Holm (2015) bellowed that often in teaching, Finnish culture was dominating while immigrants' own opinions and cultural perspectives were hardly heard and valued. They described it as "cultural silence" when instruction is shaped into critical intercultural approach aiming to teach immigrants what is right to do according to Finnish traditions.

Likewise, Tarnanen et al. (2015) declared that immigrants' sound was lacking in labour policy as well. While Kärkkäinen (2017) made interesting note that Finnish culture was sometimes reduced to a package what foreigners should conform to.

Hence, recommendations to reckon with immigrants' experiences and viewpoints when developing integration services has been presented in various reports.

Nevertheless, more collaboration with work life at earlier stages of integration and interaction with mainstream society through various means, among them leisure activities, seems to be widely accepted as key influential factor for achieving overall objectives of integration trainings. Studies reclaim that social networks and workplace experiences supports both language learning and understanding of Finnish culture as well as enhances real employment chances. (Kärkkäinen 2017; Kokkonen, Pöyhönen, Reiman & Lehtonen 2019).

Accordingly, various studies yield the need to develop integration trainings and services leading to working life and promoting even short-term employment (Uusikylä, Tuominen, Reuter & Mäkinen 2005; Aho & Mäkiaho 2017).

Analysing those different perspectives, the question of integration trainings efficiency becomes even more salient. It seems that on the one hand there is competency and efficient measures, on the other hand those are not either utilized correctly or enough for achieving final objectives of integration measures.

2.3 Major challenges in the process of integration services

2.3.1 Customer heterogeneity

Immigrant population in Finland is vastly diverse by newcomers' country of origin and their life backgrounds (OECD 2018; Støren & Børing 2018, 603). Data from several sources demonstrates that large degree of immigrants' heterogeneity is challenging and strongly impacts final outcomes of integration trainings (Uusikylä et al. 2005; Krutova et al. 2016). The recent report by Karinen et al. (2020b) explaining the roles of municipalities in the process of immigrants' integration and

coordination, ascertains that there is a need for more accurate and reliable information about the immigrant population. Final report on TEMWISIT project (MEE, 2016, 69) acquiesces to the note that authorities are not familiar with different types of immigrants.

This all means that although immigrant customer heterogeneity is discussed as a significant influential factor of successful experiences in integration trainings, multifariousness has no definitive solution. In most cases, immigrants' diversity is described by grouping them by the feature of some similarities. Therefore, individual characteristics encompassing those major differences between immigrants is neglected and they are perceived as one whole group (Lindfors & Suominen 2014; Kurki 2018). Thus, it is failed to grasp diversity of immigrant customers.

Immigrants, who face more challenges in integration process due to explicit reasons are most frequently mentioned in discussions. Based on previous researches women from middle East and Africa, people outside of labour market, immigrants with mental health and youths are the biggest groups in need of particular attention. They are identified as vulnerable customer groups and considered to be central to hone on in when analysing functionality of integration trainings. (Lindfors & Suominen 2014; Kerkkänen & Säävälä 2015; Saukkonen 2016; MEAE 2018.)

In more generalized way pervasive difficulties among immigrant women are early family formation and childcare at home rooted in cultural understanding of a woman's role as a wife and a mother. Viren et al. (2011) explained that for majority of immigrant women the same gender equality as in Finland is difficult to acknowledge.

Various studies describe women as independent target group and evince they need better support and diverse services (MEAE 2018; Kotouttamisen toimivuus 2019). Employment at early stages and more chances for social networking is considered to be effective for their integration into society (Lindfors & Suominen 2014; Saukkonen 2016).

Youths are one of the biggest group of customers in need of greater support. This is explained due to the fact that young immigrants learn language more easily and quickly, therefore they want to move to working life rather earlier (MEAE 2018).

However, people outside of labour market and immigrants suffering from mental health problems seem to be bigger challenge with less suitable measures for them. Big part of those staying outside of labour market are again women and moms staying at home but also immigrants who are not TE-customers for other reasons (Saukkonen 2016; The educational tracks and ... 2019).

Correctly pointed out by OECD (2018) all immigrants despite the fact if they are immediate jobseekers or not, should get guidance and be directed to services to avoid complication in future employment and integration.

Mental health is another key issue what is not considered enough in integration services based on existing studies. The survey about migrant health and well-being (THL 2018) proved that mental health care is unmet need while it is among major worries of immigrants. The results showed that health issues might be addressed better at all stages and in all services to support integration. Similarly, Skogberg and Koponen (2019) proposed that trainings and supporting participation in measures should be more sufficient for immigrant customers with health and psychological distress to raise their employment rate.

Kerkkänen and Säävälä (2015) described major mental health problems withing immigrant groups due to their immigration process, prior and after immigration experiences related to trauma of uncertainty, exclusion, economic difficulties along with poor language skills to express themselves. Interestingly, they explained health related issues as cultural phenomena and suggested to build new services considering those cultural factors of immigrants.

Likewise, Schubert et al. (2019) explained immigrants mental health problems as to pre-immigration stress, in particular in case of refugees and asylum seekers. They concluded that exposure of trauma is linked to level of acculturation and social networking within some groups of immigrants. However, they also

discussed cultural influence on help-seeking habits and its impact on how health problems were interpreted in immigrants' different religious context.

Strong focus on culture and its importance is noticeable in studies about immigrants' integration. Surprisingly, cultural differences are largely related to challenges rather than richness with potential of immigrants' diversity. Lindfors and Suominen (2014) depicted that Finns did not tolerate different identities but integration sometimes meant detaching from their own cultures.

Kärkkäinen (2017) reasonably argued that use of the word culture is overemphasized with a tendency to explain all due to cultural differences. She explained that this essentialist view of culture leads to belief that culture with its impalpable components is difficult to change.

Literature analysis gives reason to think that heterogeneity is at some point negatively interpreted in discussions about immigrant's integration. Ethnic hierarchy, segregation and discrimination are mostly used words to describe attitudes toward immigrants in society and oppose good practices of immigrants' integration.

Evidence presented in various studies assents that religion and country of origin are mostly the reasons for negative prejudices about immigrant groups (Lindfors & Suominen 2014; Ahmad 2019). Often, as Støren & Børing (2018) articulated immigrants are divided into westerns and non-westerns while the latter has rather negative meaning for Finnish people.

Besides, immigrants with refugee status coming from Middle East and Africa appear to have more challenges in terms of integration and employment (Sarvimäki 2017; Bratsberg et al. 2017; Väisänen 2020). As stated in the future of migration 2020 strategy (Ministry of the Interior 2013) Finns are less likely prone to make migration easier for newcomers. However, this low spirits toward foreign population is explained by short migration history in Finland. Conversely, Saukkonen (2016) introduced opposite perspective claiming that ethnic segregation was moderate in Finland and differences in employment rated

between native and foreign-born were lower compared with other Northern European countries.

Anyway, there are many reasons to believe that cultural identity has its impacts on integration process and despite all efforts and measures discrimination happens leading to exclusion. Varjonen (2013) assumed that being non-Finn is perceived to be more negative than being representative of any other ethnic groups. She described integration as “we teach, we support”- process and claimed that immigrants were put in an unequal position.

It sounds bit like an extreme criticism. However, OECD report (2018) similarly evaluated segregation in workplaces in Finland to be relatively high not only for new foreigners but also for those who had lived in the country since early childhood.

Studies speak about the problem of migrants being employed at lower ranks and paid lower salaries (Krutova et al. 2016; Sarvimäki 2017). This kind of discrimination as Kärkkäinen (2017) claimed is hidden beyond the reasons such as lack of professional qualification and insufficient language skills. Her argument makes sense if compared with UTH survey results (Statistics Finland 2018) indicating that three out of four participant of the survey with foreign background had as minimum average language skills and their educational level was more or less the same as in the same age population with Finnish background.

To generalize results of presented studies, it seems that ethnic heterogeneity has significant influence on overall integration. Nevertheless, diversity of immigrant customers at TE-office needs to be holistically explained. Without more concrete individual examples, it is difficult to understand what typical challenges we speak about, how those are reflected in everyday experiences and what could be done to address them sufficiently in integration services.

2.3.2 Outcome-based integration trainings

Integration trainings has set target language skill level B1 to be achieved at the end of integration courses. Promoting immigrants' employment is another objective of integration measures. It is believed that immigrants' participation at different workplaces is effective way to learn language, bring foreigners closer with natives and support their inclusion into Finnish society (Sahradyan 2017; Aho & Mäkiaho 2017; Karinen et al. 2020a). In addition, emphasis on labour market integration could be explained in relation to ageing population of Finland. As articulated in International Migration 2018-2019 Report (Ministry of the Interior 2019) immigrants' faster labour market transition is important in the shade of labour shortage.

Accordingly, priority objectives in both Government Integration programmes (2012; 2016) has been to make integration measures compatible with labour market requirements and accelerate employment paths for immigrants.

To understand how efficiently integration training work on those purposes, it was interesting to look at previous studies explaining objectives of integration courses and discussing relationships between process and intended outcomes.

The section three in integration law (1386/2010) defines integration as "interactive development involving immigrants and society at large". Logically, it already means that to interact one needs sufficient language skills. Reflectively, Integration programmes (2012; 2016) support improvement language proficiency through its objectives and defined measures.

Other studies similarly explain importance of language in integration as precondition for succeeding in further education, employment and social interaction with mainstream society (Viren et al. 2011; Intke-Hernandez & Holm 2015).

OECD (2016) introduces very interesting and worthwhile point in regard to language as key factor in determining success of integration. Although it states that acquiring host country language is essential in all OECD countries, report

asserts that language is prerequisite to social interaction and employment particularly in Finland.

While this may be true, giving that much importance to language in integration is criticized in a number of ways. In some cases, language is described as a tool to be able to participate in other activities what truly promote integration, spend time and communicate with Finnish people (MEAE 2018). Another argument is that language learning is life-long process, accordingly language could not be imperative to integration (Thalgott 2017). Rather radical discourse is introduced by Kärkkäinen (2017) who says that this emphasis on language skills debases integration to Finnish language proficiency.

Furthermore, set target B1 had been a question of discussion in various studies arguing that different language skills are necessary in different situations (Tarnanen et al. 2015; Kärkkäinen 2017; Kotouttamisen toimivuus 2019). Forsander (2002 as cited in Ahmad 2015) urged that inordinate and vague demand for language competences at workplaces easily justified rejection of all immigrant jobseekers. Surprisingly, less attention is paid to heterogeneity and immigrants' diverse learning abilities when speaking about language learning. Immigrants varying competences is directly termed by Hievanen et al. (2020) who suggested to carefully consider the learners' personal goals to be achieved during studies against their abilities and learning potential.

Moving on now to employment as indicator of integration and one of the objectives of integration trainings, there are two dominant discourses countering it. Several studies claim that language is not the only key factor to get a job, but employment depends on various unobservable aspects, among them negative attitudes toward immigrants, discrimination, lack of networking and difficulties to recognize previous education, duration of living in Finland as well as overall economic situation (Sarvimäki & Hangartner 2017; Aho & Mäkiäho 2017; Kurki 2018; Skogberg & Koponen 2019).

Krutova et al. (2016) with logical realism elaborated that education gained in host or home country can never be a promise to get a job. Thus, we can conclude that

this is unreasonable hope that integration training conceivably leads to immigrant employment.

Another significant opposing discourse to employment as integration indicator accounts for employable subjectivity of immigrants and explaining integration from economic perspectives (Kurki et al. 2018). Masoud et al. (2020) claimed that integration policies and discursive practices intended to ameliorate immigrants rather than address real reasons for their unemployment. It is argued that integration turns into a process of all the time mending what is considered as a help for immigrants to survive and fit into mainstream society.

Ronkainen and Suni (2019) similarly adduced ideological shift regarding work and employability in integration education. Based on analysis of various documents they instigated that work as right of the individual has become an obligation and indicator of integration.

Undoubtedly, employment is positive social determinant in integration but measuring immigrants' experiences or functionality of integration trainings in socioeconomic terms is unrealistic if not impossible (Klarenbeek 2019).

In closing, if we want to get grip on reality it is more sensible to view integration as individual process promoting equality rather than focusing on factual, tangible accomplishment of immigrants (Karinen et al. 2020c).

2.3.3 Fragmented Finnish system of integration

Much of the current literature describes Finnish integration system as complicated and fragmented. Different sources lament the adverse influences of fractured system on overall efficiency of integration services.

There are three strongest negative arguments about the impact of integration system on poor performance.

One of the most frequently referred point is that immigrants need to understand better how system works in order to benefit from integration services at its full potential (Uusikylä et al. 2005; Lautiola 2013; Karinen et al. 2020b). Sarvimäki and Hangartner (2017, 24) recited this perspective by stating that support in navigating the system is number one need for immigrants.

The challenge is not new perhaps as it had been paid attention already years ago. For example, in 2011, Hallikainen in her thesis about non-refugee immigrant experiences as clients of Finnish public services, spoke of fragmented and sectorized system and reported that immigrants could not understand casual relationships between integration services. However, her suggestions on providing better guidance to immigrant customers is attested to be again cogent after years (Kotouttamisen toimivuus 2019).

Another assumption about complex system is that it leads to unclear roles and responsibilities between independent sectors involved in integration services (Saukkonen 2016; Karinen et al. 2020b). Lautiola (2013) attributed ambiguity in duties and lack of knowledge about integration services as a whole to the scattered measures between actors. This gives reason to think that one of the possible causes for insufficient guidance could be poorly defined roles when it is unclear who is responsible for what.

In addition, procurement system for integration trainings is criticized for bringing additional stress to trainers and discouraging their long-term partnerships (Uusikylä et al. 2005; The educational tracks... 2016).

Montonen and Lappalainen (2017) argued that new implementation models of integration trainings might have negative impact on teachers' professional work. Although the article represented narratives by only six educators, it brought forward interesting point that new models could spawn shift from teacher competences to market-based expertise. Hence, the article presents envision of teachers as consultant.

While previous findings demonstrate that procurement system what enables arranging integration trainings at different places and by different providers

makes things complicated, the fact is that multisectoral collaboration is important for successful practices of integration.

To recognize emergent ways how to bring different parties together and make better use of their potential, we need to make discussion increasingly concrete. All parties should speak on their real experiences in everyday practices to get the grip on reality and understand what actual strengths and factual challenges in integration services they face.

2.4 Cope with challenges needs for improving integration process

2.4.1 Cross-sectoral and multi-level collaboration

Previous studies indicate that collaboration between different sectors and with the whole society is decidedly important to enhance the efficiency of integration services and overall integration process (MEAE 2018; Karinen et al. 2020b). Saukkonen (2016) advocated better cooperation between public and private sectors and civil society to provide various means of activities and support language learning and integration of immigrants.

Likewise, Ala-Kauhaluoma et al. (2018) in the study about functionality of integration measures specifically from the perspective of immigrants employment, named multi-professional and multisectoral cooperation to be a key development area. The study implied that more direct connections between TE-offices and labour market would enhance employment chances for immigrants. It claimed that multi-level collaboration would also help TE-officers to understand customers and their needs better, and accordingly plan more meaningful services for them.

Similarly, the report on Faster Education Paths and Flexible Transitions for Immigrants working group (Maahanmuuttajien koulutuspolkujen ... 2017) expounded that collaboration between different actors was necessary to enable

using efficiently all available information about immigrants gained at different stages in service selection process.

Other studies correlate with the problem of communication failure between different parties involved in integration process depicting poor information flow and lack of familiarity with each other's work (MEE 2016; The educational tracks ... 2019).

However, the fact that cooperation does not work that well is clearly evidenced in the recent publication *Guidance and Services for Immigrant Customers of Employment and Economic Development Offices* (Karinen et al., 2020a). It incites that the common system might help to understand roles of TE-offices and municipalities and promote information exchange between them.

It has already mentioned many times that integration could not be limited to any measures neither results of trainings are directly proportional to efficient services. Nortio (2019) again brings interesting and important perspective to the point about social media and its role in reinforcing integration through social debates. Although this issue had been mentioned before, it is still undetected when speaking about multi-sectoral collaboration.

Nevertheless, huge emphasis is put on immigrants' organizations and their involvement in integration services. Lautiola (2013) signified that activities arranged by immigrant organizations had particularly positive impact on integration and society's attitudes toward immigrants what could not be achieved only through public services. At the same time, she validated that this expertise and potential were not fully utilized by public authorities due to administrative and financial limitations. As a solution, Ekholm (2015) suggested enlarging immigrant organizations involvement in integration by selling their services to municipalities.

In addition to financial resources, one of the identified reasons for low participation of third sector in integration services is lack of information to immigrants on the opportunities they offer. Bontenbal and Lillie (2019) consider Civil Society Organizations (CSO) as great potential to support specialized integration services for most vulnerable groups. But again, they speak about the

same challenges such as activities arranged as short-term funded project and immigrant's unawareness of those services offered by CSO. Furthermore, as noted in the report, relationship between organizations are barriers to use resource efficiency.

While no one argues that multisectoral collaboration is necessity to address key challenges in integration process, further discussion is needed to articulate what could be achieved through integration trainings and when and what kind of help from different parties are needed to fulfil potential of integration measures.

2.4.2 Informal integration

Väisänen (2020) explains that creating relationship is fundamental keystone for immigrants to survive in a new country.

Similarly, other studies approve that social connections and immigrants' personal life have significant influence on their integration experiences (Varjonen 2013; Kokkonen, Pöyhönen, Reiman & Lehtonen 2019; International migration 2018–2019, 2019).

As Ahmad (2015) stated immigrants' skills and professional competences mean little without social capital. He claimed that even duration of living in Finland did not help to enhance employability if immigrants' social network was not diverse and inclusive.

Those assumptions are rationale for the suggestion in the report by Karinen et al. (2020c). The report ascertained that immigrants who had even a single friend or otherwise felt accepted by Finnish society were more satisfied with integration trainings. Considerately, authors highlighted importance of integration services what support more equality and build broader social networks.

Results of previous studies prove that in addition to integration services, network-building and developing language skills might be supported in leisure time and everyday life activities. However, at that point it is not only up to immigrant's

motivation or interest to communicate with others, but receptiveness of mainstream society, immigrants' family and circle of acquaintances determines their chances.

Tarnanen et al. (2015) presumed that language learning might happen both formally and informally while opportunities for immigrants to use language depended a lot on with whom they spend their spare time or what work they do. Although the study is limited in its scope and presents only narratives by two ladies, the assumption it makes is braced in other official documents and independent researches (Government Integration Programmes 2012 & 2016; Saukkonen 2016; OECD 2018). Ultimately, immigrants' participation in leisure activities and other events remains low (The educational tracks and ... 2019).

This discussion at some point tells that integration is not understood and considered enough beyond policies. Varjonen (2013) made valuable note and explained integration as a condition when a society accepts immigrants and gives them full possibility to participation in social life. Likewise, Klarenbeek (2019) defines integration as a relational process where natives and newcomers integrate with each other. However, fairly enough, he assumes that in most cases integration takes form of influence from insiders on immigrant. He ratifies that it is almost always non-natives who are blamed for any problems in integration process.

Taken together, it is clear that integration trainings efficiency cannot be explained only through procedures and measures provided by TE-offices. But if we need to advance in understating reality the problem must be discussed holistically.

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

3.1 Qualitative research

Opoku, Ahmed and Akotia (2016, 33) explain research methodology as “a philosophy and framework that are fundamentally related to the entire process of the research’.” Accordingly, when selecting a research methodology, the purpose and major goal of the research was carefully considered.

Thus, the aim of my study influenced my decision to employ qualitative research (Baker 2000). This study intended to explore the efficiency of integration trainings for immigrants. To satisfy that objective I needed first-hand knowledge and flexibility to get deeper into the research question. Hence, qualitative method was most appropriate and suitable.

As Taylor, Bogdan and DeVault (2015) advice qualitative research is a good option to use if the goal of the study is to get newer insights rather than verify existing facts or theories. Furthermore, it is a chance to describe real life experiences and examine topic comprehensively (Hirsjärvi, Remes & Sajavaara 1997). According to Opoku et al. (2016) the key advantage of qualitative method is rich and deep data what it brings. It is much due to flexibility the method provides.

Kuada (2012) explains that qualitative methods allow the respondents to raise unexpected issues what researchers could not anticipate themselves but what might be significantly important for the research process and its results.

Another factor for diverse qualitative data is unique, unfiltered knowledge from those people who are directly involved in the research problem (Taylor, Bogdan and DeVault 2015). Taylor et al. (2015) explicate that qualitative research aims to explore lived experiences and see how people describe their reality in their own words.

Thus, considering the goal of the study, using qualitative research was meaningful to gain more-in depth knowledge. This study was an opportunity for respondents to speak about issues what they cogitated as most important and describe how they derived themselves strengths, challenges and improvement needs for integration trainings (Kuada 2012). Qualitative research ensured gathering rich data based on respondents' professional expertise and experiences.

3.2 Data collection

The research was mostly built up on primary data collected through interviews, but it was much supported with secondary data as well.

According to Hirsjärvi et al. (1997) official document is one type of sources for research materials. In that study state documents were used as a background to help understating research question and provide the baseline for comparison against primary data results. Secondary data was key source for critical approach when analysing existing texts in contrast to authentic experiences described by the research participants.

My secondary data was based on material what was available publicly (policy documents, curricula for integration trainings and Government Integration programmes). I reviewed and analysed those documents in a separate chapter. As Saldaña (2011) noted this practice of presenting literature review as a part of research corpus became common. However, the major limitation at that stage was that majority of such documents were in Finnish language with unofficial translations in English.

Using both primary and secondary data helped to provide multiple points of view about the research topic.

3.2.1 Sampling and preparing for data collection

Robinson (2013) described four steps in the sampling process for interview-based qualitative studies. At first stage universe of research respondents is determined by setting inclusion and exclusion criteria, secondly sample size is defined, then comes sample strategy and finally researcher provides the participants with all necessary information for making concordant decision on participation in the research.

Crowe, Inder and Porter (2015) attributed selection of research respondents to the research question. Accordingly, sample universe, in other words research participants for the study were selected in accordance with research objective.

Purposive sample technique was adopted to ensure that the most appropriate people were represented. Sample included TE-officers, management representatives from institutions providing integration trainings (later referred as integration training provider) and training teachers. All of them had rich and long professional experience of working with those immigrants who participate in integration trainings.

The next stage of defining sample size was challenging due to the fact that integration trainings are arranged by various providers at different places. In addition, those trainings consist of four modules and two different level courses for non-literate people with no pre-schooling (no reading and writing skills). Concerning a team of 14 TE-officers, they were also divided into three separate groups based on immigrant customer types they served. Out of those 14 TE-officers, three of them worked with youths, seven were in charge of adult immigrants and four TE-officers were dealing with foreigners who were no longer entitled to participate in integration trainings, however, they were in need for such services. Integration trainings are meant for immigrants who has lived in Finland less than three years.

All of those possible respondents were interesting sources for interview. Thus, it was difficult to determine sample size because like Hirsjärvi et al. (1997) say this is exactly that specific feature of qualitative research that every case is unique

and brings something new. Nevertheless, as Robinson (2013, 29) explains sample size is influenced by theoretical and practical considerations. Thinking this way, purposive sampling strategy gave a chance to make final decision on selecting research participants based on two key factors. First, to represent relevant respondents from each above-mentioned group and second, to have sufficient time to meet up with all of them.

This study employed semi-structured theme interview as data collection method. In the preparation process I followed five-step guide by Kallio, Pietilä, Johnson and Kangasniemi (2016). Those were considering appropriateness of the method to the purpose of my research; gaining adequate understanding of research topic; preparing first draft of interview guide; reconsidering relevance of interview questions to study objectives; and lastly, finalizing plan into more logical and clear questions based on identified themes.

I interviewed all 14 TE-officers working with newcomers and old immigrants still in need of integration services.

In case of integration training providers and teachers, sample represented at least one representative from each module level. That target group included 3 teachers and 5 people on different managerial positions from various educational institutions arranging integration services. In all 22 people were interviewed for the study.

At sourcing level (Robinson 2013, 38) formal emails were sent to research participants where I explained the objectives of that study, why the research was conducted and how the material would be used. They were informed that research results were publicly available data with free access for all interested readers. Research was based on voluntary participation.

3.2.2 Conducting interviews

Interviews were prearranged. As Saldaña (2011, 50) explains location for interviews is critical component for gathering data. Accordingly, time, date and

meeting place for interviews were agreed beforehand with every participant. Interviews were scheduled for approximately one hour and conducted at respondents' workplaces.

The study adopted semi-structured thematic interview method. Open-ended questions were used to give research participants a chance to speak in their own words, express their perspectives freely based on their professional experiences with the goal to gain rich data (Saldaña 2011).

Hirsjärvi et al. (1997) say qualitative research favours respondents as an instrument of data collection. It also means that a researcher might be ready to be flexible in varying situations and regulate interviewing process according to participants answers. Saldaña (2011) asserts that improvised questions in qualitative research are effective ways to generate unexpected insights and ideas during the interviews. By employing semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions, the respondents had a chance for deeper discussions and spontaneity. In addition, the reason for using interviewing method was that it made possible to go back to research participants in case of need to supplement the research material (Hirsjärvi et al. 1997).

I used critical incident technique (CIT) in interviews. As Kuada (2012) explains this is effective way to reach deeper dimensions of research topic by allowing respondents' reflecting on their experiences while speaking. Research participants narrated concrete stories from their everyday work practices and remembered most important issues what affected performance of integration services.

Key factor, what required special attention during the interviews was that research participants were from different culture than mine. Kuusisto-Arponen (2007, 39) speaks about cultural codes and advices researchers to be ready to change working style according to given culture, pay attention to using language and presenting issues.

Considering cultural context of Finland, I gave respondents free choice to decide themselves on type of interviews. Several interviews were conducted as individual ones, others were arranged in groups.

Furthermore, Hirsjärvi et al. (1997) explain that people interpret their positions differently in different cultures and protect their safety according to their cultural understanding. Thus, Finns representing a reactive culture (The Lewis model 2020) were less likely to express any strong opinions, but rather find suitable approach and avoid immediate confrontation or direct criticism. Accordingly, group interviews were efficient because like Grönfors (1982 as cited in Hirsjärvi et al. 1997) says grouping helps respondents to feel more relaxed and encouraging each other during interviews.

The interviewees were Finnish-speaking and final thesis was to be written in English. As none of those languages are my native one, all the interviews were recorded to avoid misinterpretations and misunderstanding due to language nuances. Recording was useful in terms of its flexibility to replay later as many times as needed, minimize linguistic errors and ensure precision. In addition, field notes were included in data collection to improve profundity of qualitative findings (Phillippi & Lauderdale 2017).

3.3 Data processing and analysing

Ritchie, Spencer and O'Connor (2003) alleged that qualitative data is generous but difficult to organize as it is cumbersome and intertwined in content. Thus, they advised to start the process of analysing by getting through the material to know what there is. They call it familiarization.

Checking information was important to ascertain if something was missing. Hirsjärvi et al. (1997) describes it as a first step necessary to supplement information in case of need.

At starting point of processing research data, I transcribed interviews to create text-based version of gathered material and arrange it systematically. I used thematic analysis (TA) what helped to deal with that huge data from interviews.

Crowe et al. (2015) describe steps what TA involves. First is examining the data recalling the research question. This phase includes labelling additional material what is not directly connected to research question but what might help understanding the general context. Then is defining the themes and grouping similar ideas, finding relationships between themes to come up to final phase what they call process of synthesis.

Accordingly, once I had transcriptions, I followed all those steps to code different hypothesis by interviewees under the predefined themes what was strengths, challenges and needs for improvement of integration trainings. Inductive analysis was used to explore unexpected ideas (Hirsjärvi et al. 1997).

The key factor of my attention in data analysis was language. Raento (2007) asserts that language is important at every stage of research. Moreover, Hirsjärvi et al. (1997) remind that people do not perceive things in the same way. Accordingly, understanding linguistic expressions and research participants' meanings beyond them was critical to ensure validity of outcome analysis.

Temple and Young (2004) note that language boundaries are pervious. They explain that translation and the depth of analysis concern with theoretical and epistemological issues and conclude that paramount is objectivity in translation process whether it is done by a researcher or someone else.

Temple (1997) elucidates that interpreting different language is not only about overlapping concepts in languages but it depends on understanding perspectives as well. She refers to "intellectual autobiography" by Liz Stanley (1990:62 as cited in Temple, 1997) what is explained as an analytical process to realize how and why we come to think in a particular way detecting our understanding of things in its real context where they were shaped .

I had several years of work experience at TE-office before I conducted that research. Accordingly, terms and concepts in research field was familiar to me. In addition, I had experience as an immigrant in Finland and former customer of integration services, what supported my objectivity since I recognized different perspectives about the research topic.

Raento (2007) recommends that quality of translated text is rather improved if the original one is written well. The report was first prepared in Finnish language. It was sent to research participants to make sure that contextualization was done properly.

3.4 Validity and reliability

Kuada (2012) defines two criteria for evaluating the robustness and rigor of qualitative studies. First, it is trustworthiness what according to him (2012, 100-101) is assessed through different dimensions such as credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability.

To establish greater credibility Kuada (2012, 101) advises to show the data to research participants and make sure that their messages were understood correctly. He calls it *respondent validation*. In case of that study, as mentioned above, the final report in Finnish language was sent to all participants. Several changes were done later based on their feedback.

In terms of transferability I have described in detail how the study had been conducted. As Remes and Sajavaara (1997) say reliability increases by the comprehensive and clear explanation of research process. Collected research material consisted of audio-recordings from interviews, transcripts and reports generated from primary and secondary data. All were stored as an evidence that the research was conducted by me following the planned phases.

Second criteria by Kuada (2012) for evaluation of research work is authenticity. This examines how fair the results are considering the relevance of the research sample, and how the study had helped participants to improve

understanding of own situations in order to encourage readiness for a change in case of need.

The study worked as a dialogue and discussion platform for research participants where they had a chance to think loud, ask questions, sound their view-points in their own words and get involved in deeper analysis of their everyday practices.

4 REAL-TIME MIRROR REFLECTIONS OF INTEGRATION AS POLICY AND PRACTICE

4.1 Finland for immigrants: a pledge for equality

Finland is considered to be a country of multiculturalist and inclusive integration policies (MPI 2010; MIPEX 2015). The country with its core value of equality aims to improve lives for everyone, reduce poverty and social disparity (Integrational Migration 2018-2019).

Prevention of racism and discrimination is legally supported by the Non-discrimination Act (1325/2014) prohibiting divergence based on language, religion, origin, or any personal characteristics.

Various projects had been implemented to promote antidiscrimination and diversity in Finland. The country keeps monitoring by collecting data and publishing discrimination studies (National Discrimination Monitoring System). Finland runs advisory board for ethnic relations (ETNO) to enhance interaction between different ethnic minorities, their sense of security and positive attitudes on diversity.

Government resolution on the future of migration 2020 strategy (Ministry of the Interior 2013) describes Finland as a safe and open country where diversity is valued, and all are equal to find their place in society.

Undoubtedly, central tenet of equality is hard-wired into Finnish ideology and policies. By the same token, the Integration Act (1386/2010) aims to support immigrants' active participation in society and promote equality and non-discrimination expressed in dialogue between different social groups.

However, Finland still remains a country where immigrants' different identities are not welcomed and recognized (Lindfors & Suominen 2014; Hyökki 2019). Despite paper promises articulated into idealistic intentions, discrimination and racism happen in immigrants' life, although, it is difficult to prove (OECD 2016).

Universalistic ideals to create equality for all becomes nonviable for society in which diversity increases every time. Furthermore, those attempts lead to homogenizing tendencies where all are similar (Alitolppa-Niitamo 2002).

Hence, holding out hope that integration trainings lift the whole burden of assimilating newcomers is simply wrong. Neither language proficiency nor any other professional skills gained during integration measures guarantee immigrants employment as one of the indicators of integration against ethnic segregation happening in labour market (Ahmad 2019).

Woefully, that false sense of optimism stems from official regulations on integration processes and activities with perceived desirability of social and economic assimilation of immigrants.

In the next sections I interpret the key official documents promoting integration in Finland to understand how they enable successful goal achievements of integration services.

4.2 The Act on the Promotion of Immigrant Integration

Integration trainings provided as labour market adult education and self-motivated studies are implemented based on the Integration Act (1386/2010). The first Act came into force in 1999 (493/1999). Within time, new types of immigration and expanding diversity in immigrant population resulted in policy amendments. Thence, the current Act on Promotion of Immigrant Integration (1386/2010) took effect since September 1, 2011.

As stated in the publication by the Ministry of Education and Culture in Finland (The educational tracks and ... 2016) major difference between those two documents was in more emphasis on roles and responsibilities of different parties at each administrative level and focus on importance of cooperation between municipalities and TE-offices.

The latter Act (1386/2010) also enlarged its scope to all immigrants. It means that any newcomer registered as an unemployed jobseeker at TE-office is eligible to participate in integration trainings within three years after getting the first residence permit or first entry in the Population Information System in case of European Union citizens. However, the need for integration services should be recognized first during the initial assessment initiated by TE-offices and municipalities.

In essence, Finnish integration policy aims to enhance chances for further education, reduce immigrants' employment, promote inclusion, and increase availability of various integration activities (Kohti nykyistä kotoutumislakia n.d.).

Perpetually, goals are favourable but there are several points worth to mention in order to see how possible it is to achieve them.

First start with the definition of integration as provided in the Act (1386/2010). Section three says:

Integration means interactive development involving immigrants and society at large, the aim of which is to provide immigrants with the knowledge and skills required in society and working life and to provide them with support, so that they can maintain their culture and language. (1386/2010.)

While the first sentence with key word interactive textualizes explicitly inclusive vision of integration where mainstream society comes along with immigrants, the middle part of the definition cast doubts on the real purpose for that kind of communication. As it is stated the aim is to help newcomers to acquire necessary skills for anchoring in Finnish society. In other words, it might mean that Finns teach immigrants how to live Finnish life and what to do in order to conform with Finnish norms and values. Unarguably, no one expect to alter or change visible or invisible life rules in Finland because of immigrants, but definition of integration in that key legal document gives reason to think that newcomers are the only one who has to change, reshape and learn all the time (Masoud et al. 2020).

That short definition already features its connotation that immigrants are given a hand of support, and if they want their new life works out regardless of how difficult and different new experiences could be for them (Kurki 2018).

On the same page, integration is described as a process to support immigrants' maintaining their cultural identities. However, with that huge emphasis on language proficiency and understanding Finnish way of doing things, it is hard to believe that maintaining identity means more than for example wearing national clothes or speak native language within family members. In particular, immigrants' religious divinity seems to be hard to accept (Hyökki 2019).

All this tells a story of idealistic integration policy of Finland what is built on a failure of mutual learning entering into exchange of knowledge between newcomers and Finns (Kurki 2018).

The second critical issue what needs to see through the lens of reality is how communication, guidance and planning of integration process take place at initial stages of integration services.

Based on Integration Act all immigrants at first place must be given necessary information about their rights and obligation in Finnish society and services available to promote their integration.

Indeed, for someone in a foreign country with nobody around to ask for help, such informational support means a lot to feel safe and know what to do next. However, if immigrants are not communicated by adequately prepared personnel, it becomes wasted effort of vain attempt.

There are several factors to think of before one believes that all those universal means are enough to be articulated in the language of law to accomplish. In that fragmented system of integration, to imagine that immigrants understand all immediately or on the other side, TE-officers know every single possibility what an immigrant can benefit from is alleged. Even if they know about everything as expected, the question is if TE-officers have enough time with customers to

speak of those details or if they are skillful enough to negotiate in a clear manner with a person who speaks only one dialect of some language.

The Act provides a chance to arrange translation services for immigrants in a language what they understand decently. Nevertheless, it would not exclude those many cases when there are no sufficient and precise interpreting services that enable real-time communication (Viren et al. 2011; The educational tracks and... 2016).

No-one expects that integration system might be prepared for immigrants' all possible diverse needs, including translation languages. However, naive assumptions based on good intentions and social conscience might lead more to criticism for poor results of integration trainings rather than throwing light on its success (Saukkonen 2016).

Indubitable, Integration Act (1386/2010) is compendious accounting the range of ideological values of Finnish society. For example, in terms of equality and respect to individuals, policy ensures that immigrants are involved, and their objectives are considered while drawing up individualized integration plans. They can also refuse to participate in measures if they have valid reason. However, nobody can guarantee that immigrants' personal arguments about appropriability in services justified by own perception could be tolerated by TE-officers for various reasons, among them lack of available better measures to offer.

For the same purpose, consideration of immigrant's personal objectives for integration or giving them a formal chance to decide themselves on meaningful services does not necessarily mean better if they are not provided with enough information about their possibilities or if there are no other services at their disposal.

This discussion could turn into conclusion that integration policy seems to be comprehensive, inclusive and flexible to work for all, while it is kind of masking very practical challenges by deflecting concrete solutions to always new purposes.

4.3 The Government Integration Programmes

The Government Integration Programme is an action plan what is prepared in pursuit to section 34 in the Integration Act (1386/2010). The programme outlines objectives and measures for immigrants' integration.

The first Government Resolution on the Government Integration Programme (2012) was prepared as a cross-administrative policy package for the term 2012-2015 in cooperation of different ministries responsible for integration. The Programme with its six focus areas and 63 measures put emphasis on immigrants' employment and social inclusion by supporting their independence and equal opportunities.

The second Government Integration Programme for 2016-2019 (2016) took into account impacts of the first action plan along other policies and practices and set objective to create more flexible system with strong focus on individualization of services. As noted by Bratsberg et al. (2017, 110) this high need for personalized measures was also due to significant increase of asylum seekers in 2015 and past experiences of poorly integrated refugees in Finnish labour market what cost extra expenses for Finland. Reasonably, to curb immigration costs, integration programme for 2016-2019 heightened its focus on easier and quicker access to education and working life for asylum seekers. However, both integration programmes attach importance to labour migration to gain the competitive edge through internationalization (International migration 2018-2019).

Although both of the programmes seem to be aligned with time and situation, objectives described under focus areas give the impression that challenges are the same all the time along with relatable suggestions but grouped in different order and discussed in different words.

Effective guidance and support, accessibility to appropriate services, individual needs of immigrants, equal opportunities to education and labour market, multisectoral cooperation, same vulnerable groups are over and over under special attention to be addressed. This speaks for three possible problems.

Either the planned actions toward the goal is not right or the guidelines are not properly implemented (OECD 2018). While utmost essential third version is that those goals are unattainable to achieve through integration trainings.

Anyways, comparing both integration programmes, there is considerable improvement in the latter taking a shift toward more realistic goals.

The first integration programme (2012) is unbelievably ambitious and idealistic with less hope for actual achievements since the very beginning. It holds the general assumption that integration happens immediately, and immigrant can integrate in social life straightforwardly (Saukkonen 2016).

The very first focus area of communal integration with its objective claims to bring immigrants living conditions close to mainstream society. Although key focus comes on housing, income level, employment, education and participation as described in additional brackets, it is incontestably unfeasible to achieve. The programme sets goals of zero tolerance for racism, raising immigrant employability rate from 19,7 to 60 % in Helsinki capital region. Those intentions are unquestionably noteworthy, but lacking evidence to believe it could happen.

The second programme for the years 2016-2019 has rather favourable objectives although very much similar to the goals of the first action plan. Here more attention is given to immigrants' individual motivation and their key role in integration process. Perhaps this is a response and an attempt to cede responsibility for non-fulfilled objectives to immigrants (Masoud et al. 2019). Furthermore, importance of first-stage services is much accentuated. The programme counts on guidance, advice and initial assessment to enable selecting meaningful integration measures for immigrants. This directly means arduous task and heavy responsibility for TE-officers while there is almost no help offered how to deal with that duty if not considered the Decree on Initial Assessment for Promoting Integration (570/2011).

The Decree specifies key issues to address during the initial interview. Assessment should examine immigrants' prior knowledge and experiences, reading, writing, learning, language and other skills, their special strengths and

own interests concerning job and education and their life situation. Later, integration plan is prepared based on that information expecting that most suitable services are selected considering all details about immigrant's situation.

Although all possible scenario is already considered at policy level to ensure purposeful assessment, guidance and advising at initial stages, it does not necessarily mean that the process might be efficient.

That large scope and comprehensiveness of initial assessment could be number one reason for its failure. Stepping beyond intention it is interesting what skills and tools people conducting those interviews have in hand, what new competences they need to evaluate efficiently immigrants' whole lifespan, how possible it is that an interview or an assessment test gives full picture of immigrants needs, and along many other questions how aware TE-officers and immigrants are of all trainings available with its learning objectives to make right decisions.

Perhaps this lack of awareness is a reason why TE-officers believe that trainings arranged in a modular format is the best option for immigrants with no specific needs. Accordingly, in most cases start point is module path for newcomers (OECD 2016, 14). In addition, prioritizing modularized trainings could be explained with its simplicity and easy-to-follow plan for TE-officers. Immigrants are directed there once, and they keep moving ahead from module to module up to the last course. As they manage to proceed to next levels of integration trainings, it is possibly believed that all goes well.

Going back to key objectives of integration programme 2016-2019, likewise the previous one, it aims high immigrants' employment. The programme introduces deeper perspective to use potential of diverse cultural strengths and expand Finnish innovation. However, prospective is limited to immigrants with high professional skills or students graduating from Finnish higher education.

Another biggest targeted group are refugees and women in need of strong support. Other types of diversity are not taken into sufficient consideration what logically leads to inadequate decisions and results in integration services.

The connotations of objectives in both Integration programmes 2012 and 2016, vindicate that integration is by and large addressed from economic perspective although it is not directly expressed. Emphasis on employment and labour market integration is an attempt to benefit from high-skilled immigrants and avoid financial burden associated with poorly qualified newcomers. While it merely understates and limits the scope of integration to social stance, it also explains why the challenges in integration services are persistent. Without the alignment between objectives, activities and assessment, integration trainings will never lead to intended outcomes would it be employment or social inclusion.

Suggestions for the next action programme had been already reported by the Audit Committee approved by Parliament (Kotouttamisen toimivuus 2019). Those suggestions reprise to speed up integration and accelerate the pathways to employment by providing adequate services. It is recommended to focus more on compatible skills of working life during integration training, make language teaching more effective, increase involvement of third sector and civil society in integration and again hone in on women as vulnerable group.

None of those suggestions are brand new but those have been already addressed in previous integration programmes. However, Audit Committee's report introduces interesting and worthwhile initiative to make learning activities compulsory and evaluate language, knowledge of working methods, rules, and values of Finnish society through testing.

Although scoring the gained knowledge might be stressful for educators and immigrant, it is perhaps rational recommendation to finally see actual results of integration trainings and make evidence-based observations on effectiveness of existing policies and programmes.

4.4 Curricula for integration trainings

Education for the immigrants is organized in accordance with Finnish education system. However, there are several curricula depending on type of integration training program.

Literacy trainings are arranged in compliance with the National Core curriculum for Literacy Trainings for Adult Immigrants drawn by the Finnish National Board of Education (FNBE 2012a). Yet, education providers are encouraged to build their own curriculum based on the guidelines provided in that document.

Along with objectives, core content and assessment during and after trainings, curriculum describes implementation and premises for provision of such studies. It also includes separate chapter about support and guidance counselling for immigrant learners.

According to the curriculum the major overall objective for Finnish/Swedish language and literacy trainings for adult migrants is to gain elementary language skills and learn basics of reading, writing and arithmetic what helps learners to move ahead to the next level of education, work life or other activities.

Besides knowledgeable skills, training should support improving students' self-esteem, developing study skills and enhancing immigrant's engagement in society.

Curriculum lets teachers to be flexible in their work in terms of setting separate short-term objectives, employing various teaching methods and approaches, and using different teaching materials. However, this freedom does not mean much to arrive to the same endpoint within huge diversity of illiterate learners, who are divided into primary and secondary literacy and semi-literacy adults in the curriculum itself. Personalized study paths and individualized support is not enough reason to judge achieved results against the same objectives set for training as a whole.

Curriculum explains learning as a result of students active and goal-oriented action linked to their prior experiences and strengthened by doing things together. Teacher guidance and feedback is described as a tool to help students build trust in themselves and engage actively in learning. Trainings might support immigrants to understand their competences and get prepared for taking responsibilities for their own studies. On top of all, teacher counselling should result in concrete plan in next phase of integration.

It somehow sounds that all is up to teacher. Their transformational power and ability are reasons for hope that literacy trainings will be the same successful for all.

But how fair and realistic it is to charge them with huge responsibility considering heterogeneity in study groups. How logical it is to expect that individualized study paths, and student-oriented learning is enough for high achievements when we speak about the group of learners consisting of fully different people. Immigrants of different age and from different life situations, among them some experiencing traumatic past what affect their learning abilities or accuracy of memory. While individualistic approach gives a chance to focus on peculiar needs of each learner, it is not still enough to believe that study results will be same for all.

What happens if 160-200 days meant for literacy training end up in something less than intended and expected. Who or what to blame for poor results when evaluating its effectiveness? Aside from blaming, learners need to retake the course for additional resources and time for all.

Perhaps the major challenge here is not reasons to explain integration training insufficiency but mindful consideration of probability of goals. It could happen only through acknowledging success and failure and recognizing what is done, why and for whom.

The curriculum for Literacy Trainings (FNBE 2012a) is comprehensive and multi-minded covering all possible scenarios of challenges in study process. This is that biggest weakness of the document because it upholds the grounds

of defence in the absence of objective pragmatism and practicality. It is easy to justify low performance by ineffectively implemented learning process or unmotivated immigrant learners.

Next is, National Core Curriculum for Integration Trainings for Adult Immigrant (FNBE 2012b) what applies to other types of integration trainings. The curriculum describes equality and social justice as basic values of integration trainings with the goal to provide immigrants with everyday life skills needed to live in Finnish society.

Like literacy trainings, other integration courses aim developing language proficiency as a presumption for work life or further education. In addition, integration trainings might support skill development to enable immigrants to be more independent, plan their learning and assess their competences realistically.

The major strength of that curriculum is that integration is explained as individual experience appertained to immigrant abilities, motivation and personal characteristics. Integration is described as two-way process of interaction between mainstream society and newcomers what supports maintaining own cultural traditions. Those goals are in direct accordance with the Integration Act (1386/2010). However, there is small but very concrete and interesting detail worth to mention. While cultural habits and identities are respected, based on curriculum, integration trainings might help immigrants to reform any of their traditions what is in conflict with Finnish law. This is important point to explain some particular characteristics of teaching in integration trainings. Are they meant for reshaping “instrumental culture” what Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco (2001, 156) describes as necessary skills to function in a particular society? Or do they address those values and worldviews what create “expressive culture” and bring understanding of own self to people (Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001).

Another strength of that curriculum is that integration is intimately linked with various life skills going far beyond employment.

Guidance from training providers and tutors and assessment during studies are again described as important factors impacting learning outcomes and enhancing students' skills to manage their studies, learning and life. Interaction is supported by encouraging multisectoral cooperation. Curriculum places emphasis on placement testing as starting point for building appropriate path for immigrants. However, it gives a chance to change study path later in case it turns out unsuitable for an immigrant.

That curriculum for Integration Trainings for Adult Immigrant (FNBE 2012b) is quite concrete with clear objectives. It provides freedom and flexibility in understanding and supporting learning process. Assessment focuses on student's general progress and achievements in relation to objectives set for different areas of training. However, pass/fail grading for all studies besides Finnish and Swedish language skills might lead to wrong interpretation of learning outcomes. It is difficult to predict learner's performance by using that general terms what could very easily be on the edge of both sides.

Another National Core Curriculum for Basic Education for Adults (FNBE 2017) is intended for all those who had not completed their studies within compulsory school age. This curriculum explains the major objective of basic education to provide social equality, promote cultural competences and preserve cultural identities, support development of human capital and enhance employment.

The goals are pretty same for all types of education based on curriculum, however in basic education more focus comes on transversal competences to enable learners to employ gained knowledge.

Teacher is again in key role as an educator but not only. Teachers should understand more about learners' personal needs, life situation and encourage them to believe in themselves in order to overcome everyday challenges.

This description of teaching objectives gives space to think that there is no chance for failure. Everything is considered and even in case of poor abilities or less will of training participant to act, teacher should succeed to motivate them. While it sounds ideal, it is too good to be true. Such approach could bring lack

of understanding for possible failures or lead to unfair blaming for teachers who had done their job improperly.

Whatever it is, those supercilious expectations are source for stress for all. Reality is that intentions are beautiful but delirious with less practical value to make things happen.

5 INTEGRATION TRAININGS FOR IMMIGRANTS: STRENGTHS, CHALLENGES AND NEEDS FOR IMPROVING ITS EFFICIENCY

In this chapter, I reported research findings without interpretation. The results were framed around three major themes. First, I presented research participants' depiction of strengths of integration services. Then I introduced key challenges recognized by research respondents as most influential on functionality of integration trainings. Finally, I reported interviewees' suggestions on identified needs to increase service efficiency.

5.1 Strengths of Integration Trainings

5.1.1 TE-officers' arguments for good practices

TE-officers posited that integration trainings implemented as labour market training in a modular format were more efficient and brought better results than integration trainings provided as independent studies. For that reason, they explained that modularized trainings were number one option for them to start with new immigrant customers if there were no specific learning needs.

If a customer is a grown-up, educated person, the most effective is the modular path (TE-officer 1)

To my mind, customers learn Finnish language better during integration trainings provided by TE-office than in some other trainings organized as self-motivated studies (TE-officer 2)

TE-officers asserted that all objectives of integration trainings such as set target B1 language level, access to further education and employment, development of social, cultural and life management skills could be achieved during the trainings if an immigrant was motivated and had enough learning skills. They believed that meaningful and appropriate services could be found for all immigrants who were aware of their life interests and had some future plans.

In such case, TE-officers claimed that integration trainings could help customers at different educational levels to develop and proceed in life toward their personal goals.

I do not believe that even one immigrant stays without and beyond services if he/she is ready to accept a job. We have all to offer (TE-officer 1)

However, to a question to what extent integration trainings promoted the whole process of integration, among them immigrants' social inclusion, TE-officers answered that all was very individual. They explained that integration lasted for more than several years and it was associated with various factors. TE-officers gave much importance to immigrant customers own roles and responsibility for successful integration experiences.

TE-officers highlighted that integration trainings were just a good start with major goal to learn language in order to be able to operate in other situations where actual integration happened. One of the TE-officers described integration trainings as “the first driving license” to get ahead.

Labour market trainings include other studies as well... but this is mainly about language learning (TE-officer 3)

We give them (immigrants) general tools. But it is up to customers' ability to modify those skills better to fit into the needs of desired position and workplace. Nobody could help them to adjust gained skills (TE-officer 4)

5.1.2 Integration training providers and teachers' perspectives on good practices

In general, integration training providers and teachers evaluated trainings as efficient. They described functionality of integration courses in terms of competent teachers, effective instruction, flexibility and adaptability in classrooms to meet individual learner's need, broad scope support and diverse opportunities provided to immigrant customers.

However, in contrast with TE-officers, teacher from training provider 1 asserted that reconstructing immigrants' self-concept and identity-image what led to low self-confidence was more important for better performance than immigrants learning abilities.

If a learner moves away from that old identity of "I do not know" then she/he can succeed. Even in case of weak and difficult starting point (Teacher from training provider 1)

Accordingly, she explained her attempt during the course to help immigrant learners to see themselves in a whole new better way as part of training efficiency, although she acknowledged that this effort by teachers outreached tangible goals of trainings.

Teacher from training provider 2 added that teachers support was important not only in classroom settings but beyond it. She spoke about many roles what teachers had in integration trainings. She remembered that often they helped immigrants with life-related issues such as for example renting a house.

Teacher from training provider 2 verified that this kind of additional support was part of their everyday working life what they could not avoid or ignore due to the fact that immigrants personal problems impacted their ability to concentrate on studies, accordingly had direct consequences in learning outcomes.

Training provider 2 described this versatile supportive role of teachers alongside study process as one of the key strengths of integration trainings. However, teacher from training provider 2 complained that sometimes needs were far more plentiful and diverse to fit into limited guidance time during the training. Despite all, she inferred that most of the immigrant learners achieved intended outcomes of their course and were able to continue to further stage of trainings with sufficient language skills and knowledge.

Training provider 3 reasoned effectiveness of their work by stating that they did rather more than what happened during the courses. He said that they had organized various trainings for employers to make immigrants recruitment easier for them and help newcomers to integrate into labour market.

We have provided guidance to company management and have tried to find workers for them many times (Training provider 3)

All providers who participated in that research, conceded that teachers professional qualities and skills, and instructional methods were key strengths of integration trainings.

Training provider 4 averred that immigrant learners' productivity and high performance in integration trainings were due to carefully designed process based on rigorous planning. She convinced that teaching strategy and qualified staff were the biggest secret for their success. Training provider 4 claimed that their teaching style worked perfect for almost all types of immigrants including people with no prior education up to highly educated customers, only if they had learning capabilities. They described adopted method as real possibility to tailor the teaching package according to learners' needs and language proficiency.

Our teaching method ensures to activate memory capacity at full. It actively involves students' learning systems... it addresses huge potential what has not been used up so far (Teacher from training provider 4)

When a teacher comes to work with us ... we train them to be able to adopt our teaching method and use materials efficiently (Training provider 4)

Training provider 1 similarly discussed flexible strategies in teaching as important factor for effectiveness of integration trainings. She noted that teachers had freedom to plan their work in their own groups according to students' needs. Training provider 3 concluded that key strength of trainings delivered by them was teachers' ability to understand learners' situation and address it. Accordingly, they named consistency in teaching as major reason for successful study results.

Teacher has significant impact on classroom experiences... The basic rule is that teaching should always attend to the needs of each group (Training provider 3)

In addition, training provider 2 emphasized that repetitive practice and small-sized groups played a big role in educational progress.

Training providers and teachers recognized multi-sided studies and diverse opportunities during the integration period as a key strength of services. Training provider 3 claimed that immigrants were supported to get closer to mainstream society, learn language and understand Finnish culture through various measures. He named as an example work try-outs offered by TE-offices. Furthermore, he stressed that immigrant learners participating in their trainings studied in the same building with all other Finnish students.

Training provider 3 mentioned other efficiency factors for integration trainings such as professional and vocational trainings what helped immigrants to learn about different careers and build connections for future jobs.

Unlike TE-officers, Training provider 3 inferred that integration trainings were not only for language learning but its rich content covering various topics explained best the functionality of integration services. He told that integration trainings were effective opportunities for immigrants to see Finnish work life, understand what professional education meant in Finland and build networks.

The message by TE-officers, service providers and teachers must be very clear that labour market training is not only language course, it is rather more (Training provider 3)

Collaboration as key success factor for efficient functioning of integration trainings was the only topic when training providers and teachers' opinion differed. Most teachers found cooperation with TE-offices to be challenging in some cases, while training providers spoke about smooth and effective coordination of work.

We have done great work with TE-office ... I only have to send thanks to them (Training provider 1)

I have to say that I have had sometimes communication difficulties with TE-office. I could not reach them ... (Teacher from training provider 3)

5.2 Key reasons what hinder efficiency of integration trainings

When the research participants were asked about the key challenges in their everyday work, majority of TE-officers and integration training teachers commented that it was immigrants' heterogeneity. They identified various types of diversity within immigrant customers and emphasized that in most cases challenges stemmed from differences due to immigrants' prior educational background, learning abilities, motivation, religion and cultural origin, and past life trauma that impacted customers' memory and overall mental health.

Research respondents categorized different challenges at different stages in integration service process. For majority of participants the following issues were of major concern: limitation of integration system, lack of evaluation and assessment tools, service selection and customer grouping in trainings, services after integration period, immigrants social stance, communication between TE-officers and integration training teachers, labour market conditions, employers and immigrant customers' non-realistic expectations.

5.2.1 Customer heterogeneity: illiteracy, religion, culture and life experiences

TE-officers affirmed that immigrant customers had changed a lot in recent years. They said that there had been significant increase in numbers of illiterate immigrants or the ones with poor educational backgrounds who were not ready to participate in integration trainings.

Teacher from Training provider 2 held up with that discern. She explained that at starting point she had often to teach basic things to immigrant learners, such as classroom behaviour, what to do in case of being absent or late for courses or returning from a break on time.

There could be such students who are in their fifties and hold the pen the first time in their hands here in Finland (Teacher from training provider 2)

Training provider 4, similarly acknowledged that this shift in immigrant groups had been reflected in training results.

In 2015, 86% of our students attained set target B1... That time there were hardly any immigrants with refugee background. Evidently situation has deteriorated since then (Training provider 2)

Another difficult target group was immigrants from Muslim culture. TE-officers noted that they often stayed away from trainings because of religious holidays, especially during Ramadan and on Fridays. They clarified that missing courses interfered not only with absent students' learning but negatively impacted the performance of the whole group.

Training provider 4 spoke about persistent problem related to Ramadan and women health. She said that pregnant women who participated in trainings during Ramadan period did not eat anything whole day what ended up in fainting and calling to ambulances for help.

TE-officers had more communication problems particularly with Muslim women due to their cultural understanding of women's role in society. They told that because of those norms and cultural perceptions big part of women had never attended school neither worked.

The will to bring own culture is so powerful that sometimes they forget the fact that they are in Finland (TE-officer 5)

Teacher from training provider 2 remembered the case when she had to explain to customer's husband what his wife was doing during the classes, otherwise the woman would not have been able to attend a course at all.

Explaining the impact of culture on learning results, training provider 4 recalled practices, when a learner avoided participation and speaking with others because it was culturally unaccepted to communicate with unknown people. While as teacher from training provider 2 asserted that group work was a key to effective learning. Training provider 4 added that in some cases those big differences in cultural values lead to a conflict in a group.

There could be an Arab man sitting next to lesbian and this could end up in any conflict. We try hard to keep them as a group to be able to work together (Training provider 2)

The teacher from training provider 1 described culture problems in her own work as to impact immigrants' self-concept, bringing fears and lack of trust to own-self and future with no hope for better life. She said that cultural identity was mostly a challenge to development for two customer groups: those were adult immigrants in their fifties and sixties who had never been in working life and young people with no vision for future.

Adult learners have strong sense of self-image; accordingly, changes happen slowly what makes the process challenging for all, would it be students, teachers or any other people involved to help them to proceed (Teacher from training provider 1)

Along with culture and religion, all research respondents shared common view that immigrants' life experiences before moving to Finland and the country where they came from, influenced overall integration and training efficiency. TE-officers similar with training providers 2 and 4 highlighted that traumatized customers suffering from memory and psychological problems were mostly among refugees, what explained their poor performance compared with other groups.

A learner should not be on sleeping or wake-up pills during the courses. We have such students, who come here just to sleep because they feel safe with us... they cannot sleep at home (Training provider 2)

Howbeit, all respondents noted that memory and other health-related problems had become quite common in all types of immigrants. TE-officer 9 added that this explained cases when customers attended the trainings and learned something there, but they did not know anything the next day.

Interviewees assumed that besides immigrant's past experiences, their personal life and social condition in a new country mattered a lot while interpreting customer diversity in relation to final results of integration trainings.

TE-officers and training providers explained that due to family situation including parenting issues, dysfunctional relationships and other practical problems,

immigrants had difficulties to concentrate on studies or sometimes stayed away from trainings.

According to TE-officers, often the reason for being absent from courses was travelling abroad with families. In such cases, TE-officers said that they had to restart the whole process again once the immigrant customers get back in Finland because all gained skills and knowledge were easily forgotten. Accordingly, there was no visible improvement in their situation as a result of participating in integration trainings.

5.2.2 Motivational barriers to learning

Although all research respondents surmised that immigrant learners' motivation and active involvement in training process played a role in final outcomes, opinions differed when speaking about motivational quality and variables influencing immigrants' inducement to learn.

TE-officers said they had every now and then immigrant customers who participated in integration trainings with the only interest to get financial support. They explained that easily gainable unemployment benefits paid to unemployed immigrants had negative impact on their motivation and accordingly led to poor learning results in some cases.

Money is a reason for interest. The more they get, the more interesting the activity becomes (TE-officer 7)

Unemployment security works so well in Finland that it even encourages customers to be passive (TE-officer 5)

Training provider 4 reported similarly that they had had immigrants who attended courses and did as little as possible just to fulfill the obligation of an unemployed jobseeker. She added that besides class activities problem was insufficient use of language in everyday life situation. She explained that language learning was everlasting, therefore immigrants using language outside classroom was significantly important to improve results of language trainings.

In accordance, TE-officers claimed that no course or effective teaching could help learning language, if immigrants did not practice it independently outside classroom settings on their spare time and in life situations.

We always advise our immigrant customers to watch TV shows for kids in Finnish, read newspapers ... follow all what is done in good Finnish... But they laugh at it! (TE-officer 5)

Conversely, the teacher from training provider 2 described majority of immigrant learners as highly motivated to learn and develop. Likewise, training provider 1 contended that their students recognized the importance of integration trainings well and tried their best to participate actively.

I have a group where all are enthusiastic and committed, perhaps some of them even too much. They dig into every topic (Teacher from training provider 2)

Teacher from training provider 1 defined immigrant learners' motivation in relation to self-concept rooted in cultural identities. She believed that supporting them to see clearly how integration trainings helped in finding new selves was a way to increase immigrant motivation to study. She said it also meant moving away from their old identities as barriers to believe in changes for better future.

Likewise, TE-officers said they found relationships between cultural habits and personal ambitious to achieve something. As an example, they remembered immigrant women with no concrete life plan rather than taking care of kids and families. In case of men, TE-officers thought that lack of motivation was again due to past lifestyle. They convinced that job as a possible result of integration trainings could not be motivational factor for men with no working history.

Apart from culture TE-officers named poor learning abilities as motivational barrier what could be according to them due to educational background but also life situation. TE-officers and integration training teachers theorized that if an immigrant had never attended a school before, it was directly reflected in their motivation because of new stress how to study, do homework or behave during classes.

I have seen people, who had difficulties to hold a pen in hand because they had never done it before. It is too much work to do with them (TE-officer 6)

Furthermore, TE-officers assured that immigrants who had good English language skills were less enthusiastic to learn Finnish. They told that English was often used as language of communication during integration trainings but also in families, especially in emotional situations when immigrants needed to express themselves.

It seems that in Finland learning Finnish is difficult because Finns speak quite good English and it is easy to switch to using English (TE-officer 8)

According to TE-officers, increasing immigrants speaking the same language significantly reduced the need to speak Finnish, thus weakened their motivation to learn language. TE-officers 3 described her observation when old immigrants from the same country helped newcomers by doing things for them.

Nowadays, when immigrant population has grown that much, there is always someone who can help others in their group. I think sometimes if they feel a need to learn Finnish anymore (TE-officer 3)

Regardless of all those challenges and reasons for demotivated immigrant learners, all research respondents from TE-office and educational institutions mentioned that there were enthusiastic learners as well who wanted to study language as soon as possible and move to working life. However, in their case as research participants said the problem was in lack of employment chances and bad experiences in labour market what negatively impacted their motivation and killed their hope shortly.

If someone participates in integration trainings for many years and finally, he is still a cleaner, he starts to remember promises and goals and decides that perhaps he could never go that far. Then he has a question why to attend courses for 5 years? (Teacher from training provider 3)

5.2.3 Limitations in integration services

Another major concern for research respondents, and in particular TE-officers, were strictly defined timetables for integration trainings, shortage of courses, limited study places and lack of evaluation tools.

TE-officers commented that training constraints importantly affected their everyday choices and overall service process for immigrants. They remembered that it became sometimes a reason to send customers to a course what had already started or made them wait for several months before they got a study place on a new training. They inferred that none of them were a good option. In first case, they said that immigrants felt like outsiders, they could not follow the group who had been together from the beginning, while long waiting times hampered TE-officers effort for effective services.

Furthermore TE-officer 3, admitted that on occasions they had directed immigrant customers to unbecoming services because they did not have anything to offer. She said that such cases happened mostly when social workers sent immigrants to TE-offices, who were not able to participate in any courses due to serious health issues or personal problems. She doubted that the only reason for guiding such immigrant to TE-offices was getting unemployment benefits.

Social workers quite often send customers to TE-office even if they have problems and are unable to participate in any services ... we do not have anything to offer to them because they may not be able to study 5 days a week and 8 hours a day (TE-officer 3)

However, TE-officer 7 identified the cases when selected integration services for immigrants were not efficient for other reasons. She remembered when an immigrant participated in work-trial for several months with no actual results of improving language skills or getting employed. She claimed those were not a question of unsuitable services but a problem of incorrectly selected work-trial places with no job-vacancies where immigrants all the time spoke native languages.

Selecting the right places for work-trials is crucially important if we want to enhance employment chances for immigrants. It might be the companies with job opening (TE-officer 7)

Training providers 2 and 4 concurred the challenge of limited training availability and acknowledged that sometimes due to that restriction they had to accept immigrants into their courses even if the training did not seem to be quite beneficial for a particular customer or they saw that learner was not ready for the course.

We have had such a challenge that in a short period of time two healthcare personnel (a nurse and a doctor) called our teacher and said that a customer needed to attend a course as it affected their bid to be successful in treatment. It is a burden for us when they send a customer unable to learn just for being here (Training provider 4)

Moreover, the teacher from training provider 1 spoke of difficulties in transferring a learner from course to course. She said that even in case when she knew that her course was not meaningful for an immigrant, she could hardly do anything because of complicated process going through various stages and happening always through TE-offices. She explained that one of the key reasons for that hard experiences could be the fact that integration trainings were spread widely among different actors and changing students between various institutions was not easy.

Nowadays to transfer a learner to other trainings means involvement of TE-office, waiting, going, coming ... it does not work this way. Previously there was one educator who could build sensible path for a customer, now it is kind of distracted process (Teacher from training provider 1)

Training provider 2 similarly alleged that inflexibility in student transfer to other trainings was a big challenge mainly caused due to limited student number for a certain course.

Concerning the fixed start time for integration training courses, TE-officers and training providers described it as a serious limitation in terms of service sufficiency. They explained that as there was no flexibility to decide when to join a course, immigrants had sometimes to attend them at the wrong time when they

were not mentally and psychologically ready for studies or they had many other practical issues to worry about.

It would be better if sometimes customers are given their own time and they start learning only when they are in a condition in which they are able to learn (TE-officer 9)

Another big issue was grouping the immigrants for integration trainings. TE-officers recognized the problem of having customers who spoke the same native language in the same groups. They explained that it was ineffective in terms of language learning for all. Their justification was that while learners from the same language family kept communicating with each other in their mother tongue what reduced their chances to practice Finnish, it also caused disengagement leaving other participants aloof from interaction process.

What opportunities for language learning could be there, if majority is presented by some nationality or language family? Such language groups should not be formed (TE-officer 6)

In addition to language, part of TE-officers was concerned about huge age differences within the learning group. They assumed that mix-aged groups had negative impact on learning. TE-officer 7 thought that adult learners' different learning abilities affected young participants motivation and slowed their success down.

However, the teacher from training provider 1 advocated age and other types of differences within a training group. She convinced that such gaps positively impacted those learners who could not fully understand where the course led to or otherwise had no vision for their future.

We may have groups with young and adult learners sitting together but we have never noticed it to cause any problem (Training provider 1)

Training provider 2 and 4 said they had also experienced difficulties of wrong grouping, although they could not do anything because they did not participate in student selection process.

It is TE-office who decides who comes to our training courses, we only get the participant list (Training provider 4)

In case of Training provider 4, the problem was grouping slow learners together with fast learners what resulted in dragging back the whole group or putting extra supportive effort. Another challenge was when they had in their student list such immigrant whose skills were not enough to attend trainings.

It had been really awkward for us because we could not prove the reasons to withdraw them from trainings (Training provider 4)

The teacher from training provider 2 had again different problem. She complained that TE-office kept sending customers to them who had already those skills and knowledge what their course aimed to teach.

This happens almost in every case. Sometimes I wonder, why they (immigrants) come here if they already know all what we teach during the training (Teacher from training provider 2)

At the same time, training provider 2 added that TE-officers had a good deal of expertise to understand different customers and group them for trainings, but she connected those failures to limited training courses.

Although lack of trainings along with other resource constraints were not new for any research participants, training provider 3 claimed that TE-officers should identify different customer groups more efficiently. Furthermore, teacher from training provider 1 argued that customers' needs might be recognized better and appropriate services should be planned in a more flexible way. She said that immigrants were not supported enough to try different ways but, in most cases, they followed TE-officers' decisions to take modularized path.

I have wondered why customers who want to try and for example, apply for professional education are not given a chance immediately. They are limited to options decided by TE-officers (Teacher from training provider 1)

Similarly, training provider 4 clarified that in terms of service selection, final decision was always up to TE-officers while trainers only gave advices based on their observation during the trainings.

The participants on the whole demonstrated that integration trainings did not answer diverse needs of heterogeneous immigrant customers. In addition to duration and intensity of courses, all respondents criticized aiming for the same outcomes. They described it as a limitation in evaluating the efficiency of integration trainings.

TE-officers explained that some of the customers only needed spoken language to get employed. On the other hand, they said that people from academic field needed almost C-level language skills to work by their professions.

Similarly, training providers considering immigrant learners' different plans, interest and learning abilities, noted that integration trainings working the same way for all with the common objectives to be achieved was not rational.

Training provider 2 defined a customer group from her experience who only wanted to get a job as soon as possible but they were not interested in any professional studies lasting for years.

Some do not feel like studying but they want to work (Training provider 2)

All respondents raised additional concerns about limited support and no services for immigrants after integration period of three years. TE-officers directly stated that immigrants were left alone at that critical stage while they were not ready for that independence. TE-officer 5 inferred that immigrants ended up in two options to give up and leave all achievements behind or continue struggling as long as they stand.

While TE-officers believed that training providers could have helped with the problem if they had better supported network building during the trainings, Training provider 3 claimed that TE-office was responsible to help immigrants after courses by providing effective follow-up plans.

Another big issue for all participants was lack of evaluation tools in integration trainings what limited their chances to prove service efficiency.

TE-officers argued that monitoring and evaluation methods did not give real picture of immigrant customers' achievements during the trainings. TE-officer 4 complained that she did not have any other reason to assess immigrants' learning except training teachers' feedback and work-trial certificates.

Some of the TE-officers found completely ineffective classifying language skills according to levels against diverse understanding of language proficiency in different situations.

When an employer says that someone has good language skills, it means completely different thing to us. If a customer can understand and communicate, it is already enough in our case, but employers seem to expect rather more, really high language skills (TE-officer 10)

Training provider 3 alleged that lack of evaluation tools reduced importance and meaning of integration trainings to language learning. He explained that while only language skills were assessed by numerical evaluation, they took no notice of other acquired diverse competences gained during integration trainings. He noted that this limited focus on assessment of language skills became the reason for wrong interpretation of integration trainings for all.

We focus on language proficiency too much... and we start speaking about language courses instead of integration trainings (Training provider 3)

Furthermore, training provider 4 spoke of difficulties in assessing own work against other providers and understand their performance because of no available reference data.

5.2.4 Integration trainings content and teaching methods

Opinions differed as to whether teaching methods and content of integration trainings were relevant to immigrant customers' needs and overall objectives of integration services.

Some of TE-officers argued that integration courses did not always meet the changing skill requirement in the Finnish labour market. TE-officer 4 had doubts that immigrants were taught things what were no longer in demand. She insisted that it was necessary to modify and update training content constantly in order to improve employment outcomes for immigrants.

TE-officer 5 added that training content might be narrowed down to be suitable to the purpose of integration trainings. She asserted that immigrants did not need the same knowledge as Finns who had lived their whole life in Finland, but newcomers needed support for quick employment.

Further concern was about teaching methods. Part of TE-officers claimed that instructional strategies and techniques were not sometimes that effective considering heterogeneity in immigrant groups and individual's different learning styles.

TE-officer 6 reasoned that inefficiency of teaching had to do with procurement system for integration trainings. She explained that training providers were in difficult situation trying to adjust strictly defined requirements into their organizational positions to perform what was demanded.

As opposed to TE-officers, training teachers and providers claimed that quality of integration trainings was very high both in terms of content and methodology. However, teachers defined different problems in their work.

The teacher from training provider 2 had concerns about overlapping work when the same things were taught several times in different modules during integration period. On the other hand, the teacher from training provider 1 assured that repeating in teaching, especially at starting point, was the most effective method for learning. She identified as a bigger problem lack of awareness about each other's work what led to teachers' wrong expectation for learners' skills when they joined next level courses.

Returning to training content, Training provider 3 stated that courses were always up to date since they were in close collaboration with employers. Accordingly,

they got extensive information about the current state, demands, and needs in labour market. In addition, training provider 3 said that they had regular discussions with teachers during and after training period to figure out challenges and consider them in planning next courses.

Concerning teaching methods, all training providers and teachers emphasized that it was major strength in the whole training process. Each of training teacher claimed that individual needs of every customer, their goals and intentions and their learning abilities were fully considered in their teaching. Training providers added that individualized instruction was supported by curriculum, competent teachers, and effective instructional strategies.

5.2.5 Demanding overall expectations and unrealistic objectives of integration trainings

Although majority of TE-officers believed that it was possible to reach B1 language level during integration trainings, all of them along with training providers and teachers admitted that goal was not attainable in all cases. Considering the range of skills and abilities in immigrant groups, respondents described common language objective as irrelevant.

Training provider 3 thought that one year for language learning was not enough for low-skilled immigrants. In addition, big part of TE-officers claimed that even lower level of Finnish language was enough to be achieved during integration courses to prepare learners for further measures and activities in life.

B1 is not realistic for everyone. We have to admit that it is not possible ... We have to focus on what we can really do (Training provider 3)

Teacher from training provider 1 asserted that intention to complete high requirements of integration trainings in quick succession was quite hopeless for some learners. She added that besides defined goals, sometimes teachers set themselves unrealistic objectives and they expected rather more from immigrants than possible to be attained in a short period of time.

The requirements and training intensity are so high that in practice it is impossible for students to follow... It is quite painful for some of them to get through the process (Teacher from training provider 1)

Moreover, training providers 2 and 4 told that in some cases immigrant learners set false hopes and plans for themselves and started to believe in them. For example, training provider 2 spoke about experiences when immigrant customers expected immediately to have the same successful career in Finland like they had in their countries. Part of interviewees described it as cultural understanding of life while others claimed that immigrants were not given enough information and guidance about potentials of integration trainings, accordingly their assumptions were wrong.

We as teachers know what integration trainings are for, but learners need to understand as well.... They need to know what is expected from them and especially what TE-office awaits! After all, TE-office is the key actor in integration process (Teacher from training provider 1)

Respondents criticized employment goal as determinant of functionality of integration services. TE-officers accentuated that notwithstanding the efforts and efficient integration measures, final decision was always on the side of employers.

In addition, TE-officers contended that they could not help much in finding a job as it was the phase when immigrants personality, skills to present themselves and ability to make impression on possible employers were most critical.

Even if we make job offers to our customers, this never means that I can go with them to job interviews or write a motivation letter for them. It is their job (TE-officer 11)

Interviewees explained that immigrant employment was associated with several of most important correlations of employers' high and unrealistic expectations, their readiness and willingness to hire foreigners and their fears about immigrants' language proficiency.

Training provider 3 clarified that often Finnish companies did not want to hire immigrants due to lack of experiences working with foreigners. He said that usually employers' felt uncertain whether people with foreign backgrounds were able to deal with everyday work practices.

Teacher from training provider 1 emphasized that limited resources to assign supportive staff at workplaces was another reason to avoid recruiting non-natives along with employers' ethnic prejudices toward immigrants.

Respondents posited that recruiting of foreign labour had potential to fill labour shortages in Finland. However, they affirmed that there was much to be done with companies and employers to promote job opportunities for immigrants. Otherwise, as research participants stated none of the supportive measures and integration trainings were enough to achieve employment goals. Hence, respondents concluded that increased job placement rates were not clear, realistic, and appropriate objective for integration trainings.

5.2.6 Communication between TE-officers, integration training providers and teachers

TE-officers, training providers and teachers had different opinions when speaking about effective communication between them.

Training provider 1 and 4 claimed that collaboration with TE-office worked perfect and in case of some difficulties with individual customer, they always got immediate support. Training provider 2 concurred with the idea of collaborative efficiency with TE-office and asserted that communication had been always good without any serious problems.

In contrast, teachers from both training providers 1 and 2 spoke about different experiences. They said that sometimes they could not reach TE-office at all or their messages providing feedback and updates about learners' situation were not considered when making decisions.

Teacher from training provider 1 commented that every time when she noticed that her course was not meaningful for an immigrant learner, she tried to cooperate with TE-office to change the training. However, her emails and phone calls were not always answered neither suggestions accepted.

Perhaps TE-officers have right reasons to say no. But what I see is that even when from my point of view a customer could do well in vocational trainings ... TE-officers say "no" to them and direct to integration training path modules (Teacher from training provider 1)

Similarly, teacher from training provider 2 remembered a case when her recommendations to TE-officer about the next steps of necessary measures for a particular learner were not heeded and the customer was left outside the service.

I inquired about the case from TE-officer. I do not know where my message had disappeared, they said they had not received it (Teacher from training provider 2)

Few TE-officers also complained that collaboration with training teachers did not always work well. TE-officer 5 delineated that teachers had different understanding how to achieve the common goal of employment. She explained that although final objective was clear for all parties involved in integration services, TE-officers wanted things to happen faster while teachers' strategy was more content-oriented.

Goals are the same for sure, at the end of the tunnel is workplace. But we want to get there faster... They provide good services and teaching, but cooperation does not work always (TE-officer 5)

5.3 Identified needs and suggestions for improving integration services

In discussions on the third theme how to improve integration services, all the respondents emphasized the need for new measures to deal with customer heterogeneity. Other big issues related to service efficiency were better collaboration between different actors, flexibility in service processes, realistic

expectations according to customers' needs and learning abilities, and relevant, measurable, concrete objectives for integration trainings.

5.3.1 New trainings and services at initial phase, during and after integration period

TE-officers and training providers convinced that due to different cultural backgrounds and life experiences, immigrant customers found it difficult to understand social norms in Finland and in particular, Finnish working culture. Furthermore, the respondents stated that immigrants had troubles in getting to know how the service system worked, accordingly they either had higher expectations or they could not recognize opportunities offered to them.

Thus, TE-officers proposed to arrange some kind of social orientation courses or short training about Finnish working culture and service system in the beginning of integration period. They believed that the course might help customers to understand why they participate in integration trainings and support their conscious actions for next stages.

Training provider 1 claimed that civic orientation course provided in customers native languages when they still did not know Finnish well, would increase their motivation.

The message should be sent in their own languages that Finnish society is like this and when you learn language, you will do well here (Training provider 1)

TE-officers and trainers second strong suggestion concerned extra special services for those customers who could not participate in integration trainings normal way due to past history of trauma or some other personal problems. Research participants highlighted that customers suffering from mental disorders increased all the time. Accordingly, they urged to build supportive network for such people and let them move ahead on their own pace.

Another utmost challenge for TE-officers were no options for immigrants who dropped out of integration trainings because they could not attend whole day courses due to life situation. TE-officers called it wasted resources. Accordingly, they suggested to arrange some optional courses for such customers and give them a chance to continue studies according to their conditions. TE-officers also supported the idea of providing special trainings on different types of integration rather than labour market trainings for all immigrant groups.

First comes to my mind those traumatized customers with no education ... who are still able to participate in our measures, their health is good enough to join services and learn. However, for majority of them trainings are too short, it needs to be slower (TE-officer 8)

Teacher from training provider 1 and 2 made more concrete recommendation to add one more level in reading and writing courses or some kind of additional training where illiterate customers would be able to prepare better for next modules. Both teachers affirmed that if a customer wanted to continue studies in vocational or professional trainings, they needed better arithmetic skills and knowledge of other practical issues.

Furthermore, majority of teachers and training providers contended that integration training results were better when it was arranged at the same institution. They explained that this way they were able to see how student performance improved, and plan accordingly further steps to avoid absences, long waiting times and breaks between courses. Thus, training provider 4 advocated creating and organizing several-level modules within the same training provider.

All research respondents noted that personal services available after integration period was critically important. TE-officers declared that immigrant customers did not have enough skills and knowledge to continue independently finding a job. They recommended that such practical things as applying for an opening should also be taught in separate courses at the final stages of integration period.

In the beginning of integration trainings, we need social orientation course and in the end a training how to apply for a job in Finland, (TE-officer 10)

5.3.2 Cross-functional and multisectoral collaboration

All TE-officers opined that improving cross-functional and multisectoral collaboration was key to achieve objectives of integration services. They strongly suggested to involve employers into training process, give them the role of educator and part of their responsibility in supporting immigrants' labour market and social integration.

TE-officers asserted that employer engagement in integration services was important to keep trainings up to date matching with labour market needs. In addition, they believed that this way immigrants would create better networks and boost their chances of getting a job.

Furthermore, some TE-officers recommended to build collaborative teams with immigrants who had integrated successfully into Finnish society. TE-officer 4 proposed to set up a support group where foreigners with their good experiences in Finland meet up with newcomers to share stories, give advises and encourage them to keep trying.

I should suggest building some kind of support group, what our customers can join, go often and listen, see people who had once been in their situation but had found a job (TE-officer 4)

Moreover, TE-officers commended to build strong relationships with international networks and various organizations working with foreigners.

On the side of training providers, they appealed to better cooperation with TE-officers to corroborate information flow and ensure that all important details they observe and gather during the trainings are delivered to TE-office.

They could also advise us about those issues what we have not noticed during the classes (Teacher from training provider 2)

In addition, training providers suggested to support closer collaboration between various institutions providing integration trainings in order to enable learners' smooth transfer to a new module in integration trainings and enhance effective study process.

5.3.3 Flexibility in integration trainings and services

Research respondents stated that integration trainings might be more flexible in many ways to benefit them better. TE-officers, training providers and teachers strongly recommended that instead of fixed schedules and prearranged timetables, immigrants might be provided with options to join integration courses whenever they feel emotionally and psychologically ready for studies.

Training provider 4 proposed that newcomers might be given enough time to deal with practical issues first and start participating in trainings only at appropriate time for them.

If an immigrant just got his residence permit, it is not rational to send them to trainings immediately because they have numerous other things to arrange... Flat, KELA, police ... they stay away from courses from the very beginning and are absent from most important days (Training provider 4)

In addition to starting date, TE-officers and trainers suggested to consider more carefully diversity in immigrant customers' interests, goals and abilities when planning integration services and trainings. The respondents recommended to provide intensity and duration-based training options to enable alternative learning possibilities for different types of customers.

Teacher from training provider 1 advocated greater professional autonomy for teachers to aim for realistic goals and create stress-free learning environment for learners.

A teacher needs to get away from that pressure of excessive demands coming from outside. One should not believe that a learner can reach impossible during the course... Because those goals are utopian, learners cannot do it (Teacher from training provider 1)

Based on their experiences, some of the teachers claimed that modular integration trainings did not work for all customers. Accordingly, they suggested providing immigrant learners with flexible choices of relevant services, offer optional chances and let them plan their own path more independently. Teacher from training provider 1 emphasized that adjustable services was most necessary for illiterate customers to use available resources and support appropriately.

5.3.4 Manage outcome expectations and set realistic goals for integration trainings

Research participants argued that employers' high expectations and demands for immigrant applicants were often unrealistic and led to misinterpretation of efficiency of integration trainings. Training providers and TE-officers proposed that employers might lower language requirements and train foreigners at workplaces by providing supportive measures. The same suggestion concerned professional education.

Not everyone can reach that B1 level during the trainings, but despite that customers might be given a chance to continue in professional education or working life and develop language skills there (Training provider 3)

The second biggest challenge was customers' unrealistic work demand and hopes for career. TE-officers and training providers said that customers often believed to get high level positions immediately after integration trainings. Training providers recommended to make integration plans drawn at TE-office more concrete and measurable to help immigrants understand real objectives of integration trainings and avoid taking opportunities as promises.

TE-officers might tell customers concrete goals to be achieved within concrete time... Not like now you go there and then there.... But they need to know when they are expected to achieve a set goal (Teacher from training provider 1)

And lastly, the strongest recommendation by all respondents was to keep high expectations for learning outcomes of integration trainings but without high

pressure to get the same desired results with all immigrant learners. Research participants suggested to reconsider all conditions including customer heterogeneity and acknowledge actual goals what could be accomplished within integration trainings.

6 DISCUSSION

The findings of my research indicated that in general integration trainings are considered to be efficient. However, in more concrete discussions, when respondents started to analyse strengths and challenges in their everyday work, it became clear that functionality of integration trainings crept to a smaller scope. TE-officers needed to clarify that integration measures gave real chances to succeed to those immigrants who were motivated to study and had good learning abilities. At the same time, research participants' major concern was increasing heterogeneity in customer groups with considerable number of low-skilled newcomers and people suffering from health problems what directly impacted their learning outcomes.

This could be already interpreted in a way that integration training is not effective for big part of customers, but it works best for those who have some competences and clear vision for life. Respondents said themselves that such immigrants are not in the majority.

Furthermore, TE-officers' responses included some kind of hidden messages for me to think that they spoke perhaps more about the potential of integration services rather than tangible achievements. I understand their description of good practices as possible scenario if everybody is the same way physically and mentally healthy and committed in studies. This principle of universalism (Alitolppa-Niitamo 2002) is probably the reason why the same people held contradictory assumptions and were locked into ignorance of reality happening around.

My thinking has factual roots. NAOF (2018) and OECD (2018) showed that only few percentages of integration training participants achieved intended language level B1 while bigger part was not ready to continue further studies or move to work life mostly due to poor language skills. In addition, as NAOF (2018) noted there is not sufficient information to prove efficiency of integration trainings in terms of its objectives of language proficiency and employment. Likewise, the

participants of my research complained that they had no tools to evaluate final outcomes of integration measures.

This means that although research respondents described integration trainings in a positive feedback loop, their claim lacks numerical and evidence-based reasoning and sounds inconsistent with their own theories about recognized challenges and identified needs for improving training sufficiency.

Thus, it is debatable why research respondents evaluated integration trainings as functional and what made them believe that all works well. To my understanding there are several possible reasons beyond it. However, taken together, their arguments on efficient measures could be entrenched beliefs backed by subjective views or intended equivocation against better judgment spawned likely by the following factors.

First, as representatives of reactive culture, research respondents presumably avoided confrontation, hence strong opinions worked last (the Lewis Model 2020). Due to that cultural habit respondents perhaps focused more on the bright side instead of direct and negative criticism. However, later when describing challenges in their work, research participants reproved many of the hurdles and deficiency in services. This possibly explains also idealistic approach in integration policies evidenced by Saukkonen (2016) who argued that immigrants were given bigger promises compared with attained results.

Another reason why respondents assessed positively integration trainings could be that TE-officers discussed its efficiency often in comparison to self-motivated studies. Similar to my results, the belief that labour market trainings ensue better language skills than independent studies or voluntary trainings is supported in number of other reports (NAOF 2018; Karinen et al. 2020a).

One more reason for positive appraisal might be one-sided discussion what was evident when I asked the respondents to name the strengths of integration trainings. TE-officers defined them in their good guidance, equal consultancy to all and service selection considering immigrant customers' learning abilities along with effective modularized path of integration measures. On the other side,

training providers believed that good results owed to their competent teachers, flexible teaching approaches and training content. This preferential reasoning for well-functioning integration services is likely due to lack of communication between TE-officers and training teachers. Thus, knowing little about each other's work led to limited scope of discussion. Respondents articulated themselves that cooperation did not work always among them. Likewise, previous studies showed that coherence between different sectors has been one of the key development areas during many years (Uusikylä et al. 2005; Maahanmuuttajien koulutuspolkujen ... 2017; International Migration 2018-2019).

Poor liaison could possibly be rooted in procurement system of integration trainings what discourages different parties to get involved in partnerships (Montonen & Lappalainen 2017). As other studies showed often different actors are not aware about each other's roles and responsibilities (Lautiola 2013; Saukkonen 2016; Karinen et al. 2020b). OECD (2016, 9) directly noted that division of autonomy needed to be clarified between municipalities and TE-offices for better cooperation while collaboration between various stakeholders was described as critically important for efficiency of integration system.

Although the problem of awareness about own roles was not reported directly in my research, it is probably the case because as I noticed respondents almost always pointed to other sides when discussing reasons for poor results of integration trainings. For example, TE-officers say that training providers and teachers should help customers to find employment at their final stages of integration measures. In contrast, training providers claimed that it was TE-officers responsibility to provide better guidance, direct customers to meaningful services and be flexible in their decisions to offer individualised support even after integration period.

Considering that the findings of previous studies about strengths of integration trainings were likewise quite contradictory, it is difficult to understand who is on the right side. Karinen et al. (2020a) supported the evidence that initial assessment and guidance provided by TE-officers worked well. Similarly, Sarvimäki and Hämäläinen (2016) asserted that TE-officers were competent, and

they managed successfully to select services for immigrants in accordance to their needs.

However, in contrast number of other studies indicated that guidance is poor and main challenge in integration services is providing necessary information to immigrants to allow them participate in planning their integration path (Viren et al. 2011; MEE 2016; Kurki 2018; Kurki et al. 2018; Karinen et al. 2020d).

While there is a reason to support any of those assumptions, these opposing results makes me think that TE-officers and training providers feel the need to turn to self-defence and it happens due to the burden of responsibility what negatively affects their ability to concentrate on their work. Accordingly, they feel overwhelmed being liable for achieving goals beyond their control while explaining themselves is a quick fix for stress.

For example, training teacher 1 shed some light on actuality of poor professional autonomy for teachers squeezed by high, unfeasible demands instead of empowering and encouraging them to work toward attainable goals.

TE-officers attempt to refer immediately to customers motivation and own role in achieving final objectives of integration trainings also proves my doubt that they try to avoid responsibilities for unfulfilled goals.

The respondents certainly could easily partake in subterfuge when discussing reasons for the low performance in integration trainings by pointing to customers and explaining that it is them who could not do it (Masoud, Holm & Brunila 2019). TE-officers can also blame teachers for ineffective learning while on the other hand, teachers could lambaste TE-officers for failing recognizing immigrants' real needs when selecting services. This all goes up to official documents what regulate integration measures and what provide all possible variations of wording to be understood in divergence ways when deciding what went wrong.

For example, integration law (1386/2010) and integration programmes (2012; 2016) clearly evince the importance of initial assessment and guidance by TE-officers and at the same time they speak about significant role of immigrants for

final outcomes. Curricula used for integration trainings illustrate the teacher role extended into building self-confidence and motivation in learners. This is perhaps what my teacher respondents meant when they spoke about identity change and explained that it was a way to help immigrants to become successful learners.

It seems that from one point, umbrella-like policies embracing all possible factors related to integration do not give reason to argue over missing points, while on practice level my research illustrated that people involved in those services believed they did their best. Then the question is where the problem is if everything is ensured with policies and all is performed within the realms of possibility in practice.

This could be partly answered by analysing findings to first theme of research about strengths of integration trainings what showed that all what was in TE-officers and training providers hands and what they could impact by themselves performed well. At least they believed so while dodging accountability and shielding against low-yield outcomes by finding faults with almost always someone or something else.

Accordingly, TE-officers and training providers' affirmation that all works well could have its purposes if it is considered from their point of view meaning that they spare no effort, but they do all they can.

However, in that strict sense whether integration services serve its purpose of employment enhancement, language proficiency and social inclusion, answer is as simple as no. Although, behind those failures I might fairly say that there are numerous other actors what set limits to TE-officers and training providers work. Therefore, it is inapt from the very beginning to evaluate efficiency of integration trainings only against presented set goals. Otherwise discussion comes to a full stop to admit that integration services do not work.

At that point I move to the second major research question presenting the key problems in integration services.

The results of current study are in agreement with finding by Uusikylä et al. (2005) what showed that the major challenge for TE-officers and training providers is customer heterogeneity and diversity within immigrant groups. Other studies have also demonstrated that immigrant population is quite diverse in Finland (Saukkonen 2017; OECD 2018; Støren & Børing 2018). This diversity involves different cultures, religious, life habits and experiences as well as various health-related or social problems.

The study supports evidence that heterogeneity is an issue to be considered when speaking about learning outcomes and efficiency of integration trainings. Similar with Krutova et al. (2016) and OECD report (2018), the results urged that even immigrants' country of origin and age had impact on their performance as they directly affected learners' motivation and readiness to study.

However, most surprising observation is that research respondents almost always described major challenges in relation to immigrants' cultures and religious, and every concrete example was about newcomers from non-EU countries (Kärkkäinen 2017; Støren & Børing 2018). Participants openly discussed the worries that some specific and very different cultural habits put limit on their attempts to serve immigrants better. Although they spoke based on real experiences, their arguments might be tacit approval of cultural stereotypical assumptions but also could be a sign of cultural intolerance, especially in case of huge conceptual gaps (Varjonen 2013; Lindfors & Suominen, 2014).

The findings cannot be extrapolated to all participants. Nonetheless, like Kärkkäinen (2017) said, culture seems to be often overemphasized and is used to explain all failures under it rather than going deep down to personal qualities of individuals (Viren et al. 2011). This attitude perhaps leads to that generalization and categorization of immigrants into bigger groups by the respondents when they spoke about Muslim women or traumatized refugees from specific countries.

Although ethnic segregation was not even mentioned by my respondents in direct words, their examples how women from some cultures could never imagine to work or how some customers hampered other learners in the same group when

they were absent from classes due to religion holidays perhaps show some irritation. The fact is that culture and religion are much discussed as barriers by research participants when speaking about immigrant heterogeneity and its impact on learning outcomes.

There are two likely causes for my premises. First and most probably, it could be due to lack of cultural awareness what was also reported by Viren et al. (2011). Another reason for negative perceptions of the impact of culture on integration training outcomes could be lack of appropriate services to meet diverse needs. While TE-officers and training teachers are expected to do impossible to commit to success for all by meeting those personal needs of each customer, they are in dire straits with finite possibilities. Accordingly, referring always to culture as a reason for failures could possibly be defensive response to unmet goals.

Turning now to cultural awareness, there are several reasons what make me think that respondents' cultural competences extend only up to recognition that immigrants coming from other countries are different rather than their readiness to adapt and respond to those differences. For example, respondents spoke about women who could never imagine working outside of families or customers who could hardly understand or accept value of equality in Finland. Hence, they see culture through divergent range of features what leads to strong essentialist view that they can hardly do anything for better changes when it concerns immigrants' incompatible cultural habits rooted deep down into their identities (Kärkkäinen 2017).

Some respondents said themselves that in case of women from Muslim cultures changing cultural understandings of their social roles and reshaping their old identity was important to improve outcomes of participating in integration measures. At the same time, they assumed that this process was very hard if not impossible sometimes. Wherefore, their discussions sounded like there was no hope from the very beginning for any success in some cases and it was culture what was to be blamed for such learners' poor performance.

On the other hand, respondents are right that culture is difficult to change. Kazi (2009) explains culture as evolutionary theory what means that culture is not one

day experience, but it is shared learning gained over time and ingrained deeply into us (Schein & Schein 2016). Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov (2010) called culture mental programs what directs our behaviours, shapes our feelings and attitudes.

Accordingly, research participants mentioned properly that culture and cultural identities had huge impact on immigrants' customers actions, decisions, reactions and overall behaviours (Kazi 2015; Macpherson 2017) and it was not always that easy to make them think different.

However, Hofstede et al. (2010) say that culture is learned, and people can also behave in different ways. Furthermore, as Schein & Schein (2016) described, culture is an evidenced belief about the right way of living in particular society to survive. Thus, I agree with my respondents that immigrants need to learn Finnish skills and norms to deal with their new Finnish life. Nevertheless, this learning might happen not through instruction or introducing list of rules but by giving time to reflect, to participate, and understand why things work this way in Finland instead of saying what they have to do (Intke-Hernandez & Holm 2015).

Adaptation is a long journey through layers of culture (compared with Trompenaars, 1996 as cited in Kazi 2009) up to changing cultural DNA (Schein & Schein 2016). This change needs understanding of meanings and realizing relevance of new norms to get them as granted (Schein & Schein 2016). Otherwise, whole process of learning turns into resistance and ends up with poor results.

Kazi (2020) says that learning of culture is not one-time outcome-based activity, but it is rather everlasting process of developing. In that long process, effective communication is inevitable what cannot happen without cultural awareness. I guess lack of cultural consciousness and sensitiveness is part of the story when respondents complained about immigrants' unrealistic expectations and wrong interpretations of their work or own roles.

Cultural intelligence is the backbone for efficiency of integration trainings. It is of key importance that people working with immigrants have knowledge and skills

to speak with them, use right words to make messages clear because communication is about culture (Hall 1976). This is our cultural brain what gives meaning to everything around and what influences how we understand the same words or gestures (Brett 2000; Brett, Behfar & Kern 2006; Kazi 2009; linguistic paradigm in Schein & Schein 2016; Bourrelle 2017).

For example, some immigrants understand a promise of equality as a pledge to get high work positions while Finns mean equal opportunities for all. Or for some immigrants support what integration trainings offer might mean doing things for them rather than just help as much as possible.

Research respondents bewailed that some of customers were not motivated enough to learn but they did things just to get unemployment benefits. They explained correctly that motivation had to do with culture (Hofstede et al. 2010) but exactly for that reason, task and fulfilment oriented Finnish culture could be exhausting for some immigrants representing fully different cultures (Trompenaars' as explained in Kazi 2009).

Hence, cultural awareness and understanding who we deal with, is the only way to communicate clearly over shared goals with immigrants but be flexible and courageous enough to let them try their own way for the common objectives (Macpherson 2017).

TE-officers conceived that teaching methods did not always work for different learners while training providers thought that guidance at TE-office was poor. But I see the major challenge in both cases in lack of cultural sensitiveness and responsiveness in services rather than respondents' professional skills and knowledge. It is about ability to examine own assumptions and those of their customers to deliver effective services what address immigrants needs through understanding and accommodating different ways of thinking (DeCapua & Marshall 2015; Taylor 2017). It seems respondents spoke about the same problems but in different words because they were not fully cognizant about culture and its critical importance in their work.

Consequently, even in case of honest intention to respect different cultures, misunderstandings and misconceptions will always happen leading to irritation and conflict, if those people dealing with immigrants are not aware what culture means. They have to be culturally educated. Understanding cultures might be both sided (Macpherson 2017) otherwise it never works while this is the only tool against resistance to unavoidable changes (Kazi 2020) what respondents name as number one challenge in their everyday practices.

Another challenge of diversity unravelling research respondents' dim view of culture could be the problem of insufficient trainings what is not new (Ala-Kauhaluoma et al. 2018; Masoud et al. 2019; Karinen et al. 2020a; Karinen et al. 2020b). However, the results of the study more explicitly demonstrated hindrances in integration system and services.

It shows that inflexibility in limited measures with fixed starting dates and strictly defined quota per training often left TE-officers and trainers with no choice but to follow what was available for a high price of spurning real needs of immigrants. This finding is consistent with recent study by Karinen et al. (2020a) stating that good guidance is not enough if there are not appropriate services to offer. Accordingly, such limitations impact quality of integration trainings and decrease staff efficiency.

Speaking about heterogeneity problems, similar to many other studies, concerns were expressed about limited opportunities for those customers who needed special support among them highly educated immigrants or customers belonging to vulnerable groups of women, youths, people with health problems (Lindfors & Suominen 2014; Saukkonen 2016; Ala-Kauhaluoma et al. 2018; MEAE 2018; Karinen et al. 2020b).

Howbeit, results of my research called particular attention to immigrants with mental disorders. Findings showed that number of customers suffering from mental sickness grow rapidly while there are no services to help them (Kerkkänen & Säävälä 2015). Amount to Skogberg and Koponen (2019, 133), my study revealed that only integration trainings are not enough to help immigrants with

psychological distress, but they need special intensive support in addition to integration measures (OECD 2016).

Undeniably, personal assistance and individualized services need huge financial resources what is not realistic neither fair to expect. However, immigrants are promised to be supported with their personal development needs.

In practice, one of the most manageable way to keep this promise is to gain better understanding of immigrant customers and recognize who they are, what they need rather than shaping them all into one group labelled as immigrants (Masoud et al. 2019).

There is a clear need to know more about immigrant population (MEE 2016; Karinen et al. 2020b) to make better use of limited resources. Another option is to give up undue confidence, name reality and relinquish unrealistic hopes for all.

Though, classification of customer groups does not promise much if knowledge is not reflected in concrete changes in integration services.

On the question about challenges in integration trainings, the study found that in addition to above mentioned reasons of fixed timetables, limited quota and insufficient courses, the problem was also that there were no discrete measures for immigrants after integration period. This finding is not described previously.

On the contrary, Audit Committee approved by the Parliament (Kotouttamisen toimivuus 2019) initiated to reduce integration period from 3 years to a year. This works as an opposite message to my results meaning that within a year immigrant should not have any specific needs for support, but they might be ready to continue independently with the same services as others. Nevertheless, the findings of the current study demonstrated that personal assistance and services provided in like manner as during integration period is significantly important for immigrants after completing the modular courses. Research respondents advocated that such measures enable immigrants' continuous development by alleviating pressure of being suddenly left alone and ensure that all hard work of three years will not be washed away in long planning of what to do next.

Another most important finding of the current study is irrational objectives of integration trainings what are poorly aligned with activities and do not match up with assessment criteria.

To start with language objective, there are two different perspectives on language proficiency and its role in integration process. The first one in contrast to my findings, does not give the major importance to language learning neither immigrants employment for integration for various reasons (Kärkkäinen 2017; Thalgott 2017). The second perspective supported in Viren et al. (2011) corroborates with my results that language is key for integration as it brings new possibilities for immigrants. However, despite recognizing importance of language skills, the finding of my study indicated that it is unreasonable to have same set target level B1 for all customers. It was explained again due to heterogeneity and immigrants' diverse learning abilities.

Furthermore, the study supported evidence from previous observations that immigrants need different language skills in work and social life (Tarnanen et al. 2015; Kärkkäinen 2017; Kotouttamisen toimivuus 2019). Similar with Ahmad (2015) my study illustrated that demands for language competency is often vague and excessive, accordingly it easily becomes the reason for unemployment against the high expectations of employers.

Besides language, the research results attested that employment cannot be an expected outcome of integration trainings. The problem had been discussed in earlier studies by particular authors, but different from my findings their critic mostly allude to integration policies and practices stating that those made integration as a business and immigrants as employable subjects (Kurki et al. 2018; Masoud et al. 2020).

In my study, respondents did not show worries or strictly negative thoughts of addressing integration from economic perspective. Even more, in line with the Report of the Audit Committee approved by the Parliament (Kotouttamisen toimivuus 2019), research participants assumed that employment is a significant way to integration as it brings immigrants closer to Finnish society. However, their

major concern was again their part of responsibility. They explained that employment was not in their hands, but it depended on many other visible and non-observable factors.

Those various reasons beyond immigrants' unemployment had been many times evidenced in other studies (Krutova et al. 2016; Saukkonen 2016; Aho & Mäkiahho 2017; Bratsberg et al. 2017; Sarvimäki 2017; Klarenbeek 2019; Masoud et al. 2020). My findings corroborated with the idea by Ahmad (2019, 15) that if employer attitudes do not change, no measures can bring desired results in terms of immigrant employment.

Inarguably, in that light, my research respondents are right to say that they cannot guarantee job placements even in case of most efficient services but interestingly they first start again speaking for their causes instead of discussing generally overall potential of integration trainings to enhance employment chances.

This proclivity for taking things personally gives a reason to think that perhaps it is a part of that big story of poorly aligned assessment of their work, what possibly makes them to remind everyone that unmet goals are not their fault.

Although my respondents did not use direct words of hierarchy and discrimination, the results showed that they were quite familiar with whatever happens in labour market and what opportunities immigrant applicants have to get a job. There are similarities between the attitudes expressed by TE-officers and those described by Väisänen (2020, 12) that in Finland education and work experiences from abroad is suspicious for employers. Accordingly, as research respondents said one of the serious problems and reason for low employment was Finnish employers' lack of trust to immigrants and big doubts whether their language and professional competencies were suitable for Finnish work life.

The research participants commented that immigrants often get lower positions, mostly in service sector and that there are some career fields where they could never get into (like Krutova et al., 2016; Kurki 2018).

However, in contrast to other studies TE-officers again emphasized own role of immigrants in employment. They asserted that personality and skills how immigrants present themselves during job interviews might have huge impact on getting a job. This perspective is much criticized by Kurki et al. (2018) who says that market-oriented discourses leads to blame immigrants for all as a personal failure rather than explaining it at societal level. I also think that immigrants cannot do that much only through their positive dispositions because as respondents admitted themselves Finnish employers are not that eager to hire foreigners and they keep high standards for immigrant jobseekers.

Furthermore, again based on participants arguments Finnish working life rules and norms are quite specific what needs special skills. So, employability could not be much around personality or lack of competences neither effective measures.

The interesting finding is also that while all respondents assumed that employment could not be expected as outcome of integration trainings, TE-officers saddled training teachers and providers with responsibility to support better immigrants' employment by developing presentation skills and building professional networks during courses. That tendency of delegating nonprofessional roles to teachers is reprehended in the article by Montonen and Lappalainen (2017) where authors argued that new models of integration trainings put teachers in the role of consultant shifted toward market-based expertise and brought huge stress for them.

While my teacher respondents did not fully neglect their important roles at all stages of integration process and claimed they did all they could to get immigrants closer to employers, they pointed back to TE-offices and stated that it was their responsibility to support immigrants in all whatever they needed after courses.

It could be argued that those conflicting premises of TE-officers and training providers is due to unrealistic goals of integration trainings along with unclear roles of overwhelmed responsibilities for them. Once trainers are given a task to teach language and skills necessary for employment and TE-officers are expected to build effective individualized plans considering immigrant situation,

they feel need to prove that they do their best even though results remain unfulfilled. It is therefore likely that real reasons beyond unmet goals are not discussed enough or are not given adequate attention.

Nevertheless, findings of the current study confirmed that more could be done to get better results. Research participants' suggestions are in line with those of previous studies but some of them are more concrete and precise reflecting the identified challenges experienced personally by my respondents.

Based on study results there are four major needs what might enable to improve efficiency of integration services. Those are additional integration measures, service flexibility to adapt to customers' needs, better collaboration between different parties involved in integration services and efficient goal setting leading to realistic expectations.

The findings are in accord with other studies indicating that workplace experiences, involvement of third sector and whole society is crucially important to help immigrants understand Finnish culture and learn language efficiently (Varjonen 2013; Sahradyan 2017; Väisänen 2020).

The results supported Vanhanen's (2016) note that formal and informal learning must occur concurrently to promote integration. It means learning language and Finnish culture by participating in various activities and observing different life situations to bring comfort of belonging and sense of group identity to immigrants.

Accordingly, my research respondents by the same token advocated that there might be various services for immigrants what provide more possibilities to gain work experiences at earlier stages of integration and get closer to mainstream society (Aho & Mäkiäho 2017; Karinen et al., 2020b).

My respondents suggested that employers should become educators. They might allow foreigners to join workplaces with nonsufficient language proficiency and provide guidance for immigrants to support further learning of language and other skills.

Similar with previous studies one of the recommendations was to involve different international organizations in integration services to increase chances for social networking and communication. Furthermore, it was highly suggested to invite old immigrants and provide peer mentoring services for newcomers where foreigners guide and support each other by sharing motivational life stories. The idea of peer support and importance of binding relationships for language learning, skill development and social integration was also reported by Kokkonen et al. (2019, 92).

The study supported evidence that voluntary sector might bring unique value to integration practices. However, as already pointed out by Bontenbal and Lillie (2019) the results indicated that potential is not efficiently used so far.

Other similar suggestion with recent publications was providing additional various trainings arranged in a flexible manner to give all immigrants a chance to participate according to their life situation and avoid long waiting times or breaks between courses (Viren et al. 2011; Ministry of Education and Culture 2019; Kaspala 2019; Karinen et al. 2020a; Karinen et al. 2020b;). The study confirmed that non-stop activities to enhance language learning is crucially important (Ala-Kauhaluoma et al. 2018).

Another implication that existing integration trainings are not sufficient enough is demonstrated in suggestion to offer preparatory trainings to those who want to continue vocational studies. It is interesting that this need was already discussed and promised to be met in both integration programmes (2012 & 2016), but my findings showed that reality is different. Suggestions also concerned offering trainings of various lengths and intensity for diverse learners.

To speak about more concrete recommendations, the research participants proposed to arrange social orientation course at the very beginning of integration period in immigrant's native languages. They assumed that such coaching might help immigrants to understand real potential of integration services and bring realistic expectation for future. Respondents also suggested organizing special training at the end of integration services where customers get knowledge, skills, advises and hints how to find a job in Finland.

Another direct suggestion concerned one more additional course for illiterate immigrant customers before they move to modularized path after reading and writing courses. That idea is partly supported by Uusikylä et al. (2005) when they spoke about the need for supportive teaching especially for people with no prior education.

For more balanced instruction, training providers and teachers recommended to increase their involvement in student selection process and grouping for courses.

Concerning the problem of fragmented system and lack of information flow, my research respondents in the lines of various studies, suggested better cooperation between different parties. Research participants advocated that closer connections are needed to communicate over common goals sufficiently and make efficient decisions based on all relevant information gathered at different stages. Multisectoral cooperation had been many times topic of discussion (Ekholm 2015; MEE 2016; Saukkonen 2016; Ala-Kauhaluoma et al. 2018; Bontenbal & Lillie 2019). Although it had been among objectives in both integration programmes (2012 & 2016), my findings demonstrated that stronger collaboration between ministries, social partners and different actors is still on the agenda. Research participants explained it in relation to procurement system corroborating with Vanhanen (2016) saying that reason for poor collaboration could be no stable status for parties and no permanent practices of partnerships due to service acquisition.

The final and most considerable suggestion of the current study is setting realistic goals for integration trainings to increase satisfaction for all sides and bring reasons for positive interpretation of service results. Saukkonen (2016) criticised Finnish multiculturalist policies and explained that its high promises to immigrants could be a reason for dissatisfaction. My research result proved the same and advocated that objectives of integration measures might be defined in feasible, realistic goals and negotiated more clearly with everyone, including employers, training providers or immigrants themselves. As one of the training providers said: "We have to admit that it is not possible to achieve B1 level in all cases but...We have to focus on what we can really do'."

That quote may work as the best possible explanation for conflicting findings and various attitudes on integration training efficiency. I personally think that the key point where we should start arguing on how sufficient integration trainings are, is to reconsider what and why is done and how those activities are aligned with final outcomes.

7 CONCLUSIONS

The present study was designed to determine efficiency of integration trainings against its key objectives to promote employment, social inclusion, and further education by acquiring necessary skills for work and life in Finland and B1 language proficiency during three years of integration period. The research aimed to identify strengths and major challenges in the process of integration services and recognize the needs for improving its effectiveness.

7.1 Conclusions and recommendations

Taken together, the findings of this study suggest that integration training is a prime opportunity and fundamental starting point to receive essential knowledge for moving to other activities where integration happens. However, considering immigrant diversity, the results showed that integration measures could not always bring same effective outcomes. The study evidenced that integration services do not respond diverse customer needs. Furthermore, findings demonstrated that formal training is insufficient to achieve intended final goals of integration trainings.

In general, the data provided evidenced how the respondents perceived efficiency of integration trainings related to any improvement in immigrants' skills and life rather than achieving same measurable results for all customers.

Concerning the major challenges in integration services, the study strengthens the idea that customer heterogeneity is key concern. The results highlighted that in addition to cultural and religious diversity, immigrants' unequal learning skills, prior life experiences, individual interests, and motivation had significant importance on learning performance. The evidence from the study urges that in case of unmet supportive care for immigrant customers with mental health issues no training could help to learn anything or improve their life chances.

The findings indicated that inflexible and insufficient integration measures limited the respondents' choices and affected negatively decision-making process in service selection.

The most obvious finding to emerge from that study is that flexibility is also needed in setting learning objectives. Current findings clearly supported that outcomes should be differentiated for individual immigrant learners rather than working for common and general desirable goals to be achieved. Moreover, the results showed that aiming to teach the same things within same means and time did not work in light of huge diversity in immigrants' groups.

As regard suggestions for improving integration training efficiency, the recommendations from that study complement those of earlier researches. Overall, the results demonstrated the need for new services along with improved resilience in existing measures.

Although the study focused on integration trainings for newcomers, it has raised important question about future supportive services for foreigners to encourage continuous and constructive development after integration period.

The qualitative data collected through semi-structured open-ended interviews provided empirical findings based on authentic experiences of those people who were directly involved in the process. Thus, the major contribution of the study was to discern reality and explain impact against intent.

The analysis of good practices, obstacles and opportunities undertaken here, demonstrated the problem of recurring challenges. This is one of the most important messages to be paid attention in order to first recognize why things remain same over the time and then find solutions.

As study findings indicated possible reason for persisting issues could be unrealistic objectives shaped into overwhelming goals what could never be achieved only through integration trainings. Furthermore, emphasis on culture and immigrant diversity highlighted lack of preparedness to work with heterogeneous customers not only in terms of measures but also with regard to

intercultural competences, although it was not directly worded by the respondents.

The results revealed that customer heterogeneity posed communication difficulties, affected immigrants' motivational quality to learn, required various approaches in services and caused unequal uncertainties for employers. Those observations evidence the need for providing more knowledge about immigration and multicultural issues for all staff who work with foreigners.

Intercultural knowledge might support culturally sensitive approach in services by enhancing effective communication and understanding motivating cultural values to encourage immigrants keep trying.

The study results supported the idea that mainstream society and extra curriculum activities are of major importance for language learning, networking and social integration. However, findings complemented with earlier studies that this potential is not being used effectively and advocated to involve employers, international organizations, old immigrants and third sectors into integration services.

Probably, high point to mention when speaking about missed opportunities is that while immigrants are trained for their Finnish life, it is necessary to educate Finns about different cultures and help them to see those good consequences for all if they participate in integration process.

Overall, the insights gained from this study support expanded understanding of strengths and challenges in integration trainings and improve prediction of negative impact of needs remained unheard.

If we simply keep believing that all is possible and things work out well, we result in spending money, time, resources and get disappointment because of unmet expectations. Without setting achievable, relevant, and specific goals, without admitting that policies are just probabilities to success, but reality is different, and without opening eyes to existing challenges nothing happens and history will repeat itself again and again.

7.2 Future research

Understanding tendencies of changing face of immigration: Immigrant customer heterogeneity caused formidable hurdles for TE-officers and training providers. The study showed that integration measures were not always enough to meet the needs of diverse learners. In particular, immigrants with mental distress required specific support.

Nevertheless, offering personalized services to each individual customer is almost impossible in the face of time and resource constraints and considering rich dimensions of diversity. Therefore, understanding customers, identifying those major pain points and needs, and filtering them down into real achievable opportunities what integration trainings could certainly provide is the best solution for rational use of resources.

I see the challenge is not only lack of resources but also using wrong recourses or spend them inefficiently. Accordingly, knowing immigrant customers better, examining and investigating who they are and what their worries are instead of labelling them under refugees, nationalities, religious or ethnicity, might help to shift perspective on old problems and revise choices within existing resources.

Hence, future studies to learn customers and bring better knowledge about them is suggested in order to know what to count as a result of integration trainings and how to use available resources effectively.

Evaluating instructional alignment: The study showed that unrealistic objectives and overwhelming expectations for final outcomes of integration trainings was a big issue what led to resentment and copped a plea for poor results. Although findings alleged that TE-officers and training providers did their best, misalignment with intended goals and assessment was a real problem to describe their big achievements eliminating potential and possibilities.

Therefore, there is a need for further studies to show relationships between goals of integration services, practice activities and assessment.

The research threw up many questions in need of further examination to evidence constructive alignment in integration measures. Further work on that issue would help to understand the extent of impact what integration trainings could bring to delineate attainable intended outcomes and rethink current practices to align them with those objectives along with assessment of training efficiency.

This knowledge should also help to establish clear roles and responsibilities for TE-officers, training teacher and all other parties involved in integration process.

7.3 Limitations of the study

One of the major challenges during the research was conducting interviews in Finnish what is not my native language. Furthermore, communicating with respondents representing different culture was an issue to ensure understanding messages and their meaning in a correct way. It seemed that majority of research participants were reluctant to direct criticism especially about each other or for Finnish side.

The study had only focused on integration trainings implemented as labour market training, arranged in a modular format and procured by TE-office. However, integration trainings could also be provided as independent studies what was not addressed within the research scope.

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