Exploring how mentoring facilitates migrant employment and well-being in Norway

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A Salutogenic Approach

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Abstract

Highly skilled migrants experience challenges in securing relevant work in Norway. Education and work experience are considered essential for employment, however, migrants often remain either unemployed or underemployed. Recently, mentoring programs have received attention for contributing to higher labor market participation, but the mechanisms by which this occur is little researched. Likewise, the effect it has on migrants' well-being is often overlooked. The key objective was to: Explore how a mentoring-to-work program contributes to migrants' labor market integration and well-being. As such, this study adopts the theoretical approach of Salutogenesis to identify 1) stressors experienced by mentees regarding labor market integration, 2) the resistance resources to cope with stressors in relation to labor market integration and well-being, and 3) the mechanisms within mentoring that contribute to employment.

This study followed a qualitative phenomenological approach. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with eight participants of a single mentoring-to-work program for migrants in Oslo, Norway. The mentees consisted of two refugees, two expat partners and one international student, all with higher education. In addition, two mentors and the leader of the program were interviewed.

The findings suggest language proficiency, devalued education and work experience, discrimination, culture differences, and network to be the main stressors for integrating into the labor market. Educational background and personal strength, including social support and engaging in social activities were some of the resources the migrants used to cope with the stressors during their labor market integration. The mentors were specifically important in mobilizing migrants' internal and external resources. They provided writing seminars on CVs, application letters and LinkedIn, but also knowledge on how to approach the Norwegian labor market and how to prepare for interviews. The findings cannot conclude whether the mentoring program increases migrants' employment, however, it has positive implications on their employment goals.

Keywords: Health promotion, labor market integration, mentoring-to-work, migrants, salutogenesis, stressors, resistance resources, well-being.

Acronyms & Abbreviations

GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
GRRs	General Resistance Resources
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IMDi	Directorate of Integration and Diversity
NOKUT	Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education
NAV	Norwegian Labor and Welfare Administration
SIKT	The Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research
SOC	Sense of Coherence
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SRRs	Specific Resistance Resources
TNA	Thematic Network Analysis
UDI	Norwegian Directorate of Immigration
UAM	Unaccompanied minor
Work-SOC	Work-related SOC
WHO	World Health Organization

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 Background and Context

Access to work is a critical component of an efficient labor market. However, this may be limited based on migration status, difficulties in recognizing foreign qualifications and skills, language barriers and intercultural differences. Therefore, skilled migrants may be underemployed or not employed at all, which affects migrants' well-being and ability to integrate into the labor market of the host-country. In 2020, the estimate of international migrants worldwide was 281 million, which equates to 3.6 percent of the world's population (McAuliffe & Triandafyllidou, 2021). The United Nations' International Organization for Migration (IOM) reports an increasing number of international migrants, particularly in Europe and Asia. There is a continuous rise in the number of migrants of working age, but a decline in their labor force participation (ILO, 2021).

Labor market participation is a key outcome indicator of Norwegian integration policy. In spite of policies and programs to promote labor market participation, migrants persistently have lower employment rates[1] than the general population in Norway (NOU 2020: 16). However, statistics show a difference between the employment rate and the length of the period of residence and the reason for migration. For refugees, it often takes longer (5-10 years) to acquire relevant competence and gainful employment as they arrive in Norway to receive protection. However, after five to ten years of residence, most migrants experience a decline in employment rates and increasing social insurance dependency rates compared to natives with shared characteristics (Bratsberg et al., 2017). This is in contrast to recent European evidence, suggesting that differences in employment rates between migrants and natives are reduced with years since migration (Dustmann et al., 2017; Tanay et al., 2016). In terms of gender differences, women have on average a lower proportion in employment compared to men, whereas migrants who arrive in Norway to study show no significant gender differences. A large proportion of migrants are employed in part-time positions where refugees are overrepresented in occupations relating sales and service, cleaning, and the health sector, among other occupations (Olsen & Asvik, 2021).

While recent studies have investigated the experiences of low-skilled migrant workers, it is also important to examine the integration of highly skilled migrants as they

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[1] SSB employment rates for 2022: total population 77,4%; excluding immigrants 79,8%; all immigrants 68,9%; immigrants from Asia 64,2%; immigrants from Africa 61,2%; immigrants from Latin-America and Caribbean 72,0% (SSB, 2023).

contribute with new knowledge and help Norway remain competitive in the global economy. Lack of labor participation can have extensive consequences, both for the individual and the society. On the individual level, it is difficult to get a job without formal competence which relates to everyone regardless of ethnic background. However, migrants are at disadvantage even when arriving with high education and skilled experience from their home country in which they are excluded from important skills development in the Norwegian workforce (NOU 2018: 2). Long periods of unemployment may affect migrants' motivation and self-esteem. Hence, it can challenge the integration process for migrants themselves and the sustainability of the welfare state. Therefore, for society, low employment among migrants means loss of labor, lower revenues, and additional social security costs (IMDi, 2022). Also, with demographic challenges such as an aging population and a weak ratios between economically active to inactive residents, a successful integration of migrants can provide a solution to the challenges and a welcome stimulation to economic growth (Kancs & Lecca, 2018).

Migrants usually move to a country that is unfamiliar, with limited knowledge about the labor market of the host country. They may lack social networks that could provide them with the specific knowledge, which in turn can act as a barrier to integration or slow down the process. Thus, the first few years after arrival are particularly important for migrants' long-term prospects. Migrants who fail to enter the labor market early, within an occupation that is consistent with their skills and in a sector thar provide upward job mobility, may have a negative lasting effect throughout a migrant's career. A mentoring-to-work program put migrants on a path towards upward occupational mobility, which facilitate inclusion and integration through locals with knowledge and experience within the specific environment.

1.2 Structure of thesis

This paper is organized into eight chapters. This introductory chapter is followed by a critical literature review relating mentoring and integration, and gaps in the literature are identified. Chapter 3 presents the theoretical framework, which comprise of Aaron Antonovsky's salutogenic approach to health. Chapter 4 outlines the primary and secondary objectives of the study. Chapter 5 presents the research methodology, including research design, research site, recruitment of participants, method of data collection, data analysis and trustworthiness. Chapter 6 provides the findings, which are then discussed in Chapter 7.

Chapter 8 concludes with a summary of key findings and presents recommendations for future research and practices.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

2.1 Introduction and Search Strategy

The following sections provide a critical overview of literature related to 1) *mentoring* and 2) *facilitators and obstacles to labor market integration*. Literature was found using a combination of two different databases: Google Scholar and Oria. Keywords used were: "mentorship programs", "mentoring", "coaching", "skilled migrants", "migrants", "work", "integration", "labor market", "facilitators" and "obstacles". Peer reviewed literature post-2012 was prioritized unless highly relevant. A snowball method using reference lists was also employed to discover further relevant literature.

2.2 Mentoring

Mentoring programs exist in various forms and contexts, both within the professional, voluntary, and public sector. The literature identifies and distinguishes mainly between four different types of mentoring: youth mentoring (e.g., McClain et al., 2021; Preston et al., 2019; Raposa et al., 2019), academic mentoring (e.g., Livingstone & Naismith, 2018; Lunsford et al., 2017), mentoring-to-work (De Cuyper et al., 2022), and workplace mentoring (e.g., Bear, 2018; Waaland, 2023). Mentoring is widely used in integration efforts, but there is no universal definition of mentoring (De Cuyper et al., 2019). Recently, studies have started to focus more on mentoring-to-work and De Cuyper et al. (2019, p. 117) defines it as follows:

> A person with more localized experience (mentor) provides guidance to a person with less experience (mentee), the objective of which is to support the mentee in making sustainable progress in his or her journey into the labour market. Both mentor and mentee voluntarily commit to this and establish contact on a regular basis. The relationship is initiated, facilitated and supported by a third actor (organisation). While asymmetrical, the mentoring relationship is of reciprocal nature.

Generally, these programs focus on migrants, but are not restricted to this groups. However, the impact of migration on employability implies a loss of economic, social, cultural, human and information capital as these types of capital are harder to transfer across geographical and

cultural borders (Bagnoli & Estache, 2021; Chiswick & Miller, 2009; De Cuyper et al., 2022).

Neuwirth and Wahl (2017) evaluate a program in Austria which is jointly run by partners from both private and public sectors. A key finding is the importance of appropriate matching of mentors and mentees. Studies on mentoring-to-work for migrants have also emerged in Finland focusing on cultural competences (Sirppa et al., 2023), Sweden focusing on gender differences in labor market outcomes (Månsson & Delander, 2017), Germany focusing on migrant ethnicity (Weiss & Tulin, 2021) and Belgium focusing on labor market integration of migrant youth (Bagnoli et al., 2022). Individual, professional, organizational, and societal are all cultural competences which seems to be seldom acknowledged and covered all together. Mostly, the current programs have focused on one or two domains, and professional and organizational culture are often left untouched (Sirppa et al., 2023).

Mentoring in Norway is a relatively new field, particularly mentoring-to-work for refugees. A few studies (Bjønset & Kindt, 2019; Spjelkavik et al., 2020), looking at the effects of mentoring, indicate that mentoring can contribute to the integration of groups with traditionally weaker connections to the labor market. A systematic review from 2018, commissioned by the Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi), on the effects of employment-oriented mentoring programs for vulnerable groups on employment-related outcomes, found zero studies that met their inclusion criteria (Munthe-Kaas et al., 2018). Nevertheless, some existing studies give insight into formal mentoring programs in Norway. Radlick et al. (2020) found a strong desire for strengthened social capital, particularly access to resources through network ties, when assessing youth mentoring.

2.3 Facilitators and obstacles to labor market integration

The concept of integration has for a long time been widely debated and controversial, reflecting the use by different actors in different contexts (Ager & Strang, 2008). Karlsdóttir et al. (2017, p. 16) state that "research on integration is usually at national level while integration in itself takes place at local level, where people work, live, socialize and seek education". Mostly research on refugee integration focuses on outcome, particularly labor market integration (Borsch et al., 2019; Djuve et al., 2017) with evidence of inequalities (Brell et al., 2020; Karlsdóttir et al., 2017). A few studies (Gürer, 2019; Phillimore, 2011, 2020) examine the process of integration and have begun to view refugee perspectives (Lynnebakke & Pastoor, 2020).

Besides introduction programs (IMDi, 2019; Ugreninov & Turner, 2023), networks in different forms seem to be the biggest contributor to labor market integration. A Swedish study (Carlsson et al., 2018) indicates that jobs obtained through close ties are likely to channel migrants into occupations where the density of migrants is already high, which in turn result in lower quality. However, more studies are focusing on bridging ties that connect networks which give migrants access to material, informational and motivational resources that they usually have limited access to. A non-government mentoring program from Germany examines network intervention for refugees through the matching of local volunteers to form friendships (Jaschke et al., 2022). They found positive effects on social connectedness, housing satisfaction and language proficiency which in the long run could indirectly have an impact on migrants' employment. Similarly, Brady (2015) tested the effect of network social capital on Irish employment outcomes and found that individuals' weak ties differ across age and location, but is significant for their employment outcomes, whereas their close ties as friends and family were less important. Hence, weak ties offer more personalized support on more equal footing and may be more attuned to individual needs. A similar, but different approach was done in Germany (Battisti et al., 2019) to evaluate the impact of a job search assistance on the employment of recently arrived refugees by identifying suitable vacancies where they sent the refugees' CVs to employers. The study did not find any significant effects on employment, but their findings suggest that personalized job search assistance may improve labor market integration, particularly for lower educated refugees due to a perceived higher hiring cost.

Obstacles to labor market integration are widely highlighted in the literature as lack of recognition of qualification and skills, lack of language skills, lack of social capital and networks, and discrimination (Cheung & Phillimore, 2014; De Cuyper, 2022; Mesfin & Mamuye, 2020). Studies have found cultural familiarity, race, religion, gender, and age differences to be decisive factors for employment as well. For example, a Canadian study (Madut, 2015) found employers to prefer Canadian-born candidates rather than migrants, even though they had equal status (education). A few studies have addressed other factors, showing that the connection between initial settlement and migrant labor integration may affect their socio-economic situation (Wimark et al., 2019). Integration is not only a complex process for migrants themselves. Receiving countries needs to follow their government's policies and measures that determine economic sustainability, particularly in the Nordic countries where they provide generous welfare payments (Kancs & Lecca, 2018; Noja et al., 2018).

2.4 Gap

Scholars and policymakers agree upon the beneficial resource of mentoring for career advancement, but studies are yet to uncover what is happening and how it is understood by the migrants (mentees) themselves. Little research is done, especially in Norway, and there exists a gap between mentoring and practical application among highly skilled migrants. Many mentoring programs are considered employment oriented as they focus on the individuals' labor force participation, and not their personal lives, which may be affected by the outcomes. Current programs have partly failed to comprehensively address the various difficulties that migrants face. More knowledge is needed about how highly skilled migrants' (lack of) participation in the labor market is related to physical and mental health. This research study will explore how migrants navigate the context around their labor market integration and well-being.

Chapter 3. Theoretical Approach

3.1 Salutogenesis

The robust health promotion theory of salutogenesis was applied for this research study to explore how relationships created by mentoring can contribute to migrants' well-being. The theory of salutogenesis was first introduced by Aaron Antonovsky in 1979 (Mittelmark & Bauer, 2017) after considering the circumstances that make people more resourceful than others when facing difficult situations (Becker et al., 2010). Salutogenesis is widely used in migration studies (Daniel & Ottemöller, 2022) and is an approach to human health focusing on factors that support the maintenance of one's physical and mental health, and well-being. A central question in the salutogenic perspective of this study involves the factors that keeps migrants healthy and how they cope with a critical phase of life like unemployment in a healthy matter. Antonovsky (1979) views health as a continuum between dis-ease and ease/health, rather than as a dichotomous state (either healthy or ill), meaning that people are always in a dynamic movement on the health spectrum. The theory considers the complexity of an individual by looking at the environments and personal characteristics which improve well-being. Antonovsky's fundamental orientation to health has later been seen as a good theory base for health promotion and had a great impact on the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion (Lindström & Eriksson, 2006; Mittelmark & Bauer, 2022).

The main construct of the salutogenic model, Sense of Coherence (SOC), perceives the world as comprehensible, manageable and meaningful (Eriksson, 2022). Having a high SOC can be used to discuss how one can move towards the health end of the continuum despite complex stressors in their life (Braun-Lewensohn & Mayer, 2020). Therefore, SOC will influence whether migrants are able to move towards greater well-being and job satisfaction in the process of labor market integration, as opposed to accepting work below their qualifications. SOC has three dimensions: 1) *comprehensibility* refers to the degree of which social life and environments make sense and are understandable for people, 2) *manageability* is the extent to which people can identify internal and external resources at their disposal to cope with stressors, and 3) *meaningfulness* represents the source of motivation to engage with challenges (Eriksson, 2022). The SOC develops from infancy, with attention to culture, social capital, gender, ethnicity and age, among other factors (Benz et al., 2014). Along with SOC, *Generalized Resistance Resources* (GRRs) and *Specific Resistance Resources* (SRRs) are key concepts to the salutogenic model. GRRs are resources of a person, group, or community which actively facilitate individuals to cope effectively with different stressors (Idan et al., 2022). These can be of psychosocial, biological, and material factors. GRRs are both internal and external such as self-esteem, money, and knowledge. SRRs are situation-specific and instrumental, provided to cope with particular stressors and are considered of more relevance to health promotion practices compared to GRRs (Mittelmark et al., 2022). A mentoring-to-work program may count as an SRR.

"Health in the River of Life" (see Figure 1) created by Lindström and Eriksson (2011) is often used as a metaphor of health development. The illustration demonstrates the characteristics of medicine (care and treatment) and public health (prevention and promotion) (Eriksson & Lindström, 2008), which shows that life is full of challenges and resources. The curative perspective on health presents the use of expensive techniques and professionals to 'save people from drowning', whereas the upstream thinking of protective (public-directed) and preventive (individual-based) offer people support at an earlier stage in the health process. The health education and promotion perspective are based on interaction, social and personal resources, and physical capacities, enabling people to make decisions, to identify and use available resources to protect and improve their choices for a healthy life. Research on how migrants deal with stressors like unemployment can provide helpful information for work and health promotion, maintaining mental health, and improving the chances of labor market integration. A mentoring-to-work program could be seen as teaching migrants how to swim in the river of the Norwegian labor market.
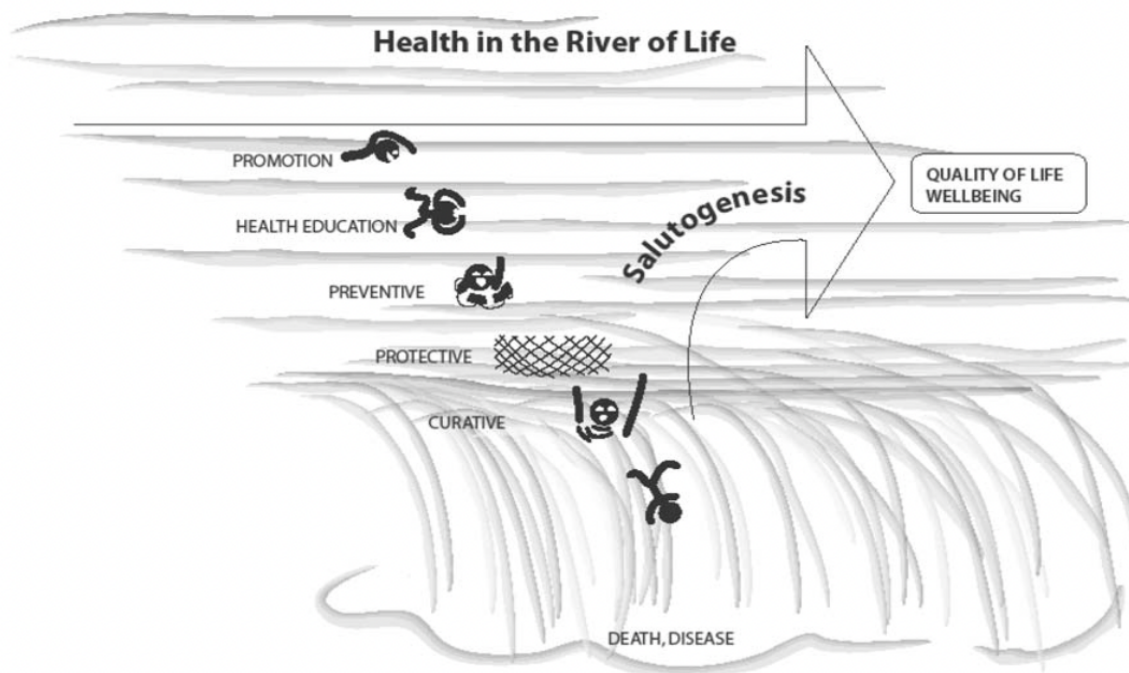
Figure 1: "Health in the River of Life". Developed by B. Lindström & M. Eriksson, 2011, p. 89.

Migrants experience many different stressors when integrating to a new social and professional life. SRRs are optimized by societal action where mentoring could be seen as a contributing role in health promotion. The salutogenic model of Antonovsky will provide this study with a more comprehensive understanding of migrants' resources and capacities, coping, and responses to labor market integration relating a mentoring-to-work program. Additionally, the cultural context will be taken into consideration to understand the cognitive, behavioral, and emotional processes.

Chapter 4. Problem Statement & Research Objectives

4.1 Problem statement

To date, there has been limited comprehensive consideration of the health effects of mentoring-to-work on employment and well-being for highly skilled migrants. Some mentoring programs have shown to increase labor market participation among migrants (Weiss & Tulin, 2019), yet the mechanism for how this occurs is little researched. Likewise, the mentees' response to mentoring is barely acknowledged. In addition to contribute

knowledge towards a bigger project[2] conducted in three countries, this study also has the potential to contribute to other scholarly developments as mentoring programs are relatively new in Norway and have been little used by government programs promoting labor market participation among migrants.

4.2 Research Objectives

The primary objective of this study is:

1) To explore how a mentoring-to-work program contributes to migrants' labor market integration and well-being.

The secondary objectives are to identify:

1) Stressors experienced by mentees regarding labor market integration.
2) The resistance resources to cope with stressors in relation to labor market integration and well-being.
3) Mechanisms within mentoring that contribute to employment.

4.3 Definitions

Whilst there does not exist an international, universal accepted definition of a *migrant*, the term reflects a common understanding of "a person who moves away from his or her place of usual residence, whether within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, and for a variety of reasons" (IOM, 2023). Migrant is a wide term and includes several well-defined legal categories of people. Hence, migrant is used as an umbrella term in this study, covering different forms of movements such as refugee, asylum seeker, international student, unaccompanied minor (UAM) and expat partner. Note that this study consists of *highly skilled* migrants who possess university education, extensive experiences, or a combination of the two.

The concept of *well-being* is notoriously difficult to define precisely. The World Health Organization (WHO) (1986) defines *health* as "a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity". Health and well-being are explicitly linked and refers to a positive state, framing health as resources for everyday life and not the object of living. Dodge et al. (2012) focus on three key areas of well-being: 1) the idea of a set point for well-being, 2) the inevitability of equilibrium, and 3)

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[2] Comparative study: "The strength of weak ties: how mentoring facilitates migrant employment in Norway, the Netherlands and Belgium (WEAK TIES)".

the fluctuating state between challenges and resources. For this study, I draw on their definition of well-being as: "the balance point between an individual's resource pool and the challenges faced" (Dodge et al., 2012, p. 230).

Chapter 5. Methodology

This chapter outline the methodology followed within this research study. The epistemological standpoint and the resultant research design that framed the study are explained, followed by research site, recruitment of participants, method of data collection, and data management. Finally, the complex issues of data trustworthiness, ethical considerations and limitations of methodology are discussed.

5.1 Qualitative Research Design

A research methodology rests on foundations of ontological and epistemological assumptions which guides the approach to acquire and interpret knowledge, and understand reality (Neuman, 2014). The interpretivist paradigm is based on the premise that reality is subjective, multiple, and socially constructed (Pervin & Mokhtar, 2022). In other words, the ontology of interpretivism is relativist and the epistemology is subjective. In this reason, the researcher admits the value-laden nature of the study – the axiological views that the researcher and what is being studied cannot be separated (Okesina, 2020).

Congruently to the nature of the interpretivist standpoints, this research was best suited to a qualitative phenomenological approach. The overall aim of phenomenology is to derive an understanding of essential meanings as constructed through interpretation of people's lived experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This methodology was used to look for processes, mechanisms, obstacles, and characteristics of mentoring programs by identifying shared aspects that have yet to be addressed by existing literature. This approach requires both textual and structural descriptions of participants' experiences. An important aspect of analysis in phenomenological studies is to stay close to the meanings as expressed by participants because the aim is to discover how the participants make sense of and interpret their lives around specific questions. Without the commitment to stay close to participants' expressed meanings, the researcher risk imposing their own bias over the data. As such, the conceptual framework, epistemological approach, and research design formed an appropriate foundation for this research study.

5.2 Research Site

This research is one part of a pilot project conducted in three organizations in two cities in Norway, which in turn, is of a larger comparative study of how mentoring facilitates migrant employment in Norway, the Netherlands and Belgium. This study was mainly conducted in Oslo, Norway. However, participants were located across the country. All participants within this research study are connected to one mentorship program. The administration consists of mostly immigrants, except from one. The program identifies their mentees as highly skilled migrants or a member of minority group in Norway and are between 18 and 55 years of age. The mentors of the program are from the same or similar field of expertise as the mentees. Note that the participants in this study are not recruited as mentoring pairs.

5.3 Participants and recruitment

5.3.1 PIISTON

PIISTON[3] is an advisory group that establish national learning and action network for refugees. The mission is to improve a mutual knowledge transfer between researchers and users across disciplines by increasing collaboration and strengthening service provision (NFR, n.d). PIISTON and network partners at UiB have contacts with organizations running mentoring programs, through which the organization in Oslo became the research site for this study. The issue of "gaining entrée" (Luker, 2008, p. 146) to the purposive sample and the research setting was solved through the anticipated liaison collaboration with the mentorship organization. The program director acted as a recruitment partner to reach participants via email or WhatsApp.

5.3.2 Participants

Purposive sampling was used to select the participants at three distinct levels shown in Table 1. The number of participants to be interviewed were based on the estimation of the sample size needed to achieve data saturation[4]. One interview was held in Norwegian, while the remaining seven interviews were in English.

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[3] PIISTON (Promoting inclusion, access to information, and successful transition), an NFR-funded network led by Fungi Ottemöller from 2018 to 2022. Project number 288042

[4] Data saturation is reached once adding new participants to the sample stops yielding new or novel insights.

Characteristics	Organization *Participant group 1*	Mentors *Participant group 2*	Mentees *Participant group 3*
Area(s) of expertise	• Program leader	• Journalism • Human Resources	• Literature and Language • Social science • Finance • Psychology • (Technology) • Global development/relations
Gender		1 male 1 female	1 male 4 females
Age		39 – 44	26 – 37
Region of origin		• Scandinavia • East Africa	• Central America • Latin America • Central Africa • Southeast Europe • East Europe
Reasons for coming to Norway			• Family reunification • International student • Refugee

Table 1: Characteristics of participants.

     Participant Group 1: The organization acted as a key informant with specific knowledge about certain aspects of the program and the population of interest. The program leader was interviewed to establish how the mentoring program's vision and methodologies are implemented and how this can lead to employment among migrants.

     Participant Group 2: The objective of this group was to explore how mentors provided guidance and support to their mentee in making sustainable progress in his or hers journey into the labor market. Initially, the mentors were expected to have localized experience and be situated in the same city as their mentee, but the mentors proved to also have experiences with mentoring across cities.

     Participant Group 3: The aim of this group was to explore mentees' experiences, their expectations, and the outcomes of participating in the mentoring program. Primarily, the mentees were supposed to have a refugee or asylum-seeking background because these groups tend to have more challenges entering the labor market (SSB, 2018). However, the organization does not cover the participants' status in terms of which migrant group they belong to. Once the interviews were set, the participants chose whether to share that type of information or not. Finally, two participants had a refugee background, two participants came to Norway as expat partners and one participant was an international student.

5.4 Method

The qualitative data was derived through in-depth interviews with participants which were then transcribed to allow for analysis. In-depth interviews refers to "face-to-face encounter between the researcher and informants toward understanding informants' perspectives on their experiences or situations as expressed in their own words" (Taylor et al., 2015, p. 102). Following an individual semi-structured questioning procedure, using open-ended questions made it possible to draw out the most texture and depth in the interviews. Semi-structured interviews are appropriate within a 30 ECTS phenomenological study due to time limitations and practicalities. The research was conducted within three separate groups namely the organization, the mentor, and the mentee (see 5.3.2). Each group was formed by different semi-structured interview guides[5] (see Appendix 2). These were developed as part of the bigger study. The interview guides simultaneously allowed for internal flexibility and a dynamic question process by exploring informants' interpretation of the phenomena (Punch, 2014).

Interviews were conducted both physically and remotely, depending on the participants' wishes and location. In those cases where we met physically, the participant chose the place of the meeting. An Olympus VN-541 digital voice recorder was used during the physical interviews to mitigate against flat batteries, full memory cards, and human errors. Otherwise, the meetings were held via the virtual meeting room Zoom due to its secure recording functionality, robust interface, user authentication and proven to be a user-friendly interview medium (Archibald et al., 2019; Ohnigian et al., 2021).

5.5 Data Analysis and Management

Thorne (2000) describe data analysis as the most complex phase of qualitative research. However, if data analysis is conducted in a systematic manner, it can be transparently communicated to others (Malterud, 2001). This qualitative research used Thematic Network Analysis (TNA), a systematic language centered analysis technique to make sense of the various forms of data. Braun and Clarke (2006) describe thematic analysis as "a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (p. 79). TNA is a relevant and robust tool for analyzing qualitative data in a rigorous manner, starting by extracting the: 1) lowest-order premises evident in the text, 2) categories of codes grouped

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[5] I was specifically involved in developing the probing questions together with my supervisor. The interview guides were later sent to the other pilot projects running in the Netherlands and Belgium.

together to summarize more abstract principles, and 3) super-ordinate themes encapsulating the principal metaphors in the text as a whole (Attride-Stirling, 2001). Code ideas emerged during the transcription and reading of transcripts process, however, the coding framework was developed once all the interviews were transcribed, allowing the narratives to emerge from the raw data. After the initial codes, I re-read them several times and revisited the raw data to reduce and group similar codes into basic themes. Themes were organized into coherent groups, based on concepts of the study, and then further into more shared issues of organizing themes which captured the core of the text and produced the coding framework as a tool to answer the research objectives. The analysis thus started off inductively and progressed deductively by considering theory and objectives.

The transcribed data was uploaded into the data management tool NVivo 12 to support the organic process of inductive coding. NVivo facilitates collaborative working by enabling the secure sharing of data remotely. Moreover, it was helpful in managing the large data sets by assisting in coding, organizing themes, and weighting multiple data elements (Zamawe, 2015). Using NVivo to code the data made it easier to identify deviant cases, detect coding errors, and estimate reliability among coders.

5.6 Trustworthiness of Research

Trustworthiness is one way for researchers to persuade themselves and the audience that their findings are worthy of attention. Lincoln and Guba (1985) have introduced four concepts of quality: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Each of the apparent concept has remained in focus throughout the study.

Credibility is achieved when data findings represent plausible information drawn from the participants' data and is correct interpretation of their original views (Yilmaz, 2013). Essential meanings were clarified both during the interview and post-interview through the sharing of data. All participants were given the choice to read through the transcript of their interview in case they wanted to add, change, or erase content. Three participants requested to read through the respective transcript, but none of them had objections to the content.

Transferability in qualitative research can be problematic given the subjective nature of lived experience, but the research can still achieve resonance if the data provide readers with evidence that the study's findings could be applicable to other contexts and populations (Tracy, 2010). In this research, a complete and thick description of process of inquiry was given, which provided adequate details on the site, participants and methods used to collect

data. In addition, as there were other organizations in the pilot, data from this research are adding to a bigger study. While the findings of the research are specific to a small number of a particular context and individuals, major themes can be extrapolated across similar socio-ecological systems.

Dependability requires the process of inquiry to be thoroughly explained and consistent over time (Yilmaz, 2013). Throughout this study, the method of data collection, analysis and interpretation has been explained. Moreover, by providing adequate contextual information about each piece, the study can theoretically be replicated by other researchers and generate consistent results. Three different interview guides were well established in accordance with each participant group and all the interviews were recorded. The same interview guides have also been used with participants in other organizations within this pilot, making it transferable to the bigger comparative study with the Netherlands and Belgium. Additionally, the analysis stuck to Attride-Stirling's methodology to TNA.

Confirmability require the data findings to be objective and logical, and not the result of the researcher's biases (Shenton, 2004). Identifying issues of positionality was important due to the diversity of participants in terms of ethical and educational backgrounds. Pre-conceptions and biases were mitigated by being clear to myself and the participants about the motivation and qualifications for exploration of the field. Using a reflexive approach allowed for the understanding that the positionality is never fixed and is always context-dependent (Bryman et al., 2008). For example, the interview guide was discussed with my supervisor prior to the interviews but also re-drafted after the first interview to improve the probing questions. The field of research was new to me, meaning that I remained neutral and eager to understand their perspectives. Further, confirmability is demonstrated by providing an audit trail to illustrate that the findings are based on the participants' narratives and involve a description on how the data is collected and analyzed in a transparent manner. This includes the coding process where codes were clustered together to form basic and organizing themes (see Appendix 3). The purpose of this is to clarify and show that the analysis follows a logical path.

5.7 Ethical Considerations

All qualitative research must adhere to ethical guidelines and discuss ethical considerations to ensure the security of the research participants (Green et al., 2019). This required an evaluation and implementation of protective steps against negative consequences

for the participants involved. All activities conform to strict ethical standards related to consent, confidentiality, and user privacy.

Informed consent represents a contractual agreement with the adequate information regarding the research in which enable the participant to consent to or decline participation in the research voluntarily (Walker, 2007). Participants were given a consent form (see Appendix 1) prior to the interview, and verbal or written consent was obtained.

Confidentiality refers to the obligations of the researcher to use and handle the information that has been disclosed to them in a correct manner (Punch, 2014). All data from this research was managed in accordance with the Norwegian Personal Data Act, including General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), and UiB regulations. All personal data was stored in the UiB SAFE[6] server. All sensitive information was treated with caution; participants' names were anonymized and coded, transcripts were then stored securely.

Due to ethical consideration, the mentors and the mentees were *not* recruited as mentoring pairs. *Participant engagement* is an important process for ethical conduct in research with migrants and was an integral part of this research design and implementation. All participants were given the choice to read through the transcript of their interview in order to add, change or erase content. Involving the user group at the project design stage ensured that the research focus was relevant for the participants.

Approval for data managing, processing and protection plans were achieved from The Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research (SIKT) (see Appendix 4). The approval was granted for the pilot project but cover this study as one part of it and in turn adds to the bigger study. This also explains the difference between what is stated in the consent form and the objectives of this study. The objectives were changed to match the overall purpose of this study and therefore do not match the objectives stated in the original consent form. Ethical consideration was also done beyond the consent form. As a researcher, I was flexible with my time, letting the participants choose time and place of the interviews. This also entailed me travelling to Bergen to meet a participant in person although I am based in Oslo. If the participants preferred Zoom over physically meetings or had to reschedule the meeting, I accommodated that.

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[6] SAFE (Secure access to research data and e-infrastructure) is a solution for secure processing of sensitive personal data in research, developed by the IT division at UiB (UiB, 2023).

5.8 Limitations of Methodology

There is a need to acknowledge methodological limitations of the study that could have affected the findings. Firstly, the gatekeeper as in the program leader may have affected the selection of the participants based on desired answers. This way of recruitment was necessary to get access to the program's mentees and mentors. However, the purposive sampling made it possible to evaluate each participant before contacting them. Secondly, the mentees and mentors were not supposed to be recruited as mentoring pairs to avoid biases as the main goal was to produce objective results. During one interview, a mentoring pair was discovered due to name-dropping. This was taken into consideration and discussed closely with my supervisor, where we decided to include the participant because it did not reflect any consequences or negative outcomes for any of the parties involved in the study. While these are arguable the main methodological limitations, additional limitations of the study will be discussed in Chapter 7.

Chapter 6. Findings

The findings are presented in this chapter and are drawn from the in-depth interviews, focusing mainly on the mentees' experiences and outcomes unless stated otherwise. The findings have been divided into six organizing themes according to the TNA, namely: *'Program structure', 'Stressors to integration', 'Mentoring process', 'Networks', 'Resistance Resources',* and *'Success and Improvement'.* Each organizing theme contains two to four basic themes (see Appendix 3). Participants are divided into *Mentee* 1 to 5, *Mentor* 1 to 2, and *Leader*. See Appendix 5 for a detailed description of the mentees. The level of English varies between participants and some quotes include Norwegian terms which are translated in brackets. Unclear meanings of quotes will be explained in more detail based on the context of the respective quote.

6.1 Program structure

The first organizing theme provides an outline of the basic components of the mentoring program by looking at *'Functioning of the program'* and *'Outcome of the program'.*

Functioning of the program: The program takes place once a year and depends on grants from Oslo municipality and IMDi. The program lasted for four months. Usually, it runs for six

months but in 2022 the program received the grants from the government later than expected. The program consisted of a joint introduction meeting, pair meetings, workshops, and a questionnaire provided at the end. The mentoring pairs met each other an average of two times a month, both face to face and online during the program. Matching the mentee with a mentor from the same or similar industry was important, but not always an easy task depending on the field, as the leader noted: *"Food quality (…) I couldn't find any mentor to her in that industry or similar, so I also paired her with a coach* [a person who work as a business or life coach]*" (Leader).* The program started with 30 mentees, but two dropped out for certain reasons before the program started. The mentees were usually not from Western countries, but from countries the leader expressed as being more at disadvantage when coming to Norway. She mentioned countries like Pakistan, India, and Russia, along with Eastern European and South American countries. The leader expressed how there are more mentees applying for the program than there is place for. Looking at the different criteria for inclusion is therefore challenging, but the organization has a focus on having at least 60 percent women and everyone needs to know English. The 2022 program had 23 percent men and 77 percent women.

Outcome of the program: The program has gone from local to national in a year, meaning that this year's program had mentors and mentees across multiple cities. The leader of the organization did not have a number of employed mentees for the 2022 program as it was still running at the time of the interview but stated the following about the previous year: *"We had in the first six months 50 percent of the people got jobs. After nine months 75 percent (…) how long term that is and what's happening afterwards (…) need some time and a little bit different research" (Leader).* The leader reflected upon the differences in program duration and how less time could affect the outcome for this year's mentees. However, she did get feedback that a lot of the mentees were getting interviews and were active job-hunters. In last year's program there were only 12 mentees, whereas this year there were 28 mentees.

6.2 Stressors to integration

The second organizing theme of this study focuses on the components which would prevent or seriously inhibit migrants from integrating into the Norwegian labor market. In this section 'Using up a mentoring place', 'Needed skills and competencies', 'Legal requirements' and 'Job market barriers' are presented to identify barriers to labor market participation.

<u>Using up a mentoring place:</u> While this basic theme was not directly linked to stressors to integration by participants, it implied that programs in general provide a certain security for vulnerable groups such as refugees. For one participant, being part of a program led her to always fall back into a new program after one ended:

> I'm realizing that maybe applying for the mentorship program was for me to delay the time I need to actually take matters in my own hands because I'm like 'oh, it's another program. They're going to take care of me. Someone is going to be out on the looks for me', but I think after that I just realized 'okay, no one like coming to save me'. (Mentee 2)

This experience was borne out elsewhere as she came to Norway seven years ago as an UAM, trying to navigate life as a refugee through high school and higher education. Now, she identifies herself as both a refugee and a Norwegian student, implying that she should not necessarily have needed the place in the program compared to people who have not had the time to adjust to Norwegian life and culture: *"I could just be another young Norwegian trying to figure out life and career but at the same time I could also fit in the model of another immigrant trying to navigate the Norwegian system" (Mentee 2).* She wondered if other migrants could have benefited more from her spot in the program.

<u>Needed skills and competencies:</u> Language barrier was one of the most frequently mentioned obstacles for integration into the labor market, both socially and professionally. Participants gave examples where they understood that knowing Norwegian was a big contributor in facilitating or hindering them in getting jobs: *"Like I couldn't get any jobs… for example Spanish teacher because you need 'norskprøve B2 bestått'* [to pass the Norwegian language test level B2]*" (Mentee 1)*; and *"that's understandable because it's like legislation, a lot of documents, agreements so it's better to read it in original language" (Mentee 4).* The job opportunities are present within their field of expertise. Moreover, migrants' experience is acknowledged by employers and recruiters, but the lack of employment rate stems from their level of Norwegian:

> I was getting very good opportunities and phone calls, and at the end it was like 'but do you speak Norwegian?' And it was very good companies and dream jobs with the Norwegian… because of my experience, like I have a lot of experience and… but it was in Norwegian. So, I'm trying to focus on that. (Mentee 3)

There was a clear link between self-development and language acquisition, like Mentee 1 stated: *"I feel need to learn a lot of vocabulary if I want to express myself the way I do in Spanish. (…) I don't… I'm saying 'hi' and being quiet or being ashamed of my accent because it's very strong"*. However, it was also expressed how Norway is so globally interconnected which can simultaneously be helpful to accelerate the migrants' integration process and slow it down: *"I just spent time here trying to learn Norwegian, passed the exam and never used it. (…) very hard here to start to speak because everyone switched to English immediately (…) if you feel more comfortable in English, it's easier"* (Mentee 4).

The lack of knowledge and information were common challenges according to all participants, but it revealed a difference between the groups. The expat partners and the international student arrived with a sense of understanding of the work culture and the financial circumstances: "*I expected that it's pretty expensive country to live, so you can earn money, but you spend for renting, for food, so um lot of money" (Mentee 4)*. However, the information received and doing it in practice did not correlate: *"You think you're capable of doing this, but you need to be here in Norway to understand what is really happening" (Mentee 3)*. The refugees observed differences in gender roles: *"I was not used to live alone (…) women, many of them live alone (…) Latinos are not like that. (…) solo payment, it is difficult to become independent as single" (Mentee 1)*. Stereotypical work seemed to be harder to overcome when they were strongly embedded, like Mentee 2 noted: *"Thought I had a lot of knowledge and information about the diversity of the workforce in Norway because you know, I tended to go for like the stereotypical jobs for immigrants"*. With the information the participant received, she thought it was normal and expected to apply for stereotypical jobs, but reflecting on it now, she understands it differently.

Legal requirements: Existing regulations can impede the integration of migrants, either by forbidding it or making the implementation process complicated and time-consuming. Participants expressed frustration related to work permits, the Norwegian Labor and Welfare Administration (NAV), the asylum reception, the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI) and the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT). The asylum center was not explicitly an obstacle for integration, but it prevents contact with the outside world and was described as an unpleasant place to be stuck: *"That place is horrible, like the conditions that they have is like dirty, people are always very noisy. (…) they don't clean inside" (Mentee 1)*. Before coming to Norway, she travelled through different countries and expressed how they were treated: *"it was almost human trafficking because it was an*

NGO that brought us there without contract, without any guarantee as workers and we experience lower abuse".

      As this mentorship program was running in the middle of the Ukrainian refugee crisis, meetings at UDI were delayed, increasing the time participants were forced to wait to receive their work permits. Also, NAV had an increase in the number of social assistance recipients and increased requirements for activation and digitization, which made the process of employment long. However, NAV was seen as a good resource for job hunting. As Mentor 1 noted: *"We would need to just bite the bullet and use every available asset at our disposal. That includes registering a resume at NAV"*. Many of the mentees agreed that the education from their home country was not readily accepted in Norway. Additionally, some occupations are regulated by law, meaning they require to be approved by NOKUT if the education is taken abroad. One participant did not qualify with her educational background.

Job market barriers: Difficulties in recognition and transmission of qualifications and skills seemed to be instrumental in late integration. Proving discrimination in the labor market is almost impossible, but most participants acknowledged that exclusion exists. There is an overall context of social stratification and social norms. For example, having a foreign name decreases the chances of being called in for an interview: *"It's like your CV immediately goes to another* [pile], *you know… when they see the name" (Mentee 4).* Not having Norwegian references was another: *"'F*** your experience, this is non-Norwegian'. (…) And I was like 'so, what about all my skills that I have been polishing for years?'. (…) So, I feel like very sad and unappreciated" (Mentee 1).* Congruently, the job rejections are high among most of the participants. This in turn, could result in stereotypical jobs. Mentee 2 explained how the health sector was blocking her opportunities to try something else because it was hard to transmit the skills to other careers: *"I was working as an assistant or in Norwegian what that call 'ufaglært'* [unskilled]*, so it was really hard to like climb up the ladder in that area".* In addition, stereotypical jobs did not fulfil their personal and professional purposes: *"The 'miljøarbeider'* [community service] *job, which I don't like to be honest because I'm not a nurse. I'm a teacher and journalist so… And being at night alone just looking at someone sleeping is boring" (Mentee 1).* The fear of going down the path of stereotypical work, such as working in a shop or in the health sector was shared by most of the participants.

6.3 Mentoring process

The third organizing theme establishes the collaboration which takes place between the mentee and the mentor by looking at the following sections: *'Before mentoring'*, *'Mentoring relationships'*, *'Mentors' perspective'* and *'Outcomes'*.

Before mentoring: The reasons for joining the mentoring program are closely linked to the previous section on stressors to integration. Adding on, a lot of the participants were lacking professional networks. Thus, the greatest motivation to join was to receive a mentor of the similar profession to help find a relevant job and to understand the common practices of the Norwegian working culture. In the long run, the expectations were to find gainful employment: *"I have these dreams to achieve, and I want to work for organizations in Norway that maybe work for integration or immigrant or refugees. So that's my goal. That is what I wrote in my application" (Mentee 2).* However, ending up with a dream job after completion of the program was not necessarily the main motive for most mentees. They saw it as an opportunity to self-develop, learn, and create a network of connections. One mentee was hired between the application and the start of the program. Her goal with the mentoring program was no longer to get a position, but to get mentoring experience to develop her organization and to get grant openings. For others, it was more fluid: *"I didn't have a lot of expectations. (…) it was more like I have nothing to lose on this, only to gain. So, whatever I learned from it, whatever I get from it, it's going to be beneficial long term" (Mentee 5).* When asking the mentors about the mentees' expectations, they pointed out that sometimes they had to lower their expectations. Like one of the mentors stated: *"While their expectations are reasonable, in many ways it can also be unrealistic" (Mentor 1).* This did not mean it was impossible, but it relied upon commitment from the mentees.

Mentoring relationships: Findings on mentoring meetings show a significant effect on the dynamic in the mentoring relationship. Most of the meetings were held online – either to accommodate the mentees' needs or because they were living in different cities. As mentioned, the meetings were set to be twice a month over a period of four months. Over half of the mentees did not fulfil these 'obligations' – mostly because the first meetings were so productive. As Mentee 5 noted: *"Our meetings were very fruitful the first few meetings, like we talked a lot. It wasn't much more at the later stages (…) he was relying on me just applying* [for jobs]*".* For another participant who only attended one meeting, she felt like she

could proceed the process on her own with the resources she had already received from her mentor: *"She has given me this treasure that I really used (...) I have other things going on (...) She's not the only one who speaks to my career" (Mentee 2)*. They still expressed to benefit from the process, but compared to other mentees, they were not able to develop a deeper connection and trust with their mentor like Mentee 1 described: *"He was like always there. He was very punctual. He was... he really seemed to care about following up with me"*. The consistency of meetings and follow- ups allowed the mentors to draft an individual plan for them. The low attendance could be a reflection of the program being free as Mentor 2 pointed out: *"Generally speaking, (...) it can be a problem when stuff like this is for free (...) it might be that people take the opportunity lightly"*.

The organization and the mentors provided the mentees with workshops concerning CVs, motivational letters, resumes and LinkedIn. Several of the mentees expressed how they had done similar activities other places: *"I had already seen those workshops. I take Norwegian classes almost every day of the week and we had a 'rådgivergruppe'* [counselling group]" *(Mentee 5)*. Another mentee brought up a program through NAV which enabled her to write CVs and update her LinkedIn profile. These were also the main reasons why participants attended less meetings. For one participant, it was a combination of not being pushy and maintaining the mentoring relationship because she was applying for a position at her mentor's company: *"If it would be another company, it would've been another situation for me. It's like your friend pushing you to his company and you feel uncomfortable" (Mentee 4)*.

Mentors' perspective: The mentors reflected upon their role and functioning in the mentoring process, including the affect it had on them. A mentor serves different functions. Firstly, they are trying to connect with their mentee by listening to their experiences and establishing expectations. Then, they draft a plan to reach the goals they set. Mentor 1 sums up the variety of his role: *"I tried to both help them to better articulate themselves as job seekers and potential employees (...) at the same time I tried to just be there whenever they felt like they needed a friendly voice to talk to"*. The challenge was to provide the mentees with the necessary information in which they could absorb it themselves instead of handing it to them. Keeping the mentees accountable was a consensus among the mentors: *"They can't expect me to get them a job, but I can give them advice and tips (...) as long as they do it, it'll take them one step further" (Mentor 2)*.

Additionally, the emotional aspect was challenging to navigate as to whether the mentors should provide empathy or keep it professional: *"When it comes to job hunting and the impact it could have on your self-esteem… it's very difficult to talk to a person and to hear them pour their heart out (…) and to not want to give them a hug"* (Mentor 1). Two ways the mentor accommodated this was to: 1) create a WhatsApp group; and 2) instead of having job-related conversations, they would just talk. He explained how this was done as a voice of empathy from someone who had been through the same, and not as a therapist. The mentors had slightly different perspectives on how the organization had supported them through the mentoring process. While one brought up the initial meeting with the mentee and sending follow-up mails, the other expressed how the organization provided them with a framework on how to interact with the mentee. However, this was not explained in depth, other than it was an approach on how to conduct yourself in professional relationships – what they can and cannot do, but it was not a strict set of rules.

Outcomes: This basic theme is related to the participants' personal and professional outcomes. According to the organization, the main goal is to help skilled migrants enter the labor market in a way that ensure a relevant job *"according to their qualifications, their professional background and actually what they want and not (…) a restaurant or in a garden (…) accepted as a right passage in Norway (…) something that we actually want to break"* (Leader). From the personal perspective, mentoring has had a positive impact on mental health of the participants. For one participant it helped her to showcase her achievements better: *"It also helped to imposter syndrome. When I feel sad or like I can't do anything, I look at my LinkedIn and then I'm like* [smiles]. *It's an advice that my mentor gave me when I feel like that"* (Mentee1). Another gained more self-confidence: *"When I took it in my own hands it worked better, and it increased my learnings and now I can confidently plan my future (…) We want not just the career, but we also want to have a good life"* (Mentee 2). The mindset towards jobs changed in the sense that a career does not have to look one specific way. This was evident to other mentees as well. All participants expressed how well designed the program was, allowing them to explore either by themselves or with the help of their mentor. From the professional perspective, all participants were left with a better understanding of the Norwegian labor market. One participant was offered a position related to technology but never started because the company was downsizing, while another participant received a job in a Norwegian content creator company. As for the other

participants, during the mentoring program, they applied for positions, but it did not appear that they were hired within their field.

6.4 Networks

The fourth organizing theme focuses on the importance of networks and the different ways to develop and maintain personal and professional networks through the mentoring program. In this section 'Need for network' and 'Network solutions' are presented.

Need for network: The organization and the mentors highlighted the importance of having networks and recommendations: *"it's not about skills in Norway (…) it's about network (…) recommendations work a long way (…) a lot of jobs are not even um advertised" (Leader)*; and how it is beneficial for both parties on the labor market to have cultural diversity: *"not just for foreign nationals that are trying to get into the Norwegian job market, but also for Norwegian companies that could benefit from the different perspectives or contributions of non-Norwegians. (…) that's incredibly underestimated" (Mentor 1)*. The interviews did not show any significant effects of expanded networks, but according to a survey, the organization could report an increase in the contacts they have from their professional fields. Adding on to this, the mentees did express how Norwegians are reserved people and difficult to create a relationship with: *"It was difficult to catch guys* [friends]. *Norwegians are very shy" (Mentee 1)*. However, several of the participants gave examples of having found access to either existing migrant communities, based around similar national or cultural backgrounds or groups who share the same life situation. This will be explored in greater detail in section 'Resistance Resources'.

The need for developing networks and cultural knowledge was based on the communication differences between the migrants' home culture and Norwegian culture (for instance the balance of formal and informal communication or what are appropriate communication channels), like Mentee 5 expressed: *"yeah about the calling, he* [mentor] *also reassured me that it's essential almost in Norway to call first. I still like wow… I mean, it takes a lot for me"*. Finn[7] and LinkedIn were the most common platforms to look for jobs, but finding the right ads or selling themselves as relevant candidates was not necessarily a forgone conclusion. As Mentor 2 noted:

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[7] Norway's largest marketing space. Finn.no specializes in advertisements and services for purchases and sales between private individuals, including small and large companies.

I'm helping them to see things from a different perspective because when the mentee looks up Finn.no or LinkedIn, they may only consider a few positions, while I shine a spotlight on the fact that you can also be a good fit for something else.

Some mentees expressed how they did not like LinkedIn, but stayed on it because they felt the necessity of putting themselves out on the market. A LinkedIn profile in English, Norwegian, and their native language was considered important because one profile could have the same contact content in multiple languages.

Network solutions: According to the organization, the mentors were not obligated to provide networks for their mentee due to uncertainty of trust and connection between the mentoring pair. However, the mentors expressed that they wanted to use their network as an incentive for their mentees but were hesitant to do so because it could be a reflection on them. One mentor explained how he once introduced his mentee to his network, and it did not go as planned. It did not have a negative impact on him but *"it sort of created an uncomfortable scenario where my mentee didn't do what they were supposed to do. (…) was a blessing in disguise because by speaking to my mentee I got a better sense of their professional situation" (Mentor1)*. Instead, they provided the mentees with relevant websites and contact information of people they knew. Some benefited from it, while others did not: *"I cannot say that it was not helpful, but now, I haven't had the need to contact that person again" (Mentee 3)*. Only Mentee 4 reported that she was directly introduced to her mentor's network: *"Once he invited me at his company for a cup of coffee (…) meet all his colleagues and ask to give me advice from them"*. She was later invited to an interview where she *"came to one hour session with different… starting from developers and finishing with CEO"*. Another mentee said: *"He talked about it. (…) He had a friend who was a recruiter at the Norwegian Refugee Council (…) asked her if there's going to be any (…) new positions (…) but I haven't heard anything" (Mentee 5)*. In cases where references were hard to access, the mentees were encouraged to get as many testimonials as possible.

6.5 Resistance Resources

The fifth organizing theme presents *'Employment strategy', 'Personal strategy'* and *'Social strategy'* as ways of responding to different challenges and the processes of adjusting to change.

<u>Employment strategy:</u> The mentees gave examples of different ways to find jobs: *"If I know another African girl or another immigrant (…) if I see an awesome opportunity that I think would suit them, I send it to them. It's like unspoken caring in a way"* (Mentee 2); *"I even go to University of Oslo sometimes if they have open lectures. I try to do that because I feel that's maybe the best way and try to approach some people" (Mentee 5)*; and "*it's called meet app where you choose your passion and what you like, and this app will find you events" (Mentee 4)*. Using the collective entity or community of a workplace is another strategy, where every employee is seen as a basic source to information:

> We are always making jokes (…) my older Norwegians [colleagues] (…) like 'see how we are struggling? We could be home with our kids, so you better choose a different career' (…) those things are really helpful. (…) I remember one time I thought my pay wasn't fair and I talked to my colleague (…) he encouraged me to say something to the boss and a plead my case and sent in more papers. (Mentee 2)

Most mentees were limiting themselves while they could potentially apply for more jobs. By expanding the career options, they discovered other possibilities which were still within their industries: *"I have work experience in gender, I think I tend to go only for those (…) but (…) I should you know, check other jobs that are similar or even in education, non-formal education" (Mentee5)*. Others chose to reinvent themselves: *"I choose very different direction than my economist and the psychologist* [education]. *(…) I took 11 months course (…) started as an intern (…) without payment for six months I think and then they offered me a contract" (Mentee4).* Also, the pragmatic circumstances like finances and settling influenced their choices of employment. As Mentee 2 reflected*:*

> Do I need to like sacrifice a lot and build a career, or do I actually need to start thinking to build a *life*, not just a career because there are so many things that goes into that. (…) practice delayed gratification so to say.

The need of finding the dream job became less important if you had more flexibility.

<u>Personal strategy:</u> Given the precarious employment and integration conditions the participants found themselves in, all spoke about mental health problems such as anxiety, depression, and occupational stress. For example, COVID-19 was perceived as stagnating their opportunities for socializing and networking: «*the language barrier that increased with corona. Like I couldn't practice Norwegian, to talk or socialize for two years. That impacted like a lot of my abilities – social anxiety, like mental illness because of the asylum stuff"*

(Mentee 1). Helplessness and complications around asylum were found to be coupled with feelings of being worried and anxious, but talking to a mentor helped:

> I'm very depressed because I didn't have like work permit (…) I got like a resolution one month after I applied (…) we talked about that sometimes and I feel like it was also nice to exchange experiences about how difficult the process is. (Mentee 1)

Other mechanisms to cope with mental stress were related to resilience, physical and mental awareness, having a support system and being confident, for example: *"I didn't know what being anxious meant until I moved here. (…) being resilient and put myself first, like mentally, physically, being more calm (…) I learned how like to be more relaxed honestly, because I was going crazy"* (Mentee 3); *"I don't keep it close to my heart, but it also depends maybe that I have a backup in my husband" (Mentee4)*; and *"I need to put things in my own hands and actually apply for jobs, not just like…maybe go for jobs that are more qualified for than my social work field" (Mentee 2)*.

> Aspirations and capabilities were key drivers of migrants' integration and characterized the narratives of the participants:

> In five years, I see myself a more bachelor's degree in 'TV og produksjon' [TV and production] because I finished my journalism degree in my home country. Working (…) in journalism and making movies and something related to art. I'm also an author, so I wish I could publish in Norwegian, Spanish, and English. (Mentee 1)

Aspirations also refers to the social base of individual choice and encompass both the rational and emotional components of decision-making.

Social strategy: This basic theme involves both the social strategies to get a job and to create a social life. Several of the participants addressed that using close ties could increase the probability of finding a job: *"The way I've gotten job until that time* [before the mentoring program] *was through maybe a network or a friend was there" (Mentee 2)* and;

> Don't be shy to ask your friend or people you know. (…) I was so embarrassed to ask someone (…) because I thought maybe if I lose in the interview process, what would they think about me. It's hard, but you need to step out of this. (Mentee 4)

In addition, close ties seemed to channel other support provisions beyond access to employment. Emotional support is likely to be acquired from close relationships or other immigrants going through similar experiences, like for example: *"What helped me a lot was making new friends (…) and expand my support network, know more Latin Americans" (Mentee 3)* and *"When I became pregnant (…) I got more friends and like we started to go to*

these open kindergartens and meet moms from different countries (...) social lives became more full" (Mentee 4).

6.6 Success and Improvement

The final organizing theme focuses on the different aspects of the program by which the mentees and mentors find success and have the potential to improve for future implementation of a mentoring-to-work program. These are identified by the basic themes of *'Mentoring level'* and *'Program level'*.

Mentoring level: Most of the mentees had their meetings online, which none of them proved to have a problem with. In fact, the majority preferred it: *"I liked it. Its more efficient" (Mentee 1)*; *"I actually prefer remotely. I'm fine with remote meetings now" (Mentee 3)*; and *"We were both just comfortable… It wasn't that much difference" (Mentee 5)*. Interestingly, Mentee 3 contradicted herself by emphasizing the importance of: *"Having physical meetings (...) for me networking is in person, work meetings can be remotely, but when you make a connection (...) is always in person. (...) maybe next time it will be better if you* [organization] *have more networking sessions"*.

Scheduling the sessions emerged as a challenge for some participants due to COVID-19, too much flexibility and internal changes (one mentee reported that her mentor received a promotion). It was suggested that some mentors did not have sufficient time, which made planning difficult at times. *"Be sure that the mentor has the time and the availability because they are obviously open and they want to be helpful but if you don't have the time, it's complicated" (Mentee 3)*. This was in line with Mentee 4 who wanted more transparency at the start of the program and setting a timeline for when the meetings should take place insofar as both parties feel obliged to participate.

Program level: The most important aspect of the program seemed to be the matching of the mentor and the mentee, which the organization received a lot of praise for: *"He knows how to get his things done. (...) I'm a journalist (...) used to fight for human rights and up-front corruption and s***. But he was like the opposite side (...) I need correct change - this is the person" (Mentee 1)*; *"Her journey really has you know, it's like a copy and paste of what I want to do, what I've seen myself doing and the organizations and things like that" (Mentee 2)*; and *"Actually, it was like 100* [%] *match. She* [leader] *found like the same area person for me, like what I needed, and also the mentor… maybe six years ago he moved to Norway"*

(Mentee 4). One participant highlighted the benefit of the multicultural diversity of the administrative organization that were matching the mentee with a mentor, which increased their understanding of her journey: *"I feel many times Norwegians don't understand how it is, even though like maybe they have nice intentions or thoughts, but it's like just an immigrant knows how difficult the system can be from an outside perspective"* (Mentee 1).

Both mentors shared the view of wanting to have a separate network for mentors: *"It could have helped to sort of optimize and enhance (...) the caliber of council that we could have given to our mentees. (...) I would have wanted a better overview of the mentors that were involved in the program"* (Mentor 1). This means that in cases of incompatible mentoring pairs, the mentors would have the necessary information to turn to another mentor for help. This is somehow related to the mentees as well, in which one participant suggested that they could have had an evaluation after the first meeting to see whether the mentoring pair were a good match or if they should find someone that would be a better fit. Additionally, a common space for the mentees to create network amongst themselves were missing for several of the participants:

> One thing I had expected, and it didn't (…) when we got the sheet at the beginning like how this program is going to be structured (…) we're going to have common meetings and we had very little of those. (Mentee 5)

Chapter 7. Discussion

In this chapter, the impact of mentoring-to-work as a resource for migrants' labor market integration and well-being is explored, relating the lived experience of participants against existing literature. Using the salutogenic model in this study assists in identifying the stressors to labor market integration, the resistance resources to cope with the stressors, and the mechanisms within mentoring that contribute to employment. First, the implications of the most prominent themes that emerged will be discussed, looking at the identified and hidden barriers. Further, the discussion will be framed in relation to the three dimensions of SOC – comprehensibility, manageability, and meaningfulness. Finally, emphasis will be placed on how this study may be linked to global development and health promotion. Note that the migrants of this study are not a homogenous population, and the findings suggest that the prevalence of labor market integration and the condition of well-being varies across populations. Limitations of the study will be presented at the end.

7.1 Identified and hidden barriers

All participants reported facing barriers to social and professional integration due to lack of Norwegian proficiency. These results on language capital are in line with studies conducted in other countries as well (Ghio et al., 2023; Tang et al., 2022; Udayar et al., 2021). Migrants' experience of labor market participation in relation to language is either little researched or overlooked by studies exploring the negative mental health effects of (lack of) employment. By addressing the knowledge gap, Tip et al. (2019) found that mastering the language of the host country made employment possible and enabled refugees to interact with the majority culture, which in turn increased their well-being. Similarly, a study from Germany indicates that formal language training can help accelerate the integration process insofar as migrants find stable and skilled work (Lang, 2022). Masgoret and Ward (2006) state that linguistic proficiency and communication competence are the main elements of all cultural learning approaches and sociocultural adaptation. While this study supports these findings, it also views a contradicting truth about language acquisition to the social and professional context of the workplace.

The findings present two distinct problems when analyzing the effect of language in labor market outcomes; in professions like IT and international organizations, the knowledge of Norwegian is less important to achieve successful task performance, but the informal communication inside the companies is most likely in Norwegian, whereas Norwegian proficiency is often a decisive prerequisite for many unskilled professions. Although a migrant is gainfully employed, it does not necessarily mean they feel included. Something similar was found in an international company in Denmark, where employees were excluded from informal interactions and from access to power structures because they were lacking skills in the local language (Lønsmann, 2014). This suggests that certain high skilled professions may lack an internal inclusive work environment compared to lower skilled professions.

Stress and frustration regarding relevant jobs was frequently addressed by the participants. Despite economic capital, the *transfer* of qualifications and skills from country of origin acted as a barrier. These findings build on existing evidence of underemployment as migrants struggle to locate employment commensurate with their skills and financial needs (Cheung & Phillimore, 2014; Chiswick & Miller, 2009). Moreover, employers approach migrants' work experience and education with bias because they do not perceive them as equivalent to the host country's qualifications (Novak & Chen, 2013). Interestingly, those

with higher education from Norway struggled along the same lines as the overall migrants of this study. This can be explained by the fact that they have no track records of employment in Norway which results in a gap in their work history, which in turn means they are not able to provide references to potential employers. The study suggests that recognition processes should start with assessing migrant's background and strength, rather than an identification of what the migrant is lacking. The findings also indicate that lack of information about where to look for jobs makes them more dependent on informal contacts like the mentoring program.

Most of the participants were lacking social capital when they arrived in Norway, meaning they had little or no access to social networks and support. Studies have found positive effects of social networks on migrants' labor market integration (Gërxhani & Kosyakova, 2020). Although this is evident in the literature and participants of this study shared a mutual understanding of the importance of social networks, the way they created them varied. For example, the refugees and the international student tended to create networks across different ethnic groups, including native-Norwegians, whereas the expat partners created foreign rather than native-Norwegian networks as a source of bonding capital. This could be explained by their age difference, assuming young people adapt faster to new environments and the fact that universities facilitate interaction and exchanging resources among students. Moreover, the migrants of this study have different legal statuses that affect their ability to engage in the Norwegian labor market. While expat partners and international students are free to move back and forth, refugees are not. The degree of temporary and permanent stay may influence the willingness to adapt to the culture. Noteworthy, both groups expressed how Norwegians are closed off people, making it difficult to enter a circle of friends. Thus, some expressed to bond better with people who share similar characteristics such as race and ethnicity. Although this did not pose any specific challenges according to the participants, rather a predictable factor for better mental health, it should be considered when looking at migrants' adaptation and integration in the labor market.

Acculturation can be explained as the process by which an individual or group adopts the practices and values of one's host culture while still retaining their own culture of origin (Berry et al., 2006). Sam and Berry (2010) propose four different acculturation strategies, consisting of assimilation, integration, separation, and marginalization (see Figure 2). The issue that arises in this study is how the migrants balance culture maintenance and contact. If the ethnicity of social ties is stronger than the urge of knowing locals, there will not be a

mutual acceptance of being different which is found to establish an environment that promotes integration (Sorgen, 2015) and it is easier to get caught in negative stereotypes (Ryan, 2021). Integrated migrants who have a strong sense of belonging to the society of both the host and the home culture, may be more likely to have higher employment rates than migrants who either identify exclusively with the host culture or reject both. This is exemplified by an Italian study which found that migrants who identify with either the host culture, or both the host- and home culture have a better chance in the labor market, with a probability of being employed 18.6, 5, and 2.3 percentage point higher than that of, respectively marginalized, assimilated and separated (Carillo et al., 2023). Arguably, assimilation can provide access to local networks that can be a source for finding a job, but it can lead to weaker social ties. For the separation strategy, the opposite pertains.
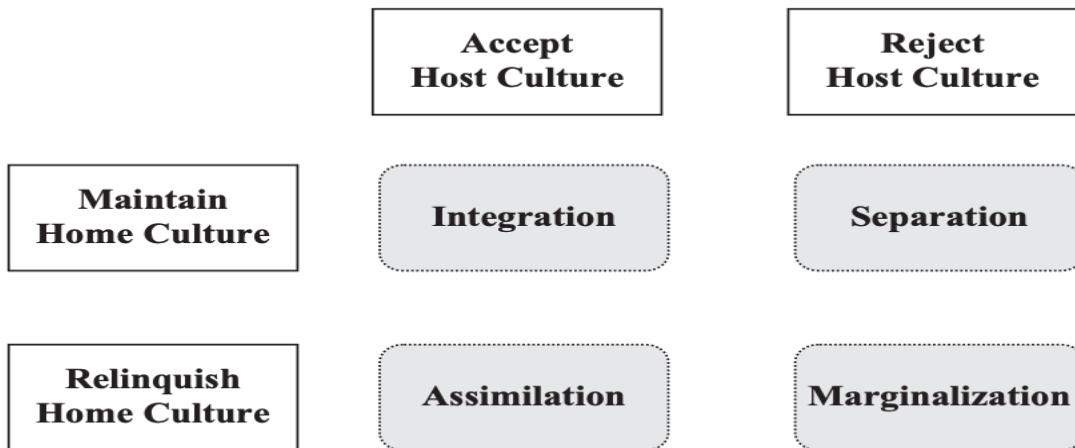
Figure 2: Four acculturation strategies. From J. Riedel, U. Wiesmann & H-J. Hannich, 2011, p. 556.

7.2 Formation of SOC

Work-related SOC (Work-SOC) has been suggested as particularly relevant for researchers and professionals working with occupational health interventions (Vogt et al., 2013) and is extremely relevant since the Norwegian labor market is influenced by increasing migration flows. The perception of comprehensibility, manageability and meaningfulness is simultaneously influenced by individual characteristics (a migrant's personality and experiences) and the characteristics of the Norwegian labor market (work-related structures and processes). Using a simplified model of salutogenesis (see Figure 3), I have illustrated the process of SOC in which it appeared in this study.

Figure 3: Model of salutogenesis for the context of work. Adapted from G. Jenny et al., 2022, p. 322.
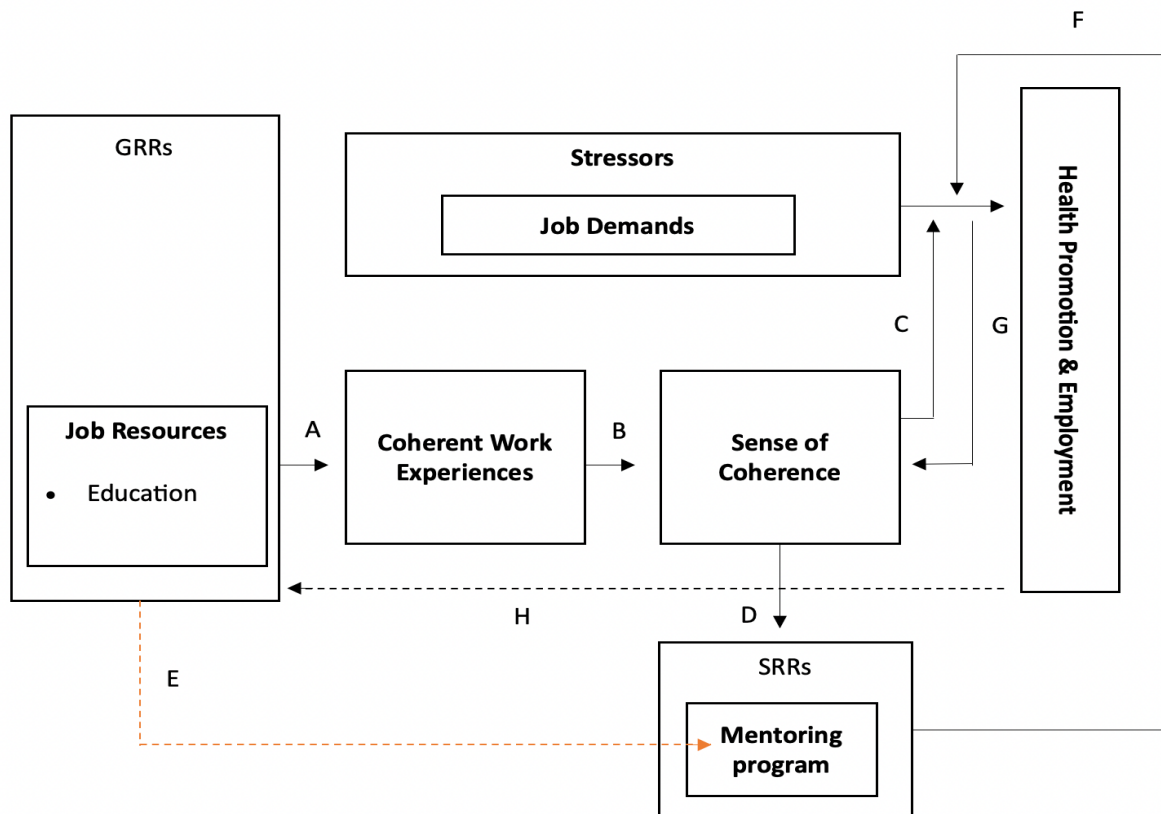
Job resources are part of the GRRs (biological, material, and psychosocial factors) that provide space for coherent work experience (A), which help to build up the SOC (B) among employees (Jenny et al., 2022). Education, among other GRRs, contributes in a general way to strengthen the SOC. Migrants with more GRRs are more likely to perceive consistency, a better load balance and decision-making power. SOC then affects the way the migrant perceives, assesses, and copes with stressors in the labor market, or the so-called job demands (C). Neither Antonovsky nor other researchers have shown SRRs much attention on its relationship to well-being (Mittelmark et al., 2022). This study views mentoring as an SRR, a targeted intervention that support the strengthening of SOC to ensure and improve migrants' ability to respond to subsequent employment challenges (F). A strong SOC facilitates the use of the mentoring program (D). Originally, GRRs and SRRs are not connected because they have different origins, but it is included in this illustration because it was a requirement of the mentoring program that the migrants had higher education (E). These two types of resistance resources, among others, determine whether the migrants achieve better health and job satisfaction. Reversely, successful coping builds up future SOC (G). The illustration provides an integrative explanation of how personal and external

resistance resources can reduce strains related to work. Good health is a requirement to improve GRRs and job demands can reduce GRRs. This reciprocal process is illustrated with the black, dashed line (H). The following sections will further discuss SOC as both a precursor and outcome of employment and well-being by looking at comprehensibility, manageability, and meaningfulness.

7.2.1 Comprehensibility

The sense of comprehensibility is a cognitive component that describes the extent to which a work situation is perceived as structured, consistent and clear (Mayer, 2014; Vogt et al., 2013). Most of the participants were prepared for a life in Norway and had a general understanding and overview of the Norwegian labor market and integrating into a new culture. However, most of the stressors were unexpected. Meeting the 'reserved' personality of Norwegians and the way to approach jobs created difficulties in adapting to social and professional norms. The 'culture clash' and subsequent norms were somehow seen as stable factors they gradually grew accustomed to, but their pre-migration expectations led to inconsistency. However, applying for the mentoring program suggests that they can identify certain stressors and expectations in an organized manner. To strengthen comprehensibility, the mentoring program provide the information needed to build up knowledge of the Norwegian labor market and its requirements. Arguably, comprehensibility might be facilitated through information and a sense of understanding as to why and how the mentoring program is beneficial. The mentoring program seem to offer a way out of the migrants' confusion of the Norwegian labor market by acting as a bridge between the mentees' own work culture and ways of being around the Norwegian working context.

Coping with the demands on the labor market was partly addressed by proactivity and aspirations. However, while migrants' aspirations are valid, they might be unrealistic, according to the mentors. This reflects one of Antonovsky's descriptions of comprehensibility as a solid capacity to judge reality (Antonovsky, 1979). In other words, expectations should be grounded on what the actual situation is, not what the migrants hope it is. Thus, the mentoring program helps to mobilize their internal resources such as motivation and mental preparation by making their expectations more realistic in order for them to identify with their GRRs to reach 'new' goals and restore hope. In the literature on careers, Kuijpers and Scheerens (2006) calls this "reflection on capacities and motives". Mentors expressed how this could entail applying for slightly different jobs than what they pictured

themselves working with. Other ways of mobilizing external resources were to make them call potential employers. This was an unknown and uncomfortable practice for several of the migrants, but they understood it as a necessity to stand out among other job seekers in the Norwegian labor market.

Consistent stimuli that form comprehensibility of what it means to integrate into the Norwegian labor market also compose stress and discrimination. Although none of the participants directly experienced discrimination, they had the perception of the labor market being selective and name-discriminating. There exists empirical evidence indicating that employers in Norway tend to discriminate against job seekers with foreign-sounding names (Birkelund et al., 2014). While this cannot directly attribute the findings to racial or ethnic bias in employment, the findings from this study are consistent with previous studies that view differences for employment based on aggregated group characteristics (Kingston et al., 2015; Pivovarova & Powers, 2022). Generalization like this is a shame when skilled migrants are overlooked, but it is perhaps more alarming and cynical because it seems like employers base their hiring decisions on general 'rules of thumb' which reflect broader power systems and stratifications in the society. Exposure to prejudice and discrimination may have a negative impact on migrants' mental and physical health outcomes because it develops a mistrust towards authorities and feelings of frustration. Participants expressed how they did not see a point in applying for a position unless they fulfilled all requirements stated in the application. According to Slootjes et al. (2017), this can threaten consistency, load balance and decision making power because a relatively weak SOC is characterized by having discrepancy between expectations and experiences. Thereby, negative accounts of comprehensibility were in cases of stress and disappointment regarding being highly educated and failing in the labor market.

7.2.2 Manageability

The sense of manageability is the instrumental and behavioral component of SOC where difficulties are seen as solvable (Mayer, 2014). Slootjes et al. (2017) claims that this component is mainly shaped by a load balance throughout one's life, meaning that migration and integration pose a particular threat to migrants' load balance. For this study, this would indicate that the refugees' life situation is unstable and inconsistent, resulting in limited opportunity for personal growth because they have experienced difficult and traumatizing events like escaping conflicts and political persecution. These are more isolating and unpredictable factors compared to what the expat partners and the international student

experienced. They, on the other hand, expressed to have stable and fulfilling jobs in their country of origin. However, Reid and Quayle (2008) propose that most people who start their professional education before age 30 have better chances of developing high SOC, regardless of their pre-migration experiences. This aspect would need some more research, but it may be applicable to this study's participants as well.

The refugees of this study are showing some modification and flexibility of SOC during the process of migration and integration which affect the underload-overload balance. For example, overload of depression and anxiety appeared in situations which were outside their control such as encountering difficult and extreme situations like work permits and asylum. Studies have found depression to be associated with lower SOC and inability of imagining a positive future (Foo et al., 2018), but this does not explicitly attribute to this study. Rather, it seemed like the refugees had much to accomplish in a short period of time. This feeling of underload is likely to be enhanced by a strong sense of urgency to integrate in the labor market because they are afraid to waste time (Baker et al., 2020; Lynnebakke & Pastoor, 2020). Although their resources might be limited in the waiting period, they showed great usage of the resources at their disposal. One refugee discussed with her mentor whether to apply for an unpaid internship and it turned out to open doors to relevant jobs. According to Wood et al. (2019), voluntary work increases community involvement and therefore may have positive impacts on understanding norms and structures of the host work culture.

The expat partner who was offered a job and later notified that the company was downsizing is a great example of what Antonovsky (1987b) describes as an individual with strong manageability, who manage adversity in life without feeling victimized or treated unfairly. This situation was a huge setback for her because she was turning down potential interviews while waiting for the start-up date, but this is not a story of overload or inconsistency. She turned the situation into something positive, explaining how it increased her confidence and her abilities to solve different task performances for future interviews. She interpreted the situation in a logical and self-evident way, emphasizing timing rather than her incompetence.

Antonovsky (1987a) states that it is possible to achieve a high degree of manageability when resistance resources are legitimately seen as being controlled by other well-disposed and trusted mentors. The mentoring program provides the migrants with various resources to cope with stressors. Internal resistance resources have been mentioned, but they also offer external resources. Workshop facilitators like how to write resumes, CVs and a LinkedIn profile were positively received by the migrants. However, the first two were

not seen as beneficial as the last one because they served more as a review rather than an introduction to new ideas on how to write them. LinkedIn was the most prominent and possibly the best resource for establishing better employment- and network outcomes. The findings did not reveal whether the participants had knowledge of LinkedIn from before, but they did express how little they knew about the value of it in the context of the Norwegian labor market and the importance of having a comprehensive profile. After guidance from their mentor, they shared a better understanding on how to best represent themselves as potential employees on the labor market. Very little research investigates the role of online networks or advertising platforms in migrants' labor market integration. This is surprising given that migrants are lacking networks but professional platforms such as LinkedIn have the ability to provide them with the information and contacts needed to access the labor market. Bilecen and Seibel (2021) investigated gender differences in the usage of online networks in the Netherlands and found that migrant women made less use of social media platforms such as LinkedIn. This partly explained their lower participation in the labor market. This contrasts with this study, which also adds to the literature that migrants use LinkedIn for self-promotion and to acquire information on available jobs, including access on characteristics of employers. Moreover, LinkedIn seemed to increase migrants' independence and autonomy, particularly for women, because they gained ownership of own achievements. This suggests that mobilization can be sparked by digital environments but is dependent on the mentors' guidance to make the process proceed smoothly.

Furthermore, the mentors provided the migrants with websites, contact information and sometimes people within their own networks which enabled the migrants to implement effective job search strategies. Whether they were called in for interviews or not, almost all participants reported that they prepared for the interviews with their mentor. This involved aspects such as mentors familiarizing the migrants with the practices of interviews in the Norwegian labor market. This seemed to be a key factor for load-balance because the migrants confirmed there were a few differences in professional practices between their country of origin and Norway. Migrants also possessed resources of their own. For example, the Meet app helped one of the expat partners to organize herself into network structures based on own wishes of labor market outcomes. The finding suggests new ways of consolidating weak ties that deliver new and relevant market information which enables migrants to identify occupational opportunities and foster new ideas.

Language proficiency has throughout this study proved to be the main challenge in entering the labor market, but the participants understood that learning the language is time-

consuming and relies on effort and determination. Also in social settings, when experiencing Norwegians as reserved or trying to accommodate the migrants' linguistic skills by switching to English, determination seemed to be a resource in terms of making friends. This entailed saying 'yes' to every available social event, and joining activities where they shared experiences with others, for example maternity leave groups. The mentoring program was also supporting and improving their linguistic skills. While most mentoring programs have a minimum language requirement such as A2 level, this program has less emphasis on Norwegian and instead requires knowledge of English. This does not imply that language is not integral in the mentoring program. One participant explained how she had the option to communicate in her language of origin or English but chose to have the meetings in Norwegian to improve her linguistic skills. For other participants as well, the mentoring process facilitated linguistic progression. In line with other studies (De Cuyper, 2022), language is not put forward as an explicit objective of a the mentoring program, but is seen as a positive side effect, especially as language is so intertwined with working life.

However, the participants reported some examples of underload where they expected and wished for more networking from the mentoring program, specifically with other mentees. As GRRs act as the cornerstone of the formation of SOC, networks in this context are arguably examples of resistance resources for both psychosocial contexts and job demands.

7.2.3 Meaningfulness

The sense of meaningfulness is the motivational component of SOC where life make sense and challenges are worthy of commitment (Mayer, 2014; Vogt et al., 2013). This component is found to be positively related to different facets of labor market integration and well-being. Migrants who addressed job demands with confrontation and commitment, rather than avoiding or escaping them, appeared to be satisfied with their situation. One of the expat partners expressed that she struggled to transfer her qualifications to the Norwegian labor market, so she chose to pursue other interests to become more eligible on the labor market. The findings show that there are different ways of attaining meaningfulness. Despite stress and challenging job-demands, she was able to move forward in her occupational life by showing strength and motivation to find other purposes with her work situation in Norway by dedicating 11 months to a course in IT/tech. This suggests a strong effect of intrinsic motivation and affective processes for social development, adjustment, and well-being.

The refugees who worked within the health sector dealt with typical symptoms of burnout and constantly referring to not being compatible to do the job, resulting in overload and stress. Previous studies (Volanen et al., 2004) have found that lack of opportunity to use skills at work is negatively associated with SOC and underemployment can have adverse effects on migrants' psychological well-being, particularly for women and refugees (Bloch, 2002; Fernandez-Reino & Rienzo, 2021). Although they found their work less meaningful, they adopted an understanding of social inclusion at the workplace, allowing them to recognize the importance of economic independence while also considering their feelings of (dis)connectedness. The findings adds to discussions which show that a supportive work climate helps to build the individual's personal resources (Luthans et al., 2008). This study suggests that a feeling of inclusion at work meant that colleagues actively supported and encouraged them to evolve as potential employees in the Norwegian labor market. Similarly, a study exploring the strength and well-being of Burmese refugees living in Australia found that education is associated with allowing a person to find purpose with their life through its link to employment (Borwick et al., 2013). GRRs are understood as a 'critical resource' and an important factor in building strong SOC (Braun-Lewensohn et al., 2017; Joseph & Sagy, 2017). The participants applied GRRs in different situations which acted as means to promote capability of resilience. In other words, GRRs neutralize stressors in the work context and lead to life experiences with strong SOC.

Besides engaging in courses and employment, participating in different social activities outside work were other means that contributed to their integration and well-being in Norway. For example, the international student attended open lectures which he found interesting and a way to connect with people. These findings build on existing literature which suggests social participation in such activities may lead to beneficial effects, through promoting cohesion among ethnic groups and a sense of belonging and identity (Niemi et al., 2019).

Although mentors advised their mentees to broaden their job searches, several of the participants appeared to be committed on finding a job within their own field. This can be tied to professional identities and the fact that a lower position may lead to a feeling of losing status (Eggenhofer-Rehart et al., 2018). This suggest on one side, that having lower levels of meaningfulness may be an indicator of not perceiving enough resources to invest in the challenges. On the other side, having higher levels of meaningfulness may expose migrants to the risk of failing due to inherent limitations of their work situation. However, the international student in particular addressed how he became more flexible and open to

applying for slightly different jobs during the mentoring program. He showed intermediate levels of meaningfulness which also are more likely to reflect an objective balance between a migrant's own resources and contextual constraints. A strong sense of identity and the ability to shape outcomes seemed to strengthen meaningfulness.

Slootjes et al. (2017) found that identity and belonging had an impact on meaningfulness. Joining the mentoring program seemed to have positive effects on migrants' self-efficacy beliefs, professional success, and a sense of identity because several of the participants perceived an emotional quality of their mentoring relationships. They perceived support through an outside person who understood the place of frustration the migrants were coming from. A couple of the migrants even addressed collective cultural narratives within the mentoring relationship. Together, this played an important role in fostering the experience of consistency, load balance and meaningfulness.

7.3 Global Development

Mentoring as a tool has been recognized at national and international level, as a good practice for both social- and labor market integration (OECD, 2022). Mentoring can influence and address a global outreach in its usefulness regarding the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by mobility and implementation. Reversely, the SDGs can act as a referential guide to assure aligned objectives. Generally, mentoring programs have the adaptability to a variety of different organizational contexts and can therefore empower individuals of particular settings.

Mentoring-to-work may have positive effects on SDG 10 by helping migrants integrate into the host countries' labor market, which in turn can reduce international inequalities within and among countries (McKenzie & Yang, 2015; UN, 2022c). Whether it is temporary or permanent migration, studies show that migrants who are employed in the host country contribute to increased income and reduced poverty, which come particularly through remittances (Cantore & Calì, 2015). Additionally, mentoring is highly sustainable because it taps into existing resources that traditional labor market instruments (e.g., introduction programs) ignores, such as knowledge and experience from people who are already integrated in the labor market.

Migrants' disadvantages in the labor market are significant barriers to achieving SDG 8, which promotes inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all (UN, 2022b). Mentoring facilitate access to resources and information, which are important factors to include migrants in the labor market. Due to

its progressive role, mentoring-to-work has been ascribed with the capacity to create greater inclusion in the context of the Norwegian labor market (Radlick & Mevatne, 2023). However, as indicated in Chapter 2, mentoring-to-work programs for (skilled) migrants are often overlooked, but there should be a greater focus on it, as migrants add important competence to the Norwegian labor market and contributes to economic growth.

SDG 3 aims to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all (UN, 2022a). As this study has shown, while job demands lead to experiences of strains, the mentoring program provides resources that may help migrants effectively cope with stressors. Mentoring function for careers, but also considering the interpersonal nature of mentoring relationships captured within the psychosocial support component who provides valuable interpersonal resources such as role modeling, guidance, and 'friendships'. Where participants expressed how they were anxious, the mentors provided empathy by listening and sharing experiences, and helped with problem-solving. This is important steps towards building prosperous societies.

7.3 Health Promotion

The illustration of "health in the river of life" which was presented in Chapter 3 is often used as a metaphor of health promotion. Antonovsky noted, it is not enough to promote health by avoiding stress or by building bridges to prevent people from falling into the river, rather, they need to learn how to swim (Eriksson & Lindström, 2008). The issue of migrants is similar because migrants' capability to swim in the flow of the river is limited. Protective factors such as social support or settle for a job below their qualifications are not enough to adapt to the Norwegian labor market or to improve their well-being. The overall well-being of individuals and groups are more likely to be achieved through creating empowering environment in which people can actively participate and identify their internal and external resources, and here is where a mentoring-to-work program becomes extremely beneficial. Mentoring has a positive role to play in the sharing of skills and knowledge, and in meeting the specific learning needs of the mentee and the organizational context they wish to work in. Although its intention is not explicitly to improve health, this study found a marginal change in well-being, especially in psychosocial situations.

The Ottawa Charter incorporates five action areas for Health Promotion: 1) build healthy public policy, 2) create supportive environments, 3) strengthen community actions, 4) develop personal skills, and 5) reorient health services. Improvement in health is based on three strategies: *advocate*, *enable* and *mediate*. While focusing on all three strategies, there

are two action areas in particular that are of relevance for this study, namely *create supportive environments* and *develop personal skills*. Health promotion cannot be achieved by the health sector alone, it is dependent on the collaboration of other sectors of the government, including non-governmental organizations like this mentoring program. Creating supportive environments involves both the physical and the social context. The Ottawa Charter states:

> Changing patterns of life, work and leisure have a significant impact on health. Work and leisure should be a source of health for people. The way society organize work should help create a healthy society. Health promotion generates living and working conditions that are safe, stimulating, satisfying and enjoyable. (WHO, 2023)

Mentoring relationships are established to be supportive and reciprocal while promoting knowledge building. Even in challenging times like the migrants of this study has expressed, they are given the information and skills needed to strengthen their capacities in the labor market, enabling them to take control of own choices and own health. Advocacy is created by the mentor and the organization. Mentors advocate in the sense that they are experienced and have personal interest in promoting a mentee's career. They network on their behalf, offer advice and guidance on how to improve one's presentation of self and enlarge the mentee's perception of what they can do. The organization can influence decisions within political, economic, and social institutions. Most current mentoring programs have focused on local mentoring in which previous research has argued that the added value of mentoring lies in the knowledge of local labor markets (De Cuyper, 2022). The findings of this research indicate that national mentoring reaches out to a bigger audience of people despite their geographical location. Since its development, the organization has established partnerships with private, community and institutional stakeholders and received state funding which facilitate the implementation of future development projects and ensures growth.

7.5 Limitations

One of the main limitations of the study was its size. The limited time to collect, manage and analyze the data resulted in few participants within each group, and it is therefore not possible to draw broad and universal conclusion about the participants' experiences. The latter is one of the reasons why I mainly focus on the mentees of this study, though the perspectives of all participants are included. Initially, in line with the bigger study, the project was intended to have a greater focus on social networks and weak ties, but the data did not

provide enough knowledge and information on these components. For that purpose, it would have been necessary to draw a sociogram of the participants' network of potential supportive ties, and later, see whether they received useful information or social support. In return, this could have assessed the relevance of ties related to labor market outcomes. After close consideration and discussions with my supervisor, we decided it was beneficial to focus on the narratives of the mentees rather than on the collective level of social networks through mentoring. This also aligns nicely with the theoretical approach of salutogenesis. It should be noted that the experiences of these participants are much more complex than can be represented in a paper of this nature.

English could have affected the data as it is both the participants and my second language. Their level of English varied, although everything was understandable, they may not have been able to express themselves in the same manner as they would have in their mother tongue and meanings may be lost in translation. In addition, as most of my participants lived outside of Oslo, the interviews were on Zoom which may have affected the quality. Meeting the participants in person would have been preferable in order to read body-language better and have a more relaxed setting than what Zoom meetings can offer. Notwithstanding, all interviews went well, and I believe my participants felt safe and were able to trust me with their experiences.

This study shows little evidence of publication bias, so it should be acknowledged that studies that do not support the effectiveness of mentoring programs may be less likely to appear in peer-reviewed journals, which may affect the interpretation of the findings. Despite these limitations, this TNA provides up-to-date assessment of the impact of mentoring-to-work for skilled migrants in Norway and presents stressors, resources, and mechanisms both within and beyond a mentoring program to assess labor market integration and well-being.

Chapter 8. Conclusion & Recommendations

This study set out to explore how a mentoring-to-work program contributes to migrants' labor market integration and well-being by addressing three sub-objectives. First, this study identified stressors experienced by mentees regarding labor market integration. Concerning pre-migration, the migrants experienced different life conditions in their home countries and during the migratory journey, reflecting the difference between refugees' isolating and unpredictable factors compared to the expats and the international student's more stabilizing life situations. Once in Norway, they faced other stressors at different levels, both individual and contextual, to their labor market integration. Language proficiency,

devaluation of foreign education and work experience, implicit discrimination, cultural practices, and networks were the main stressors that limit access to employment and prevent migrants from getting desired jobs. All participants shared that these were the key components to address for an increasing and improving chance for integration. Not only is it difficult to enter the labor market with limited Norwegian language skills, but the findings suggest that language have different implications on skilled versus lower skilled occupations, indicating that certain skilled occupations lack inclusive and informal working environments, which may affect migrants' psychosocial capital. Assumingly, devalued education and discrimination are related to employers' attitudes towards ethnic diversity, but these findings cannot confirm it.

Second, the study aimed to identify the resistance resources to cope with stressors in relation to labor market integration and well-being. It is obvious that migrants must cope with particularly demanding stressors and a complex process of labor market integration. However, it is also clear that a resource-focused mentoring program can help migrants to cope with these stressors. The mentoring program seemed to increase migrants' usage of resistance resources, indicating moderately effective labor market integration for a range of psychosocial and professional challenges across diverse outcome domains. Reconnecting with positive narratives of achievements such as education and aspirations helped migrants to see themselves as resilient and empowered. In this sense, mentors play a pivotal role in identifying the migrants' barriers and strengthen their resources.

Third, the study aimed to identify the mechanisms within mentoring that contribute to employment. Based on the findings, bridging ties initiated by the mentors are unlikely to provide networks that directly increases employment among migrants. However, mentoring generally encompasses supplementary tasks that are helpful in achieving employment *goals*. The findings view that the mentoring program help to navigate opportunities, draft different papers related to job applications, prepare them for job interviews, create social networks through own people of contacts and/or LinkedIn, and assist in Norwegian rules and regulations.

Overall, the migrants demonstrate a strong SOC regarding labor market integration and well-being. The findings indicates that despite having a general understanding and overview of the Norwegian labor market and integrating into a new culture, the migrants faced unexpected stressors. The mentoring program helped to strengthen comprehensibility, giving them the information needed to build up knowledge of the labor market and its requirements which in turn enabled them to view labor market integration as challenging

rather than threatening. Appropriate load-balance was created by actively applying for jobs and acknowledging that obtaining work is difficult for *everyone*, regardless of early experiences. This seems to compensate for a weak comprehensibility of labor market integration.

The paradox migrants experience in a skilled labor market, which offer occupational mobility but to which access is limited, can negatively affect their well-being. The study has addressed that isolation, depression and anxiety are implications of different challenges relating work and well-being. However, these implications only attribute to the study's participants in some ways. They showed an ability to cope with challenges that followed migration and integration by utilizing GRRs, especially education, which arguably shape a strong SOC among the participants. Thus, their SOC moderate or buffer the effects of stressful events like asylum, job loss and work permits. Though some of the challenges differed between the migrants, they used similar resistance resources, both provided within and outside the mentoring program. Where unexpected stressors created discrepancy between expectations and experiences, the mentoring program provided internal (e.g., mental preparation) and external (e.g., job approaches) resources to mobilize the migrants understanding of the Norwegian labor market.

Although the migrants have significant constraints on the labor market, their wish to integrate and construct their future careers in Norway based on their aspirations remained salient and accounts for their meaningfulness, both for integration itself but also for applying for the mentoring program. Additionally, some mentoring pairs developed strong and meaningful relationships. A non-public actor such as a supportive mentor who encourages skill development, building self-esteem and social capital are components that are not formally and solely delegated to other actors of the society.

To conclude, the findings indicate that mentoring is not only 'pedagogical' in the sense of helping migrants find work, but it is a psychosocial space to share and provide cultural and social capital that is locally relevant to each mentee, reflecting reduced risks and challenges on the labor market and increased well-being.

Recommendations:

Practice:

- Reach migrants before or immediately upon arrival (not enough with the introduction program) in Norway to provide a starting ground for learning about policies, procedures, and practices that apply for the Norwegian labor market.

- Mentoring programs should consider ways to let mentees interact with each other beyond the mentoring meetings. This will be an efficient way for them to share experiences, ideas, and networks. Better use of technological tools may be a solution.

- Content-specific situations might have an impact on the type and amount of support the mentor is able to provide (e.g., counselling approaches to sensitive personal issues of the mentees), so it should be clear guidelines or courses for the mentors on how to best handle them.

Research:

- Research is needed to explore which practices within programs strengthen or reduce the effect of mentoring, including cross-national mentoring.

- This study has viewed some differences on how stressors operate across groups of migrants. However, more research is needed on this topic with regards to the different reasons for seeking work in Norway, which in turn highlights the variations on migrant motivations and worries about integration relating socio-economic contexts.

- Formal education seems to remain one of the most important predictors for finding a job and obtaining occupational mobility, but if such qualifications are not attained or recognized, migrants are bound to face difficulties regarding employment. More research is needed on why there is an absence of ethnic diversity in the Norwegian labor market. One way to do this is to investigate how employers and institutions are selecting their employees, and what criteria they are using.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Informed Consent

Are you interested in taking part in the research project:

" Exploring how mentoring facilitates migrant employment in Oslo, Norway"?

This is an inquiry about participation in a research project where the main purpose is to explore how mentoring programs facilitate sustainable, long-term work for migrants. In this letter we will give you information about the purpose of the project and what your participation will involve.

Purpose of the project
This study intends to explore the interconnection between social networks created through mentoring programs and sustainable long-term work for migrants. Mentoring programs involve three parties: the mentee, the mentor and the organization that matches the mentor and mentee. In social network theory strong ties exist within closely-knit groups such as between family members and close friends most of whom know each other. Weak ties arise between groups and form less dense networks. The matching of a mentor with a mentee forms a weak tie.

The primary objective of this study is:
- To generate a knowledge base on which aspects of *mentoring to work for migrants* programs contribute to sustainable long-term work.

The secondary objectives are to identify:
1. The mechanisms, facilitators, and obstacles to labor market participation within mentoring programs.
2. The characteristics of the "weak ties" in the mentoring programs and what features contribute most to labor market participation.

This research study forms an academic thesis in fulfilment of Master of Philosophy in Global Development Theory and Practice, University of Bergen.

Who is responsible for the research project?
University of Bergen is the institution responsible for the project.

Researcher: Silje Martine Sletbak
Supervisor: Marguerite Daniel

Why are you being asked to participate?
You are being asked to participate because you have experience of a mentoring program for migrants in Norway.

What does participation involve for you?
Participation in this study would involve one individual in-depth interview that may take between 30 and 60 minutes. You will be asked to share your experiences of participating in the program, your expectations, and the outcomes.

Participation is voluntary
Participation in the project is voluntary. If you chose to participate, you can withdraw your consent at any time without giving a reason. All information about you will then be made anonymous. There will be no negative consequences for you if you choose not to participate or later decide to withdraw.

Your personal privacy – how we will store and use your personal data
We will only use your personal data for the purpose(s) specified in this information letter. We will process your personal data confidentially and in accordance with data protection legislation (the General Data Protection Regulation and Personal Data Act).

Data will only be accessible to myself (Silje Martine Sletbak) and Supervisor (Marguerite Daniel).

Measures to ensure privacy:
1. Your name and contact details will be replaced with a code.
2. The list of names, contact details and respective codes will be stored separately from the rest of the collected data.
3. Data will be coded using NVivo software.
4. Data will be stored in a password protected personal computer and on the encrypted research server SAFE through University of Bergen, Norway.
5. Written notes will be stored in a locked cabinet.
6. Published data will ensure participant anonymity unless otherwise specified.

What will happen to your personal data at the end of the research project?
The project is scheduled to end **May 2023.** Data will be archived following the EU General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). All personal data, including recordings, will be deleted at the end of the project.

Your rights:
So long as you can be identified in the collected data, you have the right to:
1. Access the personal data that is being processed about you.
2. Request that your personal data is deleted.
3. Request that incorrect personal data about you is corrected/rectified.
4. Receive a copy of your personal data (data portability), and
5. Send a complaint to the Data Protection Officer or The Norwegian Data Protection Authority regarding the processing of your personal data.

What gives us the right to process your personal data?
We will process your personal data based on your consent.

Based on an agreement with *University of Bergen*, SIKT – The Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research has assessed that the processing of personal data in this project is in accordance with data protection legislation.

Where can I find out more?
If you have questions about the project, or want to exercise your rights, contact:

University of Bergen, Norway.
HEMIL Centre.

Silje Martine Sletbak (Researcher)   Our Data Protection Officer:
silje.sletbak@student.uib.no   Janecke Helene Veim
+47 950 09 454   personvernombud@uib.no

Marguerite Daniel (Supervisor)
Marguerite.Daniel@uib.no

Data Protection Service (Sikt), by email:
(personverntjenester@sikt.no) or by telephone: +47 55 58 21 17.

Yours sincerely,

Silje Martine Sletbak   Marguerite Daniel
(Researcher)   (Supervisor)

Consent form

I have received and understood information about the project "***Exploring how mentoring
facilitates migrant employment in Oslo, Norway***" and have been given the opportunity to ask
questions. I give consent:

To participate in *In-depth interview.*
For information about me/myself to be published in a way that I can be recognized (**only** age,
gender, name of organization)

I give consent for my personal data to be processed until the end date of the project, approx.
May 31st, 2023.

(Signed by participant, date)

Appendix 2: Topic Guide

Interview guides

The research study has three groups of participants and therefore three interview guides. Probing questions are in italics.

A. Mentees

1. Please tell me about your life before you joined the mentoring program. What were your aspirations for your life in Norway?
   a. *Qualifications, previous work experience (in home country)*
   b. *expectations of work, education (in Norway)*
   c. *Challenges experienced in Norway before you joined the program.*
2. Please tell me about your motivation in applying to the mentoring program.
   a. *What info, where did you get it? what triggered you, inspired you to apply?*
3. What were your initial expectations of the program?
   a. *Meetings, role of mentor, etc.*

   How have these changed?
4. Please tell me about the mentoring process
   a. *Frequency of contact, activities, etc.*
   b. *Who did you meet, to whom were you introduced and what was the outcome?*
5. Have you experienced any challenges in your participation? How did you deal with these?
   a. *Language?*
   b. *Time?*
6. What have you gained through participation? What is the outcome of your participation? *Probe for networks (did mentor introduce them to others?), the characteristics of the networks (networks related to their qualifications or experience), progress towards sustainable work, etc.*
7. What do you consider contributes to success in mentoring?
   a. *Personality? Match of mentor-mentee?*
8. What have *you* learned?

B. Mentors

1. Please tell me about your role as a mentor in this program. How did you come to be involved?
   a. *What do you think are the most successful aspects? Could you reflect on why it worked? Could you use an anonymous case to illustrate?*
   b. *How has the organisation supported your mentoring? (Have you received any training?) What would be helpful?*
   c. *How has your employer supported your role as mentor? E.g., have been allowed to use work time to do the mentoring?*
2. What kinds of aspirations and expectations do the **mentees** start with? How does the mentoring process meet these aspirations and expectations?
3. Please tell me about the mentoring process.

     a. Frequency of meeting
     b. Activities
     c. Who did you introduce your mentees to?

4. Have you experienced any challenges in your participation? How did you deal with these?
5. What have you achieved? How has your mentoring impacted the mentee? How has it impacted *you*? What have *you* learned through the process of mentoring?

C. Program leader responsible for matching mentors and mentees

1. Please tell me about the aims and goals of your mentoring program.
     a. What needs / gaps in social context are you fulfilling?
2. How do you recruit mentors and mentees?
     a. Do you have specific gender targets in each case?
     b. What kind of background do you want in mentors? Qualifications? Experience?
     c. Ho are mentees selected? Do more apply than there are places for?
3. How does your program function?
     a. Length in programme?
     b. Frequency of meetings?
     c. Training for mentors?
4. How do you match the mentors and mentees? Please describe the process.
     a. By sector? Function? Personality?
5. How does the mentoring *relationship* function in practice?
     a. Are there differences in practice compared to intentions/aims.
     b. Is language an issue?
     c. How do you follow-up the process? Do mentors report – how frequently?
6. Has the mentoring program achieved its goals? What indicates this?
     a. Are networks established?
     b. Do the mentees get jobs?
7. What have *you* learned through the process?

Appendix 3: Thematic Network Analysis

Organizing Themes	Basic Themes	Codes
Stressors to integration	Using up a mentoring place	Double identity
	Needed skills and competencies	Lack of Norwegian
		Lack of knowledge and information
		Reasons for coming to Norway
		Work and living context in country of origin
	Legal requirements	Immigration system barriers
	Job market barriers	Discrimination or exclusion on the job market
		Qualifications and skills devalued
		Job rejections
		Stereotypical work
Mentoring process	Before mentoring	Expectations of mentoring
		Information about the program
		Reasons for coming to Norway
		Reasons for joining mentoring program
	Mentoring relationship	Mentoring meetings
		Mentoring across cities
		Other activities related to mentoring
		Reasons for not attending meetings
	Mentors' perspective	Added values of mentoring
		Clarify boundaries and accountability
		Provide empathy, being professional
		Reasons to become a mentor
		Role of mentor
		Support from the organization
	Outcomes	Learning outcomes
		Outcome of mentoring
Networks	Need for network	Expanded networks
		Network is essential for work in Norway
		Platforms to look for jobs
	Network solutions	Voluntary work or internships

		Mentors' network
		Tools to create networks
Resistance Resources	Employment strategy	Actively creating networks
		Expand career options
		Pragmatic influences on choices
		Resources to escape stereotypical work
		Resources other than mentoring
	Personal strategy	Aspirations for life
		Being proactive
		Mental health
		Self-confidence
		Aspirations for life
	Social strategy	Close ties networks
		Creating a social life
Success and Improvement	Mentoring level	Time and scheduling
		Common space for interaction
		Experience of digital meetings
	Program level	Networking in the programme
		Matching mentor-mentee
		Other activities in the program
Program structure	Functioning of the program	Criteria for inclusion as mentee and mentor
		Features of program
	Outcome of program	Efficacy of program

Appendix 4: SIKT approval for data management and protection (in the bigger project)

Assessment of processing of personal data

16.12.2022
Reference number
540252

Assessment type
Standard

Date
16.12.2022

Project title
The strength of weak ties: how mentoring facilitates migrant employment in Norway:
a pilot study

Data controller (institution responsible for the project)
Universitetet i Bergen / Det psykologiske fakultet / Hemil-senteret

Project leader
Marguerite Lorraine Daniel

Project period
01.01.2023 - 31.05.2023

Categories of personal data

- General

Legal basis

- Consent (General Data Protection Regulation art. 6 nr. 1 a)

The processing of personal data is lawful, so long as it is carried out as stated in the notification form. The legal basis is valid until 31.05.2023.

[Notification Form](#)

Comment
ABOUT OUR ASSESSMENT Data Protection Services has an agreement with the institution where you are carrying out research. As part of this agreement, we provide guidance so that the processing of personal data in your project is lawful and complies with data protection legislation. We have now assessed the planned processing of personal data. Our assessment is that the processing is lawful, so long

as it is carried out as described in the Notification Form with dialogue and attachments.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION You must store, send and secure the collected data in accordance with your institution's guidelines. This means that you must use online survey, cloud storage, and video conferencing providers (and the like) that your institution has an agreement with. We provide general advice on this, but it is your institution's own guidelines for information security that apply.

TYPE OF DATA AND DURATION The project will be processing general categories of personal data until 31.05.2023. LEGAL BASIS The project will gain consent from data subjects to process their personal data. We find that consent will meet the necessary requirements under art. 4 (11) and 7, in that it will be a freely given, specific, informed and unambiguous statement or action, which will be documented and can be withdrawn. The legal basis for processing general categories of personal data is therefore consent given by the data subject, cf. the General Data Protection Regulation art. 6.1 a).

PRINCIPLES RELATING TO PROCESSING PERSONAL DATA We find that the planned processing of personal data will be in accordance with the principles under the General Data Protection Regulation regarding:
• lawfulness, fairness and transparency (art. 5.1 a), in that data subjects will receive sufficient information about the processing and will give their consent
• purpose limitation (art. 5.1 b), in that personal data will be collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes, and will not be processed for new, incompatible purposes
• data minimisation (art. 5.1 c), in that only personal data which are adequate, relevant and necessary for the purpose of the project will be processed
• storage limitation (art. 5.1 e), in that personal data will not be stored for longer than is necessary to fulfil the project's purpose

THE RIGHTS OF DATA SUBJECTS As long as the data subjects can be identified in the data material, they will have the following rights: access (art. 15), rectification (art. 16), erasure (art. 17), restriction of processing (art. 18), data portability (art. 20). We find that the information that will be given to data subjects about the processing of their personal data will meet the legal requirements for form and content, cf. art. 12.1 and art. 13. We remind you that if a data subject contacts you about their rights, the data controller has a duty to reply within a month.

FOLLOW YOUR INSTITUTION'S GUIDELINES We presuppose that the project will meet the requirements of accuracy (art. 5.1 d), integrity and confidentiality (art. 5.1 f) and security (art. 32) when processing personal data. To ensure that these requirements are met you must follow your institution's internal guidelines and/or consult with your institution (i.e. the institution responsible for the project).

NOTIFY CHANGES If you intend to make changes to the processing of personal data in this project it may be necessary to notify us. This is done by updating the Notification Form. On our website we explain which changes must be notified: https://www.nsd.no/en/data-protection-services/notification-form-for-personal-data/notify-changes-in-the-notification-form Wait until you receive an answer from us before you carry out the changes.

FOLLOW-UP OF THE PROJECT We will follow up the progress of the project at the planned end date in order to determine whether the processing of personal data has been concluded. Good luck with the project!

Appendix 5: Table of Mentees

Participant	Age	Region of country	Reasons for coming to Norway	Year of arrival	Education	Occupation
Mentee 1	Late 20s	Central America	Refugee and international student (on a student risk scholarship)	2019	Bachelor: • Spanish language and Literature • Journalism Master: • Spanish Language and Latin American Studies	• Miljøarbeider (social worker) • Content creator
Mentee 2	25	Central Africa	Refugee	2015	Bachelor: • Sociology Master: • Social Work	• Student Part time: • Miljøterapeut (social worker)
Mentee 3	34	Latin America	Expat partner	2022	• Binational Latin America/US relations	• Innovation and knowledge economy advisor
Mentee 4	37	Eastern Europe	Expat partner	2015	• Economy • Psychology • Technology (course)	• Web developer
Mentee 5	32	Southeast Europe	International student	2019	Bachelor: • Political science Master: • Global development	None

Grey = taken in Norway