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0 Abstract

This thesis has investigated the relationship between social norms and chances of finding employment in IT in Denmark for non-Danish women. The non-Danish women have participated in a career coaching programme offered by a free tech school, ReDI School Copenhagen. The women have been offered a volunteer career coach that has helped them with finding employment in Denmark. The thesis has aimed to identify social norms in the Danish IT labour market, and how they affect the chances of employment for non-Danish women and has investigated how the career coaching programme uncovers the social norms and helps the women navigate these. The method of data gathering has been semi-structured interviews of ReDI School coachees, coaches, an independent career consultant and ReDI School's career program manager.

The results show that understanding and following the social norms may increase the chances of finding employment in IT in Denmark for non-Danish women and that the career coaching programme uncovers and helps the women navigate the social norms, which may increase their chances of employment, although there are norms where more focus in future coaching sessions, as well as further research, may be required.

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1 Introduction

1.1 The Danish IT industry facing a difficult future

In the wake of the COVID crisis, Denmark is faced with a new societal issue. While many people feared the economic consequences of national and international lockdowns, the Danish economy, in reality, recovered from the crisis with a positive economic growth of 4.7% in 2021 (OECD 2021). While positive economic growth seemingly is a good thing, it can have potential accompanying issues, which is apparent in the fact that many Danish companies, within different sectors, have problems with attracting and recruiting the necessary workforce needed to keep up with the increase in consumer demands. This has the potential of limiting economic growth in Denmark (The Ministry of Employment 2021). The lack of labour in Denmark is not merely an issue in contemporary society, as it may result in problems in the future. Recent projections, based on data from Statistics Denmark and the Danish Research Institute for Economic Analysis and Modelling, show that in 2030 there may be a mismatch in the supply and demand of labour in different fields and education groups (IRIS Group 2021: 4-5). The analysis shows that one of the affected groups is people with higher education (minimum of 18 years of schooling) within the field of “engineering, technique, and IT”, where an excess in demand of labour of 13.000 people are expected in the year 2030 (ibid: 5). The report finds that the reason for the increase in demand is that the field historically has seen a lot of growth and that this growth will continue due to an increase in the focus on the green transition and the continuation of the general digitalisation of society (ibid: 27). The problem of mismatch within the field of engineering, technique and IT is not only seen in projections of the future, as it already is an issue for IT companies in Denmark today. In a survey study including 217 Danish IT companies, conducted in October and November of 2021, the largest trade association for Danish IT companies, IT-Branchen, finds that 89,8% of the companies are looking to expand their business by hiring more people in IT positions. At the same time, 58,6% of the companies have had to give up on hiring people for vacant IT positions within the past 12 months (IT-Branchen 2021).

1.2 The lack of diversity in tech and its consequences

In the last years, there has been a large focus on diversity in various aspects of Danish society such as the music industry, the boardrooms and the management of organisations. The IT industry has also been one of the areas where there has been an emphasis on the need for more diversity, especially in regards to the gender of people working within IT in Denmark, as the large majority are male.

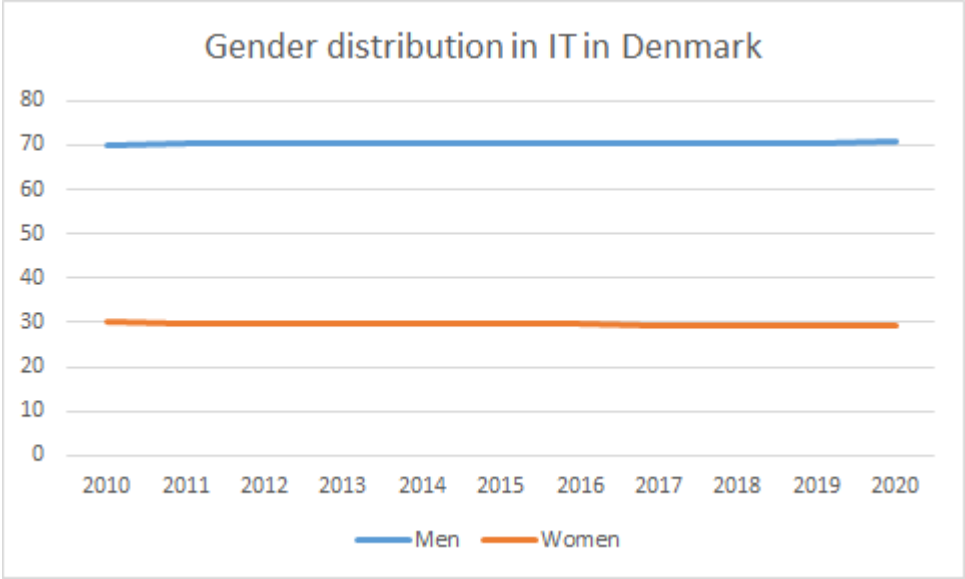


Figure 1: The gender distribution in IT companies in Denmark from 2010 to 2020.

Source: <https://itb.dk/tema/branchen-i-tal/beskaeftigelse/>

Of the 95.230 full-time employees working in IT, by the end of the fourth quarter of 2020, approximately 70% are men. As visible in Figure 1, there have not been any significant changes to that number between 2010 and 2020 (IT-Branchen 2021B). While the issue of gender diversity is obviously big and has to be responded to, it is important to not let it overshadow other types of lacking diversity in IT. The Danish union, Djøf, has started a commission, “TechDK Kommissionen”, consisting of “prominent” members from businesses, the media industry universities, etc. who are tasked with examining how the development of technology changes society (Djøf 2022). They posit that the narrow focus on gender in the discussion of diversity and inclusion in tech has caused other factors, such as age and ethnicity to be left out of the conversation (TechDK Kommissionen 2022: 2). This is a serious issue as developments in technologies can alienate certain people, and if those are technologies that aim to connect citizens with

public services, they can potentially be alienated from aspects of society. In Denmark, this can pose issues for people who are non-digital for various reasons, as a lot of the contact with authorities today happen through digital services that require NemID, or MitID, and that citizens regularly check their e-Boks where they receive, sometimes very important, notices from authorities. If citizens do not react in due time to, for example, a speeding fine that they receive in e-Boks, they could have to go to court as they did not pay the fine. This can potentially affect citizens with limited “personal, social, and economic” resources. It is therefore necessary to consider these citizens when designing public technological solutions (Altinget 2021). A solution can be that the teams that design new technological solutions should not consist of one homogenous group of people, but rather a diverse group of people from different walks of life in regard of age, gender and ethnicity (TechDK Kommissionen 2022: 2).

1.3 ReDI School of Digital Integration

Another possible solution to the problem of a lack of diversity in tech, outlined above, could be the NGO, ReDI School of Digital Integration, which is a free tech school that provides “migrants and marginalised locals free and equitable access to digital education”. The school was founded in Berlin in 2016, during the Syrian refugee crisis, as an attempt to help the many refugees that were arriving in Berlin. Since then, the school has opened in three new locations in Germany, as well as in Copenhagen and Aarhus. The school offers education in various subjects, such as different coding languages, UX and UI, and cloud computing. Besides these advanced courses, the school also offers basic computer courses for people who have no experience with using computers, and other technological devices, and who find themselves in digitalised countries where being able to use technological devices is an important aspect of participating in that society. In addition to teaching its students concrete skills, they also offer coaching and mentorship programmes that are aimed at preparing the students to enter the job market (ReDI School 2022A).

The school opened a division in Copenhagen in the fall of 2020, and differs from the German divisions of the school, as they only offer courses for women. This decision was

taken as the founder of the Copenhagen division saw an explicit need for female talent in tech in Denmark. The school is divided into two main groups of students. The beginner students, who are women that do not have a lot of experience in using computers and are therefore taught basic computer skills, and the group of tech students, who are taught more advanced tech courses. The remainder of this thesis will only be concerned with the tech students and the activities in the Copenhagen division of the school. In Copenhagen, the tech courses are structured as 12-week courses, where the students are taught various skills within the course they have been accepted into. The 12-week course ends with a final project, that is aimed to use and showcase all the skills the students have been taught during the 12 weeks.

1.3.1 The career coaching programme and the students

The career coaching programme in ReDI School offers its students to be matched with a coach who helps them with finding a job in IT in Denmark. All the career coaches are unpaid volunteers who have full-time positions in Denmark - some of them within IT, but not all. They are, however, required to have participated in HR processes and in employing people, and have knowledge of what it takes to be part of the labour market (Appendix 1.1: 13-14). 29 out of the 64 students have been offered a career coach in the ongoing semester. The career coaching programme is focused on “personal development, networking and gaining an understanding of the labour market. Furthermore, the programme consists of various career-related activities, workshops, and company visits, as well as internship programmes and job opportunities for the students. The workshops could consist of teaching the students concrete skills such as how to write a CV and cover letter, but also more “soft skills” like finding your way into tech and job satisfaction (Appendix 1.1: 1).

There are a total of 64 tech students in Copenhagen in the spring semester of 2022. The students come from 22 different countries, but the most common country is India, as 30 student originates from there. The vast majority of the tech students are highly educated, as 29 have completed a Bachelor’s degree, while 30 students have completed a Master’s

degree. The average age of the tech student in the spring semester of 2022 is 36, where the youngest is 26 and the oldest is 44 years old.¹

¹ Student data has been provided to me by ReDI School without permission to share in an appendix or similar.

2 Literature review

The purpose of ReDI School's career coaching programme, getting its student a job in IT in Denmark by focusing on personal development, networking and understanding of the Danish labour market, leads to the question of what it is that the students need to understand about the Danish labour market and why. Looking at the average age of the ReDI School student, it is fair to assume that the majority of them have already worked for several years, in their home country or other countries, so should they not already have an understanding of what it takes to be part of a labour market? As the answer to this question is likely yes, it might be important to examine what can happen when a person moves from one country, our cultural context, to another. In particular, in regard to the labour markets of these cultural contexts.

2.1 Discrimination of minorities in the labour market

Initially, it might be beneficial to first take a step back and look at the big, structural picture of finding a job in Denmark as an immigrant. To do this, I will first examine a large meta-analysis of correspondence tests from 1990 to 2015, by Eva Zschirnt and Didier Ruedin (2015). This analysis covers 738 correspondence tests from 43 separate studies conducted in OECD countries that investigate ethnic discrimination in hiring decisions (Zschirnt & Ruedin 2015: 1116). When discussing the reasons why ethnic discrimination may occur when hiring new employees, the literature points to two immediate explanations. Namely, the distinction between taste-based discrimination and statistical discrimination. The former describes hiring situations where the employer has racial or ethnic preferences, which could be due to xenophobia, racism or other personal preferences. This will oftentimes lead the employer to dismiss any information they have about the applicant such as qualifications, recommendations, etc. which also means that the employer is willing to hire an applicant that lacks in certain areas, as long as she has the 'right race'. Statistical discrimination refers to situations where members of a specific group are discriminated against, in the hiring decision, because the employer lacks information about them. In these types of situations, the employer may estimate that getting the needed information about the applicant is too costly, and therefore decides to

hire an applicant whose characteristics they are more familiar with. In a Danish context, this could be when a white, male, Danish employer hires an applicant that is similar to him, instead of, for example, a woman of African origin, simply because the employer has previous experience with white, male employees, while he has none with female Africans. In this case, the employer could spend time, and resources, on getting more information about the applicant he is unfamiliar with, but as it is cheaper (and easier) to choose an applicant he knows more about, at least based on his previous experiences with them, he will often end up choosing that applicant (Zschirnt & Ruedin 2016: 1117).

Another reason why ethnic discrimination occurs in hiring decisions is related to theories of social dominance, which emphasise that cultural groups are ranked corresponding to their social position and any negative stereotypes that are connected with the groups and their members. This can create status hierarchies or ethnic hierarchies. The latter is somewhat related to the concept of cultural distance, where members of cultural groups are perceived as having less status, and therefore rank lower in the hierarchy (Zschirnt & Ruedin 2016: 1118). This concept will be elaborated upon in the 'Theory' section of the thesis and will be placed within a larger theoretical framework that examines the dynamics that take place when members of one cultural group are to adapt to a new cultural context. The results of the analysis show that ethnic and racial minority groups face discrimination in hiring processes and that this tendency is seen across OECD countries, as the majority of the studies examined in the analysis report discrimination against minority groups, and that this discrimination corresponds to minority group applicants having 49% lower odds of being invited to job interviews, compared to their competitors from majority groups. Considering "relative call-back ratios" applications from minority groups have to send around three job applications for every two applications that majority group applicants send before they are called back for a job interview. This discrimination in hiring processes exists despite the fact that many of the surveyed countries have implemented legislation that aims to counter discrimination in hiring processes, indicating that there is still a need for more research concerning the underlying reasons for this sort of discrimination (Zschirnt & Ruedin 2016: 1126-1127). In Denmark, there is similar legislation aiming to counter discrimination in hiring processes, as seen in "the Act on the

Prohibition of Differences of Treatment in the Labour Market” that was introduced in Denmark in 1996, and establishes that:

“an employer may not treat employees or job applicants differentially whether at the time of employment, dismissal, transfer, promotion or in terms of pay and working conditions” (Kühle & Årsheim 2020: 109).

While the study by Zschirnt & Ruedin is quite large in its scope and therefore shows quite robust results in regards to the discrimination of minority groups in hiring processes, its pitfall is also its size when considering its generalisability to ReDI School’s target group: highly educated minority women, who are specifically looking for jobs within the IT sector in Denmark.

A study conducted in a Danish context, however, shows similar results in regard to ethnic discrimination in the labour market. The researchers sent over 800 generic applications to job openings in the Danish labour market, meaning that they sent two equally qualified applications for each job posting, with one having a traditionally Danish-sounding name, and the other with a Middle Eastern-sounding name. Additionally, the applicants’ gender and ethnicity were assigned randomly in order to examine the effect between gender and ethnicity (Dahl & Krog 2018: 403). Similar to the results of the study described above, Dahl & Krog finds that applicants with a Middle Eastern-sounding name are significantly less likely to get a callback for a job interview, in comparison with applicants that have a Danish-sounding name. What makes these results even more notable, is that the job applications sent to job openings were all highly qualified, regardless of the name written on the application, which ideally should result in less incentive for discrimination. Furthermore, the results of the study show that discrimination varies with gender, and that male applicants with Middle-Eastern sounding names are especially vulnerable to experience discrimination when applying for jobs in Denmark (Dahl & Krog 2018: 413). While the study by Dahl & Krog is surely useful to highlight that there are also issues in Denmark regarding structural barriers to the participation of immigrants in the Danish labour market, it is important to highlight some of the specific barriers for immigrants,

which will be examined in a text focusing on the norms of Denmark's relation to employment chances for immigrants.

2.2 Ethnic identity, norms and employment chances

In Denmark, the employment rate for immigrants is often lower than it is for native Danes. Ensuring that immigrants quickly enter the labour market after entering the country, is an important task for many societies, Denmark included. Especially for Denmark, this is also quite a difficult task as Denmark has a large interethnic employment gap. In 2005, the employment gap between non-EU immigrants and native Danes was 25% (Gorinas 2014: 226). Fortunately, this gap has decreased since 2005, for men, as the most recent numbers show an employment gap of 19,21% between male Danes and males from MENAPT countries (Middle East, North Africa, Pakistan and Turkey). However, the same employment gap for women is 26,08% proving that there still is a great need for researching the causes of this employment gap, in particular for non-EU women (Appendix 3).

Ingrained in the public debate on employment, and economical success, of minorities, is the argument that minorities' decision to maintain their own culture and dismiss the adoption of the majority culture is a catalyst for economic and social exclusion in the host country. Inspired by this public debate, researchers have begun to examine minorities' commitment to their home country and their host country in order to see how it links with their employment chances in the host country. The study's contribution to the public debate is in how its results can be used to inspire post-migration policies in Denmark in three ways of which only one is directly relevant to this thesis. Namely, the aspect of linking openness to majority norms with ethnic identity, and seeing how it relates to employment (Gorinas 2014: 226). The results of the study show that there is a positive link between immigrants sharing norms with the majority and employment probabilities, but that the effect differs across genders and origin countries (Gorinas 2014: 240). Gorinas conclude by showing how immigrants whose norms are the furthest away from the norms of the host country will have the most difficulty with finding employment in Denmark. He suggests policies that promote interethnic interactions and education of

immigrants, as this can support widening the network of immigrants, as well as provide them with the skills needed to enter the labour market. Finally, interactions with natives can help the immigrants learn the social norms of Denmark, which can result in fewer interethnic conflicts as well as help the immigrants find employment in Denmark (Gorinas 2014: 248).

2.3 The role of career counselling

As shown above, immigrants arriving in a new country looking for employment, may experience challenges understanding and navigating the norms, which can affect their chances of finding employment in that country. To overcome this and increase chances of finding employment, immigrants may require additional help in comparison with native job seekers. In the following, I will go through two articles that examine how career counselling can help immigrants find jobs in their host country.

To give the historical context to the concept of career counselling, Michael Stebleton and Donald Eggerth tracks the origin and background of the career development profession. The authors argue that the profession had its beginning in Boston in the early 19th century, where social reformer Frank Parsons and his colleagues worked as “agents of social change” attempting to bettering the lives of poor immigrants by finding them jobs that matches their skills. The intention of career development was, and is, very much based on a conception that stable and successful employment can be seen as a facilitator of economic empowerment that in turn results in lasting political and social power (Stebleton & Eggerth 2012: 3-4). The authors present three key points that have been brought up in recent literature regarding career development for immigrants. The first one relates to how current practitioners of career development, which for example could be the volunteer career coaches in ReDI School, possess the ability to instil the spirit of Parsons into meeting the needs of growing immigrant populations in regards to employment in the host country. These articles are concerned with examining how career consultants, or coaches, can better serve this diverse population, and how they can work as ‘brokers’ by helping clients find resources in the community to help them improve their professional lives. Secondly, much of the literature deal with the importance of identifying

and addressing contextual factors and barriers, when working with immigrants, as these can impact their well-being. Finally, it deals with the need to learn more about the immigrant clients that career consultants encounter in their work, for example by engaging in involvement efforts aimed at informing others about the needs of diverse communities. Furthermore, some of the literature examines how organisations and companies can create strategies that help them learn more about their employees and thereby create better work environments for immigrants (Stebleton & Eggerth 2012: 9-10).

While the article by Stebleton & Eggerth is surely a good introduction to the field of career development, it is also necessary to examine literature that delves into how various contextual factors can influence the employment chances of immigrants and what role career development plays in this regard. Oksana Yakushko et al. have looked at exactly this with the aim of giving specific suggestions for career counsellors working with immigrants (Yakushko et al. 2008: 362). Previous literature in the field has shown a clear link between immigrants' abilities to adapt to their new environment and their employment status. A factor in this adaptation is obviously learning the language of the host country, but understanding cultural norms in terms of "social interactions, work attitudes and other customs" is also essential as it can support immigrants in finding employment, and seeking opportunities for promotion in the future (Yakushko et al. 2008: 374). The authors advise career counsellors to spend time with their immigrant clients to explore cultural norms related to work by asking them to describe the "world of work" in their home country. Based on this presentation and discussion on cultural norms related to work in the client's home country, the counsellor could help the client by informing them about how the world of work is structured in their host country, by highlighting and discussing important differences between home and host country. Another way in which career counsellors can guide their clients is with a focus on the client's intercultural competence in relation to work, by inquiring about the client's transition into the new country in regards to how easily the client understands the cultural complexities of the new cultural context. To support the transitioning and the building of intercultural competencies, the counsellor can pay particular attention to the client's progress in learning the language of the host

country, and to the client's interactions with natives of the host country. (Yakushko et al. 2008: 381-382).

The literature examined above shows what role career development can play in the process of immigrants learning to navigate the cultural norms of the host country in order to increase their chances of finding employment. The two texts that relate to career development are both focused on the US, and I have not been able to find much literature that is specifically concerned with Denmark, the target group of ReDI School, and the IT industry, which seems to justify a study that is concerned with these three elements. Additionally, the other texts reviewed in this section that did examine the cultural context of Denmark did not have a specific focus on the target group of ReDI School or the IT labour market, which serves as further justification for this thesis.

3 Problem statement

The above problematisation, discussion and literature review have resulted in the following problem statement, that will lead the thesis and its analysis:

Which social norms do non-Danish women encounter when applying for jobs in IT in Denmark, and how do they affect their chances of finding employment? How does ReDI School's volunteer career coaching programme uncover social norms in IT in Denmark and help non-Danish women navigate these?

In order to make my problem statement fully clear for the reader, it is necessary to define the concepts presented in the statement, so there are no misunderstandings in regard to the results of the analysis.

Most people have a somewhat clear understanding of what social norms are, but seeing as social norms are highly variable from cultural context to cultural context, which will also be highlighted in the analysis, I will define social norms in the following way:

“A culture's norms determine which behavior are permissible and which are forbidden, what things are desirable and what things are to be avoided, what is good and what is evil. Because norms determine what is good and what is desirable, they determine how people in the culture will behave” (Boyd & Richerson 1994: 72).

In regard to employment, it can be understood in a few ways. This is also considering that both my informants and ReDI School students and coachees, in general, have different types of employment. Bearing in mind the fact that ReDI School is an IT school, the end goal for the students is to find employment in the shape of a full-time position in a company, where their primary work tasks let them use their technical competencies, whether they are within coding, user experience, or something else. Two of my informants

are currently doing their internships, with one of them having a paid internship. While this may be a good way to build experience in the Danish IT labour market, the coachees are still more interested in finding full-time employment in a more permanent position, instead of a temporary employment situation. Therefore, I refer to permanent, full-time contracts in an IT-related role whenever I mention the concept of employment in the remainder of the thesis.

3.1 Techno-anthropological relevance

As will be clear in the following chapters, there are aspects of this thesis that are not distinctly techno-anthropological, which is why I, in the following, will outline the techno-anthropological relevance to this thesis and why a techno-anthropological perspective is beneficial for examining the relationship between social norms and the employment chances of non-women Danish searching for jobs in the Danish IT sector. The theories chosen to interpret the empirical data have their starting points in fields not directly related to techno-anthropology, and similarly, the ethnographic method outlined in the “Methodology” section can be used in many disciplines other than techno-anthropology which necessitates outlining how this thesis is distinctly techno-anthropological

I will take the starting point in how the field of techno-anthropology has been formulated by two of its initiators, Tom Børsen and Lars Botin (2013). According to them, the field is occupied with uncovering the different logics that influence human abilities and competencies which often are mediated by technologies (Børsen & Botin 2013: 7-8). In my thesis I aim to investigate how the logics that exist in the Danish IT labour market, in the form of social norms influence the abilities of ReDI School coachees to find employment in Denmark. The thesis also aims to investigate the other direction by seeing how the technical abilities and competencies of the coachees influence their chances of finding employment when considering the social norms in the Danish IT labour market. While I do not investigate any specific and clear technological artefact when answering my problem statement, there are surely a handful of technologies that the coachees can and do use when looking for employment, like LinkedIn, phone calls, and CVs and cover letters. Surrounding these technologies are a lot of social norms in relation to how these

technologies are to be used when applying for jobs in IT in Denmark. During my analysis I will describe how these technologies are utilised by the job searching coachees, and how this use fit into the larger cultural context of job searching in Denmark.

Another argument that displays the techno-anthropology relevance of this thesis is the interdisciplinarity that is inherent in the logic of techno-anthropology, as explained by Børsen & Botin:

"Anthropology becomes a proxy for different humanistic and social scientific research approaches that in their multitudes reveal different aspects of technology and techno-science" (Børsen & Botin 2013: 8).

As will be outlined in 'Theory', I will use different theoretical frameworks and concepts from different fields of social science, that in conjunction aim to reveal different aspects of the field of the Danish IT labour market, that with a focus on social norms, and to some degree, the technologies used by ReDI School coachees in their job search examine the chances of employment.

4 Who are the informants?

In the following section, each informant will be described. Furthermore, the intention of interviewing the different types of informants will be presented. Note, that every informant besides ReDI School's career program manager Anne, has been anonymised. The specificities of the anonymisation of the thesis informants will be outlined in the 'Methodology' section.

4.1 The coachees

Four coachees have been interviewed for this thesis. Three of them no longer study at ReDI School after their course in the fall semester of 2021, while one of them decided to continue with a new course in the spring of 2022. The argument for interviewing ReDI School coachees is inspired by the use of phenomenology as a qualitative research method, with the intention of understanding social phenomena from the perspective of the actors themselves. With this follows the assumption that "the real reality" is the reality as it is perceived by human beings (Jacobsen et al. 2015: 227). By interviewing coachees that have first-hand experience with the social practice of applying for jobs in Denmark, I aim to achieve a better understanding of the phenomenon that is job searching, with all the various social conventions that accompany it. As I personally have around ten years of work experience in Denmark, I find it absolutely crucial to pursue the perspective of other people as a way to detach myself from my own perception of the social practices of Danish work culture. This becomes even more important considering that the experience of applying for jobs in Denmark is presumably different for a native Danish man, than it is for a foreign-born woman.

Harpreet

Harpreet moved to Denmark from India with her family in 2018. When she moved to Denmark, she was in the midst of her seven-year-long maternity leave. She used a part of this leave to study. For example, by completing a course in cybersecurity from ReDI School, as well as taking other certifications. Harpreet is in her late 30s, has a bachelor's degree in electronics and telecommunications engineering, and has worked with

cybersecurity in India prior to her maternity leave. After some years of applying for jobs in Denmark, she found a job in a Danish IT company, working as a vulnerability manager (Appendix 1.7: 101). Besides Denmark and India, she has worked in cybersecurity in Germany and the United Kingdom (Appendix 1.7: 105).

Lucine

Lucine has a background in architecture, and has worked as an architect for six years in her native Armenia. She has lived in Denmark for close to three years, and is in the beginning of her 30's. After some years of applying for jobs within architecture in Denmark, she decided to switch careers, and pursue a job in tech. Her interest in working in user experience, or user interface, led her to ReDI School, which was recommended to her by a friend. She is currently working as an UX design intern in a large Danish power company, and hopes to continue working in UX, and to combine her interests of architecture and UX (Appendix 1.6: 86-87).

Pratibha

In 2013, Pratibha moved to Denmark from India, where she worked as a teacher. Due to the difficulty of the Danish language, she struggled with finding a job in teaching, and decided to change careers. While looking for new opportunities, she discovered ReDI School, where she took the data analytics course in the fall semester of 2021, before continuing with the cloud computing course in the spring of 2022. She is currently looking for a job within data science in a tech company in Denmark, but in the meantime she works for her husband, who is a freelancer, by helping him with his administrative work. She has been searching for jobs within tech during most of her time in Denmark, and has worked for a currency exchange company in Denmark. Besides Denmark and India, she has worked in Australia, the United States, and the United Kingdom. Pratibha is in her late 30's (Appendix 1.9: 134-139).

Vidya

Vidya is from India, in her mid-30s, and has taken her master's degree in information systems management in the United Kingdom. In 2013, she moved from the UK to

Denmark where she struggled for several years with finding a job in tech. She has worked in several startups in Denmark as a software tester, but they had to close down or move out of the country. In 2017, she started her own business with her husband, unrelated to tech. During the Covid-19 pandemic, they were forced to shut down the business, which led her on a new hunt for a job in tech in Denmark. During her search, she found ReDI School, where she took an introductory course to JavaScript in the fall of 2021. Following her course, she found a job in, the ReDI School partner company, Monical (Appendix 1.8: 117-118). When describing her work tasks in Monical, Vidya mentions that:

“...right now I have been assigned two teams, and I deal with them everyday, and we have the daily stand-up, so I would know what they're doing today, and what is their plan for the rest of the day, and then I also ask everyone what is it they have done yesterday. Was it okay? Or do they need more assistance in doing that. So it's kind of like trying to know the information in the team...” (Appendix 1.8: 119).

4.2 The career coaches

For this thesis, I have interviewed 3 volunteer career coaches. 2 of the coaches have international backgrounds with experience working in different countries. The reasoning for interviewing career coaches is similar to the phenomenological argument presented above. I find the career coach perspective interesting and beneficial for the thesis, as it adds an extra layer to the analysis, compared to the perspective of the students. The coaches may experience the coachees' perception of the Danish labour market, as it is being relayed to them, but they have an important different perspective to add to that perception, as they have their own experience searching for jobs - often in different countries allowing a comparability that can help highlight what makes the Danish labour market special in terms of unwritten social rules. As two of my informants also have, or have had, a say in matters related to hiring and managing employees, they may have a better idea of what Danish employers, in general, find important when looking for new employees. This is further indicated by ReDI School's career program manager, Anne, as she mentions that ReDI School searches for volunteer career coaches who have

participated in HR processes and have been involved in the employment of candidates in their organisations (Appendix 1.1: 13).

Fatin

Fatin works in a large intergovernmental organisation as an information manager, which is a position that is “related to tech, but it’s not only”. He has worked in that position for three years and has lived in Denmark since 2017. He has taken a master’s degree in international management, specialising in technology and IT management, from Copenhagen Business School. He was born in Tunisia but grew up in Italy and France. Fatin has worked as a coach in ReDI School since the fall of 2020 and has coached 11 students. Besides his coaching role in ReDI School, he also has a similar role in his own organisation, as he is a part of a mentorship programme (Appendix 1.4: 57-58). He has work experience in China, Denmark, Canada and France (Appendix 1.4: 64).

Kristine

Kristine has a master’s degree in Danish, with a specialisation in communication, from the University of Copenhagen. Currently, she is taking a master’s degree in coaching and philosophy from a university in London. She has previously worked in the media industry, but in recent years she has been employed as a “discussion partner” to executives in large corporations and organisations. In this role, she has been involved in hiring processes and the assessment of employees and candidates. She has experience with coaching people in various professions, such as “athletes, architects, writers, executives”. She has coached ReDI School students for a year and a half (Appendix 1.5: 71-72).

Merjem

Merjem works as a senior project manager in a Copenhagen based IT company called Oblity, where she works with people in Australia, the United States, and different countries in Europe. Before moving to Denmark, she worked in an IT company in Sweden. She did her studies in Spain, and is originally from Bosnia. Merjem has been a coach in ReDI School since the fall of 2021, and is currently doing her second round of coaching (Appendix 1.3: 34-36).

4.3 Other informants

The final category contains ReDI School's career program manager, a self-employed career counsellor, who works outside of ReDI, and two partner companies of ReDI School. The interview of Anne, serves as a background interview, to understand the intention behind ReDI School and its career coaching programme. The interview with the self-employed career counsellor, Cynthia, serves as a sort of inspiration for further perspectives on the Danish labour market and its unwritten rules and allows for perspectives that exist outside of the social context that is ReDI School and the tech companies that its students normally gravitate towards when looking for jobs in Denmark.

Anne

Anne has worked in ReDI School for the past two years as the career program manager, meaning that she is responsible with helping prepare the students for "the real world", which could include supporting the personal growth of the students, helping them expand their network, and gain a better understanding of the Danish labour market. She has a master's degree in political science and worked in the media industry before joining ReDI School (Appendix 1.1: 1).

Cynthia

Cynthia is an American, who moved to Europe at the age of 19 and eventually ended up in Denmark where she works as a self-employed career consultant, offering services for internationals who are looking for jobs in Denmark or looking to move to Denmark to work. When she moved to Denmark, she worked for several years in various start-ups until she started her own business, where she does workshops in collaboration with "a-kasser", and offers one-to-one sessions to her clients (Appendix 1.2: 18-19).

Monical

Monical is not an informant, but I choose to present them here as the organisation is an important actor, as ReDI School has a formal partnership with Monical which for example can be seen in the internship programme, where ReDI School students have the possibility to intern in Monical in positions related to the course they are taking. Monical

is a multinational corporation founded in Denmark, but which has offices all over the world, in countries like Finland, India, and the United Kingdom. ReDI School and Monical have had the internship programme for one year, and a total of 7 ReDI students have interned at Monical.

5 Methodology

In the following section, the methodological design of the thesis will be presented, as well as arguments for the choices taken. The empirical data consists of nine semi-structured interviews of ReDI School coaches, and career coaches, as well as an interview of a career consultant outside of ReDI School, and of ReDI's career program manager.

5.1 Balancing distance and proximity

Considering the fact that the research study presented in this thesis is conducted in, and based upon, a field where I am, at least to some degree, an active participant, I have spent a substantial amount of time reflecting on my role as a researcher in a field where I also have a role as a worker. These reflections are related to my role in relation to the informants, and how this may influence the results of my study. Furthermore, they are related to how being immersed in the field prior to beginning my thesis can influence my pre-understandings of the field. The results of these reflections are implemented in some deliberate methodological choices throughout the data collection, which will be explained in the next sections.

5.1.1 My role in ReDI School

In order to better understand what my role in the research study is, and what impact my acquaintanceships with the informants may have on the results of my data, it is necessary to present what my work tasks consist of in ReDI School, and what kind of relations I have to my informants.

My role title is *Tech Program Assistant*, which means I am responsible for a large amount of the practicalities related to the tech courses in ReDI School. This entails being the students' contact person in case of any questions or complications related to the course, as well as being in charge of the recruitment and onboarding processes during the semesters. More importantly, my role requires me to be physically present at the course locations, which means that I will physically meet a large part of the students on a weekly basis. The degree to which a student reaches out to me, and asks for help with anything

varies greatly. In general, I don't speak to the majority of the students, once the semester has started, apart from greeting them when they arrive. A small number of the students, however, require more help with various things related to the course or their struggle with finding employment in Denmark.

In regards to the interviewed career coaches, I have not had any sort of involvement with them in my capacity as Tech Program Assistant, as my role does not concern the career-related activities of ReDI School.

5.1.2 Contacting my informants

One of the aspects of my thesis where I have reflected a lot in relation to balancing distance and proximity is in regard to who I have invited to be interviewed, as I wanted to avoid talking to people with that I have too close a relationship, as I am concerned that this could influence their statements during the interviews. A concern I had in regard to this, was the fear that my informants would hold back with any potential criticisms of ReDI School, its career coaching programme and the coaches themselves, as they might think that posing criticism of the organisation in which I work could strain the relationship between us. In order to respond to this concern, I decided to only send invitations to the students with whom I did not have any particular relation to, meaning students to that I haven't talked much. Furthermore, this also serves as a way to mitigate any biases, be they conscious or unconscious, towards students who I knew would talk positively about ReDI School or students who I knew had gained full-time employment following their course at the school. I had a desire to get a nuanced perspective on how social norms influence the coachees' chances of finding employment in Denmark, which is why I wanted to not only interview coachees that have found full-time employment in IT in Denmark.

Although I wanted to be careful about not interviewing coachees I knew too well, there is also an obvious advantage in the fact that the coachees are aware of who I am, in regards to my work in ReDI School. This is because, I realise that receiving many rejections for positions you have applied for might be difficult for some people to talk about, as it can be associated with negative feelings. For that reason, I believe it to be advantageous that the coachee-informants may view me as an ally, instead of an anonymous researcher

they do not know whose motives are when they have to share feelings that can be difficult to talk about.

I did not have concerns in regard to my personal relation to the informants influencing the interview when interviewing the career coaches, as I do not work with the career coaching program, and therefore have not had any possibility to build a relationship with the coaches, based upon my work, prior to the interviews. I only had a brief conversation with Kristine during my preliminary, informal observation at a career coaching training, but this was solely in my capacity as a researcher.

5.1.3 Positioning myself

Before the interviews, I wanted to make sure that I was as detached from ReDI School as possible, and that my role as a researcher was as clear as possible to all my informants. For example, during my very first point of contact, which was when sending the email inviting them to my interview. Here I could have decided to send the email from my work email, as the informants seeing that the email was sent from a domain that is familiar to them, could decrease the chance that they would think of the email as spam that they should just dismiss. Instead, I sent the email from my university email, in order to ensure that my role as a researcher was as clear as possible.

During the interviews, I likewise attempted to maintain a clear distinction between myself as a researcher and as a ReDI employee. If for example, I had to ask questions about ReDI School's career activities, I was very careful to not refer to the activities as something that "we" offered as I would in normal conversations with the informant in my capacity as a ReDI employee. However, there were occurrences during my interviews with the coachees, where they would ask me questions that I would only be able to answer because I work for ReDI School. This made it difficult to maintain a strict distinction between me as a researcher, and as a ReDI employee. However, these occurrences were rare and brief, so I do not believe that they could have obscured the distinction and impacted the quality of the empirical data.

5.2 Using induction as a starting point

My initial course of action when commencing the data gathering for this thesis has been the subject of many reflections, due to the fact that this research study is significantly different because I haven't previously done research in a field I am that well familiar with. In the research studies I have participated in, in the past, I have obviously done extensive research of the field, resulting in some sort of understanding before observing or interviewing actors in the field. However, I haven't researched a field where I have the sort of insight that is only attainable by actually working within the field and interacting with its actors. This made me wary of any, intentional or unintentional, prejudices about the field, especially in relation to the problem statement of this thesis. I wanted as many different perspectives on the unwritten rules that the coachees of ReDI School encounter when applying for jobs in tech in Denmark, and not just merely the ones that I have become aware of during my interactions with ReDI students in my capacity as program assistant. Therefore, I wanted the initial approach to the thesis to be as inductive as possible, meaning I attempted to initially ignore whatever assumptions I had about the field, or in the context of this research study, clearing my mind of whatever social norms play the most significant role for ReDI coachees' job searching in Denmark. By doing this, I attempted to achieve what Steinar Kvale and Svend Brinkmann refer to as 'deliberate naiveté', where the researcher maintains an open mind to new and unexpected phenomena, instead of adhering to already established categories and frameworks of interpretation. This presupposes the interviewer being curious about what is being said, and what is not being said, and more importantly, being critical of their own presuppositions and hypotheses during the research process (Kvale & Brinkmann 2015: 51-52).

This may seem like an abstract thought experiment, so this can be elucidated in the order in which I did observations and interviews in the field. While I did not intend for my empirical data to contain organised observational studies, I still decided that an informal observation session would be beneficial for the design of my interview guides, as it could allow me to be presented with perspectives that I had not considered based on my pre-understanding of the field that I have acquired during my work tasks. Therefore, I attended

a career coaching training session prior to the start of the coaching semester. At this point, I was aware that I already had a good idea about what I believed would play the biggest role in the answer to my problem statement. With the intention of the empirical data to surprise me, and show me new, unexpected perspectives, I believed this to be a precarious starting point for my data gathering, especially in regards to my interview data, as I feared this could mean that I could close my eyes for new social rules, or perspective on ReDI School's career coaching, because I already had my mind set on the most significant aspects of the field. The decision to initiate the data gathering process by observing was an attempt to mitigate this potential complication, and not start interviewing people without first being subjected to different perspectives.

While the above discussion may sound like a critique of having too much knowledge about the field, this is not the case as hermeneutics has argued that we are only able to understand the world on the basis of a pre-understanding (Tanggaard & Brinkmann 2015: 37).

5.3 Interviews

During my data gathering, I completed a total of nine interviews. The reason for this number of interviews was that I felt that this was an appropriate number of interviews, primarily in regards to what I believed I would be able to analyse myself with the constraints of time and size of the thesis. However, by the last number of interviews, I experienced that my informants repeated many of the same points, meaning that I likely reached a point where more interviews would not necessarily have given me more valuable perspectives that could be useful in answering my problem statement.

My interviews all took the shape of semi-structured interviews where I had a set interview guide that I followed throughout the interviews while allowing myself to move away from the interview guide whenever I encountered interesting perspectives in the expressions of the informants and felt a need to probe into those perspectives. All interviews, except for the one of my colleague Anne, were conducted online via Zoom, which was a decision I took to accommodate my informants, as most of them have full-time positions, as well as family obligations, so I wanted to make sure that the interview was as convenient as

possible for them. While there were, unfortunately, a number of instances of connection temporarily disrupting causing the audio recording to cut off, these were rare and did not affect the overall empirical data.

5.4 Anonymity

Eight out of my nine informants have been anonymised in the thesis. When anonymising informants, it is important to reflect on the degree of anonymisation, in order to maintain a balance of anonymising to a degree where the chances of the informants being recognised are decreased but not to a degree where important aspects of their personality are extracted, damaging the quality of empirical data.

The ReDI School coachees are the group of informants that I've been the most concerned with anonymising, as they are in a somewhat precarious situation as they belong to an under-represented group in the Danish IT sector. Adding to that, they are still in the process of establishing themselves in the Danish tech industry, as they are either searching for jobs, working in an internship or in the early stage of their career in the Danish tech industry. Considering this, I do not want to jeopardise their careers in Denmark by presenting critical statements about Danish tech companies expressed by the coachee-informants without obscuring their identities to some degree.

Thus, I decided not to use the real names of the informants, and instead assign them a random name. I wanted to give them a name that matched their origin countries, and therefore I used the website 'behindthename.com/random' which generates a random name based on a number of parameters, such as the origin country and gender of the name.

This led me to another discussion in regard to keeping the balance of anonymising just the right amount. Namely, whether I would disclose the origin countries of the coachees or not. While disclosing the origin country of an informant surely makes them more identifiable, I decided to not obscure their origin, which is why the origin countries of the informants are reflected in their randomly generated name. The reason for disclosing their country is due to the fact that I believe that hiding their country will make it less clear how unwritten social rules can affect the coachees' chances of finding employment in IT in

Denmark. As the ReDI School coachees have various different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, it will obviously differ from student to student how difficult or easy it might be for them to understand, navigate and overcome unwritten social rules. As seen in 'The career coaching programme and the students', the students in ReDI School come from a lot of different countries, and even continents, so it is fair to assume that their cultural reaction to and understanding of unwritten social rules likewise differs. By showing the origin countries of the coachees, it becomes easier to highlight this cultural difference between the norms of the coachees and the norms of the Danish IT industry, and what effect it has on the chances of employment.

Besides the name of the coachees and their origin countries, I have anonymised different elements that are irrelevant for the analysis, but which can be used to identify informants or other actors, such as career coaches and ReDI School students who are not informants in this thesis. This could be elements such as the age of an informant's child, or the name and occupation of other ReDI School students.

Finally, I made the decision to anonymise the real name of Monical, as it is mentioned a number of times during the interviews, as they have a partnership with ReDI School, through their internship programme. It was crucial for me to anonymise this organisation, as only a small number of ReDI School students have an internship in that company, and by changing the name of the organisation it is more difficult to identify the informants.

When anonymising the volunteer career coaches, I had many of the same reflections that I had when anonymising the coachees, which is why I have anonymised the names of the coaches and randomly generated a name for them. In regards to the origin countries of the career coaches, I likewise considered hiding them, but I found it important to highlight that the coaches, as well as the coachees, have different ethnic and cultural backgrounds that may impact the way that they perceive the Danish IT market.

In regards to the organisations in which the coaches are employed, I have decided to either anonymise the names or remove the names from the transcriptions, as they are irrelevant to the analysis, and can be used to identify the informants.

6 Theory

In the following section of the thesis, the theoretical framework will be presented. This framework will be utilised in the analysis to interpret the empirical data and answer the problem statement of the thesis.

6.1 Acculturation

John Berry is a Professor Emeritus of psychology from Queen's University in Canada and has a specific research interest in the role that ecology and culture play in human development, and in acculturation and intercultural relations (Sage Publishing 2022). In an article, published in 1997, Berry introduces a model that examines "how individuals who have developed in one cultural context manage to adapt to new contexts that result from migration" (Berry 1997: 6). Considering this description of the model, it seems advantageous to use the model when analysing the empirical data, as all ReDI School's tech students are adults, who have experienced the transition from developing in their origin country to having to adapt to the cultural context of Denmark, and following that, the Danish labour market. This model has a large scope, as it attempts to encapsulate the process of acculturating to a cultural context as a whole, and not only the labour market. There will therefore be elements of the model that will not be described in the following, nor be used in the analysis, as I aim to focus only on the unwritten rules in the specific cultural context of the Danish IT job market, albeit some of the rules may be influenced by cultural norms found in the general, Danish society.

Berry introduces a distinction between the cultural group that is "new" in the host country, and the cultural group that is already living in, and has been developed in, the host country, as refers to the groups as being "dominant" or "non-dominant" when considering their relative power whenever it is relevant to discuss this difference (Berry 1997: 8). In the analysis, I will likewise make this distinction to accentuate the difference between the groups who are acculturated in the Danish cultural context, and the ReDI School coachees, who are in the process of being acculturated to the cultural context of the Danish IT job market. I will do this by referring to the group, that is already acculturated

to the Danish cultural context, as being members of the dominant social group, while the ReDI School coaches will be referred to as members of the non-dominant.

Berry uses the concept of acculturation to refer to “the general processes and outcomes of intercultural contact” (Berry 1997: 8). He acknowledges that while the concept is, in itself neutral, meaning that acculturation can take place in both groups, it usually creates more change in the acculturating group. Berry presents a distinction between two different types of acculturation: collective and psychological acculturation. The collective acculturation induces a change in the culture of the group, while the psychological acculturation induces a change in the psychology of the individual (Berry 1997: 7). From my empirical data, I don’t have any basis to shed light on any potential changes in group culture meaning that I will solely focus on the psychological acculturation of my informants when analysing the empirical data.

6.1.1 Outcomes of acculturation

Acculturation can bring along a different number of social and psychological outcomes that vary in their direction and degree. Berry introduces three broad categories that can be used to encapsulate the different outcomes. The first one refers to the cases where the cultural and psychological changes are rather easy for the individual to accomplish, and the adaptations are merely viewed as a matter of having to learn a new “behavioural repertoire” that is appropriate for the new cultural context. However, this process also requires some degree of “culture shedding” and could therefore be followed by a moderate “culture conflict”. This category is called *behavioural shifts* (Berry 1997: 12-13). In cases where more serious cultural conflict arises, the individual may experience what Berry refers to as *acculturative stress* when they find that changing their cultural repertoire is not easily done. A more common concept that can also be used to describe this dynamic is the notion of “culture shock”, but in the analysis, acculturative stress will be used to describe this dynamic (Berry 1997: 13). Finally, *psychopathology* can be used to describe the final category of psychological outcomes to acculturation, as it covers the cases where the changes in cultural context are so substantial that the individual is unable to cope with them, resulting in serious

psychological disturbances like depression and anxiety (Berry 1997: 13). These three categories of psychological outcomes will be used in the analysis to shed light on any potential psychological consequences searching for jobs in a new cultural context may have for the coachees and ReDI School, and how this may affect their chances of finding employment in Denmark.

6.1.2 Acculturation factors

Accompanying the process of acculturation, are a number of factors that exist prior to, and during, acculturation. Age is a factor which plays a significant role, as the acculturation process is generally smoother when it starts at an early age, instead of when you are an adult. Similarly, gender has an influence on acculturation processes, as women may be more at risk of experiencing acculturation-related problems, such as depression, anxiety, etc. Education also seems to be a factor that is often associated with lower probabilities of experiencing acculturative stress (Berry 1997: 21-22). Considering my empirical data, I do not have much basis to determine what significance these three factors hold for my coachee informants, as they are all somewhat similar in terms of gender, age, and educational level, but they are still important to have in mind during the analysis, as they can still be important factors in explaining acculturation outcomes.

Besides these demographic factors, personal factors also play an important role in the outcome of the acculturation process. A factor in this could be an individual's locus of control, meaning whether they believe to be in control over the situations they encounter in their everyday life, or if they believe outside forces control them. Additionally, introversion/extroversion is a personal factor that can influence the acculturation process, but Berry argues that it is not the trait itself that influences the process, but rather how that trait fits into the new cultural context (Berry 1997: 23).

There are also factors of a more cultural nature, as is made clear when Berry uses the concept of 'cultural distance' which refers to the dissimilarities between the cultures that are in contact with each other. This could relate to aspects like language and religion but is not limited to these two. The greater the distance is between two cultures, the greater

the need for culture shedding and culture learning for the non-dominant group when being acculturated to the new cultural context, which carries the potential for greater culture conflicts (Berry 1997: 23). Berry does not expand upon how this cultural distance can be analysed within the framework and considering that this thesis aims to examine social norms, which are ingrained within the cultural context of any country, it is necessary to utilise a theoretical concept that attends to the significance of culture. Later in the 'Theory' section, I will present Pierre Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital, and how I aim to use this in conjunction with Berry's acculturation model.

Berry underlines the factor of social support as being important in the process of acculturation, though it seems to differ in regards to where members of non-dominant cultural groups prefer their social support to come from - their own original culture or members of the dominant cultural groups. However, there seems to be a correlation between having social support from both groups and successful adaptations to the host culture (Berry 1997: 25). As in the case of cultural distance, Berry does not elaborate on how social support can be analysed, so in order to respond to this, I will make use of the concept of social capital. While Bourdieu has used this concept extensively, I will not follow his use of the concept when analysing my empirical data, as I instead will draw inspiration from Robert D. Putnam's use of social capital, with his introduction of the concepts of bonding- and bridging social capital. These will be elaborated upon later in this section. It is important to note, however, that there are parts of my empirical data where it is more beneficial to use Berry's concept of social support than Putnam's social capital concept.

6.2 Capitals

As mentioned, Berry's framework lacks a number of theoretical concepts that can explain important factors that influence the outcome of members of non-dominant social groups' acculturation to a new cultural context. In the following, I will present two forms of capital, that will be used to examine the role that these factors play in the acculturation of the coachee informants, which in this thesis will be assessed by considering their employment status in Denmark.

6.2.1 Cultural capital

Bourdieu was a French sociologist who had a wide array of research interests, with one of the most well-known interests being in the area of distinction and social differentiation (Järvinen 2013: 365-369). Within this area, he had a specific interest in examining how culture, and the consumption of culture, contribute to creating distinctions between different social groups in society. Throughout his research, he found that members of the dominating classes in France are able to consume the culture that distinguishes them from dominated classes because the understanding of culture is based upon an upbringing in a family belonging to a dominating class, where they have been continually cultivated to the culture of the dominating classes (Järvinen 2013: 369). The distinguishing between dominating and dominated social classes is similar to the distinction that Berry creates in his acculturation model when he speaks of dominant and non-dominant cultural groups.

Bourdieu sees that there is a correlation between an individual's cultural taste and its position in what he refers to as 'the social space' (Järvinen 2013: 369). The social space is constructed as the individuals find their position in the space relative to the other individuals in the space. Individuals' position in the social space is based on two principles of differentiation: economic and cultural capital (Bourdieu 1997: 21). Economic capital refers to the amount of money and other resources that an individual has at their disposal. Cultural capital is a bit more complex than mere monetary possessions, as it refers to both education, such as exams and titles, and cultural 'skills', which can be understood as an understanding and mastery of the cultural codes and norms of the dominant classes (Järvinen 2013: 372). Another important aspect that cultural capital encompasses relates to an individual's linguistic abilities, and can be called linguistic capital. Linguistic capital reflects the position that an individual has in the social space and there is a correlation between an individual's efficiency in using language and the amount of linguistic capital they possess (Schroedler 2018: 17)

Bourdieu expands upon the concept of cultural capital, as he asserts that it exists in three different states: an embodied, an objectified, and an institutional state. The embodied

state relates to the fact that cultural capital, in its fundamental state is linked to the body and presupposes embodiment. The accumulation of cultural capital presupposes an embodiment process which costs time that has to be invested by the individual. Bourdieu compares this with building muscle which takes time to do (Bourdieu 1986: 17-18). This time aspect of embodied cultural capital can be related to the point made above, that dominating classes have an advantage compared to the dominated, as they have spent their upbringing being cultivated to the 'right' norms and their embodiment process has started early in life.

The objectified state relates to the possession of material, and cultural objects, such as literature, paintings, instruments and so on. Finally, the institutionalised form is shown in academic qualifications, which is seen as a certificate of cultural competence that is approved by the dominant classes (Bourdieu 1986: 19-20).

A third important form of capital is social capital, which refers to the resources that an individual has due to their membership in a specific social group (Järvinen 2013: 372).

I will not use the concept of economic capital, as I do not have any particular interest in the financial situation of the ReDI School coachees and what effect it may have on their chances of finding employment in IT in Denmark, though it may have some kind effect. I will also not only use Bourdieu's definition of social capital, as I will primarily make use of Putnam's understanding of social capital, which will be expanded upon later in this section.

In the analysis, I will use this concept of cultural capital to analyse what happens when the coachees of ReDI School encounter the Danish IT labour market in regard to cultural norms that exist in that social space. How well will they fit into the culture of the Danish IT market? To use the words of Berry: how far is the cultural distance between the norms of ReDI School's coachees and the norms that exist in the Danish IT market? Finally, how does this distance influence what position the coachees take in the social space of the Danish IT market?

6.2.2 Social capital

Robert D. Putnam is an American political scientist, who is notable for his book, *Bowling Alone* (2000) in which he analyses the decline in social capital in America. He sees this decline being represented in the dwindling membership numbers of American community organisations (Putnam 2000: 15-18). Considering past definitions and uses of the concept, by people like Bourdieu and James S. Coleman, Putnam sees that social capital has both an individual and collective aspect as individuals make connections that benefit themselves, but that social capital at the same can have “externalities” that affect individuals outside the one trying to make the connection. In the context of job searching, a beneficial factor is to take advantage of your network as “most of us get our jobs because of whom we know and not what we know” (Putnam 2000: 19-20). The simultaneous individual and collective aspects of social capital can be exemplified in an individual’s membership of a “Lions Club” division, that aims to help members of the community, while at the same allowing the club members to build connections with people that can help them further their careers. According to Putnam social capital can take different forms, as he asserts that social capital is not exclusively an asset that can be used to induce positive change, like in the case of a community organisation like Lions Club. Social capital can also be applied to anti-social groups like terrorist networks and racist organisations (Putnam 2000: 21-22). However, Putnam finds that the most important forms that social capital can take can be seen in the distinction between bridging and bonding social capital. Bridging social capital is found in networks that consist of individuals from different parts of society, as they are characterised by being heterogeneous. As a result of the openness of these types of networks, they often help develop broader identities. Bonding social capital can be found in networks that are “inward-looking”, homogenous and that tend to reinforce exclusive identities. This could for example be relations found in family members, close friends or ethnic fraternal organisations (Putnam 2000: 22).

The two forms of social capital differ in the nature of the benefits they provide members of the networks. Bonding social capital is useful for giving social and psychological support to members of the network while mobilising solidarity. Bridging social networks

do not offer the same kind of support for its members but can be useful in other situations, such as when applying for jobs, as the weak ties that link individuals to distant acquaintances are often more useful in this regard than the strong ties found in close relations or networks (Putnam 2000: 22-23).

In the analysis, I will use these concepts to analyse the importance and nature of the social support that the job-seeking informants may, or may not, receive from the members of the networks they participate in. In particular, I have an interest in the social support the coachees receive from their coaches and whether this support increases their chances of finding employment in IT in Denmark.

7 Analysis

In this section of the thesis, I will analyse the empirical data gathered through interviews with my informants. This analysis aims to answer the problem statement that has guided the thesis: *Which social norms do non-Danish women encounter when applying for jobs in IT in Denmark, and how do they affect their chances of finding employment? How does ReDI School's volunteer career coaching programme uncover social norms in IT in Denmark and help non-Danish women navigate these?*

To answer this problem statement adequately and in a way where I, and the reader, do not lose the overview throughout the answer, I have decided to split the problem statement up into the four questions that constitute it:

1. *Which social norms do non-Danish women encounter when applying for jobs in IT in Denmark?*
2. *How do they affect their chances of finding employment?*
3. *How does ReDI School's volunteer career coaching programme uncover these social norms?*
4. *How does ReDI School's volunteer career coaching programme help non-Danish women navigate these norms?*

These four questions will be separated into two sections.

The first section will go through each of the social norms that I have exposed throughout my data gathering and explain how they manifest themselves through my informants and their descriptions of the Danish IT labour market, and finally how they affect the ReDI School coachees' chances of finding employment within IT in Denmark. The second section will examine how the ReDI School career coaching programme helps the coachees uncover the social norms existing in the Danish IT labour market and how the programme helps the coachees navigate the social norms, and, hopefully, get them closer to finding employment in Denmark.

Throughout the two sections of the analysis, I will make use of the theoretical frameworks and concepts presented in the 'Theory' section.

7.1 Norms

7.1.1 Proactivity

The norm of proactivity is seen as being very important when applying for jobs in IT in Denmark, and a norm that the coachees struggle with navigating. Career consultant, Cynthia, when asked to reflect on social norms that she has encountered when applying for jobs in Denmark, mentions the norm of proactivity and mentions that many internationals have issues with being proactive in job searching. She remarks that a way in which you can show proactivity is when you contact a company about a job opening, which for example could be via a phone call. A particular challenge in this regard is when there is not a lot of information in the job ad (Appendix 1.2: 30). Pratibha agrees with the last sentiment, as she notes that she is struggling with making up questions from a job posting. When every potential question you might have is already answered in the job posting itself; "what should you ask about it?" (Appendix 1.9: 134). Lucine, likewise, acknowledges this norm of proactivity and that it is performed by calling the company and asking questions, and that this is a way to make sure that the company remember you in some way. She adds, however, that she will not call a company unless she has any questions (Appendix 1.6: 91-92). Career coach, Fatin, supports these feelings the coachees have as he says that far from every attempt at making contact, and making yourself noticed by recruiters, calling them up, is successful. He posits that two-thirds of the time there is no reply when a coachee calls a recruiter, and if they manage to talk to someone, they do not always feel a connection with the person, or that the person even has any interest in speaking to them (Appendix 1.4: 68-69).

When considering why it is so important to show proactivity by calling companies and making yourself noticed, and when putting this in relation to the chances of finding employment in Denmark, cultural capital can aid the analysis. From the above examples, it shows that being proactive is a social norm that is ingrained within the dominant cultural

group in Denmark, which I believe is fair to assume is inhabited by people who have succeeded in finding employment in Denmark. By not being aware that this norm of proactivity exists in job searching, or at least having difficulty with following by calling and asking the right questions, you risk taking a disadvantageous position in the social space as it can mean that you have a smaller chance of being employed. What is important to note in this regard, is that the coachee is likely in competition with other applicants. If one, or more, of these applicants, are aware of this social norm and have embodied it, meaning that they call the company, and ask questions, and even more importantly, the right questions, then they have a clear advantage over the coachee as they navigate within the norms of the dominant cultural group, at least in relation to job searching in IT in Denmark. That an applicant seemingly has an advantage when they follow the norm of proactivity, is confirmed by Pratibha when she tells the story of another ReDI student, who has found employment in Monical. She indicates that part of the reason could be that the student called the company before applying which resulted in a 20-minute long conversation with a recruiter, which was essentially an informal interview. This led Pratibha to reflect upon that norm, as she saw that: “yes, these phone calls make a difference”. It made her change her strategy when applying for jobs, as she now calls the company she is applying for every time she sends an application (Appendix 1.9: 138). This example is quite interesting when considering it with Putnam’s bridging/distinction in mind. Though he posits that bridging social capital is better in a job searching context than bonding social capital, this seems to in fact be an example of a situation where a possible bonding relation is helpful in the context of job searching. This is, however, primarily speculation as I do not know enough about Pratibha’s relation to the aforementioned ReDI student to assess whether their relationship can be described as being a bonding network, but considering that they have the same ethnic background and are in similar life-situations in regard to their employment status, I believe it is fair to assume that their relationship may be characterised as a bonding relation, more than a bridging relation.

Calling companies is not the only way that a ReDI coachee can display proactivity, as many informants mention LinkedIn as a technology that is very useful for showing

proactivity, and consequently letting yourself become noticed by companies and recruiters. Harpreet let me know that she makes an active effort in connecting with all the people that she meets at company visits arranged by ReDI School and that she tries to keep in touch with them by interacting with them on LinkedIn, for example, if it is their birthday, they have a work anniversary, or anything similar. Doing that, she states, she ensures that they remember her and that the person once met her during one of the company visits (Appendix 1.7: 103-104). Similarly, Pratibha uses LinkedIn as a way to show proactivity when she applies for a job, as she sends people from the company she is applying for connection requests, to make sure that they can see the content she shares on the platform. On one occasion she also used LinkedIn to set up a phone call to talk to someone about a position she was interested in (Appendix 1.9: 135). Merjem acknowledges the power of LinkedIn when she asserts that making yourself noticed on the platform by commenting on and liking the posts of the people in your network is a very important element of job searching, as it is a way to make yourself visible and make sure that people remember your name (Appendix 1.3: 38-39).

In analysing the benefits of being proactive on LinkedIn when applying for jobs in Denmark, it seems beneficial to consider social capital as a starting point. Considering that Bourdieu defines social capital as the resources that an individual has due to their membership in a specific social group, it may seem somewhat abstract to use in this situation, as it does not seem like my informants have exchanged their many LinkedIn connections into any employment possibilities. Therefore, it is difficult to see a clear connection between having many connections on LinkedIn, with whom you actively interact, and increasing your chances of finding employment in IT in Denmark, at least for the informants I have interviewed. However, these types of weak links to a large number of people constitute what Putnam would determine to be a bridging network between the coachee and her many connections on LinkedIn, as the network is heterogeneous, as it consists of people from different companies and whose work tasks may differ a lot, although many of them are employed within IT. Bridging networks are exactly, according to Putnam, the types of networks that put you ahead when applying for jobs. While there is no certain way to make a correlation between having many connections on LinkedIn

and an increased chance of employment for my informants, at least two of them have expressed that they identified, understood and started following the norm of proactivity, which seems to be a norm that is prevalent for the dominant cultural groups in the context of job searching in Denmark, which could mean that they take a better position in the social space of job searching than what they would if they did not show any proactivity on LinkedIn. However, their behaviour on LinkedIn could open a whole other discussion concerning whether they are interacting with their connections in a manner that is deemed culturally correct in Denmark, as there is obviously a difference between doing something and doing something right. I do not, however, have any empirical data to start this discussion.

7.1.2 Networking

As the norm of networking is somewhat related to the norm of proactivity in job searching, it seems beneficial to continue the analysis by examining the importance of networking when coachees are searching for jobs in IT in Denmark. Most of my informants emphasise how crucial it is to have a network when looking for jobs in Denmark. Cynthia highlights that Denmark is a small country, so it is important to build allies like in “Game of Thrones” (Appendix 1.2: 26). Merjem and Fatin likewise accentuate that networking is important due to the size of Denmark. Fatin elaborates and expresses that people within specific industries know each other, which makes the network even more important. At the same time, he acknowledges that building a network in Denmark is very difficult when you are an outsider (Appendix 1.3: 43; Appendix 1.4: 68). The coachees also realise the power of the network. Pratibha claims that Denmark “works on the base of networking”, and compares it to her native India where a network, from her experience, does not have the same importance, as you just apply for a job and wait for the recruiters to contact you (Appendix 1.9: 137). Lucine agrees with Pratibha that Denmark works on the basis of networking, as she says that in Denmark you have to know someone, especially when you come from abroad because; “if there is someone from abroad and you don't really know a person, you would like to have the recommendation to know that, okay, I can trust this person, right?” She then expresses that it is the same way in Armenia, where she is from, but that it is “a bit more closed” in Denmark (Appendix 1.6: 87).

Looking at the above expressions of the importance of networking in Denmark, it seems obvious that what the informants suggest that a strong professional network can contribute to the job searching for coachees are the similar benefits that Putnam highlights when describing the benefits of bridging social capital in job searching. Namely, a broad network of heterogeneous individuals that helps the applicant get ahead. In relation to network-building, one thing that is important to have in mind is that the ability to talk to many different people and build professional relationships with them requires that an individual have the social skills needed to do this. This could result in a situation where individuals who are lacking in social skills or maybe are extroverted of nature, are forced into a disadvantageous position in the social space of job searching, simply because they lack the abilities to build the professional relations needed to increase the chances of employment that often comes with a large network in Denmark. Berry argues that personal factors can influence the acculturation process, and this is an example where having a personal character trait that does not fit into the cultural context could hinder your chances of acculturation, which in this case relates to finding employment.

7.1.3 Having the right personality

The norm of having the right personality is surely as abstract and difficult to decipher as the name indicates, because what is the right personality? You could argue that having the right personality would relate to proactivity, amongst other norms covered in this section. This norm, however, does not merely relate to having the right character traits, such as being a proactive person, as it also very much relates to simply showing your personality in a job interview. While it for some may seem obvious that you would show your personality when being interviewed for a position, I have discovered that many ReDI School coachees originate from cultures where showing your personality is not seen as important when applying for jobs and that recruiters do not really consider an applicant's personality when deciding who to hire for the position. The inquiry into this cultural phenomenon takes its starting point in a quote from career coach Kristine:

And then they originate from cultures where they, as I see it, do not really care about the personality when you are hired. Like, you look at the CV, grades, hard facts, you can say. Where Danish companies look at both hard facts and the softer. So they are actually just used to the fact that they can send a CV, I think, and then get hired based on that (Appendix 1.5: 76).

Pratibha touches upon this phenomenon in job searching in India, as she thinks back on her time in India, where she would just send a CV when interested in an open position. She asserts that she would never call a company and show proactivity, as that would just seem like you are desperate, and practically begging for a job, which would make a bad impact on the company (Appendix 1.9: 135). Anne, from ReDI School, has experiences that relate to this phenomenon when ReDI School has posted job openings for a position within their own organisation. Students and former students applied for the positions by sending their CVs and cover letter. That cover letter, however, consisted of “one to two lines” about why they wanted the job, and as Anne expresses it: “this is not really how you get in” and adds that you want to be convinced when you receive an application for an open position. She acknowledges that there might be some confusion about how much you should put into different elements of job searching and that this might be hard to navigate for the students (Appendix 1.1: 3).

The final point that Anne presents is very interesting, as it may sound like she says that the students applying for the position at ReDI School, might not have put enough work in when writing the cover letter. I would argue, however, that this is not the case, as I think the applicants put just the right amount of work in the cover letter if they were to apply for a similar position in their country of origin. This point is only valid, of course, if the applicants originate from cultures where the norm is to only send in your CV and then wait for recruiters to contact you, similar to the phenomenon that Kristine describes, as she believes some of the coachees are used to getting hired based on their CV. While the connection between having the right personality and applying with more than just your CV is not entirely clear, I would say that there is indeed very much a link, as the point of a cover letter is to show your personality to the recruiters, as a way to convince them why

they should hire you for other reasons than your skills. These examples above show a very clear example of cultural distance between members of the dominant cultural context and members of the non-dominant, and more importantly, it shows what can happen when the cultural distance is too large. In the case of applicants sending only a CV, and not attempting to convince the company and write a cover letter showing their motivation, what happens is that the applicants may not be considered for the position at all. At least, this seems to be the case when considering the experience of Anne. When applicants still navigate within the norms of a cultural context which cannot be directly applied to the Danish cultural context, it seems as though there has not been a sufficient amount of culture shedding, using the words of Berry, or you can say that the applicant has not yet embodied the cultural capital that is valid when applying for jobs in Denmark if you are to use the words of Bourdieu. Finally, this can cause the applicants to take a disadvantageous position in the social space if they are not even considered for the position.

A part of what is viewed as the right personality in the Danish IT labour market, which relates to the analysis presented above, is to be passionate about what you are applying for. This is mentioned by multiple informants. Cynthia posits that Danish employers want someone who is passionate about what they do (Appendix 1.2: 27), while Pratibha mentions that an important part of proactivity is to convey to the recruiters that you are passionate about the job (Appendix 1.9: 135). Merjem considers her coachees' original cultural context when considering this seeming lack of passion when her coachees apply for jobs. As all of her coachees are from India, she notes that the demographic of India, with its almost 1.4 billion inhabitants influence the competitiveness of the labour market. It almost goes without saying that more people in a country equals more competitors in the labour market, and with that logic, and with the fact that Denmark has "only" 5.8 million inhabitants, Denmark should have a less competitive labour market. This is what Merjem implies when she adds that the small size of the population in Denmark means that you have room for being individual. India's competitive labour market means, according to Merjem, that you do not have the same focus on personality and that her Indian coachees have been developed in a culture where they have learned to only focus on their skills

and competencies, which also means that they list as many possible competencies as possible in their CV, without customising it to the specific job which they are applying for (Appendix 1.3: 42).

This again implies a cultural distance between the cultural context of the coachees' origin countries and the cultural context of Denmark, potentially resulting in them taking a disadvantageous position in the social space, in comparison with applicants they are competing against, as these applicants may have the correct form of cultural capital that is acknowledged in Denmark when applying for jobs, and therefore are in a better position in the social space than the coachees, because they have a better understanding of what Danish companies prefer in an applicant, which in this case is for the applicant to be passionate about what they are applying for. One final point, I think is important to highlight is found in the statement by Cynthia who makes a connection between a cultural norm in India and the size of the population. This opens a whole new potential discussion about how demographic factors can influence what cultural norms are prevalent in a society. While this discussion is interesting, it will not be pursued in this thesis.

To display how complex it can be to follow cultural norms in any country, but especially Denmark, I will in the following examine two conflicting cultural norms that exist in Denmark. Initially, I will touch upon a set of cultural laws that references the norm of equity and equality in Scandinavian countries, and which is a type of pushback against individualism. "The law of Jante" was first coined in 1933 in the book 'A fugitive crosses his tracks' by Danish writer Aksel Sandmose and presents a set of rules that is prevalent in the fictional town of Jante in Norway. The law of Jante can be summarised using two of its rules: "Do not think that you are anything special. Do not think that you are better than us" (Palamara 2016: 1). These cultural laws are mentioned directly, or indirectly by three of my informants. Cynthia describes them when she talks about how it can be difficult as an international to target when applying for jobs because you have to master the balance of talking about your achievements, so the employer knows that you have the skills needed to perform the tasks in the position, but doing it in a way so it does not seem like you are "full of yourself", because that would mean that you would break the

law of Jante (Appendix 1.2: 25). Merjem likewise talks about the law of Jante and mentions how it makes her work as a career coach a bit more difficult because her aim when coaching her coachees is to build her coachees up and work on their confidence. At the same time, she is aware that there exist unwritten cultural laws that very much conflict with having built yourself too much and having too much confidence (Appendix 1.3: 50). Harpreet is the only of my informants who have found employment in a full-time position with a permanent contract, at the same time is the only one who works in a Danish company, that cannot be described as being international, which means that she is expected to speak Danish, which she does, and that most of her colleagues are Danish. She has personally experienced what very much sounds like examples of the law of Jante even though she does not explicitly name it. During my interview with her, I asked her what part of her job searching strategy she has had to change because she found out that it was not appropriate in Denmark, to which she answered that she has learned that she should not show that she is too ambitious, and she even notes that it is the key point that she has learned (Appendix 1.7: 110). She also exemplifies the law of Jante in the social interactions with her colleagues, when she mentions that she has learned that Danes do not like it when you try to teach them too much, meaning that she has to be balanced when talking to her colleagues in her office or during meetings. This has led her to be careful when interacting with her colleagues in meetings, and when writing them emails (Appendix 1.7: 111).

The examples above display how complex the Danish cultural context can be, because you have to navigate a labour market where you are expected to show your passion for the position you are applying for, and at the same time you are expected to do it in a way where you follow some arbitrary law that is likely not even familiar to you. Mastering this balance really highlights the importance of cultural capital, and substantiates Bourdieu's claim that growing up in a dominating cultural class gives you a big advantage as you early on in life learn how to balance this very careful act of just showing the right amount of passion without bragging about your skills.

Harpreet's reaction to the cultural circumstances in the Danish labour market can be analysed using Bery's acculturation model and specifically the possible psychological

outcomes when an individual has to adapt to a new cultural context. Based on the above example, I would categorise her adaptation as a behavioural shift, as she does not seem to have any significant issues with changing her ways to better accommodate the cultural context of her working place, and she does not mention finding the cultural context particularly hard to understand and navigate. In this regard, she has also actively tried to search for ways to better fit into the cultural context of the Danish IT labour market, as she mentions contacting recruiters who have interviewed her for the reasons why she did not get the job, and afterwards using their explanation to better fit into the cultural context (Appendix 1.7: 108).

As I mentioned before, I wanted to explore two conflicting cultural norms, the first being the one connected with the law of Jante. The second norm is one related to not showing too much humility and being too polite towards your colleagues, or the recruiters you are speaking to when being interviewed for a position. This norm manifests itself through my empirical data on several occasions. Fatin mentions that politeness is not always something that is well-received in the Danish labour market, for example when a coachee calls a male recruiter sir. He believes that it is much better to call that person by his name, as being referred to as sir can be off-setting for the recruiter. He also gives the example of when a coachee apologises profusely when late for a meeting, as that can likewise be off-setting for people. He adds, however, that there are times when apologising for being late is expected (Appendix 1.4: 69). Kristine also mentions that the coachees should abstain from calling recruiters sir or madam, for instance in a job application and elaborates on how doing so could be perceived by recruiters, as she says that you could risk seeming submissive, and look like a person who is afraid to have an opinion. She adds that companies in Denmark want an applicant that they know will behave well, but at the same time is not afraid to stand by their opinion. If the recruiters have a feeling that the applicant is too submissive, the cultural gap between the applicant and the company becomes too wide, and an imbalance in the power relation emerges (Appendix 1.5: 73). With reference to power relations, one informant discovered something which was unusual for her, in comparison with her native India. When going to class and speaking with her teachers who work in a Danish IT company, Harpreet learned that there is no

“hierarchy issue over here”, meaning that everyone in a company, regardless of their position within the company, can talk to someone regardless of that person’s position. She mentions that an associate in Denmark is allowed to speak to a vice president and notes that this hierarchy barrier does not exist in Denmark, while in India it would be present (Appendix 1.7: 105). Fatin confirms this when he mentions that some coachees, especially the older ones, who have a more “old school” approach tend to create barriers between themselves and other people “like, you’re sir, she’s a madam, that’s a professor, that’s my coach”, and adds that Danish people do not like it when other people put them up “too high” and make them almost unapproachable (Appendix 1.4: 70).

In these previous pages, I have attempted to show the confusing and conflicting nature of “the right personality” a coachee should have when applying for jobs in IT in Denmark, at least in the way it is perceived by my informants. This right personality involves having to master the art of balancing your personality in a very careful way, so you display your passion for the position, while not bragging about your competencies, and simultaneously not being too polite or even submissive. Being developed in one cultural context and then moving to a new one, as an adult, can make this transition difficult, as it can mean that the acculturating individual is forced to do some cultural shedding, as well as cultural learning. Above, there are many examples of ReDI School coachees struggling with doing this. According to Bourdieu, it takes a very long time until cultural capital is embodied and an individual has accumulated the cultural capital needed to take an advantageous position in the social space, which in this case means to make yourself look attractive in the eyes of an employer. This seems, in particular, to be the case for the coachees when the cultural distance between the original cultural context and the new one is very wide.

7.1.4 Having (the right) experience

It goes without saying that having some sort of experience related to any position that you are applying for is important. This could be experience in the form of having worked previously with the role that you are applying for, or by having completed an education that is related to the role you are applying for. This is not any different for the coachees of ReDI School which I will give a number of examples of in the following.

When I asked Anne what she believe to be some of the biggest challenges for the coachees of ReDI School, she mentioned that a lack of experience is a great barrier, as it seems to be very difficult to get a full-time job within coding, if you have not previously worked in a coding role, meaning that you have to have worked in, sometimes multiple, internships before you are in consideration for the position. In this regard, ReDI School's tech courses are a good place to start, but a 12-week course in coding is not enough to get a full-time position in coding (Appendix 1.1: 2). Pratibha experienced exactly this when she has been contacted by recruiters who were interested in her profile. Upon discovering that she is a “fresher”, and does not have a lot of experience, they tell her she will not be considered for the role, but that she is welcome to contact them again once she has some more work experience. She notes that she cannot get any experience unless she gets a job where she can build experience. She has also found herself in the bizarre situation where her application for an unpaid internship was rejected, because she had too much experience, making it even more difficult for her to get inside the Danish IT labour market (Appendix 1.9: 140). Harpreet also got rejected for a position due to her lack of experience within the field of cybersecurity, despite the fact that she has worked within the field for several years before moving to Denmark. She claims that this was because she had a gap in her CV of seven years, due to her maternity leave, and the companies wanted applicants who were updated with the recent knowledge in cybersecurity. She was, however, prepared for these rejections and spent time updating her knowledge with the most recent certifications and improving her Danish skills (Appendix 1.7: 108-109).

The lack of skills can be linked to a lack of the cultural capital needed to be considered for the positions that the coachees have applied for. While your technical abilities may not seem to have much to do with learning the cultural codes required to successfully navigate a social space, Bourdieu asserts that “ability or talent is itself the product of an investment of time and cultural capital” (Bourdieu 1986: 17). The lack of ability, at least in the eyes of the company, is very clear in Harpreet's example, where her seven years of maternity leave resulted in a gap in knowledge meaning that she was not updated with the latest knowledge in cybersecurity. This highlights that the field of IT is quite interesting

using Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital and especially the notion of social space, as the social space of IT is constantly shifting, as it is a field in constant development, to the point where a seven-year break means you are no longer updated on the latest knowledge. In other words, the cultural capital needed to take an advantageous position in the social space of cybersecurity, or IT in general, is shifting so regularly that you have to keep accumulating cultural capital in order to maintain your position in the social space. If you do not, you can no longer take the position in the social space that would previously have secured your employment within the field, as shown in the example of Harpreet. A way to show that you in fact have the required amount of cultural capital can be shown through your work experience, and in particular that you have recent work experience in the field. It seems to be the same case with Pratibha, who looks attractive in the eyes of the employer until they learn that she does not have any work experience in the field.

As mentioned at the beginning of this section of the analysis, experience can be seen in the form of completed education that is relevant to the position the coachee is applying for. The question of what academic qualifications is considered valid is contingent on the social space, as Bourdieu argues that one form of cultural capital, the institutionalised form, is seen in academic qualifications that are approved by the dominant classes. In my empirical data, I have examples of this dynamic when the coachees apply for jobs in IT in Denmark, where their university degrees from universities abroad, are not considered valid academic qualifications to the degree where the coachee is hired for a position. Fatin gives this dynamic the title "the reset clock", which refers to the apparent fact that when the coachees arrive in Denmark, the clock goes back to zero, meaning that previous experience does not count as it did not take place in Denmark. This applies both to work experience and relevant education. Fatin sees this expressed in the fact that the coachees sometimes struggle with even landing an internship, despite the fact that they have "four to five years of experience". (Appendix 1.4: 63). Kristine continues this criticism of the Danish IT labour market when she remarks that Danish companies do not take many chances and do not show curiosity when looking for new employees. For example, if an applicant has a degree from a university in Bangladesh, then that applicant will not be put "at the top of the pile" of applicants. If they had studied at a university like Harvard,

which is very recognisable for Danish recruiters, then they would be in a better position to get hired (Appendix 1.5: 78). Anne makes a similar point when she notes that many employers do not understand and also do not want to spend the time researching the university the applicant has studied at if it is a university that is not immediately known to them (Appendix 1.1: 4). This relates to the type of discrimination dubbed statistical discrimination by Zschirnt & Ruedin, presented in the literature review, referring to situations where the employer discriminates against a group when they do not have enough information to assess whether they would be a good fit for the company, and do not wish to spend the time and resources to get the required information.

7.1.5 Language

At first sight, possession of the ability to speak a specific language does not seem like a cultural norm. But based on the definition of the cultural norms, as presented immediately after my problem statement, as something which is desirable, I will still argue that being able to speak the Danish language could be considered a norm in the cultural context of the Danish IT labour market.

Before commencing the work on this thesis, I did not have any expectation that language would be an important factor for ReDI School coachees' chances of finding employment in IT in Denmark, as I have always seen the IT industry as being international, due to the fact that coding languages are universal and not dependent on the language you speak, and because some IT projects will be outsourced to different countries, outside the companies' home countries, and therefore necessitate being able to communicate in English. This led me to believe that mastering English would often be enough in terms of language in the Danish IT labour market. Kristine has had several coachees who have experienced not being called back for an interview due to the fact that they did not speak Danish, even though they have applied for positions in "pretty big companies". She even criticises the Danish labour market for not being very international (Appendix 1.5: 78). Merjem has looked at job openings with her coachees and several postings where speaking the Danish language was a requirement, even though the posting was written in English (Appendix 1.3: 47). Fatin believes that there is an unspoken rule in the Danish

IT labour market, that you have to show a certain degree of integration, and a way to do this is by showing that you understand “a tiny bit of Danish” or that you have started taking Danish classes because showing a willingness to adapt is a “very big plus” in Denmark (Appendix 1.4: 68). Lucine, however, remarks that she thinks the importance of Danish is very contingent on the company you work in, and in particular whether this company have an international environment, as *The Danish power company*, where she works has an international environment, meaning that she only speaks English in her work, and has no issues with the lack of Danish skills, though she is trying to improve her Danish (Appendix 1.6: 98-99). Vidya and Harpreet both have examples of the importance of knowing the Danish language. Vidya told me the story of when she initially arrived in Denmark and applied for a job in a *pharmaceutical company*, which was directly related to the field of her master’s degree. After three rounds of interviews, she was competing for the position against a Danish man, and a Chinese woman. The Danish man was offered the position, and for some reason, he was the one to break the news to Vidya and the other applicant. While letting them know that he got the position, he started “speaking out his mind” and say that he fooled the recruiters, as he did not have any experience with the tasks that were part of the position. Vidya got confused by this, because her education is directly related to the position, and this made her hypothesise that the reason why he got the position was that he was able to speak Danish and that the recruiters wanted people who speak Danish as it makes it easier to train them. She adds that she believes that knowing Danish is an underlying requirement, even though the job posting is in English (Appendix 1.8: 125). She seems to agree with Lucine’s sentiment that the requirement of Danish is highly dependent on the company, as she only speaks English in the Danish company Monical, and she was never asked about her Danish skills during job interviews (Appendix 1.8: 127). Lucine’s point is likewise substantiated by the experience of Harpreet who works in a company that is smaller than Monical and *The Danish power company*. In her daily work, she exclusively speaks Danish except for situations where her Danish falls short and her colleagues have to translate it to English (Appendix 1.7: 112). She even mentions being interviewed for the position 9 months before she was actually employed and that she initially got a rejection due to her lack of Danish skills. However, after improving her Danish the company decided to hire her (Appendix 1.7: 103).

When explaining the concept of cultural distance, Berry mentions that one of the key factors is language. Not being able to speak Danish seems to create a barrier between the coachees and finding employment, but the above examples show that this is not always the case, as it is very much contingent on which company the coachees are applying for and the environment within that company. This is clear in the case of Vidya, who was rejected at one company because of her lack of Danish, while she was hired in an intern position in Monical despite her lack of Danish, which shows that the amount of linguistic capital needed to take a position in the social space that allows you to be offered a position within the company is different from company to company. There are also indications that the amount of required linguistic capital can differ from industry to industry, as Lucine was unable to find employment in the field of architecture in Denmark because she did not possess enough linguistic capital, but managed to get an internship in a Danish company in a UX position (Appendix 1.6: 98-99).

Kristine makes an interesting remark that can be linked with the concept of cultural distance, as she says that Danish companies like recognisability, and if the applicant does not speak Danish, they have a disadvantage because recruiters, according to Kristine, prefer to hire people that look like themselves. If you are to follow the logic of that last point, the language aspect of cultural distance might not relate only to whether you are able to speak the same language, but also to whether the recruiter recognises any similarities between themselves and the applicant which serves to decrease the cultural distance.

Another way in which linguistic capital is visible in my empirical data is not in relation to whether the coachees can speak Danish, but rather the way that they speak English. While I do not have many examples of this phenomenon in my data, I still believe it is an important point that highlights the role that the linguistic capital of a coachee can play in the Danish IT labour market. Kristine coached a coachee from India, who had a very strong Indian accent to the point where Kristine struggled with understanding her, despite the fact that she has lived in London where there are many Indian people. She had to tell

the coachee to work on her accent, because Danish people have a hard time understanding Indian accents, due to the fact that Danish working environments are not particularly international (Appendix 1.5: 74). Merjem mentions that one of her Indian coachees has experienced racism, where a recruiter made fun of her Indian accent when the coachee showed proactivity by calling the recruiter after she had sent her application for the position (Appendix 1.3: 46).

While there are not any of the Indian coachees who mentioned any examples of this during the interview, it is still an important point that shows how a lack of linguistic capital, in the form of the inability to speak English without an Indian accent, in the social space, which is the Danish IT labour market can influence which position you take in the social space, ranging from recruiters not understanding to recruiters being racist towards you.

7.2 Helping coachees uncover and navigate social norms

In this final part of the analysis, I will examine how ReDI School's career coaching programme uncovers social norms in the Danish IT labour market and how it helps the coachees navigate these norms. To make it clearer how the programme helps the students in regards to uncovering and navigating the norms described in the previous sections, I will again divide this part into the five different norms.

7.2.1 Proactivity

As described in the previous part of the analysis, proactivity is important in job searching in IT in Denmark, and one way that the coachee display proactivity is through the use of LinkedIn where some coachees will connect with people from the IT sector they have met during company visits, and interact with them. Merjem has a large focus on LinkedIn during coaching sessions, where she helps the coachees with how to present themselves in a way where their skills are highlighted for employers. Additionally, she encourages the coachees to be active on LinkedIn, as it is a good way to make themselves visible to employers (Appendix 1.3: 37-39). Getting help with updating her LinkedIn profile is something that Harpreet mentioned benefitted her job search in Denmark (Appendix 1.7: 113). Pratibha was also advised by her career coach, Fatin, to be active on LinkedIn, and

even told her that being connected with someone on LinkedIn is not enough, as she needs to form a sort of relationship with that person by commenting on their posts on LinkedIn. Doing that, she becomes a “noticeable person” to that person, which in turn could help if she were to apply for a position in the same company where that person is employed (Appendix 1.9: 143). As covered earlier, many coachees are aware of the norm of proactivity in regards to calling up companies before or after applying for a position with them, which some of them have struggled with. For that reason, Kristine focuses on this aspect by teaching her coachees how to research a company and call them up to ask questions about the position and make themselves visible in that way (Appendix 1.5: 81). In my empirical data, I do not have many examples of how career coaches help the coachees with showing proactivity when applying for jobs. This may be due to the way questions were asked during the interviews, or it could indicate that this is an area that requires more focus in future career coaching sessions.

7.2.2 Networking

Anne explained what elements constitute the coaching programme, and told me about various workshops that the coachees can participate in, and one of these workshops is regarding networking in Denmark, where the goal is for the coachees to brainstorm with each other about who they know and how those people might help to get where they “want to go” (Appendix 1.1: 9). Besides this workshop, there is also a lot of networking built into the company visits arranged by ReDI School. The company visits at Monical and Disport helped Harpreet meet a number of people within the companies and connect with them on LinkedIn (Appendix 1.7: 103-104). Pratibha also attended these company visits, which gave her similar additions to her network and her list of connections on LinkedIn. Likewise, she attended networking events arranged by ReDI School with the sole purpose of connecting the students and coachees with people working in various IT companies in Denmark (Appendix 1.9: 145-146). When I asked Lucine about what she was taught in ReDI School that she thinks will help her in the future, she ranked the networking aspect over the knowledge she acquired during the teaching. She especially values her career coach in this regard, as she has helped her in particular with building Lucine’s network. Her career coach, realising Lucine’s background in architecture, did not only help with

introducing her to people working within UX but also introduced her to acquaintances she has within architecture. Lucine met with one of those acquaintances working in architecture, and he talked to her and gave her advice on job searching (Appendix 1.6: 89). More importantly, Lucine attributes the fact that she landed an internship in *Danish power company* to her career coach, as her coach knew people within the company because she has worked there previously. Lucine believes that the recommendation given to *Danish power company* by her coach was the reason she got the internship (Appendix 1.6: 86).

These examples display how the events and company visits arranged by ReDI School help facilitate the accumulation of the social capital of the students. Using Putnam's distinction of bridging and bonding social capital, it sure seems like it is the accumulation of the former variant that is primarily facilitated by the events arranged by ReDI School as it has helped the students build relations with distant acquaintances within IT in Denmark, that could help them find jobs. While there are not any indications that these relations have directly helped Harpreet find her current job, it is very clear how Lucine's relation to her career coach has helped her get into her current internship. Lucine mentions that she had a very nice relationship with her coach and that it was very friendly, which could lead you to believe that their relationship could be characterised as being a bonding relationship, that is found when individuals have a strong tie to each other. This does not seem to be the case, however, as she mentions that she is not seeing her or is in contact with her on a regular basis, it is reasonable to characterise their relationship as being a bridging relation (Appendix 1.6: 96).

7.2.3 Having the right personality

As I displayed in the analysis of the norm of having the right personality, navigating the cultural context of the Danish IT labour market in regards to how you present yourself and your personality can be very complex.

An aspect of personality that is important in IT in Denmark, compared to other countries, is simply showing your personality. As detailed earlier in the analysis, some students

struggle with this, as they have been developed in a cultural context, where showing your personality is not as important as it is in Denmark. This is something Kristine works on with her coachees, as she says that it is important that the employers can “feel who you are” during a job interview. A more concrete way in which she prepares coachees for the personal aspect of the job interview is by rehearsing with them by acting out a job interview during the sessions. During this, she helps the coachee by preparing the way they are going to tell the employer how they are as a colleague (Appendix 1.5: 80-81). While she does not elaborate on the concrete ways she helps the coachees with this challenge, Merjem notes that her coachees struggle with being relaxed and “cosy” during a job interview because they are so determined to get the position that they have a tendency to “over-perform” during the interview, making it seem like they are at an exam. She talks with the coachees about this during coaching and tries to teach them Danish values that are appreciated by Danish IT companies (Appendix 1.3: 44). After asking Harpreet about what she has learned from searching for jobs and attending interviews in Denmark, she told me that there is a large focus on the personal aspect in job interviews in Denmark, compared to India (Appendix 1.7: 109). While she did not directly say that she learned this during the career coaching session, the example still shows the importance of teaching coachees to highlight their personalities during job interviews. Fatin does not mention how or whether he helps the coachees with showing and having the right personality, but he does touch upon how he tries to help coachees navigate this norm as he says that he tries to look for opportunities that are fit for the coachees as a person, and try to match them with those (Appendix 1.4: 61).

Similar to the norm of proactivity, there is a lack of examples of how coachees are coached in the area of personality, which could be a focus for future studies, as well as for future coaching sessions.

7.2.4 Having (the right) experience

Experience is an important factor when looking for employment in IT in Denmark, and in particular, this relates to whether you have experience in the form of previous employment in Denmark or have studied at a university that is preferably recognisable to the employer.

Throughout my interviews with the career coaches, I learned that they spent a substantial amount of time uncovering for the coachees what experience they have, as the students have a lot of competencies that they do not recognise as being useful when applying for jobs in IT in Denmark.

Kristine helps the students with “resource-spotting” by asking them about their previous work experience and probing how they can use this work experience to write an application that fits the specific position they are applying for (Appendix 1.5: 73). She adds that it is not always helpful for the coachees that she tells them what she thinks they are good at, so she helps them by asking how they solved specific work tasks in their previous employment and thereby helping them notice their capabilities (Appendix 1.5: 83). Fatin has also discovered that some of his coachees do not understand the skills that they possess, meaning that he spends time during sessions extracting the skills that he knows they have, but that they lack the confidence to “put out on their own” (Appendix 1.4: 67). This extraction work becomes very clear in the interview with Pratibha where she expresses that Fatin helped her realise aspects within herself that she had not noticed before. During covid lockdowns, Pratibha started her own business, unrelated to IT, which she did not realise she could use in job applications. Fatin helped her notice that she has a “hidden entrepreneur” in her, that she knows how to manage a business, and therefore has knowledge of how to communicate her value as a business in public. Pratibha also did not realise that she could use her work experience in sales when applying for jobs in IT, but Fatin helped her to update her CV by writing that she has experience in dealing with customers. Overall, Pratibha believes that Fatin helped her a lot with improving her CV (Appendix 1.9: 144). The importance of career coaches spotting the resources of their coachees, especially in areas that they may not be aware of themselves, is shown in an example from Vidya’s interview, which is very similar to Pratibha’s experience with running a business. Vidya has run her own business for several years with her husband, and when reading the posting for the current internship she has at Monical, she realised that she in fact has been doing a lot of the same tasks when running her business. This gave her to confidence (and courage) to apply for the internship despite the fact that she does not have any previous work experience in that type of position (Appendix 1.8: 119).

While she figured this out herself, and not during the coaching sessions, the experience underlines why it is crucial for coaches to help the coachees realise how they can highlight their previous work experience when applying for jobs in Danish IT companies, even though that previous experience is not directly related to IT.

7.2.5 Language

In my empirical data, I do not have many examples of situations where the career coach directly helps the coachees with the norm of language. The only real example I have, is not in relation to the Danish language, but rather English, as Kristine helped “flatten” the heavy Indian accent of one of her coachees (Appendix 1.5: 74) This lack of examples is not surprising, as the role of the career coach is not to teach the coachee Danish, as that would be very time-consuming, and because many of the coachees are already taking Danish classes. Having my problem statement in mind, you can then instead take a look at how the coaches, and the career coaching programme in general, help the coachees navigate in a Danish IT job market where the ability to speak Danish is very important. One way of helping them navigate this seems to be to recommend them to apply to companies that have an international environment, and where English is the business language instead of Danish. Kristine recommends different companies with international environments to avoid them spending time applying to companies that would never hire the coachees (Appendix 1.5: 81). You can also view the internship programme established between ReDI School and Monical as a way the career coaching programme supports the students’ navigation in a labour market where knowing the Danish language is important, as seven students have interned in Monical, which business language is English allowing ReDI School students who are not fluent in Danish to get concrete work experience in a Danish IT company.

7.2.6 Social support

While social support is not a norm, I nevertheless found it very important to have a section of the analysis explaining the role of social support in the career coaching programme, as it proved to be a very important factor for the students. Both in the relationship with the coach and in their chances of finding employment in IT in Denmark. The notion of social

support refers to the acculturation process outlined by Berry, as it is an important factor in this, as having social support from both people in dominant and non-dominant cultural groups is linked with successful adaptations to the host culture. In itself, ReDI School supports social support in the form of the support found in your own cultural group, as it automatically places women in similar situations together in its courses and in the social events, workshops and company visits arranged by the school. While I do not have any direct examples of this in my empirical data, in the form of statements from my informants, I have personally witnessed how ReDI School as a community allows the students to meet women who are also trying to break into IT in Denmark, which gives the students the chance to exchange experiences with women in similar situations. It is important to note, however, that even though the students are in similar situations, in terms of employment status, they do not necessarily belong to the same cultural group, as the students come from 22 different countries, but I think it is fair to put in the same overarching group as they are all outside the Danish IT labour market and are trying to break in. The career coaching programme also facilitates social support from individuals who are part of the dominant cultural group, in the context of the Danish labour market, as Fatin and Merjem have full-time employment in IT in Denmark, while Kristine has worked in the field for several years.

All the career coaches give examples of how they give social support to their coachees during coaching sessions. Fatin has a lot of focus on building the confidence of the coachees, by making them aware of the amount of work they are actually doing:

“Because I feel like they're doing so much, and they're almost not aware that they're doing all this job. Which for me is sort of mesmerising, like: wow. You're doing this, this, and that, and are you realising that not everyone is doing this? Not everyone is willing the amount of work that you're doing, and those types of things. And when they see it with that perspective, they're gaining confidence” (Appendix 1.4: 59).

He continues by remarking that most of the coachees just need a little push to help their careers in IT in Denmark going, and all the people that the coachees meet on their way into a full-time position all help them by giving small pushes toward that goal (Appendix 1.4: 65). Similarly, Kristine uses the example of pushing the coaches, as she believes that all of them have the potential and the competencies to find employment and that one of the best ways that she can help them is by helping them believe in themselves (Appendix 1.5: 74). When asked about what she thinks is the most important work she is doing as a career coach in ReDI School, Merjem replies that it is “building these women up” by strengthening their confidence and making them believe that they are able to find employment in IT in Denmark. She sees that this is often what the coachees are lacking at the beginning of a coaching semester, which is why she puts such a large emphasis on that aspect of coaching (Appendix 1.3: 39).

Vidya gives a great example of the effect that applying for jobs and receiving many rejections can have on the coachees. When she explains her journey in Denmark starting in 2013, through her work experience, she told me that she was struggling a lot, and went through depression. She added that it is very hard to meet people and make friends in Denmark (Appendix 1.8: 118). Thankfully, Vidya is in a much better position today as she remarks that ReDI School’s career coaching programme has helped her confidence to get to “more than 100 percent” (Appendix 1.8: 124). Pratibha has gained a lot of confidence, as well as a skill set, by being a part of ReDI School (Appendix 1.9: 137). Building confidence is what Lucine highlights in her relationship with her career coach (Appendix 1.6: 96).

While the career coaching programme plays an important role in helping the coachees' chances of finding employment in Denmark by uncovering social norms and assisting the coachees in navigating these, it is also crucial in facilitating social support from the coachees who I would categorise as being members of the dominant cultural group in the Danish labour market. When sending many applications and receiving many rejections, your mental health can be strained. Especially when you are simultaneously going through a process of being acculturated to a new cultural context. Therefore, it is crucial

that the coachees receive social support, both from their fellow students in ReDI School and the coachees, as almost all of my informants seem to highlight the importance of having confidence in yourself when you are applying for jobs in the Danish IT labour market.

8 Discussion

The aim of this thesis has been to uncover the social norms that non-Danish encounter when applying for jobs in IT in Denmark, and how ReDI School's career coaching programme helps the students uncover and navigate these social norms. The findings of the thesis have uncovered five different social norms that are prevalent in the Danish IT labour market. Furthermore, it has shown how the ReDI School coaching programme, through its activities and career coaches helps the students uncover and navigate these norms, although to different degrees.

The results indicate the need for providing female immigrants applying for jobs in IT in Denmark with assistance in the form of career development which could be career coaching or career counselling, as the benefits of doing so are clear as the analysis, through its use of different theoretical frameworks and concepts, have shown how having a career coach can increase the chances of female immigrants finding employment in IT in Denmark.

The research done in this thesis contributes to existing literature outlined in the 'Literature review'. Although my results did not show many examples of direct discrimination against the job searching coachees from Danish employers, they did show examples of statistical discrimination which seemed to be bound to a lack of knowledge and experience with applicants from ReDI School's target group, and perhaps a lack of willingness to take chances with applicants. Furthermore, the results are similar to a previous Danish study investigating the relationship between openness to majority norms and employment, as my results seem to indicate a connection between being open and adapting to majority norms and finding employment in IT in Denmark. However, my thesis especially contributes to the existing literature in its specificity of investigating non-Danish women looking for jobs in IT and gives new insights into how this group of job searchers navigate social norms in the Danish IT labour market.

When considering the limitations of the study, there are a number of the norms detailed in the analysis, where the empirical data has not been able to show many examples of ReDI School's career coaching programme help uncover social norms and assist the women in navigating those. Showing as many examples as possible of this is crucial when investigating exactly how the career coaching programme helps the coachees, as it can illuminate which aspects of the coaching should be accentuated in future coaching sessions and because it can inspire similar coaching programmes in other organisations and municipalities.

My recommendations for the future practical work of ReDI School's career coaching and programme, and particular its coaches, are in line with the suggestion given by Yakushko et al. (2008), as presented in the 'Literature review'. Namely, that the career coaches devote extra attention to the social norms in Denmark, what effect they may have on the chances of employment, and how the coachees can navigate them. This could take the form of a discussion of the social norms related to work in the origin country of the coachee and how these may be similar, but in particular, in what ways they are dissimilar.

Future research on the connection between social norms and chances of employment for immigrants can build upon my research, as it can give a starting point for important norms to explore. However, it could be beneficial for future studies to investigate this relationship in other groups than non-Danish women searching for jobs in IT, as it could build upon my research and show how this relationship may vary depending on variables like gender, age, as well as what kind of business the research subjects are interested in working in.

9 Conclusion

This thesis has examined the social norms that exist in the Danish IT labour market, and their influence on employment chances by identifying what social norms non-Danish women encounter when applying for jobs in IT in Denmark. The non-Danish women that this thesis is occupied with are all present or former students at ReDI School in Copenhagen, a free tech school that provides migrants and marginalised locals free and equitable access to digital education. Furthermore, the non-Danish women have participated in ReDI School's career coaching programme, where they have been assigned a volunteer career coach that has helped them with getting closer to finding employment in IT in Denmark. Besides identifying social norms, the thesis has investigated how ReDI School's career coaching programme uncovers social norms and helps the coachees navigate them.

Through semi-structured interviews of nine informants – four coachees, three coaches, an independent career consultant, and ReDI School's career program manager, the thesis has sought to answer the problem statement by using John Berry's acculturation model, Pierre Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital, and Robert Putnam's concept of social capital to analyse the empirical data.

The results of the analysis have exposed five different norms that are important to understand and navigate when applying for jobs in IT in Denmark as a non-Danish woman. Namely, the norms of *proactivity*, *networking*, *having the right personality*, *having (the right) experience*, and *language*. Furthermore, the results have shown that there seems to be a relationship between whether coachees can understand and navigate these norms, and their chances of finding employment in IT in Denmark. The results also indicate that many of these norms can be complex to understand and navigate as the coachees of ReDI School often originates in countries that have different social norms than the ones found in Denmark, in regards to job searching and the labour market in general, which can affect their chances of employment.

The second part of the analysis has shown that ReDI School's career coaching programme, and in particular its career coaches, help the coachees with uncovering and navigating these social norms, which can increase their chances of finding employment in IT in Denmark. There are, however, a number of the norms where there is a lack of empirical examples of how the coaches help the coachees, which could indicate a need for more focus on these norms during coaching sessions or further research.

The results of the thesis could form the basis of more research into the relationship between social norms and employment chances. Both in regards to the target group of ReDI School, and other groups of immigrants in other contexts.

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