

Against All Odds? Sami Women's Lower NEET Experience in An Arctic Context: Education and Work Participation among Multicultural Young People in Northern-Norway, the Norwegian Arctic Adolescent Health Study (NAAHS)

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Abstract: The present paper aims to explore and discuss how the factors of gender, class, and culture work together to form pathways from school to work among Sami women in Arctic Norway. The focus is to explore Sami women's lower NEET (Not engaged in Education, Employment, or Training) experience from an ethnoreligious multi-context perspective. Data are derived from a cross-sectional cohort and registry follow-up study in Northern Norway, 2003–2012, and data from Statistics Norway are included for an up-to-date data analysis (2021). This is a cross-sectional cohort and registry data study in Northern Norway, 2003-2012. The participants were adolescents and young people. Out of 5 877 junior high school pupils (15-16 years old), 83% answered a questionnaire in a cross-sectional study, the Norwegian Arctic Adolescent Health Study (NAAHS), whereas consent-based follow-up consisted of 68% (3987 young people). There is an ethnic self-report of 9.2% with Sami ethnicity in the respondent/consent group, hence 10% in NAAHS. As explained by ethnoreligious affiliation, the outcome variables were educational aspirations, the non-completion of high school, higher education completion, and NEET experience among female Sami young adults. The explanatory variables are sociodemographic factors (gender, ethnicity, residency). Stratification of the participants is made by dividing girls and boys, Sami and non-Sami, Laestadian and non-Laestadian, and residency by counties in Arctic Norway (previously Finnmark, Troms, and Nordland). The results show that Sami women stood positively out compared to the majority women and all men through the footprint to work participation. Some of the conclusions from the study are that sociocultural and macroeconomic factors must be highlighted and considered to ensure and evolve for Sami women's further work participation.

Keywords: Minority, young Sami females, Indigenous people, longitudinal, NEET, Laestadian affiliation.

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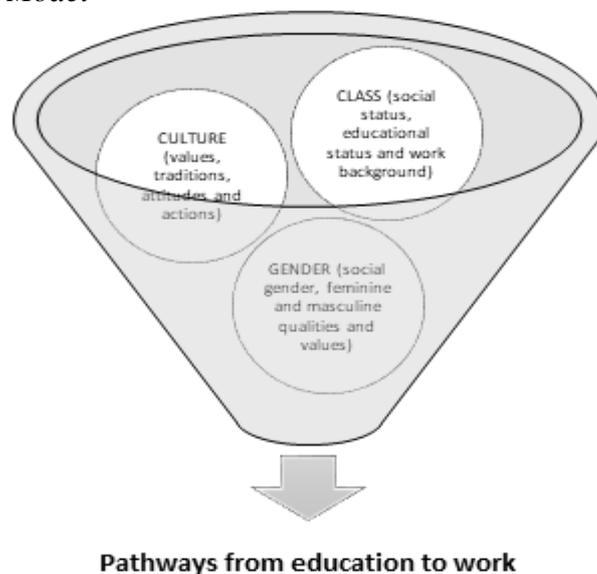
The present paper applies an ethnoreligious and multi-context perspective on Sami females' pathways from educational aspirations to work. The pathways' key factors of gender, class, and culture are considered to explore the lower NEET (Not engaged in Education, Employment, or Training) experiences among young Sami women in Arctic Norway. The ethnoreligious perspective is based on Svebak (1983), where the cultural term is understood as religious affiliation in Laestadianism and ethnicity by the Indigenous Sami. The two groups form a "religious ethnicity" with their own traditions and internal recruitment over generations. The multi-context includes Arctic peripheral residency, a nomadic lifestyle, gender, and religious affiliation, among other contexts. The term NEET includes young people who are currently unemployed, not in education, or not receiving vocational training. The term also includes students who have not completed their higher education program (Bania et al., 2019; Fyhn et al., 2021; Oliver et al., 2014; Social Exclusion Unit, 1999).

Intersection forces of socio-economy, structural decisions, and political experiences resulting from colonization can include intergenerational trauma, racial discrimination, cultural disconnection, and suppression (i.e., loss of language and skills) has affected minority Sami woman in Norway for decades (Kortekangas, 2017; Kortekangas et al., 2019). Moreover, systematic oppression and assimilation (i.e., majority-monitored residential schools), loss of control (i.e., land loss, home dispossession and reindeer farming regulations) and structural limited access to adequate services like health, education and employment have also contributed to inequal educational opportunities compared to the benchmark population (Aguiar & Halseth, 2015; Anderson et al., 2016; Kortekangas, 2017). Lack of educational opportunities has a great effect on social justice and community development, where particularly the importance of dialogic processes is lacking (Freire, 2000; Kortekangas, 2017). Historically, females in minority populations tend to have lower educational aspirations than males (Forrest et al., 2018), possibly because of experiencing blocked opportunities (Kao & Thompson, 2003; Kao & Tienda, 1998)

A multi-context perspective on Sami females' pathways from educational aspirations to work includes the factors of gender, class, and culture (Lazarsfeld, 1937; Listhaug, 1989). These factors are presented in the Causality Funnel model (Figure 1). The bubbles are placed where the most significant term is closest to the end of the funnel.

Figure 1

The Causality Funnel Model



Note. Based on Lazarsfeld (1937) and Listhaug (1989).

Altogether, these elements create the social context for our actions and are shaped in the socialization process at home, in school and at leisure activities. The leisure activity arena must be understood in a broad perspective, as it includes both the religious and ethnical contexts. The concept of gender is operationalized by “biological gender” with the categories of male and female. Gender is also understood as ‘social gender’ (Moi, 2001; Risman, 2018), relevant to the idea that school life and work life may be more adjusted to and based on feminine rather than masculine values/skills (Duckworth & Seligman, 2006; Theunissen et al., 2014). The concept of class can be translated into socioeconomic status, where education, profession and financial situation give access to several types of capital (Bourdieu, 2011; Rodriguez-Hernandez et al., 2020) Finally, based on Svebak (1983), the cultural term is understood as religious affiliation and ethnicity by Laestadianism and the Indigenous Sami.

Educational Opportunities for Sami Women in a Historical Perspective

Educational opportunities for Indigenous Peoples in Arctic Norway increased in the decades following World War II, with the establishment of a University in Tromsø (Troms County) in 1968 (later renamed the Arctic University, UIT), as well as several decentralized university colleges, which gave all youth from Northern Norway the opportunity and access to higher education in their own region. A Sami activist wave in the 1960s and 1970s caused young Sami adults, especially women, to pursue higher education (Kuhn, 2020; Pedersen, 2013; Pedersen & Moilanen, 2012). The activist wave was a global process with student riots in several Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries. Furthermore, the establishment of the Sami Parliament and other Sami institutions during the past 25–30 years increased the job opportunities for educated Sami in their home municipalities.

The SAMINOR 2 Survey found that the education level was high, including areas in which the Sami are in the majority (Broderstad et al., 2020). The findings are in line with previous findings from the SAMINOR 1 Survey (Lund et al., 2007). Norwegian and international research suggests that parental education, finance, and profession is strongly associated with their offspring’s educational attainment (Bania & Kvernmo, 2016; Belfield & Levin, 2007; Fyhn et al., 2021; Lamb et al., 2010; Sirin, 2005). Research shows that peripheral youth pursue education to a lesser degree compared to youngsters in more central areas (Bæck, 2016; Coleman, 1988; Doyle et al., 2009; Green & Corbett, 2013; Helme & Lamb, 2011; McNeal, 1999; Pedersen & Gram, 2018; Rothon et al., 2012).

There is a low prevalence of teenage pregnancy in Norway, per April 2022 0.5% of all labors so far this year has been with teenage mothers (Medical Birth Registry Norway [MBRN], 2022). Teenage pregnancy is a key socio-demographic characteristic identified for clear association with being persistently NEET (Forrest et al., 2018). There are financial and practical means related to bringing young mothers into both education and work in Norway. The welfare arrangements include student loans, social housing, social entitlements, access to kindergartens and benefits for young single mothers and young parents (Hatland et al., 2018; ssb, 2012). In addition, higher education is tuition-free in Norway, which also is a mean for social mobility and equality for young Sami women.

Geographical and Ethnoreligious Contexts

Arctic Norway is vast and sparsely populated, including the counties Finnmark, Troms and Nordland, comprising what is called Northern Norway. This region consists of a unique structure with a multicultural group of Indigenous people, the Sami, as well as a high proportion of people with Laestadian affiliation. Laestadianism has been a significant religious movement since the early 1800s, and it stands strong among Sami people in Norway, Sweden and Finland.

Sápmi, which extends from the west of Northern- Norway, Northern-Sweden and Northern-Finland (the Nordic countries) over to the Kola Peninsula of Russia in the east (Kortekangas et al., 2019) shares ethnic and historical boundaries. However, Laestadianism has not systematically been a part of the Indigenous Sami in Russia, as the core areas for preacher, biologist, and founder Lars Levi Læstadius (1800-1861) was around the borders of Norway, Sweden and Finland (Kuhn, 2020). The Laestadians has traditionally been considered a Sami version of Lutheran Christianity and has a strong religious and social position in Northern Norway, that is, with its abstinence norms (Eggen, 1998; Kuhn, 2020; Leganger-Krogstad, 2011; Spein et al., 2011). The Laestadians represent a social and cultural network in Arctic Norway. In the NAAHS study, 20% of Sami youth reported a Laestadian affiliation, whereas the general population of youth reported 5% Laestadian affiliation. Both numbers were equally distributed between boys and girls (Bania et al., 2015).

Gender- and Demography-Based Differences in High School Completion

Northern Norway experienced a high number of young people who did not complete high school in the period of 2003–2012, compared to the rest of the country and the OECD countries (Byrhagen et al., 2006; OECD, 2014; Valle et al., 2015). The high school non-completion rate was between 23 and 29 percent, increasing further north (Statistics Norway, 2004-2014). Historical statistics from particularly Eastern Finnmark and the Sami core areas from the mid-1990s indicate a high school non-completion rate close to 54%, regardless of gender and ethnicity. This alarming development was shown to have escalated further a decade later with a non-completion rate of 58% for all pupils, and 63% among boys (Broderstad et al., 2009). In the period 2014–2020, the total high school completion rate was 79.6% among young people in Norway. Here, there is a difference between youth choosing university preparatory high school (89.1% completion) and vocational preparatory high school (68.3% completion). In the counties of Nordland and Troms respectively, 58.9% and 58.7 % of all youth completed high school, whereas the similar number in Finnmark county was 50.7% (Statistics Norway, 2014-2020). There was a higher proportion of young men than young women who completed higher education in Norway in 2000. By 2012, the situation changed, where 31% of all Norwegian women had completed higher education, compared to 31% of all men (Valle et al., 2015). The following decade has shown the same development, where the proportion of women completing higher education has increased from 35.6% (2015) to 39.8% (2020) (Statistics Norway, 2015-2020). Numbers from education statistics show how women all over the country complete higher education. In total, 28.7% complete shorter higher education (typically a bachelor's degree (BA)) and 9.4 % complete longer higher education programs (typically a master's degree (MA)). For women from the Sami core areas, the equivalent numbers are 24.7% and 4.7% respectively. When it comes to male shorter higher education overall; 17.8% complete it, whereas the higher education completion rate among males in the Sami core areas is 12.4%, and in Arctic Norway 17%. For males completing longer higher education, the proportions are 10% for all of Norway, 3.5% for Sami core areas and 8.2% for Arctic Norway. Statistics on completed higher education show great differences between males and females, regardless of ethnicity (Statistics Norway, 2018a, 2018b). However, the workforce numbers indicate less differences between the genders: 67.8% of males and 65.1% of females (Statistics Norway, 2021); 70.7% of males and 65.8% of females in Finnmark county, 68.7% of males and 64.2% of females in Troms County and 68.7% of males and 63.4% of females in Nordland County (Statistics Norway, 2021). Workforce statistics in Arctic Norway show they are included in the workforce equally as the general population.

Aims and Research Question

The aims of the present paper are to explore and discuss how the factors of gender, class, and culture work together to form pathways from school to work among Sami women in Arctic Norway. Arctic Norway is a vast and sparsely populated region with a unique structure of Indigenous people, the Sami, as well as a high proportion of people with religious Laestadian affiliation. The following research question was formulated: How can the lower NEET experience of Sami women in Arctic Norway be understood in an ethnoreligious, multi-context perspective?

Methods and Materials

Sample Characteristics

The Norwegian Arctic Adolescence Health Study (NAAHS) was completed in 2003–2005 among approximately 5,000 15–16-year-old pupils from junior high school. The same group of adolescents was followed up through consent-based registry data from National Education Database (NUDB), Norwegian Patient Registry (NPR) and the Historical Event Database (FD-Trygd). A large cohort has been followed over a period of ten years, with the development from self-reported educational aspiration in their last year of junior high school (named 10th grade in Norway), completion of high school and higher education (university and college and vocational higher education), as well as entitled social welfare benefits and work inclusion. Our informants were 15–16 years old at baseline and 23–25 years old at follow-up. The informants were mostly Norwegians with some Sami, both boys and girls, Laestadian and non-Laestadian and youth from central and peripheral Arctic Norway. Out of 5,877 possible contestants, 4881 (83%) 15–16-year-olds from junior high school participated in the NAAHS survey in the period 2003–2005. The questionnaire was answered over a period of two hours in the classroom, with adult supervision. Students who were not present completed the survey later. The questionnaire was available both in the Norwegian and Sami languages. The response rate was as follows in the respective counties: Finnmark 71%, Troms 82% and Nordland 88%. A total of 3,987 (68% of the age group) gave written consent to follow up by registry data, where 9.2% reported Sami ethnicity. The Regional Ethic Committee (REK) gave consent to the NAAHS study and registry data follow-up.

Measures and Analytical Procedures

Work marginalization was measured by NEET (Bania et al., 2019; Fyhn et al., 2021; Oliver et al., 2014). In this study, participants who satisfied one of the following conditions were included; The person has not completed tertiary education as of the study period, The person has either been registered as 100% unemployed for more than one year or having received six or more months of sickness benefits or received six or more months of social welfare benefits during a 12-month period or having received medical rehabilitation benefits or disability pension during the entire study period (2003–2012).

Data were based on registry data from the FD-Trygd and the NUDB (Bania et al., 2019). The epidemiological study, consisting of a cross-sectional study at baseline and registry data follow-up, was analyzed by descriptive methods (frequency, distribution) and by regression analysis (associations and casualty). Interaction analysis was performed between gender, residency, and ethnicity. Analyses were also performed where socioeconomic variables (parental education, salary, and profession) corrected associations.

Ethical Considerations

All authors of this article are non-Sami. Although two out of three are women, we acknowledge and are aware that we also represent the colonists and the benchmarkers in background and how we were brought up. The terms and understanding are from a majority perspective, describing and analysing the minority. Belonging to the majority is a privilege unknown to the minority. Research highlights how asymmetry in privilege upholds privileges despite good intentions (Olsen, 2018). The authors must be aware of this dynamic. In a historical aspect, the colonists have had the power to define in an Indigenous context as well as in research. In addition, majority researchers have capitalized on stories told, often with good intentions (Smith, 2021).

Results

The present findings build upon four previously published papers (Bania et al., 2015, 2019; Bania & Kvernmo, 2016; Bania et al., 2016). For the analytical purposes of the current paper, the findings are selected and integrated in a new manner, focusing on the relationship between educational outcomes, ethnoreligious factors, and gender. The cross-sectional study NAAHS (2003–2005) and registry data follow up ten years later (2012–2013) showed how girls reported higher educational aspirations than males but still had equally high drop-out rates from high school (Bania et al., 2015; Bania et al., 2016). Non-completion of high school was associated with social problems (peer problems and excessive social life) (Bania et al., 2016). There were self-reportedly more emotional difficulties among girls, despite their completion of high school and seeking low-threshold mental health support. Female participants who completed a lower level of higher education (typically BA) had more behaviour difficulties (Bania & Kvernmo, 2016). NEET experience among young adults was significantly higher among women and associated with mental health problems such as hyperactivity and peer problems (Bania et al., 2019). Young adults with peer problems and lower parental education had greater risk of NEET experience (Bania et al., 2019).

Sami adolescents had lower educational aspirations and marginally larger non-completion of high school compared to fellow non-Sami peers (Bania et al., 2015; Bania et al., 2016). Completed higher education was equally and non-significantly distributed between genders, with a prevalence of approximately 5% for the higher level and approximately 18% for the intermediate level. About one quarter of the young people completed the lower level (vocational, non-university higher education), while more than half of the young people had not yet completed any higher education. Sami young people had somewhat but not significantly higher rates of higher education completion (7.1%) than non-Sami (5.3%) and lower rates of not-completed higher education (48.5%) than non-Sami (51.8%) (Bania & Kvernmo, 2016). Ethnic differences in NEET experience were found, where Sami males had significantly larger NEET experience compared to non-Sami males. However, Sami females had a lower degree of NEET experience than non-Sami females (Bania et al., 2019).

To sum up, Sami adolescents had lower educational aspirations and marginally larger non-completion of high school compared to fellow non-Sami peers. Females in Arctic Norway also had lower levels of completed higher education compared to Norwegian females in general. However, Sami females stood out positively compared to the female majority population, with lower degrees of NEET experience. This may indicate that variables other than levels of educational completion are relevant to explain work engagement and lower NEET experiences among Sami females.

Discussion

What is standing out in the sociocultural and ethnoreligious contexts? What are the pathways from school to work for Sami women? The presented findings show that females struggle equally as much as males when it comes to school completion and work participation regardless of ethnicity (Bania et al., 2019; Bania & Kvernmo, 2016). However, Sami females struggle less than the female majority population when it comes to work participation (Bania et al., 2019). Therefore, it is interesting to explore what may have influenced these outcomes in the multi-ethnic Arctic context? Several system-based processes can explain some of the outcomes. First, the process of assimilation of the minority Sami population until the 1950s aimed to erase identity markers and cultural practice such as language, clothes and gear and ecological integrity (Dolfsma, 2004; Jensen et al., 2011; Kortekangas, 2017; Kuhn, 2020; Nystad et al., 2017). Secondly, poorer living conditions in all of Arctic Norway has been a fact for decades (Broderstad et al., 2020; Broderstad et al., 2009; Lund et al., 2007). However, egalitarian Norway makes it possible for all youth to pursue education through generous student loan and scholarship arrangements as well as other financial arrangements such as cheap housing and access to kindergarten for young students with children (Hatland et al., 2018). Decentralised, tuition free studies and a local university since 1968 have been available in Arctic Norway, and teenage pregnancy is overall low in Norway (MBRN, 2022). Finally, in an ethnoreligious perspective, where the Sami and Laestadian importantly have exclusive contextual understanding in describing, analyzing and discussing young Sami women in Arctic Norway and their work participation, Kuhn (2020) describes how the Laestadianism is a double-edged sword. On the one hand it eradicated certain parts of the Sami traditions. On the other hand, it provided many Sami with a sense of pride and respect.

Young Sami women can in some ways be seen as more robust through work participation that leads to salary and independence. The causality funnel illustrates this by the terms 'gender,' 'class' and 'culture.' The bubbles in Figure 1 are placed where the most significant term is closest to the end of the funnel, 'The Causality Funnel' (Lazarsfeld, 1937; Listhaug, 1989), where the three factors of gender, class and culture constitute, and at the same time are shaped by, the social context of our actions (Dilli & Westerhuis, 2018). Studies suggest that areas of school and work life appreciate stereotypically feminine values or traits such as relational skills, self-discipline, and cooperation abilities (Duckworth & Seligman, 2006; Theunissen et al., 2014), whereas the more traditionally masculine traits such as independence, self-confidence, and competitiveness (Theunissen et al., 2014) create inner motivation that can be reinforced or reduced by the social class and/or sociocultural network. The perspective of Paine (1965) as referred to in Kristiansen (2005) argues that Laestadian affiliation among Sami minorities has provided a therapeutic effect/means to a double minority group (Sami and Laestadian). This is due to a set of unique ideals such as abstinence, simplicity, and material thrift, which create a bond of solidarity within the group and a boundary against non-believers (Kristiansen, 2005, 2016). Material thrift as spiritual wealth is a well-known perspective within protestant movements (Lang Hearlson, 2021) and can also be recognised in the Sami Laestadian ethnic minority group. Such ethnic cohesion could have given the Laestadian Sami an understanding of being one people in an ethnoreligious context (Svebak, 1983). The ethnoreligious groups' distance to the Norwegian majority population creates a boundary where the minority population's own values and identity cannot be violated or weakened (Bjørklund, 1985). Taken together, this way of living as well as the Sami identity, access to higher education and a general acceptance of females with paid income can create means for work inclusion for Sami women. Furthermore, access to blue-collar work for Sami young women through fish factories and self-employment in other primary industries such as reindeer herding can give access to income not requiring higher education. Dilli and Westerhuis (2018) suggest how

moderate employment protections, high governmental expenditures in education, and more female-friendly policies in general, complements with the overall institutional framework which enhances female work participation in Nordic Europe.

The term ‘culture’ in this context is the merge of religious affiliation by Laestadianism and Sami ethnicity. Svebak (1983) shows how Laestadianism and Sami ethnicity are connected in a religious and ethnical identity. The term used by Svebak (1983) is ‘religious ethnicity’, a socioreligious term, which has its own traditions, influenced by different traditions in a generational recruitment perspective. The Laestadians see themselves as a genuine people in society with a joint common culture recognised by words and actions (Kristiansen, 2005). This internal culture cannot be considered a unity as it consists of elements from both the Sami minority and the Norwegian majority (Kristiansen, 2005). The Laestadians can therefore be considered to have brought minorities together. Svebak (1983) relates multiethnicity with the Sami and the Laestadians as the development of a movement. One can infer that the Laestadian movement has established the foundation of a united people of Sami and Laestadians as an ethnoreligious category (Kristiansen, 2016). In some ways, this ethnoreligious perspective can be related to Paolo Freire’s ideas about the suppressed pedagogics and his liberation theology (Freire, 2000; Kuhn, 2020). Freire pointed out that when groups stand together, they are stronger and speak out, as suppression creates a ‘culture of silence’ in which the minority’s culture, language and way of thinking is alienated because it does not reflect the majority culture and is not appreciated by benchmarks. This can contribute to an unintended practice where the educational system creates an asymmetric relationship between students and teachers, lacking critical reflection, dialogue, and a joint development of knowledge (Kortekangas, 2017; Steinsholt, 2004). The Arctic context is far from the Latin-American, but there are similarities in co-determination mechanisms. Political activism, grassroots movements and raising awareness of own identity and values are such mechanisms. The way school and education are considered can be a part of this mechanism of awareness, and this applies among Sami young women. This is highlighted through the studies of young Sami women’s pathways from educational aspiration to completed education and work participation.

The social anthropologists Bjørklund (1985) and Kuhn (2020) pinpoint the majority-minority perspective when it comes to suppressing the Indigenous Sami population. The minority’s identity and self-worth has not been acknowledged by the majority (Kortekangas, 2017). According to Bjørklund, several Laestadian statements can be considered as symbolic resistance, such as “take a step away from the world”, “take not part of the secular glory/honor” (Kristiansen, 2005). The lack of acceptance of the benchmark values, that is, material wealth, can create an ideology of resistance. Kuhn (2020) describes how the Sami resistance has been divided in two: anti-colonial resistance and decolonizing/renewing cultural values. The values, norms and status hierarchy of the majority population is turned upside down (Kristiansen, 2016). In this case the paradox is confirmed by the minority Sami and Laestadians, who experience suppression by the majority. Material poverty is considered a symbol of spiritual wealth (Paine, 1965), and in this perspective the Laestadianism suits the Sami way of living. The period of Norwegianization can influence the Sami people’s way of pursuing higher education, including negative experiences and suppression, forced change of language, as well as diminishment of the Sami way of living (nomadic lifestyle) and a lack of access of global benefits as health, education and infrastructure as suggested by Anderson et al. (2016), Aguiar and Halseth (2015) and Kortekangas (2017). Sami women have during the last decades experienced a strong revitalisation and better living standards, which has reduced the social distance between the minority and majority population and increased the Sami pride in their culture (Bals et al., 2011; Broderstad et al., 2020; Kuhn, 2020; Stordahl, 1994). The work marked, including employment requiring tertiary education, blue collar work and self-employment, is open for Indigenous Sami women. The female friendly policies as suggested

by Dilli and Westerhuis (2018), the macroeconomic, ethnoreligious, and sociocultural context and access to all parts of the work marked are all forces enabling young Sami women to experience work inclusion.

Limitations

There are several limitations within this study and aims to be a contribution of one of many lenses. First, the present findings tell us about the descriptive statistics and significant between-group differences, but do not provide insights into the experiences and attitudes of Sami women. However, we can identify some interesting patterns and core findings related to the lower NEET experience among Sami women compared to their non-Sami female peers. This might be subject to further research. Second, the data were collected some years ago, and may not be representative of the present situation. This is addressed by the authors comparing the findings to updated statistics, ensuring that the same tendencies are still prevalent. Finally, the ethnoreligious perspective is not exhaustive. Several relevant perspectives other than those included may have been considered. Still, a broader and more complex exploration was the aim of the present paper.

Conclusions

A sound ethical research practice is to utilize the space given to advocate and take an active stance on how the research results and theoretical perspectives can be understood and used to promote ethnoreligious and multi-context aspects to maintain and develop means for Indigenous young Sami women access to all parts of the labor force. In this educational and work inclusion multicultural context Sami women do not stand out compared to the majority of females when it comes to educational aspirations, completion of high school, or tertiary education. However, the Indigenous Sami young women have significantly lower NEET experience than their majority female peers. From a sociological perspective, this can be understood by an educational system securing access to education and work, as well as a gender perspective and an ethnoreligious system with cultural values that enable Indigenous Sami women salary-based work participation.

Access and acceptance for self-employment and blue-collar work for Sami young women through fish factories and other primary industries such as reindeer herding has given the Indigenous women without higher education possibilities to work, receive income, and gain independence. Young Sami women have access and acceptance for jobs requiring higher education, and they can complete tertiary education regardless of socioeconomic status due to the structural, periphery-friendly higher education institutions and available jobs. In this regard, a broad job market and structural enablement are useful and necessary tools for maintaining low NEET experience for Indigenous Sami women, also in the future.

Bullet points

- Differences in NEET experience are understood in a multi-context, ethnoreligious perspective
- Female Sami adolescents- and young women do not stand out compared to majority females when it comes to educational aspirations, completion of high school or completion of higher education
- Indigenous young Sami women have significantly lower NEET experience than their majority female peers
- Sami males had significantly larger NEET experience compared to non-Sami males

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