How do you work in a PSYCHOLOGICALLY UNTRADITIONAL field?

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Abstract

The present study is founded in an interest about what it is like to be a new psychologist working in a field, where there are not many psychologists employed. It does so with the research question:

How do newly qualified psychologists experience transitioning into the labour market, especially when working in fields that are not associated with PPR or clinical psychological work?

The study takes a phenomenological approach and constructs a theoretical framework building mainly on Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and Banduras concept of self-efficacy in order to understand and interpret the empirical data gained from video interviews with four newly qualified psychologists. It uses a semi-structured interview guide to interview the four psychologists, two of whom are self-employed consultants, one works with an NGO, and one works with research at a hospital. The analysis identifies four themes of interest to the research question. These are: *Theme 1: Expectations for newly graduated psychologists*, *Theme 2: Personal and societal aspects*, *Theme 3: Abilities and competences*, and *Theme 4: Psychology in a new context*. These four themes serve as the foundation for the discussion, where two prominent features from the themes are held against the theoretical framework of the thesis with the research question in mind. Additionally, the methodologies of the thesis are discussed and evaluated in accordance with the three quality criteria: generalisation, reliability and validity.

Conclusively, the study finds that the participants experience transitioning to and working in a psychologically untraditional field as immensely rewarding but hard earned on account of the need to create their own network of support for the psychological aspects of their job. All participants exhibit a high sense of self-efficacy and a large passion for the job content, which render them more resilient and more able to thrive in their respective job positions. Thus, this study finally suggests that entering a psychologically untraditional field might require a certain ability to endure a lack of traditional support and a strong passion for the goals you set up for yourselves or the ability to develop these skills along the way. Any which way, these four psychologists not only create a meaningful working life of their own, they also break new land for the psychological profession as such. It is indeed possible to apply the psychological competences acquired at the university in new settings.

Preface

This thesis is the result of hard work through multiple obstacles during the first half year of 2020, where the excitement and tension of finishing a five year long education culminated with a global crisis on a scale rarely seen before, and as such it has had a rough beginning – nevertheless I could not be more proud of the finished product!

Throughout my time at the university, I have had many doubts about my choice of education, given that I started my years as a high schooler out with an interest in arts, animation, and storytelling. When I applied for the psychology major at Aalborg University on account of my love for working and learning with other people, I struggled to join these two worlds of my life; the artisan and the psychology student. As a final attempt, this thesis was founded in the motivation of giving in to the dilemma of marrying opposite areas. This resulted in the topic of the thesis being how other people experience joining multiple interests to create their career; in this case how psychologists experience working in alternative psychological positions.

Too many people to count has helped me on this journey, but most noteworthy and relating to the last semester and this thesis, I would like to give my thanks to my supervisor Sarah Awad, who through this whole process has supported me in my own decisions and has been a source of inspiration regarding the content of the project. Thank you! I owe my thanks to Casper Feilberg as well, as he took the time and energy to work and spar with me, ultimately guiding me towards the theoretical standing point I ended up grounding the study in. To my friends Kathrine Johansen, Jonathan Smed Iversen and Rikke Møller Larsen, thank you for our discussions concerning the project and practical support. You aided me in areas where one person was not enough. My gratitude also goes out to the participants of this study, who graciously lent me their time, thoughts, and experiences. Thank you very much.

Perhaps the greatest thank you is dedicated to my mother, Pia Bøgelund Emtkjær, who most of all has been on the side-line of every stage of the process and has offered invaluable insight into the project as well as myself. You pushed me when needed, because you saw my strength and wanted me to do my absolute best. Without you, this semester would have looked very different.

A final and resounding thanks to my partner, who, if anybody, has experienced the full range of my emotions throughout this process of writing a master's thesis. You have my love and my gratitude. Thank you, Timothy!

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Chapter One: Introduction

Chapter One: Introduction

"How do you intend to use what you've learned from the psychology course in this line of work?" inquired the woman interviewing me for a video editing job for the communication department at Aalborg University. Caught off guard, I searched my head for an answer, while I smiled disarmingly to my two interviewers. The position was mostly sought out by students from the media and design courses; hence my interviewers' intriguing attitude towards me, a psychology student. Having a personal interest for digital media, I had applied for the job as something fun to do part-time, which meant that I saw no connection between psychology and video editing. And so, to my own disappointment, I couldn't give a satisfying answer.

This experience serves as the foundation for my curiosity and the personal motivation for this project. Three years has passed since the experience with the job interview, and I am now months away from applying for my first full time job as a newly qualified psychologist, which generates a wave of questions related to which jobs I am going to apply for. Additionally, during this last semester of the psychological major, the Danish psychological union, Dansk Psykologforening (DP), held a webinar for all soon-to-be new psychologists, where they focused on the fact that you should be open to different job possibilities and not expect to get a 'traditional' psychological job as the first thing. This was interesting to me, as it echoed my experience at the job interview and fuelled my interest as to what it means to be a new psychologist and what they contribute with in the labour market, especially those who work in fields not related to therapy.

In the DP brochure, *Karriereveje for Psykologer* (2015), which is a career guide for newly graduated psychologists, 19 psychologists from both the public and the private sector discuss their psychological work and offer advice for new psychologists looking to apply for their first jobs (Appx. 7). Of the 19 psychologists, 12 of them highlight the importance of thinking outside the box, expanding one's definition of a psychologically relevant job, and not to dismiss opportunities that are not clinical, therapeutic or pedagogical (Appx. 7). Graduates should be "(…) creative and seek alternative job options (…) and explain why psychologists' competences can be valuable for companies" (Appx. 7, p. 7, my translation). This statement comes from Katja Brandt Jensen, one of the 12 psychologists, whose advice encourages graduates to think outside the box. In the article, *Noget med mennesker* (2013), from the

psychological magazine Psykologi Nyt, Katja expands on her journey from psychology student to consultant for the multinational technology company IBM. Pursuing a job at IBM, she "(…) had to get used to the thought of looking at psychology with a broader perspective than what [she] had done during the time of [her] study" (Carl, 2013a, p. 16, my translation), and furthermore, she had to rethink what it meant to be a psychologist, since she didn't get her authorisation: "I thought that getting my authorization was a necessary stamp of approval, but now I see that it's not relevant to my current position" (Carl, 2013b, p. 16, my translation). That the identity of a psychologist is closely linked to therapy and assessment is a classical stereotype, and what Katja and the other psychologists from the brochure tries to do, is to encourage new psychologists to reshape and challenge the common conception of what a psychologist is. Lastly, Katja emphasises that the pursuit of this position was rooted in her own interest and should other newly graduated psychologists want to try alternative career routes, they should do so with their own personal interests in mind (Carl, 2013, p. 16).

While not investigating psychologists, in his PhD from 2014, Feilberg studies psychology students and how they form necessary psychological competences, relevant later in their psychological career (Feilberg, 2014, p. 592). Through interviews with psychological students and drawing on an existentialistic phenomenology, Feilberg explains how psychological students form both a psychological habitus and a scientific habitus during their time at the university in order to understand others and act professionally for their upcoming jobs (Feilberg, 2014, p. 592). Thus, Feilberg tries to capture what it means to be a psychological student and how they form their personal and professional competences that qualify them for psychological jobs.

Where Feilberg focuses on psychology students, Kuittinen et al. (2014) looks at newly qualified psychologists with 1-6 years of professional experience (p. 63). Psychologists in their study were asked to rank 52 statements regarding their competences (Kuittinen, Meriläinen, & Räty, 2014, p. 63). These statements were categorised into four conceptual domains, which include: Working with clients; Professional identity and autonomy; Adjusting to the boundaries of the psychologist's work; and Multi-professional work and professional development (Kuittinen et al., 2014, p. 63). They found that the psychologists, who had most recently graduated, rated their competence mastery higher than the psychologists, who had a few years of

experience (Kuittinen et al., 2014, p. 76). Kuittinen et al. (2014) speculate that the enthusiasm and excitement linked to starting a new job may act as a motivational factor and explain this tendency (p. 76). In their study, Kuittinen et al. (2014) therefore find newly graduated psychologists with a high perceived level of competency mastery, but they do not conduct interviews to gain more insight into this topic and how the newly graduated psychologists experience using these competences.

Why young people may be motivated to perform highly, is something Katznelson et al. (2018) have researched in their book *De topmotiverede unge*. They interviewed ten young and highly motivated students with the purpose of exploring young people's relationship to learning, knowledge and education, ultimately providing guidelines for future education and the cultivation of motivation among youth (Katznelson, Sørensen, Nielsen, & Pless Mette, 2018, p. 15). Through these interviews, the young participants convey feelings of boredom, amotivation and not being able to fit into narrow educational boxes, and they furthermore criticise the use of grades within the educational system – all of which can lead to a crisis of meaning for the young people (Katznelson et al., 2018, p. 252). The researchers, however, also identify five situations, in which the young people feel highly motivated (Katznelson et al., 2018, p. 257). These will be further expanded upon in Chapter Three. The young people come from a varied background, and the researchers have thus not investigated the implementation within psychology.

These three studied have in different ways investigated motivated young people and how they come to thrive in their educational or vocational settings, but how do new psychologists experience working with their interests and use the competences they develop during their time at the university? To further spread light on these themes, the thesis takes up the theme of newly qualified psychologists and how they sustain their motivation and experience using their psychological competences in fields of work not 'stereotypically' associated with psychologists. It has societal and educational value to understand the roles of psychology graduates in relation to the labour market and the positions they occupy, since this can further focus the teaching at the universities and inspire both new psychologists and potential employers to expand the view on what a psychologist can do. By looking at a few individual cases, this understanding may develop and provide information about the psychologists graduating from Danish universities.

1.1 Research question

Having tried to paint a picture of some of the reflections and thoughts which has preceded this investigation, I present the following as this thesis' research question.

How do newly qualified psychologists experience transitioning into the labour market, especially when working in fields that are not associated with PPR or clinical psychological work?

To further clarify the research question, three aspects of the question will now be examined; the research question's population, context and issue.

The desired population to investigate in this project are newly graduated psychologists from a Danish university. 'Newly' graduated is in this thesis defines as graduated within the last five years. The contextual frame of this investigation is moreover limited to psychologists with a job within an 'untraditional' field of psychology. In this project, 'traditional' fields are considered the areas where most Danish psychologist work. From a graduation survey, conducted by Aalborg University, around 80% of the graduated psychologists are employed within the public sector, of which more than half work with children and youth, and the remaining predominantly work with social health in institutions and therapy (Bazuin, 2017, pp. 23-27). Of the remaining approximately 20%, who work in the private sector, half of the graduates are employed in social health organisations, and the remaining work with therapy or counselling (Bazuin, 2017, pp. 23-27). Because the majority of graduates work with children and youth (PPR), in the health sector or with therapy, these are in this project considered 'traditional' psychological positions. Therefore, the 'untraditional' fields are defined as the positions occupied the least by psychologists, which specifically means fields not associated with PPR, clinical psychology, and therapy. The research question's issue, which is the focus of the project, is the experience of the newly qualified psychologists. Specifically, the focus will be on their experiences with the transition from the university to their job, and the experiences with their psychological competences in their work.

1.2 The why

In accordance with Kvale and Brinkmann's guidelines for conducting an interview research project, it is important to clarify a projects purpose and what is being

researched, before deciding how to obtain the desired knowledge about the given topic (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015, p. 158). In other words, the project's *why* and *what* comes before the project's *how*. In this section, the why of the project is presented to provide the reader with a clear understanding.

In this chapter, I sketched my personal motivation for this thesis, which is based in the interest and curiosity of what it means to be a newly qualified psychologist, especially those who work in new fields not associated with PPR, therapy, or clinical psychology, and how they contribute with their psychological competences in these fields. Researchers have defined psychological competences within the frame of the psychological education, while others have found that new psychologists tend to believe in their own psychological abilities. Others still have looked at young motivated people with the purpose of pinpointing specific situations, where they feel especially motivated. It therefore seems natural to fill out the intersection between them and try to shed light on newly qualified psychologists and how they experience their psychological competences and how they stay motivated within a psychologically untraditional field

Why I am investigating this project is thus to acquire empirical data on the experiences of newly qualified psychologists working in psychologically untraditional fields to gain knowledge on what they contribute with in the labour market and how the psychologists manage their motivation and experience their new professional situation, ultimately with the goal of providing insight and inspiration for both the universities educating psychologists, as well as the employers and the newly graduated psychologists applying for job positions for the first time. This societal theme of newly graduated psychologist seeking jobs within the Danish labour market is very contemporary and thus an important subject to engage with, especially for those psychologists who seek to contribute to the society in new and interesting ways.

1.3 Structure of the thesis

The project is divided into seven chapters, which are presented in the following:

Chapter One: Introduction serves as an invitation and presentation to the thesis and the overarching themes and aims. Furthermore, the research field is reviewed and the concrete research question guiding the investigation of this project is presented and elaborated.

Following the first chapter, *Chapter Two: Research approach* provides the philosophical framework of the project in form of the research approach to the research question. Here, the phenomenological reflections following the works of Maurice Merleau-Ponty are outlined with the purpose of providing essential tools for how to approach the participants of this project.

In *Chapter Three: Theory*, the main theories used in the analysis are presented focusing on their features relevant to this project. The chapter is divided into two sections: Habitus and Motivation. Within the Habitus section, Bourdieu's concept of habitus is presented along with the concepts of field and capital, following which Feilberg's concepts of psychological habitus and scientific habitus are presented and related to the thesis. These concepts provide a language for the analysis in Chapter Five. In the Motivation section, Bandura's concept of self-efficacy is presented along with Deci and Ryan's concepts of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, which also serve as key concepts in the analysis. Also, in this section the work of Katznelson et al., whose motivational situations provide a framework for the discussion in Chapter Six, is shortly presented as well.

This is followed by *Chapter Four: Method*. This chapter is dedicated to the methodological reflections and considerations of the project, where the specific method, semi-structured interview, is presented along with considerations for doing video interviews and the ethics of doing interviews in general. The interview guide is likewise presented along with the analysis method, interpretative phenomenological analysis.

The theoretical concepts presented in the third chapter are used in *Chapter Five: Analysis* to analyse the participants' experiences with the transition from university to their job, and their experiences with using their psychological competences in their work. Four themes are presented and related to the research question, which serves as the foundation for the next chapter.

In *Chapter Six: Discussion*, the arguments in the previous chapter along with the theories of and concepts of Chapter Three will provide the framework for a discussion of the research questions. Methodological reflections will also be discussed.

In the last chapter, *Chapter Seven: Conclusion and further perspectives*, the final remarks and conclusions will be presented along with future perspectives on the project's topic.

Chapter Two:
Research approach

Chapter Two: Research approach

This chapter contains an introduction to qualitative research, whereupon a phenomenological approach based in Merleau-Ponty's thoughts will be reviewed as it relates to the project. Lastly, reflections on the role of the researcher will conclude the broad philosophical and theoretical framework of this chapter.

2.1 Qualitative research

The research question focuses on the psychologist's experiences within psychologically untraditional fields, and as such a qualitative research method is an appropriate approach in this context. This is elaborated in the following.

Qualitative research covers various research approaches, which differ in their theoretical understanding of the object under study and their methodological focus (Flick, 2009, p. 57). These approaches are concerned with the description and interpretation of subjects and phenomena 'from the inside out', meaning a focus on understanding the experiences and perspectives of the people participating in these studies (Flick, 2009, p. 3; Langdridge, 2007, p. 2). One of the reasons for using qualitative research methods is the fact that qualitative research often offers a more open approach to the phenomena under study, which allows for deeper involvement of the researcher compared to studies which uses a more quantitative research strategy with larger populations and stricter standardised methods (Flick, Kardorff, & Steinke, 2004, p. 5). The qualitative researcher thus seeks to obtain a deep and rich understanding of the subjects and phenomena under investigation, as Blumer (1969) formulates it: "The initial position of the social scientist and the psychologist is practically always one of lack of familiarity with what is actually taking place in the sphere of life chosen for study" (p. 33). The purpose of doing research is therefore to familiarise the unfamiliar, in this case the experiences of newly acquired psychologists working in psychologically untraditional fields.

According to Flick (2009), the central features of qualitative research are the appropriate choice of methods and theories, the analysis of different perspectives of the participants, reflexivity of the researcher's relation to the research, and the variety of different theories and methods (p. 14). Here, the differences between the quantitative and qualitative methods are made clear. The traditional deductive quantitative methods rely on testing hypothesises created from existing theories and

models, whereas inductive qualitative methods focus on empirically grounded theories and less on what is already known (Flick, 2009, p. 15). As with Blumer's quote, psychologists explore the unfamiliar by starting with the phenomena of study in its own context. By focusing on the local context for the phenomena of study, qualitative methods are mindful about the different subjective perspectives present in the field of study, as well as the researcher's relation to that field (Flick, 2009, p. 16). Therefore, qualitative research methods are not based on unified methodological and theoretical concepts, which provides the researchers with a wide variety of theoretical standing points and methodologies (Flick, 2009, p. 16). The specific standing point is explicated in the next section, where I draw upon the perspective of Merleau-Ponty to present the application of phenomenology in this thesis.

2.2 Phenomenology

In the start of the 20th century, the scientific philosophical movement beginning with Edmund Husserl (1859 - 1938) and later developed by Martin Heidegger (1889 - 1976) and his followers emerged under the name of phenomenology (Keller, 2006, p. 10; Langdridge, 2007, p. 10). This movement does not have a definitive definition but can be understood as a particular way in which to experience and describe the world (Feilberg, 2012, p. 47). Collectively, however, the phenomenological movement can be described as a theoretical, methodological, and practical school of thought that focuses on the way things and phenomena appear to the human consciousness (Keller, 2012, p. 11). A phenomenological approach thus focuses on human experience, how meaning appears for the subjects, and additionally takes into account the position of the researcher (Langdridge, 2007, p. 9), which correlates with the fundamental features of qualitative research outlined in the previous section.

In the further presentation of a phenomenological approach, I will draw on the perspectives of French philosopher and existential phenomenologist Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1908 – 1961) to have a clear focal point amidst the broad movement that is phenomenology. Merleau-Ponty's own words describe the phenomenological approach like this:

> Phenomenology is the study of essences, and it holds that all problems amount to defining essences, such as the essence of perception or the essence of consciousness. And yet phenomenology is also a philosophy that places essences back within existence and thinks that the only way to

> understand man and the world is by beginning from their "facticity." (…) It is also a philosophy for which the world is always "already there" prior to reflection – like an inalienable presence – and whose entire effort is to rediscover this naïve contact with the world in order to finally raise it to a philosophical status. (Merleau-Ponty, 2012, p. ixx)

In this quote from the preface of Merleau-Ponty's 1945 work *Phenomenology of Perception*, he introduces phenomenology, of which I will elaborate on two aspects: the essences of phenomena and the notion of human existence. The first aspect highlights the fundamental theme lifeworld essential to phenomenology, and the second aspect leads to the concepts of body and style, which are crucial in the understanding of the concept of habitus.

For Merleau-Ponty, phenomenology concerns itself with investigating the essences of phenomena by starting with the 'facticity' of the subject under study. This means that the phenomenological method strives to return "to things themselves", as Husserl famously puts it (Merleau-Ponty, 2012, p. ixxi), in other words describing the phenomena as they appear, not based on common sense, cultural, or scientific predispositions (Feilberg, 2012, p. 62). Working phenomenologically thus entails returning to the phenomena's essences to be able to describe them as they appear to the subject experiencing them. The subjects' experiences of phenomena is the fundament of all scientific knowledge according to Merleau-Ponty: "The entire universe of science is constructed upon the lived world, and if we wish to think science rigorously, (…) we must first awaken that experience of the world of which science is the second-order expression" (Merleau-Ponty, 2012, p. ixxii). The 'lived world' to which Merleau-Ponty refers is the Husserlian concept of lifeworld (Lebenswelt), which Husserl described as the "natural concept of the world" (Merleau-Ponty, 2012, p. ixxi). To Husserl, this concept was the only real world of every single person, which is the obvious and unquestioned foundation for human behaviour and thinking (Hitzler & Erbele, 2004, p. 67). Merleau-Ponty, along with Heidegger, Sartre, Gadamer, and Ricæur, represent the existentialistic stance within phenomenology that centres on the concreteness of human being as opposed to the focus on transcendental consciousness (Feilberg, Norlyk, & Keller, 2018, p. 216). This is evident by the "ontological primacy of meaning and of the lifeworld" (Feilberg et al., 2018, p. 216) within this phenomenological thinking. With the lifeworld at the centre of the phenomenological

method, Merleau-Ponty emphasises that it is through our lived worlds that we understand phenomenology and the phenomena under study (Feilberg, 2012, p. 46). Thus, the essences of phenomena are emphasised by Merleau-Ponty to entail a focus on the lifeworld of the subjects studied, hereby making it possible to describe the essences of the phenomena in their facticity.

To Merleau-Ponty, the lived world is experienced through one's body, and this makes the body an ontological necessity, since everything we are and know, we know from the perspective of the body (Merleau-Ponty, 2012, p. ixxii). We not only *have* the body, we *are* the body (Keller, 1995, p. 7). Therefore, the human existence is linked to the body that is *with* us (Merleau-Ponty, 2012, p. 93). This means that all experience starts from the body: "The body is the vehicle of being in the world and, for a living being, having a body means being united with a definite milieu, merging with certain projects, and being perpetually engaged therein" (Merleau-Ponty, 2012, p. 84). Human existence is thus furthermore characterized by the familiarity we experience with our accustomed surroundings and environment; we are 'united' with the milieu. When Merleau-Ponty writes that the world is 'already there', he refers to the fact that our body is the fundament of our existence and our experiences are pre-reflexive in nature, because we do not constantly think about or question our behavior or everyday activities, therefore the world exists before we reflect on it. These familiar activities become our habits, as Merleau-Ponty explains in the following quote:

> To habituate oneself to a hat, an automobile, or a cane is to take up residence in them, or inversely, to make them participate within the voluminosity of one's own body. Habit expresses the power we have of dilating our being in the world, or of altering our existence through incorporating new instruments. (Merleau-Ponty, 2012, p. 144f)

By acquisitioning new habits, we change our fundamental existence and behaviour in the world and include this into our bodily schema by 'dilating our being in the world'. I will furthermore highlight the concept of style, which Merleau-Ponty presents as a way to perceive this pre-reflective world (Feilberg, 2014, p. 249; Merleau-Ponty, 2012, p. ixxi). Style refers to something pre-conceptual and a sociocultural attitude (behaviour or habitus) (Feilberg, 2012, p. 47). This style both relates to something personal and something general, because the personal and the collective lifeworld are two aspects of the same lived experience, which is the basis for the style with which

we approach and describe experience (Feilberg, 2012, p. 47f). The understanding of the body, according to Merleau-Ponty, and the notion of style serve as the basis and inspiration for the concept of habitus in Bourdieu's writings and the concept of psychological habitus in Feilberg's study. This will be elaborated on in their respective sections in the next chapter. As we will furthermore see, this is also the basis for the methodological approach in this thesis, because the focus is on the psychologists' (the participants) experiences, which are uniquely theirs but may also contain elements of other psychologists' experiences, since our individual lifeworld is part of a common human lifeworld (Feilberg, 2012, p. 47f). Thus, the focus of the investigation will remain on the participants' lives and their experience in order to describe their situation as it relates to the topic of this thesis.

The phenomenological approach presented on the basis of Merleau-Ponty's writings serves as the foundation for the thesis' methodological approach, in that to enlighten the research question the focus of the investigation will be to understand and describe the lived world of the participants and attention will be payed to the fact that a phenomenological approach requires a particular style of which to understand these phenomena.

2.3 Role of the researcher

The motivation for this thesis was deeply personal and therefore it is important to include reflections on how my role as the researcher has shaped and affected the study at hand. In the phenomenological approach of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, lifeworld is central for carrying out studies and describing phenomena: "Everything that I know about the world, even through science, I know from a perspective that is my own or from an experience of the world without which scientific symbols would be meaningless" (Merleau-Ponty, 2012, p. ixxii). Therefore, the lifeworld of the researcher serves as a guide in the investigation, and the knowledge and experience of the researcher determine what issues and phenomena receive attention. Consequently, it is important to acknowledge one's preconceptions regarding the subject under study. When collecting or producing data, the data does not speak for itself, it needs the researcher to analyse and compare them according to theoretical ideas, which provides the researcher with great power and the need for transparency is even higher (Brinkmann, 2015, p. 163).

It is my interest in the psychologically untraditional or uncommon fields of work that motivated the research question, and my focus throughout the project is directed at gaining more knowledge on how it is to be a newly qualified psychologist in such a field, as it relates to my own future graduation. Therefore, I have methodologically inquired into areas of motivation and competences present for the participants to get insight into the obstacles and experiences of these aspects. Specifically, I have used this focus when selecting and designing a method that supports the research question, as well as influencing the interview guide and directing the course of the interviews. Furthermore, by being aware of my own role in the project, I have vice versa used this focus to see the opposite side of the study and in that way adapted a different perspective in the discussion of both the material and the project. Throughout the project I strive to be transparent and clearly reference my own stance and perspective, as it is the understanding of yourself that enables you to use your lifeworld to better understand others (Feilberg, 2014, p. 544), which is why I have included myself as researcher in this thesis.

Chapter Three:
Theory

Chapter Three: Theory

The chapter is divided into two parts, the first part focusing on concepts relating to notion of habitus and the second focusing on the notion of motivation.

3.1 Habitus

In the first part of the theory chapter, concepts relating to how humans interact with their social environments will be presented and discussed to assist the analysis of the psychologists' experiences transitioning to and working in psychologically untraditional fields. To this end, Maurice Merleau-Ponty has been used to establish the framework for human habits and being in the social world, which will be further expanded upon with Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, field and capital, and Casper Feilberg's concept of psychological habitus.

3.1.2 Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, field and capital

A man inspired by the writings of Merleau-Ponty is the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1930-2002), who contributed with his social theory of habitus, capital, and field. With these concepts, Bourdieu attempts to explain human behaviour and social life (Keller, 2006, p. 129), and I will present them in the following as they relate to the project.

Bourdieu's motivation for developing a new theory in social science was to transcend the theoretical oppositions of subjective/objective and structure/action (Calhoun, Gerteis, Moody, Pfaff, & Virk, 2002, p. 259; Postone, LiPuma, & Calhoun, 1993, p. 1). Both objectivism and subjectivism divorce action from structure, with subjective approaches focusing on agent's experiences, beliefs and judgements, and grants these agents with the power of forming the world and act in it according to their own desires, where objective approaches focuses on the social structures and how material conditions shape social thought (Postone et al., 1993, p. 3). Drawing on objective approaches to understand structures and subjective approaches to understand action, Bourdieu strives to create a reflexive approach to social life surrounding the notion of social practice operating with the three fundamental concepts of habitus, capital, and field (Calhoun et al., 2002, p. 260; Postone et al., 1993, p. 1).

> The conditions associated with a particular class of conditions of existence produce habitus, systems of durable, transportable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as

> principles which generate and organize practices and presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them. (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 53)

With the concept of habitus, as presented above, Bourdieu emphasises how sociocultural conditions produce systems of dispositions and tendencies which functions as social structures and guidelines that, in turn, structure and form the present social guidelines, making it circular in nature. In Bourdieu's own words, habitus is thus both structured and structuring; human behaviour and social norms are created by and creates human behaviour and social norms. Habitus is this "(…) generative and unifying principle which retranslates the intrinsic and relational characteristics of a position into a unitary lifestyle" (Bourdieu, 2002, p. 272). The habitus is at the same time both distinct and distinctive, thus saying something about what the individual wears, how she walks, her musical preferences and so on while simultaneously distinguishes between what is good and bad and what is right and wrong – even though this varies between individuals and habitus (Bourdieu, 2002, p. 272). Because each habitus is distinct, is becomes clear what and who is different; what an individual likes and dislikes tells something about them and enables other individuals to identify them as distinct and different from themselves (Bourdieu, 2002, p. 273). Therefore, habitus is about what distinguishes individuals, groups, and people from each other, but also what unifies them. Every disposition is either different from or the same as other individuals, groups, or people. Furthermore, one of the functions of the concept of habitus is to "(…) account for the unity of style, which unites the practices and goods of a single agent and a class of agents" (Bourdieu, 2002, p. 272), which means that just as the phenomenological concept of lifeworld, the individual and the collective aspect of habitus can be two halves of a whole, but at the same time, every habitus is unique to the particular agent. Habitus is thus dispositions and characteristics associated with both a single person and a group of people, and therefore creates both individual and collective practices (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 54). Each individual belongs to a certain group in which they develop their habitus, which mean that the habitus of the individual tends to display many specific characteristics of that group, and in that sense, the "individual habitus is but a variant of a collective root." (Crossley, 2001, p. 84). This relates to the project when thinking about individual psychologists and psychologists as a collective. We have our own personal way of doing things, internalised by previous experiences,

but our way of doing things may also correspond to how people in our own "group" do things, which creates something characteristic about us as a whole. When inquiring about what psychologists contribute with in a professional setting, it is therefore relevant to include a concept that enables the researcher to see the specific features of the individual psychologist as well as psychologists in general. This concept, habitus, distinguishing between what is right and wrong – something that both structures us and something that we structure – is what Feilberg takes inspiration from and incorporates in his theory of psychological habitus, which I will present in the next section – for now, let us turn our attention to Bourdieu's accompanying concepts of field and capital.

The habitus concept is one of the three fundamental concepts in Bourdieu's social theory. The other two, which functions in conjunction with habitus, are capital and field (Crossley, 2001, p. 86). The action generated and shaped by habitus exists within a context with corresponding resources. The contexts are what Bourdieu calls fields and the resources available to the actor within that field he calls capital (Crossley, 2001, p. 86). Fields are the domains of social life with their own rules, positions, and practices (Calhoun et al., 2002, p. 262). Therefore, each field is semi-autonomous and has their own history, logic of action, forms of capital, and habitus of its agents (Postone et al., 1993, p. 5). The psychological profession is an example of a social field. The relationship between habitus and field is circular, as involvement with a field is what shapes the habitus and, in turn, habitus shapes the actions that reproduces the field (Crossley, 2001, p. 87).

Capital is "accumulated labor (…) which, when appropriated on a private, i.e., exclusive, basis by agents or groups of agents, enables them to appropriate social energy in the form of reified or living labor" (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 241). Capital is therefore seen as a "good", something that has exchangeable value in a particular field (Crossley, 2001, p. 87). These goods are sought out and accumulated by the agents inhabiting the field as a way to control their own future as well as that of others (Postone et al., 1993, p. 4). This accumulation of resources and goods defines their capital and their social life chances, as people with many resources and a high capital can position themselves better within that field. Bourdieu distinguishes between four capitals: economic, cultural, societal, and symbolic (Bourdieu, 2002, p. 243; Crossley, 2001, p. 87). These capitals are social by nature, because they "derive their meaning from the social relations that constitute different fields" (Calhoun et al., 2002, p. 263).

Having a high capital of one form, providing individuals with power in a particular field, may even transfer to other fields (Calhoun et al., 2002, p. 263; Postone et al., 1993, p. 5). This is most notable with the economic capital, as money translates easily into different fields. If you have high financial capital, you can afford higher education for you and your family, which elevates your societal capital. Capitals only function and exist in relation to a field, and the variety of forms of capital is what structures the organisation of the different field, which generates the different practices and habitus associated with the field, thus creating the desire for specific forms of capital (Calhoun et al., 2002, p. 262). Even though economic capital is by far the most effective of the four, I will dive into the cultural capital, as it relates to education among other things. According to Bourdieu, cultural capital exists in three forms:

> In the *embodied* state, i.e., in the form of long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body; in the *objectified* state, in the form of cultural goods (pictures, books, dictionaries, instruments, machines, etc.) (…); and in the *institutionalized* state, a form of objectification which must be set apart because, as will be seen in the case of educational qualifications, it confers entirely original properties on the cultural capital which it is presumed to guarantee. (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 243, italics in original)

Reminiscent of Merleau-Ponty's understanding of habits and the body, cultural capital can be acquired at times unconsciously, since the embodied state of cultural capital links directly to the agent's body and the specific predispositions, traits, and inclinations that defines the individual and cannot be done second handily (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 244f). Objectified cultural capital is the agent's material belongings, which also asserts the individual's status and power in the different fields. The institutionalised state of cultural capital refers to cultural competence and authority and are linked to the skill and qualification associated with academic institutions (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 247f), i.e. the psychological education provided at the Danish universities. The institutionalised state somewhat neutralises the embodied qualities of cultural capital, which constrain the bearer to their biological limits, because the institutional state of cultural capital "guarantees" the bearer certain academic benefits and values (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 247f). This can be seen in cases, where individuals are guaranteed a better pay on account of their degree as compared to autodidact individuals within the same field of work (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 247).

In social life, habitus is the underlying structure embedded in society and it conditions how we act and think and what we like and dislike. In the social fields a range of possibilities and expectations determines how we enter them with the knowledge we have about ourselves, our habitus, and reasonable and unreasonable way of acting within those fields. Because habitus is both structured and structuring, our behaviour is conditioned by the rules and possibilities of the fields. Regarding the research question, the concepts of habitus, capital, and field will serve as a tool to distinguish the different fields of work the participants' find themselves in as well as a way to approach the abilities of the participants that are associated with being a psychologist.

3.1.3 Casper Feilberg's concept of psychological habitus

Drawing inspiration from Merleau-Ponty and Bourdieu, among others, Casper Feilberg (2014) has developed the concepts of psychological habitus and scientific habitus in his PhD dissertation. To Feilberg, Bourdieu's concept of habitus can be used to capture a specific pattern of behaviour, which operates on two levels; the individual and the collective (Feilberg, 2014, p. 81). It is this ability to comprehend both a person's and a culture's or a profession's characteristic behaviour that Feilberg employs to thematise the cultured (formed) psychological and scientific habitus present in psychology students (Feilberg, 2014, p. 92). Thus, Feilberg uses Bourdieu's concept of habitus as an analytical tool to grasp both the specific aspects of a psychology student as well as the general features of the psychological profession (Feilberg, 2014, p. 246)

According to Feilberg, a psychological habitus is a certain corporal sense towards phenomena of an existential nature (Feilberg, 2014, p. 248). For the psychological students in Feilberg's study to cultivate a psychological habitus, they need to "learn how to understand other people in a qualified way in the light of our own lifeworld" (Feilberg, 2014, p. 592). In this sense, the psychological habitus is a special perception or attention towards phenomena and experiences. Feilberg furthermore highlights that to gain a psychological habitus, one must get to know oneself to be able to understand the psychological aspects and issues experienced by others (Feilberg, 2014, pp. 544-546). Therefore, a psychological habitus is a habitually constructed readiness to perceive undifferentiated forms of meaning, enabling the individual to get closer access to different phenomena's entirety and complexity

(Feilberg, 2014, p. 249). The habitually constructed readiness is achieved, Feilberg emphasises, by drawing on one's own lifeworld and experiences with a psychological structured perception, which allows certain aspects to emerge at the expense of others (Feilberg, 2014, p. 248). By drawing on our own experiences, these may overlap the other person's experiences and behaviour, creating what Feilberg call the "common third" (Feilberg, 2014, p. 248). In the case of psychologists, this mean that they, through the building of a psychological habitus, are aware of the aspects and phenomena present both in the psychologist and the person, they are engaging with. Furthermore, Feilberg highlights that this drawing on one's own lifeworld and getting involved with a topic can lead to aha-experiences (epiphanies), which is an experience that reconstructs our understanding of a specific topic (Feilberg, 2014, p. 109). Aha-experiences lead to new understandings because you become aware of an inconsistency with your previous understanding (Feilberg, 2014, p. 111), just as a psychological habitus makes psychologists sensitive to others, enabling them to change their understanding of that person. Therefore, a psychological habitus is within this thesis understood as a particular way to approach subjects and phenomena where you have a predisposed sensitivity towards understanding others in their complexity. Hence, the psychological habitus is more than simply emphasising with the person in front of you, it is a corporal sense of certain styles of phenomena and people, where you use yourself as a way to understand the other. Drawing on your own lifeworld and working with yourself in order to culture your way of approaching and understanding others is therefore an essential quality of being a psychologist, and the notion of a psychological habitus will be fundamental in the analysis of the participants' statements and experiences.

The psychological habitus is in itself not enough to grasp the complete habitus of an effective and good psychologist, argues Feilberg, and adds the scientific habitus as a cornerstone of the psychologist's complete and cultured habitus (Feilberg, 2014, p. 246). In other words, there is a limit to how far the psychological understanding, gained through a psychological habitus about psychological phenomena and issues, reaches in understanding the bigger picture of the situation (Feilberg, 2014, p. 259). According to Feilberg, a scientific habitus is a specific way of approaching a problem based on an array of reflected choices and considerations (Feilberg, 2014, p. 260). He explains it as such: "(…) This psychological sense for the case in question must be enriched by the use of scientific theory and method, if the students are to be able to act

in a professional way when times come" (Feilberg, 2014, p. 592). With this habitus, the purpose is to see the phenomena from the outside and rely on the theories and the methodological approaches (Feilberg, 2014, pp. 256-260). To gain the best understanding of the different aspects and phenomena of a case, both the psychological and scientific habitus should be cultivated, and they do indeed presuppose each other, because they isolated need the other habitus to compliment them (Feilberg, 2014, p. 266). This is what Feilberg calls a cultured or a moulded psychological and scientific habitus (Feilberg, 2014, p. 268; pp. 592-594). The cultured psychological and scientific habitus is characterised by alternating between a psychological and a scientific approach towards the phenomena, in an attempt to understand a problem or a case (Feilberg, 2014, p. 268). It is thus an approach of both understanding and explaining, where you engage and emphasise with the lived phenomena as well as trying to grasp and explain the phenomena to get an objectified understanding of the case (Feilberg, 2014, p. 268). Having and utilising a cultured psychological and scientific habitus means to use oneself through psychological theory and method to understand others and the world in a qualified, self-reflexive, independent and safe way (Feilberg, 2014, p. 275). Hence, the psychological habitus focuses on using oneself to understand others and the world, whereas the scientific habitus focuses on applying theory and method (Feilberg, 2014, p. 275)

The basic understandings of Merleau Ponty outlines the general approach of this thesis, where the lifeworld of the participants and to some degree the lifeworld of the researcher is at the centre of the investigation. From this understanding of the concepts of body and style, Bourdieu establishes a general theory of the underlying structures of social life, which provides a frame for the broader scene of distinguished groups within the society. Within this context, Feilberg provides a more specific theory on a particular group within the society; a group that belongs to a psychological way of thinking and behaving. Thus, Bourdieu and Feilberg enable me with tools for approaching the participants with a broad societal perspective and a narrow individual and group-specific perspective.

3.2 Motivation

In the second part of the theory chapter, attention will be drawn to concepts that focus on human motivation. The reason for this, is to have concepts to explore and address the motivation behind the psychologists' decisions to work in psychologically untraditional fields. In this endeavour, Albert Bandura's concept of self-efficacy and Edward Deci and Richard Ryan's concept of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation is presented, as they relate to the project.

3.2.1 Albert Bandura's concept of self-efficacy

The focus on the participants' experiences with their own competences requires an additional theoretical framework to approach their statements, apart from the concepts discussed in the first part of the chapter. This is the reason for including Albert Bandura's concept of self-efficacy in the project, which this section will present along with the four ways of developing a high sense of self-efficacy.

In his social cognition theory, Albert Bandura (1925 -) presents the concept of self-efficacy, which in its essence boils down to "people will only try to do what they think they can do, and won't try what they think they can't do" (Brown, Malouff, & Schutte, 2014, p. 13). When Bandura developed the roots for this theory in the 1960s, the dominating model of human behaviour in the psychological field of personal change was the psychodynamic model, and his motivation behind his theory was to create an alternative view of human behaviour (Bandura, 2004, p. 613f). Where the psychodynamic approach focuses on the inner life and psychic determinism of the individuals, arguing that this regulates human behaviour, social cognition and Bandura's Agentic Theory includes the environmental aspects and put emphasis on the interplay between personal, behavioural, and contextual influences to regulate human behaviour (Bandura, 2004, p. 614; Brown et al., 2014, p. 14).

Self-efficacy is "people's beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives" (Bandura, 1994, p. 2), and individuals with a high perceived self-efficacy approach difficulty tasks more optimistic and may see them as an opportunity to master them, whereas individuals with a low perceived self-efficacy tend to give up in the face of difficult tasks and see them as personal threats to be avoided (Bandura, 1994, p. 2). Furthermore, individuals faced with obstacles, who doubt their own capabilities, focuses their attention on their own shortcomings and the bad outcomes, instead of on

the task at hand and how to accomplish it (Bandura, 1994, p. 2). According to Bandura (1977), self-efficacy is the most pervasive mechanism of human agency and the foundation of human motivation; self-efficacy has a direct influence on our choices and activities, because we are most likely to do something if we believe in our capabilities and competences (p. 194).

Bandura's theory is a theory of agency. To be an agent, Badura argues, is to intentionally influence one's life circumstances, as well as being proactive, self-regulating, and self-reflecting (Bandura, 2007, p. 995). Bandura highlights these as the four core concepts of human agency: intentionality, forethought, self-reactiveness, and self-reflectiveness (Bandura, 2004, p. 618; Bandura, 2007, p. 995f). Bandura emphasises the importance of the notion of intentionality; we form intentions for the future and create plans for realising them. Forethought helps us create these plans by setting goals for ourselves and anticipating the outcomes of our actions, which helps us motivate ourselves (Bandura, 2004, p. 618). Through self-regulation we adopt social standards and regulate our actions accordingly, and we furthermore reflect on our own efficacy, the meaning of our goals, and the soundness of our actions (Bandura, 2004, p. 618). All these factors contribute individually and collectively to shape the character of our lives and social systems (Bandura, 2004, p. 618). In relation to Bourdieu's concepts, where habitus both regulates and is regulated by our behaviour and the social rules present in the social fields, in Bandura's core concepts of human agency, agents similarly regulate their behaviour to acquire different outcomes. In Bandura's own words, people are "producers of their life circumstances not just products of them" (Bandura, 2004, p. 623). This correlates with the notion of habitus, where individuals both shape and is shaped by their life circumstances. But where Bandura's theory emphasises the individuals' intentional regulating of their behaviour according to their own beliefs, Bourdieu's theory emphasises that agents regulate their behaviour according to their social environment. According to Bandura, individual change is therefore possible with self-regulatory functions developed by motivated individuals, and social systems created by human activity can be changed by collective action (Bandura, 2004, p. 627). Combining these two points, it stands to reason that having a high sense of self-efficacy is effective when wanting to change social norms and the habitus of one's group, as dealing with novel situations require a belief in one's abilities to succeed. Self-efficacy is thus a powerful mechanism. The attention will now be drawn to the development of such a mechanism.

The development and perception of an individual's self-efficacy is, according to Bandura, influenced by four major factors; the factors are mastery experience, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and somatic and emotional state (Bandura, 1994, p. 2f; Bandura, 2004, p. 622f). Among the four ways to develop a strong sense of self-efficacy, the most effective way is through mastery experience (Bandura, 2004, p. 622). Having successfully mastered something, we are more likely to believe we can do something new that is similar to the task which we mastered (Bandura, 2004, p. 622; Brown et al., 2014, p. 16). Hence, success develops a robust belief of self-efficacy, while failure, however, undermines it (Bandura, 2004, p. 622). Another experience, which also is a source of influence for the development of people's self-efficacy belief, is that of vicarious experiences obtained by social models (Bandura, 1994, p. 3). Observing others similar to ourselves successfully accomplish the task at hand, increases our own self-efficacy and the belief that we can do it as well (Bandura, 1994, p. 3). The inverse is equally true; observing someone like ourselves fail the task at hand lowers and threatens our perceived self-efficacy (Brown et al., 2014, p. 18). Furthermore, the more we associate with the person being observed, the greater the impact on our self-efficacy and the belief of whether we can do it or not (Brown et al., 2014, p. 18). The third way of developing a strong sense of efficacy is social persuasion (Bandura, 1994, p. 3). We tend to mobilise and sustain greater effort when verbally persuaded to believing that we have what it takes (Bandura, 2004, p. 622). The last way of developing our self-efficacy is tied to our physical and emotional states (Bandura, 2004, p. 623). By monitoring our levels of anxiety, tension, and psychological as well as physical discomfort, we judge our capabilities in certain situations (Bandura, 2004, p. 623). To modify beliefs of efficacy in such instances, we must reduce our stress reactions and alter our negative emotional tendencies (Bandura, 1994, p. 3)

Therefore, mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physical and emotional states influences our beliefs of self-efficacy and, consequently, our behaviour. These concepts relate to the research question, as they establish a connection between our beliefs in themselves and the experiences we have, thus creating a language to access the participants' experiences with themselves in their work.

3.2.2 Motivational strategies

In the previous section, I argued through Bandura that individual change is possible with self-regulation. Edward Deci (1942 -) and Richard Ryan's (1953 -) Self-Determination Theory (SDT) similarly addresses the notion of self-regulation and human motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2008, p. 182). SDT's main distinction is between autonomous and controlled motivation, which can be understood on a continuum of the degree of self-determination or self-motivation, ranging from amotivation, extrinsic motivation to intrinsic motivation, varying to the extent of autonomy (Deci & Ryan, 2000, p. 72). People who identify with an activity's value and integrate it into their sense of self, experience autonomous motivation, whereas people, whose behaviour is externally regulated by reward or punishment, experience controlled motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2008, p. 182). Intrinsic motivation has the highest degree of autonomy and extrinsic motivation has far less: "Intrinsic motivation [is] the doing of an activity for its inherent satisfactions. (…) Extrinsically motivated behaviors, by contrast, cover the continuum between amotivation and intrinsic motivation, varying in the extent to which their regulation is autonomous" (Deci & Ryan, 2000, p. 72). Therefore, intrinsically motivated activities are the reward in and of itself, whereas extrinsically motivated activities lead to separable outcomes (Deci & Ryan, 2000, p. 71). SDT sees motivation not as an amount but as a type, but also stresses that people do not automatically experience intrinsic motivated behaviour, rather it is the social environments that shape the way individuals act and develop (Standage, Gillison, & Emm, 2014, p. 2). To this extend, SDT specifies three fundamental psychological needs that "are (1) *the need for autonomy* (…), (2) *the need for competence* (..), and (3) *the need for relatedness*" (Standage et al., 2014, p. 2, italics in original). This means that people need to experience their behaviour and activities as self-endorsed and as effective within the settings of the activity and feel connected to and cared for by others (Standage et al., 2014, p. 2)

These needs correlate with the motivational situations found by Noemi Katznelson and colleagues when studying top motivated young people. Their research suggests that motivation is the result of interaction between people within different contexts, making motivation something dynamic that needs to be understood within a specific historic and cultural setting (Katznelson et al., 2018, p. 22). Therefore, motivation is not something tied to the individual but is shaped in the contexts in which

the individual is a part of (Katznelson et al., 2018, p. 23). With this perspective on motivation, one is able to question the contexts of the individual that creates the motivation. Whereas Deci and Ryan see motivation on a spectrum of self-regulation, albeit they emphasise that individuals have a need for closeness to important persons, they hardly touch upon the circumstances and context for the motivation. Here, Katznelson and colleagues argue that one should focus not on *how much* a person is motivated but on *how come* a person is motivated (Katznelson et al., 2018, p. 23). Looking at how motivation appears and becomes present within a person enables researchers to question and improve societal institutions as to how they motivate young people (Katznelson et al., 2018, p. 23f). In their research, Katznelson et al. find five situations, where young people feel especially motivated. These are: 1) Situations that pique their interest, 2) Situations that have a clear goal, 3) Situations that provide them with mastering and success experiences, 4) Situations in which they feel they make a difference, and 5) Situations where social relations acknowledge and push them (Katznelson et al., 2018, p. 257). Looking at these five situations with a Banduraian perspective, it is clear to see the similarities. Situations that provide the young people with successful experiences correlate with Bandura's concept of mastering experiences, as well as the situations where other people recognise and expect things of them can be equated with verbal persuasion. Regarding the situations that pique the young people's interest and situations, where they feel they make a difference similarly correlate to Deci and Ryan's concept of intrinsic motivation, which is done for its inherent satisfaction. Believing in oneself and being motivated may arguably not be the same thing, but according to Bandura and Katznelson et al. they have overlapping features.

The different theories and concepts presented in the second part of this chapter provide a variety of tools on different levels. Bandura's theory of self-efficacy is a general theory of human agency, whereas Deci and Ryan' concepts of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation establishes a framework specific for human motivation, as it relates to the level of autonomy. Lastly, the motivational situations outlined in Katznelson et al. offer a specific perspective on young, highly motivated people and how their context affect them. Whereas the concepts of self-efficacy, intrinsic, and extrinsic motivation are included in the analysis, the motivational theory of Katznelson et al. will serve as

a theoretical frame for the discussion, where I evaluate the participants' experiences in relation to the research question and the contributions of this thesis.

3.3 The what

In this chapter, I have presented two theoretical areas relevant to explore in the circumstances of this thesis; habitus and motivation. I have done so to have a clear focus regarding the interview material. Because of the thesis' topic of newly qualified psychologists' experiences in their work environment, it is relevant to have a theoretical framework concerning human habits and motivation, as it enables me to analyse their experiences in light of their reasons for working and how they handle the work assignments linked to their work.

On the topic of human habits, I have included concepts from both Bourdieu and Feilberg. Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, field, and capital takes a general and societal approach, whereas Feilberg's concepts of psychological and scientific habitus are specifically directed at psychology students, which gives me the opportunity to see the participants within their context and explore their specific roles as psychologists. On the topic of human motivation, I draw on a couple of theories and concepts. Bandura's concept of self-efficacy is relevant in the first part of the participants' journey; coming from the university and starting at their new jobs, where it is interesting to look at their beliefs in themselves. Self-efficacy along with the different ways of developing one's belief of self-efficacy creates a terminology for addressing the participants' experiences with how they use and evaluate their psychological competences. For the second part of their journey, the participants need settle into their jobs, and here it becomes relevant to look at what motivates them to keep going in a psychological untraditional setting. To this end, the use of the concepts intrinsic/extrinsic motivation from Deci and Ryan and the motivational situations from Katznelson et al. will become relevant in the later chapters.

What I am investigating is this project is thus the newly qualified psychologists' behaviour as it relates to Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, field, and capital and how they utilise their psychological competences in the light of the terminology provided by Feilberg's concepts of psychological and scientific habitus. Moreover, I am analysing what makes them believe in themselves as they enter a new field with the help of Bandura's concept of self-efficacy and how they sustain their motivation, once they are working a psychologically untraditional field in light of Deci and Ryan's

concepts of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and Katznelson et al.'s motivational situations.

Chapter Four:
Method

Chapter Four: Method

In this chapter, I present the method of semi-structured interview along with video- and ethical considerations regarding conducting interviews. Furthermore, the interview guide and the analytic tool interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) is presented as well.

4.1 Semi-structured interview

In this section, I highlight the relevant features of a semi-structured interview and the reason for implementing this method within the project.

4.1.1. Central features

A semi-structured interview is, as the name implies, an interview that is somewhat structured beforehand, and it focuses on the interviewee's experiences with a particular topic (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015, p. 47). The interviewer consults an interview guide with a range of topics to be covered as well as a default order and wording of the questions (Robson, 2011, p. 280). Both the order and the wording of the questions tend to be modified in the course of the interview, and new questions may occur in response to the participants answers (Robson, 2011, p. 280). As such, the quality of the interview is dependent on the skills of the interviewer. Studies where the interviewer is closely involved with the research process, as is the case with this project where the interviewer and the researcher is the same person, the semi-structured interview becomes very appropriate, since the researcher thus is an active part of the interview (Robson, 2011, p. 285)

The purpose of a semi-structured interview is to understand the themes of the everyday world from the participants' own perspectives (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015, p. 45). This means that the participants' perspectives become the reality investigated, since they are the experts on themselves. This is what Flick calls subjective theory, which refers to the stock of knowledge that the participants have about the topic of the interview (Flick, 2009, p. 156). In line with the research question, a semi-structured interview enables the interviewer to get access to the participants' subject theory and experiences with transitioning to and working in a psychological untraditional field, while also allowing the interview to flow in the directions, which are important to the participants' experiences. To this end, three types of questions is most often used in semi-structured interviews: open questions, theory-driven questions, and

confrontational questions (Flick, 2009, p. 156f). The open questions are used to gain access to the participants' subjective theory (Flick, 2009, p. 156). The theory-driven questions are based in the research's literature or the researcher's theoretical presuppositions, and finally the confrontational questions are used to re-examine the participants' subjective theories and different perspectives (Flick, 2009, p. 157). All questions should be short and simple and free from academic language and jargon (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015, p. 189). The interviewer should also avoid questions that are double-barrelled, leading, or biased to ensure that the participants understand the questions and answer as truthfully to themselves as possible (Robson, 2011, p. 282). The process, or interview schedule, of a semi-structured interview starts with a briefing of the participant (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015, p. 183). This typically involves an introduction to the interviewer, the interview topic, and the informed consent (Robson, 2011, p. 284). After a 'warm up' consisting of easy, non-threatening open questions, the main body of the interview is carried out, which aims to cover the desired topics of the interview (Robson, 2011, p. 284). By the end, a debriefing strives to defuse any tension and closing the interview in a comfortable manner (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015, p. 183). The open questions make the interview flexible and ensure more in-depth and truer answers from the participants, however the analysis becomes more difficult and time consuming, and the loss of control is greater as well (Robson, 2011, pp. 280ff). As will be presented later in this chapter, the interview guide widely follows the guidelines laid out above in relation to the types of questions and the structure of the interview guide.

The reason why a semi-structured interview works well with a phenomenological standing point, is that the form of the interview allows richer details from the participants. In accordance with the phenomenological guidelines, the phenomena under study in the interview must be handled with deliberate naivety (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015, p. 51). This means that the researcher must be loyal to the phenomena under study by being aware of one's own understanding of that phenomena (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015, p. 49), what Merleau-Ponty highlights as returning to phenomena's facticity. To enlighten the research question, I need access to the psychologists' thoughts and experiences. Other methods, such as observation, would provide me with knowledge of the participants' behaviour at their work situations, but not knowledge on how they experience these situations. Oppositely, collecting biographical diaries from the participants may offer too many experiences without a

clear focus relevant to this project. An interview thus seems very appropriate, when the aim is to get topic-relevant information about the participants' experiences. By using a semi-structured interview, the participants can elaborate and highlight specific situations and experiences important to them, as opposed to a fully structured interview, where the questions are determined beforehand and non-avertable (Robson, 2011, p. 279). An unstructured interview would on the other hand result in loss of control and make the analysis process very difficult (Robson, 2011, p. 280). Considering the fit with both the research question and the phenomenological approach, the semi-structured interview is the method used in this study to get access to the participants' thoughts and experiences.

4.1.2 VoIP considerations

The lockdown on account of the COVID-19 pandemic issued by the Danish government on the 11th of March has affected the methodological layout of this project. To comply with the government's safety guidelines, this investigation employs video software to interview the four participants included in this project.

Video interviews are in the category of VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol), which enables users to send and receive voice and video in a synchronous connection (Lo Iacono, Symonds, & Brown, 2016, p. 1). An interview via the internet with sound and video is not the same as a real face-to-face interview, which means that there are different advantages and disadvantages of using this method. The clear advantage of conducting the interviews via the internet is the reduced costs for both parties involved (Lo Iacono et al., 2016, p. 11). No transport time are necessary, the participants can attend from the comfort of their own home, and the flexibility is greater with both parties able to conduct to the interview in between meetings and errands (Lo Iacono et al., 2016, p. 5). Another advantage of the participants being interviewed in their own setting is that they might be more comfortable and less worried about the time (Lo Iacono et al., 2016, p. 6).

The disadvantage of having the participant in another room is the issue of building rapport, which can be challenging with VoIP methods (Lo Iacono et al., 2016, p. 6). Rapport is about building trust between the participant and the interviewer, and with the distance between the two, there is a loss of social contact and intimacy, since the interviewer is not effectible able to see or show the full extent of their body language, as well as offer small gestures, such as a cup of tea, and engage in other

small appropriate social activities (Lo Iacono et al., 2016, p. 11). However, video interviews offer more in terms of nonverbal clues as opposed to telephone or e-mail interviews; face-to-face interaction are important to register the different gestures and facial expressions (Robson, 2011, p. 292). As an example of this, in the interview conducted with the participant Hanna, a technical issue prevented us from seeing each other (her picture was frozen), which made it very difficult for me, as the interviewer, to read her facial gestures and the mood of the conversation in relation to how I should respond with my own facial expression. Technical difficulties such as these are what can endanger the rapport build with the participants, especially in cases where sensitive topics are present (Lo Iacono et al., 2016, p. 6). In the case of the interview with Hanna, I informed her of the technical issue, and we both decided to finish the interview in spite of this obstacle.

The last issue relevant to mention, is that of recording and storing the data attained from the interview. VoIP use the internet connection via a third party, and as such it is the researcher's responsibility to ensure that the program handles the data in accordance with EU's General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) or inform the participant and get their consent if that is not possible (Lo Iacono et al., 2016, p. 9). The program used in this project is Microsoft Teams, which meet the criteria of GDPR in relation to storage of confidential data (Microsoft.com, 2020).

VoIP methods are relatively new, and many aspects are not yet studied. The three aspects – resources, building rapport, and confidentiality – are what was considered in this project in relation to carrying out interviews via the internet.

4.1.3 Ethical considerations

The ethical considerations in this project concern the method and the analysis. This project aims to gain knowledge on newly qualified psychologists' experiences with working in psychologically untraditional fields. This is the reason for the method being a semi-structured interview. When conducting an interview, the participants' informed consent is required. Informed consent is the agreement between interviewer and interviewee, which includes an explanation of the purpose of the interview, the management of the data, and the terms of participating in the interview (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015, p. 116). Informed consent should only be given to a person competent to do so, and it should be given voluntarily (Flick, 2009, p. 41). The purpose of the informed consent is to ensure that the participants' autonomy is respected (Kvale

& Brinkmann, 2015, p. 116). Similarly, when transcribing the interview, specific details should be encrypted to ensure the confidentiality promised in the informed consent (Flick, 2009, p. 42; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015, p. 117). This means that acquaintances of the participants should not be able to recognise them in the transcript. In addition, when analysing the material from the interview, the participants should also be treated with respect. This means grounding the interpretations in the interview statements and not making unsound interpretations about the participants (Flick, 2009, p. 41).

Concretely in this project, the interview contained an oral consent form (Appx. 6), which every participant was e-mailed and presented for at the beginning of the interview. Subsequently, when the interviews were transcribed, all mentions of names, employers, and other identifying details were encrypted or changed to ensure the confidentiality of the participants. Furthermore, when presenting the participants, only the most essential information is offered to understand the context of the participants. Additionally, all interpretations in the analysis will be grounded in context-given statements from the participants, which will be referenced with both appendix- and line number.

4.1.4 Interview guide

The interview guide (Appx. 5) consists of a briefing, four themes, and a debriefing. The briefing and debriefing contain verbatim scripts to read to the participant as well as questions to the participants consent and questions about the interview. The scripts and questions are meant as a guide for the interviewer, and the exact wording may differ from participant to participant, with the purpose ultimately being to establish rapport with the participant for a comfortable and easy understandable interview situation. Three demographic questions are positioned at the top for the interviewer's attention. They are not direct questions, but rather a checklist to ensure this information is gathered.

The presupposed structure of the four themes is a short introduction to the theme followed by subthemes relevant for the investigation. Under these subthemes are actual questions intended to get access to the participants' subjective theory regarding the subthemes. These questions are constructed with the guidelines discussed in the previous sections in mind; short, easy to understand, and with a neutral attitude. The first theme, *Introduction*, contains open questions, which prompts the participants to

tell freely about themselves. In the second theme, *Transitioning from university to work*, both open questions and theory-driven questions appear. The same is true for the third theme, *Experiences at work*, and the fourth theme, *Discussion about the role of the psychologist*. The theory-driven questions are based on a pilot-study with a newly graduated psychologist, where these and other themes emerged. Theory supporting the themes were familiarised beforehand, enabling the construction of the current questions.

4.1.5 Presentation of interview context

The connections to the participants was established through e-mail in April of 2020. The interview setting consisted of a webcam connection between me and the participants. They were either at home or at work, and I resided alone in my living room. Four psychologists, graduating within the last three years from Danish universities, were interviewed and the interviews were recorded using the software Microsoft Teams. The sample consisted of two women and two men; Mia, Hanna, Alex and Peter. They will be further presented in Chapter Five.

4.1.6 Transcription of the data

The purpose of transcribing an interview is to present the verbal conversation as accurately as possible on paper in accordance with the study's focus (Kowal & O'Conell, 2004, p. 248; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015, p. 240). The focus thus determines the cause of action regarding the transcripts, since different methods of transcription make different analysis available. Furthermore, every transcription process is a reduction of the richer and more complex primary data (interview) and secondary data (recording) (Kowal & O'Conell, 2004, p. 249). As Kvale and Brinkmann (2015) describe it: "To transcribe is to transform" (p. 236). Therefore, it is important to clarify the aim of the transcription and decide on the appropriate transcription procedure (Kowal & O'Conell, 2004, p. 249). Different transcribing representations exists. Here, I present four types: standard orthography, literary transcription, eye dialect, and phonetic transcription (Kowal & O'Conell, 2004, p. 250). They vary in relation to how true they are to the conversation and how much they follow the grammatical rules, making it easier to read (Kowal & O'Conell, 2004, p. 250). In this project, the principles of orthography and literary transcription were considered. Both these methods are based on the norms of written language, with literary transcription also including elisions and assimilations of the spoken word (Kowal & O'Conell, 2004, p.

250). When constructing the transcription system for this project, the aim was to make the scripts easily readable following the grammatical rules of written language, while still allowing the individual participants to be portrayed with their respective speech style. The argument for this is that the analysis is thematic, which does not require a thorough phonetic transcription as conversation analysis requires (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015, p. 241). The specific rules of the system used in this project is presented in Table 1: Transcription rules.

Table 1: Transcription rules

Rule	**Example**
Filler words are removed	"Øh", "Øhm", "Mhm", "Tja"
False sentence starts are removed	Repeating words at the beginning of a sentence
Inaudible words are marked	(…)
Emphasis on words is noted with cursive	"Der er jo *derfor*, jeg gjorde det"
Grammatical punctuation used	

Lastly, the transcripts are identified by appendix- and line number. Another point to make is that while the interviews were conducted in Danish, the presentation of excerpts from the scripts will be in English. This means that the data further undergoes a transformation, since some statements and phrases will be lost to translation. The system outlined here and the decision to present the participants' quotes in English serves to make the project's method more accessible for the reader.

4.2 Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA)

It is said that the analysis starts already before collecting the empirical data, which is to say that it is important to consider the method of analysis and the purpose of the empirical data. As Kvale and Brinkmann (2015) emphasise, the question of how to analyse 1000 pages of transcription should never be asked after the actual interviews, as this is too late; the analysis strategy should be considered beforehand to guide and direct the interview to the projects purpose (p. 250). In the case of this project, the purpose of the method and interview were to gain knowledge about the phenomena of transitioning to and working in psychologically untraditional fields, and the analysis

method chosen to support both this purpose and the semi-structured interview is the interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA).

As the name suggests, IPA draws on phenomenological ideologies and focuses on the lifeworld of the study's participants (Langdridge, 2007, p. 107). The purpose of IPA is therefore to investigate individual's views and personal perceptions of the topic or object under study, rather than attempting to form an objective statement of the phenomena itself (Smith, Jarman, & Osborn, 1999, p. 218). With the semi-structured interview's focus on the experience of the participants, studies using the IPA method predominately employ this method in their research (Langdridge, 2007, p. 110). Furthermore, the IPA method function well in studies which utilise a small sample size (Langdridge, 2007, p. 109; Smith et al., 1999, p. 225), and the samples tend to be reasonable homogeneous and purposive, as the studies are inclined to obtain detailed information about a specific group of people (Langdridge, 2007, p. 110). Considering this, the sample used in this study match the features of IPA well, as I aim to shed light on a fairly homogenous group of newly qualified psychologists. While not possible to do so completely, researchers using the IPA method thus try to get an 'insider perspective' on the participants' experiences and perspectives (Smith et al., 1999, p. 218). Moreover, this access to the participants' lifeworld depends on the researcher's own conception, which is used to make sense of the lifeworld through an interpretative process – hence the interpretative in interpretative phenomenological analysis (Smith et al., 1999, p. 218f). As well as with the interview, the researcher should be aware of their own presuppositions and understandings of the interview and the participants. Already touched upon, I reflect on my own role as the researcher throughout the project, and I both actively use (i.e. my motivation as the driving force in this project) and try to avoid (i.e. my own expectations about being a psychologist) my understanding and position in relation to the topic of this thesis.

According to Smith et al. (1999), IPA is occupied with the notion of cognition, more specifically with understanding what the participants believes or thinks about a certain topic (p. 219). It is not possible to get access to the participants' lifeworld through the transcripts alone, so IPA therefore partake in an analytic process with the material to be equipped to say something about the participants' thinking (Smith et al., 1999, p. 219). However, this preoccupation with cognition in IPA is contradictory with phenomenological philosophy, which rejects the notion of a mind-body dualism (Langdridge, 2007, p. 108). Nevertheless, this theoretical claim is in practice not

noticeable, as many IPA researchers keep their focus on the understanding of participants' meaning of experience (Langdridge, 2007, p. 108). I will do the same and use this method to access the data in the interviews with a focus primarily on experience and not on cognition.

4.2.1 The concrete stages

Interpretative phenomenological analysis employs thematic analysis as its principal approach (Langdridge, 2007, p. 110). This essentially means that the researcher identifies major themes within the transcripts of the interview. This is done by completing four stages of a single case before proceeding to the remaining interviews (Langdridge, 2007, p. 111). Smith et al. (1999) identify the four stages as follows: 1) Looking for themes, 2) Looking for connections, 3) A table of themes, and 4) Continuing the analysis with other cases (pp. 220-224). After this, the fifth and final stage, which is to produce a master list of the themes of the groups enables the researcher to easily approach their data (p. 226).

Looking for themes. In the first stage, the researcher reads and re-reads the transcripts of the interview to become intimate with the material (Smith et al., 1999, p. 220). The two margins of the transcript are used to organise minutes, summarising notes can be written in the left margin and preliminary interpretations and themes can be written in the right margin – preferably one margin at a time (Smith et al., 1999, p. 220f).

Looking for connections. Once the researcher has the themes written in the right-hand margin of the transcript, a list of all the emerging themes are created, making it possible to see the connections between them by clustering them together in ordinary and subordinary themes (Smith et al., 1999, p. 222). Moving from the transcript to a separate list, it is important to assure that the themes listed fits with the actual statements of the participants (Smith et al., 1999, p. 222).

A table of themes. With the different categories of themes, the researcher is now able to create a master list or table containing all the themes in a coherent fashion (Smith et al., 1999, p. 223). The themes can be divided into themes and sub themes, irrelevant themes can be dropped, and each theme should be presented with an example from the transcript (Smith et al., 1999, p. 223). By making sure that the listed theme is represented in the transcript, the researcher's bias is minimised, and the autonomy of the participant is respected.

Continuing the analysis with other cases. When the researcher has identified the relevant themes from the first script and listed them coherently, they can move on to the remaining transcripts. The researcher now has two options: using the themes identified in the first interview as a lens and guide for identifying themes and the following interviews or starting from scratch and beginning anew with the next transcript (Langdridge, 2007, p. 111; Smith et al., 1999, p. 224). What I did in this project was a mixture of them both. After identifying relevant themes in the first transcript, I used these themes as a guide for searching for similar themes in the next transcripts, while remaining cautious of new relevant themes. Were these found, I went over the old transcripts with this new perspective, continuously being an iterative process between themes and transcripts.

After every interview is read through and the relevant themes listed, the researcher can create a master list, which is the final list of the major themes (Smith et al., 1999, p. 226). The selected themes are chosen according to their 'richness' in the transcript, how much detail and information is present about them in the transcripts, and how the themes help illuminate the topic of the study (Smith et al., 1999, p. 226). The master list of this project along with line numbers of examples from the participants' interview can be seen in Table 2: Master list.

Table 2: Master list

Themes	**Mia**	**Hanna**	**Alex**	**Peter**
Expectations	83-88	32-36	63-71	75-78
- Prestige/pride	152-174	163-166	702-708	415-417
- Own experiences for job	444-445	351-353	718-725	553-559
- Dansk Psykologforening		575-577		
		642-643		
Social and personal	249-252	70-72	45-52	80-81
- Mentors, supervisor, sparring with others	356-358	101-104	129-160	314-317
- Passion, interests	679-694	192-197	284-288	336-340
	957-958	391-403	315-339	366-377
	982-985	719-727	365-367	467-477

- Recognition/respect from others - Meaning, making a difference - Feeling alone - Personal integrity, personal quality/standards - Including oneself	1049-1051		428-431	550-551
	1102-1114			
Abilities and competences - Academic abilities, research, concretising - Psychological abilities - Lack of practical knowledge - Lack of belief in oneself - Believing in oneself - Mastering experiences	332-345	175-187	164-182	123-127
	473-474	203-219	243-266	216-220
	502-506	221-230	490-504	223-225
	517-525	284-288	508-512	419-425
	541-569	463-464	562-563	
New context - Using competences different - Challenging the psychological profession - Working interdisciplinary - Untraditional psychology	5-12	273-282	23-29	9-13
	35-36	688-695	219-227	452-453
	201-202		302-311	

4.3 The how

In this chapter, I have presented the methodological reflections and considerations regarding the chosen method for gaining data and analysing said data. Thus, a semi-structured interview form was used to access the participants' experiences with transitioning to and working in a psychologically untraditional field. This was done with the help of the software Microsoft Teams, as the global COVID19-pandemic prompted social distancing. Furthermore, the method of analysis, IPA, was presented and related to the use of semi-structured interview and the phenomenological standing point of this project.

How I am investigating this project is thus by interviewing four newly qualified psychologists with a semi-structured interview that contains a briefing, four themes relating to the research question, and a debriefing. The interviews are conducted online with the software Microsoft Teams, and the material is transcribed in a simplistic and grammatical correct style. To analyse the material, the analytical tool interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) is employed to keep the focus on the participants' experiences and the shared themes among the four participants.

Chapter Five:
Analysis

Chapter Five: Analysis

In this chapter, the relevant themes identified with IPA in the transcriptions will be analysed and compared to each other. Four themes relating to the participants' experiences with transitioning to and working in a psychologically untraditional field were identified. These are *Theme 1: Expectations for newly graduated psychologists*, *Theme 2: Personal and social aspects*, *Theme 3: Abilities and competences*, and *Theme 4: Psychology in a new context*. Firstly, an introduction to the interview participants will set the stage for the analysis, followed by a model illustrating the different themes and how they relate to each other.

The participants in this study are all between 25-30 years and graduated with a psychological degree from a Danish university within the last three years (2017-2020).

Mia graduated from a cultural psychology programme. Prior to her graduation she found employment at a nongovernmental organisation that works with children through play and physical activity. Her job was to coordinate the volunteers and take care of the practical settings for the children. When she graduated, the same organisation rehired her as a psychologist managing the same responsibilities, but now also providing conversations and teachings to the young volunteers as well as managing the different relationships to parents and institutions.

Hanna graduated from an organisational psychology programme. After graduation she started her own consulting firm, which she unfortunately had to temporarily close in the beginning of 2020. After spending some time developing her company, she found her passion in working with transitional psychology regarding foreign labour. Her specific assignments include doing workshops for companies and individual and collective conversations with foreign employees, providing them with a successful on-boarding programme. Throughout the analysis, Hanna will be presented as though her firm is still in business.

Alex graduated from an organisational psychology programme. After a couple months of unemployment, he was hired at his former internship, a public hospital division. Here he worked with assessing patients referred to them because of sickness linked to work. By the start of 2020 his position at the hospital changed to the development of intervention strategies to better work environment, where he

singlehandedly is responsible for the project. His work assignments thus include research and collaboration with his engineering partners.

Peter graduated from an organisational psychological programme. After a couple of months in unemployment he started a company with his friend that provides an SMS-service to companies about mental strength and mindfulness to improve their work environment. His work assignments include reading psychological articles, developing and condensing that psychological knowledge to strategies and tools for his company's clients.

Figure 1: Model of the four themes and their subthemes

The model above illustrates four relevant themes and their subthemes to provide a clear overview for the reader, as we head into the analysis of these themes.

5.1 Theme 1: Expectations for newly graduated psychologists

"You do psychological testing and you do therapy. That is what is commonly thought about psychologists, which is very true, it's just not the whole story"

Hanna, appx. 2, l. 671-674

This theme concerns the different expectations the participants have experienced relating to their psychological education – from others and themselves.

5.1.1 Experiencing external expectations

In this subtheme, I present the participants' experiences with external expectations towards them. The external expectations, which the participants mention as a part of their experience with transitioning to the labour market, are different. Mia and Hanna meet high and positive expectations from their colleagues and clients, while they and Alex also experience a weak understanding of their profession at the jobcentre and from friends. Peter indirectly experiences some expectations from DP in the way they offer support to their members, since the support is directed at the most common job functions within psychology.

5.1.1.1 Prestige and skill associated with being a psychologist

Two of the participants describe how being a psychologist is considered prestigious on account of their experiences. When reminiscing about her admittance to the university in the psychology major, Mia's eyes light up: *"(...) When I got in, I experienced a lot of pride associated with being accepted. When I told people that I got accepted it was very prestigious, which surprised me a lot*" (Appx. 1, l. 444-447). Mia received recognition for being accepted into the psychological major, and Hanna experiences something similar. From the university, Hanna regularly had the impression that she had to prove herself (Appx. 2, l. 794-795), which was contradictory to what she experienced after graduating, where she, equally to Mia, received recognition for being a psychologist: "*People expect that you are skilful. That is the expectation, because you are a psychologist*" (Appx. 2, l. 800-801). Just as with graduates from other professions, having a Master's degree is treated with respect; something that with a Bourdieuian perspective is considered as institutional capital (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 247f). The recognition and the expectations Mia and Hanna

experience can therefore be attributed to the status provided and asserted by their institutional capital. In the general culture, it is most often considered difficult to get accepted into a psychological major and the major itself deals with human health issues, endowing the profession with a high cultural capital within this area. When they have a high cultural capital, other people potentially perceive them as powerful within the psychological area and may expect high quality work from them. The prestige Mia and Hanna experiences are therefore an important part of the cultural power associated with being a psychologist and may affect the success the participants have when entering a psychological untraditional field.

5.1.1.2 Expectations from Dansk Psykologforening and the jobcentre

The high expectations for a psychologist presented in the previous section is very clear to Mia: "*I can definitely recognise that there are expectations to how you are and what position you apply for as a psychologist*" (Appx. 1, l. 987-990). In her process of applying for her first position at the NGO, she reached out to Dansk Psykologforening (DP) to get advice on her contract with the company when she was applying for the project coordinator position:

> *(...) I called DP to get some insight, like: "What should I focus on in this contract?" I got a hold of the driest biscuit [conservative, red.], he was really old school, he was like: "That's not a psychological position", and: "What about your authorisation?" I remember thinking for the first time: "This isn't going to be easy" (...).* (Appx. 1, l. 940-947)

The focus from DP, in her experience, was to get her the authorisation relevant for a psychologist and making sure that the position was 'psychological'. Mia recall being confused and uncertain on what to do, because she was proud of herself for getting a job but got the impression from DP that they wanted her to do something else (Appx. 1, l. 961-967). Peter's impression of DP is similar to Mia's experience, as he comments on his experiences with DP: *"(...) It doesn't seem like there is much support to self-employed consultants, who work with leadership counselling*" (Appx. 4, l. 556-558). Peter speculates on DP's expectations for newly graduated psychologists, as it seems to him like the support from DP is directed towards the classical psychological positions. Not receiving knowledge and support in his area of self-employment leaves him with a feeling of being alone (Appx. 4, l. 559) – a topic which I will touch upon in Theme 2: Personal and social aspects.

Both Alex and Hanna's experiences with the jobcentre resemble Mia and Peter's experience with DP in the sense that the jobcentre too cares less about the interests of the newly graduated psychologists and more about their own agenda. Hanna does not seem impressed when she recalls her experiences with the jobcentre: "*They don't care if you apply for a whatever-job in Netto, you just need to get a job*" (Appx. 2, l. 648-649). Additionally, Alex has this to say about the jobcentre: "*They just wanted you to get a job. That was their biggest goal, as long as it said psychologist on your contract, they didn't care about your interests*" (Appx. 3, l. 68-71). Moreover, the sparring and support they received at the jobcentre did not match their psychological profile, which both Alex and Hanna attribute to the lack of knowledge about where psychologists are relevant, as Hanna explains:

> *Society doesn't have a clue about what psychologists do and where they can end up, but they mostly think it's PPR; that is what you do (...), that it is where you start. Because it is where you start.* (Appx. 2, l. 651-657)

The expectations described by Hanna above are consistent with Alex' experiences, as he also has experiences with people, who do not know where psychologists are employed (Appx. 3, l. 706-710). Evident from the experiences from all the participants is that their interests do not receive much attention from the societal institutions they interact with.

In contrast, the DP brochure tells another story. I will shortly present the DP material, as it will appear in the discussion. Within the first couple of pages, big bold black letters encourage new psychologists to expand their understanding of the psychological profession: "Psychologists know something about people – people as colleagues, as consumers, as students, and much more than simply clients. Therefore, it is ideal that psychologists apply their competences broadly" (Appx. 7, p. 3, my translation). In this sense, the material seems to promote psychologists like Mia, Hanna, Alex, and Peter. Furthermore, the brochure affirms the participants' experiences with laymen being uncertain of the positions a psychologist can manage, stating: "Even though it does not say 'Psychologist' in the job application, your competences may still be useful. It could be that the employer is not aware of this – then it is your responsibility to draw their attention to this fact" (Appx. 5, p. 4, my translation). The brochure thus clearly states that the mindset within the labour market can be uncertain of a psychologist' competences and way of contributing.

5.1.2 Experiencing internal expectations

Regarding their own job expectations for working as a psychologist, the general tendency among the four participants is the reluctance to work in the field of pedagogical psychological counselling (PPR), which is this subtheme's focus.

As Hanna proclaimed in the previous section, the majority of newly graduated psychologists does in fact get a job in which they work with children and youth (Bazuin, 2017, p. 27). This prospect was also Mia's own expectation for her possibilities as a psychologist: *"(...) I couldn't see myself in the clinical field, but I wasn't interested in PPR – and those were the two options I saw at the time*" (Appx. 1, l. 86-88). She was very locked in this thought of mind and could not see how she could use her psychological education in other fields, but her supervisor helped her realise the possibilities of working with psychology and that she could apply for an internship at an NGO:

> *It broadened my perspective that I could work in this field, but at that time I had no idea that psychologists could have another position than a psychological; fulfilling a position, which didn't have a psychological description (...) I was like: "But that's not a psychological position" (...) I was completely locked in that frame of mind. I was like: "If I studied to become a dentist, I couldn't become a policeman!" That was my understanding of our profession.* (Appx. 1, l. 159-171)

The fact that she could not 'see' herself in the fields of clinical psychology and PPR indicates that this was a push-factor away from the psychological field, whereas the pull-factor, which I will analyse in the next theme, was her interest and passion for working with non-governmental organisations. Also note her own interpretation of what psychologists work with as something 'psychological' or something that has 'a psychological description'. This is not a very detailed or rich description of what it means to be a psychologist. Mia possessed this understanding up until the Master's course, which is a testament to the general attitude towards psychologists mentioned in the previous subtheme. Peter similarly experienced difficulties when looking at his different options:

> *In the end, I mostly applied for positions within PPR. Because that was the possibility, right? That's also why I was in the process of thinking I should just accept it and do three years in PPR, become authorised and then think:*

> *"Okay, I'll change afterwards", but let me tell you, I was happy I didn't do that*. (Appx. 4, l. 74-78)

Like Mia, Peter seemed caught in a frame of mind of what is possible with a psychological degree, because PPR 'was the possibility'. Since a huge portion of newly graduated psychologists find employment in the field of PPR, the participants' reasonable expectations were to pursue this line of work. As presented in chapter three, habitus is the structure underlining the social world and affects what is reasonable to expect for an individual (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 54). Within the habitus surrounding the psychological education, it is more likely to find employment in PPR, which may explain the participants own expectations to their future employment. What Mia and Peter both have in common is that they managed to change their frame of mind, pursue alternative psychological positions and thereby satisfy themselves in the process. This change from doing what is expected to do what they want mirrors Deci and Ryan's concepts of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Both DP and the jobcentre encouraged them to get a job as soon as possible, which served as extrinsic motivation for Mia and Peter. However, when they managed to work in a field of their interest, the work became intrinsically motivated – something Peter notes that he is very happy about.

All the participants experienced external expectations; either from DP or the jobcentre. The participants' experiences with DP indicate a habitus within the psychological field that associates psychology with therapy and counselling. The participants found themselves enmeshed within this habitus, as they considered their vocational opportunities limited to PPR. As the quote that initiated this theme suggests, the mindset that psychology is testing and therapy is something that is present both for the newly graduated psychologists and for the people at DP and the jobcentre. However, within the brochure from DP and the supervisors available to the psychological students, there is a broader vision of what psychology can be, which indicates different forces trying to challenge the status quo and the habitus within the psychological field.

5.2 Theme 2: Personal and social aspects

"I'm not the only psychologist in Denmark, but sometimes it feels that way"

Mia, appx. 1, l. 1034-1035

This theme concerns the personal and social aspects, or lack thereof, of the participants' experiences transitioning to and working in their respective fields.

5.2.1 Involving oneself in the work

This subtheme is divided into two sub-subthemes, which relate to how the participants include themselves in their psychological work and the importance of evolving as a psychologist.

5.2.1.1 Following their interests and passions

One aspect, all the participants have addressed is the importance of following their passion and interests. As Peter explains when asked the question of why he and his partner wanted to make their own business: *"We both had passion for mental training, so that became our starting point (...)"* (Appx. 4, l. 371-372). Thus, the reason for Peter to start his own company is grounded in the realisation that he needed to follow his passion. Hanna, starting out as a consultant, had great expectations for herself that she should be able to do anything a company required. However, she felt lost and unfocused in her work because she did not have a specific focus (Appx. 2, l. 54-56). After turning her attention to her passion, she found the true reason for being a consultant, when she started working with foreign labour and "*it became my niche and something I'd been passionate about for a long time*" (Appx. 2, l. 70-72). As Deci and Ryan stress, the more one identifies with the values of the activities, the higher autonomy one feel regarding motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2008, p. 182). Therefore, both Peter and Hanna have a great sense of affiliation with their work, which means their job satisfy them because they are intrinsically motivated to do it.

Mia emphasises the importance of meaning when talking about the different fields of psychology: "*There were good examples [of where to fit in regarding the psychological competences gained from the Master's programme, red.], just not ones I could see myself in, in a meaningful way*" (Appx. 1, l. 574-578). Mia says she needs to 'see' herself in her work in 'a meaningful way'. The same is true for Alex. When asked about which positions, he applied for after graduating, he says: "*Generally speaking, [I was] looking for jobs that would not only satisfy my need for having a job*

but also satisfy my need for meaning" (Appx. 3, l. 284-286). Both Mia and Alex thus express a desire to fulfil their need for meaning in their jobs, and Hanna and Peter pursue their passions in their self-employments.

According to Feilberg (2014), when you bring yourself into play, there is an opportunity to readjust your preconceptions and preunderstandings (p. 111). Looking at the participants' experiences, and taking this perspective, it can be argued that Hanna and Peter bring their own existence into play resulting in an aha-experience, which changes their expectations and understandings of what they should do as consultants. For Hanna, it is the realization that she should work with foreign labour, and for Peter, it is the realisation that he will be more satisfied pursuing a consultant career. Also, Mia and Alex communicate a great desire to work with their interests and passions, and by getting in touch with themselves they can effectively assess, if their jobs satisfy their need for meaning – which is part of forming a psychological habitus.

5.2.1.2 Keep evolving as a psychologist

Alex elaborates on what he means with a 'need for meaning': *"(...) If you want meaning in your work – if you are just a psychologist in order to have a psychologist job, but it's within a field that doesn't excite you, then you become a 'factory' [monotone, red.] psychologist*" (Appx. 3, l. 315-319). By this he means that your job can fall into the same routine, and you can become too numb to notice the small details and variations of each client. For him, it is essential to find meaning and inspiration in his work, otherwise you do not ask the right questions anymore and you do not evolve as a psychologist: *"(...) If there's not any kind of professional interest and enthusiasm about it, then how do you evolve?"* (Appx. 3, l. 321-322). This theme is present for Alex throughout the interview, as he wants to keep improving and challenging himself; the need for evolvement is also implied by the fact that he applied and got funding for the research project he is currently working on. Furthermore, he speaks of 'excitement'; something that must be present in a job before he can evolve as a psychologist. It can thus be argued that Alex use his personal excitement as a compass to ensure his continued development as a psychologist. Both Hanna and Peter value the growth aspect of being a psychologist as well. Hanna wants to learn something new, when she has acquired her current goals (Appx. 2, l. 314-316) and Peter sees learning new abilities as a virtue in relation to the psychological topics at the university (Appx. 4, l. 467). When it comes to evolving and including yourself in your work, Mia

calls it 'psychological integrity', which is her values as a psychologist and something she must keep adjusting and developing (Appx. 1, l. 1135-1137). In her own words:

> *[Psychological integrity] means that you are certain that you are present in your work both personally and professionally. That you don't slack the quality of your work – that you are sure the quality is high, even though you are alone, and at the same time that you have faith (...) in your own abilities; that [you] will make it.* (Appx. 1, l. 1118-1123)

Mia talks about being 'present in your work' both 'personally and professionally' to make sure her work is of high quality. 'Being present' means being aware of who she is and what she does regarding her job, implying that she keeps working with and evolving herself to ensure the quality of her work at the NGO. Alex puts it this way: "*The more quality you gain yourself from your work, the better the quality you can give to the ones receiving your work*" (Appx. 3, l. 343-344). Developing the corporal sense associated with a psychological habitus, you must be aware of and deal with your own issues in order to understand others' experiences and issues (Feilberg, 2014, pp. 544-546). Therefore, being a psychologist is, like many other occupations, a question of continuous development, which also seems important to the participants of this research.

5.2.2 The importance of mentors and social relations

The participants experience both loneliness and are in need of support from mentors and colleagues moving into unfamiliar territory.

5.2.2.1 Feelings of loneliness

Getting through the interview guide, Peter is asked if there is anything he would like to add, to which he responds: "*I think there's one thing, we haven't touched upon, and that is the fact that I think you can be very lonely*" (Appx. 4, l. 550-551). By this, Peter means that following an untraditional path has left him feeling lonely, e.g. on account of not receiving much support from DP. The other participants also recognise the feeling of loneliness. One of the participants, Alex, previously worked with a psychologically traditional setting with clients and therapeutic sessions. Within this setting, he was part of a group of psychologists supporting each other in their work assignments, something which he misses in his current position, where he is quite alone and all responsibility regarding the research primarily falls upon him: "*Going*

from regular working hours and having co-workers who do the same to basically being all alone" (Appx. 3, l. 430-431). Mia, who interned at an NGO organisation internationally, also experienced loneliness in the transition from university to work: *"(...) I wasn't taken by the hand, because I didn't choose the classical internship. I experienced standing a lot on my own when I graduated*" (Appx. 1, l. 520-522). Mia elaborates: "*My position is marked by the fact that I must fight for myself, because nobody else is doing it*" (Appx. 1, l. 356-358). In her current position, Mia had to establish the psychological position and fight for her supervision. Being the only psychologist at her work and working in an untraditional psychological field, Mia therefore experiences the feeling of being alone. Hanna also describes how being a self-employed consultant can be lonely: *"(...) Well, you are completely on your own, and you need to want it and have that drive to manage assignments that are nowhere near a traditional psychological role"* (Appx. 2, l. 192-194). As is clear for Hanna as well as the other participants, working in a psychologically untraditional field requires a lot of them in relation to building the position, getting the support, and being on your own compared to other psychologists, who work on their own but are a part of a psychological group, which work within the same field.

5.2.2.2 Sparring with others/mentors

The feeling of loneliness creates the need for social relations, as Mia explains: "*Because I'm alone, I have really spent many hours on the phone discussing my professional skills and integrity in my job with (...) psychological friends*" (Appx. 1, l. 982-985). Mia furthermore uses her supervisor as a way of getting support in her field (Appx. 1, l. 920-921), and she emphasises throughout the interview the importance of having access to mentor-like figures helping new psychologists in their field of interest: *"[You should] (...) ensure that you have someone in your network, who can validate that you are on the right track*" (Appx. 1, l. 1111-1113). The other participants also emphasise the importance of social relations and especially relations with a mentoring role. Hanna explains that when she graduated, she wanted to create a mentor programme for Master's degree students as a connection between the university and the labour market, as a way for the new psychologists to understand what awaits after graduation (Appx. 2, l. 722-727). Alex agrees with this perspective: *"(...) It would be interesting to have a psychologist, who knew something about the labour market, who could tell you what to expect*" (Appx. 3, l. 730-733). Moreover, Alex uses his closest

colleagues and his team leader to spar with regarding his research project, because he has not done this kind of work before (Appx. 3, l. 129-138). Peter also emphasises the importance of social relations, as he describes an experience, he had during the organisational psychological programme. The university had invited different psychologists to tell about their jobs, and one of the speakers, who worked at Nordea in the role of innovator, caught Peter's interest. Peter excitedly describes the experience: *"It was extremely inspirational to hear about somebody, who was doing something else*" (Appx. 4, l. 579-582). Peter's experiences during the time at the university makes him believe that the students, who want to go a more untraditional way with psychology do not get the support needed: *"I don't think there is too much support and sparring on understanding the different possibilities"* (Appx. 4, l. 553-554). This could have something to do with the general habitus at the psychological major at the universities, which focuses more on preparing the student for the more classical positions; what is expected of a psychologist – as was analysed in the first theme.

Looking at the participants' need for social sparring from a Banduraian perspective, it is worth noting his concepts of vicarious experience and verbal persuasion. Peter emphasises how hearing other psychologists talk about their untraditional jobs is inspiring and motivational. The person in question, the psychologist from Nordea, has the same education as Peter and is thus similar to him on that account, which is why the psychologist represents a social model for Peter. Hearing about the psychologist's successful transition from the university to his untraditional position at Nordea may therefore strengthen Peter's belief of self-efficacy, prompting him to pursue his own untraditional path. Another way to strengthen the self-efficacy for the participants is through verbal persuasion. This concept can be applied in the situations, where Alex and Mia draw on their relations for support in their work. Having someone to spar with and receive feedback from can influence how Alex and Mia feel about themselves in their work. Receiving positive feedback from team leaders or supervisors means that Alex and Mia increase their belief in themselves. Thus, it can be extremely crucial for the participants to have social models who can both show how to do it and provide positive verbal support.

The participants' experiences with the transitions from the university to their first jobs are characterised by a lack of support regarding their psychologically untraditional fields of work. In their work, they have found social relations crucial for dealing with work assignments. Furthermore, they have considered themselves when finding a path best suited for them and their personal interests by being intrinsically motivated, providing them with an inherent satisfaction for the work they are doing.

5.3 Theme 3: Abilities and competences

"Somehow, I have realised that you are able to do so much, and I have loved that about the [psychological] profession"

Mia, appx. 1, l. 473-475

This theme concerns the participants' experiences with and beliefs about their psychological competences when working in a psychologically untraditional field.

5.3.1 Experiences with psychological abilities and competences

What is common for all the participants' experiences is the acknowledgement of how their psychological skills offer them unique competences and approaches to work assignments, which is not available for their colleagues, clients or collaborating partners. Furthermore, transitioning from the university to the labour market, it becomes apparent to them that the skills and approaches that seemed like common knowledge to them, is widely appreciated as expert knowledge.

5.3.1.1 Psychological knowledge is not 'common knowledge'

The first example of psychological skills that seem internalised by the participants is when Alex describe how he experienced his competences as common knowledge:

> *The thing you forget when you know something is that other people don't know the same. (...) You think: "Okay, I am able to do many things that I think is common knowledge, something everyone can do", and then you meet someone, who says: "We don't know this. We simply don't know, but you know, so you do it."* (Appx. 3, l. 565-571)

In this experience, Alex is surprised by the fact that what he deemed as 'common knowledge' is seen by someone else as expert knowledge. Hanna is similarly surprised with her psychological skills after graduating: *"It appears subconsciously. Because a lot of what you read, you think: "That's common sense", but when you get out [transferring from the university to labour market, red.] it's not common sense for 'common' people. That surprises you*" (Appx. 2, l. 204-208). Hanna is surprised that what she considered 'common sense' is specific knowledge not shared by her clients.

Furthermore, it appears 'subconsciously', something Peter also experiences during meetings with clients of his firm, where he uses his skills 'implicitly' (Appx. 4, l. 217-220). True for all their accounts are that at some level, their competences have become internalised to a point where they consider them second nature and something that is, as Peter puts it, 'obvious' to them (Appx. 4, l. 425). It is also worth noting the surprise the participants feel. During the interviews, the participants do not gloat about their knowledge, but rather, they are genuinely surprised by the fact that they have competences they deemed 'common knowledge', which are praised by others as professionally specific knowledge.

The abilities acquired at the university can from a Bourdieuian perspective be understood as institutional capital (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 244f), but additionally, they can be understood as embodied capital, since the abilities becomes internalised and part of their 'mindset'. Peter says he uses his psychological competences 'implicitly', and Alex and Hanna's remarks of their knowledge as something 'common' indicate that their psychological abilities are a part of their social bearing and thus occur as embodied capital. Unconsciously, they may attribute some of their knowledge and competences to their personal knowhow, because these fine-tuned senses and approaches to people and situations have become internalised. This is what psychologists should be able to do according to Feilberg (2014) with his concept of psychological habitus (p. 248). Being able to handle these complex social issues is dependable on developing a corporal capacity on an unconscious level. The psychological habitus is thus not necessarily something the participants are aware of and they may approach their work with their psychological skills and behaviour implicitly. Their psychological abilities have become embodied and thus are a part of their behaviour, and their psychological habitus is the underlying precondition of their approach to their work in an untraditional field.

5.3.1.2 In possession of 'psychological' skills compared to their colleagues

When talking about what she can contribute with in an NGO setting, Mia says thoughtfully: "*It is clearly the ability to access and choose knowledge that this organisation does not have access to"* (Appx. 1, l. 730-731). Her examples of this are the psychological perspective in situations where it is necessary to explain the children's behaviour, organise educational workshops, and handle conversations with the volunteers. Therefore, because she is a psychologist, she can provide a different

perspective and has access to knowledge on account of her psychological education that the other employees may not have access to. In her own words:

> *It is definitely during teachings that I get the greatest acknowledgement that my colleague, who is from Political Science, could not have taught the same. That is often when I feel the relevance of my background. When I feel that psychology was the only thing that could make it happen, then I really think it is great.* (Appx. 1, l. 689-691)

In her teaching experiences, it is made clear to her that her psychological background provides her with competences that her colleagues with other educational backgrounds do not have in the same amount, and therefore she is able to provide different services in her work. These services, she exemplifies throughout the interview, is the ability to explain children's behaviour, shift the focus from blaming the culture to looking at the individual and its context, and to create trustworthy connections to the parents and the volunteers. The 'relevance of her background' is the psychological education from the university, and that is what makes her feel especially equipped to handle her work assignments. In her own words, she focuses on creating insight for colleagues, parents, volunteers, and institutional staff: "*We have to make sure that everybody knows what we are doing and how it can be applied. That includes collaborative partners and parents and the volunteers and the children*" (Appx. 1, l. 723-725).

Another experience with psychological competences comes from Alex, who feels invaluable on account of being a psychologist in his research. In a meeting with a company, for which he develops interventions strategies, he describes how they recognised his psychological abilities: *"This feeling that it could not have been just anyone saying something, and they would be:* "*Wow, that was good", but it actually was the competences developed as a psychologist that they could use*" (Appx. 3, l. 557-562). Specifically, he presented his research project about intervention strategies for the group, who thought these strategies accommodated some of the issues within their company, and therefore Alex's knowledge was very beneficial for them (Appx. 3, l. 570-571). Alex does not go into specifics about the intervention strategies but seems proud of the fact that the company partners had 'sparkles in their eyes' (Appx. 3, l. 553) in reaction to his presentation at the meeting. He does, however, go on to elaborate on the subject of his psychological abilities, as he reflects on what

psychologists are particularly good at: "*From what I have seen from my colleagues and myself, we are just very, very skilled and quick to get into that. Because we see the connections quicker than other people do*" (Appx. 3, l. 647-651). The 'that', he is referring to, is the different questions associated with people, such as; What is my role in this meeting? What should I consider regarding the different individuals? How is the power dynamic in this situation? Who do I need to activate to get this result? These, and more, are some of the aspects of human interaction Alex recognises that he is very quick to notice and address. He describes it as the *"(...) mindset you get as a psychologist*" (Appx. 3, l. 668-671). This 'mindset' seems to be present for Hanna as well. In her work with the foreign employees, she must establish a connection between her and the employees, which she confidently explains: *"It is very, very easy for me to create a therapeutic alliance, where I become a catalyst for change*" (Appx. 2, l. 512-514). In these situations, she utilises her psychological abilities and psychological habitus, and the level of skill she displays in the interaction with her clients surprises her and makes her realise that "*boy, I'm really capable!*" (Appx. 2, l. 518). Peter has realised something similar when it comes to interacting with his clients and customers: *"(...) I have an ability for reading people or analysing their signals in a meeting. I think I implicitly have gotten them from psychology*" (Appx. 4, l. 223-225).

All the participants have experienced situations where their psychological competences and abilities were recognised and held in high regard. As argued previously, the participants' psychological abilities are forms of institutionalised capital, because they are acquired through the university and elevate their status in their occupational settings. As Alex and Mia describe, their institutionalised capital earns them recognition at their respective jobs because their abilities are beneficial for the work they are doing. For Alex, it is his psychological knowledge regarding the intervention strategies and for Mia, it is her psychological abilities to approach and teach about psychological topics. Moreover, when Hanna and Peter describe their psychological competences as 'easy' and 'implicit', they can be understood as another form of cultural capital; the embodied kind – also as previously mentioned. These two forms of capitals are essentially their psychological habitus; a bodily sense towards psychological themes constructed during their time at the university. Apart from a psychological habitus, a psychologist also draws on a scientific habitus, which enable them to critically assess different situations based on their psychological knowledge. Switching from a psychological to a scientific habitus is important, and in the instances

where Mia and Hanna have access to special knowledge on account of their psychological education are good examples of the utilisation of a cultured psychological and scientific habitus. Thus, examples from the participants indicate that their psychological abilities are useful in the psychologically untraditional settings in which they work.

5.3.2 Academic competences help convey psychological knowledge

Briefly touched upon in the previous subtheme, the participants also have experiences where their general academic competences are useful for them at their work. Peter describes the general academic competences gained at the university as *"(...) the ability to read a scientific article and decode the most important parts and then use it specifically*" (Appx. 4, l. 123-125). This competence of identifying the 'most important parts' and presenting them to others 'specifically', essentially communicating their expertise to others, is what the following pages are concerned with.

Both Peter and Hanna are self-employed and have their own companies. For Peter, the communicating competences are used, when he and his partner need to translate the psychological knowledge they read to something which can be used in practice: "*When we are developing the courses (...) it is reading articles and trying to boil it down to messages that people receive*" (Appx. 4, l. 233-235). Peter's clients are different organisations, which receives text messages from Peter's company regarding mental strength training. Herein lies the use for his communicative skills. Hanna has to communicate complex issues simplistically as well, when speaking to her clients: "*I have to dial the academic speech down. Otherwise no one understand or wants to listen*" (Appx. 2, l. 229-232). When she is successful in conveying to the client that she understands them, she feels competent, as it removes a barrier between her and the clients (Appx. 2, l. 502-505). Alex does not work with clients but collaborative partners. Being engineers, they also have specialised academic language, but he is still aware of his role in conveying psychological knowledge: "*It has to be a much more tangible way of explaining. It really has to be a concrete causality, otherwise they don't understand"* (Appx. 3, l. 118-121). Just as Peter and Hanna experiences it, the knowledge Alex possess is something he has cultivated over a long period and communicating it well is crucial in his research. Similar to the other participants, Mia has experienced using her academic competences. In her work, she must communicate

abstract psychological phenomena to parents of children, who are enrolled in their programme:

> *It is my experience that the families have trouble understanding, when it gets too elusive (...) so trying to explain the children's knowledge and their being in the world (...) has helped a lot of parents, because it suddenly becomes concrete.* (Appx. 1, l. 332-341)

She presents a very concrete example of how children's brains handle the word *no*. To a child, the word is too abstract to understand, and so it results in the child unconsciously ignoring the word (Appx. 1, l. 335-337). When parents get frustrated with their children disobeying them, this concrete neurological explanation offered by Mia connects the dots for them, and she has successfully guided the parent-child relationship further along.

All four participants experience possessing expertise psychological knowledge, which cannot be conveyed to non-professionals without transforming it. The knowledge, they have access to, is specific to psychologists. This means that they need to be competent in communicating their knowledge in an accessible way. To this extend, they seem to rely on their general academic competences acquired at the university; the scientific habitus. With a cultured psychological and scientific habitus, a psychologist is able to switch between these, something we see Mia do in the instance with the child and the word no. She both needs to *understand* the frustration of the parents and *know* the neurological reason behind the child's behaviour. This way of approaching social issues can therefore be very beneficial for the companies employing a psychologist, who possess a cultured psychological and scientific habitus. Yet another point relevant to the participants' experiences with transforming and applying their psychological knowledge in their work is linked to the Bourdieuian concept of field. The institutional and embodied cultural capital the participants possess and their approach derived from a cultured psychological and scientific habitus are transferable to different fields. The abilities acquired and formed at the university are thus transferrable to other contexts, when looking at the participants' experiences.

5.3.3.1 Strong belief in themselves and their abilities

What is evident after these four interviews is that every single one of the participants have a strong belief in their own abilities when it comes to their work in a psychologically untraditional field. Both Peter and Alex have had experiences that improved their view of their own competences. For Peter it is when he is *"(...) creating the mental strength courses, then I feel pretty competent*" (Appx. 4. L. 315-317). After having participated in a meeting, where Alex presented his ideas to his colleagues' appreciation, he could say this with a smile on his face: "*That was very good for my self-confidence, to be in a meeting like that*" (Appx. 3, l. 562-563). In both situations, the participants must perform in one way or another, but they accommodate the challenges and find themselves feeling competent. In these instances, Peter's feeling of competence is linked to creating new material and Alex' feeling of competence is linked to the recognition he receives from his colleagues. Hanna is similarly comfortable in her role when having conversations with the foreign employees, stating that she has: *"(...) never been afraid of becoming self-employed. I have always felt that I have things under control*" (Appx. 2, l. 563-565). This reflects the general view Hanna presents of herself during the interview; despite her temporary termination of company, she steadfastly conveys positive thoughts on her own abilities. Mia is the only psychologist at the organisation she works for, and the position only became a reality after she fought for it. When reflecting about her competences regarding this transition, she assertively proclaims: "*The thing I've clearly acquired is the belief that I can apply for a position, which is not a psychological position, and still steer it in a psychological direction*" (Appx. 1, l. 553-556). She displays a firm belief in her own abilities to manage a position outside of her professional field, which she herself has created.

From a Banduraian perspective, the participants will only be compelled to do things they believe, they can accomplish. This is interesting when considering the professional choices, they have made. Mia has created her own psychological position within an NGO, Peter and Hanna followed their passions and started their own companies, and Alex applied for money to a research project of his own design. All these stories are examples of people with a high sense of self-efficacy, pursuing untraditional ways of using their psychological abilities. People with a strong sense of self-efficacy approach novel and difficult tasks with optimism and view them as opportunities to develop their skills and affect their future. This is exactly what these

four participants have done; seen the opportunities their competences provide them with and pursued their personal interests.

5.3.3.2 New field and practical experience: Feelings of incompetence

Looking at the situations where three of the participants lack faith in their own abilities, it is predominantly tied to their inexperience with the professional field they work in. Mia expressed lacking practical experience during her years at the university, when she finally transitioned from the university to the NGO (Appx. 1, l. 1049-1050). Even though she experienced knowing more than she expected, sometimes she felt embarrassed due to the lack of her practical competences: *"(...) Sometimes I have felt that it was a scam, like: "I don't know this anyway, so how about we just talk about the fact that I don't know, so I don't have to feel embarrassed about not knowing""* (Appx. 1, l. 544-547). Hanna also mentions the feeling of embarrassment in the start phase of her self-employment:

> *It felt like: "I can do nothing". That's how I felt for a period. It was kind of embarrassing. Now I don't have a problem talking about it. If I look at the grand scheme of things, it is something everybody experiences. It is not something uniquely tied to me, or that I'm stupid or incompetent.* (Appx. 2, l. 600-606)

Even though she felt embarrassed, looking back Hanna realises that the feeling was a valid and very normal feeling when starting your own company. Peter, who is also in the process of starting his own company, is venturing into a new field and has little experience with it. In his own words: *"(...) This is a new field and I don't know it, and then I don't really feel competent, but when we succeed, then I feel pretty competent afterwards*" (Appx. 4, l. 337-340). Both Hanna and Peter are resilient in the way they look at their failures. Hanna deems her feeling natural and Peter knows that with a successful experience, he will feel competent again. Hanna explains it like this: *"It requires hard work and smart decisions, but you can only get smarter with experience. You just have to keep going and take whatever knowledge you acquire*" (Appx. 2, l. 613-615).

Approaching this with a Banduraian perspective, it is clear to see how the concept of mastering experiences plays a vital role for the participants. Mastering

experiences is the single most effective way to develop a strong sense of self-efficacy (Bandura, 2004, p. 622). Both Hanna and Peter describe how the feelings of incompetence occurs when they lack knowledge and insight into their respective fields. What they also can agree on is that with successful experiences they feel more competent and prepared for new challenges. They have mastered an experience, which results in the belief that they can do it again. These experiences with success thus develop a strong and robust sense of self-efficacy, which may account for the resilient approach both Peter and Hanna display regarding their failures. Mia and Hanna links feelings of embarrassment to the experience of feeling incompetent. When the belief in yourself regarding a specific area is low, obstacles pertaining to that area may seem like a personal threat (Bandura, 1994, p. 2). Because Mia and Hanna's person are being "threatened" by the obstacles that requires more practical experience, they may see themselves in a negative light and thus feel embarrassed.

To sum up the third theme, I would like to quote Mia, who attempts to illustrate how the psychological competences are gained and developed: *"(…) You can compare it to the metaphor of driving; it is first when you get your driver's license that you truly learn how to drive a car"* (Appx. 1, l. 507-509). She is given a lot of knowledge before she can obtain the driver's license, in this case the psychological degree, but it is first when she starts driving that she truly learns what she needs to know to navigate the new job situation safely. The same seems to be accurate for the other participants as well. The understanding and habitus they acquire at the university enable them to develop their psychological competences in practical settings, where the continuous successful experiences strengthen their belief of self-efficacy, which in turn support them in a psychologically untraditional field.

5.4 Theme 4: Psychology in a new context

"An advice I would like to give to myself and others, is taking bigger risks in projects"

Peter, appx. 4, l. 452-453

This theme concerns the participants' reasons for working in a psychologically untraditional field and the possibilities this implies for both the participants and their employers.

5.4.1 Challenging the current psychological framework

When looking for psychologically untraditional positions, one of the aspects of the participants' experiences is challenging the psychological framework they were educated in.

Peter encourages psychological students to challenge the current presuppositions of what a psychologist does, since this will make it easier to take bigger risks when they transition to the labour market (Appx. 4, l. 497-499). Mia's experience with creating a brand-new psychological position in an organisation without any psychologists ties into her narrative about changing the existing norms within psychology:

> *Ever since I started, I have had an interest for the area of psychology that challenges what I call the 'dusty, grey norms' within psychology – I was very preoccupied with how psychology can be used as an catalyst for other professions and how to shake things up a little regarding working with psychology in other professions* (Appx. 1, l. 6-12)

Her ambition to challenge the 'dusty, grey norms' reflects an aim to push the field of psychology into an area, where psychology's interdisciplinary abilities can be utilised. Hanna explains the challenge a little different, but still with the intention to push limits: *"Well, it's all about innovation. You need to be able to think psychology into other areas, where it has not necessarily been used before. It's about being a forerunner. I think this independent way of thinking is very important*" (Appx. 2, l. 756-760). Innovation and creativity when thinking about how to use psychological competences are the cornerstones in what Mia and Hanna try to illustrate.

Because habitus is something that is both structured and structuring, the expectation of what psychologists should do with their degree is forming the students attending the university, but on the other hand also something that can be changed. Therefore, what can be expected from a psychologist can be adjusted with examples like the four participants in this study, who have found work in areas not predominantly occupied by psychologists. When the participants are inclined to challenge the current framework, they consequently structure the behaviour and thought patterns associated with being a psychologist in a way that is different from what is the case now. By engaging in psychologically untraditional fields, it is thus possible to expand the habitus related to psychologists and their expected behaviour, job positions, competences and so forth. Furthermore, by successfully taking the risk to challenge the traditions within psychology during the time at the university, students may learn to master new experiences, strengthen their sense of self-efficacy, which in turn may motivate them to seek out jobs that are even more untraditional.

5.4.2 Possibilities of untraditional psychology

When challenging the field of psychology, three of the participants emphasise the possibilities psychology entails and the interdisciplinary abilities of the psychological profession.

When applying for positions, Alex became aware of the many possibilities and shared this optimistic view of psychologists' careers: *"We will become what we want to be at some point, you are not locked. I didn't feel limited*" (Appx. 3, l. 743-744), elaborating further that: "*Many think it is purely a therapeutic education, but in reality, you can become many different things, as long as it involves people*" (Appx. 3, l. 718-721). Just as a gardener is an expert in plants and flowers, a psychologist is an expert in humans and human behaviour. Since many of the fields in the labour market involves working with people, psychologists can contribute in many situations. Mia puts it in relation to her and other psychologists' competences: "*It is the understanding of using different fields, working interdisciplinary (…).* (Appx. 1, l. 541-542). She adds that *"(…) there is a lot to gain from other [professional, red.] fields*" (Appx. 1, l. 638-639). From a Bourdieuian perspective, Mia highlights how she is able to use her capital in different fields. Expanding on this thought with a Feilbergian perspective, she is able to switch between both the psychological and scientific habitus, which enables her to use her psychological skillset with people and colleagues, while still being able

to access other fields with her academic knowledge. Alex further expands on this topic, stating that many of the competences acquired as a psychologist can be used in different fields: *"A lot of the things you learn as a psychologist, whether you graduate from the psychodynamic programme or the organisational programme, a great deal of the competences acquired can be used interdisciplinary"* (Appx. 3, l. 302-306). The abilities gained at the university are here described as versatile by Alex. An example of this is his own working situation; even though he is working on his research project, he is still able to help his colleagues with patients, easily making the transition from doing research and collaboration with the engineers to entering a therapeutic situation with a patient (Appx. 3, l. 459-462). Among the competences available to psychologists, Mia also draws on her experiences with the model of problem-based learning (PBL): *"(...) PBL is based on how to work interdisciplinary with psychological colleagues, so I really feel that it has given me a great deal of strength in understanding how to co-operate with others*" (Appx. 1, l. 588-591). These competences are in Hanna's eyes very favourable for psychologists in the broad labour market: "*The working community is structured in a way, in which interdisciplinary collaboration is the focus, and that is true for psychologists as well*" (Appx. 2, l. 273-276). The skills acquired via the education at the universities both include psychological competences and general skills for working with different fields and people. The participants are therefore well equipped to venture into a psychologically untraditional field.

If we look at the possibilities with a Bourdieuian perspective, his concepts of field and capital are relevant yet again. Because the capital they possess is knowledge about people, their behaviour, and their issues, the capital can be transferred to other fields than the traditional psychological field, where these competences are similarly well suited. This is because every field includes agents, people, who follow the rules and logic of that field, and since psychologists possess a cultural capital to understand and assess these rules, they have the abilities to transfer these 'goods' from one field to another. In other words, the interdisciplinary qualities of psychological competences make them ideal for interacting with other fields within the labour market as far as human behaviour, issues, and collaboration goes.

5.5 Summary of analysis

When transitioning from the university to the labour market, the four participants in this study experience both external and internal expectations. The external expectations consist of expectations from the psychological union and the jobcentre. Here, the participants express a need for specific support from each of them in their respective fields. They experience the jobcentre wanting them to get any psychological job, not taking the participants' interests into account. From the union's side, the expectations are mixed, since the DP brochure encourages newly graduated psychologists to seek untraditional career paths, while the concrete experiences of the participants in this study are a lack of understanding and support toward psychological untraditional positions. The internal expectations include the job prospects for the participants, who all elude the possibility of working in a field associated with the major field of PPR.

Personal and social aspects also play a role in relation to the participants' experiences with transitioning to and working in psychologically untraditional fields. When both transitioning to and working in their current positions, the participants use their personal interests and passions to guide them. They involve themselves to choose careers and to keep developing as psychologists. Moreover, all the participants emphasise the importance of social relations to support and validate them. Working in a psychological untraditional field, the participants also express feelings of loneliness, since there is no established psychological network surrounding their respective fields of work.

When it comes to the participants' experiences with using their competences in a psychological untraditional field, the participants both rely on their psychological and academic competences. What surprised them, when they started working in a field not dominated by psychologists, was realising that their employers and colleagues recognised their psychological competences and knowledge. This means that they are very competent in areas dealing with human issues compared to their colleagues without a psychological background. The participants furthermore experienced using their general academic competences as a way of conveying and communicating their psychological knowledge to laymen in their work. Even though the four participants manage psychologically untraditional positions, they appear to be self-confident and believe in their own abilities, as they describe specific situations from their work,

where they successfully utilise their psychological competences in a psychological untraditional field.

Lastly, the participants experience their psychological competences as a strength in their field of work, as they allow them to work interdisciplinary and expand the understanding of what it means to work as a psychologist by challenging the current traditions within psychology.

Chapter Six: Discussion

Chapter Six: Discussion

In this chapter, I begin with discussing what implications can be drawn from the analysis of the participants' experiences and then I review the arguments for how the methodology in this project live up to the three scientific standards of a research study: generalisation, reliability and validity.

6.1 Discussion of prominent themes

With the research question, I sought to enlighten the topic of newly qualified psychologists and their experiences with transitioning to a psychologically untraditional position and working in this setting. The interview and the following analysis of the four participants' experiences resulted in the identification of four relevant themes, which paint a picture of what is significant for these four psychologists when starting to work. From the empirical evidence of this study, two aspects seem particular prominent and important if newly graduated psychologists want to do well within a psychological untraditional field; social support and motivation by passion.

All the participants highlight the importance of social relations and the feelings of loneliness that comes with the lack of support. Working in the periphery of the psychological profession has left the participants without pre-existing psychological support systems. This means that the participants have to provide a support system for themselves consisting of supervisors, psychological friends, and colleagues, adding extra pressure on them as newly graduated professionals. According to Bandura's theory, the participants need to have a strong sense of self-efficacy in order to believe that they can carry out their job assignments. As we have seen, four factors contribute to strengthen this belief. Of these four factors, the first three seem to play the biggest roles in this study: mastering experiences, vicarious experiences, and social persuasion. Even though mastering experiences is considered the most effective when strengthening one's self-efficacy, and three of the participants describe situations where feelings of incompetence is changed to feelings of competence on account of successful practical experience, all four participants seem to be more occupied by the lack of social support. To see other psychologists thrive in an unfamiliar milieu and to receive sparring from other psychological professionals are something that strengthen the participants' self-efficacy. This correlates with the participants' specific context;

they are newly qualified and find themselves within unknown territory regarding the psychological profession. Being newly qualified in itself may pose several stressors for the participants, but adding to this, the participants work in a field where psychological role models are scarce. The concept of resilience may further inform the discussion of how the participants can do well within an untraditional field (Condly, 2006, p. 215f). Resilience can be defined as coping with traumatic stressors and overcoming difficult situations by virtue of abilities, motivations, or support systems (Condly, 2006, p. 213). Resilience thus refer to the quick return to the baseline functioning after exposure to stressors (Schwarzer & Warner, 2013, p. 140). Furthermore, resilience is a multifaceted concept which comprises of a variety of personal resources, some of which are good social relations and high self-efficacy beliefs (Schwarzer & Warner, 2013, p. 140f). Therefore, promoting a high sense of self-efficacy as well as having strong social relations are ways to render people more resilient, preparing them for novel and highly stressful situations (Schwarzer & Warner, 2013, p. 150). The unknown territory the participants find themselves in after getting employed is a very novel and stressful situation for them. Therefore, having strong social relations, in this case psychological role models or mentors, along with a strong sense of self-efficacy may improve the participants' resilience and way of coping in the face of adversity. Thus, it makes perfect sense that all participants are preoccupied with the issue of social support. In this light, the implications of this analysis with these four participants are that newly qualified psychologists, who works or wants to work in psychologically untraditional fields, are better off being resilient and having a strong sense of self-efficacy, because they do most of the legwork themselves.

Another important aspect of thriving as a psychologist in a psychologically untraditional field is the quality and extent of your motivation. From the interviews, two factors seem to be relevant. The first is that all four participants touch upon and describe their motivation regarding their current positions, and the second is that they all express great passion for their jobs. Applying part of the theoretical framework, Deci and Ryan's concepts of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation, this tells us that the participants are intrinsically motivated with a high level of autonomy. They are highly and intrinsically motivated to do their job, because they identify more deeply with the activities connected to their passion. Looking at the empirical results from a contextual point of view, following Katznelson et al. with the five contexts in which highly

motivated people thrive, something else stands out. All five contexts are present for the participants, but two contexts seem more prominent for the participants than the others. These are the contexts that pique their interest and contexts, where they feel they make a difference. These features combined seem to correlate with the motivational and vocational archetype of the Prima donna, as defined by the work of Helle Hedegaard Hein (2013). Looking at highly skilled and creative employees' motivation, Hein has created four archetypes based on the willingness of the employee to sacrifice time and energy for the work, of which the most willing type is the Prima donna (Hein, 2013, p. 36). The Prima donna should not be understood as a temperamental or self-centred person, but as a person who has an existentialistic relationship with their work (Hein, 2013, p. 38). To the Prima donna, work is a call to serve a higher course and therefore something deeply linked to their person. Their motivational kick is something associated with their meaning of life and a feeling of euphoric happiness (Hein, 2013, p. 38). Following this description, it makes sense to compare the participants, who need to 'see' themselves in their jobs and thrive in situations that pique their interests and stand out as 'meaningful', in relation to the archetype of the Prima donna. In this light, the implications of this specific analysis with these four participants are that newly qualified psychologists, who works or wants to work in psychologically untraditional fields, are people who are willing to sacrifice time and energy in order to serve a higher calling deeply linked to their person.

6.2 Discussion of the methodologies

The standards for scientific studies are developed for quantitative studies, and thus it would be wrong to believe that qualitative studies could live up to the same standards, since quantitative and qualitative studies operates in different ways (Yardley, 2017, p. 295). However, this does not mean that one should not consider the scientific standards in relation to one's study. Generalisability is the ability to transfer the knowledge gained from one study to another population or setting (Demuth, 2018, p. 79). Since this study employs a very small sample, it becomes near impossible to generalise the knowledge gained to other contexts, unless you define the degree of generalisability (Demuth, 2018, p. 80). In the case of this study, the level of generalisability is the intrinsic single case, which aims to understand the uniqueness of a specific group; psychologists' experiences with working in a psychological untraditional field. However, with the phenomenological principle of lifeworld as something both

individual and collective, there is also the possibility that newly qualified psychologists in other fields, or even newly graduates from other disciplines, will be able to recognise the experiences laid out in this thesis. What the participants of this study have described may thus be part of a common narrative of becoming a professional following the years at the university.

The principle of reliability means that the study and its results are trustworthy and that the study can be replicated (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015, p. 318). When conducting the interviews, it is important to be transparent. As an example, leading questions can change the reliability of the interview; the participants should be able to come with the same answers more or less disregarding the settings and the interviewer (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015, p. 318). As another example of transparency; when creating the interview guide, I tried to respect the participants' autonomy and opinions by asking them open and easy understandable questions. Reliability is something to strive for but focusing too much on this criterion can counteract the creativity and innovation of the interview by constraining the participants to the topics of the interview guide (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015, p. 318). In this study, the interview guide was used when needed, but otherwise the participants led the flow of the interview. Thus, I focused on addressing the topics of the study, while letting the participants add their own experiences and perspectives. As the interview followed the natural flow of the conversations, the interviews were rich on account of the participants' experiences, but also harder to compare afterwards and may therefore be harder to replicate. This was a deliberate choice, and the benefits in this case were interesting and important angles from the participants. The interviews with Alex and Peter required greater reliance on the interview guide, as they both provided short and precise answers, whereas Hanna and especially Mia gave long and elaborate answers, which covered most of the questions in the interview guide by themselves.

A third important aspect of the quality of this research is the notion of validity. Validity is the truthfulness and accuracy of the study (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015, p. 318). In other words, is the study studying what we assume it is studying? Are the study's observations reflecting the phenomena it is interested in? The aim of this study is to gain empirical information about how newly qualified psychologists experience transitioning to and working in a psychologically untraditional field, to which I identified four relevant themes from the participants' interviews. Thus, regarding these four participants, the results shed light on the question(s) asked. At the same time,

however, the results show only a small part of the four psychologists' experiences and are in no way fully adequate of their work experience. However, as this research is introductory in its inquiry, the empirical material provides a framework for the participants' experiences, which centers on the notion of working in their respective fields.

Another point to consider when discussing the methodologies of this thesis is the chosen psychological positions, which in this case is phenomenology. How would other positions have helped enlighten the topic of the thesis? In the thesis, attention is turned to the individuals of the study, which provides rich "inside" information about the transformation of individuals from the university to the labour market. However, a more contextual and societal focus could have been social psychology or cultural psychology, where Bourdieu's theory could have been unfolded even more. This would have provided a framework for the culture and history surrounding newly qualified psychologies venturing into the labour market in psychologically untraditional settings. With the cultural perspective, more attention could have been given to how the Danish society shape the notion of a psychologist and the social systems to keep it this way. The closest within the thesis to do this, is the concept of habitus, which describes the social world as shaped by and shaping our social structures and behaviour. Following this line of thought, a broader and more societal perspective could have provided other important and very interesting information, such as how the different fields within psychology view the psychological profession. With a third perspective, a discursive perspective, the language surrounding traditional and untraditional psychological positions could have taken centre stage. Furthermore, the brochure by DP could have been analysed using this framework to provide a discursive frame for understanding the participants' experiences.

Taking an even larger perspective; switching from qualitative methods to quantitative methods could have given me the opportunity to gather a greater sample and have specific points of comparison, which is important when looking at questions like how many psychologists work in the periphery of the psychological field.

Ultimately, the approach chosen within this study is but one of many ways to investigate and gain knowledge on this current and important topic.

Chapter Seven: Conclusion and further perspectives

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The thesis at hand sought to shed light on the topic of transitioning to and working as a psychologist in the periphery of the psychological profession. Specifically, it aimed to do so with the overarching research question: *How do newly qualified psychologists experience transitioning into the labour market, especially when working in fields that are not associated with PPR or clinical psychological work?* The reason behind this was a mixture between a personal interest and the lack of specific focus within the literature on newly graduated psychologists working in psychologically untraditional fields.

The methodological approach to this problem was qualitative in design, leaning on phenomenological principles of drawing attention to the participants' lifeworlds with specific theoretical focus on their habitus and motivation. The thesis used semi-structured interviews to inquire about the participants' experiences with transitioning to and working in psychologically untraditional fields.

Initially, it was uncovered that the four newly qualified psychologists who seek working opportunities in the periphery of the psychological profession do not attach well to more traditional job opportunities within the field. Some of the participants have longed for inspiration regarding their job opportunities during their education – occasionally getting an epiphany when guest lectures have showed them another road or supervisors have supported the notion of different working possibilities. The four newly qualified psychologists that have succeeded in finding a psychologically untraditional working position are characterised by having a high degree of self-efficacy and a big drive towards finding a position that provides sense and fulfilment. In addition, they also possess an ability to genuinely reflect on what makes them "tic" workwise. In this sense, they are newly qualified psychologists with large resources and a great passion to make things work out.

Based on interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA), four relevant themes were identified to enlighten their transition into the labour market. The first theme found that the four psychologists experienced a lack of social support from the established support systems. Both the jobcentre and the Danish psychological union, Dansk Psykologforening (DP), were more preoccupied with their own agendas than with taking a greater interest in what the newly educated psychologists wanted or needed. The second theme shifted the attention towards the personal and social aspect

of the participants' experiences, where it was demonstrated that the participants have genuinely followed their interests regarding their positions and on this account have experienced great work satisfaction. In several ways, they experienced a satisfaction and richness pursuing their own interests which were not present during their education. This satisfaction with the content of their jobs, however, was accompanied by a sense of loneliness and a task of creating their own support systems. The third theme provided information about the participants' experiences with using both their psychological and academic competences as well as how the participants' viewed these abilities. The basic finding here was that all participants experienced a great use of their psychological and academic competences, to a certain degree, much to their own surprise. They learned that they do indeed have psychological competences that help them manage human issues and academic competences that help them communicate psychologically relevant information. This theme also revealed that the four participants experienced a strong belief in themselves, which proved important in managing their new situation. Finally, the fourth theme found that the participants' experienced a large desire to work interdisciplinary with psychology in their new jobs, thus aiming to challenge the psychological framework they experienced at the university. If they had any doubts about their abilities to work as psychologists in unfamiliar territory when starting out their transition, all four participants now see great potential with a psychological degree – a fact they themselves are a testament to. In conclusion, the participants experienced the transitioning to a psychologically untraditional field and working in it as rewarding but hard work, since they need to create their own network of support for their psychological job assignments and truly sustain their own motivation.

Theoretically speaking, this study was able to confirm existing literature lingering around the concepts of Bourdieu, Feilberg, Bandura, Deci and Ryan, Katznelson et al., and Hein, while also drawing to the forefront the importance of social relations and the importance of motivation by passion. These two features of working in a psychologically untraditional field are particularly prominent for the participants when considering how they thrive within their jobs. Therefore, this study underlines how much the participants benefit from being resilient and having a strong sense of self-efficacy. Furthermore, the hard work it requires to work in psychological untraditional jobs also underline how much the participants benefit from being motivated by their own interests and passions, in other words being intrinsically

motivated. One could speculate whether it currently demands this kind of self-efficacy and motivation – or even a Prima donna approach – to truly succeed within unfamiliar work territory? With this study, it is not possible to determine this, but it would be an interesting jumping off point for further investigations into this topic. What can be established, is that the existing support system does not seem to be adequately equipped to truly support newly graduated psychologists, if they want to pursue alternative careers. Considering the implications of this thesis within the psychological practice from an institutional perspective, the university, the jobcentre, and DP all have the ability to alleviate the first of the two prominent features of working in the periphery of the psychological profession; the importance of a social network. As reviewed in the analysis, the DP brochure and some of the supervisors at the universities already support the notion of expanding the expectations of what a psychologist can contribute with and accomplish. Thus, there is an awakening within the profession that it could be worth striving for a more multifaceted understanding of what it means to be a psychologist. However, the institutional support is still in its infancy and a takeaway message from this study is therefore that without the proper support during the years at the university and continuing in the years after, it is still basically up to the alternatively minded individual to identify and pursue their own passion with vigour and determined motivation.

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