

ESCAPING BRAIN WASTE. WORK EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS OF HIGHLY SKILLED UKRAINIANS IN POLAND

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Purpose: The research aimed to identify what causes some highly skilled migrants from Ukraine to work according to their qualifications and others work below their qualifications.

Design/methodology/approach: This article discusses the results of a survey conducted among 248 highly skilled economic migrants from Ukraine working in Poland. Two groups were analysed: working according to their qualifications and working below their qualifications. The study was carried out between December 2021 and March 2022. The CATI method has been used.

Findings: There is a statistically significant relationship between the length of work experience of respondents in Ukraine and whether or not they are working according to their qualifications or below their qualifications. There is a statistically significant relationship between working in accordance with or not in accordance with qualifications and the assessment of whether it is difficult for a Ukrainian to get a job in Poland in accordance with his/her qualification.

Research limitations/implications: The limitation of the conducted research is that it is conducted exclusively from the perspective of the migrant and does not take into account external factors such as the situation in the labour market of the host country, legal conditions, employers' attitudes towards employing foreigners in positions requiring higher education. This should be taken into account in future research.

Practical implications: The research also has implications for the management of organisations. They show that there are people among the Ukrainian workforce whose potential is not being used. Their talents could be utilised within the organisation. Further research should look at companies and examine how the process of hiring foreign workers works and determine when a company decides to hire a highly qualified Ukrainian according to his/her background.

Social implications: Poland has become a country of immigration. Economic migrants from Ukraine were joined by refugees from that country after 24.02.2022. The proper use of migrants' qualifications is therefore important from the point of view of the economy, but also of the host society.

Originality/value: It shows the possibility of using highly qualified migrants from Ukraine in the organisation. In the Polish labour market migrants from Ukraine are mainly employed as manual workers.

Keywords: qualification, migration, brain waste, career management, organization.

Category of the paper: Research paper.

1. Introduction

Poland has become a country attracting increasing numbers of economic migrants. In 2021, the country was in first place in terms of the number of documents issued due to migrants taking up employment (Eurostat, 2022). By February 2022, there were an estimated 2 million foreigners in Poland, of which the majority, 1.35 million according to estimates, were people from Ukraine - mainly economically active men (Duszczuk, Kaczmarczyk, 2022). This influx was primarily of a labour-intensive nature. The vast majority were migrants from Ukraine who took up employment in Poland mainly in sectors of the so-called secondary labour market, primarily, according to the structure of their legalisation, in services, industry and construction (Górny, 2017). Economic migrants were treated in Poland mainly as additional hands for work, a labour force that was lacking. Polish public statistics do not record the migrants education level. Research shows that among economic migrants there is a sizable group of people with tertiary education, and their share varies from a dozen to several tens of per cent depending on the study (Górny, Kaczmarczyk, Napierała, Toruńczyk-Ruiz, 2013; Kubiciel-Lodzińska, 2012). A huge challenge faced is how to use the qualifications of people coming to Poland. For many years in Poland, mainly in the context of workers from Ukraine, the phenomenon of brain waste has been a challenge. So far, however, it has not been the subject of a wider debate. The issue of migrants' loss of qualifications is all the more relevant as estimates suggest that around 40-60% of Ukrainian refugees who arrived in Poland after 24.02.2022 have tertiary education (Openfield, 2022; EWL, 2022).

The aim of the research was to identify what causes that some highly skilled migrants from Ukraine work according to their qualifications and others work below their qualifications. This paper analyses selected results of a quantitative survey of 248 highly qualified pre-war migrants from Ukraine working in Poland according to their qualifications (101 persons) and below qualifications (147 persons). Ukrainian citizens are the most numerous on the Polish labour market, as more than 80 per cent of work permits and more than 90 per cent of declarations of assignment of work were intended for this group in 2021 (Kubiciel-Lodzińska, 2020). The survey was carried out between December 2021 and March 2022, so it does not include refugees from Ukraine. The data collection CATI method has been used.

The article contributes to the literature relating to the impact of the work experience obtained by a highly skilled migrant in the country of origin on his/her subsequent situation in the labour market of the host country. It also shows to what extent the opinions on the usability of qualifications translates into the possibility for the migrant to take up a job in line with or below his/her qualifications. A novel approach to the research is to undertake a quantitative analysis relating to the employment of highly skilled migrants from third countries (in particular those from Ukraine). It shows the possibility of using highly qualified migrants from Ukraine in the organisation. On the Polish labour market migrants from Ukraine are mainly employed as manual workers.

The article begins with a literature review that refers to the concepts of brain waste and deskilling, which are used most often in the context of the underutilisation of migrants' qualifications in the host country. It also identifies studies that have addressed the issue of work experience in the country of origin and its transferability to the destination country. The following section describes the research method and the sample. The third section shows the results of the study. Finally, a discussion and conclusions were presented.

2. Research context

The term brain waste refers to the situation where an individual works in an occupation that requires lower skills than those he or she has acquired (Reitz, 2001). It arises when a skilled individual bears the costs of education but does not reap the benefits of possession, i.e. the skilled migrant ends up unskilled. Due to the non-utilisation of qualifications, both the migrants and the host society lose out (Sumption, 2013). Brain waste most often results from low transferability of skills (education), which occurs when, due to the specificity of the skills or other factors (e.g. language barrier), it is not easy to 'transfer' them across borders (Chiswick, Miller, 2009). Moreover, the higher the labour market segmentation, the more likely a migrant is to remain already in a low-skilled job (Fellini, Guetto, 2019). In the European context, brain waste is a complex and interconnected process that is often linked to the definition of skills and their need for recognition. It is recognised that the phenomenon of brain waste is rarely initiated by the migrant himself, and originates from the interaction with the labour markets of the host country (Elo, Aman, Täube, 2020). Related to so-called brain waste, is another concept used in the context of migrants' inability to use their skills, which is skill depreciation (deskilling). This is the process of incomplete (or nonexistent) use of one's education for a specific job, which in the long term renders previous competencies invalid (can occur not only in connection with migration but e.g. in the case of long-term maternity leave). This is most often the case for those with higher education (Pecoraro, Wanner, 2019). Of course, it is worth noting that under-qualified work may not always be considered inferior. Highly skilled workers from the

so-called new EU member states (e.g. Poland) employed in low-skilled occupations in host countries are seen as potentially more effectively employed than in their country of origin, suggesting that this mitigates the effect of brain waste (Fihel, Janicka, Kaczmarczyk, Nestorowicz, 2015).

The phenomenon of brain waste is a challenge faced by most immigration countries. The most common reason for highly skilled migrants to undertake work below their qualifications in so-called 3 D jobs (dangerous, dirty, dull) are economic factors. While they undertake work below their qualifications, they also have the opportunity to earn higher wages than in their country of origin (Favell, 2008). Other factors that cause highly skilled people to take jobs below their qualifications are the difficulty in having the education received in the country of origin recognised (Parrenas, 2001), the lack of or insufficient knowledge of the language of the immigration country, and the short-term nature of the migration.

An immigrant's work experience in the destination country, in contrast to their experience in their home country, is presented in a U-shape. It is meant to represent the migrant's high level of professional achievement (work experience) in the home country and low professional status in the country of immigration (Chiquiar, Hanson, 2005).

This means that a migrant's work experience in the country of origin does not always translate into success in the labour market of the host country. A study in Finland showed that work experience reduces the risk of discrimination and increases the number of potential contacts for a job offer. However, it does not significantly affect the number of call-backs for jobs where vocational training is required or are highly skilled jobs. Foreigners' chances of getting a job do not change significantly even when they have more work experience than native applicants (Ahmad, 2022). Interesting findings also emerge from Canadian studies. They show that migrants who worked in regulated occupations in their countries of origin experienced a significantly greater reduction in occupational classification in Canada than those who worked in unregulated occupations before arrival. In contrast, those who had worked in regulated occupations before emigration and were able to find employment also in regulated occupations in Canada did not experience any downgrading, (downgrading) of occupational qualifications (Banerjee, 1983).

Based on the literature review, the following research questions were asked:

1. Does the length of work experience in the country of origin translate into taking up a job compatible with the qualification?
2. Do migrants' opinions on the usability of qualifications influence whether they work below or in line with their qualifications?

3. Methods

The quantitative survey was conducted from December 2021 to March 2022 among 248 Ukrainians with a university degree. In the study, highly qualified individuals are defined as those who have completed higher education (Docquier, Marfouk, 2006). Due to the differences in the Ukrainian and Polish education systems, the study recruited individuals with at least a bachelor's degree, which can be considered the equivalent of a Polish bachelor's degree, as it provides the opportunity to continue their education in second-level studies. They could be graduates of foreign (Ukrainian or other universities) or Polish universities.

Purposive sampling was used in designing the survey, so it is a non-probabilistic sample. The criteria for the selection of respondents were defined in detail: migrants had to come from the same national group (Ukraine), have the same level of education (tertiary education), and have worked in Poland for at least six months before the survey. The research was comparative as the selection of respondents assumed the recruitment of migrants from Ukraine working in Poland in accordance with their qualifications (in a position requiring a university degree) and working below their qualifications (in positions not requiring a university degree). The snowball method was used when recruiting respondents. The assistance of employers who allowed contact with their Ukrainian employees was used. Recruitment was also done with the support of NGOs that support immigrants, particularly those from Ukraine. Contact was also made with universities, through which contact was made with their Ukrainian graduates. Snowball sampling was used because it is difficult to access group and there is no sampling frame (Heckathorn, 2011).

The research tool used in the quantitative part was a survey questionnaire, which consisted of 12 closed-ended questions and a metric (including gender, age, a field of study, country of graduation, profession pursued in Ukraine and length of work experience in the country of origin, profession pursued in Poland, a branch of employment, length of stay in Poland, the definition of permanent place of residence and was also asked about the year of employment with the current employer). The questions contained in the questionnaire were aimed at indicating the migrant's professional path and concerns, *inter alia*, the way of finding employment, assessment of the possibility of using qualifications on the Polish labour market, determination of factors stimulating and blocking taking up employment consistent with qualifications, knowledge of the Polish language was also referred to. The data collection method used in the study was a telephone survey (CATI - Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing). A total of 248 respondents took part in the survey, and among them were 101 people working in Poland according to their qualifications and 147 people working below their qualifications.

The age structure of the respondents confirms that the youngest age groups were most present among (pre-war) economic migrants (details Table 1).

Table 1.
Characteristics of respondents

		Number	%
Gender	Women	100	40,3
	Man	148	59,7
Age	Up to 35 years	113	45,6
	36-44 years	88	35,5
	45-55 years	39	15,7
	Over 56 years	8	3,2
Country of graduation	Ukraine	203	81,9
	Poland	37	14,9
	Other countries	8	3,2
Year of arrival in Poland	2003 and earlier	12	4,8
	2004-2010	19	7,7
	2011-2015	40	16,1
	2016 and later	177	71,4
Nature of work in Poland	In accordance with qualifications	101	40,7
	Below qualifications	147	59,3
Length of work experience in Ukraine	Respondent has not worked in Ukraine	36	14,5
	1-5 years	84	33,9
	6-10 years	57	23,0
	over 10 years	71	28,6

Source: own elaboration.

More than 80% of respondents graduated in Ukraine, nearly 15% in Poland, and more than 3% in another country. These included graduates of construction (10 people), economics (45 people), pedagogy (42 people), technology (37 people), IT (23 people), and medicine (14 people). Respondents were also asked about the length of their stay in Poland. It was found that the largest number of people, over 71%, had arrived in Poland relatively recently, between 2016 and 2022, while the smallest number, only about 5%, had been working in Poland since 2003 or earlier. Nearly 8% of respondents arrived in Poland between 2004 and 2010, and 16% between 2011 and 2015. The adopted ranges relating to the year of arrival in Poland result from the earlier nature of the inflow of migrants from Ukraine. The period before 2004 is before Poland's accession to the European Union. The period from 2004 to 2015 is the post-accession period, in which the outflow of Polish workers who decided to emigrate was more and more noticeable in the Polish labour market. This is a period in which employers increasingly began to employ foreign workers, primarily from Ukraine. After 2015, we have seen a huge increase in both work permits and declarations of the intention to entrust work to a foreigner - hence the choice of the next period. More than two-thirds of the respondents worked in Poland permanently, while about 26% claimed that working in Poland is a temporary occupation for them. i.e. they come to Poland for a few months a year and return to Ukraine. In addition, respondents were also characterised in terms of their situation on the labour market, i.e. whether they work according to their qualifications or below their qualifications, how long their work experience is, whether the job they are doing is their first job in Poland and whether they have worked in another country outside Poland.

Nearly 34% of respondents had 1- 5 years of experience working in Ukraine, 5-10 years worked 23% of the respondents and nearly 30% had worked in their country of origin for more than 10 years. Just over 14% of respondents had not worked in Ukraine at all. Only 1/3 of respondents declared that they had work experience in other countries, while for about 70% of respondents going to work in Poland was the only migration experience.

4. Results

4.1. Length of work experience of respondents in the country of origin and nature of employment in Poland

The aim of the research was, among other things, to establish whether there are any relations between the length of work experience in the country of origin and the nature of work in Poland.

In the surveyed group, among those working according to their education, almost 38% had between 1 and 5 years of work experience in their country of origin. Nearly 1/3 had worked in Ukraine for 5-10 years and just over 18 % had more than 10 years of work experience. About 15% of the respondents had not worked in Ukraine at all (Table 2).

Table 2.

Respondents working in Poland according to education and below education by the length of work experience of respondents in Ukraine

Length of work experience in Ukraine	Work in accordance with qualifications		Work below qualifications		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
1-5 years	38	37,6	46	31,3	84	33,9
6-10 years	29	28,7	28	19,0	57	23,0
over 10 years	19	18,8	52	35,4	71	28,6
Respondent has not worked in Ukraine	15	14,9	21	14,3	36	14,5
Total	101	100	147	100	248	100

Source: own elaboration.

Table 3.

Relationship between nature of work in Poland and the length of work experience of respondents in Ukraine

	χ^2 Pearson	df	p-value	V-Cramer
Work in Poland according to education and below education by length of work experience of respondents in Ukraine	10,4532	3	0,0151	0,2074

Source: own elaboration.

This suggests that there is a statistically significant relationship between the length of work experience of respondents in Ukraine and whether or not they are working in positions that align with their education level in Poland (p-value = 0.0151 < 0.05) - Table 3. Frequency analysis showed that in the study group, those with longer work experience in Ukraine were

slightly more likely to work inconsistently with their qualifications. This means that the length of work experience obtained in the country of origin does not translate into 'success' in the country of immigration. V-Cramer's value of 0.2074 would indicate a moderate association between the two categorical variables being analyzed.

This shows that the longer the length of work experience in Ukraine, the greater the likelihood of working below qualification.

The survey results show that for employers, the migrant is a 'white card' and their previous work experience gained in their country of origin is not crucial when filling positions. It is more crucial what positions the employer is looking for and whether they are willing to take the job.

A consequence of this is that employers have a different approach to verifying the qualifications of foreign workers. More than 77% of respondents working according to their qualifications claimed to have submitted a university degree when applying for a job. Only 19% of those working inconsistently with their qualifications responded the same way. For nearly 62% of respondents working below qualification, the employer did not check their education and 15% submitted documents proving that they had completed vocational courses. In contrast, in the group working in line with qualifications, only less than 6% of respondents claimed that the employer had not checked their education. Additionally, nearly 22% submitted documents of completion of vocational courses to confirm their qualifications. Nearly 37% of respondents working according to their qualifications took part in interviews, while among those working below their qualifications it was less than 7%. In the first group, all respondents knew how the employer checked their qualifications, while in the second group, 4% said they did not know how the employer checked their qualifications (Table 4).

Table 4.

Method of verification of qualifications by the employer (by nature of work of respondents)*

	Work in accordance with qualifications		Work below qualifications		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
I showed my university diploma	78	77,2	28	19,0	106	42,7
I showed a document of completion of professional course(s)	22	21,8	22	15,0	44	17,7
Employer did not check my education/qualifications	6	5,9	91	61,9	97	39,1
Other	37	36,6	10	6,8	47	19,0
I don't know	0	0,0	6	4,1	6	2,4

*More than one answer possible.

Source: own elaboration.

Table 5.

Relationship between the nature of work in Poland and the way in which the employer verifies qualifications

	χ^2 Pearson	df	p-value	V-Cramer
How the migrant's qualifications were checked	79,7884	1	0,0000	0,4972

Source: own elaboration.

Verification of education/qualifications shows a significantly relationship whether a respondent is working according to or not according to his/her qualifications in Poland (p -value = $0.000 < 0.05$) – table 5. Education and qualifications are verified when a migrant is employed according to qualifications. Research shows that a certain group of foreigners' talents are wasted when satisfying the labour market and looking for people willing to do jobs that are unattractive to native workers. Moreover, often the employer does not even know that he is missing out on the potential of a person (e.g. with an engineering degree) because he does not verify the qualifications, education and focuses only on finding people ready to take the job he is looking for. V-Cramer's value of 0.4972 would indicate a strong association between the qualifications of migrants and the method used to check them. This suggests that the method used to check qualifications is highly related to the nature of the work migrants have been employed.

4.2. Respondents' opinions on the usability of qualifications

The research also sought to establish whether there is a relationship between migrants' opinions on the assessment of the possibility of using their education and the nature of the job. More than 46% of respondents working according to their qualifications and more than 87% of those working below their qualifications agree with the statement that it is difficult for a Ukrainian in Poland to get a job according to their education. Nearly 20% of respondents in the first group do not have an opinion on this (against 6.1% of those working below their qualifications). It is worth noting that more than 1/3 of those working according to their qualifications do not agree with this statement (Figure 1).

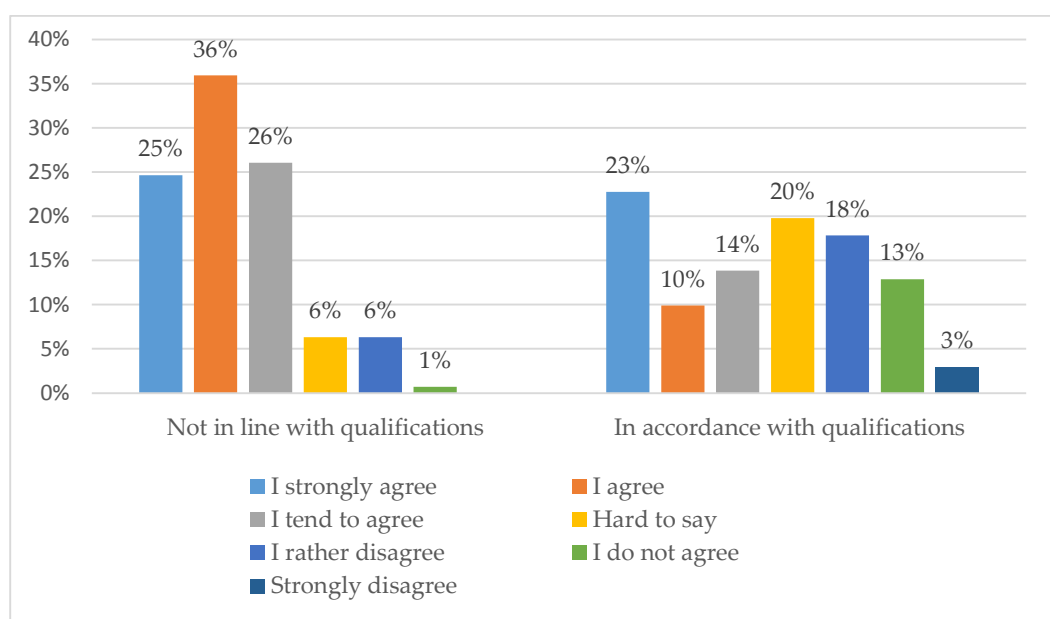


Figure 1. Please specify to what extent you agree with the following statement: It is difficult for a Ukrainian to get a job in Poland that is compatible with his/her qualification according to the nature of the job.

Source: own elaboration.

Table 6.

Relationship between the nature of work in Poland and the rating of the statement "It is difficult for a Ukrainian to get a job in Poland that is compatible with their qualification"

	χ^2 Pearson	df	p-value	V-Cramer
Evaluation of the statement "It is difficult for a Ukrainian to get a job in Poland that is compatible with his/her qualification" according to the nature of the work	55,5341	6	0,0000	0,4781

Source: own elaboration.

There is a statistically significant relationship between working in accordance with or not in accordance with qualifications and the assessment of whether it is difficult for a Ukrainian to get a job in Poland in accordance with his/her qualification (p -value = 0.0000 < 0.05) - Table 6. This means that the migrant's conviction about the possibility of using his/her qualifications is also important when looking for employment. Highly skilled migrants often assume even before they leave the country that they will not be able to get a job in line with their education (e.g. due to a language barrier) and immediately look for employment below their qualifications, which is definitely more readily available. V-Cramer's value of 0.4781 would indicate a strong association between the evaluation of the statement "It is difficult for a Ukrainian to get a job in Poland that is compatible with his/her qualification" and the nature of the work. This suggests that there is a strong correlation between the nature of the work and the perceived difficulty of getting a job in Poland that is compatible with one's education. It is likely that the nature of the work has a strong influence on the perceived difficulty of getting a job that aligns with one's qualifications.

More than 52% of those working according to their qualifications disagree with the statement that recognition of education obtained in Ukraine is very difficult in Poland. Noteworthy, a similar view was expressed by more than 1/3 of those working in accordance with their qualifications. In contrast, 1/3 of those working according to their qualifications and more than 46% of those working not according to their qualifications believed that recognition of education obtained in Ukraine is very difficult.

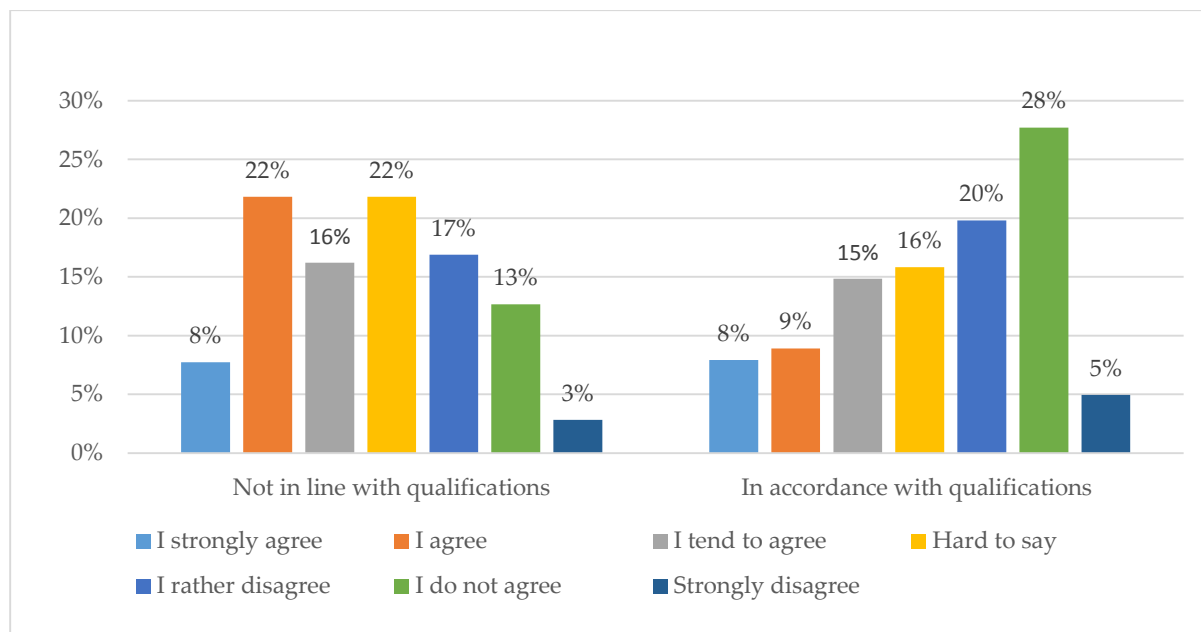


Figure 2. Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statement: Recognition of education obtained in Ukraine is very difficult in Poland.

Source: own elaboration.

Table 7.

Relationship between the nature of work in Poland and the evaluation of the statement 'Recognition of education obtained in Ukraine is very difficult in Poland'

	χ^2 Pearson	df	p-value	V-Cramer
Opinions on the statement "Recognition of education obtained in Ukraine is very difficult in Poland".	15,2091	6	0,0187	0,2502

Source: own elaboration.

There is a statistically significant relationship between working according to/against qualifications and assessing whether recognition of education obtained in Ukraine is very difficult in Poland (p -value = 0.0187 < 0.05) – table 7. V-Cramer's value of 0.2502 would indicate a moderate association between the two categorical variables being analyzed.

5. Discussion

The important finding is that the longer the work experience of a high-skilled person in the country of origin, the less likely he or she is to obtain employment in line with his or her qualifications. Taking a job below the qualification first results in deskilling and later in brain waste. This shows that the work experience of high-skilled migrants acquired in the country of origin does not affect success in the labour market of the host country, i.e. it does not facilitate obtaining matched employment to the qualification. The first question is therefore answered. This is due to several reasons. This may be due to several reasons including the age of the migrants - the longer the work experience - the older the migrants are. Age, on the other hand,

can affect how a worker perceives his or her capabilities. Older and middle-aged workers, research shows, are more cautious in their career choices (Yeatts et al., 2000). The second reason, Poland has not been interested in attracting highly qualified people to work and has no activities in this regard. An exception might be the facilitation of doctors from abroad introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the influx of refugees from Ukraine, regulations dedicated to Ukrainian refugees (e.g. scientists, doctors, and teachers) were introduced to facilitate access to the profession (Pędziwiatr et al., 2022), but these were actions forced by situations rather than deliberate to facilitate highly qualified people taking up work in Poland. There is a lack of a strategic approach to the possibility of more adequately employing high-skilled migrants - both from the state and from the employers themselves. In Poland, labour migrants, who came mainly from Ukraine, were primarily clocked in as a labour force to fill gaps in the labour market. Which concerned professions that were unattractive from the point of view of Polish workers. No thought was given to the use of their qualifications even though, according to estimates, around 20-20% of migrants are tertiary educated (Górny et al., 2013; Kubiciel-Lodzińska, 2012).

It is more difficult to obtain a clear answer to the second question Research has shown that there is a statistically significant relationship between the assessment of statements on the possibility of using qualifications and the nature of employment. However, it is not possible to conclusively indicate that those who evaluated the possibility of using their education more positively obtained a job precisely because of their attitudes. It may be that respondents who work in line with their qualifications are more positive about the possibility of using it because they have succeeded in the host country's labour market. This issue in the case of Ukrainian migrants in Poland would need to be explored further during qualitative research. But we know from other countries, that migrant's career aspirations influence the type of employment and determine career development (Gottfredson, 2002)

A huge challenge that requires a change in the mentality of employers is to stop seeing foreign workers as a 'white card'. Employers, according to analyses of employees' answers, when employing a foreigner in a profession from the secondary labour market, rarely ask about education and work experience. The key for them is to meet the demand for specific professions, and to find people ready to perform certain jobs for which there is a shortage of workers. In the case of Poland, this demand was mainly for workers in simple jobs, people to work in construction, industry, services, and agriculture. And it was primarily for these jobs that foreign workers, mainly from Ukraine, were recruited. This situation is well illustrated by the dual labour market theory (Piore, 1979), according to which the labour market is divided into two segments: primary and secondary. The first includes jobs perceived as attractive and the second characterises jobs perceived as unattractive (usually requiring physical labour in difficult conditions, e.g. agriculture, industry, construction). Migrants are most often hired to fill gaps in the labour market and to take up that employment that native workers reject.

Certainly, an issue that would need to be deepened is the transferability of education and qualifications of migrants from Ukraine. There is no doubt that they are not perfectly transferable, which is due to several reasons. The slightly different education system, but also the incompatibility of education with the work done in the country of origin (migrants already work below their qualifications in their country of origin) and the individual attitudes of migrants (lack of self-confidence, lack of willingness to learn the language, lack of willingness to take up a job in line with their qualifications).

6. Conclusions

The study contributes to the debate, particularly relating to the migration of highly skilled persons from Ukraine in Central and Eastern European countries. Above all, it shows that this group is not homogeneous, which is an important indication for employers and migration policy.

The research has implications for the management of organisations. It shows that there are people among the Ukrainian workforce whose potential is not being used. Their talents could be utilised within the organisation. Further research should look at companies and examine how the process of hiring foreign workers works and determine when a company decides to hire a highly skilled Ukrainian according to his/her qualifications.

The study also has practical implications, mainly for migration policy. Recommendations for better collection of data on the education of migrants. For example, when registering refugees from Ukraine, data on their level of education and occupation was not collected. These data are also not collected when issuing work permits and declarations on the employment of foreigners. There is also a lack of institutional support to promote the employability of highly skilled migrants, which may indicate that career development and the ability to obtain employment in line with education is seen as something that depends solely on the migrants themselves and their activity in the labour market. This may be an area for future research.

The limitation of the conducted research is that it is conducted exclusively from the perspective of the migrant and does not take into account external factors such as the situation in the labour market of the host country, legal conditions and employers' attitudes towards employing foreigners in positions requiring higher education. The analysis focused on only one aspect - the possibility to use work experience from the country of origin - and the possibility to take up a job in the country of immigration is also influenced by other factors.

In the context of future research, a sectoral analysis would also be relevant, e.g. a more detailed analysis of migrants' occupations and the opportunities and barriers related to their use of qualification in the Polish labour market. It would also be important to refer to local labour

markets and the possibilities of absorbing tertiary-educated migrants into them. Poland has become a country of immigration. Economic migrants from Ukraine were joined by refugees from that country after 24.02.2022. The proper use of migrants' qualifications is therefore important from the point of view of the economy, but also of the host society.

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