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Travel of ideas in the context of high-skilled migration

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Abstract

This paper explores how the journey of migration unfolds for highly skilled migrants, focusing on the travel of ideas and how they are formed, materialised and translated in the context of high-skilled migration. The study is based on 19 qualitative interviews with highly skilled migrants who work in various occupations, primarily in multinational companies in the Gothenburg area. In addition, several interviews have been conducted with company managers, institutions, relocation companies, and labour unions in order to provide a complete picture from all different aspects within the process of migration of highly skilled labour migrants to Sweden. The findings from the study have been analysed through the lens of translation concept and partly through the push-pull theory. This work shows that migration is a long-term process that requires a deep analysis not only from a specific social group perspective but rather from a context of broader global challenges.

Key Words
Migration, highly skilled migrants, translation, travel of ideas, push-pull theory

Introduction

Migration is a topic that has been highly prevalent in the world's headlines starting with the Syrian refugee crisis. It has been given a high importance in the national political agendas of many developed countries who have an increasing ageing population and facing a lack of skilled workforce needed to maintain economic growth. Among these countries is Sweden which has taken in more migrants per capita than any other European nation. Particularly, about 400,000 foreign-born persons immigrated to Sweden between 2015 and 2017 (Statistics Sweden, 2018). Sweden is also gaining more human capital than it is losing via international

migration. Over time (1990-2010), immigrant selection has trended towards becoming more skilled, although that trend has been temporarily broken in 2015–16 with the relatively low-skilled refugee groups arriving in Sweden during that period. On the basis of the Swedish register data, the total migration flow to Sweden is relatively small at the very top of the skill distribution, i.e. post-graduate level. Namely, high skilled migrants comprised only 33% of all migrants who moved to Sweden in 2010. Nevertheless, the country has seen a drastic increase in the number of high skilled migrants, illustrated by the fact that it received 104,387 such individuals in 1990, whereas in 2010 this number soared to 293,236 — an increase of 135% (Swedish Agency for Growth Policy Analysis, 2017).

Bailey and Mulder (2017) point out that the global competition for highly skilled migrants has increased significantly along with the increasing role that highly skilled migrants play in maintaining the growth of developed economies. Moreover, Beaverstock (2012) explains that the high growth in various economic sectors in the last three decades has necessitated the mobility of highly skilled transnational migrants, especially in sectors where there are global talent shortages. Furthermore, Bailey and Mulder (2017) note that in EU countries, population ageing and decline in some regions has meant that many countries are dependent on foreign skilled labour both to innovate and to sustain their economies. In addition, the authors conclude that high skilled migrants bring economic value to the host country which is measured in terms of improved productivity, higher innovation potential and a wider range of skill sets (Bailey and Mulder, 2017). Finally, Boucher and Cerna (2014) highlight that skilled migrants are more attractive for countries compared to other immigrant groups as they are often viewed as less welfare dependent and have a skill set that is ready for the labour market.

Market for talent
Countries compete for the world's top talent by offering them various mixes of opportunities and imposing selective barriers (Kapur and McHale, 2005). Namely, the authors note that potential host countries offer 'deals' which are composed of a mix of incentives in the form of social, economic, and political opportunities and disincentives in the form of immigration barriers.

Borjas (1990), argues that there exists an immigration market allocating persons wishing to leave their current countries of residence among the few host countries willing to admit them. The author further discusses that potential migrants, just as workers looking for a job, are looking for the best country to live in. He adds that host countries, like firms looking for specific types of workers, set immigration policies so they can attract specific types of migrants. A similar view is offered by Kerr et al. (2016) who note that migration flows are the result of a complex process wherein multinational companies and other employers are looking for high skilled labour; governments trying to manage these flows with policies; and individuals seeking their best options given the constraints imposed upon them.

Human capital — an individual's skills, education, experience, drive and initiative — lie at the heart of competitiveness (Porter, 1985). The author argues that human capital drives the creation of value that makes firms and, by extension, a nation's economy competitive and shapes the opportunities and living standards of workers throughout the whole economy.

Therefore, seeking out and capitalising on the talent of highly skilled workers is a policy priority for both firms and countries wishing to fuel their knowledge-driven economies of the 21st century (Papademetriou et al., 2008). In this vein, Shachar (2006) observes that knowledge (education and skills) is one of the most important types of capital individuals can acquire to make them more attractive and competitive. For example, the US, Canada, the UK, and Australia created migration policies to attract highly educated and skilled migrants. In this 'race for talent', Shachar (2006) argues that the possibility of obtaining citizenship attracts high-skilled migrants. The author further notes that high-skilled labour is not a new phenomenon; but the competition for high-skilled migrants has increased globally in recent years. He adds that highly skilled workers have always been mobile; what is new is a growing competition among developed countries to attract them. Finally, he concludes that, in the race for talent, many countries are changing their migration policies, decreasing the intake of low-skilled migrants while opening up their borders to the highly skilled.

Over the past decades, a growing number of countries have started to pursue policies to attract high-skilled migrants, such as academics, scientists, medical personnel, engineers, and IT specialists (Czaika, 2018). Kapur and McHale (2005) note that the exceptional rise in the number of high-skilled migrants to developed countries is the result of several forces, including increased efforts by policymakers to attract those individuals, recognising the central role of human capital in economic growth, positive spillovers generated by skill agglomeration, declines in transportation and communication costs, as well as the increased pursuit of higher education by young individuals. According to OECD (2011), the international mobility of highly skilled workers is currently an important issue in many countries. Accompanying the high demand for skilled labour, especially in industries and professions relating to information technology, there is a growing shortage of such workers in a number of developed countries. To meet these shortages, an increasing number of countries are implementing measures to facilitate the recruitment of foreign skilled workers (OECD, 2011).

High Skilled Migration
Migration is defined as the movement of a person or a group of persons, either across an international border, or within a country. It is a population movement, encompassing any kind of movement of people, whatever its length, composition and causes; it includes migration of refugees, displaced persons, economic migrants, and persons moving for other purposes, including family reunification (International Organization for Migration, 2011).
A *long-term migrant* is defined as a person who moves to a country other than that of his or her usual residence for a period of at least a year (12 months), so that the country of destination effectively becomes his or her new country of usual residence. From the perspective of the country of departure, the person will be a long-term emigrant and from that of the country of arrival, the person will be a long-term immigrant (International Organization for Migration, 2011).
Highly skilled are defined as those persons having a university degree or extensive/equivalent experience in a given field (Iredale, 2001). Furthermore, Lowell (2008) suggests that the most basic definition of highly skilled migrants tends to be restricted to

persons with tertiary education, typically adults who have completed a formal two-year college education or more..

Following the definitions above, all of our interviewed subjects can be categorised as long-term (permanent) high-skilled migrants, as all of them have lived and worked in Sweden for more than one year and have a high academic degree.

Swedish immigration policy

The Swedish high-skilled immigration policy towards non-EU citizens can be summarised as follows: since December 2008, work permits no longer require a review of labour market needs. Work permits are issued for a maximum of two years, with the possibility to extend them for another two years. After four years, a permanent residence permit can be granted. Family members of the primary applicant are also able to obtain a work permit. While the process, at least in theory, is quite streamlined with no government involvement to assess labour shortages, it has a reputation of being quite bureaucratic and time-consuming (Swedish Agency for Growth Policy Analysis, 2017).

The Swedish Labour Immigration Law of 2008 abolished the labour market test and introduced a non-selective demand driven labour migration policy where individual employers were given the power to select migrant workers (Emilsson et al., 2014). This law states that an individual must have been offered a job before he/she can obtain a work permit (Migrationsverket, 2018). Moreover, he/she cannot enter Sweden until the permit has been granted. In addition, he/she cannot obtain a work permit to go to Sweden and look for a job. In order to obtain a work permit, an individual must fulfil the requirements for a work permit for one job. However, the requirements cannot be fulfilled by having two or more jobs at once. Lastly, the individual needs a work permit to work in Sweden whether he/she is employed in Sweden or abroad, whether he/she is employed by an employment agency that provides personnel to a company in Sweden, or whether he/she has been transferred within an organisation (Migrationsverket, 2018).

We start this paper by presenting previous studies of the chosen topic which is followed by theoretical framework of migration and translation concepts. Second, we explain the methodological approach used to review the literature, how the empirical data is collected, structured and analysed systematically. Next, the paper continues with presenting the empirical findings based on numerous interviews and collected data. We then investigate the underlying assumptions and scope conditions of these approaches by using the theory of migration and translation concept as theoretical lenses. In the final sections, we reflect on the possibilities and limitations of integrative approaches and present suggestions for further studies.

Previous Studies

Most previous studies on highly skilled migrants have been carried out in the fields of economics, regional studies and international relations (Cerna 2011; Docquier, Lohest and Marfouk 2007; Ho 2011). Most of these studies focus on return on skills, impact on the economy, moving into and out of regions and the effect of changes in migration policies. Consequently, research on highly skilled migrants has been limited in focus by mainly

examining highly skilled migrants as economic agents moving only to maximise the return on their human capital (Beaverstock 2012; Ho 2011).

Everett Lee (1966), in his paper *A Theory of Migration*, broadly defines migration as a permanent or semi-permanent change of residence. The author adds that no restriction is placed upon the distance of the move or upon the voluntary or involuntary nature of the act, and no distinction is made between external and internal migration. No matter how short or how long, how easy or how difficult, every act of migration involves an origin, a destination, and an intervening set of obstacles. Lee's (1966) push-pull theory presents possible migration patterns between an area of origin and an area of destination, with plus and minus signs signifying pull and push factors respectively. There are also factors, to which people are essentially indifferent. On the other hand, there are intervening obstacles between the area of origin and the area of destination, signifying not only the physical barriers of migration, but also restrictive immigration laws, cost of transport, ethnic barriers, etc. Lee notes that the number of migrants is directly proportional to the number of opportunities at a given place and inversely proportional to the number of intervening obstacles. Moreover, the author suggests that one may also think of intervening obstacles as *intervening opportunities;* that is, the presence of other places between an origin and destination point to which one could migrate.

Lee, (1966) argues that a set of factors that has direct or indirect impact on migration provides a framework to make assumptions about the volume of migration under different settings, the portrait of migrants and migration force in general. The author tries to show what the key drivers of migration are, by identifying the push and pull factors and observe how they can be configured. For instance, in some of the classical papers on migration it was suggested that people were pushed by low incomes in area of origin and pulled by better opportunities in area of destination (Lee, 1966; Harris and Todaro, 1970). In more recent studies, poverty was defined as a key driver for out-migration, before it was argued that the poorest hardly can migrate, since resources are insufficient (Tapinos, 1990; Van Hear and Sørensen, 2003). Nowadays, geopolitical, financial, and technological factors transformed dramatically, and brought new, more complex factors to migration arena and to international one particularly (Castles, 2004; Van Hear et al., 2018). We acknowledge the scholars' view that in some way the push-pull model is simplistic and limited (Skeldon, 1990; De Haas, 2011). On the other hand, push-pull theory argumentations about migration partially indisputable and acceptable in the present globalisation and global mobility of highly skilled workers.

Indeed, Lee (1966), remarks that migration decisions are never completely rational. For instance, factors associated with the place of origin and destination could be distinctive. A person who lives in an area for a long time can make a considerable analysis and deliberate judgement about the area of origin, but it is not the same with factors associated with the area of destination. It turns that the knowledge of the area is not accurate and advantages and disadvantages of the place of destination could be observed only by living there. Furthermore, Lee (1966) argues that migration is selective, appealing that people react differently on push and pull factors – responding on advantages and disadvantages of area of destination – have different abilities to overcome obstacles. He divides the selection of migration into positive and negative groups, where positive are those that with a high skills (e.g. professional and managerial people). The author describes them as people who are under no necessity to migrate and do so, because of positive opportunities and outcomes, ones that can assess plus and minus

factors at origin and destination. The push-pull concept in this case, can be beneficial in investigating the travel of idea of highly skilled migrants. The idea of migration lies deep inside of the factors to change the area of origin and embedded within these reasons to migrate, thus, certain motives triggers the idea to be born and materialised into words and manifests, which in turn comes to actions. In other words, it can be a useful tool to observe the inception of an idea in the area of origin, its further materialisation, travelling and translation in the area of destination.

Traditionally, the travel of ideas is discussed in terms of 'diffusion' model. Latour (1986) argued by comparing it with the translation concept. He observes that in the diffusion model, the token (e.g. an idea or a concept) moves in the same direction through time and space as long as there is no resistance; whereas the translation model which is transmitted in time and space is in the hands of people, and each of these people in chain can act differently, changing the token, adapting it or deflecting it. Instead of doing something essential for the existence and maintenance of the token like in the translation model, people resist force and transmitting it (Latour, 1986).

In this paper, we will try (1) to follow the 'carriers' of idea to migrate to Sweden, questioning how ideas were born, embedded, displaced and re-embedded in a local context at a given time and space. We will try (2) to investigate triggers that stand behind an idea to migrate, follow it through the migration process of individuals from the place of origin to the place of destination. Moreover, following the above mentioned arguments, this paper will present (3) how macro-actors like government and non-government organisations interact with micro-actors like highly skilled workers and transform the initial idea into something new. Therefore, this study intends to answer the following research questions:

1. What motivates/drives highly skilled workers to migrate?
2. How the idea is born, materialised and translated during the journey of migration and how it interacts with the local context?

Theoretical Framework

In order to incorporate our case study of migration of highly skilled workers or in other words the migration of ideas we are going to address it with the help of translation model and migration theory.

In order for an idea to spread (to travel), it must be materialised into an object. Czarniawska and Joerges (1996) refer to this process as translation. The authors offered a way of viewing the spread of management ideas as a process of translation. In order for an idea to travel in time and space, Czarniawska and Joerges (1996) argued that it must be materialised or, in other words, translated into an object, such as a book, a model or an image. Then, ideas and practices are developed in a local context or specific area and become embedded in it. Thus, ideas can be materialised in many ways and create transformation: unknown objects appear, known objects transform its shape and content, and finally, practices become translated (Czarniawska and Joerges, 1996). Once the ideas have reached their destination, they become re-embedded

into a new social context. An innovation or an idea starts off with certain properties in one context, but as it becomes materialised and travels to another social setting it will undoubtedly change and become translated (Czarniawska and Joerges, 1996).

Czarniawska and Sevon (2005) introduced the concept of translation borrowed from Latour (1986) in order to describe the dynamic process in which an idea is adapted to new contexts, needs and circumstances, resulting in something completely new. They argue that there is no inherent perfect model of an idea or concept rather it can be more effectively interpreted from a translation model. "*Translation is the process before it is a result*" — this is how Callon (1986) describes this phenomenon. Callon (1986) and Latour (1986) originally associated the concept of translation with both action and transformation, coupling both linguistic and material objects.

As mentioned in previous section, travelling of ideas is made possible by actors who transform the token continuously instead of the transmission of the same token as in the diffusion model (Latour, 1986). As long as the token is in one's hand, it takes one shape and meaning, and no matter what happened earlier, it will be transformed depending on the actions of the person it possess at certain time and space or in, other words, in local context. This goes in line with Callon (1980) who brought the concept of translation model in his actor-network theory and emphasised its similarity outcome: "*Translation postulates the existence of a single field of significations, concerns and interests, the expression of a shared desire to arrive at the same result. Translation involves creating convergences and homologies by relating things that were previously different*" (p. 211). He argues that instead of replacing metaphors in the process of idea spreading like the diffusion model does, translation rather adds new physical metaphors and bring new meaning to the existing idea or concept (Callon, 1980).

From the notion of translation it can be clearly seen that anything travels from one place to another will arrive in different form. Erlingsdottir and Lindberg (2005), provide an example of this phenomenon by presenting one of the case of the health care development project for elderly people and translating practices of home medical institutions to the new context. In other words, what was accepted by one organisation, was not fully admitted by another, and, thus, was contextualised into a new practice by cooperation of all actors. From the given case, Erlingsdottir and Lindberg (2005), argue that the same idea can declare itself variously in practice in heterogeneous organisations. In addition, Hwang et al. (2005), claim that "*organisations are not just passive adopters of practices, but are active interpreters and editors of external ideas and models*" (p. 2). Indeed, Czarniawska and Joerges (1996) call it 'ideas in residence', when the travelling idea disputes with local practices, traditions and experiences. In such 'conflict' of ideas, resistance may arise which enhance the translation process by shaping the new idea into the local practice (Czarniawska and Joerges, 1996). So, instead of paying attention to the diffusion of an idea or practice itself, it is rather critical to know how an organisation adjust and contextualise the practice to the local context (Hwang et al., 2005).

Czarniawska and Sevon (2005) state that to set something in a new place is to construct it anew. They add that ideas must undergo the process of materialisation in order to travel, a complex interaction of factors characterised as a mixture of change, social mood and intention that might not always lead to the realisation of an idea, i.e. its transformation into an object. This latter way was adopted to understand translation as a continuous circulation of management ideas and practices. Czarniawska and Joerges (1996) remark that management

ideas are translated into objects (models, books, transparencies), sent to other places than those where they emerged, translated into new kind of objects, and then sometimes in actions, which, if repeated, might turn into institutions, which in turn could be described and summarised through abstract ideas. Furthermore, Czarniawska (2002) declares that only an artefact can be moved in terms of time and space, idea need forms and shapes, it must materialise, "*a practice or an institution cannot travel; they must be simplified and abstracted into an idea, ...words or images. Neither can words nor images travel until they have materialised, until they are embodied, inscribed or objectified, as only bodies or things can move in time and space*" (p. 7).

As stated by Czarniawska and Sevon (1996), any idea needs energy to travel through time and space. An image in the album or a book on the shelf cannot travel by itself; it is the people, whether in the role of users or creators, who gives an energy to an idea. It means that the central role in translation model is given to the people as the creators and the carriers of ideas, since the token is in everyone's hands and each person shapes it in consonance with their preferences (Latour, 1986). Indeed, translation is a bilateral process that involves both the translator and the translated context. Therefore, during the translation, all of the actors in a chain of actions are involved on a certain level and transform the idea as well as being transformed (Hwang and Suarez, 2005).

It echoes in Czarniawska and Sevon's (1996) arguments that a global network consists of many local networks, which then gain an unparalleled scale and scope of action. In other words, they appeal that actors connect with other actors on a micro-level creating networks that appear to be organisations. This means that an organisation made of actors, who moves ideas, turns them into objects, then objects again into ideas, dispatches them from their time and space of origin and eventually appears again in another place. Thus, this paper argues that although there are researches in relation to the travel of ideas on macro-level investigating the organisational change (Czarniawska and Sevon, 1996; Callon, 1986; Erlingsdottir and Lindberg, 2005; DiMaggio and Powell, 1983), it is critical to focus on how ideas are born, materialised and transformed on a micro-level. Indeed, as translation is empowered on a personal level, and performed in accordance with each individual's frame of reference, it is suggested that the encounter between the traveling ideas and the ideas in residence in the local setting should be studied primarily on individual level rather than on organisational.

Partly inspired by Lee and his push-pull theory as well as the concept of translation introduced by Czarniawska, and other scholars, this research work argues that the migration of highly skilled individuals in Sweden can be facilitated in the realm of the translation model. To do so, many scholars were trying to find an approach of how the idea is born. Czarniawska and Joerges (1996) argued that ideas do not come unexpectedly, thus, it is important to catch the moment of how and when the idea came "into the span of attention of a given group of organisational actors", but this is usually a hard task. Van Hear et al. (2018) argued that it is rational to follow the triggers that shape the broader context where ideas and concepts to migrate are formed and where actors make the decision whether to migrate or not.
Therefore, in this paper we aim to achieve a more distinct knowledge of how such factors and motives arise, how actors make their decisions and how extensive migration patterns emerge, which then facilitate constitution of structural conditions for consecutive migration (Bakewell et al., 2016). Migration in this case, is an embedded part of deeper transformation processes

integrated in the term 'contextuality', it also has its internal, self-sufficient and independent dynamics, and impacts such transformation processes in its own right. Because migration is not an external phenomenon, but rather an internal part of broader contextual and development processes, the social impacts of migration are also fundamentally heterogeneous (De Haas, 2010).

Methodology

Design of the study

Since the research study is focused on a general phenomenon within a specific group of people we don't have to get access to the particular organisation to investigate and analyse it.

All of our interview candidates must fulfill the following criteria:
- Must be considered as a long-term migrant (have migrated to Sweden and lived in the country for at least one year);
- Must be considered as a highly skilled individual (having a university degree or extensive/equivalent experience in a given field);
- Must be experienced in Global Mobility, Human Resources or be related to migration work (this criteria relates only for employers and different institutions such as Migrationsverket, relocation companies or labour unions).

We were oriented on people who have already lived in Sweden, on average, for 2-5 years. People with past experience, who have much connections or network, mobile and flexible. Furthermore, in line with our research work, we were interested in a group of foreign employees, because it is one of the most vulnerable groups of people in terms of finding accomodation, obtaining a work permit and other social issues.

Such research 'freedom' allows to see a wider picture of the phenomenon and gives flexibility in various data collecting methods and strategies. Moreover, it enables examining how different actors interact with each other within the same network (Silverman, 2011). By focusing on a multiple cases in different organisations, researchers are allowed to acquire deeper insights of the particular setting from different angles as it shows practical evidences from real life as well as a complete and accurate picture of the phenomenon (Flyvberg, 2006; Baxter and Jack, 2008). Since this study aims at examining highly skilled migrants', organisations' and institutions' interpretation through the translation of idea of cross-country mobility, it requires both well elaborated as well as conditionally dependent data.

The organisations which were chosen for this case study were partly a choice of convenience, hence, initial contact persons were already available. It was furthermore a choice based upon the researchers' knowledge regarding the organisation, thus, they must fulfill the following criteria as well:
- Organisations that own or control production of goods and services in at least one country other than their home country;

- The organisation must have a complex organisational system with a variety of cross functional departments and diverse group of employees. Such criteria allows to get a deeper understanding of candidate's interview interpretation and clear view on the given phenomenon;
- The organisation must be experienced (positively or negatively) in hiring highly skilled migrants for at least 10 years. The time criteria in this situation is critical because it gives a thorough chronology of the phenomenon of interest, whereas the organisation's positive or negative experience in hiring highly skilled migrants can be determined.

Such a choice of criteria falls in line with Eisenhardt's (1989) argument that making an appropriate selection according to the theoretical model is more suitable with the chosen companies being perceived to be an organisations where the research phenomenon can be successfully investigated.

Due to the specific research methods and chosen topic, the list of respondents was divided into three groups:
- **Group 1: Highly skilled migrants**. This group represents professional workers outside of Sweden, who have been mobilised and moved to Sweden with work purpose. Graduates who had been studying in Sweden and got a job after graduating the academic institution. This is the main focus group, since they possess an experience and knowledge of migrating to another country;
- **Group 2: organisations or specific departments related to Global Mobility.** This group represents employers from HR and Talent Acquisition departments or in other words departments with developed Global Mobility policies. The second group of respondents will show the opposite side of this 'journey' and how organisations manage with new talents, explain the motivation of hiring highly skilled individuals and what kind of challenges they meet;
- **Group 3: Institutions or third-party organisations.** Last but not least is the group which represent organisations that facilitate both, Group 1 and 2 in different aspects of the 'journey'. Here, we want to investigate what kind of boundaries and challenges both of the Group 1 and 2 have. In other words, how and on what level such third parties support highly skilled migrants and multinational companies.

Thus, such a diverse pool of empirical sources can be translated into more reliable data and cover many aspects of the current study from different angles. Moreover, it provides the opportunity to picture information and see where these actors and their actions intersect (Silverman, 2013).

Data collection
To deeply investigate and provide an accurate analysis of individuals' subjective comprehensions, primary data was collected by conducting a total of 19 qualitative semi-structured interviews. The semi-structured way of interviewing respondents allowed to stick to a certain structure of the interview without any restrictions or boundaries. In addition, it also allows interviewees to speak freely and openly, while providing the opportunity for interviewers to ask follow-up questions related to the topic (Kvale, 2007). Therefore, the

interviews were open-ended and semi-structured, since they are deemed to enable a higher degree of flexibility and provide an opportunity to talk freely (Silverman, 2011).

From the total number of interviews, 16 were conducted face-to-face, two via Skype, and one via phone. All of the interviews were conducted in English and lasted approximately 45-50 minutes. Moreover, interviews were conducted primarily at the respondents' workplace, and only few of them were taken at neutral zone where no one can disturb and where we can focus on the given topic. Organisational freedom of choice by not being bonded to any specific company, allowed us to avoid power asymmetry and establishing close relationship with interviewees (Kvale, 2006).

The questions for each interview were structured and adapted to the respondent's position and organisation. The interviews were conducted with highly skilled migrants of different age groups (25-40 years old), gender (13 male and 6 female interviewees), areas of origin (Africa, Asia, Europe, North America, South America and Caribbean) working in diverse sectors (IT, education, engineering, marketing, project management, sales, human resources) at various multinational companies and institutions in Gothenburg and the surrounding area. Three interviews were conducted with employers who showed an opposite side of phenomenon. Such a diversity group of interviewees provided a deeper understanding of the phenomenon, identification of various perspectives and at the same time facilitated the creation of model which could potentially be suitable to distinct types of situations (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

The interviews were anonymous since it makes respondents feel secure and gives a possibility to share information without any social pressure (Silverman, 2013). In addition, the interviews were recorded with their permission and transcribed in order to capture valuable information and reflection for analysis. It allows to focus on the interviewee, listen and ask follow-up questions, rather than transcribing the answers (Silverman, 2013). In addition, the interviewees had some freedom in answering the questions. They were appealed to give clear examples and contextualise their evidence according to the phenomena, we have been trying to investigate, thus, it will bring clear understanding and facilitate analytical processes of the research work.

Data Analysis

Analysis of the quantitative data was based on grounded theory, since it exempts a researcher from examination or avoid making a false assumptions of existing theories (Martin and Turner, 1986). Furthermore, according to Turner (1981), grounded theory is well suited for handling qualitative data such as semi-structured interviews. This section involves analysis of the transcribed interviews which consist of several steps. First of all, the interviews were coded and organised into relevant categories, and then grouped into Excel data-tables to be examined further. During the initial stage of categorising and interpreting the data, open coding was conducted. The open coding process was finalised when significant links between codes were established (Given, 2008). Memos are also organised throughout this process of upcoming thoughts and explanations which can be supportive for future analysis (Smith, 2015).

As long as we can define common and exceptional patterns in empirical data we can build a theoretical concept. The final stage of the analysis was then to apply the theoretical framework, finding analogies between the theory and the categories and memos, which

followed by attaching code labels to identify contexts, activities, or phenomena. Since it is difficult to abandon some preconceptions during the data analysis, it was important to utilise previous knowledge of the research field in trying to define the patterns in interviewees' interpretations in order to comprehend the studied phenomenon (Martin and Turner, 1986).

The table below categorises the interviewees in relevant groups based on specific criteria:

Category	Number of interviewees
Interviewee type	High skilled workers (15), institutions/organisations (4)
Nationality	Brazil (1), China (2), Cuba (1), Egypt (2), Greece (2), India (2), Spain (1), Sweden (3) Syria (1), Turkey (1), United States (1), Vietnam (1)
Age group	25-30 years (6 respondents); 31-36 years (8 respondents); 36-40 years (2 respondents), over 40 years (3 respondents)
Gender	Male (13), female (6)
Area of occupation	IT (4), engineering (1), education (1), labour union (1), marketing (3), supply chain (1), HR (1), sales (3), relocation services (3), project management (1)

Implications, drawbacks and limitations

One limitation of this research is the small sample size of interviewees. The risk with having a small sample is that it cannot be representative for the majority of highly skilled migrants in Sweden. Another limitation is that we did not have the opportunity to conduct longitudinal research which would allow to follow and observe the complete migration journey in all its stages, but rather we conducted interviews taking a retrospective approach — the respondents needed to recall past events that happened several years ago.

Silverman (2013) notes that one drawback of interviews is that they tend to be subjective as the collected data includes only the interviewees' own interpretations of the field of the study. In addition, he remarks that respondents can have difficulties recalling important aspects which are significant to the study's aim. On the other hand, Watson (2011) cautions that interviewees can be biased towards their own organisation and there is a risk that they might portray it in a positive manner.

Another important factor to consider is the aspect of subjectivity in regards to collecting, understanding and interpreting data. In order to overcome the aforementioned issues related to bias and subjectivity, interviews were conducted with several respondents from each organisation. Charmaz (2014) notes that there is a possibility that researchers can bring subjectivity to the analysis, assuming that it not necessarily should be seen as a limitation due

to the fact that grounded theory argues that the researcher's subjectivity can provide lenses through which the data can be viewed and interpreted in different ways.

Since the purpose of the analysis was to find interesting material in regard to the research questions, it is difficult to keep an analysis without any subjectivity towards the chosen research area. This goes in line with Silverman (2013), who remarks that when moving from words to analysis the researcher will look for data, not only to identify concepts, but also guide the direction of the research itself. However, in order to minimise such bias and in accordance with Martin and Turner (1986), the analysis was initially concentrated on a comprehensive description of the data features before making any theoretical statements.

Therefore, this study does not aim to formally generalise how actors use the network and what role it plays for their migration activities, but rather attempts to look at examples of what it can mean in certain context. In addition, by broadening the focus of potential actors involved, some attention will be diverted away from the work of one person (e.g. the contact person), which in turn can provide new descriptions of how different actors within different organisations perceive the network's role for their activities.

Findings

As the main group of our research analysis is the highly skilled migrants (hereafter HSMs), it is important to understand what drives people to move to Sweden in the first place; how the idea of migration to another country with different cultural, financial and social practices affects them; how the initial idea of migration is transformed during the 'journey', and what happens after the idea is embedded into the local context.

First of all, we defined two main groups of HSMs who had an idea of migrating to Sweden. They are represented by expats and graduates who have different motives to migrate to Sweden as well as different routes and 'obstacles' to emigrate in this country. Expats are those individuals who received a job offer and moved to Sweden in order to work, while graduates are the individuals who moved to Sweden initially to pursue a university degree at a Swedish university.

On the other side is the group of actors who are responsible for transforming this idea and in some case are creating the possibility and enabling the HSMs to migrate to Sweden. This group consists of organisations such as multinational corporations (hereafter MNCs) and state-owned institutions. Although they support HSMs to settle down, they act at the same time as a 'filter' of HSMs' coming to Sweden. Thus, their intentions on this phenomenon are fundamental and requires a deep analysis.

"Move to Sweden? Why not?" or The Idea is born and materialised

The Idea to work

The beginning of the 'journey' for all expats starts with an idea which is triggered by certain factors. Foremost, this could be financial reasons of both the native and the host country.

Namely, there is a significant salary gap between Sweden, as one of the most economically developed countries in the world, and countries from where our interviewees came from (such as Greece, Syria, Turkey, Spain, Cuba, Brazil, India, Vietnam, Egypt and China). According to one Brazilian expat, it could possibly be a push factor to move to Sweden:

> *It is a lot about money — money talks in an emerging market society. That is why we have such a high turnover in such markets [Brazil] where we have a high pace of development. We always see people moving from one position to another or to another company, and of course one of the reasons is to get a better salary. — Expat 1*

As we have evidenced in our study, better economic and workplace conditions as well as higher career advancement opportunities in highly developed countries motivate certain highly skilled individuals to leave their country of origin and migrate to the new destination country where these opportunities are present, as in the case of Sweden. An expat, who had previously worked in the Spanish subsidiary of a Swedish telecommunication company, stated that precisely better economic and work opportunities influenced his decision to migrate to Sweden. Possibilities to grow, being able to work on different positions in headquarters' office and higher salary created a strong desire to relocate to Sweden.

On the other hand, the idea to relocate, for some of the interviewees was enhanced by visiting Sweden for a business/educational trip reasons (conferences, meetings, seminars and etc.) or contacting with Swedish colleagues at the regional offices and working in a Swedish cultural environment. This was the case for 5 out of 19 interviewees and particularly for one Indian expat, who, although was working for the Indian branch of one Swedish manufacturing company, had many opportunities to visit and experience Sweden which would later become his permanent home. He had continuously traveled to Gothenburg for business visits, system expertise and performing acceptance tests and has created a certain image regarding the Sweden and Swedish culture in particular. As it can be evidenced by the interviewee response, such day-by-day experience of the Swedish way of life/work style through contacting and interacting with Swedish colleagues, built a positive image of the host country and motivated them to migrate and improve their economic situation. For some of them, this networking was key in getting a job and moving to Sweden. This can be illustrated with the words of one of the expats who had previously worked in the Cuban subsidiary of a multinational Swedish company:

> *I had applied many times through the internal web portal and I didn't get positive answers, but all of my Swedish contacts [colleagues] knew that I was very eager to come here [in Sweden]. Most of them have visited Cuba, then we have had a good chat and visited the local customers. After four months they called me and said about available position. So, I accepted this offer. I would say this personal relationship was the most important in getting the job instead of the conventional way of applying through the website. — Expat 2*

If we are going to speak about this phenomenon as a 'journey', then a 'ticket' for it could be a job offer from the MNC to move to the company's headquarters in Sweden and the possibility, in general, to be promoted within the corporate system. Eventually, financial reasons — stability at work and corporate safety — go in line with social factors that shape and

trigger the idea to be born. It includes life safety, educational and work perspective for family members, and healthcare system. Indeed, MNCs are interested in HSMs and aim to attract them with the best offers and options that the company can provide. It was acknowledged by one talent acquisition manager that companies nowadays want to make sure that they offer HSMs not just the salary or the benefits, but rather taking care of relocated employees — help with finding accommodation, with settling-in services, ensuring that their employees obtain a Swedish personal number, help them open a bank account, as well identifying schooling options for their children. In other words, attract individuals with best service packages, rather than providing them only with financial incentives.

In the context of economic and social factors, HSMs who are married or have children are more sensitive and dependent in making the decision to migrate, as this decision has affect not only on them, but also on their families. This, in many cases, became an additional factor to migrate to the area of destination or to stay at the area of origin. In evidence of that, all respondents with families and children stated that they took the decision to migrate together or were thinking of how it will have an influence not only on them, but on all family members in particular. Therefore, such decision-making processes were more complicated and difficult to materialise independently. The aforementioned respondent from Brazil described the challenges of moving together with a spouse to Sweden:

> *The only thing that I was concerned about, and it was the most important thing at that time was the happiness of my wife, because when I moved I was ready for the people, I was ready more or less for the weather, the office and also my professional challenge, but my biggest concern was, and as always, is the happiness of my wife's lifestyle while I am at work.* — Expat 1

As evidenced, the main issue in these cases was the isolating experience for the newly arrived spouse while the husband is at work. Moreover, lack of a job, not knowing the local language and not having a close social circle cause further frustration and isolation for the newly arrived spouse. Also, this was an additional challenge for the expats who moved together with their spouses to help them adjust to the new environment, help them find a job, secure an accommodation, and other related issues.

MNCs in many cases offer pre-visit tours that are usually organised before the individual has signed a contract, and that is for them to come to Gothenburg for either a half-day or a full day visit with the relocation supplier. It is reasonable to get a feel what it would be like to live here in Sweden, give them information about the housing market, healthcare. Companies also give them a tour around the area or go into apartments and houses and give them information about the costs, how long it takes from the apartment to the site, and to give them better understanding of what it is like to live in Gothenburg. That is also crucial, especially when people are moving with their family:

> *I did a pre-visit [trip] with my wife to Sweden in February 2017 and the idea was to show to my wife [Sweden], because you know it's not all about you, it's also about the family and how this change will affect the whole family and also my parents. Sweden gave me the peace to bring my family. It was very important for us as well.* — Expat 4

Last, but not least is the cultural factor, when the Idea of migration to another country is based on personal desire of exploring a new culture and language. It was argued before that having a chance to know more about Swedish culture, language and particularly personal experience of visiting Sweden built a solid picture about the host country and which triggered the idea of moving to Sweden. On the other hand, we can assume that without the first two factors, financial and social, it would be hard to realise the last one.

The Idea to study

From academic perspective, studying in Sweden, finding a job and settling down in the host country is another reason to sustain an idea to migrate and it turns out that the initial idea of migration differs from expats' group of HSMs.

International students are seen as future skilled migrants. According to Iredale (2001), many skilled migrants are former international students whose local degree allows them to stay in the host country. In the case of Sweden, there are certain regulations that allow graduates with Swedish Master degree to stay in the host country for six months at most, have a chance to find a job and eventually convert the student permit to a work permit. In the case of PhD graduates, Swedish migration rules position doctoral studies as a professional ones which allow them to have a work permit from the beginning of their academic career (Migrationsverket, 2018). Our empirical findings showed that 7 out of 19 interviewees migrated to Sweden in student status, were hired by MNCs at the last year of obtaining an academic degree or after graduation, and ultimately stayed in Sweden after the completion of their studies.

These are individuals who have moved to Sweden to study a full-time programme at higher educational level like Master's or PhD. In Sweden, all bachelor, master and doctoral-level programs are free of charge for EU/EEA citizens, while non-EU/EEA citizens are required to pay tuition fees (University Admissions Sweden, 2018). However, before 2011, educational programs were free of charge for non-EU/EEA citizens as well. Such opportunity incentivised two of the respondents to pursue a Master program in Sweden. Therefore, a motivational factor to choose Sweden as a destination to pursue their studies was precisely the free/low cost of education or a scholarship that covers certain expenses.

Some part of interviewees besides the free-from-tuition-costs advantage, mentioned potential language and cultural integration into society as the motive to come to Sweden. Generally, all of the respondents were focused primarily on the educational perspective rather than on the financial, social or cultural ones. The variety of academic courses, rating of institution, level of educational facilities, availability of dormitories are one of the few concerns regarding the initial idea to migrate for our focus group. As long as they were admitted by their chosen university, graduates were supported and followed by to successfully finish the academic studies. In other words, the initial idea was to move to Sweden on academic purposes without a clear plan to stay for a professional reasons in Sweden or move back to the country of origin after studies.

Such an example is one former student from Greece who moved to Sweden in 2016 together with her boyfriend to pursue a master's degree. Below she presents her reasoning behind choosing Sweden as a destination country to study:

> *Me and my boyfriend wanted to study abroad, so we tried to find a place where they [universities] have low or no tuition fees. As European citizens we don't have any fees in the Scandinavian area and low fees in the Netherlands, so we applied in both Sweden and Netherlands. I found the degrees that I am interested only in Sweden and Netherlands, and then we applied to both countries. Then, both of us got accepted and we moved to Gothenburg. — Graduate 1*

The reason in this situation was based not only on financial factors, but personal as well — boyfriend and Graduate 1 being accepted by one university — which is rather exceptional, but acceptable in our case to develop this idea further.

"We are in Sweden, what's next?" or The Idea is travelled and transformed

Having a specific image of the host country and a motivation to come is the fundamental part of the journey, but the next step is the reality that individuals face when they arrive at the destination point. By reality we imply procedures or in other words institutionalised processes set by the host country that structurise and facilitate residents' needs and obligations. At this point, interviewees were introduced to the host country's institutions such as Migrationsverket, Skatteverket, Boplats (e.g. visa, taxes, housing), as well as having the first cultural experience at work or at university (e.g. colleagues, classmates). Our 'adventurers' at this point materialise their idea of moving to Sweden and face with all positive and negative sides of migration. It is necessary to catch and emphasise the moment, due to the fact that at this stage the idea starts being transformed and compared to the original one — when it was born.

Expats

What interviewees had experienced during their migration journey is different from each other, but in most cases all respondents faced with similar procedures regarding housing, migration and settling down in the city. If the migrational and organisational procedures for expats which we will bring up further, were managed mostly by relocation agencies, cultural issues or 'cultural shock' was mentioned by major part of the respondents upon arrival.

Even though the Swedish MNCs are trying to create a common work atmosphere with strong brand values and 'Swedish style' in every regional office, it is hard to ignore the fact that the expats' domestic cultural and social aspects play a significant role in work style and in performance in particular. Comparing the differences between the workplaces of the subsidiary in Brazil and the headquarters in Sweden, one Brazilian expat presented two opposing experiences. He acknowledged that in Sweden is not much corporate fights and unstable work environment, whereas in Brazil it was much more related to unpredictable work atmosphere and different work style. For instance, he notes that in Brazil working hours are much stricter, people stay in the office much longer than in Sweden where you can leave work at 3 or 4 PM

in order to pick up the children from school or kindergarten, but in Brazil you never leave the office until 6:00 PM. Moreover, he states that in Sweden, the market is much more stable and predictable which subsequently gives people a peace of mind, low competition and eventually low level of stress at work.

We have previously mentioned that the organisational part which includes housing, visa, tax, bank related issues and many other services is covered by relocation companies provided by MNCs. The relocation services are outsourced to companies who can professionally deal with the expats' organisational and bureaucratic concerns, ranging from the extension of work permit and searching for a proper apartment to arranging Swedish language courses and identifying schooling options for the expats' children.

For a couple of years MNCs were challenging with the extension of work permit — the process which usually takes a month, now can last for 6-10 months due to the migration crisis affected by the Syrian conflict. It puts pressure on all actors related to the migration processes of HSMs, directly on expats and especially on the migration agency. The latter ones stressed to solve the raised problems, though the HSM's group was prioritised and was put on a fast-track list. Relocation companies in such cases play a role of a buffer between expats and Migrationsverket. For instance, it was discovered from one relocation manager that permit extension process for one Iranian expat lasted for 10 months which significantly affected his work and private life:

I felt like I'm in jail because I'm not able to leave the country. It's even worse than Iran.

Eventually he changed his workplace due to a personal reasons which affected not only the employees, but the employer as well. The manager argued that it was unexpected for individuals to face such obstacles. In other words, employees wanted to feel safe and secure when they get a position in a MNC, but in fact, individuals were living in Sweden, not being able to leave the country for months because their renewal was in process.

Another interesting issue is related to the physical adaptation of idea carriers. One side is to come here to attend a seminar, being a visitor, but another is to live here, getting used to the, climate zone, temperature, and long winter periods which they had not experienced in their home countries. Some of the respondents and family members discovered allergies to pollen, which they have never had before while others were struggling to deal with time zones, so they can communicate with family or friends at the country of origin — something that was not expected at the home country before moving to Sweden.

Graduates

Graduates' experience of migration to Sweden has almost nothing in common with expatriates'. If there were none considerable housing issues for some of the graduates in certain cities, others faced with problem of finding an apartment after coming to Sweden. The process of searching for an apartment varies from case to case and according to our findings, students in Gothenburg did not expect to struggle with availability of apartments at the place of the study. The housing situation for most of the interviewees is still an open question. In other words, they are always

looking for a better option and can relocate, staying in the queues for years for another apartment. An interviewee from Greece who moved to Sweden to pursue a master's degree, highlighted the difficulties to find accommodation as a student in Gothenburg:

> *I faced enormous difficulties to find an apartment. Before I came here, I had three panic attacks because we couldn't find an apartment. Apart from the fact that the university didn't provide us an apartment because we are from the EU and they prioritise other cultures and other people.* — Graduate 1

From our findings, we can conclude that graduates do not have such supporting power from MNCs as expatriates do. In evidence of that, a global mobility partner in one MNC states that graduates are positioned as local employees and provided with minimum service packages which include the relocation of household utensils from their home country to Sweden, a repatriation flight, support with getting a work permit and some help with local registration. From a company perspective, local employees should have already gone through all the organisational processes, since their familiarity with the local social manners make it easier to adapt them. Furthermore, the difference between expatriates and graduates in this case is that the latter ones are familiar with the host country's procedures and limit the cost and time needed to enter the labour market.

It can be assumed that graduates have time to be integrated into the local society during their academic career which eventually allows them to smoothly enter the professional market. Such an assumption contrasts with four of our respondents' statements. It was found that they feel a strong connection to their compatriots and the integration process did not go as they expected. These interviewees came from China, Vietnam, Greece, Egypt and Syria as students. They have different background and experience, but what they have in common is that cultural and social values were in contrast with what they used to have in their home country and what they discovered in Sweden. As one graduate from Syria notes:

> *They [the Swedish] still stay in their own circles, they are not very open. They have friends and they grow up together since elementary school. They are satisfied with what they have. In my culture, it's so much more open, easier to make friends, to speak with them. We have lots of activities together, not just mail or text, not just formal communication like here. So, friendship outside of work is hard to form here.* — Graduate 2

More importantly, it goes in line with the words of one Talent Acquisition manager who remarks that getting to know Swedish colleagues on a private level is a hard task. She argues that the Swedish tend to differentiate their work life from their private life, whereas in other countries such as the US and the UK, it is very common that you have a drink with your colleague after work spontaneously, without planning:

> *I think that can be very frustrating for individuals who come from other countries, getting to know their colleagues on a personal level and making friends.* — HR

The Idea is translated and contextualised

Here we come with an idea to be translated in local context of Swedish lifestyle. Although some of the respondents resisted to the new practices, they admitted the fact that in order to be integrated within the local environment, HSM need to be open and flexible. We are going to observe how HSMs transform the given idea into new practices and interpret local processes. The idea carriers at this moment are experienced enough and integrated on a certain level in Swedish society. Indeed, expats and graduates at this point, are familiar how the system works: organisational, cultural and social aspects of migrant life. They went through various obstacles and barriers, so they can shape a new form of idea and re-embed it within the local context.

Expats

In the previous section we observed that HSMs were struggling with obstacles that they did not expect to meet — housing, obtaining a work permit and integration in terms of cultural and social context. Difficulties with obtaining a work permit on time were rather exceptional, but remarkable, due to the refugee crisis, and have been solved partly with the help of MNCs, Migrationsverket and relocation companies. There were many more uncertainties concerning housing and cultural issues such as language barriers or integration within the local community.

If one part of the respondents were satisfied with their housing situation, another one were planning to invest in their own apartment after experiencing difficulties in selection of a desired accommodation. This argument was supported by one Boplats manager who admitted the fact that Sweden suffers from a lack of affordable housing and that it is more of a buyer's market. Therefore, finding an apartment to rent is a very burdensome task for many migrants who move to Sweden to work. People are frustrated when they need to move and when they would have to take one option, even though they wouldn't have picked that option in their home countries at all.

Major part of the expats were warned about the housing situation in Sweden and in Gothenburg particularly, but according to them they did not expect such a dramatic situation. Thus, it prompted our focus group to invest and buy an own apartment in near future, rather than paying rent for a second-hand contract. The aforementioned talent acquisition manager acknowledged the above mentioned fact, arguing that people who are relocating in Sweden on a permanent contract are looking to obtain an apartment, just because of the uncertain situation on the real-estate market. There were two respondents who owned an apartment since they moved to Sweden. One of them admitted the housing crisis situation in Gothenburg:

> *Honestly, I had to purchase my own apartment, even though I didn't plan to do it. It needs I guess 10-15 years or something like that to get a second-hand contract. So, the easiest way is to buy an apartment and that depends on people's financial situation. But it is better to pay 15 000 SEK per month for own place than to pay for a second-hand contract. —* Graduate 3

Regarding the cultural barriers and social integration in general, it was observed that after being resistant to accept the local social norms, eventually, HSMs started to actively take a part in social processes. In other words, if at the beginning they dealt with 'frictions' in terms of language barriers, or negatively interpreting local traditions and habits, now they admit it. All of the respondents agreed that learning Swedish would dramatically increase their chances to better integrate in society. Moreover, some of the respondents and their family members can speak Swedish fluently, even though it was not necessary for them to learn, since English is the corporate language in most MNCs. Behind this reason was to learn more about local people and their culture as well as to enrich their social life and improve interactions with colleagues. In addition, respondents found a between difference having a conversation with Swedes in English versus having the conversation in Swedish by describing it as *"a different type of dynamic"*.

On the other side, exactly because everyone use English at work, some of the interviewees cannot motivate themselves to learn Swedish. In any case, all of them admitted the fact that:

> *You need to be very open, very flexible because the working environment is very different from your home country, so you need to adjust yourself to that [local] reality, otherwise you are, not to say 'you are going to be out', but you are not very well connected.*
> — Expat 5

An interesting fact that we discovered is that some of the interviewees don't have a firm decision to make Sweden a final destination point in their journey. Even those who have an own apartment, accepted the possibility to move to another country or go back home one day. For some of them the constraining factor at this moment is children who study in Sweden, whereas for others is a career opportunities and sustainable work-life balance.

Graduates

If we follow the 'journey' of former students — newly graduates — we can see that the initial idea to study was displaced with the idea to get a job; former obstacles were transformed in new disincentives. The graduates' logic in this case is clear. They put a lot of effort and time in order to get used to and adapt to the local social norms, started to understand the cultural and social processes that incentivised them to stay in Sweden:

> *I want to stay here in Sweden because I am already speaking the language, not perfectly, but that's a first step, and I want to learn more about the language, try to make myself better. Now, if we get any other opportunities to live in some other Scandinavian country like Norway or Denmark, then I wouldn't say 'No'. But, I don't want to go back to Greece.* — Graduate 1

In this case it can be assumed that Graduate 1 sees opportunities in other Scandinavian countries as well, which are close enough to Sweden in terms of cultural and social values. Thus, it will be effortless for her to adapt to a relatively closed environment, even though she studied and worked in Sweden for a certain period of time.

Furthermore, the Swedish migration agency motivates graduates to stay and do their best to find a job which eventually can be profitable to the country's economy in a long-term perspective. Such a 'chance' to stay in Sweden after studies was described by one of the interviewees, arguing that at an early period of his studies he was not sure about staying in Sweden after the graduation. Lack of knowledge about the country, about the labour market and language barriers were the main factors of that uncertainties. Only after a year, when he made a progress in learning the language, he found some local friends and with a legal reason to stay for six months in Sweden to find a job, he decided to take this opportunity. Subsequently, that idea transformed in settling down in Sweden for a longer period of time:

> *Although the difference between cultures is big enough, the first mission is the cultural integration. In my situation, I have a few Swedish friends. I am here only for two years, so it takes time to know people. You have to adapt in order to be accepted.* — Graduate 3

Discussion

To migrate or not to migrate — that is the question

Starting with the interview questions: "*Why did you choose to come to Sweden?*", and *"How was this idea born?*" we aimed to find out more about the motivations of HSMs, how their idea to migrate was born and what were the underlying reasons (factors) that influenced them to make this decision. As we have seen, each individual respondent comes from a different context (set of circumstances) and is influenced by various motivational factors (drivers) which brings about the inception of an idea and shapes their decision-making process whether to migrate.

Expats

A travel of idea in our case starts with the process of creation or idea-born process. Czarniawska and Joerges (1996) argued that ideas cannot come unpredictably, without any reason. Certain drivers should give a signal, stimulate individuals' mind in order for certain ideas to be born. According to our empirical findings we defined four common drivers that trigger highly skilled individuals to migrate to Sweden and eventually push them to act accordingly. In other words, materialise the idea of migration. We take these drivers as a starting point for establishing our conceptual framework. We aim to emphasise how the role of a particular factor — whether related to finance, career, culture, or another sphere — may affect individuals differently. This means that rather than seeing particular drivers as having a static roles, we view them as having a sort of power, which triggers an idea of migration to be born in HSMs' minds, and subsequently drive migration processes.

Factor 1: Financial and career opportunity

Financial motivation or career opportunity, sometimes both of these factors, were the main reasons to start thinking of an idea to migrate to Sweden. Indeed, in Lee's Theory of Migration (1966), he argued that highly skilled individuals are more mobile, looking for better chances and opportunities for advancement. That is why major part of our respondents moved to Sweden in order to get a higher salary or better position. It was also reiterated by Van Hear (2018) who appealed that such factors indicate about structural imbalance between the migrant's country of origin and the country of destination. Such *predisposing drivers* create a context in which migration is more likely to happen. Therefore, differences in earnings, living standards and career opportunities shape the idea of migration to Sweden. Furthermore, this coheres with the study conducted by Emilsson et al. (2014) in which the authors found that 25 out of 55 interviewees based their decision to migrate to Sweden on economic factors and better work opportunities.

However, it wouldn't happen if MNCs do not offer HSMs a desirable conditions. We can assume in this case, that the financial component, apart from all other drivers, in this puzzle plays an essential role for expatriates, especially for those who have a family and children. Moreover, besides the financial incentives, it was observed that HSMs need something more than financial assets, something that will draw their attention. Competition in attracting top talented candidates oblige employer to offer the best options which can raise highly skilled workers' interest in taking a job proposal.

Factor 2: Service packages from MNCs

We can argue that the translation model is a bilateral process and involves not only HSM as an idea carrier, but also actors on a macro-level, as in our case represented by MNCs, the migration agency and third-party organisations such as relocation companies (Huang and Suarez, 2005). As we mentioned in our empirical findings, certain factors incentivised travellers to create an idea to migrate, which according to Lee's migration theory is a pull factor to HSMs. Moreover, MNCs and the migration agency created the necessary preconditions and can be interpreted as pull factors for HSMs to migrate. Therefore, influence of these organisations in the context of global-local dimension need to be taken in consideration.

Demand of certain skills and experience subsequently created a platform for HSMs to think about an idea to migrate and eventually motivated HSMs to move to the host country after they analysed all the advantages and disadvantages in out-migration. In terms of our case, such advantages as taking care of work permit, housing issues, language courses, school and kindergarten for children and professional consulting support for family members influence the highly skilled individuals' decision to migrate to Sweden. In this approach, macro-actors are trying to adapt the object into the local context by offering them a service package (e.g. Swedish classes, consulting with tax payments, and school registration, housing issues). Hence, companies are trying to take obstacles out of the travellers' way and make the process of migration to Sweden less resistant and smooth. Although, human beings are more complex, behaving irrationally at times, avoidance of all the obstacles or defining all the disadvantages

in their journey is challenging, if not impossible. According to our findings, HSMs still find barriers on their way to reach a certain level of integration in Sweden. Eventually, the initial idea of migration turned into ambiguity of the migration process and conflict of initial and factual ideas. In such encounter, friction arises, which eventually according to Czarniawska and Joerges (2005) turns to the process of translation.

Factor 3: Family issue + pre-visiting tours

In this case, pre-visits, seminars, or business trips enhanced the idea to work in Sweden. According to Lee (1966) there is always an element of ignorance about positive or negative conditions about the host country, which leads to misconceptions of the local context. Therefore, it only can be perceived by living there. Indeed, pre-visits, business trips, or certain knowledge about the area of destination cannot guarantee individuals the real picture of a local environment, but at least can more closely get the feeling of the national and corporate spirit, as well as help visualise his/her life in Sweden. Such short-term travels give either a positive or negative impressions about the host country and facilitate HSM's idea to move in Sweden for a long-term perspective.

Another important factor that was discovered is family issue which include children or parents in some cases. HSMs with family were frustrated of taking a decision to migrate posed by possible difficulties of family members' settling down in Sweden. Stark (1991) argues that decision-making process regarding the migration is rather made in wider societal context than in individual. It means that even if HSMs are satisfied with salary, future career opportunities or employer's support in housing and work permit, he/she will take into consideration their families' interests as well. That is what we see in our collected empirical data, when expats with families stated that their spouses' or children's interests are the top priority for them, regarding the migration decision-making process.

Shachar (2006) observes that high-skilled migrants who self-initiate their migration migrate to a country that offers not only career opportunities but also prospects for their families to establish a stable life. Emilsson et al. (2014), relate that choosing to migrate to Sweden also depends on social factors such as safety, living conditions, travel opportunities and work-life balance. The authors add that when deciding whether to stay permanently in Sweden, social factors are even more decisive; the decision is affected by, for example, social networks or family situations.

The idea is to take the family and embed it into the local environment without any friction. But again, as we mentioned before, when we face with human interactions within two contexts — place of origin and place of destination — we cannot be certain that these frictions will be diminished along the entire journey.

Factor 4: Cultural issues

Last but not least in our findings is what we defined as cultural factors. Indeed, exploring the country and learning the language comes with some reasons such as professional or academic purpose. Exploring new countries and visiting new places were an important aspect for some of the respondents, while for others it was more additional benefit which became a part of the work. Therefore, cultural motives play a double role in shaping the idea to migrate: one as an enhancement tool that triggers the initial idea to materialise and travel, while the other as a translation tool to incorporate the idea to the local context.

Graduates

Speaking about graduates, the mentioned above factors cannot apply in academic context, because two categories of HSM group have distinctive initial goals about moving to Sweden. Furthermore, it could be mistakenly assumed that the displacement of the ideas from study to work can be seen from the perspective of the diffusion model. First of all, the transformation process of the *idea to study* and the *idea to work* are interconnected. In other words, without the initial idea to study in Sweden, a potential student will never be a potential graduate and ultimately will not be able to work in host country. Secondly, we can assume that without a certain level of theoretical knowledge and practical life experience that he gained in academical-local context it would be impossible to re-embed it in professional-local context. Therefore, according to Callon (1980) and Czarniawska and Sevon (2005) the primary idea was displaced with another idea and re-embedded into a new context within the same country which can be referred to the translation concept. It was important to show a broad picture of translation of the initial idea and its further transformation but in different conditions. Arguments regarding this perspective will be further developed in the next stage, when the idea is travelled and transformed.

Is the idea materialised and translated?

As noted by Czarniawska and Sevon (2005), in order for an idea to start traveling through time and space, an individual need to give it energy. In this phase, the individual energises the idea by taking necessary actions — concrete steps which would later lead towards the materialisation and transformation of the previously created idea. In other words, the idea becomes materialised when it is converted into words and manifests, and HSMs as idea carriers, according to Czarniawska (2002), moved to Sweden, as only bodies or things can travel in terms of time and space.

Travel of the idea according to the translation model cannot be taken without the obstacles that need to be overcome. When the materialised idea encounter with barriers of local context the transformation process starts. Obstacles, as we discovered, could appear all along the journey of the idea. Therefore, it could possibly appear before, during and after the migration process.

Expats

At this point, we can observe that HSMs reached their goal and settled down in Sweden. Company, migration agency and relocation company as organisations who are interested in attracting best talents, provided them with all support they needed, in order to move to Sweden without any problems. However, according to Sahlin-Andersson (1996) individuals are decision-makers, who are able to take their own decisions based on deliberate argumentation. They are also expected to be in some way special, or individual, so that actors and environments can be differentiated from one another. Therefore, the local environment was surprisingly distinguished from actor's expectations (initial idea), even though facilitators (MNCs, migration agency, relocation companies) sustained them from all possible barriers (frictions). It was observed that expats' actual and expected environments, in case of working style, were distinguished. Inequities in corporate cultures, was a starting point of transformation of the idea about Sweden and Swedish work style in particular. Indeed, during their pre-visit tours, business trips and regular communication with Swedish colleagues, HSMs got some idea about the way the company 'behaves', its values and mission. On the other hand, according to Lee (1966) and Van Heal (2018), it is a hard task to recognise positive and negative aspects of an area of destination while being in an area of origin, until you move and live in a host country on a permanent basis. Thus, it was a cultural shock for some of the respondents who could never recognise such corporate cultural distinctions from their home country, even though having pre-visits and business trips to Sweden. Only after a certain time and gaining a certain experience from working in Swedish office with Swedish colleagues, they could compare the initial corporate structure with a factual one. Surprisingly for minor part of our respondents, underestimation of the potential negative circumstances of migration to Sweden reflected on biological level. It was not common, but personal health, getting used to weather, time and climate zone were an unpredictable and negative outcome after some time living in Sweden.

The same situation happened when the HSMs found themselves as hostages of migration policies which affected on the extension of work permit. It can be mistakenly assumed that work permission in terms of translation process do not play an essential role of idea transformation, but we think that migration agency's policies triggered the chain of actions that touched not only expatriates but mostly all actors in a given context. It goes in line with what Czarniawska and Joerges (1996) argued about, that the actors involved in certain actions are short sighted and may not see the entire process. Therefore, the idea may look surprisingly new, even radical. Indeed, HSMs didn't expect that such kind of obstacle could appear, and even MNCs and relocation companies didn't see that on a horizon of potential obstacles. According to Latour (1986) it was a token that in different hands takes different forms, because actors of the chain are acting differently. Migration policies are a signal to a wider community, which involves more people in translation process for their own purpose and eventually leads to materialisation of a collective action. In other words, an initial idea of migration, was shaped by the migration agency and materialised in another form, which subsequently brought new, and shocking idea for expats like immobility for months in Sweden.

Graduates

If for expatriates the shocking situation was the question of extension of work permit which was mostly been taken by relocation companies, than graduates were worried about housing issues and in contrast to expats, they were left alone with this problem. As we mentioned in the Findings section, the graduates' 'story of migration' was different to what we see in the expatriates' one. In case of the former, it takes the process of translation to another level. Indeed, only with educational incentives and partly financially (free of tuition/scholarships), students migrated to Sweden in order to gain theoretical knowledge, that in turn transformed into obtaining a professional experience and after solving certain problems (housing and integration), mostly by themselves, it materialised in a new version of the initial idea.

In contrast to expats, graduates are more experienced in terms of practical knowledge. That is why MNCs do not support them in terms of housing, integration courses and other benefits. In other words, they are more familiar with the local practices and can limit MNC's cost and time to enter the labour market. Therefore, it can be stated as a sustainable competitive advantage compared to expats who do not have a certain level of experience in the local context, but at the same time create a 'friction' in the graduates idea to work.

In integration issues, graduates are more experienced than expatriates as well, but it was discovered that for certain countries it was more difficult to integrate than for others. We can assume that common cultural and social values between certain countries (e.g. Scandinavian countries) can reduce the level of socio-cultural misunderstanding and accelerate the process of integration. It goes in contrast with four of our respondents from India, Vietnam, China and Egypt, who may have different awareness of communication and socio-cultural issues, but it is a subject of a deeper analysis for future studies.

Is the idea translated and contextualised?

The subsequent stage in our travellers' journey is the one where the initial idea materialised when obstacles are overcome and the individuals are experienced enough and familiar with local environment. It can be explained by the translation concept, when the initial idea does not fit in the local context, starting to resist to change but, eventually takes a certain form, which in our case means integration in the local context. In other words, the idea has reached its destination in terms of time and space and became embedded (in the case of expats) and re-embedded (graduates) into a new local context.

Expats
For expats the logic in this case, is the same as the extension of work permit – as long as the group of actors are involved in translation process and actively transform the initial idea, it turns into a collective action, which generates a new idea in a new form. The lack of affordable accommodation, consequently, led to sort of intervention by third party actors in the employee–employer relationships. These organisations such as relocation companies and Boplats transformed an initial idea of migration and pushed some of the expats to purchase their own

apartment. It can be argued that in the case of work permit and affordable accommodation, the group of actors distributed the model of cooperation and coordination by creating fast-track procedures for expats or finding a school/kindergarten for their children (Erlingsdottir and Lindberg, 2005). Furthermore, the major part of HSMs were on a second hand contract and only a few were the owners of an apartment in Sweden, even though the housing crisis affected all the focus group members. Thus, although the act of translation can be similar within a group, it can create a diverse reaction depending on the different individual contexts (Czarniawska and Sevón, 1996). At this moment, we discovered that HSMs embedded the initial idea in a local context by adopting the 'pre-installed' patterns in a local environment. Eventually, resistance arose when two ideas were in 'conflict', which enhanced the translation process by shaping a new idea in a local context (Czarniawska and Joerges, 1996). It goes in line with what we observed, when this process went with obstruction and subsequently brought a new idea within the same local space. In our case, expats realised that in order to perfectly integrate in the local society, they need to be not only open and flexible to society, but adopt new mechanisms: speak Swedish, even though the English is the corporate language of many MNCs in Sweden. Thus, they transformed the initial idea and re-embedded it in a more sociably-open context. It was a free-will decision to embed a new practice in a given context without any force from the group of actors (MNC, colleagues). According to Latour (1986), individuals in the chain of actions not only use a force to resist an idea or to transmit it like in the diffusion model, but rather focus on the continuous transformation of the token itself.

Graduates

The journey of graduates, who predominantly invested their time in their studies (Masters/PhD) and after graduation in more professional direction, now goes in parallel with expats'. It can be assumed that such a big effort in realising the idea to work in Sweden, will stop them to move somewhere else. Indeed, they are interested in the local market, but at the same time they are open for new opportunities as well.

We discovered that some of the HSMs transformed the initial idea to migrate to Sweden into the idea to migrate to another country in a long-term perspective. Once they contextualise own practices and embed them in the local environment, they start thinking about next challenge but in another context. Certain factors as positive and negative make this new idea to be 'frozen' for a better time — when children will grow up or new career opportunities will arise — and when certain circumstances and factors in the chain of actions will trigger HSMs' mind, the new idea will be born and, thus, a new travel will start.

Conclusion

In this paper, we explored how the process of migration unfolds for highly skilled migrants, focusing on the travel of ideas and how they are created, shaped, materialised and translated in the context of high-skilled migration. By viewing the classical push-pull theory through the lens of translation and partly inspired by the concept of 'travel of ideas', we attempted to demonstrate that an idea in the context of migration of highly skilled migrants appears after certain drivers trigger an individual's mind to take the decision to migrate. In other words, drivers push the idea to be materialised and further travel in time and space.

In contrast to the classical theory of migration which focuses on the macro environment and does not put the individual into focus, we aimed to explain the migration behavior of high-skilled individuals by adopting predominantly a micro-level approach, but also taking into consideration the macro factors. Namely, we observed the interrelationship between the micro world, comprised of individual high skilled migrants, and the macro world which consists of economic, political and social factors. This enabled us to obtain in-depth findings about the decision-making process of migrants at an individual level, but also helped us understand how these decisions are influenced by the broader macro environment. Thus, we identified a mechanism for how one idea (migration to Sweden) gets translated into another idea (be integrated in Sweden) which, in turn, is translated into a practice and then objectified into a 'new' form. We conclude that the highly skilled individuals and the group of actors illustrate how ideas are linked in a continuous chain of translations, and how this continuous chain can be linked together in top-down and bottom-up processes.

Apart from the highly skilled migrants as the actors in focus, we have identified other supporting groups of actors who play an important role in this interplay, consisting of companies (MNCs), organisations (Migrationsverket, Boplats) and relocation agencies. From our findings we can see that MNCs attempted to take control of their employees' integration in Sweden, mitigating the initial barriers such as providing housing options and help with the visa process but also provided support in overcoming subsequent obstacles after the employees have entered the country, which consisted of offering Swedish language classes, career opportunities for spouses and schooling options for their children. However, despite the help and support provided by MNCs, a smooth process of migration was not guaranteed, as certain macro factors such as the housing shortage in Sweden and the refugee crisis had an impact on the migration journey of several highly skilled workers. In addition, since the migrants have been socialised in a different culture with unique norms, values, and attitudes, adapting to the Swedish national and work culture presented challenges for many of them, especially in the early stages.

In comparison to Czarniawska and Sevon (1996, 2005) who explore how managerial ideas travel in an organisational context, we took a different approach by focusing on the individual as the creator, carrier and energiser of an idea, enabling it to travel through time and space as he/she migrates from an area of origin to an area of destination. Thus, in contrast to the authors who state that ideas are communicated images which are the property of communities, we introduce a different view, arguing that in the context of migration, an idea is inseparable part of the individual.

The suggestions for future research are three-fold. The first one arises from the limitations of our research which was based on interviews in which respondents had to recall past events, and consequently we did not have the chance to follow their journey through all of its stages. Therefore, we suggest that future studies undertake a longitudinal study which would examine the travel of ideas by conducting interviews with highly skilled migrants at different points of time, which will help the researcher follow and observe how ideas travel, materialise and translate at all the different stages of the journey. The second suggestion is to open up the study sample to highly skilled refugees who have migrated to Sweden. It would be interesting to observe how the migration journey unfolds for this vulnerable group and compare that

experience to other groups of highly skilled migrants. Last but not least, is to explore how transnational socio-cultural issues impact the integration of highly skilled migrants in Sweden.

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