

MESH

DREAM JOB

NETWORKING AND LABOUR MARKET



Which is more important, strong or weak network ties?

The efficacy of the network theory in relation to job seeking varies in different cultures, work communities and professions.

In the USA, building up professional networks is enhanced by colleges via fraternity and sorority associations.

In some other countries strong network ties may be more important than weak ties.

This is the case, for example, in community-based societies, where strong connections via family and relations, play an important role.

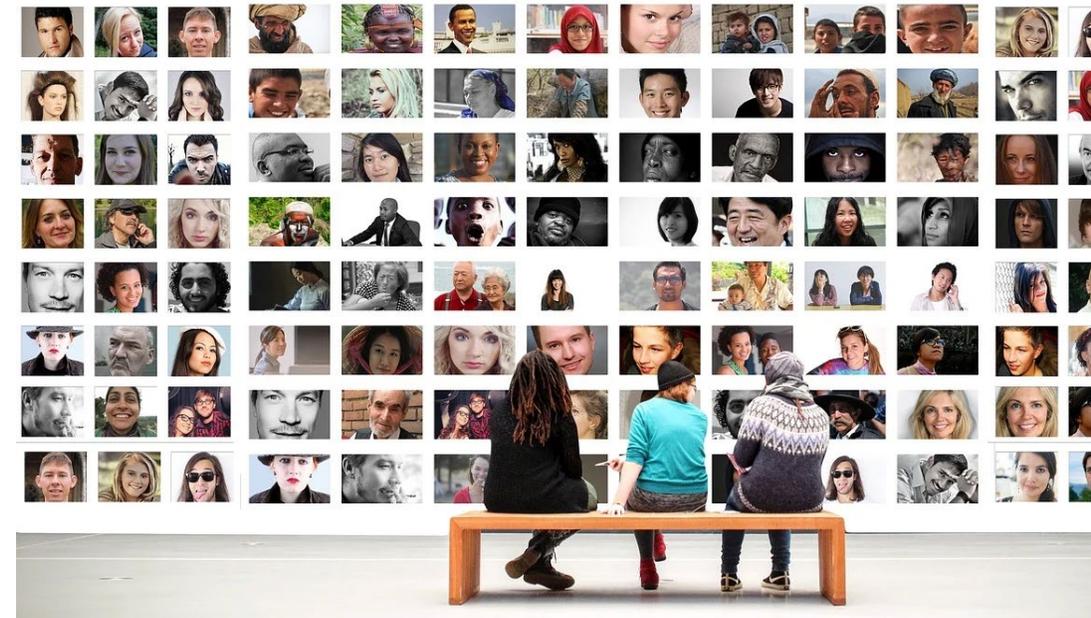
In summary, the strength of weak ties depends on the cultural context. As Granovetter said, "job search behaviour is more than a rational economic process -- it is heavily embedded in other social processes that closely constrain and determine its course and results" (1974/1994, 39).



Networking – making yourself visible

In present-day global labour market, the emphasis of networking is on ability to exchange information and become “present” and “visible” in your own professional field.

The wider professional network relations you have, the more options you have to receive information about different job opportunities and careers, instead just relying on the information you receive via the employment office or your close social circle.



Jobseekers with immigrant background and networking?

Social groups form barriers

The process of entering a new social group, both personal and professional, takes time.

Quite often immigrants tend to socialise with representatives of their own culture or language group. This narrows down the information and communication options.

It may be that only representatives of the local culture and new country are employment office employees and language teachers. If this situation continues for a long period of time, the feelings of being discriminated or rejected can become strong.



Structural racism in labour market

Some form of “racism” exists in labour market.

This concerns both immigrants as well as aged jobseekers, in some extent also young women of childbearing age (this is called ageism).

In relation to immigrants, some employers have prejudices or doubts about their language skills, work ability or how the other workers accept a foreign-born colleague.

It has been suggested that job applications should be made with no name, age and gender details – then the credentials would matter most in the first screening. Some cities in Finland are experimenting this already.

