

Studies on Lifelong Learning in Sweden, Focusing around the Impact on Swedish Labour Market

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- I Introduction
- II Definitions of Lifelong Learning
- III Swedish Lifelong Education
 - 1 The Swedish Public Education System
 - 2 Formal Adult Education
 - 3 Non-Formal Education
- IV Impacts of Lifelong-Learning on the Swedish Labour Market
- V Re-employment Programme in the context of Lifelong Learning
- VI Conclusion

I Introduction

Sweden has been recognized as a country of high-quality social welfare, and one of the representations of this can be found in the free education which the country provides to its citizens. The ultimate purpose of this thesis is to investigate how Sweden has developed its 'lifelong' learning system and how the country has embedded the idea of lifelong learning in the labour market as a form of job security system. While closely analysing various education programmes from mandatory to optional and from formal to non-formal, I have found the fact that, although the participation rate in adult education in the country is high (SCB,

2014), the quality of the education system has been doubted and a need for major reforms have been articulated in both public and the academic sector (Rubenson, 2001, p.329). Therefore, the main focus will be put on the gap between what Swedish lifelong learning intends to provide people in Sweden and what those who participate in actually get. In the last chapter, I will analyse Sweden's on-the-job training and state my opinions regarding the county's welfare policy based on Anderfors and Lindvert's article in which the authors interviewed workers of various industries about their experience in the skills development (2015).

II Definitions of Lifelong Learning

The term "lifelong learning" was introduced during the mid-1960s to replace the term "lifelong education" according to Cropley and Knapper who defined the concept as the learning which can and should occur throughout each person's lifetime (2000, p.1). Edwards and Usher sees the increase in people who started to doubt on the legitimacy of "institutional education" offered by authorities behind the emergence of lifelong learning (Edwards and Usher, 2001, p.276). In fact, it was in 1996 that the concept of lifelong learning was brought on the international politics when the European Union (EU) marked this year as "the European Year of Lifelong Learning. Three years later, the Group of Eight (G8) including the UK, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia and the USA agreed to promote lifelong education to raise public awareness of lifelong learning (Boström, Boudard, and Siminou, 2000, p.1). This global trend towards lifelong learning also reached Sweden, and now its central authority called the Swedish National Agency for Education (*Skolverket*) responsible for public education including adult education, has used its own definition of lifelong learning:

'Lifelong learning is a holistic view of education and recognizes learning from a number of different environments. The concept consists of two dimensions. The lifelong dimension indicating that the individual learns throughout a life-span. The life-wide dimension recognises formal, non-formal and informal learning'. (Skolverket, 2000, p.7)

As the latter part of this definitions states, Sweden has operated its lifelong learning system based on 3 schemes: formal (public), non-formal and informal. I will explain each from the next chapter to capture the lifelong learning in the Swedish context.

III Swedish Lifelong Education

1 The Swedish Public Education System

Sweden has developed its public education system based on the idea that all education should be entirely free of for all citizens as well as the idea that the provision of opportunities to study should reach everyone regardless of his/her background and financial resources (REGERINGSKANSLIET, 2007, p.2).

Pre-school “*förskola*”

Municipalities are obliged to supply pre-schooling for children ages one to five and even to provide The amount of municipal subsidy for pre-school depends on the child’s age and whether the parents work, study, are unemployed or on parental leave for other students (the official site of Sweden)¹⁾. The core of the Swedish pre-schooling lies in its roles in child’s development. Its aim to protect children’s individual needs and interests is reflected in the curriculum.

A year before the compulsory primary school “*förskoleklass*”

“*förskoleklass*” means ‘pre-school year’ which starts in the fall term of the year children turn six. The objective is to provide a platform for their future schooling, and thus to lessen the gap between daycare/preschool and school. It is reported that approximately 98 % of Swedish children attend *förskoleklass*. On November 15, 2017, the Swedish Parliament approved a law to make *förskoleklass* mandatory. The law will be enforced in January 2018, the first obligatory one will start in August of 2018.

Primary School “*Grundskola*”

Primary school is the 9-year compulsory programme offered for children

between age 7 and 16 comprising 3 stages; *Lagstadiet* (year 1-3), *Mellanstadiet* (year 4-6), *Hogstadiet* (year7-9). Students from 6 to13 years old are also entitled to attend out-of-school care before and after school. Moreover, there are also primary schools targeting children of the indigenous Sami people called *Sameskolor* (Sami schools).

Upper Secondary School “*Gymnasieskola*” (Gymnasium)

Upper Secondary Education is directed at students aged between 16 and 20. Although *Gymnasieskola* has an age limitation, people over 20 years old, still have the opportunity to study at the corresponding level by attending upper secondary adult education which I will explain further later from chapter 2. *Gymnasieskola* provides 18 optional programmes,;6 of which are preparation for higher education such as university, and the rest are vocational. The curriculum of Swedish Upper Secondary School varies in that there are specific programmes for children with intellectual disabilities as well as for athletes. This means that Swedish education is designed to meet individual needs and career pursuits. The upper secondary school is considered as “an entry point to the labour market”, thus are supposed to equip students both broad and specific competencies to meet the labour market’s demand on the mobility of workers (REGERINGSKANSLIET, 2007, p.5).

Higher Education

The Swedish higher education is intended to increase the opportunities for adults to return higher education. This can be understood by the design of the system which allows students to study independently and to pursue further studies. The coordination with the surrounding society is also the effort of Sweden to provide skills that can be utilized in the labour market (2007, p.7). Sweden has now committed to achieve its tertiary education Sweden’s target; 40-45 per cent of the 30-34 age cohort will have at least two years of tertiary education by 2020 (Amft., 2013, p.11). Therefore, the next two years will be the very important period for Sweden to legitimate its ‘hands-on’ higher education.

2 Formal Adult Education

Under the Education Act of Sweden, the Swedish government allocates funds

to the municipalities for adult education. The introduction of a formal national adult education system was coincided with the development of labour market training as well as the student welfare reforms since the 1960s (EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF ADULTS, 2011, p.4). Since then, Sweden has prioritized the access to education as a democratic right for every citizen, and thus directly connected to the development and maintenance of a democratic society (Nordlund, Stehlik & Strandh, 2012, p.515). The public adult education has 4 categories:

Komvux (the abbreviation of KOMmunal VUXenutbildning,)

This adult education is sponsored by the *Kommuns* (local municipalities) which has operated since 1968. This school provides basic upper secondary and continuing education programmes for those adults who have not finished compulsory or upper secondary schooling (2012, p.516).

Särvux

Särvux is adult education for the intellectually disabled also operated by municipalities. The curriculum is designed to provide those disabled adults with knowledge equal to that of the level of compulsory primary school or upper secondary vocational school.

SFI

SFI stands “Swedish for immigrants”, which municipalities are responsible in taking care of. Newly arrived immigrants are qualified to take Swedish language courses as well as courses about Swedish society, which are offered free of charge. The requirement to attend those courses are: attainment of a residence permit and full national registration number., being over 16 years old. If the one has already completed a university degree of his//her native country, he/she can study Swedish for Academics (Stockholms stad).

KY

KY (Kvalificerad yrkesutbildning) is qualified vocational and training, aims to equip adults with the competence and skills needed in working life. Therefore, this

post-secondary education is operated in close collaboration with the labour market as well as higher education institutions. In fact, one-third of the total study time takes place in an actual work place. Students who have completed the training are supposed to have enough knowledge to enter the labour market (euro guidance).

The existence of multiple adult education institutions described above is a proof that Sweden has actualized the ‘democratic society’ laid out in the Education Act mirroring the country’s effort not to make ‘exceptions’ but to cover ‘everyone’.

3 Non-Formal Education

(1) Popular Adult Education (*Folkbildning*)

The Danish philosopher N. F. S. Grundtvig and the Folk High Schools (*Folkhögskola*) he had developed in 1844 (Korsgaard, 1997) were what drove Sweden to establish Popular Adult Education (Johansson, Bergstedt, 2015, p.47). By being inspired by the Danish folk high schools’ idea to educate the ordinary people about their history, language and cultural inheritance, Sweden established the first Folk High School in 1868. According to Lövgren, J & Nordvall, the major characteristics of Folk High School is its role as a pedagogical alternative to the public school system, although folk high school relies on government and county councils regarding finance, frequency of boarding schools, the informal relations between teacher and student, the high degree of voluntary participation without academic rewards, and the initial connection to rural areas (2017, p.62) As the roots of this education lie in The Reformation and The Enlightenment, it coincided with the emergence of industrialization and fostered the growth of the Labour Movement which Sweden experienced during the late 1800s led by the Social Democratic Party (*SAP: Sveriges socialdemokratiska arbetareparti*)²⁾ and the Swedish Trade Union Confederation (founded in 1898, as the *Landsorganisationen i Sverige* and now known as *LO*) (Gougoulakis, 2016, p.12). In 1908, the Social Democrat Hjalmar Branting, who later became the Prime Minister of Sweden, claimed at the party congress that “organize a planned work of enlightenment” was the duty of the Labour Movement (quoted from Arvidson, 1985, p. 68). The education began in the form of study circles made up by various organizations including political

associations, trade union clubs and cooperative societies, but having a common objective: learn the practical application of democratic rules and processes. 1912 *Library Reform Act* was what contributed to the development of Popular Education (*folkbildning*) by fostering the consolidation of local educational associations to be entitled to subsidies for purchasing books (2016. p.18). Aforementioned *SAP, LOCooperative and the Social Democratic Youth League*, for instance, was merged into the *Workers' Educational Association (ABF: Arbetarnasbildningsförbund)* in 1912, a politically independent organisation which is still active with the aim to secure everyone's "opportunity to gain the knowledge to influence their own situations" so that each can affect local and global developments based on democracy, diversity, justice and equality. *ABF* today has its branches in every municipality across Sweden (Arbetarnas Bildningsförbund). As Ingres and Hedlund (1943) mentioned, Popular Adult Education was about the education of the "core of democracy". Therefore, the main role of Popular Adult Education was to democratize Swedish society and politics. According to Official Report of the Swedish Government, the first evaluation of the Popular Adult Education, which was done in the 1920s highlighted the education's influence on democracy with the aim to give room to municipalities of opinions and perspectives

(2) Administrators of Non-Formal Adult Education

Providers of *Folkbildning* are divided into three organisations (European Association For the Education of Adults, 2011, p.6).

Folkbildningsrådet (The Swedish National Council of Adult Education) is a nonprofit association consisting delegates of the government and the *Riksdag* (the Swedish Parliament). The Council distributes government grants to non-formal institutions such as study associations and folk high schools, submits budgetary documentation and annual reports to the government and evaluates activities offered by those organisations (Folkbildningsrådet).

The National Council of Adult Education is tasked to decide who will be entitled to subsidies in accordance with government decree and distribute funds

between them. The members of *the National Council of Adult Education* are: *The Swedish National Federation of Study Associations, the Interest Organisation for Popular Movement Folk High Schools* and *the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions*.

SAEA the Swedish Adult Education Associaton (Folkbildningsförbundet) is an umbrella organization for all of 10 study associations in Sweden. They are committed to raise the status of those associations and improve quality of each. They are also a negotiation body for the study associations and enter into joint agreements with them.

IV Impacts of Lifelong-Learning on the Swedish Labour Market

(1) The Movement towards “Lifelong Learning”

In fact, the shift from ‘education’ to ‘learning’ has its root in the transition of the meaning of a state’s welfare policy from the 1980s to early 1990s which were justified by the emergence and the development of neoliberalism which are characterized by concepts such as marketization, privatization and deregulation. Majority of Western countries found the importance of applying those neoliberalism concepts in their policies to stop state regulation from hindering market efficiency (Larsson, Latell, and Thörn, 2012, p.8). Sweden was not the exception from this global trend where market gains power to organize society over the state. This put a strong emphasis on efficiency because the country faced the economic crisis in 1990s and more and more people began to cast doubt on the legitimacy of high welfare state. The impacts of neoliberalism to the Swedish education system are described by Fejes, Olson, Rahm, Dahlstedt, and Sandberg (2016). They argue that the impact of neoliberalism on adult education as “Marketisation of education led individualization in adult education” and because of this change, municipalities began to engage a wide range of providers (public, private companies, folk highs schools or study associations) in the provision of courses, pedagogy, modes of teaching (2016, p.2). Those changes can also be found in reforms taken place in 1991: the right for parents to choose a school for their children out side of the local

school was legalized as a method to enhance quality of educational institution and the state's responsibility for schools was handed over to the municipality. Imsen and Blossing and Moos claim that neoliberalism brought changes in the view on the optimal relationship between state and individual, and thus the changes around education and its purpose, which revised the view of best way of organizing schools (2017). Therefore, the emergence of neoliberalism at the second half of the 20 century gave the opportunity for Sweden to rethink the role of state in education, and to craft strategies for market-oriented operations, which is reflected in the aforementioned change from education to learning to equip people with skills and knowledge applicable to their jobs.

(2) Objectives of Formal Adult Education

Accessibility and flexibility in regards to time and location must be a major feature of the adult education and training system. In particular, municipal adult education (*Komvux*) was established in 1968 to address the increased skills requirements in working life and formal eligibility requirements for admission. Three reasons of the foundation of municipal adult education was prescribed in *the Government Bill (Govt Bill 1967: 85, Standing Committee of Supply communication 1967:117, Riksdag Communication 1967: 277)*: reducing the growing educational inequality in society, creating opportunities for individuals to supplement their schooling and providing the labour market with a well-educated workforce (Government Offices of Sweden, 2013). Higher vocational education programmes are designed to enhance the responsiveness to labour market needs though their close cooperation with the markets. The cooperation with universities or other higher education institutions and municipalities, county councils or private education providers are also found in organizing adult education programme. The Swedish state supports funding of adult education by providing grants or special funds, given based on a successful application. Therefore, we can find the cross-sector cooperation in terms of curriculum, design of programmes and the operation of institutions behind the objective of the Swedish states to provide hands-on learning for adults. Has Swedish adult education succeeded in achieving this goal? In fact, there has not been a solid consensus about the outcome of adult education.

Therefore, I will discuss both negative and positive outcomes of adult education from the next paragraph.

(3) Positive Impacts of second-chance education

As previously explained, Sweden has long tradition of adult education administrated both by public authorities and by social partners aiming to increase work-related skills of those who attend. Adult education in the context of life-long learning became the focal point of labour market policies in major Western countries, including Sweden, when they realized that the role of insufficiently educated workers has diminished in the modern knowledge-based economy (Albrecht, Van den Bergm, and Vroman, 2005, p.1). This increasing role of education for employability and life chances has put an increasing focus on the problem of the low educated, who increasingly have faced poor prospects in the labour market. Nordlund, Stehlik, and Strandh claim that increase in the labour market participation as well as the productivity of those insufficiently educated adults is paramount not only for the welfare of the individuals, but also for the sustainability of welfare states and standards of living (Nordlund, Stehlik, and Strandh, 2013, p.515). They investigated the performance of adults who attended Second-Change Education from 1992 over 12 years. The results prove that not only immediate but also long-term positive effects on wages after the Second-Chance Education in Sweden (2013, p.529). In this regard, the formal adult education is regarded helpful tool for adults without solid educational background to attain employability and for the Swedish labour market itself. Haven is also in favor of adult education in that having a solid background in the skill subjects can yield skills useful in various situations, both in the working and other aspects of life. On the other hand, he admits there is a great difficulty in balancing the retraining for more highly-skilled and for those with the poorest formal education (HUSÉN, p.968). According to the research on the effectiveness of comprehensive education and vocational training on employment rates, Stenberg (2005) found that comprehensive education is linked to a lower unemployment rates, but labour market training has more positive effects on unemployment duration. Another researcher also proved the positive effect of formal adult education on employment

probabilities in Sweden in 2007 for both men and women, although the effect is about 1.5 times larger for women than for men (Kilpi.-Jakonen, De Vilhena, Kosyakova,, Stenberg, & Blossfeld, 2012, p.59). This result was supported by Martin Hällsten's research where he found that those obtained tertiary degrees after age 30 experienced 18 % increase in employment rate and 12 % increase in wages. He also found exactly same results that females performed better than men after attaining adult education (2012). Erika Ekström, in the IFAU's Working paper in 2003, analyzed the long-term impact of Swedish adult education on earnings of participants and revealed that participating in adult secondary education drastically decreases the earnings of Swedish males with approximately 3.5 percent, although no such impacts have been found for Swedish females. She also discovered that the age of male participants determines the size of the education's effectiveness; young men have attained relatively higher earnings. In this regard, Holmlund, Liu, and Skansargue attribute the difference in lifetime earnings to the gap in work experience after graduation which is not avoidable. If we support this argument, the returns of obtaining tertiary education should be raised with age to ensure the legitimacy of participating in education later in their lives (2008). Therefore, how much time needed for people who have obtained adult education to enjoy the benefit of attending it in forms of wage and status in the labour markets seems to depend heavily on background of participants rather than the education programme itself. According to the results, female immigrants have benefitted from adult secondary education with around 9 percent increase in their earnings (Ekström, 2003, p.22). Positive outcome of adult education for migrants in general was also proved by the investigation done by Nordlund, Bonfanti, and Strandh (2013) in which they found that the majority of non-Nordic participants experienced the drastic increase in wages. They attributed this positive income effect to non-Nordics attitudes of immigrants by which they restrict themselves to appear less 'culturally' distant through attaining Swedish by language courses since the ability to speak Swedish is one of the most important factors to raise employability. On the other hand, they claim that about 10years were needed for non-Nordics to catch up the mean income level of poorer educated nationals who did not participate in the education programme (Nordlund, Nonfanti, and Strandh, 2013). If the reasoning of

Nordlund, Bonfanti and Strandh is true, it is highly questionable that Swedish adult education is beneficial for immigrants in that Swedish society—or more specifically, the labour market—does not accept cultural diversity but uniformity, or a homogenous society. The inequality in the effectiveness of adult education between nationals and those with immigrant backgrounds reveals the gap between Sweden’s public stance as a country highly-open and tolerant of cultural difference and the reality where immigrants are forced to train themselves be like “Swedish nationals” to be integrated in the Swedish education, labour market and society at large. For purpose of enhancing skills of those insufficiently educated, the Swedish government launched adult education program called the “*Adult Education Initiative*” or “*Knowledge Lift*” The outcome of this program was as follows: During 1997–2000, the participation rate was more than 10% of the labor force. training participants with a low initial level of education benefit even less than other educational groups (2005, p.1). This implies the former educational background has bigger influence on determination of success and failure of adult education than “*Knowledge Lift*” programme itself. However, the education programme have had the positive effects in the sense that it helped young men return to work after Sweden suffered from the economic cutbacks in the early 1990s. Training programs, yet, had ambiguous effects as those public adult education programmes explained before: it yielded positive effect on the employment probability for women, not for men (2005, p.36). Because of these facts, Freeman, Swedenborg, and Topel argue that the returns to government-arranged programme is not promising (Freeman, Swedenborg, and Topel, 2010, p.216). If the government-operated adult education is not effective as the Government Bill aimed, then how about the non-formal adult education? From the next paragraph, I will analyse the performance with focus on that of Folk High Schools.

(4) Impact of Non-Formal Education on the Swedish Labour Market

First of all, it is worthy to note as the main difference from public adult education is that folk high schools are designed to adapt the differences of students. Larsson mentioned that the significant features of Swedish folk high schools are constantly changing composition of participants, their differing backgrounds, and

the development of suitable pedagogies and innovative educational models (Larsson, 2013). In fact, there is no national curriculum folk high schools need to follow, thus allowing each institution to reflect identity in programme structure. This big autonomy of folk high schools, I think is one of the important factors contributing to provide various type of people, including unemployed and disabled, with variety of knowledge. DÖrte Bernhard and Per Andersson's research on the growing participation rate of disabled adults in folk high schools reveals that there is an urgent need to set a system where teachers can develop knowledge about disabilities (2017, p.100). Maliszewski also analyzes that the variety of education programme of Swedish folk high schools have played a significant role in addressing social exclusion of both individuals and social group with the aim to attain "greater sensitiveness to the needs of the market" and the increase in the cooperation with international partners (2014, p.392). An interview with students on difference in the characteristics of municipality-run education (formal) and folk high schools (non-formal) conclude that formal adult education is described as more of a one-way communication and quite instrumental, while the non-formal adult education has its strength in more of a collective, reciprocal place for knowledge production (2016, p.9). So, why has there been such a variance in impacts of adult education on labour market? I would like to state my own speculation on this question. One of the major reasons of the ambiguity of effects for both formal and non-formal education can be found in the way education is provisioned in Sweden. The 1962 reform gave every child a legal right to an education based on the same state-regulated national curriculum, so that education became equally valuable regardless of place of residence, social background, physical and mental abilities. It is reported that, in the Statistics Swede's follow-up survey of pupils who have studied longer courses at folk high schools in the school year of 2002/2003, 50 percent of the pupils were gainfully employed while 10 % were unemployed. This result indicates that Folk High School has contribute to enhance the employment probability of variety of students in the long-run by providing the knowledge needed to enter tertiary education. Since Sweden has guaranteed the equal access to education for everyone without taking differences in economic and social background into account, the variety in participants are much stronger

factors in determining the success or failure of learning within adult education. This implies that the provision as much as options does not always lead the society where every one of people can benefit. In this regard, how much Sweden individualize its adult education system is paramount to attain positive outcome in an equal fashion to people attend the programme, yet it is an endless pursuit and can never be perfect as long as Swedish adult education accept diversity in students' personality, nationality and background.

V Re-employment Programme in the context of Lifelong Learning

(1) History of Job Security Council and its Reemployment Programme

According to Garsten, Sweden's embrace the concept of lifelong learning became not only educational in context, but in that of economic policy and market development (2015, p.187). The idea of lifelong education is also the core of Sweden's reemployment policy which intend to decrease job displacement rates of workers through programmes offered by a private organization called *Job Security Councils (JSCs)*. The first Job Security Council was established in 1972. This was the outcome of the social democratic party's contribution to form collective agreement between the *LO* and the *Swedish Employers' Federation (SAF)* in *Saltsjöbaden* in 1938. This *Saltsjöbaden* agreement by which companies and unions negotiate to ease conflicts between them was the solution to lessen the frequent strikes and labor disturbances prevailed in the early 1900s (Semuels, 2017). According to Statistics Sweden, Sweden marked the highest rate of participation rate in the adult education at 72 % among the EU countries in 2014. It was also noted that the most common type of the adult education was staff training, reached 59 % (SCB, 2014) *JSCs* job trainings have contributed to both displaced workers themselves, employers who lay-offed and re-employed, and the entire Swedish labour market by its two supporting systems: *Trygghetsraget (TRR)* for white-collar workers and *Trygghetsfonden (TSL)* for blue-collar workers. In that both of *JSCs'* programmes are financed by employers, these programmes are provided together with the combination of companies and *Job Security Councils*. From 1990 and 2009, about 18,500 projects were launched in total and has supported over 100,000

displaced workers to be re-employed (EMCC, 2016).

(2) Legitimacy of Re-employment Programmes

One of the reasons of effectiveness of *JSCs* support to help displaced workers find new jobs lies in the fact that the notification of dismissal took place many weeks or months in advance. This allows *JSCs* to take action as soon as possible, even before the layoff is declared by companies (OECD, 2015, p.76). During the pre-dismissal period, both of *TRR* and *TSL* of *JSCs* begin contacting workers who were intended to be displaced and provide them information regarding services, counseling, coaching and competence development activities to enhance workers' employability. After the layoff is announced, more personalized trainings and reemployment services are offered. Whether displaced workers need to continue working during the transition period is in the discretion of each employer. There is also a service called "Early Risk Service" by which all white-collar workers who have the possibility of being displaced, can participate in individual consultations and career planning offered by professionals. This service, however, is only available in *TRR*, and cannot be launched without the consensus of trade union and companies. Although this disparity in service between *TRR* and *TSL*, *JSCs* supports have been considered highly effective or more effective than that of The *Public Employment Service (PES)* since *PES* does not offer tailored programmes before and during the notification of dismissal period. OECD's report issued in 2015 documented that around 85 % of displaced workers were reemployed within a year and these job security council programmes are more effective than those of government-operated due to the prompt intervention of job-security programmes and financial resources collected by employers. Lars Walter, a professor at the *University of Gothenburg* mentioned that unions in Sweden agree to layoffs rather than prevent them because they think that workers will be productive through retraining. Therefore, Sweden maintains the productivity of its economy through layoffs while enhancing the mobility of workers through supports by job-security councils (Semuels, A). In this regard, the variety and promptness of *JSCs*' supports are advantageous.

(3) Challenges to Job Security Councils (JSCs)

In spite of effectiveness of job training which *JSCs* provide in collaboration with employers, the aforementioned disparity between *TRR* and *TSL* cannot be ignored. In fact, re-employment rate of blue-collar workers is lower than that of white-collar workers (at 76% and 90% respectively), and the rate varies with 45% to 90%. This variance in *TSL* performance has been attributed to the fact that *TSL* outsources supporting services to more than 100 small independent suppliers unlike *TRR* which provides all services by itself (Diedrich and Bergström, 2006). OECD's research results also showed that re-employment rates are higher for men than women supported by *TSL*, and for younger workers than older ones. With regards to the gender difference in reemployment rates, Andersson analyzed the possible reasons for this could be attributed to negative feelings of females or unwillingness to move, or they may have poorer job searching techniques than compared to men. Furthermore, women may not be chosen first for jobs. He also discovered that, from his research on attitudes towards job-search, women practice more anonymous-passive job searching than men and that less work-related self-efficacy (2015, p.444). Moreover, displaced white-collar workers tend to get better jobs than blue-collar workers with more rate of getting permanent jobs. One possible cause of the inequality in services between *TRR* and *TSL* may be rooted in the origin of *JSCs*. In fact, there was a massive job loss among white-collar workers in the 1970s and lack of sufficient measures produced by the public employment service at that time (Gazier, Bruggeman, and Moore, 2008, p.160). behind the establishment of *JSCs*. It should be noted, however, that the *TRR* services are not flawless for every employer. Ericsson, for example, did not use *TRR* at all when they closed their plant located in *Norrköping* in 1999. For some employers, *TRR* services were regarded as old fashioned, and it still consider "dismissal as a psychological crisis to be treated rather than providing workers with the confidence and skills to take responsibility for their own career development" (2008, p.161). The difference in operation and quality between *TRR* and *TSL* is what has hindered Sweden to procure equal employment opportunity regardless of workers' background: blue-collar/ white-collar, gender, and age. Sweden was also waned from OECD to assess the performances of re-employment programmes of both *TRR* and *TSL* as well as

PES with the improvement in data collection (OECD, 2015, p.94). In fact, even those who could find job quickly with the help from *JSCs*, there is a strong possibility that their wages are lower compared to their previous job. Furthermore, there are disparities in provision of services among right holders. In fact, low-skilled workers and young people receive poorer benefit coverage and lower benefit entitlements. The eligibility criteria is also regarded as too strict since it can only be used in extremely weak economic conditions and cannot be activated without the proof (2015, p.15). This is the demonstration of the dilemma which Sweden faces; to comply with the core idea that everyone (worker) is entitled to lifelong education and to limit the provision of services so that those who suffered most will be saved by *JSCs*. Sweden has also struggled to overcome “the insider-outsider divide” which can be found in the inequalities between permanent and temporary workers, white-collar and blue-collar workers in terms of flexibility of programme that defines the outcome (2015, p.16). There are also gap in varieties of training between *TRR* and *TSL*. The resources of *TSL*'s trainings is the only 5% of the fixed fee (SEK 22 000, equivalent to about EUR 2300) per client, thus blue-collar workers have to choose from limited job options. The “insider-outsider divide” can also be seen in the gap in unemployment rate of nationals and those who have foreign nationalities. According to Lee Roden, discrimination which ‘outsiders’ receive can also be a factor of higher unemployment rate among foreigners. If this is true, it is highly possible that the positive impacts on public support for those unemployed born outside Sweden can be undermined by discrimination against them (Roden). The OECD's Economic Survey of Sweden 2017 claimed that unemployment is increasing among foreign-born residents in the country, which then causes the rise in the income gap between Swedes and foreigners. We should not, however, pertain the view on foreigners as unfortunate. Although the unemployment rate of people with foreign nationalities are experiencing higher rates than Swedes, the condition varies within those outsiders. According to Roden, refugees from Yugoslavian have succeeded in integrating themselves into Swedish society without almost no difference in employment rates with nationals (Roden). This implies that providing language courses is not enough to bring foreigners into higher education. The assessment of the reemployment programmes for refugees and immigrants based

on their nationalities should be done frequently to enhance the quality and thus performance of the programmes rather than maintain the operation of the programmes based on the view of dichotomy between the two such as “nationals and foreigners”. It is important to note that there are several limitations of Public Support for unemployed. For instance, the relationship between financial support for displaced workers and reemployment rate was investigated by Skärlund, Åhs, and Westerling. They found that the correlation of financial aid and reemployment success is ambiguous (2012, p.8). Given these results, the right holders’ traits such as personality and lifestyle can be bigger factors than job security systems regardless of formalness or non-formalness to determine the reemployment success. Therefore, how to draw a line in services the state should provide is a significant problem which Sweden, as a country that accepts immigrants, continues to face.

(4) Job Training

In the previous chapter, the discussion was about the impacts and problems of Swedish re-employment programmes as a method to actualize the objectives of “lifelong learning” in the labour market. In this chapter, the focus is moved to skills development in various workplaces and how employees gain from these on-the-job trainings based on interviews with various participants of skills trainings done by Matilda Andenfors and Jessica Lindvert (2015). They mainly found the fact that the ability to participate in skills development is oftentimes undermined by various factors from working conditions, employers to more private-related things such as having small children. By explaining the interviews’ results and my indications on why employees experience the difficulty to utilize skills development despite the fact that they have access to them.

Within the country, skills training, occupational development and transitions are administrated by the collaboration of employers and unions (2015, p.173). Moreover, companies as the providers of job training tend to forget the fact that not all employees want to take part in skills development (p.178). This, in other words, means that it is risky to generalize the need to job training. The difficulty is balancing equal distribution and quality of skills training. It is also reported that when the effort to make the access to training equal to every employee is

prioritized, people who want to participate in training are not always given the opportunity (p.179). Furthermore, the companies with shortage in personnel tend to make employees hesitate from taking part in job training. This implies that Job training should be captured not only on individual-basis but also in the relationship within workers. Flexibility has required adaptability of employees which causes more stress, and this time pressure hinders employees to attend job training courses (p.180). Sweden has been a leading country in carrying out flexible working hours, and it experimented six-hours work day within the nursing home in Gothenburg without reducing wage for two years. The result of this experiment showed that although shortening working hours yielded improvements in the health of nurses, the quality of work done by them and the decrease in sick-leave, the significant increase in personnel cost was inevitable in order to maintain the amount of work done in total (Chapman) What we can understand from this experiment's results is that the enhancement of the flexibility of work causes the decrease in profit of the companies, thus in salary per employee. Therefore, the limitation of the flexible working policy can be a financial burden to implement. Dr. Caroline Murphy, a lecturer in employment relations at the *Kemmy Business School, University of Limerick* says that in spite of shortening working policy of companies, the working day is, in fact, extending due to the connectivity with the workplace (Darmody, 2017). The French government came to realize this irony relatively earlier and eventually enforced the law since January 1st in 2017 which obliges French companies to protect the right to disconnect their workers from job by setting hours where employees should not send or respond job-related emails (Agence France-Presse). These complicated problems surrounding measures to procure flexibility in work. Sweden needs to investigate further in relation to the refinement of job training and the availability of the training given that the flexibility of skills development itself is also demanded but not yet achieved in Swedish labour market. In the case of the food industry in Sweden, for example, a folklift license can be utilized only by a packer but not by employees working in other positions (2015, p.183). In this regard, Swedish skills training today is still the temporarily effective which equips employees with industry-specific, thus not easy to transfer to other fields. There has been a trend in the Swedish skills training in the workplace

that people who attained high education have more access to skills training than those with less education: The participation rate of workers from the public-sector is higher than that of people from private sector, and women joined the training more than men (Statistics Sweden, 2007). Furthermore, the need to put further efforts in figuring out the effects of job training and its relationship with Swedish work-life-policy as illustrated by the fact that the difficulty of combining the parenthood with skills development has been proven. Taking parental leave leaves not enough time available for taking part in job training (2015, p.182). This is a clear proof that once more than two work-life-balance measures are taken at the same time, the advantage of each measure is reduced. Therefore, the utmost importance does not lie in the numbers of measures to improve working conditions for employees, but lies in the companies' capacity to maintain the feasibility of measures taken while keeping productivity high. Andenfors and Lindvert state that formal access to skills development in working life does not guarantee the actual ability to participate in skills development (2015, p.171). These facts reveal the paradoxical nature of job training that it can be either helpful in improving the worker's status, living condition and thus overall well-being or troublesome in that it can add burden both in the workplace and at home. Moreover, how much the worker can utilize skills training, is heavily dependent on his/her background. Under the status quo, employees with lower education or in low status have less access to job trainings than those with higher educational backgrounds. Therefore, how to reach those who need skills development most is what Sweden has to prioritize.

VI Conclusion

What can be said by analyzing both the positive and negative impacts of Swedish lifelong learning, especially its ability to enhance adults' work-related skills is that, although Sweden provides a variety of options in order to meet different demands through both formal and non-formal programmes with the cross-sector collaboration, there are still inequality in the provision, quality and outcome of them. Individual's preconditions should be the starting point for accessibility and should be reflected in the structure of the education system. It is urgently needed

for Sweden to clarify the priority in the targets of both formal and non-formal programmes and evaluate the effects based on the difference in targets' demand on a regular basis. The combination between providers in terms of information of targets' background and their current performance can be one means to improve the Swedish lifelong learning system itself and people's ability to take advantage of it.

- 1) The Official Site of Sweden. EDUCATION IN SWEDEN
- 2) the Social Democratic Workers Party of Sweden (SAP: Sveriges socialdemokratiska arbetareparti) was founded in 1889 by delegates of worker organizations and worker-centered associations which supported social democratic principles (Gougolakis, 2016, p.17).

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