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**Job Search Assistance in Sweden: The Role of Mentorship and Support &  
Matching Programs in Migrant Women's Job Searches**

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## **Abstract**

Currently, there are different programs based on job search assistance to provide career guidance and job match for foreign-born unemployed individuals in Sweden. Regarding job search assistance programs, this study examines the roles of mentorship programs and support & matching programs in Malmö and Lund, Sweden, where one of the program goals is to increase participation of foreign-born women in the Swedish labour market. By using Pierre Bourdieu and Nan Lin's theoretical approaches, this study essentially examines the migrant women's experiences during their program participation in terms of their social and cultural capital. In this context, it also explores the experiences of the programs' staff in relation to social networking in the programs. The main findings of this study are that the programs' supportive role could enable migrant women to enhance their social capital by increasing their social networks and mobilizing the resources of those networks in their job search. Although their matching role could pave the way for capitalizing on the institutionalized cultural capital of migrant women, the programs' professional networks might be insufficient to enable migrant women to utilize their foreign education in their professions in Sweden. The reason for this could be because of the structural challenges and limited resources of some of these networks. Lastly, the programs' educational role could familiarize migrant women with the rules in the Swedish employment field. This could lead migrant women to increase their embodied cultural capital in relation to locally-shared professional work culture in the Swedish employment field.

**Keywords:** Mentorship program, support & matching program, job search assistance, job match, migration, social capital, cultural capital, Swedish employment field.

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### **List of Abbreviations**

MP	Mentorship Program
SMP	Support & Matching Program
PES	Public Employment Service
OECD	The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
UN	The United Nations
EU	European Union
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
CV	Curriculum Vitae

## **1. Introduction**

Cultural barriers among migrants exist due to the complexity of Western labour markets and employment cultures (Hack-Polay, 2016). Hack-Polay claims that migrants face difficulties in participating in the host country's labour market due to the lack of knowledge and practices in the new country. Therefore, they need training in their job search, which is part of Western employment culture.

According to the OECD (2014), information, advice and guidance, vocational guidance, vocational counselling, career counselling and career development refer to several activities within the concept of "career guidance" (p. 18) which is defined as:

"Services intended to assist people of any age and at any point throughout their lives to make educational, training and occupational choices to manage their careers. Career guidance helps people to reflect on their ambitions, interests, qualifications and abilities. It helps them to understand the labour market and education systems, and to relate this to what they know about themselves. Comprehensive career guidance tries to teach people to plan and make decisions about work and learning" (OECD, 2004, p. 19).

The OECD also emphasizes the importance of Job Search Assistance programmes for those who are unemployed by pointing out that these programmes can accelerate and strengthen transitions to work (OECD, 2005). According to Bernhard & Kopf (2014), Job Search Assistance should enhance the job search process by increasing the possibilities of receiving a job offer. Bernhard & Kopf further claims that Job Search Assistance offers the participants information related to the labour market opportunities and improve job search practices either through courses on job applications or through individual guidance. In this context, in Sweden, the Government's policy aims to strengthen job matching in the labour market and enhance people's professional skills to meet labour market needs (Johansson, 2015).

In this sense, most of the projects have an objective to match foreign-born unemployed individuals with possible job opportunities at companies and use mentorship as a method to increase the possibilities for migrants to engage in the Swedish labour market (Englund, 2002, p. 4). The efforts on small or large-scale mentorship programs have increased over the last 10 years in Sweden and abroad (Nacka, 2014).

PES, which is called Arbetsförmedlingen in Sweden, points out that, currently there are more than 30 different providers carrying out support & matching programs in Sweden, which basically aim to provide program participants with job search assistance involving job search advice, guidance and job matching (Arbetsförmedlingen, 2017b).

While mentorship (MP) and support & matching (SMP) programs become popular in Sweden, the current literature regarding their roles on migrants' job searches is not sufficient. In this sense, this study aims to contribute to the literature on both mentorship programs and support & matching programs by analysing their roles in migrant women's job searches in Sweden. This study is important to show the challenges that migrant women face in terms of their job search in Sweden as well as the programs' potential roles in this process, related to their social and cultural capital.

### **1.1 Purpose and Research Question**

The main purpose of this thesis is to examine what potential roles mentorship and support & matching programs play in first-generation migrant women's job searches in Sweden, considering social and cultural capital literature. In accordance with this purpose, three support & matching programs in Malmö and Lund, Sweden, and one mentorship program in Malmö are selected for this study. Within this study, mentorship program and support & matching programs refer to two kinds of programs involving similar program goals and curriculum, but there are some differences in terms of cooperation with key actors in the labour market (Public Employment Service, employers), work structure, and activity plan. Both kinds of programs aim to provide program participants with job search assistance

such as CV writing, presentation and interview techniques as well as networks with employers. Both programs also organize workshops and lectures regarding employment culture in Sweden. However, the main interest of this study is neither comparing these two kinds of programs nor evaluating their service quality, but, rather identifying these four programs' roles in migrant women's job searches in Sweden. Theoretically, this study aims to analyse the programs' roles in terms of Bourdieu's concept of social capital, cultural capital, and social field. Nan Lin's concept of social capital helps to do a comprehensive analysis on the programs' networks and their potential roles in the migrant women's job searches. In line with this purpose, the main research question is;

- What role, if any, do mentorship program and support & matching programs play in first generation migrant women's job searches in Sweden in terms of their social and cultural capital?
  - Do potential social networks in the programs play a role in migrant women's job searches in Sweden, if yes what is this role?

## **1.2 Research Limitations**

The in-depth interviews are done with eight migrant women who completed and have currently been participating in the mentorship or support & matching programs over at least a three-month period. The interviews are further continued with three personal coaches and one project leader in these programs.

The study focuses on migrant women's experiences who have master's, bachelor's or high school degrees, not from the experiences of any other participant group in the programs. The study is limited in drawing a general conclusion about all similar mentorship and support & matching programs in Sweden, but enable to exploration of their possible or potential roles on this subject.

This is due to, the sample size in this research, the limited geographical area of the research, lastly, the experiences of migrant women might be different from one program to another depending on their job search needs and the programs' service quality.

Although the research provides a good understanding of the interviewees' experiences in the programs, the study is limited in terms of its scope, with 12 interviews. Due to time constraints, those who left the programs for the reason of dissatisfaction or any other reasons could not be involved in this research. Further, the migrant women mostly shared their positive experiences related to their program participation in the interviews. One of the reasons might be majority of the interviewed migrant women believe that the programs are or will be helpful for their job search in Sweden. Another reason might be since the interviewer contact the interviewees for the first time, the interviewees might not feel comfortable with the interview questions, although sensitive questions were avoided and the interviewees are provided with anonymity in this study. The study limitations prevent the study to tackle the issue sufficiently by considering potential problems that the migrant women could experience during their program participation.

Due to a language barrier, as I can only speak English and Turkish, only program participants, who can speak either of these languages, were contacted for the interviews. This also limits the number of women's experiences included in the study since most of the migrant women are neither English nor Turkish speakers in the programs.

### **1.3 Disposition**

The thesis consists of nine chapters. Chapter one offers an introduction shedding light on the subjects of job searches and job search assistance. It presents the purpose of this study, research questions, and definitions. Chapter two provides information about previous research regarding migration in Sweden and the recent challenges in the Swedish labour market. It also explains the role of Sweden's Public Employment Service (PES) in job searching. In chapter three, mentorship and support & matching programs are explained in terms of their goals, job search assistance, and modes of operation. The similarities and differences are presented by making a comparison between these two kinds of programs. Chapter four explains the research methodology, focusing on the qualitative method used in the research, formulation and implementation of the research questions, ethical

considerations and the profiles of the interviewees. In Chapter five, a theory review is presented regarding the concepts of social and cultural capital by explaining the approaches of different scholars. Chapter six presents the theoretical framework of this study in relation to the Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of social capital, cultural capital and social field. Nan Lin's approach of social capital is also elaborated. The interviews are analysed in connection to these theoretical approaches in Chapter seven. Chapter eight consists of the discussion section and lastly, the research's conclusion and future research are presented in chapter nine.

#### **1.4. Definitions**

**1.4.1. Job search.** Job search is defined as the process of finding a job (Cambridge, 2017). A job search involves job related information, discovering and evaluating different job opportunities, and deciding on a job from those opportunities (Saks, 2006). Boswell et al. (2012) thinks that the job searching process is based on motivation and self-regulation which require identification of an employment goal and commitment to it, which also stimulates the individual's search behaviour for achieving the goal. While formal job search activities involve contacting employment agencies, employment offices, submitting job applications, following-up on job advertisements, the informal job search activities include contacts and networks with employees, friends and so on (Nikoalou, 2014). Regarding these definitions, in this study, the job search as a concept is referred to a job seeking process including both informal and formal job search behaviours.

**1.4.2. Migrant.** UN defines a long-term migrant “as a person who moves from her or his usual residence to another country for at least 12 months so that the country of destination can become her or his new country of residence” (UN, 1973, p.10). Regarding this definition, in this study, migrants refer to foreign born people who have been living in Sweden between 1 and 11 years with a legal permission to settle in Sweden. The migrant women involved in this study cited a few reasons for arrival in Sweden such as family reunion, marriage, study, or economic reasons.

**1.4.3. Social Network.** Walker & MacBride (1977) define social network as "that set of personal contacts through which the individual maintains his social identity and receives emotional support, material aid, services, information and new social contacts" (p. 35). Social network contains different ties such as familial ties, friendship ties, marital ties, professional ties (Rheingold, 2002). According to NASW (2012), social network also involves “social and professional organization contacts, former and current colleagues/ supervisors, college faculty advisors, and teachers” (p.1). In this sense, professional and personal networks are the focal point of this study, which can assist discovering career opportunities or finding employment (NASW, 2012, p.1).

**1.4.4. Labour Market.** Sociologically, labour markets are the arenas where the labour power is exchanged by the workers in return for salary, status, and other job rewards (Kalleberg & Sørensen 1979). These involve how workers are engaged in a job and the rules managing employment, mobility, the achievement of skills and training as well as the distribution of wages in the economic system (Huffman, 2012). Regarding this concept, this study considers the labour market where the offer and demand happen for labour as well as workers’ engagement in employment, mobility, improvement of skills, and wage distribution.

## **2. Previous Research**

This chapter, first gives an insight about migration and labour market outcomes in Sweden. It briefly explains migration history and statistically shows the unemployment rate among migrants. It also emphasizes the difference between migrant women and men in terms of employment. Secondly, the 2014 OECD report is presented to explain the challenges in terms of the migrants' participation in the Swedish labour market. Lastly, PES's responsibilities and roles are explained regarding job search and employment in Sweden.

### **2.1. An Overview of Migration and the Labour Market in Sweden**

Bevalender & Irastorza (2014) state that recently, Sweden has been a country of immigration. During the 1970s and 1980s, newcomers arrived due to humanitarian or family reunification channels, as well as labour force migration from the former Yugoslavia and from Iran, Iraq and Somalia as refugees. The diversity is considerable among immigrants in Sweden, who have arrived due to humanitarian reasons.

According to OECD (2016), between 2003 and 2012, almost 20% of immigrant flow into Sweden consisted of humanitarian migrants, which was the biggest share of all OECD countries (p.4). These groups of migrants have more difficulties in all OECD countries when it comes to integration (p.1). According to Riksbank (2015), Sweden has a high population of refugee and family member immigration. It states that job opportunities are not high for these groups, especially for those who were not born in Europe. In recent years, the number of migrants increased through family reunification with Swedish citizens and residents (Bevalender & Irastorza, 2014, p.6). Bevalender & Irastorza examines the labour market outcomes related to family reunification migrants and states that the difference in employment level between refugees and family reunification migrants was small (64 percent compared to 66 percent) (p.10).

According to Swedish Higher Education Authority (2015) Sweden is also popular study destination among international students from all around the world.

It indicates that in 2010, international students including exchange students started to take part in Swedish universities. However, the number of students from developing countries decreased in Sweden since 2011, due to the introduction of school fees for foreign students wishing to study at Swedish universities or colleges.

According to the OECD report (2014), labour market outcomes of immigrants are considered important issues for the Swedish economy and society. However, these outcomes fall behind compared to those of the native-born Swedish population. The report identified adverse outcomes within an international context. In this sense, some improvement measures are recommended such as improving language and vocational training, as well as making the labour market focus clearer in integration policies. It also shows that after these recommendations, more efforts were put into policy design in Sweden. In December 2010, a new law was introduced with the purpose of strengthening regulations based on labour market activities for immigrants. Together with other labour market initiatives, this new law and associated policies aims to the integration of immigrants in Sweden (p.4).

Migrants' employment depends on factors such as length of stay, gender, level of education and arrival reason (Manhica et al., 2015). In this sense, women are particularly struggling to engage in the Swedish labour market. According to Bevalender & Irastorza (2014), foreign born women had a lower employment rate compared to their male counterparts when they arrive in Sweden. Statistically, while foreign-born women's employment rate is 21 percent, foreign-born men's employment rate is 33 percent. These gaps decrease in the first decade of residence, but the gap persists regarding employment between native and foreign-born women (p.2). The Statistics Sweden (2017) shows that a large percentage of foreign-born women are outside the labour market in Sweden. It also indicates that twenty-five percent of foreign born women between the ages of 20 and 64 are unemployed.

## **2.2. Migration and Challenges in the Swedish Labour Market**

In terms of common critical issues regarding the challenges and needs of immigrants, OECD and the Swedish authorities (2014) identified seven themes in terms of migrants' integration into the Swedish labour market (p.4). The issues

identified in 2014 were further investigated in the Swedish integration system in more depth in the current 2016 OECD report (OECD, 2016). Within this study, the 2014 OECD report offers crucial information to understand what kinds of challenges exist in the Swedish labour market within migration. Therefore, in this section, these challenges are presented and explained according to the 2014 OECD report under seven themes outlined below (OECD, 2014):

- I. “Basic skills and Swedish language for adults
- II. Validation and recognition
- III. Employer demand
- IV. Discrimination
- V. Networks and job search
- VI. School-to-work transitions
- VII. Co-ordination among actors” (p.4).

According to the OECD report (2014), low-educated immigrants in Sweden face poor employment prospects, which can partly be explained by the decline in low-skilled jobs within the Swedish economy. In terms of language proficiency, knowledge of the host country’s language is one of the fundamental necessities for foreign-born individuals to create their networks for a job search and with the native-born population (p. 7).

The OECD report shows that assessing and recognizing foreign qualifications is often helpful for immigrants to access to jobs that are an appropriate match to their skills and qualifications. Poor matching mechanisms emerged as one of the challenges for immigrants, since entry into the Swedish labour market is facilitated by networks and informal contacts, which limits the ability of immigrants to have access to job offers in the labour market (p.11).

According to the report (2014) migrant skills need to be effectively used to supply and demand. However, skill mismatch become an obstacle if immigrants’ skills do not fit those which are demanded in the Swedish labour market. The report indicates that migrant job seekers find and apply for job positions which are suitable for their skills. It also shows that the first portal is often PES which is checked out by both migrants and unemployed people. However, few employers advertise their

vacancies through PES. The report states that in Sweden, many vacancies are instead filled by networks such as contacts with friends, relatives and employees. It emphasizes that due to the lack of local networks and the strong reliance of the Swedish labour market on networks, migrants have limited access to labour market opportunities as well. Therefore, this puts them in a disadvantaged position since they become dependent on PES (p.15).

The OECD report also points out that discrimination is another challenge in the Swedish labour market, “taste-based” discrimination occurs when employers basically prefer to employ candidates with a particular origin. Even though Sweden follows anti-discrimination policy, studies show that equivalent job applications sent with immigrant sounding names is resulted in high incidence of discrimination in Sweden (p.13). In the case of Sweden, according to Bursell (2012), discrimination based on ethnicity is one of the reasons for foreign-born unemployment (p. 30-32).

The OECD report (2014), lastly, indicates that different actors are responsible for the integration of migrants including both newly arrived migrants and those who are established in Sweden such as municipalities, the Swedish Migration Board, the County Administrative Board, the Swedish Social Insurance Agency. However, involvement of multiple actors might also cause some challenges such as settlement delays and limited efficiency (p.20).

### **2.3. The Role of Public Employment Service in Job Searching in Sweden**

According to a report from the Government Offices of Sweden (2016), labour shortages are considerable in the Swedish labour market. The labour market shortage is decreased by facilitating access to labour force with the right education and training. This will create positive benefits for the Swedish economy. It is also important that labour market policy helps employers to find suitable employees to fill the job vacancies quickly. Therefore, the investment in adult education as well as the focus on employment matching are significant for Sweden’s labour market. Government Offices of Sweden also indicates that PES aims to meet these

challenges and strengthen its efforts to increase the number of people engaging in labour market or education.

According to Arbetsförmedlingen (2017a), the overall goal of PES is to make it easier for job seekers and employers to meet each other, as well as provide job seekers with different support, whom have obstacles to enter the labour market. The service also has a responsibility for aiding newly arrived migrants enter the labour market. One of its aims is to give them the right conditions to progress as fast as possible by learning Swedish, being able to work and to financially support themselves.

The report from Arbetsförmedlingen (2017b) indicates that the support & matching programs are the initiatives of the employment service, cooperating with external providers carrying out the program activities. Therefore, job seekers need to register in the employment service first to be able to participate in the program. The providers also must keep the employment service up to date about the participants' performances by making an activity report to send to PES (p.12).

### **3. Mentorship and Support & Matching Programs**

In this chapter, the general content of mentorship and support & matching programs is explained in detail. This provides insight about the program aims, job support, schedule, and work structure. All support & matching programs provide a standard service specified by the Public Employment Service (Arbetsförmedlingen, 2014a). This enables analysis of support & matching programs in general terms, rather than singularly tackling each program within the study. On the other hand, the mentorship program does not refer to an umbrella term, but a specific program carried out by a non-governmental organization which is elaborated in section 3.2.

#### **3.1. Support & Matching Programs**

Support & matching programs started on December 2014 within the labour market measure (Arbetsförmedlingen, 2015). Program participants get help in finding work, which is related to the job needs in Sweden (Arbetsförmedlingen, 2014a). According to Arbetsförmedlingen (2014b), the programs are run by private providers, which are usually companies in Sweden. In this sense, they provide personalized support for job-seekers during their job search. The support that job seekers receive is both tools for the job search and help in establishing contacts with employers. Private providers are cooperating with PES by helping to reach the goals (Arbetsförmedlingen, 2014b) below:

- Implementing a method to reduce unemployment in Sweden
- Helping participants to engage in the labour market or education
- Providing networks and contacts with companies, where job seekers can have the opportunity for internship or employment (p.4).

Arbetsförmedlingen (2014b) indicates that those who live in Sweden and are unemployed are the target population of the service. There are around 275,000 unemployed individuals having a disadvantaged position, requiring specialized help to engage in the Swedish labour market (Stöd och matchning, 2017). Most of the participants in the service belong to the groups below:

- “Unemployed having only upper secondary education

- Unemployed young people with inadequate education
- Unemployed foreign-born people
- Unemployed people with disabilities that impair their work ability
- Unemployed between the ages of 55 and 64 years” (Stöd och Matchning, 2017).

According to Arbetsförmedlingen (2014a), job seekers must be registered in PES to be involved in one of the support & matching programs. The participants choose programs’ providers themselves. The programs are built to speed up the job finding process by providing the participants with the following activities, depending on their job-related needs: Support for job search and job application, follow-up of job search, networks with employers, mentorship, workplace-related activities, study and career guidance, information about education, personal coaching, study visits, seminars, computer courses and language support.

Arbetsförmedlingen (2014b) also specifies that the programs involve three modules which are basic support & matching, basic support & matching with language support, enhanced support & matching, enhanced support & matching with a language support. Module I offers basic support & matching help to improve the participants’ job search and employment matching as well as increasing their contacts by creating networks with employers. This module includes at least 30 minutes of personal conversation and four hours of activities a week or at least 30 minutes of personal conversation and nine hours of activities a week. Module II is similar to Module I. The only difference is that Module II is provided with language support, where the participants are provided with a translator. The participants can speak their mother tongue during the activities with the help of a translator for communication with a personal coach. Module III is for participants who need more support than the basic level, at least 30 minutes of individual conversation and eight hours of activities per week with a three-month continuation. Lastly, Module IV offers the same service as Module III in which participants use their native language with the help of an interpreter (p.7-8).

Arbetsförmedlingen (2014b) states that within the agreement for the support and matching programs with PES, the provider must submit a periodical

report, which is a kind of summary of the participants' attendance and performance records during the programs. After the participants complete the program, a final report is sent to PES (p.12).

### **3.2. Mentorship Program**

The organization's internal document states that the mentorship program is an initiative taken by a NGO in Malmö. It aims to reduce the high unemployment rate among migrant women with high education or vocational education between the ages of 20-50. Within the implementation, almost 20 mentees take part in the program for 9 months. At the same time, their job matching is continuing with mentors, who are prospective employers. The document shows that the program's goal is to create new professional contacts, increase the skills and self-esteem of foreign-born women by strengthening their position in the Swedish labour market. Although the program's aim is to provide foreign-born women with a job offer, its priority is to provide them with an internship which could lead to employment in the end. In the long run, the program aims at increasing growth and employment as well as diversity and gender equality in the Swedish labour market (Organization's internal document, obtained personally).

According to the document, the mentorship program includes the following activities: Recruitment and matching, individual coaching, networking lectures, support for CV and cover letter writing and presentation techniques, language support, job fair and internship, providing a forum to share experiences, challenges and hopes about life.

### **3.3. Similarities and Differences between MP and SMP**

Both support & matching programs and mentorship program aim at supporting the program participants during their job search and increasing their chances of entering the Swedish labour market. Both kinds of programs include similar goals, job search assistance, curriculum and activities as explained in section 3.1 and 3.2. The program similarities enable this study to tackle both

programs together. The differences between the mentorship and the support & matching programs are outlined in Table 1.

Table 1

*Main Differences between Mentorship and Support & Matching Programs*

Support & Matching Program	Mentorship Program
A cooperation with the Employment Service.	A cooperation with the municipality.
Job search assistance depending on the modules.	Standard job search assistance.
3 months continuation period, extension might be provided until 3 months.	9 months continuation period.
Mixed-gender or only women's groups.	Only women's groups with a foreign background.
-	A forum where participants share their dreams, views and difficulties on life.
Compulsory job search.	-
Computer course.	-

#### 4. Research Methodology

In-depth interviews were used as a method for this research. It is believed that this method provides detailed information about the interviewees' experiences regarding the mentorship or support & matching programs. The interviews were carried out with eight migrant women from four programs (three interviewees from mentorship; five interviewees from support & matching programs). Four interviews were conducted with the program coaches and the project leader in these programs, as well. The distribution of the interviewees amongst the programs is outlined in Table 2.

Table 2

*Distribution of the Interviewees amongst the programs*

Program's Name	Number of Interviewed Migrant Women	Number of Interviewed Program Staff
MP	3	1
SMP I	3	1
SMP II	1	2
SMP III	1	-
Total	8	4

The eight interviewees were selected among the migrant women who are either currently enrolled and will continue the program for at least three months or completed their programs. In this study, three-month participation was determined as a requirement, since the support & matching programs run for three months with the possibility of a further three-month extension, if required. On the other hand, all the interviewees in the mentorship program have completed their programs in 2016. Seven out of eight interviewees participated in either another support & matching programs or job search assistance programs at least once. The interviewees were selected from those who have a good command of English or Turkish to be able conduct the interviews.

Seidman (2012) thinks that interviewing is more suitable if the research aims to “understand the meaning people involved in education make of their experience” (p. 10). According to Seidman (2012), interviewing is a useful method to gain insight on social issues since it allows individuals to tell their experiences regarding these issues. It is “...a narrative device which allows persons who are so inclined to tell stories about themselves” (Denzin, 2001, p. 25). Denzin (2001) considers this method as a tool to introduce information based on context and meaning to the real world. Denzin also notes that the method enables in-depth interviews to reveal the intricacy that other people face. In this sense, the interviewed migrant women were asked to tell their stories related to their job search process in Sweden, the difficulties that they encounter, as well as their experiences during the programs. On the other hand, the program coaches and project leader’s professional experiences were included in this study to gain broader knowledge about networking in the programs. The in-depth interviews helped to gain comprehensive data which allows the author to unpack the issue from different angles and provide rich insight on the interviewees’ experiences related to their job search in their home country, in Sweden and after they have started the programs. Bryman (2008) thinks that the interviews have flexibility compared to other qualitative methods, allowing researchers to explore unexpected themes based on the interviewees’ social realities. In this sense, it is believed that the flexibility of in-depth interviews enables different themes to be considered for the theoretical analysis within this study.

#### **4.1. Access to the Field and Interviewees**

Two companies and one non-governmental organization carrying out the mentorship or support & matching programs were contacted to reach out to the interviewees in one of Sweden’s largest cities, Malmö. One of the interviewees, who attends the program provided by another company in the city of Lund, was included via personal contact.

The programs’ contact persons were accessed through their contact details at the organizations’ websites. A face-to-face meeting with the contact

persons was held to explain the research's goal and its requirements. After these meetings, three personal coaches and one project leader who are in charge of the programs, were accessed for an interview through the key persons at the organizations. The migrant women were accessed with the help of the programs' coaches and the project leader. They allowed me to participate in their program activities at the organizations. This participation gave me an opportunity to meet the migrant women and explain the aim of this research. After the program activities, I received contact information from those who were interested in this research. I, then, contacted the interested individuals via email to schedule an interview.

#### **4.2. Ethical Considerations**

The interviewed migrant women, personal coaches, and project leader were each given a consent letter (see appendix B) before the interviews were conducted, which, informed them about the aim and objective of the research, that their participation is voluntary. They were informed that they can withdraw from the study at any time. The interviewees were also assured that identifying information will not appear in the thesis or report. However, quotations might be used anonymously with their permission. In order to ensure the anonymity of the interviewees, the interviewees were given a fictional name and a number. MP refers to the mentorship program, SMP refers to the support & matching programs. The interviewed personal coaches and project leader were also given a fictional name and a number. P represents personal coaches and project leader. MP1, SMP1, and P1 represent the interview with the first interviewee in these three groups.

In this study, the interviewed migrant women's country of origin, occupation and field of education are particularly withdrawn to prevent revealing their identities.

In section 3.2, the mentorship program is explained in reference to an internal document obtained personally from the organization. Therefore, full reference is omitted in order to ensure the program's anonymity.

### **4.3. Profile of the Interviewees**

The background of the interviewed migrant women is diverse regarding their country of origin, age, arrival reasons, education and professional area. In the study, three migrant women completed their mentorship programs in 2016. Five of the interviewees currently continue the support & matching programs for another three months. The interviewees participating in support & matching programs have joined the module I which offers basic job support & matching.

The interviewees' countries of origin are diverse. Origin regions included Asia, Eastern Europe, Scandinavia, and North America. The interviewees' arrival years range between 2006 and 2016. The interviewees are aged between 20 and 60. All the interviewees are registered in PES. Their professional areas covered different sectors, including high prestigious professions (lawyer, doctor, scientists, etc.), public service, private sector, public health service, child care, and economics.

In terms of their educational level, Julia, Selma, and Sophia have master's degrees, Nergiz, Maryam and Riya are university graduates, Suma and Alya have a high school degree. Julia and Selma are the only interviewees who currently have a job in Sweden. However, excluding Julia, all the interviewees are currently job-seekers and aim to find a job in Sweden. Although Selma has a job, she currently aims to find an employment in her professional area.

In-depth interviews were also conducted with three personal coaches and one project leader in the one mentorship program and the two support & matching programs located in Malmö within this study. While the personal coaches work in the support & matching programs, the project leader works in the mentorship program. All personal coaches and the project leader have a responsibility to provide job search assistance, which includes carrying out the programs' activities, creating social networks and providing program participants with job support and guidance.

### **4.4. Formulation and Implementation of the Interview Questions**

The questions are formulated to explore what potential roles the programs play in the migrant women's job searches in Sweden. The questions aim

to elucidate every phase of the migrant women's job searches, which include their job search experiences in their home country, as well as in Sweden before the programs and during the programs. The migrant women were asked questions based on different subjects such as their job search experience in their home country and in Sweden before and after their participation in the programs, as well as their experiences during the programs. The retrospective questions were asked to unpack if they have experienced the job search practices in their home country, if yes, what job search practices they were. The questions also aim to elucidate their experiences regarding job search practices in Sweden and if there is any difference compared to those in their home country. The questions are designed to explore their experiences during the program participation. The questions addressed to the personal coaches and project leader aim to understand if the programs contribute to the networks of their participants and what role, if any, do networks play in participants' job searches. All the questions are designed in a clear and easy to understand fashion to prevent any biases (see appendix C). The interviewees were free to expand their answers and have an open conversation.

Two of the interviews with one migrant woman and one personal coach were designed as a pilot interview to understand if the questions were suitable with regards to the aim of this research. The pilot interviews were also necessary to see if there were any question missing or questions that needed to be developed within the research aim. Baker (1994) points out that a pilot study can also be the pre-testing or 'trying out' phase in research (p.182-3). The interview guide consisting of semi-structured questions had an important role to play in leading the conversation in the interviews. While some interviews were an open conversation as Kvale describes (2006), some of them were more structured. Therefore, while some interviewees gave detailed answers, some of them were self-contained.

Most of the interviewees accepted the interview to be recorded although a few interviewees asked not to be recorded; hand notes were taken in this case. All the interviews lasted between 30-45 minutes.

#### **4.5. Method of Analysis of the Interviews**

After the interviews were completed, they were read several times to have a good understanding of the data. The tape recordings were listened to several times as well. The qualitative content analysis was conducted considering Graneheim and Lundman's approaches. Their approach focuses on the analysis of both latent and manifest content of a text (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). In this sense, a few key questions were identified to help to categorize the data in accordance with the research questions. In order to interpret interviews, the researcher needs to underline interesting information, label and then categorize it (Seidman, 2012). In this context, different categories and themes were created. According to Graneheim & Lundman (2004), theme is an overall concept is to identify the meaning of latent content of texts. Considering these categories and themes, the interviews were interpreted based upon their manifest and latent content within the scope of the research questions and the theoretical framework of this research.

## **5. Theory Review**

In this chapter, social capital and cultural capital literature is presented by explaining different approaches propounded by different scholars. In section 5.1, the concept of social capital is briefly explored and unpacked in relation to social networks and the job search. In section 5.2, the concept of cultural capital is explained and analysed in relation to migration.

### **5.1. Social Capital and Social Network**

According to Adler et al., (2002), social capital has recently emerged as one of the popular concepts in the social science discipline. Sociologists, political scientists, economists have taken up the concept within their fields.

Coleman (1990) defines social capital considering its functional role. He explains the concept of social capital as “a variety of entities with two elements in common: they all consist of some aspect of social structures, and they facilitate certain actions of actors – whether persons or corporate actors – within the structure” (Coleman, 1988, p.98). On the other hand, Putnam (2000) claims that “social capital refers to the connections among individuals” (p.19). For Putnam (2000), social capital exists within the social ties or networking and is rooted in a community network and relations. According to Burt (1997), the structural hole metaphor characterizes social capital related to information and control that the broker has as being in connection with other people who do not have access to this social structure.

From Bourdieu’s approach, social capital becomes a resource in the social struggles that emerge in different fields (Johnson 2015). According to Johnson (2015), Lin's definition is close to Bourdieu’s analysis based on class, as he claims that the quality of social capital rises as one moves up in the social structure (p.6). Lin defines social capital as “resources embedded in social networks accessed and used by actors for actions” (Lin, 2002, p. 25).

In terms of job search, theorists discuss that labour market opportunities can become available through social networks. According to Blömar (2015), finding job opportunities through personal contacts might be easier than formal job

search channels. Blömar notes that informal job searching via social networks and contacts is advantageous, compared to formal job searching.

Research shows that social ties can provide access to information regarding job opportunities (Burt, 1993; Granovetter, 1973). In this sense, social capital enables people to find jobs (Granovetter, 1973; 1995) and creates a large pool for companies in terms of recruitment (Fernandez, Castilla, & Moore, 2000).

## **5.2. An Overview on the Concept of Cultural Capital and Migration**

The concept of cultural capital was first introduced by Pierre Bourdieu as an addition to his social and economic capital (Alberto, 2014). Bourdieu and Passeron (1977a) argues that the knowledge that the upper and middle classes is considered valuable in a society where power relations exist. If one does not belong to either of these classes, she/he could access that knowledge and the possibility for social mobility through education.

According to Lareu & Weininger (2009), the concept of capital has enabled researchers to focus on cultural capital in diverse fields, discussing culture and cultural processes considering different aspects of stratification. Aschaffenburg & Mass (1997) define cultural capital as “dominant cultural codes and practices, linguistic styles, styles of interaction” (p. 573). On the other hand, cultural capital is discussed by considering cultural participation and its importance for individual well-being both at the psychological and physical level (Koonlaan et al. 2000; Daykin et al. 2008).

In a practical sense, cultural capital is also discussed in empirical research in terms of recognition and mobilization of migrants’ institutionalized cultural capital. According to Hage (1998), cultural capital is significant for recognition in the process of migration and in fact, migrants establish their cultural capital to match with the ethnically dominant culture of the host country.

According to Nohl, Schittenhelm, Schmidtke, and Weiss (2006), Institutionalized cultural capital can be formally recognized, however, the national organizations for education set conditions that educational titles gained in another country cannot be transferred to national titles. Institutionalized cultural capital is

measured in national contexts. Therefore, its value or relevance decrease through migration. On the other hand, some professions can be capitalized in the host country regardless of where it was obtained (Coe & Bunnell, 2003). In this sense, components of cultural capital need to be analysed to see which one of them are valuable and can be transferred to another country in the migration process (Nohl et al., 2006).

## **6. Theoretical Framework**

Within the theoretical framework of this study, Bourdieu's concept of social capital offers a theoretical starting point for the analysis to understand if the programs have a role regarding the migrant women's social capital in their job search. In this sense, the issue is tackled in terms of Bourdieu's two components (network size and the volume of networks for social capital). However, Bourdieu's approach is limited of offering a comprehensive explanatory power to answer a key question in this study (see section 6.1): what potential role the programs' professional networks play in the migrant women's job searches? Answering this question requires finding out potential resources that the programs' professional networks contain. In this sense, Nan Lin's approach to social capital is combined and elaborated upon by considering his four concepts (information, influence, social credentials, reinforcement) that he propounded to explore "why social capital works in instrumental actions" (Lin, 2002, p.19). Lin's approach allows for the analysis what he calls, 'embedded resources' in these networks that the migrant women can mobilize for their job search in Sweden.

Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital allows for further analysis of the interviews to identify the programs' role in the migrant women's job searches in terms of their embodied and institutionalized cultural capital. Therefore, his two concepts are clearly unpacked in section 6.1.

It is important to bear in mind that Bourdieu has been criticized due to his vague definition of capital in terms of definition and measurement (Haynes, 2009). Obscurity and ambiguities in his arguments are criticized for leading to misunderstandings and misrepresentations in his study (Goldhorpe, 2007, p.2). This study tackles these short-comings by elaborating the concepts of social, cultural capital and social field in detail. Bourdieu's Theory of Practice (1977b) can be considered a Grand Theory (Walther, 2013, p.7), which is an "abstract and normative theory of human nature and conduct" (Skinner, 1985, p. 1). It can be applied to "different circumstances and research areas due to its generic nature" (Walther, 2013, p.7). Bourdieu (1969) thinks that social fields have its own unique rules. Thus, the fields are self-governing which do not have universal rules to apply.

The unique rules and conditions regarding social field must be explored by empirical research (Hillebrandt, 1999). Regarding Bourdieu's cultural capital, Sullivan (2002) thinks that his concept of cultural capital is solid enough to be useful for empirical research, although it was not clearly formed in his studies. Considering these approaches this study makes only a minor conceptual application of Bourdieu's concepts of social capital, cultural capital and social field regarding migrant women's job searches in the Swedish context.

### **6.1. Bourdieu's Approach on Social Capital**

Bourdieu's social capital was based on resources connected to a network of social connections which provide benefits to individuals or groups (Bourdieu, 1986). In this sense Bourdieu says, "investment strategies, individual or collective, consciously or unconsciously aimed at establishing or reproducing social relationships that are directly usable in the short or long term" (Bourdieu, 1986, p.256). He explains social capital in relation to investment strategies creating social relationships which are open to use over time (p.51). People can convert their social capital into other forms of capitals to enhance their social position (Bourdieu, 1986). In this sense, one can claim that social capital is one of several resources which can lead an individual to reach economic benefits. In this sense, Bourdieu describes social capital as:

"The aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to the possession of a durable network of institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition— or in other words, to membership in a group — which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectivity-owned capital, a 'credential' which entitles them to credit, in the various senses of the word" (Bourdieu 1986, p. 248–9).

In this context, he explains social capital in terms of “the size of the network of connections s/he can effectively mobilize” and “the volume of the capital (economic, cultural or symbolic) possessed in his own right by each of those to whom he is connected” (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 249). Bourdieu’ social capital, therefore, points out network size and members of networks as components of social capital. Bourdieu (1986) thinks that an individual can have access to social capital based on the aforementioned two factors however he did not further elaborate his claim (Song, 2013). Within this study, the main problem with Bourdieu’ social capital comes out since he did not develop the operational definition of the concept. According to Ihlen (2009), his use of the concept is more metaphorical, with limited analytically support. Accordingly, this study combines his work with Nan Lin’s approaches on social capital to move the analysis forward regarding mobilization of networks and their embedded resources.

## **6.2. Nan Lin and Social Capital in Instrumental Action**

Nan Lin’s approach on social capital offers a clear understanding of how social networks can be mobilized and instrumentally support the individual to achieve resources. Lin (2002) suggests that social capital needs to be defined in an operational sense as “the resources embedded in social networks accessed and used by actors for actions” (pp. 24–25). In this context, Lin thinks that social capital is rooted in social relations and networks (p.41). He emphasizes on fundamental motivations for actions, which are preservation of valued resources, expressive actions, and for obtaining resources, instrumental actions (p.45). The author further states that instrumental action particularly stimulates investing and mobilizing connections that might lead to an access to social resources (p. 53).

Lin argues why social capital is important for instrumental actions in his book called *Social Capital: A theory of Social Structure and Action* (Lin, 2002). In this context, he analyses resources embedded in networks in terms of four concepts, which are information, influence, social credentials, and reinforcement (p.20). Within the context of this research, his social capital approach is based on an individual’s access to social capital and their ways of use of resources embedded in

social networks, which result in benefits from instrumental actions, such as job search (p.193).

According to Lin (2002) social ties provide access to better information regarding market needs and demands. This enables individuals to be informed about opportunities and choices, which they might not be able to reach them otherwise. The author explains that social ties might affect the agents such as recruiters or supervisors of the organizations, who have an important role in decisions such as recruitment. When those ties are in the strategic locations and positions of key contacts, they can contain valued resources and power, which might influence organizational agents' decision. Within Lin's term, social ties, resources and the relationships that the individual achieve approve the individual's social credentials by the organizations. He indicates that these ties can also provide reinforcements which help to maintain individuals' mental health and commitment to resources. The individual's worthiness is recognized by others as a member of a social group having similar interests and resources provides emotional support and public acknowledgement (p.20).

### **6.3. Bourdieu's Approach on Cultural Capital**

Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital is related to the field of education. He discusses the French education system and how it reproduced social inequalities (Bourdieu, 1998a). According to Bourdieu (1998a) only those having strong economic and cultural capital can access the Grandes Écoles (French prestigious schools). Eventually, they would enhance their cultural and economic capital during their education. The author believes that cultural capital is transferred through family and education, which can be formalized as educational qualifications.

Bourdieu's approach of cultural capital (1986) includes three different forms. Firstly, the embodied form characterizes one's existence and feelings such as language, taste, way of communication and behaviour. Secondly, one is the objectified form of cultural capital that exists in the form of objects, which can also be converted into economic capital such as pictures, instruments and machines. Thirdly, the institutionalized form of cultural capital is based on educational or

academic qualifications such as diploma (p.47). Among these three forms of cultural capital, this study focuses on embodied cultural capital and institutionalized cultural capital.

Within embodied cultural capital, Bourdieu (1986) notes that “most of the properties of cultural capital can be deduced from the fact that, in its fundamental state, it is linked to the body and presupposes embodiment” (p. 244). Linguistic capital is considered one type of embodied cultural capital (Harrison, 2013), which represents communicative codes and personal presentation. According to Bourdieu (1991) “the more linguistic capital that speakers possess, the more they are able to exploit the system of difference to their advantage” (p.18).

Institutionalized cultural capital is based upon academic credentials which can be considered as “a certificate of cultural competence which confers on its holder a conventional, constant, legally guaranteed value with respect to culture” (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 50). Regarding future decisions about career and educational goals, institutionalized cultural capital play an important role (Adamuti-Trache & Andres, 2008).

#### **6.4. Social Field and Rules of the Game**

Bourdieu (1977b) explains social fields as a universe in which the agents and institutions are communicate and negotiate with each other in line with field specific rules. Leander (2009) explains the relationship between field and habitus as, “field and habitus are the twin concept in Bourdieu’s approach. Habitus is shaped through experience of people within different fields, which is accumulated over time” (p. 2). In this sense, there are different social fields such as the field of art, literature, science or careers that are divided into subfields (Walther, 2013, p.8). Mayrhofer et al., (2004) defines career field in Bourdieusian context as a network of positions in which an individual possesses career capital, while trying to strengthen her/his position with the investment in career capital in accordance with the field specific rules.

According to Wacquant (2011), the rules within a social field are implicit in nature and not systematized formally. Leander (2009) thinks that to understand

and analyse the field in a Bourdieusian sense, one needs to understand that what is considered an advantage, capital, in the social field and determine who possesses it. In this context, cultural capital might be used to advance a career in business or in academia (p.4). Regarding social field and its strategies, Bourdieu (1998b) uses analogies or metaphors of “game”. Game is referred to practices or strategies, which means how to play the game to win in social fields since every field has different rules (Bourdieu, 1969). Participation in this game shows a commitment to the capital of the field, which means the game is “worth playing” (Bourdieu, 1998b, p.76). Within this study, it is important to bear in mind that the field represents the employment field in Sweden. The field specific rules refer to practices or strategies that enable access to the Swedish employment field while game refers to job search process in Sweden.

## **7. Analysis**

In the analysis chapter, the mentorship and support & matching programs' roles in the interviewed migrant women's job searches will be analysed considering Bourdieu's concept of social capital, cultural capital and social field. Furthermore, Nan Lin's theory offers a broad understanding regarding creation of social networks and their embedded resources to mobilize in the job search processes of migrant women. Their experiences in the programs are based on several job search support elements, which are network building, CV writing, interview techniques, and personal presentation. Therefore, the analysis is only made based on these jobs supporting elements to explore both mentorship and support & matching programs' potential roles. Lastly, mentorship and support & matching programs are explored to identify their potential roles in the migrant women's job searches regarding their cultural capital. It tackles the issue from different angles. First, the programs' professional networks are analysed by considering network building between the migrant women and employers. Then, a link between these networks and the migrant women's institutionalized cultural capital in the Swedish employment field is analysed. Later, the analysis further continues in relation to the assistance offered by the programs for CV writing, personal presentation and interview techniques in terms of the migrant women's embodied cultural capital.

### **7.1. Job Search in a New Field**

The interview findings show that some of the migrant women's job search practices in their home country are not similar with those in the Swedish employment field. When they enter a new field in Sweden, they encounter a new set of job search practices. In this regard, some of the interview responses are presented below:

“When I came here, I didn't know anybody. I didn't know what was important in looking for a job. I didn't know that connections and

networks have such a big and important role in the job search” (Julia MP1).

“I need to learn a lot, how to embrace yourself in the interviews and communication. You need to adapt to this country. When you walk into a team, you need to know how to work with a team” (Riya MP3).

Bourdieu (1977b) states that habitus and field depend on one another. According to Jo (2013), immigration does not only refer to entering a new society. It also means participating in a new cultural field where the original habitus might not comply. When individuals get into a new social setting, they often find their reality in their old habitus which does not comply with the new reality. In this context, Nergiz, Julia, and Selma expressed this feeling in the interviews:

“I didn’t know where and how to look for a job earlier. I didn’t have people around who could help me. You know you can’t get help from anyone here. They are so private. I faced difficulties a little bit but I learnt which websites I can check out” (Nergiz SMP1).

“In my home country, if you want to survive as an employee you have to show that you can do everything, that you can get over everything, you can cope with everything, you know everything, which is not the case in Sweden. It is okay to show that you are human. It is okay to show you have feelings. It is important to talk about it. It is important to talk about things that you can do or the things that you can improve. I think I was a little “cocky” when I was interviewed for certain jobs because I thought that this is what they wanted. They want a person that can do everything and probably I showed that I was not aware of my weaknesses” (Julia MP1).

“In my home country, your CV is everything that you have ever done from your born. Here, they say we don’t want more, we just want this part.” (Selma MP2)

Nergiz is a graduate woman and had work experiences in different sectors both in her home country and in Sweden. When she came to Sweden, she did not know how to look for a job. Social field has its own particular rules to apply (Bourdieu, 1972). Regarding this, in Sweden, job vacancies are often advertised online such as on employment portals. There are many job sites including job listings and used for job finding in Sweden (Gothenburgdaily & West Sweden Chamber of Commerce, 2014).

Expectations from employees might also be different depending on employment fields. Julia faced one of these differences in her job interview in Sweden. She thought she had to seem to be a “perfect” job candidate in a job interview, one who is capable of doing everything like in her home country. However, she realized that this was not expected from an employee in Sweden. Instead, employers want to see job candidates’ accepting their own weaknesses. Selma indicates another difference in terms of the job search process between her home country and Sweden. She thinks that in Sweden, employers only expect a few pages for a CV, unlike the expectations in her home country.

In terms of social networks, according to Guveli et al. (2016), due to the influence of mobility and separation, migration can damage social networks. The authors believe that creating a social network and ties might not be easy for migrants although social networks can be more important for job contacts among migrants (p. 167). In the interviews, almost all the interviewees think that they need networks to find a job in Sweden. Nergiz and Riya explains this situation below:

“First you will have contacts that will support you. Otherwise you can’t go anywhere. Okay you call them [companies]. There are many companies but you need to have someone supporting you.

It is same in every country but here it is more important. For example, you need to have relatives and friends in my country” (Nergiz SMP1).

“I need to have more networks, bigger and bigger. I have to know more people in Sweden” (Riya MP3).

The interviews above point out that social networks need to be increased in order to reach job opportunities in the Swedish employment field. The interviewees also show that the migrant women need to build and increase their social networks, which could provide resources, a source of support and affirmation (Guveli et al., 2016).

On one hand, some of the migrant women face unfamiliarity in their job search in the Swedish employment field. On the other hand, the job search practices in this field seem to be similar with ones in some of the interviewees’ home countries. The interviewed migrant women coming from one of the Nordic countries agreed that there is no big difference in terms of job search between Sweden and their home country. Alya explains this below:

“They teach you how to write CV and what to do in the interviews but I already knew the information from my home country I have been in the interviews and learnt it in the schools. All this information wasn’t new. Not so many people come here and know how to act in the interview, write CV but I lived and was born in [a Nordic country]\* so all these things that I knew I have all my CV and everything I know English is ok. My Swedish is ok. I know Arabic. I don’t think I need more support.” (Alya SMP5).

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\* Information regarding the interviewee’s education, occupation or country of origin is withdrawn to ensure her anonymity.

Alya was born in a Nordic country and has Middle Eastern descent. She thinks that she knew information related to the job application in Sweden, since Sweden and her home country have similar practices regarding job searching. Therefore, Alya could use her existing job search practices (CV writing, interview techniques) in the Swedish employment field during her job search. In this sense, she also states that she does not need program support to learn these any longer.

## **7.2. Social Capital, Networks, and Resources**

PES claims that many job openings are never advertised in Sweden and employers sometimes prefer to look directly into their networks instead (Arbetsförmedlingen, 2017c). PES further suggests that job seekers should extend and develop their networks and use them to find a job in the Swedish labour market. The Service also suggests job seekers that they should map out their networks and be comfortable to contact people who might lead them to a job opportunity. In this sense, social networks are seen as key point in terms of job search in Sweden. All the interviewed personal coaches and project leader agree that one of the services of the programs is to establish program participants' networks in the Swedish labour market. In this sense, Elin, Sarah and Asha elaborate on this idea:

“We keep participants updated on the market and works, which are always changing, depending on the season as an example. They get contacts that they did not look at. They do not need to send their CVs. We send their CVs. Our contacts become their own” (Elin P1).

“We have different networks. We call random companies maybe the participants can't but we can call hundred persons. I see your ads then I will call you. Maybe this can be an opportunity to somebody here” (Sarah P2).

“I use a lot of personal contacts. It can be a contact from organizations and recommendations” (Asha P4).

The programs' professional networks are created by the programs' staff (personal coaches and project leader). Elin points out that their contacts also become program participant contacts. It means program participants can also access the professional networks of the programs' staff. The personal coaches or project leader build professional networks by either using personal contacts or recommendations or through random phone calls. They fill the position of Burt (1993) calls 'brokerage' position between networks, controlling the information flow in the labour market.

The interviewed migrant women were asked questions to explore if the programs create networks and provide information regarding job vacancies or any other job opportunities during their program participation. Seven out of eight interviewees think that personal coaches and the project leader play a role in increasing the migrant women's social networks. All the interviewees think that the programs keep program participants informed about different job vacancies and opportunities during their participation. The interviewed migrant women, Maryam, Selma and Alya explain the programs' professional networks below:

“There are many channels. They make many channels, contacts and networks.” (Maryam SMP2).

“It gets me a lot of networking. I get to know people [in the program]. Maybe one will help me out” (Selma MP2).

“It is easier to apply for a job here. They tell you where to apply there is this place they need workers, this place and that place. I think it is easier. You go to a store, give them CV and wait maybe they don't need a worker they also have that on their own websites where you can see different kinds of jobs that need workers” (Alya SMP5).

Maryam, Selma and Alya state that the programs that they have joined provide them with professional networks. The interviews show that the programs play a role in increasing the size of the migrant women's social networks. According to Bourdieu (1986), social capital is the accumulation of the resources that belong to an individual or group (p. 51). In this sense, they can access programs' professional networks with labour market actors, as well as create social networks consisting of programs' staff and other program participants. According to Bourdieu (1986), social networks can increase economic capital of an individual. Therefore, the size of one's social network is substantial. Regarding Bourdieu's approach, the size of networks can determine the possibility of accessing resources. Increasing network size also increase the potential for access to more resources (Bourdieu, 1986). In this context, there are three different networks to be considered for the migrant women's social capital, namely: the migrant women's social networks consisting of (1) the programs' staff; (2) the other program participants; (3) the programs' professional networks with the labour market actors (PES, employers, recruiters). The interview findings develop the claim that these three networks created within the programs could contain different resources that can be mobilized in a job search. Lin thinks that resources embedded in the social networks can be considered the key element of social capital (Lin, 2002). In this sense, their possible embedded resources are analysed by Lin's approach of social capital in terms of information, influence, social credential, and reinforcement in the next sections.

### **7.3. Information**

Lin claims that (2002) social ties are rooted in strategic locations as well as positions during the time that the labour market situations are not ideal. He further states that these ties can inform an individual about market needs and demand as well as providing useful information related to opportunities, which are not available otherwise (p.20). The personal coach Elin explains:

“We facilitate the interviews and job possibilities. Eighty percent of people is getting a job through networks” (Elin P1).

One of the roles of the personal coaches and the project leader is to explore these social ties and to create different professional networks for program participants. They contact companies, meet with employers or use their personal contacts to find possible job opportunities for the program participants. These networks also contain information related to job vacancies or employment opportunities. According to Lin (1999), information provided through contacts to workers or employers can raise the number of job possibilities and supply information a worker is informed about. The author explains that these contacts might also provide a worker with an increasing number of job offers or a better match between a worker and a job. In this sense, the programs’ professional networks contain an information flow to keep program participants up-to-date about new job opportunities in the Swedish employment field. Sophia and Nergiz explain:

“They have their own system that they created online. They announce activities on that website. There were activities that I saw there. I participated in some of them. They call jobmassa (job fair). Apart from that, there was IKEA’s job application for summer. You directly attend the interview. It is the way, you just attend the interview. It was like preselection. I saw it there” (Sophia SMP4).

“They announced that a company is looking for thousands of employees to work at the hospitals. They will do interviews” (Nergiz SMP1).

In line with the experiences of Sophia Nergiz the programs’ professional networks involve resources in the form of information related to job opportunities/ vacancies, which the migrant women can access and mobilize in their job search.

#### **7.4. Influence and Social Credential**

Lin (2002) claims that social ties could increase influence on the agents such as recruiters of the organizations, who play important role in decision making. He thinks that some social ties have more valued resources and display more power on organizational agents' decision-making because of their strategic location and position involving authority or supervisory capacities (Lin, 2002, p.20). The personal coach, Sarah explains:

“We are cooperating with Arbetsförmedlingen (translated as Public Employment Service) and it gives us a better position. That gets us more employers. If you are from Arbetsförmedlingen. They [employers, companies] have full attention” (Sarah P2).

Within the programs, the personal coaches agree that their agreement with PES has an influential role in terms of creating professional networks with employers. The authority and credibility of PES in Sweden strengthen the coaches' position in contacting the employers. The programs' professional networks with PES can also ensure their institutional recognition and increase their credibility, which might affect employer decisions regarding recruiting an employee through the programs. On the other hand, the mentorship program, which does not have such ties with PES, creates professional networks with employers through social ties based on trust. The project leader, Asha shares her experiences:

One of the value of the programs is hooked into the personal relationship. One of the value is also building trust. I go to my own network who is trusting me. For example, I know this person A, she is good at x,y,z. A will be more prone to draw their attention because they trust me. I would not recommend someone who is not capable. There is a great possibility to create a network if there is a middle man based on trust” (Asha P4).

Considering what Asha said, trust is important to build professional networks with employers in terms of recruitment. An employer's tendency to recruit program participants might depend on the trust between employers and the project leader. In other words, employers trust the project leader since they believe that she will recommend a suitable program participant for their job vacancies. According to Lin et al. (2010), trust is associated with social capital access. In this sense, the authors argue that trust forms the basis of the "the relationship between access to social capital and the ability to mobilize that social capital" (Lin et al., 2010, p. 164). The authors further elaborate that access to social capital may emerge within trust and an open orientation to providing employment assistance. He considers trust and open orientation mediators between access and mobilization in terms of social capital (p.175). In this context, the personal coaches and the project leader think that applying for a job by using the programs' professional networks might give the applicants employee credibility in the eyes of employers. They also base this argument on the ties based on trust between the program participants and them. Elin and Maya explain:

"We don't only give their CVs to the employers. For example, this person is always on time. We have seen them. We believe in this person because we have been in workshops outside together. It gives me a clear picture who he or she is. We are with them in different environments and the company starts being interested. (Elin P1).

"You are building trust. We create the balance between employers and applicants and tell the employers that the person is trustworthy" (Maya P3).

According to Lin (2002), social ties can be considered by the organization or its agents an approval of the individual's social credentials (p.20). Nergiz and Julia explain it below:

“They belong to Arbetsförmedlingen (PES). They prepare reports about me, which is sent to the agency. The reports show if I came to the program on time, I am actively participating and improving my skills. The program gives them [companies] a guarantee that I can do my job well” (Nergiz SMP1).

“In general, it was better it was more reliable because here I had someone that could actually talk about me. That knew me and is well established in the Swedish market” (Julia MP1).

Regarding Nergiz’s explanation, the personal coaches play a role as a referee in the job application process of the migrant women. It is also important that the referees have a position in the Swedish labour market, which might have an influence on job applications as Julia indicated. In this context, job references are one of the resources rooted in the migrant women’s social network consisting of the programs’ staff. These resources are accessed through social ties based on trust. It can be mobilized to gain employee credibility for a job application in the Swedish employment field.

## **7.5. Reinforcement**

Lin (2002) argues that “social relations are expected to reinforce identity and recognition” (p. 20). Lin also states that assurance of individual’s worthiness and recognition provides emotional support. In this context, Elin explains further:

“There is a motivation here. They know that person starts in that work. They see it works” (Elin P1).

Elin thinks that program participants can motivate each other when one of them receive a job offer. During the program activities, the participants find a chance to socialize and talk to each other. Sophia, Julia and Riya explain how these social ties and networks in the programs play a role during their job search:

“It was actually the funniest part you talked to people. I never missed a session in the program. I went there and I felt that there are other women in this same situation as I am. Women that have been even more difficult time than me here. It was amazing to listen to their stories and amazing to know that this woman has gone through much more than you have so keep on working or this woman achieved this much you can also get there so it was great to have a new perspective” (Julia MP1).

“Job search process is not easy in another country. You feel down all the time. You get the feeling that the things you do will never be enough as you can't find a job. By joining this program, you realize that you are not the only one looking for a job. This problem does not occur because of me. It helps you to remember that you are from another country and have a background. Now I start over again in a new order by using another language” (Sophia SMP4).

“It affects my confidence like I shouldn't give up. They are friendly easy to talk. We share something together. We are getting network and help each other. If they someone have a job, they tell us. You learn something from them. It affects my motivation” (Riya MP3).

The interviews show that the migrant women's struggle to find a job involves several challenges which can cause a loss of motivation in their job search. In this sense, the programs directly or indirectly pave the way for the emergence of social environment where the migrant women can find motivational support. Their social relations and networks consisting of other program participants facilitate their motivations when they go through difficult times in their job search in Sweden. This also prevents them from giving up on their job search. Lin (2002) thinks that social relations are the reinforcements that are crucial to maintaining mental health

and the entitlement to resources (p.20). In this context, social relations and networks among the migrant women help them to become motivated and keep their enthusiasm while looking for a job. This leads them to increase their emotional well-being and keep their commitment to their goals to find employment in Sweden.

## **7.6 Professional Networks and Job Matching**

Based on the interviews in section 7.4, the program coaches and the project leaders recommend or provide potential job seekers with a job reference to employers for job vacancies. Via these networks, employers assess the availability of potential employees as the migrant women demonstrate their professional qualifications for a possible job opportunity.

According to Erel (2010), in terms of the cultural capital of migrants, the Bourdieusian view considers this a ‘treasure chest’ involving language, skills, customs and lifestyles, qualifications based on their work experiences and education to unpack in the host country. Migrants do not only try to fit the system of the host country, but they also participate in bargaining activities with institutions and people, such as universities and employers, about the value of these treasures (Erel, 2010, p.649). Although the findings of this study only partially support the claim of ‘bargaining’, it shows that the migrant women aim to unpack their “treasures” related to their institutionalized cultural capital (educational and professional qualifications) in the Swedish employment field that they gained in the home country. In this sense, among the interviewees, only Riya has started a new education in another sector to match the demand of the Swedish labour market. The rest of the migrant women try to capitalize their institutionalized cultural capital through the programs’ professional networks based on their professional and educational qualifications. In this sense, Alya and Selma had an internship, Julia received a job offer in their professional field through these networks.

Selma and Alya share their experiences:

“The program gave the great opportunity to get an internship in an area that I really like and helped me to remember how much I really

want to do that kind of stuff. I helped in a research. This job I did as internship could have become a real job” (Selma MP2).

“I told them I am educated in [public health]\* and want a job and they told me there was one in this company. I got a praktik (translated as internship)” (Alya SMP5).

“I was provided with a job from the program. This was the network that led to another network. I was able to find a semi-specialist job where I could actually use my education that I had” (Julia MP1).

Julia held high prestigious profession in her home country. She can speak fluent Swedish since she studied Swedish in her home country before her arrival in Sweden. She used the program’s professional networks to find a job. Through the networks, Julia received a job offer and capitalized her institutionalized cultural capital in the public sector in Sweden. The social capital which migrants mobilize from social networks lead them to find a job (Kindler, 2014). According to Bourdieu (1986), the benefit of social capital is to provide individuals with economic capital. In other words, social relations enabling access to resources should pave the way for material benefits or converting them into economic capital. In this sense, the programs’ professional networks which are mobilized by the migrant women can enable them to gain economic capital. However, the migrants’ treasures are often devalued in the process of bargaining due to the fact that her power is not enough over the rules of the game (Kelly & Lusi, 2006, p. 836). In this sense, Julia further explains:

“What does this foreign education mean? I have been looking for a job [in her profession]\*, because I have a foreign education I

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\* Information regarding the interviewee’s education, occupation or country of origin is withdrawn to ensure her anonymity.

couldn't accredit my education in Sweden and this I had expected"

(Julia).

Although Julia received a job offer in the public sector where she can capitalize on her institutionalized cultural capital, she had to overcome challenges. Due to her foreign educational qualifications were not recognized in Sweden, she could not find an employment opportunity in her profession. Another interviewee Sophia explains:

"I need to take an exam and a law course. If I was looking for a restaurant job than the programs would be more helpful. The problem is because that they don't recognize my license here"

(Sophia SMP4).

Sophia has a master's degree and aims to work in her profession in Sweden for almost a year. However, she cannot find a job due to her professional license is not recognized in Sweden since it requires educational credentials according to the Swedish education system for validation. Based on the migrant women's experiences, the programs' professional networks can pave the way for introducing the migrant women's "treasures" to employers or managers on the value of their institutionalized cultural capital in the Swedish employment field, as in Selma, Alya and Julia's cases. However, the interviews also show that these professional networks could remain insufficient to enable the migrant women to utilize their institutionalized cultural capital in their professions for employment, especially for those who are highly educated.

These networks can also pave the way for an internship, which provide insights on actual work practices and might lead to a permanent employment (Cannon & Arnold, 1998). Selma thought that the mentorship program created a big opportunity for her to get an internship in her professional field. However, she also points out the disadvantage of unpaid internships:

“Not just an internship but if you get paid internship that would have been absolutely awesome. They offered me to continue my internship there but I cannot keep on working without being paid. For a student, it is gaining an experience if your parents are helping you out and stuff but I do need my money” (Selma MP2).

Since the internship was unpaid Selma could not continue assisting in a research and had to decline the offer. Therefore, she thinks that internships need to be paid, since one needs an income to maintain her life in Sweden, especially when there are no any other economic resources. Riya also points out that:

In another program [support & matching] I got so many praktik (translated as internship). It was almost frustrating. This is just a drama. They need to create a job (Maryam SMP2).

Although Maryam experienced this frustration in another support & matching program. It is important to consider this experience for this study since her experience offers a perspective for approaching this issue critically. Maryam joined another support & matching program before and was provided with more than one internship, of which none led to a job. This created frustration for her and she thinks that the programs need to create employment opportunities instead.

Bourdieu’s second component, the volume of social capital which the individual can mobilize effectively is also related to the ‘quality of the resources’ (Portes, 1998). It is the quality of social resources that an individual is provided through her or his social networks that is most advantageous (Bourdieu, 1986). When viewed from this angle, some of the programs’ professional networks can carry limited resources for the migrant women to mobilize for achieving employment in the Swedish employment field. Bourdieu (1986) believed that networks have potential for an individual to move up in their position in society when the individual develops her or his interest for the purposes of financial gain.

However, when the networks only result in internships, during which organizations aim to teach the interns the skills necessary in a specific professional work area in the absence of the possibility to secure a job, it can create negative outcomes for the migrant women. It can be frustrating to not know if the internship will lead to a job in the end and result in a lack of income.

### **7.7. Embodied Cultural Capital in Learning Process**

PES suggests that in Sweden, job applications involve both a CV and cover letter (Arbetsförmedlingen, 2017d). The Service indicates that while cover letter should not be longer than one page, CVs can be longer depending on the education and experience a person possess. PES also suggests that both CV and cover letter should be written in Swedish. In this regard, both mentorship and support & matching programs provide language support for job applications as well. The interviewees Selma and Sophia explain this further:

“They also help me to write Swedish words. Words that you do not really know. You use google translation and whatever but the phrases do not really say it. It is not word by word translation. You should translate the idea, how it goes into the Swedish workforce. These kinds of things really help to figure” (Selma MP2).

“Once they made a job interview with me. They have frequently asked questions which can be asked in job interviews. They have 70-80 questions in their systems. The questions are Swedish. I answered them in Swedish myself and then we talked about the answers like how my answers were. It is sort of a preparation for a job interview. It is not because I cannot answer them but because I haven’t attended an interview in Swedish” (Sophia SMP4).

Considering the interviews above, both Julia and Selma received language support on CV writing and Sophia prepared for a job interview in Sweden.

This shows that job seekers need to demonstrate Swedish language proficiency in their job applications. In this sense, Swedish proficiency can be considered one of the rules in the Swedish employment field, where job seekers are expected to make their job applications in Swedish. The programs' language support roles play in supporting the migrant women to increase their linguistic capital in Swedish. Gray (2012) explains that in Bourdieusian view, "embodied capital can be increased by investing in self-improvements by learning over time" (p.21). In this sense, the migrant women learn how to convey their ideas in Swedish, not simply how to translate words. Thus, they increase their linguistic cultural capital in a new cultural context. Duchêne and Moyer (2013) explain that in Bourdieu's term, the capitalization of language is dependent upon a unified linguistic market in which all tasks are measured based on 'the legitimate or official language' of the dominant group (p.83). In this sense, one needs to be able to use 'the legitimate language' (the language of those who are dominant in the society) to send the "right" communicative codes for being recognized by the dominant group.

Wacquant (1989) "qualifies that individuals make choices, but do not choose the principles of these choices" (p. 45). Therefore, social structures influence individuals (Özbilgin & Tatli, 2005). In this sense Walther (2013) claims that fields are the structural parts of Bourdieu's theory. Job searches and applications depend on individuals' decisions, but as Bourdieu (1969) argues, the field has its own unique rules to access, such as language and way of communication in the Swedish context. Suma, Julia, Nergiz explain further:

"They told me what a CV should look like. They gave me an example how a CV should look like. If something is wrong you should erase it. I have learnt how to write a CV and a cover letter, how to do interviews, how to speak with an employer in Sweden. You should mention about what you have done your experience. You shouldn't look at your phone. You should seem to be interested." (Suma SMP3).

“We had the chance to talk about things that are related to job search such as how to write a CV, what is important taking into consideration cultural aspect, how to present yourself to employers in Sweden” (Julia MP1)

“We are doing mock interviews with personal coaches here. First, they ask where I come from. They also ask which school I finished and about my skills. Let’s say you will do a job interview with me. Then I need to look into your eyes [to show attention]. If I need to ask you something, I should ask. You are asking questions but I should also ask like what kind of employees are you interested?” (Nergiz SMP1).

Based on the interviews, the programs give advice the migrant women about how CV should look like, what are the thing to consider in a job application, how they should act in job interviews and present yourself. In this sense, the programs guide the migrant women according to what is “important and appropriate” in the Swedish employment field.

Delpit (2006) claims that literacy conveys a message solely through a text and the word. Conveying a message truly will ensure a clear communication between sender and receiver. Delpit thinks that the sender is mainly responsible for the success of the communication, which might depend on her or his knowledge, skills and culture. In this sense, CVs, cover letters and job interviews are sort of channels to send information to the receiver. Therefore, this could require job applicants to convey her/his message clearly to recruiters in job applications.

Bourdieu and Passeron (1977a) defines culture as a system based on symbols and meanings. Language is an indivisible part of this culture (Panopio & Rolda, 1999). Embodied cultural capital can be gained in the form of language skills and accents by internalizing actual practices and styles through migration (Ong, 1999).

Bourdieu (1991) defines symbolic power as an extension of linguistic and cultural capital which is “a power of constructing reality” (p.166). In this sense, even though communication is a mutual process between people, it is also a process where locals hold the upper hand, wherein locals are defined as carriers of ‘legitimate’ hegemonic culture and symbolic capital (Hebbani & Colic-Peisker, 2012). Suma, Julia and Nergiz’s experiences point out that the programs’ job search assistance transfer knowledge, practices, and professional cultural codes in the Swedish employment field to the migrant women to create “appropriate” job application. CV writing and presentation techniques, ways of communication in a job interview are advices given to the migrant women according to the ‘legitimate’ professional work culture in the Swedish employment field. The migrant women form and increase their embodied cultural capital based on these field specific rules. This leads the migrant women to “behave in accordance to the new cultural surrounding” (Wellhart, 2013, p. 106).

## **8. Discussion**

In this chapter, first, the programs' general roles are specified and categorized regarding the migrant women's job searches based on the interviews. In section 8.2, the programs' matching role are discussed considering its network-building efforts. Lastly, in section 8.3, the discussion focuses on the programs' educational role. The interviews showed that the programs' educational role transfers field specific rules where thereafter migrant women are expected to create their job search practices according to what is "appropriate" and "important" in the Swedish employment field. Regarding the issue of education, the discussion will explore whose professional culture can be exchanged for cultural capital in a job search in Sweden.

### **8.1. The Programs' Roles in the Migrant Women's Job Searches**

The study indicated that there are three main roles of both mentorship and support & matching programs in the migrant women's job searches, which are *supportive role, educational role, and matching role*. The supportive role is based on building social networks and increasing the migrant women's network sizes, spreading job related information, providing references for job applications and directly or indirectly creating a social environment among program participants. The educational role relies upon what is "appropriate" and necessary in a job search in Sweden. This paves the way for transferring field specific rules (knowledge, practices, strategies) in the Swedish employment field. Lastly, the matching role of the programs aims to find job matches in line with the professional goals of the migrant women in Sweden. In this regard, both mentorship and support & matching programs' main roles are demonstrated in Table 3.

Table 3

*Mentorship and Support and Matching Programs' Roles in the Migrant Women's Job Searches*

Supportive role	Educational role	Matching role
Increasing social networks.	Providing advices for CV writing, job interview, personal presentation.	Finding job matches considering the migrant women's career goal.
Spreading job-related information (job opportunities/events).		
Providing a job reference/employee recommendation.		
Creating a social environment.		

**8.2. The Outcomes of the Programs' Job Matching**

Based on the interviews, many interviewed migrant women stated that they consider professional networks a crucial part of the Swedish labour market. Previous research shows that success in the job market can depend upon connections, acquaintances and other networks that can be utilized and whose existence is well known (Hack-Polay, 2016). The previous research presented in section 5.1 indicates, networks play an important role in a job search. In parallel with this approach, this study claims that migrant women could utilize their institutionalized cultural capital in Swedish employment field by mobilizing the programs' professional networks. Regarding the matching role of the programs, the migrant women demonstrate their professional qualifications for a possible job opportunity, as employers recognize the availability of potential employees. In this way, they can receive either job or internship offers. Since "migrants' contacts with

employers is limited in Sweden” (OECD, 2014, p. 16), the programs’ professional networks can be important for migrant women to utilize their educational and professional qualifications in the Swedish employment field.

On the other hand, considering the interviews with Julia, Sophia and Riya, the study shows that the programs’ matching role cannot be sufficient for them to make use of their foreign educational qualifications, particularly in their professions. The main reason for this potential insufficiency could be based on structural challenges (validation and recognition of foreign educational qualifications) in Sweden. The previous OECD (2014) report shows that “there is a strong need for efficient and credible recognition of migrants’ qualifications” (p.9). The research findings point out that this need is on-going and cause negative outcomes in the migrant women’s job searches.

Bourdieu & Wacquant (1992) claims that agents are independent in respect to their choice of practices to a certain extent. In this sense, the migrant women start participating in the programs and continue by putting time and effort on the programs’ activities, instead of leaving the “game”. They create new job search practices, invest in their capitals and fight for the achievement of employment in their professional fields. Bourdieu (1989) consider practice or strategy an outcome of social structures within a certain field. In this sense, the migrant women as job seeker are agents who make free decisions on their job search, but they are also affected by the structure of the employment field in Sweden. Therefore, the structural challenges having an impact on the Swedish employment field can limit the migrant women’s labour market engagements and influence the value of their educational qualifications. These challenges could prevent migrant women to capitalize on their foreign qualifications related to their professions in the Swedish employment field.

If we go back to Bourdieu’s approach to social capital, we see that there are two components of social capital which are ‘network size’ and ‘the volume of the capital’. He explains this relationship where "the volume of social capital possessed by a given agent ... depends on the size of the network of connections that s/he can effectively mobilize" (Bourdieu 1986, p. 249). The latter refers to the

quality of networks, which actors can utilize to advance their social position (Siisiäinen, 2000). Although the programs' supportive role meets the first component of social capital in Bourdieu's approach, the second component, the volume of social capital is yet in question regarding their matching role. When internships provided through the programs' professional networks do not lead to a job but, rather, create a vicious cycle where migrant women often find themselves in an uncertain situation in the hope of a possible employment, at this point, the internships start losing one of their main functions, which is mediating employment opportunities (Montgomery, 1991). They, however, could leave migrant women in economic position as either unemployed or job seekers. On the other hand, even though the internships can be considered an opportunity to step into the Swedish labour market, as in Selma's case, the internships that are unpaid without resulting in a job offer can create unsustainable engagement in the Swedish labour market since it does not provide sufficient income. Unpaid internships could pave the way to create "precarious" positions or "precarious" work which is "insecure, unstable, and uncertain as well as providing limited economic and social benefits" (Kalleberg, 2014, p. 2). The resources of these kinds of networks might entail a risk in a job search. They can create a vicious cycle where migrant women could fall into by hoping to find a job through internships, since their resources could seem to be appealing and hard to refuse.

In brief, the programs' professional networks could enable migrant women to capitalize on their professional and educational qualifications in the Swedish employment field. However, they could remain insufficient to ensure migrant women to make use of their institutionalized cultural capital particularly in their professions in Sweden. One of the reasons could be related to structural challenges in the Swedish employment field, while the other reason might be based on the limited resources embedded in the programs' professional networks to mobilize employment. These two potential reasons could result in several issues such as unemployment, a precarious position, uncertain employment and unsustainable labour market engagement in migrant women's job searches.

### **8.3. Professional Culture and the Field Specific Rules**

“The educational field becomes a prime location for the restructuring of habitus to align with the dominant rules and principals” (Bruner-oppo, 2010, p. 8). Regarding the educational role of the programs, the advice is provided for CV writing, personal presentation and interview techniques by all the programs within this study. Through the interviews, the study explored two field specific rules that the programs transfer to the interviewed migrant women for their job search. These field specific rules are Swedish language proficiency in job applications and the elements of the Swedish professional work culture in job interviews. In this sense both mentorship and support & matching programs ensure that the interviewed migrant women’s job applications are prepared in Swedish. In addition to this, many migrant women state that they were also provided with advice based on interview techniques. Considering the interviews in section 7.1, the migrant women stated that the programs give them advice on how they should act, present themselves and communicate with employers. They are also familiarised with questions commonly asked in job interviews in Sweden. In this context, the question that needs to be asked is whose professional culture can be exchanged for cultural capital in a job search in Sweden?

Hage (1998) claims that even though foreign qualifications are officially recognized, employers demand local professional experiences. The ‘national capital’ involves elements of embodied cultural capital such as the ability to participate in locally-shared professional cultures (Hage, 1998). In this sense, the educational role of the programs enables the migrant women to increase their embodied cultural capital according to the rules in the Swedish employment field. They create their job applications or job search practices based on the field specific rules to be able to participate in the ‘locally-shared professional culture’. Bourdieu (1991;1996) positions language and culture in the centre of the field of power relations. “Lack of language proficiency, a strong foreign accent and non-verbal (mis)communication determined by specific rules based on culture are operated in the field of power relations” (Hebbani & Colic-Peisker, 2014, p. 544). According to Riggio & Throckmorton (1988), the main aspect of effective communication is

based on the applicants' verbal communication. The authors also emphasize that interviewers sympathize with applicants who demonstrate 'appropriate' and 'positive' nonverbal behaviours which are similar to their behaviours (p.532). In terms of job searching, one can claim that an individual constructing her/his job search practices in accordance with the rules in the Swedish employment field could gain symbolic capital, which serves for her/his recognition and "reputation for competence" (Bourdieu, 1984, p.291).

Job search and workplaces involve highly formal environments where power relations exist (Hebbani & Colic-Peisker, 2014). According to Bourdieu (1986), symbolic capital is "the form that the various species of capital assume when they are perceived and recognized as legitimate" (p.17). Due to the power relations in the Swedish employment field, one could have symbolic capital in the "game" for success by possessing job search practices in line with the "legitimate" professional work culture. On the other side, this also points out that lack of Swedish language proficiency and Swedish professional work practices could become a barrier in a job search in the Swedish employment field. Empirical evidence proves that migrants need advice and guidance in their job search since its absence leaves them attached to their home countries' employment culture in the host country, which only leads them to have low-skilled employment (Hack-Polay, 2016). In the Swedish context, this situation could decrease success of migrant women in their job search, especially for the ones who do not possess similar job search practices with those in the Swedish employment field.

## 9. Conclusion

PES offers online guidance for newly arrived job seekers in Sweden. They give job-seekers advices regarding what they need to consider during their job search (Arbetsförmedlingen, 2017c). The Swedish Confederation of Professional Associations (2017b) guide job seekers to a successful job application in Sweden in ways similar to PES. In this sense, the mentorship and support & matching programs provide program participants with job search assistance including job match support.

The study examined the roles of the mentorship and support & matching programs in the interviewed migrant women's job search regarding their social and cultural capital. The study showed that almost all the interviewed migrant women think that networks play an important role in finding a job in Sweden. The interviewed migrant women indicated that they faced difficulties in their job search since their job search practices are different in their home countries compared to those in Sweden. On the other hand, the migrant women from Nordic countries think that their job search practices in their home countries are similar compared to those in Sweden. They are, therefore, able to use the same job search practices (networking, CV writing, presentation and interview techniques) in the Swedish employment field. Marshall (1992) who is an experienced career guide for newly arrived migrants claims that finding a job is completely a new path and migrants are exposed to difficulties and challenges that are entirely novel to them in this process. In this sense, the interviews showed that the migrant women encounter obstacles regarding their job search due to their unfamiliarity with the employment field in Sweden. The unfamiliarity of migrants with the employment culture in host country is well proved (Hack-Polay, 2016). According to Hack-Polay (2016), the phrase "new beginning" is common in many migrant experiences. Hack-Polay further claims that this is the beginning of a new process including many uncertainties, while at the same time it can represent hope and opportunities.

Regarding the interview results, the study concludes that the mentorship and the support & matching programs play three main roles in the migrant women's

job searches in terms of their social and cultural capital. These are the supportive role, the educational role, and the matching role.

The programs' supportive role creates professional and social networks in the migrant women's job searches. Bourdieu (1986) unpacks social capital into two elements: the number of networks and their volume (see section 6.1). Within Bourdieu's approach of social capital, the programs could enable migrant women to increase their network sizes. Social capital is also defined as resources embedded in one's social network, resources that can be accessed or mobilized through ties in the networks (Lin, 2001). "Through such social relations or social networks, an actor may borrow or possess the resources belonging to other actors" (Lin, 2010, p.4). Within the programs, the personal coaches, the project leader, and other program participants become part of the migrant women's networks. The migrant women can utilize different resources in social networks between programs' staff and them, as well as through the programs' professional networks with the labour market actors. The programs' professional networks with the labour market actors carry labour market information as a resource. This resource could enable migrant women to be informed about job opportunities and events in the Swedish employment field. The migrant women's social network consisting of the programs' staff carry another resource in the form of job references. Job references or recommendations can be mobilized by the migrant women to gain an employee credibility for job applications. This could also be mobilized to meet with employers to demonstrate their institutionalized cultural capital for possible job opportunities. The study indicated that the programs directly or indirectly establish a social environment where other program participants can socialize with each other. Based on the interviews, social relations and social networks that the migrant women build with other program participants increase their motivation and confidence in their job search. Motivation and confidence as resources enable the migrant women to not give up on their job search and keep fighting for their employment goals. In this sense, the findings lend support to the claim that the programs' supportive role could lead migrant women to enhance their social capital for their job search in terms of network size. These three networks, which the

migrant women can access carry different resources that could be mobilized in job searches such as job search information, job references and motivation for a job search.

Within the programs' matching role, via professional networks between employers and the programs, while employers can discover potential employees for their job vacancies, the migrant women can find an environment where they can demonstrate their "treasure chest" based on their institutionalized cultural capital. According to the interview results, the programs' matching role paved the way for capitalizing Selma, Julia and Alya's institutionalized cultural capital that they gained in their home countries. Since "poor information limits employers' understanding of migrant skills and qualifications in Sweden" (OECD, 2014, p.12), this could be important for migrant women to inform prospective employers regarding their professional and educational qualifications. On the other hand, the study found that there are structural challenges (recognition and validation of foreign education) which might limit the programs' professional networks in enabling the migrant women to capitalize their educational qualifications in their own professional fields. In this context, Julia could not find a job in her occupation due to her foreign educational qualifications are not being recognized. Through these networks, she utilized her institutionalized cultural capital is to find a job in another occupation. Sophia remains unemployed since she needs to take a course and an exam to validate her professional license in Sweden.

Moreover, some of the professional networks carrying limited resources can also limit the migrant women to utilize their institutionalized cultural capital for employment in their professions, as in Selma and Riya's case. These kinds of networks might cause a precarious work situation, unsustainable engagement in the Swedish labour market and uncertainty in a job search. As a result of the interview findings, the volume of the programs' professional networks is disputable regarding Bourdieu's second component of social capital. This could influence migrant women's access to social capital in order to gain economic capital such as employment.

The study discovered that the programs' educational role related to the advice or strategies for CV writing, personal presentation, and interview techniques play a role in conveying the rules in the Swedish employment field. These rules are based on Swedish language proficiency in job applications and Swedish professional work practices in job interviews. The programs' educational role could enable migrant women to increase their embodied cultural capital in line with these field specific rules in the Swedish employment field. It could also lead migrant women to carry out their job search practices in accordance with the elements of "legitimate" professional work culture. Therefore, these new job search practices based on the field specific rules could ensure recognition for migrant women in the Swedish employment field. On the other hand, this points out that the success of migrant women in this process could reduce, who are not familiar with the "rules of the game" in this field.

Finally, this study cannot generalize the findings on all mentorship and support matching programs in Sweden due to its several research limitations such as relatively small sample size and sample selection. However, it can provide an understanding of the potential roles of the mentorship and support & matching programs, having similar goals and job search assistance with the ones within this study. These potential roles should be considered regarding the interviewed migrant women's social and cultural capital.

### **9.1. Future Research**

The study discovered the roles of one mentorship and three support & matching programs by considering the migrant women's job searches. However, the reader needs to be aware that Bourdieu's approach of capital and social field as well as Lin's approach of social capital are theoretically adapted in this research with certain limitations. For future research Bourdieu's theories could be expanded, considering his approaches on power relations and social class. The programs' networks could be also analysed by position generator techniques that Lin uses to measure the quality of the ties to which an individual has access (Lin, 2002, p.88).

Different theoretical frameworks could also be applied, with different viewpoints such as gender theory and network theory.

It is important to bear in mind that this study is a master's thesis and only twelve interviews were done in a limited time with limited resources. Even though the interviews explored valuable information in relation to the experiences of the migrant women and the programs' staff, the research limitations prevented the study to adequately examine the experiences of migrant women who might have negative opinions or criticism towards the programs. Therefore, a research involving a larger number of interviewees who have different experiences and views on the programs is needed, as well as interviewees with different educational and cultural backgrounds. For future research, different actors can also be included to comprehensively analyse the programs' roles such as companies, organizations and PES which are in cooperation with the programs.

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**Appendix A**  
**Profiles of the Interviewees**

Table 1

*Profile of the Interviewed Migrant Women*

Fictive name	Converting age into 5 years interval <sup>1</sup>	Continent/Region of origin	Reason for migration	Levels of education (premigration)	Number of language spoken	Professional area (premigration)	Professional area aimed to work in Sweden	Participation in another mentorship or support & matching program in Sweden
Julia MP1	35	Europe	Economic reasons	Master	5	Civil service	Civil service	Yes
Selma MP2	50	North America	Family reunification	Master	4	Natural science-research	Research and development	Yes
Riya MP3	35	Asia	Family reunification	Bachelor	3	Economy	Health sector	Yes
Nergiz SMP1	50	Europe	Family reunification	Bachelor	5	Public sector	Public sector	Yes
Maryam SMP2	60	Asia	Economic reasons	Bachelor	4	Public sector	Public sector	Yes
Suma SMP3	25	Scandinavia	Marriage	High school degree	4	Public health care sector	Public health sector	Yes
Sophia SMP4	25	Asia	Study	Master	5	Health sector	Health sector	Yes
Alya SMP5	25	Scandinavia	Marriage	High school degree	4	Private sector	Private sector	No

<sup>1</sup> The interviewees' age is converted in 5 years interval to assure anonymity

Table 2

*Profile of the interviewed program staff*

Fictive name	Job title	Job assignment
Elin P1	Personal coach	Planning the programs' activities. Assisting program participants with their job search. Contacting companies, organizations, employers to match program participants with job vacancies.
Sarah P2	Personal coach	Informing program participants about job opportunities/events. Creating an activity report about program participants.
Maya P3	Personal coach	Contacting PES for the activity report.
Asha P4	Project leader	Planning, scheduling, conducting the program activities. Assisting program participants with their job search. Matching program participants with job vacancies. Informing program participants about job opportunities/events. Contacting the municipality for the project follow-up.

**Appendix B**  
**Consent letter**

Dear Participant,

This letter is a consent letter regarding your participation in a research I am conducting for my master's thesis in Global Studies at Lund University under the supervision of Department of Sociology. I would like to provide you with more information about this research and what your involvement would require if you decide to take part.

This study will focus on job search assistance and job matching in Sweden. It aims to understand to the Mentorship and Support & Matching programs' role in the migrant women's job searches in Sweden. Participation in this study is completely voluntary. It will involve an interview of 30-40 minutes in length. You may choose to decline to answer any questions in the interviews. You can withdraw from this study at any time, if you do not want to continue. If you give a permission, the interview will be recorded to transcribe for analysis. The interviews will be only accessed by me. Your name and identifying information will not be involved in this study. The information that you reveal in the interviews might be quoted in the thesis considering your anonymity. The completed thesis will be published online on Lund University Publications Student Papers and available for public. If you agree to these terms, the interview will be conducted.

If you require any further information about the study after the interview, please contact me through the contact information below.

Sincerely,

Selin Altindis  
E-mail: gls15sal@student.lu.se.

## **Appendix C**

### **Interview Guide**

#### **Questions for Program Participants**

##### **Background**

How old are you?

Which country do you come from?

What is your level of education?

How long have you been in Sweden?

Why did you move to Sweden?

Do you have any work experience in your country of origin or in Sweden?

Are you looking for a job in Sweden? If yes, for how long?

##### **Professional goals**

Which professional area would you like to work?

How does one get a job in this professional area in Sweden?

Do you need to receive any information or improve skills/experiences to find a job in Sweden?

##### **Job search in home country**

Have you experienced job search in your home country?

How do you usually look for a job in your home country?

Do you think there are differences regarding job search practices in your home country? compared to those in Sweden? If yes, what are they?

##### **Job search during the program**

When did you start participating in this program?

Why did you start participating in this program?

Which activities are you provided during your program participation?

Do you think this program affect your motivation during your job search? If yes, how?

Are there things that you like or not related to this program? If yes, what are they?

Is there anything missing in the program?

Have you made friends here and socialized with them? If yes, do you exchange job related information with each other?

##### **Opinions/comments/criticism on the programs**

Do you think that this program will be helpful for you during your job search? How?

Do you have any comments or criticism on the programs?

What is the difference now compared to when you started the program in terms of job search?

##### **Ending**

Thank you for participating in the interview.

## **Questions for Program' Staff**

### **Job assignment**

What is your work task in the program?

### **Network/job match**

Do you create networks for program participants for their job search?

Do you inform them about job opportunities /events?

Do you think that there are any disadvantages or advantages of applying for a job through the network you provide?

Do you match program participants with job vacancies? if yes, how?

### **Ties/networks with employers or other labour market actors**

Do you have professional networks with employers or recruiters? If yes, how do you create those networks?

Why do employers recruit employees through this program? Do you think that PES has a role or influence during this process? if yes what is its role?

### **Ending**

Thank you for participating in the interview.