

The Experience of Recognition and Belonging in Group-Settings

The Neighbourhood Mothers

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Abstract

This thesis has its interests in the Phenomenon of Women with Ethnic Minority Backgrounds and their motivations and experiences of working with the Danish integration initiative *The Neighbourhood Mothers*. It investigates how the women in the context of the Danish Integration policies develop a motivation to engage in volunteer work, helping other women with ethnic minority backgrounds, and which challenges and achievements they face. Hence, this thesis has its emphasis on the resources the women obtain through their work as mentors, but also focus on how their past is present in their future self and the now. The thesis is engaged with the Heideggerian Phenomenological Methodology and applies the Interpretation Phenomenological Analysis by Smith and Osborne. (2003). Data is collected by semi-structured interviews with three women engaged in the same local section of the Neighbourhood Mothers. The interlocutors' experiences of being mentors is related to the realms of social identity, citizenship and belonging, and the undeniable importance of recognition, which set the boundaries of the theoretical framework of this thesis. The theoretical framework is constituted by the Theory of Social Identity by Richard Jenkins (2003), The Struggle for Recognition by Axel Honneth (2006), The theory of Migrant women Transforming Citizenship by Umut Erel (2009) and An Integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict by Tajfel and Turner (1979). The theories applied helped illuminate how the women through identifying with a collective have been able to create social mobility and gained resources to help other women identifying with the same in-group. It has developed an understanding of how self-reflection parallel to their work as mentors have created the possibility to negotiate racial and gendered discourses and identities. The findings proved that the interlocutors have experienced recognition and gained self-confidence through their work as mentors. The women all share that care is a motivating element, in both their lives, their self-development and in their work with, and understanding of, the women they help. The woman of the study receives recognition by the other women engaged in the Programme, with whom they share similar backgrounds. They describe the relations as creating a feeling of connectedness and understanding, in which the women become open, and learn to articulate their standpoints. Thus, the thesis concludes that the women were motivated by their own desire to help women, who are experiencing now, what they themselves have encountered in the meeting with the Danish society, such as feeling different or lacking social guidance. Their work as mentors have created a feeling of belonging among the women, as by being Neighbourhood Mothers they have found a place in which they are recognized for their individual contributions. Furthermore, they have

developed a feeling of contributing to society, which they perceive as important in terms of promoting integration and developing the capacities of women with ethnic minority backgrounds.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Since the 1970s the focus on integration- and foreign strategies in Danish politics has been intensified, due to the increase of inward migration. As to this day, public and political concerns about the lack of integration and exploitation of the Welfare State have continuously grown (Farbøl, et al. 2019). Parallel to the implementation of the liberal Law on Foreigners of 1983, this concern continued to increase in the areas around Copenhagen in which most migrants were settled. A polarity of opinions towards migrants began to form, urging the political right and the Social Democrats to amend the law in 1985-86 with an increased focus on integration and strict rules towards asylum claims (ibid). The Law on Foreigners has since been reformed from one of the most liberal in Europe to one of the strictest, equivalent to foreign politics and integration which has grown to be some of the most important concerns of the State (European Commission, n. d. and Hansen, 2016). Integration policies enforce that every resident should be actively engaged in society and in their own process of Integration (Udlændinge- og Integrationsministeriet, 2022). Various scholars suggest that this process will be improved by engaging in volunteer work in group settings in which individuals can experience both external and internal recognition, and negotiate their positions in society (Christensen, 2006 and Slootjes, J. & Kampen, T., 2017). According to scholars within the field of European integration discourses, recognition is crucial for the feeling of belonging. Particularly in the context of exclusionary discourses towards ‘non-western’ residents, resulting from increasingly strict foreign laws and rules of integration (Anthias et al. 2013; Hirvonen, 2021; Schweiger, 2021).

This thesis has an interest in social psychology, gender and citizenship. It explores how women with an ethnic minority background in a Danish context, manage to create a desirable life and negotiate gendered and racial discourses and identities. A found curiosity within this field led to an interest in how the feeling of belonging within a community can possibly create the boundaries of this process. I found the integration initiative *The Neighbourhood Mothers* to be an interesting study. The programme educates women with ethnic minority backgrounds to become volunteer mentors, so called *Neighbourhood Mothers*, for other, often isolated, women. Past research has shown positive outcomes for the women in terms of creating a network, and that it promotes their understanding of society. Furthermore, being mentors empowers the women and strengthen their self-esteem (Krogh, 2012; Makara, 2020; Hess, 2019; Madsen, 2014). Their shared identity in the group can create a pride that motivates the women to become active members of society which is a primary objective of the Danish Law on Integration (Deloitte, 2015 & Jeppesen, 2016).

Contextual research concerning the modern development of the Danish political scene led to state the following question:

1.1 Research Question:

What has motivated a group of women with ethnic minority backgrounds to become members of The Neighbourhood Mothers Programme, and how has their meeting with the Danish Society influenced their decision?

I set out to answer the following sub-questions to structure the analysis and construct thoroughly researched findings:

- 1. How has the Women's engagement in the Programme affected their self-perception and roles as citizens?*
- 2. How does identifying with a community affect the Women's feeling of belonging in a Danish context?*
- 3. How do the Women use their roles within gender and ethnicity to negotiate discourses?*

I found an interest in researching the personal narratives of women engaged with the Neighbourhood Mothers, as I wanted to explore how they create meaning of their work and how their identities have been formed by their lives in different contexts. Hence, how their past is a present part of their self-development. Thus, this thesis seeks to investigate, in the context of the Danish society and the policies of citizenship, how exclusion and inclusion in group communities affect self-perception and identity, and how the importance of recognition plays a role in the lives of the women. Furthermore, it has an intersectional focus and examines how the women negotiate perceived gendered norms and discourses. By following the Phenomenological methodology and conducting in-depth interviews with three Neighbourhood Mothers, all with an ethnic minority background, this thesis aims to contribute to the literature on how recognition within group settings affects identity and the feeling of belonging. Thus, this thesis is contributing to the critical studies of integration, social identity and recognition with three cases of women with ethnic minority backgrounds in a Danish context.

1.2 STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

Following the introductory chapter, the second part of this thesis will define the context of the Organisation as well as the Danish policies affecting the women participating in this project. The third part continues to a review of relevant literature, consisting of two main sections. The first focuses on the four themes prevalent in the findings composed of research about citizenship, belonging,

identity and integration. The second part is focussed on research about the Neighbourhood Mothers. The thesis will proceed to the fourth chapter constituted of the methodology, which is built on the philosophy of Phenomenology. The fifth chapter introduces the theoretical framework consisting of four approaches to analyse the findings. The first theory is the theory of Social Identity by Richard Jenkins (2003), the second being An Integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict by Tajfel and Turner (1979), the third being the theory by Umut Erel (2011) of Ethnic Minority Women transforming Citizenship, and the fourth by Axel Honneth (2006) and the Struggle for Recognition. The thesis continues to the analysis built on the principles of the Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis by Smith & Osborn (2003), in which the findings will be discussed in relation to the theories. The thesis will consequently be constituted by a conclusion and reflection of the study.

2. CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND

This present chapter creates a contextual understanding of the different spheres of politics and society that The Neighbourhood Mothers are placed in, followed by an insight into the organisation and the importance of volunteer communities for integration.

2.1 Defining Integration

This thesis is situated in the context of women experiencing the impact of the discourses and practices of the Danish Integration policies. This thesis will therefore interpret integration according to the intentions established by the Danish State. This section serves a basic introduction to the concept. A more thorough knowledge of the rationalities underlying the regulations will be developed in the subsequent sections. Since its implementation in 1999 the Law on Integration has been revised numerous times. It has authority over every resident who is granted a residence permit by the Law on Foreigners (Udlændinge- og Integrationsministeriet, 2022). The most recent statutory declaration states the purpose of the law as:

(§ 1): *“To secure that newly arrived foreigners have the possibilities to utilise their skills and resources aiming to be self-sufficient and actively participate and contribute to the Danish Society at an equal level as other citizens in accordance with the fundamental values and norms of the Danish Society”* (ibid).

Chapter three of the declaration states that every ‘foreigner’ over the age of 18 must enrol in a programme aimed at repatriation and self-sufficiency in a period of one to five years, or an introduction programme lasting three years. Both aim to promote language, education, and

employment. The decision of allocation is made by the respective municipalities (ibid). Following the Paradigm shift in the refugee- and foreign policy declared by the Parliament in 2019 the focus has been on repatriation. The Paradigm shift resulted in all residence permits being temporary as well as focusing on repatriating all foreign residents without formal citizenship if it complies with international law (Tan, et al. 2020).

2.2 The History of the Law on Integration

Prior to the implementation of the Law on Integration of 1999, the Law on Foreigners governed the jurisdiction and management of permanent residents. A statutory declaration from 1998 introduced an integration system consisting of three ground values. The first value being that every municipality had to welcome foreigners, who before were settled in a few selected places. This meant that it would be challenging to relocate before three years of residing in Denmark. The second value permitted all newly arrived foreigners to participate in a three-year long introduction programme, as we see it today, focused on language, education, and labour. The programme was previously managed by The Danish Refugee Council but was subsequently standardised and administered by the municipalities. The third value was the financial integration benefit, which at the time was equal to the State's education support. This prompted critique by the international community and the United Nations. By a revision of the law a year later, the rate increased to match the state financial benefit. According to the law an individual must demonstrate a *willingness to integrate* by adhering to the introduction programme to obtain permanent residency (Farbøl, et al. 2019). However, to be granted permanent residency, one should not only understand the Danish values but also uphold them. Following years of political debates involved what the so-called Danish norms and values are constituted of (ibid). To this day, integration receives attention, with a particular emphasis on the non-western population (Københavns Kommune, 2018 and Integrationsbarometer, 2022).

2.3 Periods of Migration

In the 1960s and 1970s the Danish labour market was dominated by economic growth which created a demand for labour initiating the first wave of inward migration, prompted by the State. The wave consisted of mostly male Pakistani, Yugoslav and Turkish migrants. The need for labour derived from the expanding industrial production and capital development in the North European countries in the post WWII era (Hviid et al, 2010). The workers were expected by the State to only reside for limited period and hereafter to return to their countries of origin (Farbøl et al, 2019). The oil crisis of the 1970s resulted in a declining demand for labour, leading the State to impose a full stop on labour migration in 1973 (Hviid et al, 2010). Permanent residency could hereafter only be obtained by being

granted a refugee status or by family reunification with a Danish citizen or a foreigner with permanent residency. Furthermore, the implementation of the Law on Foreigners of 1983 led to a period with an increase in family reunifications related to the labour migrants in the 1980s and 1990s (Tranæs, 2014 and Farbøl et al 2019). The period also experienced an increase in refugees seeking asylum, as the law of 1983 created the possibility of claiming asylum by being granted the status as a ‘de-facto’ refugee. Family reunifications and asylum claims granted to refugees constituted most of the residence permits until the 2000s when the State turned away from its relatively liberal ideas (Hviid, et al, 2010 and Tranæs, 2014). The flow of refugees accepted in Denmark was remarkably reduced after 2007 due to policy changes, however with a rise of Syrian refugees in the years following 2014 (Tranæs, 2014 and Hviid et al, 2010). At present day following the Russian and Ukrainian conflict, the country has again experienced an increase in the flux of refugees (Integrationsbarometer, 2022). The results and reactions to the development of net-migration will be the focus of the following section.

2.4 The Regimes of Refugee – and Foreign Politics

Until the late 1970s, a focus on foreign policies had not been a prominent theme in Danish politics (Farbøl, et al. 2019). However, as the concern of integration and social security rose throughout the 1970s and 1980s the Social Democratic State gathered a committee on ‘foreign law’ in which rules about residence permits, labour regulation and deportation began to be formed. The committee was centred on a stricter attitude toward migrants (ibid). This increased focus on foreign – and integration politics has resulted in the Danish law on Foreigners of 1983 changing numerous times, reaching one hundred times in the year 2014. The law restricts who and how an individual is granted the right to permanent residency (Hvidtfeldt & Schultz-Nielsen, 2017 and Gammeltoft-Hansen & Jørgensen, 2014). The period of 1952-1983, was dominated by inward migration due by open borders to secure labour; the law of 1983 improved the security of family reunifications and asylum, and in 2002 a strict amendment of the Law on Integration was implemented, following the start of a strict integration policy developing continuously from 1999 and to this present day (Tranæs, 2014). The new regime of 2002 made it harder to obtain asylum and family reunifications, as well as implemented stricter rules of integration (Hviid, et al, 2010). The revised policies declared stricter criteria for obtaining reunification with a partner, such as a set income and access to housing. Furthermore, their joint connection to Denmark had to be greater than to their country of origin. The humanitarian focus changed to creating interventions in the areas of conflict to prevent the flux of refugees. The implementation of the Dublin Convention in the process of asylum claims implemented post-April

2006, was as well an element in the reduction of migrants (ibid)¹. Since then, the Law on Foreigners has been reformed from one of the most liberal in Europe to one of the strictest, while the politics on foreigners has grown to be one of the most important concerns of national politics (Hansen, 2016). The newest shift in the policy referenced as the Paradigm shift was declared in 2019, shifting the key strategy from integration towards repatriation of refugees as soon as deemed possible. However, the State continues its *Integration Programme* (European Commission, 2022).

2.5 Participation in the Labour Market

The increase of the non-ethnic Danish population resulting from family reunifications led to a rise in the total percentage of unemployed of Danish citizens between 1973 and 1983. Unemployment, low pay rates, and a growing migrant population increased the demand for social support. This prompted an intense political focus on integration. The rationale behind the focus on integration was, that the State believed that migrants often did not have a long education or relevant work experience (Tranæs, 2014). Often, they were deemed unqualified, as the Danish labour market requires high work productivity due to its high wages. Furthermore, high productivity demands education and experience (ibid). The outcome was to implement restrictions to the Law on Foreigners in 1999 aimed to decrease the number of migrants who did not have work as a motive for migration. The revision ensued the same year as the Law on Integration which resulted in further restrictions and strict economic initiatives towards migrants in the early 2000s (ibid). The following years experienced a rise in employment, and by 2015 employment of migrants reached a total of 45% after residing in Denmark for five years (European Commission, 2022).

2.6 Female participation in the Labour Market

According to Mealar (2020), there are three overarching barriers to enter the labour market for women with an ethnic minority background: language, network, and education. The employment rate of women with ethnic minority backgrounds has increased from 25, 8 % in 1996 to 52, 1 % in 2019. Yet, according to Mealar (2020), these barriers are still relevant, as the same report shows that 94 % of ethnic minority persons in Denmark think that having a job is important, revealing an existing willingness to work. According to Folketinget (2008), the utmost motivation for unemployed women with ethnic minority backgrounds to become employed is economy and to support themselves and their families. Folketinget (2008) found that employment was seen as a possibility to “do something”,

¹Since the WWII refugees have been granted asylum in accordance with the 1951 UN Convention. In accordance with the Dublin agreement asylum seekers must apply for asylum in the first EU country entered where their fingerprints are registered. This allows for a second EU country of arrival, to neglect asylum applications and return the individual to the first country of arrival (Hviid, et al, 2010 and Folketinget, 2021).

to become active, create a “work identity”, and the feeling of becoming a role model. The element of becoming a role model was seen as a factor in displaying possibilities for their children, which can increase the feeling of self-respect. Becoming employed would also improve language skills and knowledge of society. Thus, according to the study, the family is a prime motivation to engage in the labour market (ibid). Some of the barriers were the focus of the Government Programme *New Danish Women in Focus* active from 2007-2011. Following the implementation of the integration package of 2002, the Government decided to create a specialised programme focussed on women as active citizens. The programme aimed to promote their ability to become part of the labour market (ibid). It consisted of a range of different initiatives, aimed primarily at education, labour and language. The Neighbourhood Mothers Programme was a part of this initiative. The Programme was presented as not only promoting integration in general but as well creating the possibility for unemployed women to undergo an intense education, to become certified Neighbourhood Mothers (ibid).

2.7 The Neighbourhood Mothers

The Neighbourhood Mothers is a volunteer organisation established in 2007, as part of the State initiative *New Danish Women's resources in focus 2007-2011* (Ministeriet for flygtninge, indvandrere og integration, 2010). The Programme is based on the German project *Stadtteilmutter*, which was successful at the time in Berlin. This motivated the Danish Ministry of Integration to adopt the concept (Husted, M., 2011). The aim of the Programme is to empower women with an ethnic minority background to become active members of society, strengthen their personal resources, and bridge the gap between isolated and vulnerable women, and their neighbourhoods. The Programme attempts to achieve this by educating women as mentors, to develop their capacities to help local women (Bydelsmødre, 2022; Jeppesen, 2016; Deloitte, 2015). The initiative is built on the belief that mothers are the source of social integration in the family. Therefore, it is important to strengthen their knowledge of responsibilities, rights, and possibilities within the State, which effectively will help the whole family. Hence, the initiative can be described as a *help to self-help* (Deloitte, 2105). It is now administered by The Fund for Social Responsibility and managed in collaboration with communal systems and social housing initiatives and can as well be run as independent local foundations (Bydelsmødre, 2022 and Deloitte, 2015). The Programme is nationwide and currently consists of around 800 mentors divided into locally anchored sections in more than 50 cities. They represent more than 60 nationalities and more than 70 languages. The Neighbourhood Mothers share similar backgrounds with the women they mentor, as the majority themselves have experienced being a newcomer in Denmark. Hence, they have experienced learning the Danish system and the language

and have managed to establish a new social network. As the Neighbourhood Mothers themselves have experienced what the women they help are going through, they can establish equal and trustworthy conversations about family, health, and personal problems. They can help the women navigate the system, such as understanding the job centre, family counselling, and health authorities. Additionally, they establish local events and cafés for the women to create a social network in their neighbourhoods (ibid). Most Neighbourhood Mothers are between 30 and 49 years old and have lived in Denmark for more than 10 years. A minority are ethnic Danes, and few have lived in Denmark for less than 10 years. There is a diversity in formal educational backgrounds. The women they reach have approximately the same average time of residency, of whom a majority have elementary school as their highest education. Most of the conversations are held in Arab or Danish (Deloitte, 2015). The three women participating in this study are all from the same local group and city. The local group this thesis focuses on is an independent association run by a board consisting of the female mentors in the group. The women function as mentors for other women with ethnic minority backgrounds and help them with day-to-day administrative tasks and run a monthly café in which the women meet. The front lady of the section whom I have followed, Maria, explained that the group in the city has existed since 2012 and has educated two groups of Neighbourhood Mothers. To be a Neighbourhood Mother, you must participate in an education consisting of 14 modules, on different topics such as psychology and the Danish structure.

2.8 Volunteering as a factor in Integration

This section will elaborate on the importance of being part of a community in relation to integration and citizenship. Slootjes, J. & Kampen, T. (2017), describe volunteering as a form of active citizenship working in favour of integration processes. According to Christensen (2006) integration consists of three interdependent phases. The first being participation, the second interaction, and at last full integration. At the latter stage, the citizen is recognized as an active member of society and has knowledge of their rights and possibilities to create a life they desire. According to Christensen (2006) engaging in volunteer work, either as a user or volunteer, is an ideal way to engage in this process. At first, the individual must become aware of the possibilities of participation in the organisation, which may lead to casual meetings with other users and volunteers. The participants start establishing relations, in which they may discuss opinions, visions, and expectations. At this stage the participants start to interact. This may result in the newcomer being involved in the organisational work and decision making, and thereby become integrated into the organisation. According to Christensen (2006), the participants can create a sense of community if they share the

same set of visions and ideas. Working together as part of a community can create the opportunity to work at a political and societal level supporting their journey to integrate into society as active citizens (ibid). This is exactly what the Programme aims to support and actively works towards (Bydelismødre, 2022). An evaluation of the Programme by Jeppesen (2016), shows how isolated women meeting a Neighbourhood Mother experience recognizability and trust as they share their minority backgrounds and are locally anchored. According to Jeppesen (2016), this creates the possibility of respectful dialogue, in which the women can gain knowledge about society and the rights they possess. Furthermore, the meeting creates an entrance to a community which can be the first step in becoming an active citizen and reaching integration. Consequently, according to evaluations of the Programme, becoming an active member of society builds a foundation for the women to take responsibility for themselves and their family and the possibility to gain access to the labour market and education (Bydelismødre, 2022; Jeppesen, 2016; Deloitte, 2015).

2.9 The Danish Civil Society

The Civil Society (CS) is defined as the unity of volunteer organisations, networks, interventions and social movements outside the jurisdiction of the State and market (CISC, 2021), placing the Neighbourhood Mothers within this realm. It is not the scope of this present chapter to provide an in-depth chronology of the Danish CS. However, it is useful to understand the long tradition of civic engagement in society, to understand how being a part of the CS works in favour of the women being recognized as active participants in society. The CS has its roots back to the 17th century, becoming full grown in the 19th century as (male) peasants formed associations and protested for equal rights (Kaspersen and Sevelsted, 2020). The CS was formed from bottom-up initiatives in society starting the social processes that formed associations to secure social support for its members. These revolutionary processes led to the constitution of 1849 cementing the social welfare system as it granted every citizen the right to obtain public welfare and the right to form associations, to critique the structures and promote democracy (ibid and Bejder & Kristensen, 2016). The State upheld the principle of self-help and saw associations as an important factor in developing the State. The State's acknowledgement of the CSs increased in the 20th century as the liberal policies of the State changed due to the need for social interventions during and after WWII. This constituted the CS as being institutionalised with a direct responsibility for national development due to their influence in political decision making. These negotiation processes are now an infrastructural power, as the State can penetrate power through society, and as well create influential power for the CS (Kaspersen and Sevelsted, 2020). Insecure social and financial situations in the 1960s led the State to establish the

modern Welfare State in 1976 by implementing a tax-financed central social security system. The administration was decentralised by the creation of 275 municipalities, in charge of allocating universal welfare to all citizens, instead of the individual associations (ibid). Thus, the State developed from a Social Liberal State to a Social Democratic State. The CS to this day has a strong political influence, however not solely consisting of volunteer organisations. Volunteer organisations have revitalised in the past decades in part due to the present cutbacks on the Welfare State (ibid). The Neighbourhood Mothers is an example of this. It was implemented as a government funded project to support the State's aim of integration and is presently administered by the NGO The fund for Social Responsibility (Bydelsmødre, 2016).

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

This thesis has its interest in the integration initiative the Neighbourhood Mothers, which aims to promote active citizenship. It is interested in the motivations and effects of participation, and how group settings and the feeling of belonging effect and are affected by being involved with the Programme. Therefore, this present chapter is interested in the field of Integration and Citizenship. As evaluations of the Programme, and research about volunteering and integration suggest, the concepts of Recognition, Belonging, and Identity are chosen as important concepts to engage with (Christensen, 2006; Sloopjes, J. & Kampen, T., 2017; Jeppesen, 2016; Deloitte, 2015). At first, the chapter will give an insight into some existing literature on these themes, followed by a review of existing research about the Neighbourhood Mothers.

3.1 RECOGNITION IN AN INTEGRATION PERSPECTIVE

Several scholars have applied a critical approach to European integration systems and recognition theory in the contexts of migrants (Anthias et al., 2013; Joergensen, 2021; Schweiger, 2021; Huth, 2021; Hirvonen, 2021). Anthias et al. (2013) describe integration as a paradoxical and complex concept, born out of the concern for social order. According to Anthias et al. (2013), integration can be understood normatively. They argue that current policies of integration leave out the continuous development and diversity of individual contexts such as history and culture, which can risk homogenising society and place an exclusionary approach to the newcomer. Hence, according to Anthias et al. (2013), integration is a political instrument that is used as a tool of power and dominance linked to a state's discourse towards migrants. Furthermore, it is used for social inclusion, however, often lacking an intersectional approach. The normative understanding emphasised by Anthias et al. (2013) is developed as the term is used around politics on migrants, often non-western, and adduced as not being relevant for native members of society. According to Anthias et al. (2013) integration

policies create an expectation of the migrant to adopt the norms of the State. They argue that in the times of securitizing policies towards migrants this often results in exclusion, as ‘unwillingness’ to integrate is a reason to be denied permanent residency. Thus, according to Anthias et al. (2013), integration is a task to be accomplished and citizenship a status to be earned. Joergensen (2021) argues that it should not be the immigrant who must prove their accomplishments of the state’s naturalising integration goals, such as being employed. He suggests that instead integration policies should be built on recognition. According to Joergensen (2021) analysing integration with recognition will transform both the individual and collective interpretations of needs, which will shift the burden of proof to the state, as they are the ones who reproduce the recognising institutions. This is, according to Joergensen (2021), a necessity if a society shall reproduce itself as free. If social institutions do not accommodate and stimulate transformative processes, hence the development of identities and aspirations, society cannot be reproduced as safe for migrants. As a result, social integration, according to Joergensen (2021) will not be accommodated. According to Schweiger (2021) being excluded from society is a form of misrecognition, which happens when rightful claims are ignored. Hence, according to Schweiger, with a reference to Honneth (1996), injustice equals misrecognition. According to Schweiger (2021), being accepted as a citizen with equal rights presupposes recognition by the state and its citizens. The critical theory of recognition is as well highlighted by Huth (2021) and Hirvonen (2021), as an analytical tool to study migrants’ experience of social pathologies and their struggle for recognition and inclusion. According to Hirvonen (2021), migrants face two overall challenges within recognition: integration and multiculturalism. At its core, one must face the challenge of being recognized within a new culture and context and receive the recognised status as a citizen within its legal boundaries. According to Hirvonen (2021), the fundamental challenge of integration is to be recognised and respected as a part of the ‘us’, when contributing to the norms and directions of the host society. The challenge of multiculturalism concerns the recognition of how diverse cultural practices can contribute valuably to society, which can create a struggle between value horizons. Hence, according to Hirvonen (2021) recognition is a matter of society's understanding of the migrant’s values.

3.2 CITIZENSHIP

Throughout the meetings with the Neighbourhood Mothers, it promptly became clear that a motivating factor for their participation in the group, was aligned with experiences of or current struggles of finding a place in the Danish society joined with the attempt of personal self-development. Some participants described this as a multi-cultural factor, with both positive and

negative effects on the self and their feeling of belonging. Furthermore, identity conflicts rose when finding one's place in society, which was affected by ethnic cultural backgrounds and internal conflicts regarding how to fully enter Danish norms and society. These internal conflicts have by scholars been studied by conceptualising identity development with the notion of multiple identities, to describe how people with an ethnic minority background position themselves in society (Verkuyten, 2010; Erel et al., 2018; Massey and R., 2010; Anthias et al., 2013).

3.2.2 Identity and Belonging

Erel et al. (2018) argue that the social meaning of citizenship is about participation and inclusion, and concerns relationships, perceptions, positioning, practices, and identity. Therefore, citizenship is something that can be enacted and performed. Verkuyten (2010) argues that to create the possibility for positive development and self-perceptions, and to avoid an expectancy of assimilation, it is important for ethnic groups that their multiculturalism is recognized by society. She suggests that a social identity perspective is useful to apply when studying the process of identity development in a group setting. She argues that social group identities can become part of a member's identity. If that social group is recognized by society, a member identifying with the group will try to maintain and protect this identity. However, Verkuyten (2010) argues, with a reference to Tajfel and Turner (1979), that devaluation of the group by society will negatively affect the identity development of the people identifying with the group. Massey and R (2010) agree with the effect of the valuation of in-groups on identity. Furthermore, they describe identity development as being constituted by three elements in which the individual is an active agent; self-perception and motivations; boundaries created by the perception and characterization by society; actual encounters in real-world settings in which boundaries and exclusion can be negotiated. Hence, this process consists of challenging and brokering the boundaries of social categories set by the host country towards people of another cultural background. Anthias et al. (2013) describe how elements of modern integration policies place belonging as closely linked to an identification with the country of origin, which can lead to exclusion in the host-society. They argue that belonging is not solely linked to the said homogenous process of integration but is as well linked to the act of everyday practices and routines. Therefore, the studies of Anthias et al. (2013) suggest that active agency and the navigation of social constraints involved in this process are important concerns when studying barriers to becoming a formal citizen such as in the case of this present thesis.

3.2.3 Motherhood and Care

Some scholars have approached the concepts of citizenship and belonging with the notions of motherhood and care (Erel, 2011; Erel et al. 2018; Savage et al. 2005; Cases: 2021). According to Erel (2011) and Savage et al. (2005), the public act of care and motherhood is linked to local and national belonging, as well as to negotiations of class and (racialized) identity. Erel et al. (2018) describe how formal citizenship is about rights and duties and argue that in modern day politics migrant mothers are portrayed as marginal. According to Erel et al. (2018) the women are expected to prove that they can be ‘good’ citizens and integrate themselves and their children in accordance with the ‘values’ of the host country. Hence, are forced into citizenship. However, Erel et al. (2018), argue that through the act of care and cultural work in the domestic and public sphere, migrant women can challenge hegemonic perceptions of good citizenship, such as showing how care acts as a valuable and reproductive element in society. According to Cases (2021) engaging in care work can be a way to obtain a feeling of deservingness and contributing to society. Hence, trying to be a ‘good citizen’ and enhance the feeling of belonging and claim recognition. Thus, the feeling of belonging is, according to Cases (2021), connected to what you can give and contribute to society, which can be achieved if the person perceives their work as making a difference, and as valuable and necessary for society.

3.3 THE NEIGHBOURHOOD MOTHERS: COMMUNITY AND BELONGING

This present section focuses on the importance of volunteer engagement when becoming an active member of society and how to obtain important skills, such as knowledge and engagement in networks, both key factors to create connectedness and belonging in the context of the Neighbourhood Mothers.

3.3.1 Community and Integration

According to Msengi, et al. (2015) support groups constituted by women serve as a crucial factor in creating networks for newcomers and empowering women to actively engage in their integration process. Msengi, et al. (2015) argue that group settings formed by people with a shared background is also vital for identity formation in the context of being a newcomer. In this setting they can share experiences in a safe environment, in which they can learn from each other due to their multi-cultural understanding of society. According to Christensen (2006) and Dahl & Jacobsen (2005), this can be particularly important for people with minority backgrounds. Through their engagement in volunteer organisations, they can develop knowledge of society, create networks and social competencies, which can act as important factors for integration, and to be active citizens. Christensen (2006) finds

that social competencies enhance the possibility to be involved and get influence in social communities. The competencies gained as a volunteer are as well useful and empowering in other spheres of society such as the educational, political, and the labour market, and thus for integration. According to Christensen (2006), it is, however, a necessity that the community is organised in a way in which the participant is acknowledged, respected, and listened to, and in which they can gain influence. This can create a space for connectedness and mutually respectful interaction to develop their potential. Christensen (2006) and Msengi et al. (2015) explain that a safe encounter can be created in participation with other women with an ethnic minority background, who can show the women they work with that they can be independent and possess the same rights and possibilities as other women in society.

3.3.2 Community and Empowerment

Existing literature concerned with the Neighbourhood Mothers is still relatively limited. The research related to this chapter are involved with either the Danish section, the Finnish, or Swedish and has all focused on the outcomes and experiences of either being a Neighbourhood Mother or working with the Programme (Krogh, 2012; Hammersköld, 2019; Makara, 2020; Michelsen, 2020; Hess, 2019; Bordorff, 2016; Madsen; 2014). Empowerment such as the strengthening of competencies and social and personal resources as an outcome of the work as a Neighbourhood Mother was found in all studies concerning the processes and outcomes (Krogh, 2012; Makara, 2020; Hess, 2019; Madsen, 2014). According to Hess (2019), Makara, (2020), and Krogh (2012), a principal factor in being empowered is the learning processes the women experience through their volunteer work. The learning process involves the actual education the women receive through the Programme's 14 modules and the processes of interacting with the other Neighbourhood Mothers and the women they help. According to Makara (2020) and Krogh (2012), the interaction between the women creates a network and a feeling of community, which Makara (2020) defines as the creation of a *Sisterhood*. This community can be created, as the women can relate to and identify with each other. Not only because they are all part of the same programme, but because they share similar backgrounds and engage in the same learning processes. According to Krogh (2012) and Makara (2020), this learning process is motivating as the women are proud to collaborate with other women who they perceive as strong and resourceful. Bordorff (2016) and Michelsen (2020) describe how the women see the achievement of being resourceful citizens as a great motivation for their participation as mentors. According to Bordorff (2016) and Michelsen (2020), the women perceive the acknowledgment by society and the system as a possibility to create a better life for themselves. Even though the women are often resourceful

already before their involvement in the Programme, according to Bordorff (2016), being a Neighbourhood Mother creates a set of motivating structures. Within these the women can evolve to reach a stage in which they feel they can present themselves as professionals, active and responsible citizens. By being involved with the Programme the women show how they are engaged in their local neighbourhoods, and thus being active citizens. This motivating outcome is by Madsen (2014) described in relation to the learning process towards being able to navigate the Danish system. However, she describes that being able to actively participate in the Danish Society is accomplished on the conditions of the system as the women learn what is expected by society.

3.3.3 Boundaries to Integration

Michelsen (2020) found that the women often have a mistrust to the system, as they may not have received the help and guidance they are obliged to, due to their cultural backgrounds. She argues that being acknowledged by the system is a motivating factor for the women to be involved with the Programme, to learn about the system and labour market, and enhance their process of integration. Thus, creating a better future for themselves and their families. According to Madsen (2014) and Hess (2019) to be able to integrate into, learn about cultural diversities, and understand and navigate the Danish System is extremely important to help reduce the line between majority and minority individuals in society. Consequently, to reduce the marginalisation some of the women experience. However, Madsen (2014) found that the women engage in society on the majority's conditions. Thus, according to Madsen (2014) when the women engage in political discussions in the private sphere the socioeconomic inequality between the majority and minority citizens is not voiced. Therefore, political discussions often concern the women's shared identity of being mothers.

3.4 Recapitulation of the Chapter

The existing literature on the Neighbourhood Mothers have focused on active citizenship, which is the key value of the Programme. It has studied outcomes and processes of change that the women go through, the importance of learning for the process of integration, and which barriers must be crossed to achieve acknowledgement. However, it seems that there is a lack of literature on how the Programme affects the women's identity, and how recognition and motherhood affect their feeling of belonging. These concepts are engaged with by an array of scholars and suggested to apply when studying women and integration (Joergensen, 2021; Schweiger, 2021; Huth, 2021; Hirvonen, 2021; Anthias et al, 2013). These scholars are engaged with the effects of integration policies on identity and how women with ethnic minority backgrounds are negotiating discourses. Another perspective towards this field is to study how the enactment of citizenship within the practice of motherhood and

care, help the women contribute to society in ways they perceive as valuable, and at the same time manage to negotiate felt discourses on gender and citizenship (Erel, 2011; Erel et al., 2018; Cases, 2021). This thesis is engaging with elements from both sides, as it is found appropriate to answer the research question. By using in-depth interviews with three Neighbourhood Mothers this thesis aims to develop this knowledge and go beyond studying the volunteer element of the integration processes. It aims to study individual perceptions of recognition, belonging, and identity, such as is suggested in the first part of this review. The study is critical as it has its outset in the context of current and past integration policies' effect on the women participating in this study. It is placed within the sphere of social psychology as it engages with individual perceptions and somehow normative theories and literature. It acknowledges that the approach of phenomenology has not been used to study the felt effects of gender norms and citizenship in the context of the Neighbourhood Mothers, and hence contributes with three inductive cases. This present thesis will create new insight into the research on the Neighbourhood Mothers, as it will focus on the reflective and psychological outcomes of the work of the participating women, and hence will not try to create generalising results. At the same time, it will focus on the group's effect on the women, and how recognition in their daily life as well as in their work as Neighbourhood Mothers plays a role in their personal (identity) development. The theoretical section following the methodological chapter includes theories suggested and referenced by the literature as well as the themes found through the readings of the interviews with the three participants of the study.

4. METHODOLOGY

This present chapter will provide a brief overview of the origins of the Phenomenological Approach (PA) and the chosen adaption of the Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis. It will present reflections on the choice of methodology and methods, as well as its limitations and risks to validity. The selection criteria of participants will be explained, and the participants selected will be described. The PA was selected, as scholars suggest it to be a benefitting and ethical approach to develop significant and in-depth knowledge of migrants' and people with ethnic minority backgrounds' experiences, as it creates the possibility to uncover the meanings, they assign them (Tessitore, F. et al., 2019; Aldiabat, k., M., et al., 2021; Chaffelson, R., 2021), such as is the aim of this thesis.

4.1 An Introduction to the Phenomenological Approach

The PA is a qualitative research methodology with a foundational background in philosophy. The PA was originally developed as a response to the positivist research paradigm by Edmund Husserl in 1913 (Urcia, 2021). Husserl offered a descriptive approach to inductive in-depth research of lived

experiences. He did not attempt to develop an approach to create a theory of narrative data, but to understand lived experiences of a phenomenon with an objective approach. Husserl understood reality as existing independently of the mind, hence truth must be observable. His approach was therefore epistemological objectivist. The understanding of lived experiences is a crucial source of knowledge. Husserl emphasised that the researcher must objectively examine a phenomenon free of their pre-existing knowledge, history, and culture. He termed this *bracketing* which is the suspension of preconceived opinions and bias when observing and understanding a person's experience of a phenomenon. Hence, Husserl's approach is descriptive and does not interpret its findings (ibid).

Husserl's mentee Martin Heidegger developed the PA in an interpretivist direction in 1963. Heidegger's approach recognises how one cannot set aside prior knowledge; hence bracketing cannot be attained (ibid). Heidegger explains this with the concept of *Historicality*, which is the culture and history one is born into, and which forms a pre-understanding of the real world. The historicality functions as a structure for being in the world. Thus, understanding the world is not something we do, but rather something 'we are' because of the culture and history we are born into. Therefore, nothing can be encountered explicitly from one's pre-understanding. As an individual interprets every encounter within their Historicality, interpretation cannot be distinguished from being human (Laverty, 2003). Heidegger's approach is ontologically relativist, as the understanding of phenomena is connected to and situated in the fact that one exists in the world. Meanings of experiences are understood as created in everyday encounters and interactions; hence reality and knowledge are subjective and cannot be bracketed or detached. Thus, all descriptions are interpretations, and the approach is therefore subjective in its epistemology, which moves the Heideggerian PA into the realm of the interpretivist/constructivist research paradigm, which this present thesis will position itself within (Urcia, 2021). As bracketing is impossible, the researcher should instead reflect on their own pre-existing knowledge and assumptions, to in participation with the research subject create new knowledge of the phenomenon being studied. Hence, the PA is related to hermeneutics (ibid). An example of this is how scholar Umut Erel (2011) in her theory of Ethnic minority women transforming citizenship employed in this thesis suggests, that by giving voice to the women who are studied, they can negotiate, in connection with the researcher, how they are understood.

4.2 The Interpretational Phenomenological Analysis

Several adaptations to the Heideggerian PA have been proposed. This thesis employs an analytical adaptation with a foundation in psychology by Smith & Osborn (2003), called the *Interpretational Phenomenological Analysis* (IPA). The IPA is inductive and examines lived experiences in (micro-)

detail. It investigates personal perceptions of a phenomenon in its diverse and complex reality and how the individual creates meaning and understanding of their experience with a phenomenon (Urcia, 2021 and Smith & Osborn, 2003). The approach is interpretive as the researcher will try to understand and gain insight into how the participant views their personal world and realities in order to develop an analytical and interpretative structure of the transcripts (ibid). The IPA, therefore, involves two steps of hermeneutics. The first step is the participant trying to create a sense of their world, and the second step when the researcher tries to understand the point of view of the participant, and how they create sense and meaning of their world (Smith, 2004). In this way, the hermeneutics is empathetic, as the researcher tries to understand how the participant tries to understand their experience and social reality. The IPA is as well questioning at the second stage as the researcher must be critical towards the transcripts (Smith, 2004 and Smith & Osborn, 2003). Furthermore, the process of interpretation is hermeneutic as the researcher acknowledges their prior understandings and knowledge and engages in the transcripts multiple times to attain a complete understanding and interpretation (Urcia, 2021).

As the IPA is concerned with individual experiences of encounters or phenomena, the IPA is idiographic. This does not mean that the IPA cannot generate generalisable hypotheses, but that the researcher must be careful if generalising statements. Hence the IPA is meaningful when studying complex experiences and processes and how individual makes sense of them (Smith & Osborn, 2003). In her examination of migrant experiences with the British asylum system, Chaffelson (2021) experienced that the IPA created a setting in which she as a researcher could demonstrate sensitivity and transparency towards her subjects in all stages of the study. Chaffelson (2021) states, how the positivist paradigm can dismiss the non-representative function of small-sample qualitative research. However, by adhering to this, it is not possible to voice the real opinions of those effected by a phenomenon. At the same time, allowing marginal voices to be heard, the research can challenge both those who hold the power of which research are valued, and challenge the structures the interlocuters voice their grievances about (Chaffelson, 2021).

4.3 Research Methods

Smith & Osborn (2003) suggest that data can be collected in several ways to satisfy the qualitative in-depth data criterion of the IPA. This entails that both diaries, interviews, and life stories explaining in detail how an encounter or phenomenon has been experienced will suit the research. However, Smith & Osborn (2003) suggest that engaging with semi-structured interviews is the most suitable method for conducting data collection in an IPA. A semi-structured interview allows a dialogue between the researcher and participant, such as the researcher being able to engage deeper in a theme

a participant brings forth. The interview is semi-structured, to have a set of open questions to stay relevant for the research purpose. The questions should function as a structure around the themes the researcher wants to investigate, rather than the researcher being strictly dictated by it. The researcher should have a facilitating role and let the participant tell their story in a way that expresses their reality; therefore, the order of questions is not crucial (ibid). However, the interview questions should follow a logical order, as less sensitive and personal questions should be placed early in an interview. This is to start the interview by making the interlocutor feel safe and comfortable. Likewise, less specific questions should preferably be placed at the start of an interview to not lead the respondent to answer questions in accordance with what they may perceive the researcher to be interested in (ibid). The participant should be encouraged to speak with little prompting from the researcher and without explicit leading questions. However, it is relevant to think about prompts to use throughout the interview in case there is a need to clarify a response. It is important to reflect on the depth and richness of responses after conducting an interview, so to evaluate if the need for prompting answers was too essential to engage the participant. The risk of this is to not have entered the real opinions, or that the researcher has forced the participant's opinions to fit the research question (ibid). In this thesis, I have carried out three semi-structured interviews, which allowed me to get elaborated answers, as well as to ask questions related to themes the participants disclosed. I did not experience that the participants needed much prompting. I experienced that the participants felt safe and talked openly about their feelings and experiences. I have as well included conversations from my four visits to the Female café. Even though the settings did not allow me to record, and where time for the individual case was limited, the safe atmosphere between the women allowed for personal stories to be told. An example of how the setting of open conversations bringing forth valuable data, was at my first visit, in which I engaged in a conversation with two women at the table who talked about how being multicultural was an important factor in their work in order to teach the women how to approach authorities.

4.4 Selection Criteria of Participants

The PA uses a purposive sampling strategy, to select a group in which participants have experienced the same phenomenon (Urcia, 2021). The IPA presupposes a detailed and in-depth analysis of a small, selected sample size. In this thesis, I have selected women from the Neighbourhood Mothers Programme, who all share an ethnic minority background, have children, and have been in Denmark for more than 10 years. Therefore, they have experienced the process of integration or being part of a minority and have been able to reflect on their memories related. The inclusion criteria do not mean

that my interpretations will necessarily be representative of other individuals sharing the same criteria.

In an evaluation from 2015, motivations of participation as volunteers were emphasised as to strengthen their social competencies and confidence. Additionally, developing a shared identity among the group, gaining knowledge about Danish systems and intercultural knowledge among the women was seen as motivating factors (Deloitte, 2015). This group, therefore, possesses significant qualities, which are relevant for this present research, as I want to explore women with ethnic minority backgrounds' thoughts on and experiences with finding their place in the Danish society. By having the Neighbourhood Mothers as a case study, it is possible to explore if something in their experience with being a newcomer, being part of a minority, and elements in their personal journey of integration have motivated them to join the Programme. Hence, the phenomenon to be studied is how the women experience their meeting with the Danish Society and how this has affected their identities. This seems to not yet have been studied with the application of the IPA, and in the case of The Neighbourhood Mothers. Therefore, the selected group represents individuals that fit well the research concern of this present thesis.

4.5 Presentation of the Participants

At first, all groups were located on the organisation's website. I contacted a consultant from the Neighbourhood Mothers secretary, whom I was able to interview at their office. At the time of the interview, I had sent emails to every available group in and around Copenhagen, but with no response. After months I got in contact with the front woman of a group located in a city near Copenhagen.

The Front Woman of the section, I met at the monthly Female café for four months, Maria, has been living in Denmark, in the same city, for 40 years. She came to Denmark from Palestine in search of education when she was 20 years old. Maria grew up in the city of Nazareth in a Muslim family, being the second youngest of 10 siblings, of which three had moved to Denmark before herself. She has worked with refugees and families and participates in a range of communal and volunteer projects. She has received a prize for being a 'fire-soul' and helped start her local section of Neighbourhood Mothers. Interview duration: 48 minutes. Transcript is found in Appendix B.

Olivia, whom I met at my first Female café came to Denmark in the year 2007 as she married a Danish Kurdish-Iranian man, with whom she has two children, one eight years old and one 13. She studies a master's degree in business economics and has been a part of the programme Since it started in her city in 2012. Interview duration: 38 minutes. Transcript is found in Appendix C.

Nadia, 42, whom I also met several times at the Female cafés, was born in Copenhagen to parents of Pakistani descent. She has two children and is a former Neighbourhood Mother. Nadia was a part of the Programme for three years and has recently started to join the monthly café again. She has an office education but is currently unemployed. Interview duration: 53 minutes. Transcript is found in Appendix D.

4.6 Conducting the Interview

In March 2022 Maria invited me to join the monthly Female café, where I could meet and talk to her and the other women. At the café, I met Olivia, whom I interviewed a couple of weeks later. Maria invited me to join the café again the next month, where I met her early and conducted an interview. At the second café, I met Nadia, whom I also later interviewed. Before the three interviews, I emphasised that there were no correct answers, that they should answer however they felt, take their time, and that I would not interrupt, but might ask follow-up questions. I got permission to record the interviews and informed them that I would take notes throughout. I asked permission to use their first names but informed them about the possibility to be anonymous, which one of the participants requested. Hence, the names of the women and the city are anonymized. The interview guide is presented in appendix A. The women participating in the four Female cafés are not mentioned by name to respect their anonymity. They were all informed of the intention of my presence, and voluntarily participated in conversations related to my project and their experiences.

4.7 Analysis Guideline

The following section will entail the guidelines for constructing the IPA suggested by Smith & Osborn (2003).

1. The transcript is read and commented upon a few times. In this stage the notes may be summarising, associating, connecting, and occurring themes and thoughts.

1.2 The transcript will be read again, and in the left margin will now be used to comment on when overall themes are emerging. Some themes may reoccur. The purpose is to find phrases that can be connected to theory, while still being directly grounded in the participant's response. Therefore, the whole transcript is given direct attention, and no passages are given particular concern. It is neither the point to extract themes from every response, as the themes emerging reflect the richness of the participants' responses.

1.3 Themes are collected and connected. This part is therefore more analytical and theoretical. Some themes may cluster together and become *subordinate* themes, and some may appear as a

superordinate theme as they help to explain the overall meaning of the subordinate themes. In this stage, it is important to make sure that how you as a researcher make sense of the passages, is in line with the actual responses.

After each interview, I transcribed the recordings thoroughly to make sure that everything was correctly rewritten. During the interviews, the listening, and first readings, I noticed overall themes occurring in the individual transcripts. After observations, I recorded my memories, as well as wrote down important topics and experiences mentioned by the women participating. I decided to use the technique of colour coding to highlight important sections, as well as notes in the margins.

2. In this step, the clusters of themes will be ordered coherently in a table (see table 1). The superordinate themes that emerged through step 1 will be represented to cover the subordinate themes. New superordinate themes may also occur, and some themes may be dropped.

3. Step 1 and 2 will be repeated for participant 2 and 3. In this process. it is important to distance the themes from participant one, to be true to the transcripts. However, some themes found in transcript 1 may reoccur, and new themes can emerge. However, it is also an opportunity to use the superordinate themes from participant one. This may help to find similarities, but it may also facilitate finding differences. Smith & Osborn (2003) suggest that if the sample is 3> the analysis should be conducted from scratch for each participant. The results from the mutual readings of the three interviews showed that some subordinate themes were differing, however, the superordinate themes were prominent in all interviews.

4. This stage moves from the identification of themes to writing a narrative expansion of the participants' statements. The themes will be outlined and explained with extracts from the individual transcripts. There are two strategies to apply at this stage. One is to start discussing relevant themes within a broader thematic analysis drawing on external literature and theory. However, the separation between the narrative examples and the researchers' interpretations should be explicit for the reader. Another strategy is to narratively interpret each theme including the respective participants in an analytical chapter, followed by a separate theoretical discussion in which the literature and theory are applied. I have chosen to follow the first strategy of the IPA. The literature and theory included in the theoretical analysis have been selected because of the themes emerging throughout these 4 stages of the analysis

4.8 Positioning

The IPA is a narrative research methodology set in the reformist research field of social science. This implies that the knowledge it produces is not validated through the means of generalisations and testing of hypotheses that can be applied to a wide range of individuals. However, the IPA is instead concerned with a small group of participants' personal stories and experiences which can be neglected in conventional research (Polkingtorne, 2007). The personal accounts function as important aspects of understanding the human life world, thus the personal stories serve as great evidence of how individuals create meanings of real experiences and social realities. Hence, the narrative researcher is interested in the truth of single narratives, and not historical and factual truths (ibid). Accounts and descriptions of human experiences are complex and built on personal reflections and perceptions, and therefore may not be representative of other than the subject of a study. This follows, that validation of the researcher's claims and their processes of arguments are not as mechanical as in conventional research, such as research claims grounded in statistics, or qualitative research including a wider group of participants. It is not the researcher's aim to convince the reader of any conclusions other than what seems plausible and possible from their interpretation of the subjects' stories. The goal is to clarify what the stories intend to represent. Meanwhile, to lead the reader through the researcher's process of thought leading to the possible interpretations of the subjects' stories. This involves explaining the context and the researcher's own motivation and pre-existing knowledge within the field of study employed to interpret the meaning of the subjects' expressions (ibid). As the PA is placed in the realm of the interpretivist/constructivist paradigm of social science research, it is important that the researcher thoroughly explain their arguments. The researcher's prior knowledge may result in one researcher's academic background constructing another outcome than a researcher with a different theoretical background would (Urcia, 2021). Furthermore, the researcher needs to be aware of the threats to validity that arise when creating narrative research. Firstly, when the participant tells their story and verbally expresses feelings associated with an experience, it will never be a fully mirrored representation of the actual experience and the meaning it has to the person. The limits to uncovering the actual true meaning have several sources. The first concerning language, as words and access to vocabulary may limit the means to express the full depth of meaning. Secondly, a participant may not be fully aware of the significance of an experience and may not (yet) have fully realised or reflected upon the phenomenon and its effects. This may entail that the researcher must interpret a passage in the transcript that may have been hard for the participant to verbalise. Thirdly, a participant may not reveal the full extent of an experience. They may not think that their meaning or feelings associated are socially acceptable, or that they are not comfortable expressing their inner

thoughts to the researcher. Hence, the responses can be filtered to portray a positive image to the outside world. A fourth threat is a bias the researcher themselves may impose on the participant's responses, such as their attitude, gender, clothing, and facial expressions, which the participant reads to create what they believe are acceptable responses (Polkingtorne, 2007 and Smith & Osborn, 2003). Additionally, as the IPA is concerned with how individuals make sense of their worlds, it is important to pay attention to the state of mind of the participant. Hence, to the connection between emotions and what is said, as an interlocutor may not wish to disclose everything that is on their mind due to personal reasons (Smith & Osborn 2003). It is important to take notes throughout the interview – facial or other physical expressions should be accounted for as it helps conduct the analysis.

4.9 Reflections upon the Methodology

I have chosen to follow the PA developed by Heidegger with the adaption of the IPA developed by Smith & Osborn (2003), as I agree with the impossibility of bracketing out prior knowledge. I comply with the strength in allowing the humanness of the researcher when reflecting on their responses to a participant's story. Hence, that knowledge is created interactively between the researcher and participant throughout the interpretational hermeneutic process. I have chosen this approach, due to its philosophical placement of subjectivist epistemology and relativist ontology by acknowledging how experiences of the world realities are subjective and socially constructed. This is furthermore suggested as the best approach to respectfully study lived experiences (Urcia, 2021). Hence, I find the approach as the most ethical when studying personal narratives and experiences, such as is the case of this present thesis.

4.10 Summary of the Chapter

This thesis has its foundation in the Phenomenological approach developed by Heidegger. The study is inductive, as it does not aim to test a pre-existing hypothesis. This means, that theories and relevant literature are found throughout the mutual readings of the interviews. The PA does not demand that the researcher fully neglect their prior knowledge, as this is not possible. To illustrate this, the problem area is found through an interest within the field of women with ethnic minority backgrounds engaging in volunteer work, which presumes knowledge of the topic. However, the methodology demands staying true to the actual meanings described by the interlocutors, before assuming certain causalities. The thesis applies the Interpretational Phenomenological Analysis developed by Smith & Osborn (2003), which engages in the hermeneutical approach, and allows the researcher to create knowledge in collaboration with the interlocutors. The (I)PA therefore creates the possibility to develop rich and extensive interpretations and knowledge of human experiences, allowing the

interlocutor to contribute with their own expert knowledge of an experienced phenomenon and the meaning they provide it. Interpretations of the three interviews are involved within the fields of Social Identity, Belonging and Recognition, which set the boundaries of the theoretical framework, which constitutes the forthcoming chapter.

5. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The women participating in this study are all members of the same organisation. They have varied reasons and motivations to be involved. However, they all share that they have multicultural backgrounds. The Neighbourhood Mothers is an integration initiative, why members of the organisation must see integration as relevant and important. Literature presented in this thesis has shown, that to be integrated a person must feel somewhat like those of the same society, hence possess a feeling of belonging. Furthermore, while the women practise their different daily lives and networks, they engage in developing diverse ways of navigating society. Hence, they engage in the process of becoming citizens. While the women participate in the Programme, they engage in the civil society, which is as an element in becoming an active citizen; a status promoted by the Programme, and which is emphasised in the Danish Integration politics. While the women engage in becoming active citizens, they develop new parts of their identities. Jenkins (2003) introduces his theory of Social Identity, which the first part of the chapter will engage with. He describes identity as a continuous process throughout life, inflicted by internal and external processes, in which different elements in the navigation of life will affect. The women of this study have experienced different journeys to become members of the Danish Society. In their case belonging and citizenship have been prominent factors for their identities. The first part of the chapter therefore has a subjective perspective. The consecutive sections will engage with the theory of *In-group Categorization and Self-identification* by Tajfel and Turner (1979), as well the theory of *Migrant Women Transforming Citizenship* by Erel (2009). The second theory builds an analytic tool to understand the process of social identity. It creates an insight into different elements of the women's action in relation to identity development. This part investigates how the women develop their identity and social mobility by identifying as being members of diverse groups and categories, such as their ethnicity, gender and being part of the Programme. The third theory as well engages in these processes however with a focus on gender, citizenship and belonging. As is clear throughout the chapter, the concepts and elements of belonging and citizenship, hence identity and identification, is involved continuously with recognition. It is as well explicitly clear through the interviews that recognition is important for

the women of this study. The concept of recognition will be introduced with the theory of *The Struggle for Recognition* developed by Honneth (2006).

5.1 Social Identity

The theory by Jenkins (2003) was chosen as the themes found throughout the mutual rereading of the interviews as well as the relevant literature, suggested a need for furthermore knowledge upon how the women may form their identity through their work with the Neighbourhood Mothers. I have chosen to include the theory of Social Identity by Jenkins (2003) as he engages with not only the development and perception of the identity of the self, but studies how identity is formed in group interactions and external factors such as categorisations. Furthermore, how identity matters for the feeling of belonging. For Jenkins (2003) social identity is dynamic and a process that one can negotiate and communicate. Thus, the theory will help understand how these different dimensions affect the women of the study, and how they through time and interactions have negotiated their identities. Jenkins (2003) understands the concept of identity as multisided in terms of how we understand ourselves, others, culture, history, and personality. Hence, identity is filled with expectations of how we will be formed by these categories. Identity is a dynamic process, as it is the task of creating our own identity on behalf of these categories, to both understand and become ourselves. Therefore, identity is a process, happening in our daily lives and interactions (Jenkins, 2003:1). Jenkins (2003) explains identity by using the verb *identification*. To possess an identity a person needs to see certain identifications, that they find a similarity with, in comparison to other groups and people. Thus, identity is about knowing who is who, and to be able to identify differences between individuals, between groups, and between groups and individuals. Consequently, similarity and difference are the most essential elements in identity (=identification) (Jenkins, 2003: 1). Jenkins (2003) perspective of identification/identity processes is that individual and group processes cannot be detached. The identification of a collective and an individual within it, is identical, and will only exist because of their interaction. Therefore, they contribute to each other's identity development process. Hence, the dimension within the concept of identity that Jenkins has his interest in, is social, as we understand ourselves in relation to others and the collective (Jenkins, 2003: 1). Identity is constructed by viewpoints, which for the individual is ingrained in their bodies. Collective identities, made up by individuals, will be anchored in time, history and space, in which the individual exists. Thus, the two are integrated and the process of identity is a social practice (Jenkins, 2003: 3).

One of the main reasons to engage with Jenkin's theory of Social Identity is that he insists that one's identity must be acknowledged by others in society. Hence, identity is not something which can just

be claimed. At the same time identity is connected to classification and social categories (Jenkins, 2003: 1). This insisting feeds into the findings of this project, as the women actively engages in developing their own identity, while being members of the Neighbourhood Mothers, which aim is to create active citizens. As previously described, to be an active citizen involves being recognized by other citizens and the Society in which we live. Jenkins (2003) describes that because social identity is dynamic and can be negotiated it is not predetermined. Identity is about change, as well as it is about roots. It is a product of agreement and disagreement; hence identity is about meanings, in terms of how we establish meaning about ourselves and others in social interactions, transactions and influences. Therefore, identity will always be a social phenomenon, dynamically created in the interaction and reciprocity of society and the self (Jenkins, 2003: 1 & 2). However, Jenkins theory is not only interactionist, but is as well undeniably connected to social institutions, as these function as sources for identification (Jenkins, 2003: 1). An example of a social institution in relation to this project, is the Neighbourhood Mothers Programme, which can be said to be the source of identifying with being a volunteer mentor. Hence, identity is formed in social interactions as well as by institutional identifications, such as defined positions within institutions. Thus, identities (plural as it is not definitive, and an individual consists of more than one) affects how people experience and act in time and space and is as important on an individual level as it is on a collective level. These intertwining spheres makes it important to understand the significance of the verb identification in connection to identity. In identity's social understanding, one needs to either feel different or alike, to define in which identities they 'belong'. There is a third dimension in Jenkin's analysis of social identity: the biographical, described as being the phases of life and appertaining development processes. Identifications that one may learn to identify with through childhood are gender and ethnicity. These identifications will become important for one's motivations in life. Therefore, identity can also be a source of explanation for an individual's actions, such as the women joining the Neighbourhood Mothers, as they identify as women with ethnic minority backgrounds (ibid).

Jenkins (2006: 3 and 4) suggests that while we all have our own meanings, they are developed from a common knowledge which we are born into, and thus geography and history also matter. Furthermore, even though we behave due to identifications with institutions and social relations, there exists a pragmatic individualism. This implies that a person will always have their own will, and a unique self-reflection as they are uniquely embedded in time and space. Thus, identity is formed by both internal and external perceptions (Jenkins, 2006; 3 and 4). To clarify this, Jenkins has developed a model, in which he explains how the understanding of the world is constructed for individuals.

Reading the model, it is important to understand how time, history, and locality matters, and how society and the self cannot be distinctly understood. The model consists of three co-existing orders or spheres, which try to define how identity and individual understandings of the world is constructed:

- *The Individual Order*: The human world and the actual people and their thoughts. They do not make sense isolated, as even though people are unique, the self is socially constructed. Throughout life you (re-)define your (and others) identity in social relations. This understanding is built on theories by Mead (1934) and Cooley (1962, 1963), in which Jenkins defines the self as sustainable, and as being defined by an inner self definition and an external definition (brought on you by others) of ourselves: we cannot see ourselves without seeing how other people see us. The body is one example of this, as it is basically the ‘embodiment’ of identity (here primary identities are categories such as being human, and gender and (locally) ethnicity). He titles this process the ‘*The Internal-External Dialectic of Identification*’. It is the process in which all identities, individual and collective, are constructed. The internal and external should not be understood with a concrete distinction, but rather metaphorical, as they are synchronic social processes happening in the same social room. Hence, the external definition is a part of the internal self-definition, and contrariwise (Jenkins, 2003: 3 and 4).
- *The Interactionist Order*: The human world constituted of relations between individuals and what happens between them. What others think, matters as much as what we think of ourselves in terms of validating identity. Therefore, identity is not one-sided. It is about self-presentation in interactions, while we cannot fully control how our signals are received. Thus, a performative element is present in our daily lives. Jenkins refers to Bourdieu's Habitus (1977 and 1990), which is present individually, collectively, and as well in the embodiment of identity. Thus, this order also includes how we view and are viewed by others in the internal-external-dialectics. Furthermore, if we are seen as fitting into certain institutional identifications, one can internalise this identification into their own identity, only by being labelled by others. Hence, there is an element of power, as according to Jenkins external opinions have consequences for the individual.
- *The Institutional Order*: The human world that consists of patterns and organising; the established norms. There are two sorts of processes in which a group can be defined, again relating to the internal-external-dialectics. One being a collective in which the individuals

are defined and categorised by others as they are seen as sharing certain identifications. Hence, a keyword is categorisation (by others – an external dimension). The other being a collective in which the people define and identify with each other through shared identifications. Hence, the keyword being group identification (by the individual person - the internal dimension). Identities are found and negotiated at the border of where the inner (group identification) and outer (categorisation) dimensions meet and can therefore be fluent, according to Jenkins. As identities must still be accepted by others, identities are balanced and constructed in interaction. Again, there is an element of power in this process. An example may be ethnicity. Boundaries relating to categorisation may be pushed by politics (and individuals may fight against this power, agree with it or promote change), or one may be labelled by others, who have a certain view of the person being identified, for example due to their ethnicity. The inner dimension is related to the actual experience of identifying with being this ethnicity (which may also be experienced differently individually). The two dimensions may or may not affect each other and may affect the boundary of what it means to be a part of this identification.

(Jenkins, 2003: 3)

The model is inspired by several scholars, including Tajfel who in collaboration with Turner (1979) have developed a theory with parallels to the third order, which will be the focus of the next section. Jenkins model is introduced, as it builds a foundation for the coming sections, as well as being a theoretical tool to understand the processes and reflections of the women of this present study. The theory helps explain how the women are impacted by their different identifications, their social relations, and the events happening in their respective lives. It explains how these different dimensions impact choices and behaviour. Thus, how it is possible to develop a new identity(-ies) and definitions of themselves. It also explains how individual, interactionist, and institutional orders of society and the real world intertwine. Furthermore, how both categorisation and group identification are real processes and practical actions, between the collective and for the individual in the same place, within internal and external definition processes.

The next section of the chapter will engage with the theory of in-group characterization and conflict by Tajfel and Turner (1979). The collective group identification and its relationship to individual behaviour the theory presents have as well inspired Jenkins in his work (Jenkins, 2003: 8). However, the theory has a slightly more material approach (by working with concepts such as status). It is found

relevant as Tajfel and Turner (1979) have developed a self-categorisation category, which is found useful to study the women's personal identity and the meaning they create as individuals and members of a community, through the categorization of the in-group.

5.2 Social Identity: An Integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict

Tajfel and Turner (1979) developed the Theory of Social Identity processes and its effects on Social Intergroup competition, In-group Categorization and Self-Identification. This theory is suggested by scholars Verkuyten et al. (2019) as a suiting theory to engage with when studying people with dual identities such as immigrants and ethnic minority citizens, such as the women of this study who define themselves as being Danish citizens and having a second ethnic background. Furthermore, the theory is appropriate, as the women of the study subsequently met because of their shared multi-cultural backgrounds. The women also emphasise how they have gone through personal self-development by their meeting with Society and by being members of the Neighbourhood Mothers. The theory engages with the process of social identity development and in-group comparisons. It suggests a tool to analyse the process of social change in individual identities, such as in the theory of Social Identity by Jenkins (2003). However, it suggests a different analytical tool: The theory introduces the concept of *status*, understood as the outcome of the process of (inter) group comparison. A comparison may either have a negative or a positive effect on the individual, and hence, may threaten one's social identity. The theory creates a tool in which to study group and individual reactions to these effects (Tajfel and Turner, 1979). The process of social identity in group comparisons within Tajfel and Turner's (1979) theory will benefit the study of the effects and reactions of their respective backgrounds and current situations, such as their membership of the Neighbourhood Mothers and as Danish Citizens. In the following the principles of Tajfel and Turner's theory (1979) will be outlined.

1. Social Mobility

The principle of social mobility is used to analyse how an individual can try to detach themselves from a group they have previously identified themselves as being a member of. This happens the more they become aware of internal structures, as well as the group status (a negative reaction). Individual mobility does not include a change of the in-group, but the individual's desire to disidentify from their in-group in the process of upwards social mobility. For the Neighbourhood Mothers, this could be to achieve the acknowledgement of being an active citizen and strengthen social capacities.

2. Social Creativity

The concept of social creativity involves the in-group members aiming to redefine features of the group. This is done as a result from a positive reaction to the difference between the in-group and a group of comparison. Hence, comparing to a group which possess characteristics or status the in-group aims to achieve. The strategy of this can have three different focus points:

2.1 Comparing the in-group to the outgroup in a new dimension

The in-group may engage in this strategy if there cannot be found a positive comparison to the outgroup. The in-group may then develop a new category in which they have a favourable position. This also presupposes that this position is given a value by both groups, even though it may threaten the status of the other group(s) and thereby create intergroup tension.

2.2 Changing former negative values assigned to the in-group, into positive attributes.

A trait that has previously been defined as negative will be evaluated more positively by the in- and outgroups. This involves a rejection and reversion of the negative connotations, but not a change of the characteristic. This may be the most important one for the Neighbourhood Mothers, such as changing a perception of the women being passive or repressed and show how they actively engage in their own life choices and are independent.

2.3 Changing the out-group which the in-group compare themselves to (into a group of lower status).

Decreasing the feeling of inferiority will increase and recover the self-esteem of the in-group. This may be done by comparing the in-group with a group of similar social characteristics.

3. Social Competition

Through direct competition with another group, the in-group can create a positive distinction by reversing dimensions of the groups' social position. This is like social mobility (2.1), but counts for all members of a group, as individual mobility can create distinction between the group members. This dimension is a question of resources and social stratification and therefore imply an objective change in the group's social location.

The theory will help understand the actions the women have taken to improve their conditions, while helping other women do the same. A light example for the latter step (3) is, that by lifting other women within their own group, they start the process of lifting the whole group into a higher social position. For example, learning a language or creating a network, creates better opportunities for employment, thereby creating the possibility to achieve a higher social status. The next section of the

chapter is engaged with the theory of *Migrant Women Transforming Citizenship*, developed by Umut Erel (2009). The theory is complementing that of Tajfel and Turner (1979) as it also engages with categorization and the process of identity development. However, the theory also focuses on the concepts of citizenship and belonging. It is as well working intersectionally which goes well in line with Jenkin's acknowledgement of the dynamic and non-definitive understanding of identity. The theory is found suitable for this project, as it offers an analytical tool to study women of ethnic minorities in a European context with active agency involved with their own navigation of citizenship such as the women of this study have.

5.3 Migrant Women Transforming Citizenship

The third theory is developed by Erel (2009) and focuses on how migrant women create new counter hegemonic citizenships across social categories such as nationality, ethnicity, gender, and class. The theory therefore has an intersectional perspective. It recognizes that the social categories that establish gendered ethnicization, not only form the lives of the women, but also inflict on how the women themselves experience their own lives (Erel, 2009). Erel (2009) builds her theory on research about the realities of migrant women living in two different European societies. She studies how they actively engage in changing and navigating their daily lives and how they transform and negotiate norms across generations. By that, Erel (2009) shows how the women create differentiating forms of new citizenships. The theory engages with the process of 'making the self' and how women challenge discourses of how they are presented in society, such as confronting stereotypical beliefs on gender relations and oppression. According to Erel et al. (2018) these negotiations are extremely important, as the women can break the boundary to society for migrant women. It means that they become subjects with agency and substantiate their capacities to engage in society and the rights that follow. According to Erel (2011) studying citizenship in relation to migrant women, in particular mothers, is a paradox in present times of integration debates. She argues that being a mother can prove the woman to be an active citizen. According to Erel (2011) the paradox is how the migrant woman is perceived in society and politics, often as excluded. This does not count for her child, as child policies are somehow homogenous and inclusive, such as entrance to schools. The women can invest in what Erel (2011) calls emotional capital, such as engaging in their children's school. By doing this the children can gain access to cultural capital validated in the respective society. Thereby the mother engages in creating the ideal human capital, such as encouraging the education of her child, or by engaging in cultural activities or activities concerning the well-being of her child. By investing in this, the mother becomes a citizen in its normative understanding, as well as negotiate, what it means to be one (ibid).

Erel (2009: 7) suggests that there are three ‘moments’ of conceptualising the practice of citizenship. *The first moment* being that the women become *subjects with agency*. The practice of the first moment has been conceptualised in two ways:

1. By constructing knowledge about themselves and their reality, from their own standpoint, can development a consciousness and a drive to negotiate and contest stereotypical discourses and representations. This is knowledge such as the opinion of society on oppression and passivity within traditional patriarchal practices, as well as ethnic backgrounds, and the devalue of skills which may deem the women unable to participate in their society of residence.
2. The active practice of negotiating this gendered and ethnic position, which may be set in educational, working, gendered, family or political settings. This practice enables the women to constitute ways of ‘making themselves’.

It is important to understand that this first moment is not a goal to be reached, but an ongoing process. Erel (2009) suggests that letting women tell their own narrative in an interview setting, such as is done in this project, creates a setting for the women to construct their subjectivity.

The second moment of practising citizenship is when the women demonstrate their subjectivity and abilities in relation to other citizens. This can be capacities and subjective opinions within the spheres of politics, caring, culture and ethics depending on the circumstances. Within these expressions questions such as belonging in relation to citizenship are negotiated.

The third moment is the constitution of the women as rights claiming subjects. In this moment, the woman can claim a relationship between her and the State, and thereby claim the identity as a citizen. Of course, this moment is inflicted by the question of status. Because the women need formal acknowledgement by the State, the recognition of the women in the two other moments becomes extremely important. If the woman does not obtain knowledge upon her position in the world in which she lives (first moment) and if she is not perceived as and enabled to become political (second moment), the formality of citizenship will not be enabled. Therefore, the three moments are interrelated, as the ‘practising’ of the moments enables the woman to claim her rights, establish social consciousness and respect for her practises. Additionally, expressing herself will create awareness of the unjust exclusion the women might experience. The women can therefore, within the three moments both negotiate their own identity as well as transform notions of rights and citizenship (Erel, 2009: 7).

The theory by Erel (2009) complies with the three steps of integration emphasised by Christensen (2006). It will therefore offer a valuable tool to analyse the narratives of the women in this study and how they use and transform their positions in Society. Erel (2009) emphasises that by reviewing the three moments of migrant women's practice of citizenship enables an understanding of the multi-identifications the women create. Furthermore, by allowing us to understand the multiple dimensions the women may engage and identify with, discourses on women with ethnic minority backgrounds are contested. These perceptions can be altered and create an understanding of how the women become resourceful and transformative. Hence, the theory offers important analytical elements to the findings of this project (ibid).

5.4 The Struggle for Recognition

This part of the chapter engages with Axel Honneth's theory *The Struggle for Recognition* (2006). Honneth (2006) believes that identity cannot exist without recognition, thus sharing the same foundational belief which has inspired Jenkins (2003) in his work. Honneth (2006) engages with societal formalities that presuppose individual self-realisation, seen from observable and existing social phenomena. Thus, seen from a normative perspective of society and the individuals within. The theory is not only involved with an individual dimension, but as well as a social one. Honneth (2006) believes that individuals can only become socially integrated by receiving and conferring recognition, and by recognising that rights and obligations are mutually connected. This means that society can only be successful if it accepts that recognition should be organised in a matter that will benefit the individual's positive development. Honneth (2006) describes three mutually dependent spheres in which recognition takes place. The three spheres are necessary for social integration and the subject's positive meeting with society.

1. *The private sphere* consists of our personal network such as friends and family, who build one's fundamental confidence. Receiving emotional recognition helps the subject to express and respect themselves and engage in close and social relations. Therefore, recognition in this sphere is the premise for the individual to engage in intersubjective relationships and to understand the importance of mutually recognising relations. Thus, emotional recognition creates an understanding and self-confidence that is the foundation for the subject to enter the two following spheres.

2. *The legal sphere* consists of a common respect given in the form of rights which creates a type of self-confidence as a citizen. By receiving positive rights in society, such as access to

well-fare, the subject can see themselves as an equal member of society. Recognition of rights therefore secures the subject's ability to achieve their autonomy, demanding the subject to see themselves as a moral person who can engage in the public domain.

3. *The solidarity sphere*, consists of cultural, political, and work communities that the individual identifies with, and in which norms and values are shared. Being recognised within this sphere for their personal contribution, and as being a unique part of the respective group, can create a foundational self-worth within the subject. By participating they are also recognized as contributing to the (positive) reproduction of society. Thus, this sphere is involved with the subject developing a self-worth and appreciation related to being a part of a solidaric community. This sphere both contains emotions, identity and belonging such as in the first sphere, as well as common sense, such as in the second.

Honneth (2006)

According to Honneth (2006) the three spheres also function as integration components. As explained, recognition within the three spheres builds the foundation for a successful and well-integrated society. This will only exist if the State recognises and integrates the values, skills, and positive actions of its citizens. If not recognized, the subject risks losing their self-confidence, which is needed for their positive development. The lack of recognition may happen in the form of violations within one or more of the three spheres, which may entail that the subject will start struggling to obtain recognition. This can result in the development of subcultures, in which the subject identifies with other subjects who are not recognized by society, and with whom they can challenge a public discourse (ibid).

5.5. Summary of the Theoretical Framework

This chapter has introduced four theories each of which are engaged within the field of identity. Each theory contributes with important tools to engage with the empirical findings of this present thesis. The theory of Social Identity by Jenkins (2003) will help contribute to the understanding of how the women's selves have developed through life and in interactions with society; the theory of Social Identity and In-group Competition by Tajfel and Turner (1979) will furthermore contribute to this with an analytical tool to study how individuals develop their identity in group settings and create individual and collective mobility. The theory of Erel (2009) creates an understanding of how self-reflection in the context of being a minority person motivates individuals to negotiate felt discourses.

The three theories have in common that they all presuppose that identity development demands societal recognition, why the fourth theory by Honneth (2006) creates a framework to analyse in different spheres how the women have or have not received recognition and how it affects their self.

6. ANALYSIS

This chapter follows the guidelines of the IPA developed by Smith & Osborn (2003) presented in the methodological chapter. At first the findings of the analysis are illustrated in table 1. If a participant has mentioned a theme, it will be marked by an X under the respective name. All quotations are translated from Danish to English and original transcripts can be found in appendices B (Maria, pp. 63-72), C (Olivia, pp. 72-80) and D (Nadia, pp. 80-89). Woman 1, 2 and 3, are references to Neighbourhood Mothers met at the Female cafés. These conversations and observations are found in appendix E (pp. 90-93).

Thematic overview							
Super-ordinate Themes	Sub-ordinate Themes	Maria	Nadia	Olivia	Woman 1	Woman 2	Woman 3
1. Integration and Belonging							
	Multicultural barriers to society	x	x	x	x		
	Own experience with the Danish Society	x	x	x			
	Motherhood		x	x			
	The feeling of importance	x	x	x	x		x
2. Self-Development and Identity							
	Career/ Expanding Ideas and Social Network	x	x	x		x	
	Recognition	x	x	x			
	Personal Growth		x	x		x	
3. Background and Personal Desire to help							
	Childhood Experiences	x	x				
	Culture	x	x	x	x		
	Negotiate Perceptions	x	x	x			

Table 1 : Super- and Subordinate Themes

The chapter is divided into three parts structured as in the order of the secondary research questions and compliant to the superordinate themes. The first part is engaged with identity development and recognition and applies the theories by Jenkins (2003) and Honneth (2006). The second part is involved with the importance of group identification and the feeling of belonging built on the theory of Tajfel and Turner (1979). The third part involves the theory of migrant women transforming discourses of citizenship by Erel (2009) and includes the concept of care and negotiation of gendered norms. The theories are chosen as the women emphasise their reflections on how their pasts have

affected their present lives, how they have felt understood by being part of a collective, and through their work have experienced recognition in society and by other women whom they identify with. As the themes shown in table 1 are somehow interconnected, they may recur throughout the analysis. Following the principles of the IPA, every section of the analysis does not demand all three participants' answers, as they will only be included if validated by their responses. The subsequent concluding chapter revolves around the main question this thesis tries to answer of what has motivated the women to engage in the Programme, and if something in the meeting with the Danish society has affected this decision. None of the participants have explicitly claimed that the reason for becoming a Neighbourhood Mother was due to their meeting with the Danish society. However, the mentioning of the Danish culture as being different from their culture of origin was mentioned as an element of curiosity, and as a barrier for the women they engage with during their volunteer work. It is also a barrier which they themselves have encountered in different ways. As the women have all experienced the feeling of being a stranger in different realms of society, they feel their work as Neighbourhood Mothers are both necessary and important for their mentee's integration, and as well for their own self-confidence and recognition. Hence, their meeting with society is necessarily a crucial factor for their engagement in the Programme, and a factor of their present mentality and self-development. The chapter will analyse different elements of how their process of identity development, recognition and belonging plays a vital role for their current lives. Furthermore, how they have managed to negotiate their positions in the collectives in which they identify as belonging to, as well in a broader sense of society. There is evidence in the findings of how the women experience their work as important for themselves, and for the women they mentor's integration. Thus, they feel that they contribute positively to society. Furthermore, there is a strong element of care in the participants' motivations to join the programme, and how these caring traits are connected to their shared identity as mothers, both between the Neighbourhood Mothers and between them and the women they mentor. Hence, the included theories are connected to the findings of the data and will be thoroughly described throughout the chapter.

6.1 PART 1) IDENTITY: The Past in the Present and the importance of Recognition. *How has the Women's engagement in the Programme affected their self-perceptions and roles as citizens?*

All three participants emphasised how their own drive and curiosity was factors that encouraged them to participate in the Neighbourhood Mothers. These motivations can be seen in perspective to their meeting with the Danish society, as findings have shown that both the women's cultural backgrounds and the multicultural meeting with others, are equally relevant for their engagement with the

Programme. This complies with Jenkins' (2003: 3) process of identity, as the women understand themselves due to concepts such as (collective) history and culture, individual experiences and the context of their specific geographical location. Jenkins (2003, p. 51) explains how collective identity can be anchored in physical territory, such as the interlocuters' experience of finding their place in society leading them to join a community, that exists because of the members shared identity of identifying as citizens with ethnic minorities in the Danish society. The women found themselves in situations in which they had to create new forms of navigations. Thereby they have, and still do, engage in daily interactions forming their process of identity. In their individual processes, they found themselves as resourceful women with ethnic minority backgrounds, which led them to join a community, in which they found others with shared identifications. According to Jenkins (2003), this connection to a collective is important for the women's processes of identity. It is equally important for the collective, as the women form its identity. Consequently, their present identities as female mentors only exist because of this interaction, and contrariwise. The women are all in need of this interaction, as they exist in the same Danish context and in the same discourses which they try to negotiate, and thus share a collective identity. Therefore, as in line with Jenkins' (2003) theoretical understanding, the women establish meaning of themselves in their interaction, but they also negotiate the discourses and understandings of themselves and others in the collective. Jenkins explains that *“Group membership is important for individuals, as it offers a social identity and allows for self-evaluation. It creates a common representation of who you are and how to behave”* (Jenkins, 2003: p. 115). Hence, individual and collective identity is both about change (to negotiate the boundaries of identifications) as well as about roots (to identify with each other due to shared multicultural backgrounds), including the subjects' unique experiences (Jenkins, 2003: 7).

6.1.1 THE ORDERS OF IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION

The Individual Order

Maria is a notable example of how she through life has developed her identity. As Jenkins (2003: 3) explains, history and locality have profound influence in this. Maria experiences two localities; her youth in Nazareth and her life in Denmark. Throughout the interview there was a strong emphasis on how Maria's desire to help women developed in her young years in Palestine. This drive has existed throughout her education as a pedagogue and family therapist, as well as in her work as a Neighbourhood Mother. Maria helped her mother who could not read and write. She explained the impact it had for her:

“Maybe it was that little story, that I taught my mother to write and read, that made me want to help other women, to pave their way to something better, a better place. And create meaning to life, to their existence” (Maria, p. 64).

There was a clear emphasis on how Maria’s drive stems from her personality and her experiences as a child with helping her mother, as she furthermore stated that *“... I think, maybe because I at a time as a child had to shift roles with my mother...”* (Maria, p. 70), which led her to wanting to do a difference for other children. Maria also explains how they in her family shared with each other and remembers her childhood as safe. She says, *“I grew up in a family where you share everything”* (Maria, p. 63), a collective and empathetic element she emphasises, and which has manifested in her deeply caring approach to her work.

Nadia’s childhood experiences and family relations within a conservative family had created difficulties for her in social relations with ethnic Danes and institutions. Reflecting on the reason behind this, as she herself was born and raised in Copenhagen, she said that throughout her childhood her parents' traditional practices grew stronger, as they wanted to maintain their roots and culture. She explained that this meant, that they did not talk about love and feelings at home, and that the man was the head of the family. Affection was seen through practical actions or care about the material well-being of the children. She now wanted to break this barrier, which was deeply manifested in her identity, as she did not want to reproduce this behaviour in her children and herself (Nadia, Café 2). Nadia furthermore explained how she had to take care of her younger siblings throughout her childhood. When engaging in conversations at the end of our interview, she reflected upon how her responsibilities at a young age, may have been rooted in her as motherly instincts, and been a factor in why she saw the work with helping other women as an important part of her life. It was something she could relate to because of her experiences as a woman who had to take care of others and had to live up to traditional gendered norms through both her young and adult life. Meanwhile, in this interaction, she develops a new understanding of herself, and can re-define her identity and how the outside world perceive her.

The Interactionist Order

It is clear that it is important for the women to represent themselves to the outside world, as resourceful and independent active women. Through the interviews and visits at the four cafés the women put strong emphasis on their titles as Neighbourhood Mothers, and on being able to maintain their individual cultural backgrounds while being active participants in society. By society they are

demanding to be integrated to be accepted as citizens and have at a point in their lives (Maria and Olivia) gone through the steps of integration. Thus, are now considered as Danish citizens and accordingly are labelled by an official institution. At the same time, Society categorizes the women as being part of ethnic minorities. The women themselves identify with this group, however, can negotiate the category through their work, and push the boundary of what society may perceive the category as being constituted of. According to Jenkins, by identifying within the category they can negotiate which perceptions should be related. This is a long process in which the outside world, and the collective, must acknowledge the change of the boundaries of the category, as Jenkins explains with a reference to Barth (1969) “... *collective identities are generated in transactions and interactions, and are, potentially, flexible, situational and can be negotiated... groups identify themselves, and are identified by members of other groups... collective identification is naturally political*” (Jenkins, 2003, p. 134).

For Nadia, the experience with the Danish society must be seen in a different perspective. As Nadia grew up in Denmark, her ‘meeting’ refers to her growing up in a family who’s ties with the homeland grew more traditional over the years and how she has experienced difficulties in social relations. Nadia explained in our first meeting at café 2, that they did not talk about feelings, but showed their love in material and physical ways, such as with food. This has for Nadia created boundaries towards different institutional actors that she felt when she herself became a mother. When her son began kindergarten, she did not know how to interact with the caretakers, as small talk and talking to ‘authorities’, as she felt they were, was uncomfortable for her. She refers to this, as being a result of her background, and that it would negatively affect her son. She then started to reflect upon how she could change (Nadia, Café 2). This is an example of how Nadia, within an interaction with other individuals and institutional orders, tries to be accepted and hence, develops her own experience of breaking down a boundary of a category in which she felt she had been placed by others.

The Institutional Order

Nadia explained that she found understanding and connection to the women she met through the Programme. She had experienced that her former colleagues questioned her traditional practices and did not feel comfortable engaging in conversations about her private life. She furthermore explained that she finds herself in between two cultures. Nadia has grown up in Denmark and therefore does not feel as a stranger to for example the education system, but because she grew up in a diasporic home, she can understand the problems of the women she has mentored. She explains that in her culture it is not normal to tell other people about your problems, which also acts as a barrier in getting

social support or creating an independent life. As Nadia never felt fully understood by the Danish Society, such as in work settings, she had to find a new community when she faced a hard time: "I felt like I had never been able talk to them (the colleagues) and it gives (to be part of the Programme) kind of a collective feeling" (Nadia, p. 88). Finding the Programme Nadia has been able to utilise her dual ethnic identity in favour of helping the women, and at the same time learned more about her own strengths, and her thought systems resulting from her background. She has been able to do so by engaging in the Programme's education, by helping the women and in the meeting with the other Neighbourhood Mothers. Thus, Nadia finds herself as being identified as not belonging as a Danish citizen by her former colleagues as they do not share the same traditional values, such as in the domestic sphere:

"To them (The Neighbourhood Mothers) you do not have to say it. But if you said that to an ethnic Danish woman or colleague... it is me who cooks every day because my husband doesn't want to, they would think 'ok, why do you have to do that, why does he not do anything, it is not your duty'... they have a hard time understanding the cultural part ", (Nadia, p. 88).

Nadia's colleagues identify her as belonging to a category of an ethnic minority and categorise her as having non-Danish values, such as not accepting it to be normal to be the only cook at home, because of her gender. By finding the Neighbourhood Mothers, Nadia herself decides to be a part of a collective, as she identifies with the women and the values of the Programme. By joining the Programme, she can contest this perception, and try to negotiate the borders of the 'Danish' category and what it takes to be accepted and included.

6.1.2 THE SPHERES OF RECOGNITION

The Emotional Sphere

Nadia explains how she throughout her upbringing have experienced the embodiment of patriarchal norms. She was told that she was nothing without a man, that she was not allowed to cut her hair before marriage and that she had to take care of her younger siblings. These norms that she tried to escape when getting married, was reproduced:

"I had A violent marriage, mentally and physically, which I also experienced in my childhood... I fled my parents, because I was a Muslim girl you cannot just move to an apartment. I could only flee it by getting married and move on... my father has always told me, or the culture I come from, Muslim or Pakistani, you are told from childhood that you cannot function as woman without a man... for me

it was about fleeing. I wanted to get out of this and live my life... there were so many things I wished to do” (Nadia, p. 83).

Nadia had the strength to fight against both her childhood experiences as well as her marriage when facing violations. Violations can according to Honneth (2006) be translated into Nadia being mis-recognized, as she was not acknowledged as having equal rights because of her gender. Lack of self-confidence is according to Honneth (2006) a possible result of being mis-recognized. As Nadia possessed the courage to flee both her childhood home and her marriage, may be, that even though these norms had been normalised in her life, they had not taken away her self-confidence. She had always felt that these norms were not right and that they did not allow her to live a life she desired. When engaging in conversation with Nadia, she reflected on how she had to act like a mother towards her younger siblings, which may have built up her resistance and strength. This she could later use to accept how she did not feel appreciated, hence building a courage to start the process towards a ‘better life’ in which she could develop her autonomous self.

Maria explains how care and family are main priorities for her, stemming from her childhood, being brought up in an open and loving family. She explained that her parents enrolled the children in a Catholic school, even though the family was Muslim, because they knew the teachers were caring. Furthermore, that she willingly helped her mother as a child and how her father wished that all his children would go abroad to get an education: “... *We were a family who shared everything... They were open to choose a school with good education and caring and present teachers ... it was important for my father that we got an education,*” (Maria, p. 63-64). For Maria, it is clear how early in her life she has experienced emotional recognition, which has given her a foundational self-confidence. The care she has experienced suggests having been an internalised identification in her later activities such as her career and her role as the front woman of the local group of the Neighbourhood Mothers.

The Legal Sphere

” I have not experienced resistance from the Danish Society... but I have experienced people from other countries... they have some problems; it is the cultural difference. [I can] show how you can live in your own tradition, but still integrate. And that is the most important, to be part of a society” (Olivia, p. 76).

Olivia explains that she was introduced to the Programme by a family member of her husband. She explains that being a Neighbourhood Mother has supported her integration process, and that she is

now able to understand how others may experience difficulties. As she herself have experienced successful integration, she understands the value of becoming a part of society and is at the same time able to help other women achieve the same. Thus, according to Honneth's (2006) theoretical understanding she has not only been recognized as a formal citizen but finds recognition as a citizen through the Programme and is aware of the mutual obligations in society. Olivia claims that "... *The Neighbourhood Mothers' education should be a part of the language school for those newly arrived*", as for her it helped her getting to know the system, which she believes is "*a foundational basis*" (Olivia, p. 80). For her being a part of the Programme has been essential, and because of her own hardship as a newcomer, she wants to show an easier path towards integration for other women, as she explains "*It was my own experience when I just arrived in Denmark, that it was hard. It is hard for everyone*" (Olivia, p. 79). She wants to show the women she mentors, that if the Neighbourhood Mothers themselves have succeeded integrating into society, the women they mentor can as well. She feels that through the Programme, she can help other women by using her own experience with society and the knowledge she has gained during the education, so that the women learn to "*get integrated into the culture and the system, become good at integrating and then can use their time on something else*", (Olivia, p. 80). Hence, she sees a potential in the women that the Programme creates a place for her to help develop. She explains that she did not have any hostile experience with being a newcomer, and that her challenges were to understand the system and societal structures. As she was already studying and was welcomed by her husband's large family, she had the resources to reflect on the fact that her lack of knowledge about the system was her only barrier to integrate and become recognized in society. Hence, she sees a value in engaging with the Programme, to help break the boundaries to society for other women. Furthermore, Olivia stated how "*Us who just came to Denmark have a hard time understanding how it works, we as multicultural people have another knowledge about authorities and the system*" (Olivia, p. 72). Olivia and woman 1 discussed these barriers at café 1; that cultures are different in each society, and hence how you approach authorities. They argued that the power balance is flatter in Denmark than they have experienced in other places, which impacts their ability to engage in everyday conversations with authorities. This was as well mentioned by Nadia at the second café. She had not known how to talk with the people working in her son's day care and confirmed that other women shared the same experience. However, through learning how to navigate society, they can see themselves as equal citizens, possessing the same rights as others. Acquiring this, is according to Honneth (2006) to recognize oneself as a moral being who can engage in society.

The Solidarity Sphere

Becoming a Neighbourhood Mother is by essence a recognition, as the women are often recommended by others who are involved with the Programme. Additionally, Maria would always motivate that everyone presented themselves at the Female cafés. This created a safe space, in which there was a clear atmosphere of recognition among the women. When engaging in conversations with Maria, she would often pick out unique traits of each of the women, which was then returned by the women. Maria expressed how she saw the Neighbourhood Mothers as a space in which no idea was impossible, and in “*which everyone is valuable*” (Maria, p. 68). The women can thus be seen as creating a solidaric and safe space in which they can unfold their ideas and gain confidence. According to Honneth (2006) and Christensen (2006) this kind of space can develop the women's confidence and create a motivation to engage in other activities, communities, and social relations. Examples of this are Maria who after noticing her success with the Neighbourhood Mothers started a café for girls with an ethnic minority background, and Olivia who felt recognized as she in collaboration with the Programme planned a trip to a museum. She felt listened to and felt that she contributed positively to the women’s learning experience. Additionally, Olivia proudly tells of encountering the mayor:” *I was presented to (The Mayor) as a Neighbourhood Mother. And to be a Neighbourhood Mother is a giant plus, because everyone has an ethnic minority background,*” (Olivia, p. 74). Not only does she feel personally recognized, both by representing the Programme and for her personal contributions, but as well, that by stating the mutual ethnicities of the women, she can create a focus on how they contribute to the positive development of society.

Maria explains how she has experienced recognition in diverse ways throughout her career and work as a volunteer. This recognition is both material in terms of being a nominee for a fire soul prize by the ministry of integration, and by being recognized for her personality and creative contributions. Maria feels her volunteer work has contributed to gaining a network by whom she feels recognized for her opinions and work for society: “*I have an enormous network, and today I am known in the whole city. I think it is few people, who do not know who I am and what I stand for...*” (Maria, p. 67). Maria goes on to explain that she feels appreciated not only for the latter, but also because she acknowledges other people's contributions: “*It is a feeling of being valuable, and everyone is valuable, because you have an opinion about something*” (Maria, p. 68). In Maria's answers it is clear how the felt recognition has given her a sense of self confidence, and a drive towards continuing her work with the Programme.

Nadia grew up in Copenhagen but had never felt completely as a part of the Danish society. She felt that her background had not been recognized in work settings in which she was surrounded by ethnic Danes, as she says: “*There is so much from my past that I cannot talk to them about*”, (Nadia, p. 88). However, she explains how she finds comfort in her friends who share the same background as non-ethnic Danes. Here, she feels understood and recognized, which makes her not only gain confidence in the emotional sphere but find solidaric recognition as well. She also finds recognition in the meeting with the other women in the Female café. When reflecting upon herself, before she went through her personal development related to her participation in the Programme, she said:

“I definitely think that when I was young and had a child and the Neighbourhood Mothers had existed, that even though I was born here, I would have felt safer with them than with my colleagues... it is the recognisability” (Nadia, p. 88-89).

For Nadia it is clear how finding and being accepted by people whom she can identify with has created a safe space, and a confidence in her. She has allowed herself to take time to reflect upon how her background and families’ culture have formed her to react. She can translate this into a strength she can now use to help herself and other women. She emphasises that she would not have gone through this process without this space and without the Programmes' education. Here, she felt appreciated, understood, and saw herself as a valuable member. According to the theory by Honneth (2006) this proves that Nadia finds recognition. She can form a new self-confidence and is able to contribute to a positive development of society.

6.1.3 Summary of Part 1

This first part of the analysis sought to answer the question *How has the women's engagement in the Programme affected their own self-perceptions and roles as citizens?* Findings have shown that the women have gone through individual processes, all with an aim and will to help other women, whom they can identify with. For Maria and Nadia, there is an emphasis on childhood experiences as motivations. For Maria, this manifests in how family has always mattered and how she comes from a supportive background. Hence from childhood she has received emotional recognition. This has been an integral part of her identity, and as she explains, her encounters with society have developed the self-confidence she already possessed. This self-esteem has furthermore been enhanced by being recognized in group settings. For Nadia, her childhood experiences do not tell of the same emotional recognition. However, through her work within a community in which she found safety to express

herself and her eagerness to help women with similar experiences, she has found solidaric recognition to develop her self-esteem.

6.2 PART 2) COMMUNITY AND THE FEELING OF BELONGING. The Process of Social Identity in Group Comparisons: *How does identifying with a community affect the Women's feeling of belonging in a Danish context?*

1. Social Mobility

A clear characteristic when talking to the participants of this study is that they want to be seen as resourceful and successful women. They do not want to be perceived as passive and non-integrated, as they all emphasise their strong personal motivation to help other women, and to learn more about themselves through this process.

Olivia emphasises how the Programme has developed her capacity in relation to her career, which she has not gained through her university education. She states: *“The Neighbourhood Mothers education is like a small section of the social workers education. It is always related to cases where you can help”* (Olivia, p. 79). She was accepted to the Programme shortly after her arrival and felt that it would benefit her integration and help her being accepted to university. Olivia furthermore explains how her own background and ability to speak Russian, parallel to her involvement with the Neighbourhood Mothers has created the opportunity for her to get involved with the integration of the newly arrived Ukrainian refugees:

“I can help the Ukrainian refugees... the tasks an integration department does, I can solve these tasks. So, these three years, I have learned a lot, it is a great experience... and with that experience it is good to apply for jobs within integration departments, municipalities, with refugees... ”, (Olivia, p. 78).

This she emphasised as an opportunity the Neighbourhood Mothers had created as she has not only learned about the Danish system but has expanded her network and knowledge upon which departments she can help, and herself seek support by. As her formal education is within finance, she can combine it with the experience and knowledge gained in the Programme. She explains how this combination is not only satisfying her curiosity and drive towards helping other women, and society, but also how she has increased her social mobility, by expanding her competencies.

Nadia also had a formal education at the time she joined the Programme. However, as she was unemployed, she felt that it was time to do something new, as she did not want to be perceived as passive. Furthermore, she felt a distance from the Danish system due to her ethnic background. She

explained how the Programme could help her with possibilities to create a better future and reach possible career goals:

“It was something I could use to develop myself, in case I had to work more with women with an ethnic minority background. So not just learning about structures, but learning about society in general, and people” (Nadia, p. 84).

Maria arrived in Denmark 40 years ago and settled in the same city as she now resides in. Initially, she lived with her sister and brother-in-law. However, she did not emphasise this as a strong factor in her process to become integrated. Instead, Maria placed a strong emphasis on the local library as a crucial factor in her process of integration. Maria said that she enrolled in language school, but as the other students also did not speak the language, she felt that she had to do more to learn. In her free time, she therefore spent a lot of time at the library which had a strong impact on her:

“I have been putting a lot of effort into reflecting on my experience as a newcomer, and what was effective for me as a new person in Denmark. And that was the library... And later after some years, I thought that I should give some in return” (Maria, p. 69).

Maria’s drive towards the library furthermore developed, as she felt lonely at the time of her arrival and longed for interactions with other people, hence she used it as a place to create mobility. She emphasised the importance of the library as a kind of gatekeeper into society, helping her supplement the strength of her own curiosity and drive to help other women. As is clear through the analysis, the safe space of engaging with women and her own creativity is important for Maria. She has used her own will and successful encounters to build a recognized career for herself. A clear motivating factor in Maria’s process of mobility is seeing herself as active and curious, which has moved herself away from being perceived with negative connotations belonging to the group in she identifies with. Hence, it has motivated her to achieve upwards mobility in terms of her work and as a role model for other women with an ethnic minority background.

2. Social Creativity

2.1 Comparing the In-group to the Out-group in a new dimension

The Neighbourhood Mothers is a foundation for women to create a network and become active citizens. They believe that the women should become active citizens, such as they see the rest of society. Being active citizens, may not be something the women as a group think they can compare with, and therefore engage with the Programme. The Programme, though, builds a foundation for the

women to meet and engage with each other. In here, they can create a new type of network-based group, in which they can show the outside world that they are active, can create events and develop their citizen skills. This can be argued to be a new dimension of citizenship: a group which mobilises women, who may have been perceived as passive. This is valuable for society as the group engages with principles such as active citizenship. It is also valuable seen in relation to the State's integration programme, as the women develop language and societal skills, as well as participate in volunteer events. Hence, participation in the civil society can move them closer to being able to share similar identifications with ethnic Danes.

2.2 Changing former negative values assigned to the In-group, into positive attributes.

The participants of this study share that they do not identify as ethnic Danes. Most explicitly, Nadia, who was born in Copenhagen, share her feelings associated to identifying as a Muslim. She does have positive experiences, however, her reason to join the Neighbourhood Mothers was that she experienced growing up in a conservative home, in which she was told that a woman was nothing without a man (Naida, p. 84 and Café 2). Early it was clear for her, that she did not agree with this, and fled her family home to get married. However, she experienced a reproduction of the patriarchal norms, and got divorced. Nadia went through a time of reflection and had to build up her strength. She kept believing that it was right to continue building up her own identity as a woman and showing the world that not only could she take care of herself, but at the same time, she could help others. Nadia actively rejects the norms which she was born into, and actively tries to reverse related negative connotations, such as the woman being nothing without a man. By engaging in her mentoring work and helping other women with similar experiences, she tries to reverse the possible connotations of Muslim women being repressed by patriarchal norms, and how society might accept this as being the way all Muslim women are.

Maria's career is focused on helping isolated women and their families. Through an integration project she was a part of in the year 2012, they heard about the Neighbourhood Mothers. They decided to start a group in the city, in which Maria took the education. One of the reasons for this was that Maria felt that even though she could reach some women through her work as a family counsellor, she felt that there was a bigger need, as she said: *"I thought that by being a volunteer, maybe I could help more. It was not enough. I needed more,"* (Maria, p. 65). Through her work she has experienced a profound impact on the women and their process of integration, and states that:

“There was a great need for this. Not only for the women, but for the entire society... because if the mother does not know anything (about cultural activities) ... the mother and her children become isolated, the children become unadjusted, and become members of gangs. They become neglected by both society and the family,” (Maria, p. 67).

Maria tries to use the women’s roles as mothers, to create better ways for them to actively engage in society by being involved in their children's lives, in a way the Danish society perceive as valuable. Hence, she tries to change a negative public discourse around them and their families. She emphasised several times how this had a strong influence in her desire to help women, as helping them to be more independent and less isolated, would benefit their children and the whole the family:

“I could see that she was happy (The mother). And there was a pattern in this. I have later thought, that if you help the mothers in due time, it will not affect the children, and at the same time, if you help the mothers and the mothers are happy, strengthen themselves and can do a lot of things and get active, it will benefit the children”, (Maria, p. 70).

As she states, she does not think that the women will engage in this process by their own initiative, and therefore she finds early intervention extremely important. Furthermore, she emphasises the importance of a mother’s wellbeing in the process of strengthening her and the family. As Maria continuously highlights her drive to help families and women, there is a clear sign that she wants to change a discourse of the women being passive. This is a sign of Maria aiming to transform attributes assigned to them, such as passivity and neglect. Her feelings associated to her drive towards helping families, stems from own childhood which she now utilised as a skill in her work as a mentor:

“I think the Neighbourhood Mothers and myself can show them the way. We can tell them where to get help and knowledge, how to navigate society, get better and strengthen themselves. That will benefit their children and their families. And maybe because I as a child have shifted roles with my mother, I have thought that if you help the mothers in time, it does not harm the children. If you want to make a difference for the children, you must reach the whole family, especially the mothers”, (Maria, p. 70).

Maria does not only want to change negative perceptions and patterns but change the entire status of the women and their families, which will be the focus of the next section.

3. Social Competition

“The Neighbourhood Mothers is something really special, as it is the best integration intervention I have experienced, because we could finally get contact with that group who is most marginalised, or isolated, of whom everyone else have almost given up on” (Maria, p. 67),

Maria answered when asked what it means for her to be a Neighbourhood Mother. From her professional and volunteer experience involving families and children from an ethnic minority, she felt that people taking advantage of the different public and cultural activities were people with more resources. It was people who read the newspaper, knew the language and had the personal resources to create contact with others. It was not the women she now helps as a Neighbourhood Mother. Women who other authorities and initiatives, for example childhood nurses and mother-groups cannot reach. She states how the meeting with a mentor affect the women:

“If we talk to the mothers and she becomes happy, gets friends, and joins a community, she will get inputs to her life. She will get ideas, get inspiration and knowledge that will strengthen her as a mother and as a woman, as a citizen... That is an enormous win, and a great joy to think about how you can impact someone’s life in that way” (Maria, p. 67).

Maria tries to actively change the women's standpoints to lift the group in which she identifies herself as being a member of. She tries to activate their abilities by engaging in the women’s process to gain self-confidence and to become active members of society, which the State does not see as a possibility. Hence, she tries to activate the potential of the whole in-group to reach a higher social status.

Due to her own experience as a newcomer, Olivia acknowledges the problem of integration without help from the State or a network. She can offer significant help to the women to realize that they are equal members of society, and experience the same success as her:

” I am a Neighbourhood Mother, and continue to, because it helps you when you are new and arrive in Denmark, you can integrate faster and get to know the system. Firstly, you are not afraid to ask, if they have any problems or questions regarding their family, children, everything, and secondly... you do not know anyone, just as I did not at first, just for example going to the doctor, it can create problems if you don’t know the system” (Olivia, p. 74).

Olivia has Latvian descent, and wants to help the newly arrived Ukrainians, as she knows the Russian language. She says, *“I want to give this to them, it is a giant help” (Olivia, p. 76).* Olivia sees the

value in using her own skills in helping other people gain success, and hence sees a value in lifting the status of the group with which she can identify. She furthermore explains how she sees a significant importance of her work for the individual women:

“I like to help other people, and I think what we do is effective help for those who need it. It might be lonely women who have questions. If the women are safer it may result in her being able to give more to society, and the children will become more social and active, and to society it is an enormous help... to open the barrier to society, which they move more into. Not only the women, but the children as well,” (Olivia, p. 75).

Olivia believes that she also creates valuable meaning for society as she promotes the integration process of the women, who can reach the status of being active citizens. Furthermore, she emphasises, as Maria and Nadia have, how they see the work they do to help the women, as an immense help to integrate the children into society.

Nadia shares the same opinion upon the importance of her work as a mentee and of her experience of joining a community: *“It was amazing to see so many women stand together who wish to make a difference,”* (Nadia, p. 84). The fact that the women are joined in their effort to help is important for Nadia, as she continues: *“It is hard to help women with an ethnic minority background, as helping them further into the system takes a lot of resources. Then it is easier to say, that they want to deport us, right?”* (Nadia, p. 84). Nadia emphasises how the Programme helps a group of women, who the State has given up on. It strengthens their competencies within integration, for them to stay in the country, and reach the status as formal citizens. Without mentioning if she feels excluded by the feeling of belonging in a precarious and neglected group, she turns the lack of the State’s engagement into a motivation for her work as a mentor and to strengthen the group. For Nadia, this means that she can help remove a burden both from the women and the State, as she explains how it is easier for the state to say:

“ “Oh, well, we have this group of people and such things”, instead of actually starting to work with these people, or women... it takes a lot of resources... to help a woman who lives with a man who is violent... it is deep in her roots... we have to go in and help her with that, and I don’t think a lot of people will be allowed by her to do it” (Nadia, p. 84).

As Nadia explains, she does not think the State will, or can, help the women in the right manner. By using her own background, she tries to reach the women with empathy, and thereby tries to provide

the help and understanding they need. She says that even though she does not believe that the Neighbourhood Mothers can change the world for the women, they can still “*Help them slowly and steadily... and open up new perspectives,*” (Nadia, p. 85). The new perspectives Nadia is talking about, refers to how the women need to realise their self-worth. Yet, as Nadia emphasises, this presupposes that the women need their own space to self-reflect, which is a possible boundary. However, even though Nadia does not think that she can necessarily change the women’s situations, she feels that she can at least try to help the women by providing a new perspective. She says she can do this due to her own multicultural background, as she knows that it is not the norm in her Muslim background. Still, when creating her own independent life, she found that it is necessary to obtain self-respect to create a better life, and that it is possible.

“I think self-reflection is a great factor in this (to be a part of the Programme) and even though I was born here... It gave me so much, and it gave me an even greater understanding of myself... It has helped me in so many ways,” (Nadia, p. 83),

Nadia responded when asked what it means for her to have been a part of the Programme, confirming how it had a significant importance in her self-development. This may be the reason why she believes that it is possible for the women to achieve the same self-respect, and that they can be a part of changing external perceptions of the in-group and create better futures for themselves.

6.2.1 Summary of Part 2

This second part of the analysis has engaged with the question of *How identifying with a community affects the women's feeling of belonging*. Through the three parts of in-group competition and self-categorization the women engage in a process of self-development that enhances their self-confidence and status as citizens in society. The women at first engage in the process of becoming independent actors in their own strengthening of capacities, as they all aim to be seen as active and resourceful. This shows a tendency of them moving away from negative traits associated with their in-group. By being involved with the Neighbourhood Mothers, the women publicly try to negotiate discourses for them to be perceived as resourceful members of society who have succeeded in integration and are able to contribute as citizens. Being mentors, is as well a sign of them aiming to lift the status of the whole in-group of ethnic minority women, as they try to activate the women's individual processes and capacities, which the findings indicate as successful. The women do not only enhance their feeling of belonging to society, by being accepted as active citizens, but also at the same time create a feeling of belonging in their in-group, by collectively aiming for a higher position in society.

6.3 PART 3) WOMEN AS ACTIVE AGENTS IN NEGOTIATING DISCOURSES: *How do the Women use their roles within gender and ethnicity to negotiate discourses?*

Erel (2009) explains how women with an ethnic minority background go through three moments of practising citizenship. These moments can be perceived as stages of self-recognition which are the focus of this present section.

1. Moment

Maria's feelings associated with being a newcomer and her drive to learn about her new possibilities, can be seen in relation to the first moment of citizenship by Erel (2009). Maria created knowledge about how to find her place in society and became aware of her own eagerness towards learning the language and observing the people around her. She is now aware of how this has helped her, and therefore how she wants to give something back. Hence, she positions herself as active and moves towards being aware of and involved in her local community and its values. She does this as she found herself in an outside position in society, with an internal different cultural identity. This becomes known as she explains her confusion at the time of her being a newcomer. She saw couples showing public affection, and experienced that her neighbour at first did not want to talk with her or let her babysit her children, to which she says, "*I had not experienced that in my country*" (Maria, pp. 71-72). Maria became aware, that she was different. She wanted to change her perception of the first affair and change the woman's perspective in the second, so to see her as a thoughtful woman, who possesses caring abilities. For Maria, she uses care in all spheres of her work, both voluntary and professional, and finds her work important. This way of positioning herself can be a way to show the outside world how she is a caring and important citizen. It is creating a path for her, that will not only result in social mobility in line with Tajfel and Turner (1979) but will make her able to negotiate women with an ethnic minority's role as important citizens who make societal change.

Nadia has throughout her life been aware of how she felt different from other Danish citizens, such as her colleagues, who did not share her cultural background. She only found a safe space to express her subjectivity when joining the Neighbourhood Mothers, whom she feels have a cultural understanding of her:

"I think that when I was young and had a child, and the Neighbourhood Mothers had existed, that even though I was born and raised here I would feel safer in their presence back then, than I would have with my colleagues. It is kind of crazy, but it was that feeling I had. Because when you do not feel safe and you are vulnerable it is simply hard to be open to... another nationality, or people with

another inheritance than those from your own background, because there are things you do not have to explain” (Nadia, p. 89).

Nadia has constructed a deep knowledge of her own position in society. By leaving her childhood home and getting married, she started to negotiate this position, as she wanted to actively take part in her own life decisions and challenge the patriarchal norms, she was living in. However, she ended up getting divorced, as she had experienced the norms being reproduced. Before joining the Programme Nadia described herself as being shy and just as the women has mentored, did not know how to verbalise her needs. She explained that this affected her feelings associated with being a mother, as she remembers an episode in her son's kindergarten: *“I remember he held me tight. He did not feel safe either, because his mother did not feel safe... that episode is stuck deeply within me,”* (Nadia, p. 86). As she joined the Neighbourhood Mothers, she found a place in which she could learn more about the journey of being active and challenge repressing norms. She also found a space in which she could actively practise constituting a new self, outside of her former oppressive experiences, which moves her into stage 1.2 of the first moment of practising citizenship (Erel, 2011). She explains how in the period of engaging in the Programme, she developed a knowledge of why she had acted and thought as she did. Throughout the different modules of the Programmes' education, she had obtained means to change her patterns, and as well obtained self-confidence by helping other women, by using her own experiences.

2. Moment

This second moment is clear when listening to Maria's story of her time in Denmark. She promptly felt that she should give something back to the city, as it had helped her integrate into society. She was a member of the integration council and founded the local Neighbourhood Mothers group. Maria later, already being a Neighbourhood Mother in collaboration with the library, decided to create a club for girls, who were not allowed to participate in after school activities. She describes the library as a place, where she had always been able to have a physical base to *“...Develop ideas, ask for help or a place that creates the physical boundaries to a project”* (Maria, p. 70). As Maria decided to both become a Neighbourhood Mother, and to create a club for girls, outside of her other work within integration, proves how she does not only realise her own position as a former outsider, but goes beyond and is explicit about her values and opinions in the public room. She tries to create the possibility for other women and girls whom she identifies with to do the same. Especially in the case of her participation in the local Integration Council, it is explicit that she wants to make a difference, and as well build bridges for people in society to meet. The same thing counts for her partaking in the

Neighbourhood Mothers, as by supporting this, she expresses both care, interest in culture, and that she wants to bridge the gap between the women and society. The latter additionally counts for the other participants of the study. When asked if being a part of the Programme has affected her, Maria answered:

“It has. Every time I meet a woman and listen to her story, gain her trust, and get to know her... it really enriches my life... I don’t feel like a stranger anymore... When I meet women and they join this community, I get new knowledge and new experiences, it opens doors, because people are different... and I am open to more ideas... I get motivated when I hear the women’s questions, ideas, input” (Maria, p. 68).

Maria feels that it has a personal meaning for her to help women, as it has also helped her to be open minded, to know about other cultures and has created a new network for her. Maria explains how being able to continue working in the field she desires (families of migrants), has furthermore given her a feeling of importance. She is now able to do it as a volunteer, reaching more isolated women, which she was not able to do through her employment. As she is also a member of the local Integration Council, she has developed an identity which she feels that everyone in her city knows about. Doing this is what Erel (2011) defines as succeeding in negotiating standpoints in a public setting.

Nadia describes how even though the women connect around their shared identification as mothers, they do not open about the hardships they encounter: *“I think that motherhood is connecting the women. However, I do not think that you talk about it. You want to show you from your best side... Vulnerability is not something you hear about”* (Nadia, p. 85). However, during her education as a Neighbourhood Mother, she realised how being vulnerable and voicing her needs and subjectivity in social relations, have helped not only herself, but also her children and people around her. She can show them, that she has the strength to stand up for herself: *“They watch me and see that I know how to say no. That I do not want to do something... also towards my parents, siblings and my network, they hear me standing up for myself... It helps them”* (Nadia, p. 85). She states, that if she can help the women with what she has learned to do herself, it will make a difference for their children, just as she has seen in her own, due to her own development related to her volunteer work:

“I have been through much in my life, and I can see how my oldest son is... and I can see in my youngest son, that because he was three when I got divorced and I have given him space to develop himself... and I worked intensely on myself... I can feel they are different. He (the youngest) has another approach to life” (Nadia, p. 87).

Nadia explained that during the first years of her first son's life, she was still in her marriage, in which she did not know how to stand up for herself. She explained that this had a negative effect on her eldest son. She does not see this in the younger, whom she had years later, and who grew up in a period in which she had left the husband and had time to reflect upon herself and her challenges.

Another reason to why Nadia learned to voice her subjectivities, is that she felt understood in the community of the Neighbourhood Mothers. She describes it as safe and felt that because there was a shared fundamental understanding of lived realities, the community created a sense of home:

“I think I am more western than many Muslim women, but we have something in common all of us. We have the same background. We have the same experiences, so I think it is so nice to be in this kind of network... you feel more home in some way. They know what my background is, and I know theirs” (Nadia, p. 88).

As Nadia grew independent after her divorce, she explained, that because of their shared cultural understandings, she felt that she could help the women in a constructive way. As she herself had been able to create what she saw as a desirable life, she wanted to show the women, that they can achieve the same.

3. Moment

The participants of this study are all formally recognised as Danish citizens. However, it is still relevant to analyse the experienced processes of the women becoming active and rights claiming citizens. Both Olivia and Nadia expressed complications when learning the structure of the State, as well as the cultural difference they experienced in the meeting with authorities and caretakers in their children's institutions. To become a right claiming citizen, presuppose that a person must be aware of their rights and know which authorities who are responsible. Through their education, they both emphasise that they now possess this knowledge on such a level that Olivia claims that the Neighbourhood Mothers' education should be a part of a language programme for everyone (Olivia, p. 80). Additionally, Nadia's meeting with an institution leader, who helped her get her son diagnosed, is an example of how Nadia becoming a subject with agency in the public room, has helped her claim her rights as a citizen. Nadia did not experience that she had access to claiming her right to get her son diagnosed before engaging in the Programme: *“I had fought the system for about five years, and I just could not get anywhere”* (Nadia, p. 83). Another element of this example is how Nadia shows her care through her work and how she actively engages in the social well-being of her child. This public act of Motherhood is according to research by Erel (2011), helping Nadia to become a citizen

in its normative understanding, as she uses her rights by helping her child. Furthermore, according to Erel (2011) the active practice of Motherhood can create intergenerational change, as the child will not only belong to the respective ethnical background but challenge the boundaries of the national, which is what Nadia aims to do by not wanting to reproduce repressive practices in her sons, and actively tries to give her son the same possibilities as other children.

Olivia actively uses her role as a mother, by helping other women. For her motherhood is part of her identity and does not only apply to her own children. She actively tries to include other mothers, as she explains:

“In my daughter’s class I see it right away, and that is because I am a Neighbourhood Mother, if there is someone, or one with an ethnic background, I try to teach them to make playdates and integrate them... I ask them one more time... in that way I try to support them”, (Olivia p. 78).

Olivia goes beyond what the normative definition of a mother is, as she uses her own role to help integrate other women. Thus, she actively helps the women tear down their boundaries to society and enables them to use their rights as citizens. According to Erel and Reynold (2018) the mother can, by becoming an active citizen, negotiate what it means one, and by that break the boundary to society, which is exactly what Olivia does. She states that her ability to do this, is because being a Neighbourhood Mother has built up her self-esteem in the meeting with others *“I am not shy, I become active... become open”* (Olivia, p. 75). For Olivia it is also clear how her life revolves around her children, when describing her day-to-day life. The children were also a motivating factor, both in her own process of integration and her learning process as a mentor, as she says: *“If you know the system it is easier... it is so much about the children, who you need to contact, if you need help, have problems with school or kindergarten”*, (Olivia, p. 72). She says that even though she comes from a family who is active and open, being a part of the Programme and learning how to approach authorities and navigating the system has helped her in her daily life. Additionally, she states that mothers are the principal element in a family and wants to use her own experience and knowledge to help women who are isolated, through her role as a mentor. She not only sees it as a key factor in the women’s process to engage in society, but as benefiting the children:

“I have always said that women equal the children, and the children are the future, and the more they become social, the more they become open to society and have opportunities within society... it has the effect that I do not get shy, I become active... I know that the other Neighbourhood Mothers’ children can withdraw... everyone can learn to move forward “, (Olivia, p. 72).

6.3.1 Summary of Part 3

This latter part of the analysis has answered the question of *How the women use their roles within gender and ethnicity in negotiating felt discourses*. The section has created an understanding of how the women through their process of integration and engagement with the Neighbourhood Mothers have been able to express and negotiate their dual identities in a public setting. They have explained how the process of self-development and finding their own personal competencies, has created the opportunity to position themselves as active women, who are able to participate in negotiating negative perceptions about the collective in which they identify. They use their roles as mothers and the notion of care to engage in society as valuable and important citizens and workers. Thus, they can create positive perceptions in society of women with ethnic minority backgrounds, as role models and active rights claiming citizens.

7. CONCLUSION

This thesis has investigated the research question: *What has motivated a group of Women with ethnic minority backgrounds to become members of The Neighbourhood Mothers Programme, and how has their meeting with the Danish Society influenced their decision?* The research has been conducted in accordance with PA and has applied the IPA developed by Smith and Osborne (2003). Data was conducted by three in-depth interviews with members of the integration initiative The Neighbourhood Mothers, as well as four visits to a local Female café. The theoretical framework derived from the interpretation of the empirical data and was constituted by The Social Identity Theory by Jenkins (2003), An integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict by Tajfel and Turner (1979), Migrant women Transforming Citizenship by Erel (2009) and The Struggle for Recognition by Honneth (2006). The findings illuminated that the women have different motivations to join the Programme, yet all share a desire to help women with whom they identify with. The three women have at some point felt different or estranged from the Danish culture and Society and have used the space of the Programme to find belonging and understanding, and as a safe foundation to engage in self-development. The women all actively engage in becoming active citizens and find recognition among each other. An overall emphasis was placed on care. Explicitly by being engaged with an organisation aimed to help mothers, they expressed themselves and their desire to help through care. In these actions they found recognition, and all emphasise how their self-confidence has grown the more they have been able to help the women and how they through this process have been able to reflect on themselves. By receiving recognition internally among the women, in themselves and as well as externally from authorities, they built confidence and strength to focus on their own social mobility, and at the same

time negotiate their positions in society, as women with ethnic minority backgrounds. This confidence is present in how the women emphasise their pride in being mentors, women, and supporters of themselves and each other. Hence, the findings show how the feeling of belonging with an in-group affects the women positively. The findings suggest that the women's different backgrounds and experiences with the Danish Society has an impact on their choices and actions through life. All three participants state how the Programme satisfies an eagerness to help, as well as a curiosity about themselves and others. They experience a space in which they feel safe and understood because of their shared multicultural backgrounds (Nadia) and a place in which no idea is shut down (Maria). Their work with the Programme has brought them into a political sphere, in which they work in an intersectional dimension of gender and ethnicity. In this, they emphasise the importance of mobilising the competencies of families through the development of the women's self-confidence and social capabilities. Their position in society is negotiated as the participants challenge perceptions of women as passive. Consequently, as Neighbourhood Mothers they have managed to obtain recognition as women, mentors and active citizens, have increased their social mobility and simultaneously negotiated stereotypical gendered and racial discourses.

Reflections

This thesis was formed by an interest in understanding how women with ethnic minority backgrounds develop a motivation to engage in volunteer work aimed at helping other women with similar backgrounds. I found that my caution for ethical research would be benefitted by engaging with the (I)PA, which allows the researcher to wonder and interpret the subject's meaning creations respectfully. I wanted to understand the women's personal narratives, and therefore did not initially know in which direction the study would develop. The (I)PA proved to benefit my interest, allowing for in-depth knowledge, in which I in collaboration with the interlocutors could interpret and develop new knowledge about their experiences as Neighbourhood Mothers. I argue, due to the richness and explicit descriptions found in the transcripts, that the chosen theories are suitable for the interpretations of the women's experiences, while I acknowledge that my position as a researcher has possibly implicated the findings in different directions than would have emerged with a different researcher, participants or methodology. In line with scholars in the field, I suggest further research be conducted to illuminate the great potential the women possess, as highlighted by the interlocutors of this study.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Interview Guide

Q1: *Can you tell me a bit about yourself and your background?*

Q2: *Can you tell me what a normal week looks like to you?*

Q3: *Can you tell me a bit about how you became involved with the Neighbourhood Mothers and what it means to you? (Prompts: network, your background's meaning)*

Q4: *Can you tell me about how being a Neighbourhood Mother has affected your life?*

Q5: *Has anything related to your experience with society prompted you to join the Neighbourhood Mothers?*

Q6: *Do you think your life would have been the same if you had not joined the Neighbourhood Mothers?*

Appendix B: Maria, April 28th, 2022. M: Maria, I: Interviewer

I: Til at starte med vil jeg høre om du vil fortælle mig lidt om dig selv og din baggrund, hvem du sådan er?

M: Ja det vil jeg gerne. Jamen jeg er oprindeligt fra Palæstina, Nazareth, for at være helt konkret. Nazareth det er jo en kendt by. Det er der hvor Jesus er født. Og jeg voksede op der i en muslimsk familie, en ret stor familie, jeg har gået i katolsk skole som barn, de første seks år har det været katolsk skole, hvor jeg blev undervist af nonner og præster selvom min familie var muslimer så var de åbne for at vi valgte en skole hvor der var god undervisning, hvor det var nærværende, omsorgsfulde nonner der har undervist mig. Jeg har haft, jeg er nummer ni i rækken, det var sige vi var 10 børn i familien, så jeg var nummer ni den sidste yngste, så jeg har været både lillesøster og storesøster og jeg har været meget, *jeg er vokset op i en stor familie hvor man deler alt med hinanden*, det var ikke noget med at man havde sit eget værelse, legetøj eller tøj, man brugte hvad der var. Vi havde lige til dagen og vejen. Så min familie var ikke rige, de var heller ikke fattige, men øh, vi kunne lige klare os. Så kom jeg til Danmark da jeg var 20 år gammel, fordi jeg gerne ville have en uddannelse. Og for

palæstinensere i Israel det var ret dyrt at få en uddannelse, og det havde min far ikke råd til. Så han, det blev muligt for mig at komme til Danmark fordi jeg havde nogle søskende der boede i Danmark før. Jeg havde en søster der har boet i dk en del år, før jeg kom til Danmark og var i gang med en medicin uddannelse, og blev læge i Danmark og det var os af samme årsag, at mine forældre kunne ikke, det var mest min far der kunne bane vejen for at ville vi have en uddannelse så måtte vi rejse så langt vi kan for at få den *og for min far var det rigtig vigtigt vi fik en uddannelse*. I modsætning til min mor var hjemmegående og havde ønsket at skulle have en uddannelse eller bare det at læse og skrive det kunne hun ikke, for det var mange år siden og dengang gik man, altså, gik man ikke i skole når man var kvinde, man gik hjemme og passede børn og hus. Så jeg kunne godt mærke på min mor at hun var frustreret over hun ikke fik en uddannelse og ikke kunne læse og skrive. Så på et tidspunkt bad hun mig om at lære hende alfabetet, det arabiske alfabet, og det gjorde jeg, det var hun glad for og det blev jeg også glad for. *Måske var det den lille historie, at jeg lærte min mor at skrive og læse, der gjorde at jeg gerne ville hjælpe andre kvinder med at bane vejen til noget bedre, et bedre sted, en bedre mening med livet, med tilværelsen*. Også samtidig med at min far har hele tiden bakket op om at min søster og jeg, og mine søskende i det hele taget vi skulle have en uddannelse. Min søster og jeg vi ville gerne have en uddannelse og så valgte vi at komme til Danmark og få en uddannelse. Mine forældres ønske var at vi skulle komme tilbage til Palæstina, det gjorde vi så ikke, vi valgte at blive.

I: Hvor mange er i så? Søskende i Danmark?

M: Jeg har to brødre og en søster. Jeg har mistet min ene bror som boede i Danmark i mange år. Han døde for et par år siden. Men så har jeg en bror og en søster i Danmark, så vi er tre søskende i Danmark. Så seks der bor i Palæstina. Og vi har rimelig god kontakt, de besøger mig og jeg besøger dem. Det er sådan lidt om min baggrund. Mit modersmål er arabisk, så når jeg hjælper bydelsmødre og kvinder, så er det primært arabisktalende, men jeg hjælper så andre kvinder hvor sprog ikke er en kæmpe barriere så må vi finde ud af hvordan kan vi kommunikere og hjælpe hinanden, eller invitere nogle i vores fællesskab, i vores fællesskab.

I: Hvor længe har du boet i Danmark nu?

M: Jeg har boet i Danmark i 40 år. Så jeg var 20 da jeg kom og nu er jeg lidt over 60 år.

I: Du fik ikke sagt hvilken uddannelse du har?

M: Jeg ville da jeg kom til Danmark, være sygeplejerske, men det kunne jeg ikke af forskellige grunde. Jeg skulle have erhvervs erfaring og tale flydende dansk og det kunne jeg ikke dengang, det er 40 år siden og der var det svært at komme ind på sygeplejerskolen. Men så valgte jeg at blive pædagog. Og har arbejdet en del år som pædagog. Og så valgte jeg at blive familierapeut og arbejdet en del med familie, i familiebehandling og som familiekonsulent. Og jeg har lige her fortiden, er jeg i gang med at lave en kontrakt med dansk flygtningehjælp, hvor jeg skal ansættes hos dansk flygtningehjælp som familiebehandler, og det er jeg meget glad for.

I: Det forstår jeg godt. Det køre lidt hen i det næste spørgsmål, hvor jeg vil spørge om, om du vil fortælle hvordan en normal ser ud for dig, hvad bruger du din tid på og hvad optager dig?

M: Ja altså, jeg har, der er næsten ikke to dage ens for mig, der er ikke så meget, det der samme trummerum, det er meget forskelligt fra dag til dag. Netop fordi jeg er meget optaget af at, altså nu har jeg lige fundet det rigtige, altså drømmejobbet og jeg har ønsket længe at være familiebehandler og dansk flygtningehjælp er lige præcis det sted jeg gerne vil arbejde for. Men jeg har arbejdet forskellige steder, både som sprogpædagog og støttepædagog, som ressourcepædagog i forskellige dagtilbud også har jeg arbejdet i nogle projekter og jeg har tit haft forskellige stillinger samtidig, dvs. så har jeg haft job som pædagogisk vejleder, som specialpædagogisk vejleder i Roskilde kommune samtidig med at jeg har været hjemmevejleder, familievejleder for flygtningefamilier i Roskilde, så jeg har arbejdet i mange forskellige indsatser, og har haft forskellige arbejdspladser, men mit hovedfokus har hele tiden været at hjælpe nye flygtninge, altså nyankomne flygtninge til Danmark. Så hver gang jeg har søgt et job sp skulle det være noget hvor jeg kunne bygge bro mellem det nye der kommer til Danmark og samfundet. Om det så er børn eller hele familien, eller det mest udsatte familier og børn, så har jeg hele tiden haft lyst til at det er der jeg skal bruge mine kompetencer og min faglighed og det sproglige go det lykkedes heldigvis, jeg har haft nogle fede stillinger rundt omkring i forskellige kommuner. Jeg har også haft lederjob på en sprogskole for flygtningekvinder. Og lavet masere forskellige projekter sammen med andre beboerprojekter, sundhedsplejersker-

I: Spændende. Så vil jeg høre om hvordan du kom ind og blev involveret med bydelsmødrene, og hvordan de passer ind og hvornår du fik øjnene op for dem.

M: Det fordi, da jeg arbejder som sprogpædagog, der arbejdede jeg mest med børn der skulle gøres klar til skolen, altså skole klar og parate til skolen. Og der har jeg oplevet - altså det var tosprogede børn og flygtningebørn jeg arbejdede med, der har jeg oplevet det at mødrene ikke var, ikke deltog i børnenes institutionsliv, eller ikke havde indblik i hvordan børnene, det så ikke alle, men der var en gruppe af dem som jeg tog mig særligt meget af der kom jeg nogle gange i hjemmet, fordi børnene kom ikke i institution, de var måske tilmeldte i institution, men de dukkede ikke op. Eller at børn der blev passede hjemme og ikke modtog sprogstimulering skulle gøres skole klar. Og det var en lovligt kommunen skulle tage hånd om de her bånd. Det blev en folkeskolelov, eller en paragraf om folkeskolen for en del år tilbage, at alle tosprogede børn skal lære dansk inden de starter i skole. Og jeg blev ansat i kommune og senere i kommune hvor jeg skulle vejlede og ansvarlig for stimulering og folkeskolelovens paragraf 11 og der skulle jeg have kontakt med de her børn og mig opleve at mødrene, at mange af de her mødre hvis børn ikke kom i institution var isolerede og ville gerne noget mere og vidste ikke hvordan- og en del af dem blev forsørget af deres mænd, dvs. at kommunen har ikke noget pligt overfor dem. De kommer ikke på sprogskole, medmindre de selv betaler og samtidig med at de skal passe børn har de ikke mulighed for at gå nogle steder, altså at have noget for sig selv. Det gjorde indtryk på mig. *Og så tænkte jeg at som frivillig kunne jeg måske bidrage på en eller anden måde. Godt nok kunne jeg motivere mødrene til at få børnene i institution og nogle mødre var med og kigge på når jeg arbejdede med at få børnene til at lære dansk, men det var ikke nok for mig,*

ikke tilstrækkeligt. Så samtidig sad jeg i integrationsrådet i kommune hvor jeg bor og i integrationsrådet rejste jeg spørgsmålet tit om, hvordan skal vi forholde os til isolerede kvinder som ikke har den her mulighed for at blive integreret og blive en del af samfundet. Så opdagede vi på et tidspunkt at der var det her bydelsmorprojekt der var starte i nordvest og det har man hentet fra Tyskland og så tænkte jeg at det må vi undersøge og høre mere om. Og så mødte vi dem fra nv, vi inviterede dem hertil og snakkede med dem, og i integrationsrådet blev vi enige om det projekt skal vi have. Så vi søgte integrationsministeriet om nogle penge, midler, til at rekruttere et hold, nogle kvinder og give dem et kursus. Fordi man skal have et kursus for at blive bydelsmor. Og det lykkedes. Og så fik vi uddannet i løbet af fem-seks år fik vi uddannet tre hold, i alt har vi 30 bydelsmødre i byen

I: Og du har også taget uddannelsen?

M: Jeg har også uddannelsen i landsforeningen for bydelsmødre. Og uddannelsen hedder, sådan hvor man bliver konsulent for bydelsmødre. Enten. Jeg har været koordinator for bydelsmødre, hvor jeg har rekrutteret og lavet kursusprogram, det er 14 moduler man skal igennem og skulle rekruttere både kvinder og finde undervisere og da det var afsluttet, uddannelsen, fik jeg selv et kursus hos landsforeningen, hvor bydelsmødrene kan få noget supervision, noget sparring med mig, hvis de har brug for nogen ting, hvis der er ting de ikke selv kan finde ud af, så kan de kontakte mig. Og senere hen, for to år siden blev vi til en forening i, hvor vi så kan søge tilskud fra kommune om til vores aktiviteter

I: Ja så er I er selvstændige?

M: Ja nu er vi en selvstændig forening. Hvor der er en bestyrelse, ligesom en anden forening, på lige fod med andre foreninger kommune, så vi har lokaler på det gamle posthus, som er frivillighus, også søger vi paragraf 18, alt frivilligt arbejde og en gang imellem søger vi andre fonde, i Danmark er der nogle andre fonde som vi søger en gang imellem.

I: Kan du huske hvornår i startede bydelsmødre i her?

M: Det startede første gang. Det er helt tilbage i 20110 eller 2010, fordi vi fik første hold i 2012 ca. 2 år efter første hold startede i nordvest. For jeg kan huske jeg var til integrationsprisuddelingen hvor første hold i Danmark fra nv var oppe på scenen, jeg ved ikke om de fik en pris, men de skulle faktisk fortælle om indsatsen og om det her initiativ som var rimelig nyt i Danmark og det var noget der gjorde stort indtryk på mange, på dem der var til stede til integrationsprisuddelingen og jeg var en af dem, sammen nogen fra integrationsrådet og da vi så de kvinder der stod der og var ret stolte over de gjorde noget, at de virkelig gjorde en forskel og kom med eksempler så kom vi tilbage og sagde at vi blev nødt til at have sådan et projekt og det har så kørt siden 2012.

I: Og nu er det over det hele

M: Ja det er 10 år siden og nu er der jo over 800 bydelsmødre i Danmark

I: Det er ret vildt. Nu bliver jeg interesseret. Det her integrationsråd, det er frivillige der sidder der fordi de har en interesse, en baggrund der giver mening?

M: Ja, integrationsrådet i byen har vi været 10 medlemmer fra forskellige lande, og vi er folkevalgt, dvs. der var valg ligesom til ungdomsrådet og seniorråder, grønt råd, alle de der råd man nu har i en kommune, så var vi valgt af borgere. Man skulle præsentere sig og borgeren skulle sætte kryds ved ens navn. Så det var megastort den gang der blev dannet et integrationsråd.

I: Sejt. Der er mange ting at spørge om. Du har været lidt inde på det men kan du uddybe lidt mere om din oplevelse af at være med, personlige oplevelser, erfaringer, følelser omkring at være med i bydelsmødrene og at arbejde med de andre bydelsmødre og kvinderne – hvad det betyder for dig

M: Ja men det betyder helt enormt meget. Det var en rejse hvor jeg har lært rigtig meget. Det har været hårdt i starten men jeg holdt fast at det var det rigtige og jeg kunne se, altså jeg er meget visionær og jeg kunne mærke at det var det rigtige og det var noget der var kæmpestort behov for. Og ikke kun for kvinderne selv, *men for hele samfundet. Så det var rigtig spændende og jeg har lært rigtig meget. Jeg har fået et kæmpestort netværk. Og i dag er jeg meget kendt i byen. Jeg tror det er meget få mennesker i byen der ikke ved hvem jeg er og hvad jeg står for.* Det er også fordi jeg har været meget aktiv i integrationsrådet og været forkvinde i integrationsrådet og så har jeg før bydelsmødrene været i multikulturel forening hvor jeg har kørt en forening hvor vi skulle have mennesker med forskellig kulturel baggrund til at mødes og lave nogle aktiviteter sammen og det har også kørt i ti år sideløbende med at jeg prøvede at få bydelsmødre projekt i gang i. Jamen os fordi hver gang vi har prøvet noget i multikulturel forening, så dem der kom der det var de ressourcestærke. Det var de mennesker der læste avisen, de lokalblade som er opsøgende, som kommer ud, hvis de har behov for at møde nogle venner eller få hjælp til et eller andet, lære dansk eller få læst et brev. *Men bydelsmødre, det er noget helt særlig fordi det er det bedste integrationsprogram, eller integrationsindsats jeg har oplevet i mange, fordi vi endelig kunne komme i kontakt med den gruppe der er meget marginaliseret, eller isoleret hvor alle andre nærmest har opgivet. Altså sundhedsplejerskerne har haft svært ved at få dem i mødregrupperne. Mange andre projekter og foreninger har haft svært ved at komme i kontakt med de her kvinder, og børnene, deres børn og det er mit fokus – igen – børnene. Hvis mor ikke tager børnene med, og siger det er vigtigt at melde børn ind i fritidsaktiviteter, gå til spejder eller til fodbold eller et eller andet. Hvis mor ikke ved noget om det, og børnene ikke bliver meldt ind og far har travlt med at tjene penge og arbejder nærmest i døgn drift, jamen så bliver mødrene og de her børn mere og mere isolerede og det er de børn som bliver utilpassede og går i bander og bliver, de bliver omsorgssvigtede af både samfundet og familien og det var det jeg havde allermest lyst til. Hvis vi taler med mødrene, giver moren noget til sig selv og hun bliver glad og hun kan få nogle veninder og kommer i et fællesskab, så vil hun få input til sit liv. Hun vil få ideer, hun vil blive inspireret, vil få viden som styrker hende som mor og som kvinde og som samfundsborger og det kommer børnene til gode. Og det har jeg også hørt fra både store børn og mænd siger mor blev glad efter hun har kendt jer, eller efter hun har mødt jer bydelsmødre og i gør en kæmpe forskel. Og det i sig selv er en kæmpe gevinst og megastor glæde at tænke på at*

man kan præge andres liv på den måde og man får flere kvinder i fællesskab og man tager mod de nye, og den rummelighed der er, og den mangfoldighed der er – det har jeg lært rigtig meget af

I: Ja, det synes jeg giver virkelig god mening. Det synes jeg faktisk er helt fantastisk. Spændende. Nu har du jo et kæmpe drive kan jeg fornemme. Men jeg ved ikke om det her med at være bydelsmor har åbnet endnu flere døre? Givet dig, udover de erfaringer du nævner, og oplevelser, om det har åbnet nogle andre døre?

M: Det har det helt bestemt. Hver gang jeg møder en nu kvinde og høre hendes historie og får hendes tillid og hendes historie og lære hende og kende jeg kan mærke at det virkelig beriger mit liv at kende kvinder fra forskellige lande og forskellige kulturer, og at jeg også kan fortælle om mine erfaringer med at være, ja, jeg føler mig ikke så meget længere fremmed i Danmark, men tidligere har jeg følt mig, hvordan kan jeg få nogle veninder, hvordan kan jeg få et arbejde, hvordan kan jeg lykkes med at få skabt mig et meningsfuldt liv i *Danmark. Altså når jeg møder nogle kvinder og de er med i det her fællesskab, så får jeg ny viden og nye erfaringer, og det åbner os nogle døre, fordi mennesker er forskellige og man får forskellige ideer, og jeg er meget åben for forskellige ideer, så hvis der kommer en kvinde og siger kan vi åbne kvindecfe, ja, hvorfor ikke, hvad skal indholdet være?* Jamen vi skal bare møde nogen og hygge os, vi skal snakke sammen, for man går meget hjemme alene, eller man har, man føler sig meget isoleret, så har vi prøvet det flere gange, forskellige steder. Både i vores beboer projekt, i kulturhus, og nu prøver vi det her i vores frivillig hus, og det lykkes, når der kommer nogle og gerne vil være med, så opstår der synergi og tingene udvikler sig på den måde. Har jeg svaret på dit spørgsmål?

I: Jeg føler du siger at det udvider ens horisont, kreativitet, tangeang

M: Ja jeg bliver stimuleret når jeg høre nogle kvinder kommer med spørgsmål, ideer, input, og man bliver, man lytter til deres ideer, hvordan kan man udvikle det, der er ikke nogle ideer der ikke kan lade sig gøre, der er helt tosset, det er et spørgsmål om har vi lokaler hvor vi kan mødes, og kan vi ikke mødes i et lokale, et rum, jamen så går vi en tur sammen, eller så ringer vi sammen, så har vi også Facebook hvor man også kan være venner der, udveksle nogle ting, det der med at møde noget nyt, noget anderledes, så har jeg lyst til at vide mere. *og det åbner på den måde både min horisont at se nogle perspektiver, ja jeg tror det er nok det, en følelse af at man er værdifuld, og alle er værdifulde, fordi man har meninger om nogle ting, nogle ideer, det vigtigste for mig er at man ikke lukker hurtigt, og siger det kan ikke lade sig gøre, det har vi prøvet før. Altså man skal ikke lukke, man skal reflektere lidt over, hvad er den andens budskab. Altså det vigtigste er at man vil noget, og man vil hinanden, at man vil prøve at finde ud af det*

I: Det lyder som om du os har en interesse bare mennesket og lære om individerne

M: Ja!

I: Du nævner lidt det her med mødet med samfundet, hvordan skal man gøre det ene og det andet. Jeg ved ikke om du kan uddybe mere hvordan du oplevede at komme hertil?

M: *Jeg har gjort mig meget umage med at tænke over hvordan blev jeg mødt i Danmark, hvad værd et der gjorde en forskel for mig som ny i Danmark. Og det var biblioteket og det var personalet på biblioteket, der virkelig gjorde en forskel for mig og mit liv i Danmark. Det var nogle åbne. Når jeg kom ned. Det var næsten det eneste sted hvor jeg kunne sætte mig ned og kigge på mennesker som kom ind og som kom ud og nogle gange sad jeg med en bog på biblioteket, og det så ud som om jeg sad og læste en bog, og det var mere at jeg sad og observere hvordan man opførte sig i Danmark også spurgte jeg nogle gange bibliotekaren om hun kunne hjælpe mig med at finde en nem bog jeg kunne træne dansk også noget. Og der anbefalede hun mig nogle bestemte børnebøger som var nemme at forstå og nemme og læse og så var hun bare meget hjælpsomt og gav mig forskellige lydbøger, sådan nogle kassettebånd hvor jeg kunne lytte og se teksten og der var mange forskellige ting hun præsenterede mig for. Børnefilm hvor jeg kunne se, og hun anbefalede mig at se fjernsyn for dig, dengang det hed det for mange år siden der i 80'erne, så jeg så, også lånte jeg nogle forskellige videoer med hjem, alfons Åberg, Pippi langstrønte og alle de der børnefilm og jeg så dem flere gange og jeg lære mere og mere dansk, jeg gik på sprogskole også, men det var ikke nok fordi dem der var der talte ikke dansk på sprogskole, og når jeg gik hjem så ja så kunne jeg jo ikke rigtig træne dansk med nogle, så jeg tænkte at det var jo fantastisk at gå derned på biblioteket og få så meget nye ting og forskellige ting for at jeg kunne lære dansk. Så det var en god modtagelse af mig. Har altid boet her og jeg er meget glad for at bo her, fordi jeg synes der er, det er et godt sted bo synes jeg*

I: Snakkede dine søskende dansk da du kom hertil?

M: Vi snakkede arabisk min søster og jeg, men altså hun var jo dansk gift og snakkede dansk med sin man, men jeg, jeg boede ikke hos hende ret længe så flyttede jeg, jeg tror jeg boede hos hende et halvt år, jeg gik på sprogskole også fandt jeg et rengøringsjob, og det var tomme lokaler hvor man ikke snakkede med nogle, så jeg gjorde rent om morgenen, stod op kl 3 om natten til kl 8 om morgenen, så gik jeg på sprogskole og når jeg kom hjem skulle jeg sove fordi jeg var meget tidligt oppe og så brugte jeg tit aftenerne alene eller nede på biblioteket også på den måde savnede jeg at finde veninder og finde nogle relationer hvor jeg kunne snakke dansk, eller træne mere dansk . Det var i hvert fald biblioteket der åbnede mulighederne for mig. *Og senere hen nogle år, tænkte jeg at jeg skal også give noget tilbage, og der har jeg haft et fantastisk godt arbejde med biblioteket hvor vi lavede pigeclub, hvor min datter var med, en hel del med i opstarten af pigeclubben, min datter kommer også med i kvindecfe senere i aften, og hun var ansvarlig for pigeclubben, og det var en for piger der ikke måtte gå nogle steder fritidshjem, eller fritidsklub efter skole men var kun derhjemme og det var etnisk minoritetspiger unge pige, så min datter skulle hjælpe de her piger med at komme ned på biblioteket, ned i pigeclubben.*

I: Det er lidt ligesom bydelsmor bare for børn kan man sige

M: Ja, og hun var meget tændt af det og det gik meget godt, og vi søgte, jeg søgte sammen med en bibliotekar om midler fra integrationsministeriet og de fik nogle midler til pigeklubben og senere lavede vi en lejestue og det var sammen med bydelsmødrene, og der var to bydelsmødre og jeg der søgte kommune om nogle penge til at starte en lejestue, det gjorde vi. Og det kørte ca. et år og så kom Corona og lukkede det hele ned. Så,

I: Så det er nyere faktisk?

M: Ja det er nyere, ca. 3,5 år siden. *Havde vi, startede vi lejestuen. så biblioteket har jo næsten altid været det sted, eller den base for at jeg kunne udvikle mine ideer og kan gå hen og spørge om de kunne hjælpe os med et eller andet eller med rammerne for et projekt. Noget viden om hvor kan man søge, og hvad kan man gøre med foreningslivet og den slags ting.*

I: Vil du sige at det er mest det her drive du har, altså eks. Da du skulle lære din mor alfabetet eller, mødet med biblioteket, der har gjort at du tænkte at bydelsmødrene det skulle, at det ville du os

M: Ja, det at kvinder kan meget hvis de vil og hvis de, og nogle af dem vil gerne men ved ikke hvordan, hvordan kan jeg lære nogle danskere at kende, hvordan får jeg venner, hvordan finder jeg ud af systemet her i Danmark, hvor går jeg hen hvis jeg skal søge om penge til et eller andet. Hvis man skal skilles f.eks., *hvis man har et problem med sine børn. Hvor går jeg hen er der nogle kvinder der spørger. Og så tænker jeg, bydelsmødrene og jeg, kan vise dem vej, vi kan fortælle dem hvor de kan hente hjælp, hvor de kan få viden, hvordan de kan navigere i samfundet, og blive dygtige og styrke sig selv. Fordi det kommer deres børn og deres familier til gode. Også tænker jeg måske fordi jeg har på et tidspunkt som barn byttet rolle med min mor, fordi jeg på et tidspunkt var ansvarlig for at min mor skulle lære dansk, arabisk, altså skulle lære alfabetet, skrive og læse arabisk, og hun var frustreret over hun ikke har gået i skole, ikke har fået uddannelse og kunne skrive og læse, så hun bad mig tit om at sidde ved siden af hende når hun så amerikansk film, hun elskede at se amerikansk film, men hun kunne ikke læse underteksten, så hun bad mig om at komme og sidde ved siden af hende og læse underteksten så hun kunne følge med i filme, hvad der skete i filmen og så læste jeg underteksten for hende, og så nogle gange sagde jeg til hende hvis jeg ikke gad eller var træt eller gider ikke mere og jeg var jo ikke ret gammel, jeg var otte ti år gammel og jeg har været god i skolen jeg har hurtigt lært at skrive og læse, også fandt hun ud af at jeg var god til at lave mine *lektier, og var glad for at gå i skole, også ville hun have jeg skulle være hendes, en slags lærer, og det var på en måde var træls, men jeg kunne se hun var glad. Og der er et mønster i det, ift. At jeg senere hen har tænkt at hvis man hjælper mødre i tide, så belaster det ikke børnene, og samtidig med, at hvis man hjælper mødre, og mødre er glade, styrker sig selv, kan en masse ting og bliver aktive, så vil det komme børnene til gode. Udover at man aflaster børnene og hjælper hele familien, så vil børnene have det godt, og jeg tror der er meget forskning der viser, det ved jeg som pædagog og familiekonsulent, der er rigtig meget forskning der viser, at de hjem hvor mor og far kan en masse om de har uddannelse eller arbejde, eller netværk de kommer børnene til gode i høj grad. Men hvorimod hvis det er en familie hvor hverken de kan læse eller skrive eller har uddannelse eller arbejde og især hvis de er isolerede og ikke har et netværk, så er det virkelig på bekostning af børnenes trivsel og udvikling. Det**

er virkelig, det er evidensviden det her, at hvis man skal gøre en forskel for nogle børn, så skal man tage fat i hele familien, og især mødre.

I: Det synes jeg også giver god mening. Men det lyder som om det er mere din personlighed der gør, at du har et drive for bydelsmødre, og ikke så meget mødet med samfundet, er det rigtig forstået? Eller måske en blanding

M: Altså det er nok ikke uden grund at jeg blev nomineret til ildsjælspris hos integrationsministeriet det er snart 10 12 år siden, der har integrationsrådet indstillet mig til pris i kategori, der er forskellige kategorier, hvor man indstiller personer eller virksomheder til integrationspris, og jeg blev indstillet til ildsjælspris, og det var meget på baggrund af min personlighed og ikke så meget på grund af min uddannelse eller, jeg tror også jeg har valgt den her uddannelse fordi jeg, jeg har, jeg brænder for at gøre en forskel for de udsatte, for dem alle andre har, på en eller anden måde opgiver, tænker at man har forsøgt .. men jeg er meget vedholdende, jeg tænker at man skal ikke opgive mennesker, så må man prøve at finde ud af hvad er det der skal til, kan man løse det ved at mødes med dem og bare være til stede og lytte og give en håndsrækning og jeg prøver nogle forskellige ting og langt de fleste gange er det lykkes medmindre mødet ikke finder sted. Og jeg har mødtes med rigtig mange kvinder

I: Ja, det lyder som at bibliotekaren henne på biblioteket har haft en stor betydning, men kunne du selv have haft brug for en bydelsmor dengang, for at lære, altså du gik på sprogskole, men for at lære alle systemerne og hvad man nu skal for at kunne have en hverdag

M: Hmm, altså jeg har altid været nysgerrig på at møde andre mennesker, og tale med andre mennesker bare for at få, ligesom, bare for at lære noget, for at udveksle noget, og det der sådan, synergien eller hvad man kan kalde det, det der med at blive inspireret, og inspirere andre, lære noget nyt og også lære fra mig. Det har jeg altid været tændt af, ja, det er allerede fra starten næsten fra dag et da jeg kom til Danmark, der har jeg været nysgerrig på, hvordan naboerne ser ud, hvor mange børn har de, hvad laver de ude på de der fælles legepladser, når man er på indkøb så kigger man lidt efter, hvordan eh, og jeg var tit overrasket over at folk bare stod og kyssede i supermarkedet, jeg tænkte det *har jeg ikke oplevet, i mit land at, der sådan var frihed og åbenhed, omkring* sådan noget, altså at når to unge mennesker er kæresten så står man i supermarkedet mit i det hele, midt på vejen og er over det hele og kysser helt vildt, jeg tænkte det er lidt sjovt, at se og opleve det men hvorimod i modsætning til at man distancere over for nye mennesker, at det der med der er et eller andet Paradox, hvis du forstår mig, altså at det, at dansker kan været reserveret og svær at komme ind på livet af og få kontakt med. Du skal virkelig gøre et ihærdigt forsøg, og tage mange skridt, øh, sådan var det i hvert fald i starten. Nu har jeg jo vænnet mig til mange ting, så jeg ved ikke om det, om nye borgere i Danmark ser det på samme måde og jeg oplevet det i hvert fald sådan at sådan, oplevet at man virker reserveret over for nye mennesker men har meget frihed til at råbe på gaden hvis man er fuld for eksempel eller øh, den der åbenhed ift. at sige sin mening og det er lige meget at man kommer til at sårer andre. Der er stor frihed i måden at gebærde sig. Øh, at sige sin mening, men samtidig er man reserveret overfor fremmede.

I: Men oplevede du så også det, eller kunne du godt komme ind på livet af folk?

M: Jeg oplevede det lidt i starten men fordi jeg tror jeg har bare sådan mast mig lidt mere på hvis man kan sige det på den måde, jeg var måske lidt stædig. Fx jeg undrede mig i starten over, at naboerne de kunne dårligt nok hilse på hinanden når de mødtes på trappen eller ved døren til opgangen, at man dårligt nok kunne kigge på hinanden eller hilse på hinanden, men jeg hilste pænt og kiggede og smilte hver gang. Og man inviterer aldrig hinanden ind til kaffe eller uden for på legepladsen eller ude i haven og bød hinanden ind på kaffe og mad og sådan noget, det gør man så nogle gange om sommeren når det er godt vejr, men for det meste virker det sådan meget privat, man er meget lukket overfor hinanden. Også på et tidspunkt spurgte jeg min søsters nabo, hun havde små børn, om hun havde brug for, at jeg passede dem, hvis hun havde brug for det så ville jeg gerne sagde jeg, og hun tænkte, når nej det var ligesom, nej det går ikke for de kender dig ikke og sådan noget og ja sådan jeg kan være med dem på legepladsen hvis du har brug for det og så endte det så på et tidspunkt med at jeg var en halv time en gang i mellem på legepladsen med to små børn, sådan i børnehave alder, ikke, og hun kunne kigge ud af vinduet og så at de hyggede sig og de fik en gyngetur og jeg snakkede godt med dem også kom hun ned og hentede dem og så på et tidspunkt kom hun ned med en kop kaffe og vi kunne sidde og snakke sammen og altså jeg følte at jeg tog mange skridt før at hun tog et skridt og så blev det faktisk ret godt. Og jeg kom til at passe dem mere og mere og lære dem at kende og ja, det er sådan noget jeg kan, altså i Palæstina er det meget mere naturligt at man gør noget sammen, at man hjælper hinanden, man bygger hus sammen, spiser sammen, altså, passer børn, låner hinanden penge og altså det der sociale det er ikke særlig tungt og svært at gøre det.

Appendix C: Olivia, April 21st, 2022. O: Olivia, I: Interviewer

I: Til at starte med vil jeg høre om du vil fortælle mig lidt om din baggrund og dig selv og sådan lidt.

O: Jeg kommer fra Letland og kom til Danmark fra 2007. Er gift og har to børn, en på 15 og en på 8 år. I starten da jeg kom til Danmark så læste jeg på sprogskole for at lære det danske sprog, tog et kursus og kom i arbejde også blev der travlt med børnene og familie, og sådan som alle kvinder har det på sine skuldre. Så kom jeg hertil nu. Der var et familiemedlem i min mands familie, en kvinde, som ville gerne være socialrådgiver i 2009, også sagde hun til mig, du kan være med, også kan vi også gå til bydelsmødre uddannelse og deres undervisning og det åbne mange muligheder, fordi du kan læse videre, bliver uddannet, få mere information om kommunale institutioner og myndigheder. så sådan kom jeg til at blive bydelsmor, fordi jeg er nysgerrig og hvis jeg ikke forstår, og ikke ved noget så er jeg vedholden og vil vide her og nu

I: Er du så uddannet socialrådgiver?

O: Nej jeg læser en anden retning, jeg læser *erhvervsøkonomi*. Men det er ikke der at jeg får min egen nysgerrighed og behov, fordi hvis man kan systemet så bliver det nemmere at få det adp, meget handler om dine børnene, hvem skal man kontakte hvis man har brug for hjælp eller nogle spørgsmål eller problemer i skolen eller børnehaven, vuggestuen, alt det kommunikation som dansker kender i systemet og ikke udefra, os der lige kom til Danmark har svært ved at forstå det hvordan det fungerer,

vi som multikulturelle har en anden viden til myndigheder og systemet og en anden, meget forskellig, så..

I: Men det har bydelsmødre uddannelsen hjulpet til?

O: Ja, nemlig det har hjulpet rigtig meget på den måde

I: Jeg tænkte på om din mand, mødte du ham her eller?

O: Nej, jeg mødte ham i Letland. Jeg var studerende, der i Letland, så jeg kom på besøg som kæreste, og i 2007 besluttede vi at blive gift

I: Men han har flyttet til Danmark før dig?

O: Ja, meget lang tid siden, i 90'erne tror jeg

I: Så du valgte at tage til Danmark pga. ham?

O: Ja

I: Okay tak. Også bare lidt mere generelt, om du kan fortælle mig lidt om hvordan en normal uge ser ud, sådan din hverdag. Det der lige falder dig ind

O: Jamen jeg står op kl. 7 og så ordner jeg børnene, morgenmad og tøj, det er det første der skal på plads of få i skole og så har jeg ikke så travlt, fordi jeg er tolk, tolk freelancer og når alle er ude af huset, har jeg tid til at arbejde og når så min lille datter, min mindste datter kommer hjem, måske hun spørger om hun må få en lejeaftale, det er også en stor del af vores liv, med børnene, med lejeaftaler, i går havde min datter en lejeaftale og i dag—TELEFON RINGER. Så om eftermiddagen og efter kl 4 og vi alle sammen hjemme, så er der lejeaftaler eller aktiviteter, ligesom børnefamilier, også spiser vi aftensmad og alle sammen går i seng til tiden, også er dagen slut

I: Ja så meget stille og roligt

O: Ja også har vi en stor familie fra min mands side, så vi har tit i weekenden, holder fødselsdag og ekstra aktiviteter og holder jul sammen, hele familien, og i påskeferien, så vi ser hinanden meget. Fætre og kusiner

I: Og de bor alle her i Danmark?

O: Ja

I: Altså er han dansker så?

O: Nej nej, han er ikke dansker, men, men han er kurder fra Irak. Men han har en stor familie her. Også det er familie som vi elsker at blande med os med andre kulturer.

I: Spændende. Jamen nu går jeg lidt mere ind i bydelsmødrene. Om du kan fortælle mig lidt om hvordan du blev involveret med dem? Nu fortalte du lidt om at du tog den her uddannelse sådan, måske lidt mere

O: Altså det var spændende at gennemgå den uddannelse og viden og nye kontakter til sådanne kommuner og skolen og jeg var rigtig glad for at komme ind, det føles som om du kommer ind i systemet, at du ikke står derude og hegn, at du er inde i rummet med alle andre, er en del af systemet. *Det er virkelig dejligt fordi jeg, Min personlige, hvorfor jeg er bydelsmor, eller hvorfor jeg fortsatte som bydelsmor, det er fordi at det hjælper til dig når du er ny og kommer til Danmark og hurtigere integrere sig og blive kendt med den system, så for det første er du ikke bange for at spørge, hvis de har nogle problemer, eller spørgsmål i forhold til deres familier og børn, alt og for den anden, selvfølgelig, at det er sikkert, hvordan siger man det rigtigt, som sædvanligt, om du ikke kender nogen som helst, som jeg gjorde i starten, for eksempel jeg prøvede når du går til lægen, som at bestille tid, sådan nogle små ting det kan skabe små problemer hvis du ikke kan det system. Men hvis du er f.eks. hos praktiserende læge den kommunikation og multikulturelle forskel alle sammen har er på korte ben, som jeg har sagt, at det er først og fremmest de anerkender dig og skaber forståelse fra person til person, man skal ikke snakke til dem som dronningen, som man siger, men det har alle andre lande, og hvis man nu får den fortælling, det er en simpel ting, så bliver det meget nemmere at gøre de her sædvanlige ting, ja, og får det 3. hvis de har nogle der har brug for hjælp, f.eks.. Nogle som lige kommer og ikke er så god til dansk sprog, man skal udfylde nogle papirer eller man skal også kontakte nogle og på den digitale verden, det er også for svært til en nyankommen. Og nu f.eks. med de ukrainske flygtninge hvor jeg sidder om tirsdagen og oversætter til dem til integrationsafdelingen, de kan ikke finde ud af hvordan man går ind på det digitale system hvordan man går ind på borger.dk, hvordan man kan oprette e-Boksen, og alle de opslag og information og sådan, kommuner, institutioner, aktiviteter og så videre, det vil jeg gerne give til dem, så det er en kæmpe stor hjælp at få dat det op, papirer oversat, sprog og rette alt på den opslagstavle. Så, og hvis man ikke har den kommunikation over de IT og de her spørgsmål så er det et problem, så bliver det meget svært at finde og komme til at kommunikere og befærde sig i Danmark*

I: Det her hver tirsdag, er det bydelsmødrene der har arrangeret det?

O: Nej det er fællesforeningstilknytning

I: Det var det du fortalte om, at du havde snakket med borgmesteren?

O: *Ja, og jeg er også præsenteret, altså jeg gik rundt og præsenterede mig som bydelsmor. Og det at være bydelsmor er et stort plus, på den måde at alle kvinder er med en anden etnisk baggrund også*

kommer det meget nemt til at kommunikere med andre kvinder med anden etnisk baggrund, også med ens eget modersprog.

I: Ja det hørte jeg også sidst, der var jo alle sprog omkring bordet ikke,

O: Ja og det er sjovt ja

I: Du er jo allerede inde på det, men om du kunne komme lidt mere ind på din oplevelser af at være bydelsmor og at være med bydelsmødreorganisationen og hvad det sådan betyder for dig, om du har nogle oplevelser og sådan

O: *Hvorfor jeg bruger den tid som frivillig som bydelsmor, altså jeg synes det er fordi jeg kan godt lide at hjælpe til andre og jeg synes det som vi gør som bydelsmor er sådan effektivt og meget effektiv hjælp for de andre, dem som har brug for det, det er måske ensomme kvinder, som har nogle spørgsmål så det har en stor betydning og det kan man se hos hver kvinde, og børnene, så hvis kvinden er mere tryk og sikker, så det betyder det hun også kan give endnu bedre, omverdenen kan man sige, så børnene bliver også mere sociale, mere aktive tror jeg og deltager i forskellige aktiviteter, fordi alt det der handler om børnene og overfor samfundet, det er en stor hjælp på den måde at åbne den barriere fra samfundet, de bevæger sig mere i samfundet, ikke kun kvinderne men også børnene. Altså jeg har altid set at kvinder det er lig børnene, og børnene det er også fremtiden og jo mere de bliver sociale, jo mere bliver de åbne overfor samfundet og har muligheder inde i samfundet og så begynder man at trække børnene mere ind i samfundet og bliver sociale, og på den måde, altså bydelsmødre giver til mig at jeg bliver ikke genert over dem, så ja, jeg bliver aktiv*

I: Altså når du siger du ikke bliver genert, er det så overfor dine egne børn der skal ind i aktiviteter eller for

O: Både og. Selvom jeg aldrig har været genert over for mine børn, altså det er fordi måske min families opdragelse at de er aktive, men jeg ved at de andre bydelsmødres børn kan trække sig tilbage hvis de siger hvordan kan jeg løse den og blive åben overfor nogen

I: Ja jeg forstår, så det giver dig gåpåmod til bare at komme ud og gøre tingene

O: Ja, og det er eks. Os fra person til person alle der kan vendes til at komme frem i stedet for at komme tilbage

I: Og det oplever du også at kvinderne gennemgår? Altså det er jo en udvikling

O: Ja det er helt fantastisk

I: Ja. Nu har du været lidt inde på mange ting, det overlapper jo men jeg er også lidt interesseret i at høre hvordan sådan at du har oplevet mødet med det danske samfund og om der har været sådan noget

som du kan nævne, og det er os ok at nævne det igen, som der har gjort at du selv os er blevet bydelsmor, for du snakker os meget om det her med at hjælpe andre

O: *Jeg har ikke oplevet modstand med det danske samfund, for der er ikke stor forskel, men jeg har oplevet nogle fra andre lande, med anden etnisk baggrund de har nogle problemer, og det er meget den kulturelle forskel, og jeg kan hive dem ud og vise at man kan leve i sin egen tradition, men samtidig integrere sig i samfundet. Og det vigtigste, at være en del af et samfund.*

I: Så ville jeg bare lige høre ift at du nævner at være en del af samfundet, hvad betyder det for dig

O: Altså på det sidste projekt fra bydelsmor, deltog fra forskellige kommuner, jeg tror det var i november måned, hvor vi skulle finde en bestemt kanal? Og hvem skulle vi invitere til kunstmuseum, skal det være fra hele Danmark bydelsmødre, eller skal det være kun København, Storkøbenhavn og målet var at invitere dem til museum og forstå at det også er for dem, at museum er til alle dem der bor i Danmark og så var det med udstilling som vi skulle afvikle, med nogle værker og konklusionen viste at vi fik succes, altså der var bydelsmor og kvinder kom og vi omviste ikke kun de der 3 værker som vi skulle kunne, altså vi omviser uden for vores projekt, men det er også de kom ind på et helt museum og fik en stor inspiration og blev glade og kan vide at de kan komme der selv, og med børnene måske, invitere eller komme bare selv, det er fordi det er en bygning der også er en del af samfundet men som de aldrig kunne tænke sig at komme i fordi som jeg også fortalte mine oplevelser, jeg tænkte at statens museum for kunst er sådan en dansk, den er meget lukket og den er kun til speciale kunder ikke til alle sammen, til alle andre med etnisk baggrund, og det havde stor succes fordi vi knækker den fordom og de der var der var 80 kvinder og de fik stor inspiration og var rigtig glade for det

I: Så det er det her med at vise at, de, hvad kan man kalde det, tilbud der er, eller kulturelle institutioner er for alle og hvis man kan vise folk at de er tilgængelige, så kan man hjælpe dem til at være en del af samfundet?

O: Ja, så det bliver mere.

I: Ja det giver god mening synes jeg. Tror du at hvis du ikke var blevet vist den her uddannelse for bydelsmødrene dengang, tror du så at dit liv ville have været anderledes?

O: Ja det tror jeg, fordi som bydelsmor fik jeg viden om Danmark og hvordan samfundets system fungerer, det var min egen oplevelse at blive inddraget og jeg blev, måske skal jeg gøre det, måske skal jeg gøre dét. Og jeg skal spørge nogle andre om hvor man gør det her eller der, men her er det alt sammen på plads, og selvom jeg er selv født i Danmark og ved alt om det, om systemer, om skolelivet, altså så finder man ud af det med mine børn, men alligevel så

I: Så det har givet rigtig meget?

O: Ja, jeg bliver mere stille og rolig, mere selvsikker, jeg kontakter præcise myndigheder, kontaktpersoner, eller hvis jeg har brug for noget hjælp, jeg ved godt at jeg kan bruge dem fra myndighederne, fra sociale, fordi jeg ved godt hvad deres opgave er og hvad står bag opgaverne.

I: Det er vigtigt synes jeg

O: Ja meget

I: Så kan jeg også godt forstå at man får lyst til at give den viden, altså videre

O: Ja for som jeg siger, det er altid bedst at vælge at trække sig tilbage i stedet for at løse sine egne problemer måske og stille spørgsmål, som kan gøre det nemmere

I: Hvor meget fylder bydelsmødre sådan i din hverdag normalt

O: Ikke så meget. Jeg tror nu er det, jeg vil gerne gøre det lidt mindre

I: Du vil gerne cutte lidt ned

O: Ja, altså jeg har givet en stor indsats til bydelsmødre i tre år, og vil gerne fokusere på min karriere og målrette den, altså jeg har en kæmpestor erfaring med bydelsmor, jeg kan bruge den også til min karriere, egen karriere, f.eks. kommunikation med offentlige myndigheder, koordination af dem og bliver tit viden om de offentlige systemer, hvis man skal ansøge om puljer, det er også en administrationsmåde, og det er paragraf 8 for eksempel, det er sådan en del

I: Så du fik meget ud af det selvom du gav meget

O: Ja, erfaring ja

I: Hvornår er du færdig med din uddannelse?

O: 2019 bydelsmor.

I: Ja men den nuværende

O: Ja nu er jeg i gang med diplommet, jeg skal også aflevere den

I: Ja det kan jeg godt huske at du sagde at du var

O: Ja på cbs ja

O: Ja det er et diplom projekt, men alligevel man har lyst til at skrive noget perfekt

I: Men så kan jeg godt forstå du vil cutte lidt ned i frivilligheden. Hvor mange tror du at du har hjulpet gennem årene hvis du skulle give et skud?

O: *Jeg tror jeg har hjulpet.... altså jeg er altid velkommende og positiv og så har de sagt til mig hvis de har nogle problemer eller spørgsmål og f eks i min datters klasse ser jeg med det samme, og det er også pga bydelsmødrene, og hvis der er nogle eller en med en anden etnisk baggrund så prøver jeg at lære dem at lave aftale med dem og integrere dem og så kommer jeg selv og snakker med dem, hvis der er noget der kan styrke dem eller hjælpe dem, oversætte eller der f eks skal gå på tur, så spørger jeg en ekstra gang, ved du om de skal på tur eller hvad skal du, på en måde prøver jeg at støtte dem*

I: Jeg kan huske du sagde noget sidst ift at du sagde noget om borgmesteren og de ukrainske flygtninge. Tror du også at det vil give dig noget sådan, ikke fordi frivilligt arbejde ikke er rigtigt arbejde, men sådan hvis du forstår hvad jeg mener, sådan arbejdsmæssigt, at du kan få et job ud fra det

O: Ja, jeg har skrevet til integrationsafdelingen, der har brug for to eller tre medarbejdere og jeg synes hvis min primære uddannelse som business og administration, så kan jeg hjælpe med de ukrainske flygtninge, med deres bankkonto, eller deres e-Boks eller *så noget og altså, tolke og oversætte og fortælle os igen om hvordan fungerer kommunen eller noget andet, alle de der opgaver som en integrationsafdeling foretager sig, så jeg kan sagtens løse de her opgaver. Så jeg har også kunne lære noget af de der tre år, det er stor erfaring synes jeg, selvom det er en fuldstændig anden retning, men jeg ved ikke hvorfor det tiltrækker mig, jeg gør det underbevidst, men det er jeg glad for, jeg kan mærke jeg får energi fra det, når jeg kigger til mennesker. Også på dem måde den erfaring, den inspiration, det er godt til at søge job indenfor måske integrationsafdelinger, kommuner, arbejde med flygtninge. Meget*

I: Og hvis man snakker lidt mere om bydelsmødrene frem for de kvinder i hjælper, er der noget socialt, noget netværk der kommer der, eller har der været noget motivation at der kunne opstå socialt netværk igennem?

O: Det der tiltrak mig til at få den uddannelse, altså det var, jeg fik netværk selvfølgelig, og med kommunen, med forskellige, frivillige arbejde, fritid sted, og skole, den der har ansvaret i kommunen,

I: Altså når man flytter hertil?

O: Ja, også med foreningen, dem der har styr på alle foreninger,

I: Så viser de ligesom hvad man kan?

O: Så det, jeg fik også et stor netværk, ja også fik jeg mere tættere til danskerne kan man sige, ja og hvad var spørgsmålet?

I: Ja men det var mere om der altså om et: om det har skabt et socialt netværk, altså imellem bydelsmødrene og til andre, og om det var en motivation du tænkte at det kunne være rart at møde nogle mennesker

O: Det var altid rart, altså nu feks psykolog, fra skolepsykolog som har kommet, det var rigtig spændende, en der opstår aktiviteter, som har ansvar, gode mennesker som kommer forbi vores undervisnings dag, og også fortalte om alt det, hvordan fungerer økonomi og bestyrelse, altså jeg ved ikke om det er en anden, altså det er en stor erfaring når man har en, man kan åbne en bog, og kan se, altså det er jo virkelig dejligt at alle dem der nemlig arbejder for kommunen og institutioner selv kommer og fortæller og forklare hvad deres arbejde egentlig handler om og hvordan de bidrager. *Altså jeg synes bydelsmødrenes uddannelse var en mini del af socialrådgiveruddannelsen fordi det altid handler om en sag ift hvordan kan man hjælpe til nogen med forskellige situationer eller i forskellige situationer, så, det bare rigtig godt. Og socialt netværk det var, lokalt netværk ja, man fik mere viden om*

I: Ja så det har helt sikkert givet noget. Jeg ved ikke om der er nogle specifikke oplevelser du har haft gennem bydelsmødrene, som kunne være relevante

O: Min egen oplevelse, jeg var ikke chokeret, men meget imponeret at borgmesteren, jeg kan ikke fornemme ham om han er borgmester, men jeg kan fornemme at han er en mor, eller en far til hele kommunen, beboerne, så det igen fordi det er en kulturforskel og han er meget social, og vil gerne vise til alle sammen at han er en her på jorden med alle andre, og ikke bare sidder i kommunen, og bare laver de der administrationsopgaver, kan man sige,

I: Ja han er et helt normalt menneske

O: Ja, og det er oplevelsen af forskellige autoriteter, de er også menneskelige, man kan komme med det samme og til at stille et spørgsmål og kommunikere almindeligt, som hverdags, som om du kender dem i mange år, så det er også en stor betydning fordi igen det er forskelligt fra andre lande,

I: Ja, det synes jeg giver god mening. Selvom om man ikke er bydelsmor er det jo ingen gang sikkert man møder en borgmester, altså jeg har aldrig mødt en

O: Ja det er som bydelsmor jeg har det

I: Nå, nu ved jeg godt at du ikke havde haft nogle dårlige oplevelser med at komme til Danmark, men jeg synes jo stadig det er lidt spændende det her med, altså tror du at det er fordi du selv har haft et møde med et nyt system, altså det danske, at du er blevet bydelsmor? Eller er det mest også det her med at du vil give hjælpen videre?

O: *det var min egen erfaring da jeg lige kom til Danmark, det er svært, og det er svært for alle der lige kommer til Danmark, så det kan skaffe en masse tid, hvis man er, synes jeg, hvis man er bydelsmor, en af bydelsmor f.eks. jeg har fundet, en af dem der bliver kontaktet når man lige er kommet til Danmark, så bliver det meget nemmere til, Ja for dem. Og spare en masse tid og integrere sig, det går meget hurtigere*

I: Før du sådan fik indblik i uddannelsen, det var en fra din mands familie?

O: Ja,

I: Havde du selv mødt en bydelsmor før?

O: Nej

I: Ja så det var gennem uddannelsen?

O: Ja. Og det var også en studievejleder, også hvis man skal ind på kvote to er det en god ide med uddannelsen

I: Havde du uddannelse før? Ja du læste?

O: Ja jeg læste i Letland, men ikke her og her har jeg selvfølgelig selv læst dansk og hf, samfundshistorie jeg vil gerne vide mere om vikingerne, og så igennem bydelsmødrenes uddannelse kan jeg fortælle. *Den vigtigste del er det her almindelig system..., jeg synes at bydelsmødre skal være en del af sprogskolen for dem der lige er kommet til Danmark*

I: Ja det er faktisk en rigtig god ide, at man lærer systemet, det er grundlæggende

O: *Ja det er grundlæggende basis kan man sige, at vi beskriver det*

I: Jeg tror egentlig at jeg har spurgt, det er også en masse ting vi er kommet omkring

O: Altså det er min erfaring, at jeg vil gerne vise, at hvis bydelsmor kan fungere så kan vi give hjælp til kvinder og sparre tiden og blive integreret i kultur og systemet og *det betyder at man bliver god til at integrere sig og bruge tiden på noget andet*

Appendix D: Nadia, June 22nd, 2022. N: Nadia. I: Interviewer

I: Det første spørgsmål er bare om du kan fortælle mig lidt om dig selv og din baggrund?

N: ja, altså hvad vil du vide, altså arbejdsrelateret eller bare min personlige baggrund?

I: ja bare din personlige og arbejde

N: ja... Altså jeg er jo 43 år, og jeg er født og opvokset på .. og flyttede til .. her for 13 år siden og her bor jeg så med mine to drenge. Jeg har pakistanske rødder og også lidt indiske. Og ja hvad skal jeg mere fortælle om... Og så har jeg en kontoruddannelse og jeg har haft 15 års HR-erfaring. Og her sidste år der blev jeg opsagt fordi jeg har været stress sygemeldt. Så det er sådan lidt overordnet

I: hvor gamle er dine børn?

N: jamen mine børn er 21 og 13

I: okay, wow 21. Har du nogle søskende?

N: ja det har jeg

I: bor de stadig her i København?

N: ja altså jeg har to søstre. Den ene hun bor i København, altså Frederiksberg og den anden hun er bosat i Pakistan simpelthen

I: okay, hun er flyttet

N: ja hun er flyttet

I: okay. Og så kan vi gå lidt videre med sådan hvordan en normal uge ser ud for dig? Det kan godt være det lyder som et mærkeligt spørgsmål, men det er mere for at få et indblik i, hvad du bruger din tid på

N: ja, og lige nu er jeg jo sygemeldt, så det jeg gør det er jo at jeg svømmer, jeg træner, i løbet af ugen. Jeg har nogle projekter, som at male jeg er begyndt at male, jeg er sådan ved at finde min kreative side frem som jeg ikke sådan har dyrket i hele mit liv faktisk, så jeg har lavet øreringe, sådan nogle ler øreringe, det sidder jeg lidt og nusser med. Og så dyrker jeg yoga, minimum en times yoga hver dag, så det bruger jeg også tid på. Og så har jeg møder hist heromkring fordi jeg er sygemeldt så er der nogle ting man skal overholde ikke, så det er faktisk det, det er sådan min dag ser ud egentlig. Og så holder jeg pause ind imellem ikke, altså og jeg har brug for det fordi jeg kan mærke at når jeg beskæftiger mig med noget så bliver jeg også hurtigt træt. Så jeg har også brug for pauser hvor jeg slapper af Så det er egentlig hvad tiden går med for øjeblikket

I: ja, det lyder som om du passer på dig selv

N: ja det gør jeg virkelig

I: nå men så går vi lidt videre med bydelsmødrene. Om du kan fortælle mig lidt om hvordan du blev involveret med bydelsmødrene og lidt om hvad det, nu er du jo så ikke bydelsmor mere, men hvad det måske stadig betyder for dig og hvad det har betydet?

N: altså jeg, jeg blev, jeg kan ingen gang huske hvad årstal det var egentlig, det må have været i '11 tror jeg, det blev jeg skilt, altså jeg sagde mit arbejde op fordi jeg havde så mange udfordringer med min daværende eks, og blev skilt fra ham, også havde jeg jo sagt mit arbejde op og jeg skulle jo beskæftige mig med et eller andet, så jeg arbejdede hos, hvad er det det hedder, det lå derude ved den sorte diamant, men det var også hvor de arbejdede med kvinder med anden etnisk baggrund, som havde udfordringer, så kunne man være der frivilligt, jeg kan ikke huske hvad det hed. Det kan jeg finde til dig hvis det er.

I: men også sådan en form for indsats

N: ja. Ja. Så synes jeg det var virkelig spændende det der med at jeg havde været igennem en virkelig voldsom ægteskab og barndom, og så tænkte jeg at nu var jeg klar til også at hjælpe andre folk i den her situation eller bare at hjælpe kvinder specielt, også arbejdede jeg med det også mødte jeg m her fra og hun sagde så at der var noget med nogle bydelsmødre og jeg tænkte hvad handler det om, og det var lidt Ala samme koncept også, om jeg havde lyst til at komme på kursus i det og jeg tænkte, at det ville jeg da helt vildt gerne fordi jeg ville jo gerne, jeg ville jo gerne dyrke det her mere, også kom jeg så ind på det her

I: altså, uddannelsen man får?

N: ja, uddannelsen.

I: også hvordan hvad, nu siger at dyrke det her, så tænker jeg at hjælpe andre kvinder?

N: ja, at hjælpe andre kvinder, altså dyrke det her med at have forståelsen af, fordi jeg er født og opvokset her, så synes jeg at jeg har jo forståelsen, i den hvad kan man sige, den pakistanske og tyrkiske, den muslimske kultur men jeg tror ikke jeg har så stor en indsigt i det som man skulle tro, fordi jeg selv har en muslimsk baggrund, så jeg tænkte, det her får mig tættere ind på nogle ting som jeg måske kan guide dem videre i. også kom jeg så derind på kurset.

I: så det var både fordi du ville lære mere selv om en kultur du kommer fra, men også at hjælpe

N: ja, også, ikke så meget med kultur, men hvorfor reagere de kvinder som de gør. Hvorfor gør de de ting som de nu gør, og det kan være opdragelsesmønstre, det kan være nogle vaner og mønstre de har haft fra barndommen af, jamen hvad sker der, hvorfor gør de sådan som de nu gør.

I: ja, spændende og hvad hvis du kan komme lidt mere ind på det her personlige betydning, hvis det har, det skal jeg jo ikke putte på dig, men lidt mere om det følelsesmæssige omkring hvad det har betydet for dig, eller hvad du har fået ud af det

N: ud af kurset?

I: ja altså begge dele, også at arbejde med kvinderne

N: *jamen, jeg tror at, det gav mig, jeg har selv været der, jeg har selv haft et voldeligt ægteskab, både med psykisk og fysisk vold også i barndommen har jeg oplevet fysisk vold og psykisk vold og jeg tror bare at jeg endelig jeg, jeg var jo ikke ret gammel, jeg var 21 da jeg blev gift, så jeg var jo ikke ret gammel og jeg ville jo ud af mine forældres, hvad kan man sige, jeg flygtede fra mine forældre, fordi jeg var en muslimsk pige, også kan man jo ikke bare flytte ud i en lejlighed. Den eneste flugt jeg havde var at så skulle jeg giftes og komme videre. Og jeg tror også altså som barn har min far altid fortalt mig at eller fra den kultur jeg kommer fra, muslimsk kultur eller pakistansk kultur, der får man fortalt allerede fra barndommen af, at man kan ikke fungere som kvinde uden en mand. og jeg tror at, min far sagde jeg måtte ikke klippes, da jeg blev ældre, fordi min far sagde, nej det gør du når du bliver gift. Og det er jo bare en lille ting, og sådan nogle ting var der en milliard af. Så for mig handlede det jo egentlig om at flygte, jeg ville ud af det her og leve mit liv. Jeg ville ud og rejse, der var så mange ting jeg ønskede i mit liv. Og så blev jeg så gift som 21-årig, og kom ind i et andet forhold som bare var endnu værre end det jeg gav slip på. Så jeg tror jeg havde så mange ting i mit liv, i min barndom, i mit ægteskab, med mine børn, var der også, at få børnene til at fungere i sådan et ægteskab, altså hvordan gør man det. Så jeg tror bare jeg havde så mange ting, så jeg tænkte det her, det kan jeg gå videre med til andre ikke*

I: jeg tænker ikke jeg kommer til at kommentere så meget af det du siger fordi din historie. men tak fordi du deler det jeg så går jeg lidt videre med at spørge. og Det er jo lidt i relation til det jeg lige har spurgt om en mere Sådan som Det har Sådan set gjort noget for dit liv altså læring eller netværk eller hvad selvrefleksionen og hvad det end er

N: *Jeg tror selvrefleksionen og fylder så meget i det her og jeg tak eller selvom Jeg er født og opvokset her og gør og gået i dansk skole altså har fuldstændig danske uddannelsessystem så tænker jeg det her det gav mig sindssygt meget det gav mig endnu mere forståelse i mig selv også og det fik mig også Jeg har en dreng der har ADHD og Tourette og Sådan noget og så kan jeg huske på i at de der kursusforløb der blev der inviterede lige en klubleder ind også herinde fra inde fra altså den her klub der ligger lige her og han fortalte så en hel masse ting også omkring altså hvordan man Sådan hvad hedder det hvordan de kunne hjælpe hvis nu at man havde 1 barn som havde udfordringer og han hjalp mig faktisk videre med at min søn han blev udredt ja helt ja er det ikke vildt simpelthen fordi jeg havde jo jeg havde jo bokset med systemet i 5 år eller Sådan noget og jeg kunne bare ikke komme nogen vegne og så tilfældigvis så nævner han det her ved udredning også og Sådan noget der for nogle ting de Sådan går ind og hjælper med og så sagde jamen Jeg har en søn og Sådan noget ikke er så sagde han ved du hvad melde ham ind i klubben og så hjælper vi dig med at komme videre og han var en kæmpe hjælp for simpelthen med at få udredt en service ja og det gjorde jo bare at det der med*

at jeg kom jeg kom ind i systemet og ja så det Det har hjulpet mig i alle mulige forskellige fronter simpelthen ej hvor er det sindssygt fedt lidt tilfældigt den måde Jeg er Sådan en ja ja altså man får forklaret mere indblik i systemet og min generelle opfattelse når folk de Sådan taler om Det er fordi i har været er det Sådan noget 14 moduler man kommer igennem med sker ja Jeg kan ikke engang huske det Det er det nok ja fordi altså Jeg er jo også opvokset. Sådan det der ikke alle der lige ved hvordan det virker og man skal selv opsøge tingene her i Danmark. Sådan er det jo. ja men hvis man ikke opsøger dem, så finder man jo aldrig ud af det når det og hvordan får man lige den tanke om at jeg skal opsøge lige omkring det her det ved jeg jo ikke altså medmindre nogen fortæller mig om det ikke og Det er jo det

I: Det er ja lidt mere om bydelsmøderne. Det er resten jo næsten. Men nu har du næsten lige sagt det men i forhold til Sådan din oplevelse med det danske samfund om der også ligesom har skubbet dig til at blive en bydelsmor?

N: ja for mit vedkommende har det jo har det jo ikke været den del af det fordi jeg var jo jeg var jo en velfungerende kvinde Jeg tror det jeg skulle have på det herværende tidspunkt Det var jo jeg skulle have noget at beskæftige mig med fordi jeg gik hjemme og var var søgende ikke så for mit vedkommende så handlede det jo i primært om altså ikke fordi at det danske system jeg følte at Det var det der havde skubbet mig Sådan du ved eller om jeg følte at jeg havde afstand for systemet den følte så havde jeg jo ikke jeg havde det Sådan det her det Det er *noget Jeg kan bruge i min videreudvikling i forhold til hvis jeg nu skal arbejde videre med kvinder med anden etnisk baggrund ja jamen også ikke bare Sådan det strukturelle men måske også bare samfund generelt og folk imellem og Sådan og Det er så svært Det er det her.* Det er et emne der jo er så svært simpelthen ikke, fordi at ja, Jeg kan godt forstå at systemet altså måske hvad kan man sige altså bydelsmødrene de er også selvkørende her i dag Der er jo alle er jo frivillige altså Jeg tror ikke engang at Der er nogen der får noget betaling måske en projektleder et eller andet sted i et lille sum beløb med de jo selvkørende simpelthen ikke og *Det var fantastisk at se at så mange kvinder står altså sammen og ønsker at hjælpe og gøre en forskel så Jeg kan jo godt se men Jeg tror også Det er så svært at hjælpe kvinder med en etnisk baggrund altså hjælpe dem videre ind i systemet det kræver så mange ressourcer simpelthen og så er det jo nemmere at sige at så kan vi jo udvise os ikke Sådan nemmere at sige jamen altså så har vi en gruppe folk og Sådan noget ikke i stedet for at gå ind og arbejde med folk altså eller kvinder eller så jeg ved ikke giver det mening egentlig ja altså det ja det kræver så mange ressourcer simpelthen sindssygt mange ressourcer for at hjælpe en kvinde. for eksempel en kvinde som bor sammen med en mand som er voldelig og om de voldelige over for børnene altså Det er så svært fordi det her det sidder så dybt inde i hendes rødder. simpelthen hendes kerne Vi skal ind og røre ved og Jeg tror det det får man ikke lov til at mange steder*

I: altså Sådan nu nævner du kvinderne i hjælper altså har du fået nogle oplevelser hvor du tænker at nu har jeg virkelig hjulpet hende her eller set eller siger man fremskridt ikke fremskridt men måske hun har oplevet selv en personlig udvikling

N: ja altså da jeg arbejdede med anden etnisk baggrund så kvinder med anden etnisk baggrund ude i den der forening derude ved solsorten men der synes jeg der kunne jeg gøre jeg kunne ikke gøre den store forskel men en lille forskel kunne jeg gøre Det var jo for eksempel at hun havde brug for fra

hvad hedder det hjælp til danskundervisning til at læse breve og Sådan nogle ting ikke og der kunne jeg se at der må man altså så hjælp man den en smule *men ja og Det er jo det man kan gøre og Det er jo det bydelsmødrene egentlig også gøre ikke at hjælper dem stille og roligt på vej men Jeg tror det Det er så svært at få ændret på altså ikke man behøver ikke engang at ændre folk men og se altså og vise Sådan et andet perspektiv end det de selv har Det er meget svært specielt når man kommer fra Sådan en Kultur af som jeg selv gør og det kræver så meget selvrefleksion og det tror jeg bare Det er der bare ikke plads til kvinderne og nu nævner jeg kvinder igen fordi at kvinden har en kæmpe rolle I familie systemet også i en muslimske verden simpelthen eller får generelt med kvinder med anden etnisk baggrund eller familier med anden etnisk baggrund fordi at hun er dem Der er derhjemme hun er sammen med børnene hun er også sammen med manden er mandens familie hun har en kæmpe rolle i det her men hun har ikke plads til sig selv og Jeg tror det der med at når man får plads til sig selv jamen så er der også plads til selvrefleksion egentlig og det tror jeg bare ikke at Der er plads til her med kvinder med så mange kvinder altså også nu her jeg kender jeg kender selv så mange kvinder så ja ja jamen det*

I: Jeg har nemlig tænkt meget over det her med moderskab og fordi det hedder bydelsmødre og Der er jo mange af jer der også selv er mor er min opfattelse i hvert fald og Det er da også sikkert også mange af de kvinder i hjælper, tror du Det har en eller anden rolle i om man kan kommunikere sammen eller finder et fællesskab jeg tænkte meget på Sådan noget med netværket har en indflydelse på at måske at du har lyst til at blive ved med at være en bydelsmor da du var, eller Det var noget der kunne connecte jer både bydelsmødrene men også kvinderne

N: ja det kunne det godt men Jeg tror Jeg tror moderskab ja de knytter de knytter kvinderne sammen men Jeg tror ikke man snakker om moderskab når man er sammen Jeg tror ikke man og Det er jo også det Der er i den kulturelle del af siden Det er jo at at man skal jo helst fremstå fra sin bedste side altså min mine børn er simpelthen mine børn de har de her uddannelser og de er så gode i skolen og så så sårbarheden den hører man det faktisk næsten aldrig i år i de her grupper overhovedet, de ser mig at jeg godt kan sige nej jeg ikke har lyst til det her eller nu skal jeg lige holde en pause eller nej det her det gør vi i morgen og også til mine forældre til min søskende til min omgangskreds at de kan høre mig at jeg siger fra jamen det det hjælper jo dem men jeg også kunne sige fra på længere sigt det ja så det det Det er nogle ting Jeg har arbejdet med her ikke og det ville jo være super fedt hvis det altså hvis man nu kunne gå ind og arbejde med Sådan nogle ting men det det gør man jo ikke fyres bedre det der gør der går man ind og laver altså en lille forskel gør jo også en forskel for børn er helt sikkert altså

I: men det giver god mening det du siger

N: nej ja men Det er Det er benhårdt arbejde

I: Det er det hvor mange år endte du med at være bydelsmor?

N: jamen altså 3 år tror jeg, 2 3 år

I: ja man skal have overskud til at være frivillig

N: ja det skal man virkelig fordi jeg havde lige fået arbejde der jeg var jo jeg var engang færdig med kurset eller uddannelsen så blev jeg ansat der hvor jeg var ansat her nu ikke og så ja og så kunne jeg ikke få det hele til at hænge sammen simpelthen fordi min søn skulle udredes og han fyldte så meget og arbejde fyldte så meget og Jeg vil jo så altså jeg brændte jo for det her det ville jeg også fordi det gjorde mig glad for Det var bare svært at få tid til det hele

I: hvor meget tid brugte du ca?

N: Sådan jamen jeg brugte jo nogle timer om ugen egentlig ja og så fik man Sådan tiltagende tildelt kontakt med kvinderne, men også altså det der med at vi en gang imellem skulle mødes og være sammen og så kommer der andre kvinder til Sådan en kvindelig cafe ikke så Jeg tror Det var mere Sådan noget egentlig jeg deltog i men altså til sidst så var det jo Sådan at så kom jeg da ikke hele tiden fordi jeg havde simpelthen ikke overskud til det mærke det stressede mig endnu mere

I: forståeligt. føler du det har ikke kun personlig indflydelse men også netværk og karriere har gjort en forskel for dig?

N: ja jeg tror mere Der er så mange fordomme omkring min hvad kan man sige min baggrund også så Jeg tror det der med at jeg Sådan fik indblik i og okay Der er en årsag til at tingene er Sådan som de er endelige og det tror jeg bare det gav mig mere indblik i at jeg blev mere Sådan åben og mere forstående overfor andre kvinder også så Jeg vil jo gerne gøre en forskel men jeg var også fordomsfuld jo altså Det var Sådan lidt nogle altså modsætninger ikke men det her kursus altså det Det kan kun anbefales til alle simpelthen og ikke kun altså med anden etnisk også etnisk danske kvinder altså alle burde simpelthen k det her den her uddannelse det giver så meget ja også i det psykologiske aspekt ikke altså med børn og også hvordan opfører hvorfor opføre børn Sådan som de gør altså i institutionerne når man afleverer men Jeg kan huske min søn jeg var jo altså jeg var i 22 da jeg min søn han blev født og så kan jeg huske at jeg var Sådan jeg var Sådan en indelukket fordi jeg havde jo et forfærdeligt ægteskab med hans far og så havde jeg min søn der som allerede fra han var en lille baby nærmest ikke der kunne jeg se at der var noget galt med ham nu og jeg ville huske da han startede i vuggestue Jeg turde ikke at tale med nogen *pædagoger og jeg var tilbageholde og Jeg kan huske at min søn han omklamrede jo sig selv til mig fordi han følte sig jo heller ikke tryk fordi hans mor heller ikke følt sig tryk og så kan jeg huske at jeg på en af de her kursusforløb der blev der snakket om jamen hvad sker der egentlig når du afleverer dit barn i institution og der kan jeg huske at i fortalte at hvis du ikke går ind og snakker med pædagogerne jamen så tror barnet så føler barnet sig utryk og så føler barnet også at er det fordi Der er ingen der kan lide min mor Det kan jeg godt tage i nerven og kender du det den der den sidder bare så dybt ind i mig fordi Det var så tydeligt at min søn troede jo dengang da han så pædagogerne Sådan du ved ikke altså jeg gav dem nogle blikke og Sådan noget Det var der var ingen der fordi min mor simpelthen ikke han tror jo altså hun er jo hovedet Det er jo Det er jo gud for ham ikke men de forstår meget ja altså bare en atmosfære ikke Det er så fedt altså Det er så uhyggeligt alt det Jeg har været igennem i mit liv hvor jeg tænker Jeg kan jo godt se at min ældste søn for eksempel han er Sådan som han er selvom han har en diagnose*

Jeg kan jo se på min yngste søn fordi han var han var 3 år da jeg blev skilt og Jeg har simpelthen har givet ham *plads til at forme sig* Sådan så man har lyst til også selv arbejdet intenst med mig selv lige så mange år også i 10 år nærmest ikke der kan jeg mærke han har en helt anden person end en helt anden tilgang til tingene også altså Det er helt vildt hvor meget egentlig man tror det ikke Jeg tror det næsten ikke men de scanner en fra top til tå Det er helt vildt. jamen Det er jo virkelig ikke, altså Det er så uhyggeligt altså og jeg tænker jo også nogle gange altså hvis man vidste hvad Det var man gik ind til de jo havde fået børn i dag det det det ved jeg sgu ikke egentlig Det er meget svært Det er et kæmpe arbejde, Det er det virkelig, og det meste af det handler jo om man kan jo ikke være perfekt dygtig det handler om men det der med at det handler faktisk om at arbejde med sig selv, og det tror jeg bare det var det jeg ville, hænger også sammen med at være bydelsmor altså, det der med jeg ville jo ind og gøre en forskel på mødrene simpelthen ikke kun på kvinderne, men Jeg kan se det ja og det hjalp mine børn også ikke

I: sejt, hvad han er du har jo faktisk lige svaret på mit andet spørgsmål i forhold til om du tænker at dit liv ville have set anderledes ud hvis du ikke havde været bydelsmor

N: men ja men altså min søn han fik jo den her diagnose simpelthen alle sammen han blev udredt Det var simpelthen den største gave jeg nogensinde kunne få helt vildt Det er forskelligt ja jamen Det er så vildt som det overhovedet kan være

I: Det er så din ældste søn

N: ældste søn ja, ja så det hjælper på mange områder

I: Det er ikke for at lægge ord i munden på dig men der lyder det meget Sådan som om for dig at det til dels betydninger meget en selvudvikling at selvrefleksion og en lærerig oplevelse men så tænker jeg også samtidig også at du har hjulpet kvinder. ved du Sådan hvor mange du tror du har hjulpet igennem tiden?

N: altså Jeg har jo også uden for bydelsmødrene, altså der har jeg der har jeg også hjulpet altså Det har jeg max 10 stykker eller Sådan noget og så snakker man med dem i en periode eller hvad der ja nogle af dem har jeg startet i jeg hjalp for eksempel en om at komme ud af hvad hedder det hun havde så mange problemer med Sådan hvad er når hun er i boet her i så mange år så der havde jeg altså der kunne jeg se at der altså hun har brug for noget sparring omkring hvordan man henvender sig til jobcentret hvordan får jeg støtte til at kunne klare mig hvis jeg nu gik fra min mand eller alt Sådan nogle ting ikke, altså kæmpe barrierer, jamen Det er det da kæmpe ja fordi hvis altså man kan heller ikke bare lige pludselig gå ud på gaden og så er det det jo Der er nogle små børn også og børnepengene de tror at de røg ind på farens kontor eller Sådan noget der var noget bestemt der ikke og så der var der var nogle ting og Det var Sådan lidt længere proces ikke hvor hun møder op i Job centret nogle gange så så Det er Sådan lidt forskelligt og så har jeg også tolket det gjorde jeg da jeg var 23 24 år og så i forbindelse med byrådsmøde og Det var bare i forbindelse med også at gøre en forskel så tolkede jeg også for kvinder og der kunne allerede være dengang at det gav mig noget også er det der med at man så tolkede fra en kvinde og jeg mødte jo så mange kvinder også kvinder på i kvindecnret som var som havde været igennem noget en eller anden form for noget vold ikke så allerede fra Jeg tror fra rimelig ung alder der ville jeg gøre en forskel for kvinden men fordi man selv og så havnede jeg

også selv i nogle forhold som ikke var særlig gode så Jeg har jo ikke haft mulighed for at arbejde med det

I: jamen Det har du stadig gjort meget. ja det synes Jeg er sejt. Der er lige en sidste ting Jeg er lidt interesseret i forhold til jeg nævnte tidligere og Det er ikke fordi Det er sikkert du har noget at sige om det, men det her Sådan netværk omkring det, om Det har haft en indflydelse på dig, er det noget af det nu har jeg set du stadig kommer i cafeen i hvert fald set og 2 gange der altså Sådan det netværksmæssigt og om Det har en betydning for dig

N: ja Det har jo altså på en eller anden vis så har det Jeg har kun været noget 2 gange faktisk efter jeg stoppede som bydelsmor så det det første gang Jeg har været her nu har og jeg tænkte jeg Sådan skrev til mig og jeg tænkte ja nu er jeg jo altså et helt andet sted og Sådan noget ikke og arbejde så intenst med mig selv mine børn er blevet store de klarer sig selv så tænkte jeg selvfølgelig og Det er så hyggeligt *fordi Jeg tror altså selvom Jeg er hvad kan man sige Jeg har en meget vestlig Jeg tror Jeg er mere vestlig end mange andre muslimske kvinder også men Vi har jo noget tilfælles alle sammen altså Vi har den samme baggrund simpelthen Vi har Vi har de samme oplevelser så Jeg synes Det er simpelthen så rart at være med i Sådan et netværk hvor man Sådan du ved det synes lidt svært at sige men man føler sig Sådan lidt mere hjemme på en eller anden vis ikke ja Det er godt ja fordi at altså de ved jo hvad min baggrund er altså og jeg kender deres baggrund ikke altså Det er jo lidt ligesom på mit gamle arbejde der snakkede de om bedsteforældre og den samtale kunne jeg aldrig være med på for bedsteforældre Der er nej nej altså deres bedsteforældre også ikke deres bedsteforældre og hvis man havde Sådan en samtale det kunne jeg aldrig være med på fordi at mine bedsteforældre boede i Pakistan Jeg har jo slet ikke Jeg har slet ikke haft nogle relationer til mine bedsteforældre så Det er Sådan en mærkelige del Det er jo en del af mig der mangler men Jeg kan ikke være med men mine veninder og mig vi kan jo snakke om det fordi de har den samme baggrund ikke de har heller ikke haft og de synes Det er så dejligt Jeg synes Det er så dejligt at min forældre kan være bedsteforældre for mine børn ikke fordi jeg ikke selv har oplevet det så *Der er så mange ting fra min fortid som jeg ikke Sådan rigtig kan snakke med min med min har ikke kunnet snakke med kollegaer og for eksempel ikke så det giver altså en forståelse, en fællesskabsfølelse**

I: tror du det jeg også har haft Sådan en indflydelse på den her personlige udvikling du beskriver at du har kunnet føle dig Sådan trygge i den periode?

N: Ja, dengang jeg tog den her uddannelse, det tror jeg da helt bestemt at det har. Det omhandlede jo om det kvinder med anden etnisk baggrund der skulle have den her uddannelse så Jeg tror allerede der at man tager hensyn til den del, så sker der jo altså så er det jo så så er jo uddannelses hvad kan man sige hele materialet om uddannelsen er jo baseret på at Det er jo en kvinde med anden etnisk baggrund og det altså nogle ting. Jeg kunne jo være med på altså mange af tingene og så nogle ting kunne jeg ikke være med på fordi jeg havde jo haft et dansk uddannelsessystem ikke. Det var der nogle af dem der ikke havde haft her. så ja, Der er jo nogle kvinder der kommer i caféen sidst, var der flest bydelsmødre, men Der er nogen jo Jeg tror da også at Det har en indflydelse på dem eller en betydning for dem at de kan være en del af, helt sikkert. *Det er jeg slet ikke i tvivl om overhovedet, altså Jeg tror da helt sikkert at hvis jeg dengang da jeg var ung og havde et barn og der fandtes de*

her bydelsmødre så ville jeg føle mig, selvom Jeg er født og opvokset her, jeg følte mig mere tryk i deres nærvær dengang end jeg ville jeg gjorde med min med min arbejdskollega. Det er faktisk lidt vildt egentlig, men Det var den følelse jeg havde og Det var fordi Jeg tror at der sker et eller andet og man er sårbar når man er utryk så er det bare svært at udfolde sig til en helt anden hvad kan man sige nation eller folkefærd eller, ja end dem fra sin egen baggrund fordi du behøver faktisk ikke at sige, du siger jo til dem, jeg laver mad. Jeg kan jo sige til dem fra min egen baggrund der kan jeg sige jeg laver mad hver dag og de vil jo ikke stille spørgsmål men hvis du sagde det til en etnisk dansk kvinde eller til kollega. jeg laver mad, Det er mig der står for maden hver dag fordi min mand ikke ønsker at lave mad, så vil de tænke okay altså hvorfor skal du lave mad hvorfor laver han ikke noget Det er jo ikke din opgave og Sådan nogle ting, så de har svært ved at forstå den der kulturelle del men Det er jo bare noget man gør her ja, altså siger man en genkendelighed. ja det tror jeg også er vigtigt at Det er jo ja altså uanset ja man er tænker jeg at man kan spare altså.

I: Det er jo det Jeg har nemlig tænkt meget på at Det er jo ikke fordi Der bliver sagt meget omkring det bord men jeg tænker måske Der er nogen der kommer fordi, så har de noget socialt uden de egentlig behøver at sidde og have en dyb samtale

N: præcis ja og så får man en kop kaffe til og så snakker man om lidt forskellige og så er det det Det er det Jeg tror helt sikkert altså Jeg tror virkelig Der er brug for det her også det der med at komme ud hjemmefra Der er nogle af dem der måske ikke har noget arbejde og bare er hjemme konstant altså det det Det er rart at komme ud og få snakket noget og Jeg har selv mærket det nu her altså jeg ved at Jeg er ved at kvæles i det der med at være hjemme nu altså selvom Jeg er sygemeldt men det der med Jeg har lyst til og går ud og møder andre mennesker Jeg har lyst til at snakke med andre mennesker end min mand eller mine børn altså eller min familie eller mine veninder altså Jeg har ja det Jeg har lyst til at lave noget andet nu Det er jo meget menneskeligt ja tror jeg ja helt sikkert ja så Jeg tror også det Der er med ved kvinder eller bare med folk med anden etnisk baggrund vi får jo altså uddannelsessystem Pakistan for eksempel Det er jo Det er jo ikke at man lærer ikke børnene om at være opsøgende eller stille spørgsmålstejn du får besked det den her måde det foregår på og Sådan skal du lære det altså der man må ikke stille kritiske spørgsmål man må ikke hvad kan man sige hvad hedder det når man får en besked og den er modtaget og så stopper man det her og Jeg tror folk der også kommer der fra de her lande de har meget svært ved at opsøge noget vi tænker nej vi får en besked og Sådan skal vi gøre og så er det Sådan vi fortsætter ikke ja Der er lidt mere Sådan engang hvor der siger man et stringent forhold til en autoritet måske hvor det måske er mere ja Jeg vil gerne at også nej jeg ved ikke om Det er autoritet altså Jeg tror bare ikke at de de får ikke de får ikke lov til at udfolde sig på den måde som vi gør her i Danmark at vi får lov til at spille altså hvis du siger et eller andet til mig altså lad os sige at hvis jeg som bydelsmødre går ind og henvender mig hos en så vil hun jo måske bare lytte til mig fordi hun føler at hun skal bare lytte til dig når du siger okay tak Jeg vende tilbage til dig og så hører man en ting fra den her person ikke hun stiller ikke spørgsmål måske altså og hun siger hvad kan du hjælpe mig med Det var hun jo ikke det spørgsmål hun ikke stille så så bydelsmor er det meget vigtigt også og finde de rigtige spørgsmål og så stille så man Sådan kan få dem til at snakke og åbne sig mere op ikke kigge rundt Det er jo også fordi Det er en anden måde end man er vant til.

Appendix F: Observations at the Female Cafés

Meeting 1, March 31st:

The 31st of March I was invited to participate in a local Neighborhood Mothers woman's café in a town in the greater Copenhagen area, in which I grew up and lived the first 19 years of my life. As I arrived, I was greeted by the front woman whom I had been invited by. The café was held in the old post office at the station now functioning as a place for local volunteer groups. The café was arranged around a table and next to it coffee, tea and snacks for the women. At the seating table was a former Neighborhood Mother with roots in Iraq, and two local women, one from Syria, she told she had 6 kids, and was a grandmother, some in Sweden and one in England, and had been a hairdresser for almost 30 years, she did not speak Danish. At the table was also a woman from Afghanistan residing in Denmark for 4 years, with six adult kids which compared to the years living here, had grown her language well. Later arrived one user, who resided in Nørrebro, but had met the frontwoman, Maria through her husband and enjoyed participating in the café and other events such as a local multicultural food club arranged by all the women and two mentors. One with roots in Pakistan, but in Denmark for 35 years, who participated in the first round of education held by programme, as well as Olivia from Latvia, who had overseen making the local section a self-run volunteer organisation. At this first meeting I did not make formal interviews, however we did a presentation round in which I got a little insight into the women's backgrounds, as well as engaging in small talk and conversations. In my talk with them, they both emphasised the cultural diversity they met through being a Neighbourhood Mother, and exemplified how for example, they taught women how the women that the Danish system is less of obvious power, as Olivia said; some of the women come from less democratic places, where you cannot just talk to the people in charge. One who had worked as a neighbourhood mother in another area outside of Copenhagen where she used to live, said that in the work in the city it was harder to reach people, she helped the local women with for example contacting children's institutions and getting their children on waiting lists. Olivia emphasised how her work and engagement as a volunteer had let her to meet the mayor due the current conflict in Ukraine, of which the municipality will receive more than 900 refugees from. As Olivia speaks Russian, and herself has experience as being unemployed she can help to receive and guide some of the people arriving. At the end of the café, I got her contact info as she wanted to engage in an interview. I was as well invited back to the next café, which is held every Thursday of the month, where the frontwoman suggested that I could help her getting the café ready for the women and while

doing that have an informal interview. I sensed an openminded and welcoming atmosphere, and as Karina said, she just really liked coming there, even though she did not live in the city herself.

Meeting 2, April 28th:

The 28th of April I was again invited to participate in the female café. I had planned with the front woman Maria to arrive early and carry out the interview with her, and then help to set up the café an hour later. At this day it was during the Muslim holiday of Ramadan, which might be the reason for the small number of participants, as only one other former Neighbourhood Mother participated. At the meeting was also another student and a saleswoman. The former Neighbourhood Mother, Nadia, told me a short story of how she became involved, and why she had left. Her story told about wish to self-develop, which the time as a Neighbourhood Mother had succeeded her in, mostly due to the educational parts surrounding psychology. She talked about how some families does not engage in conversations of emotions which she meant could be the reason why her former husband had not supported her wishes to develop her own personal resources. She also mentioned how some men could be controlling which she did not want to reproduce in her own sons. Another reason to join the Neighbourhood Mothers was, that even though she was born in Denmark, her parents who came in the 1960s had a strong sense of their original nationality, which let them to not talk about feelings and let a mostly practical love-language, such as taking care of each other, meaning that she for example had not known how to talk with the caretakers in her sons kinder garden, which she scared would make her children think, that the adults that took care of them did not like her. Her intentions were therefore also to break down barriers she experienced in herself and her background, and at the same time to self-develop and help other women at the same time.

Meeting 3, 26th May:

At the third meeting at the Female Café 14 women was present, out of whom 8 was Neighbourhood Mothers, one a Former Neighbourhood mother(women 2 from café 2), three from other volunteer associations, a chef who had done a project with the group, and one an acquaintance of one of the Neighbourhood Mothers, who was presented as being interested in becoming a part of the group, but also said, that she was seeking a network due to her feeling lonely. The meeting started with a long round of presentations, in which the backgrounds and some experiences was presented. A tendency among the presentation seemed, that all women had a drive to help other women. A woman mentioned how she joined, and gained, self-development and grew her experience of being a translator, another

that she used, and grew, her local network, as she mentioned how she knew everyone in her area of the city, even a whole three generations of some families. Another woman who had been a Neighbourhood Mother for almost 10 years, said that her motivation was her own interest in helping other people, as it felt natural to her to “just help her Neighbour”, describing her motivation as also being due to her personal and social drive. It was this woman, who brought her acquaintance. A tendency among the women present was their engagement in social work, both due their volunteer work, but also due to their education – pedagogy, integration and social- and health worker. The round of presentations developed into an explanation of the concept and organisation, as well as the problem of many independent volunteer associations: funding. The discussion grew into how, as everyone agreed on, the continuous and important work for integration is not supported by the municipality or the state, and how the process of fund applications is both tiering and often insufficient. I, myself have wondered, in the process of my meetings and interviews with the Neighbourhood Mothers, and with the consultant at the office of the foundation, that as the work of the women have been confirmed as having a positive impact on the women being helped, and the Neighbourhood Mothers themselves, how the funding is not secured by the state as an important integration intervention. In this discussion mostly the women of the other organisations as well as the frontwoman participated. Their conversation emphasised how they put a lot of effort into working with other organisations, such as with cooking projects or playing rooms for isolated women's groups, and all had trouble with receiving funding from the municipality, and at the same time discussing the great volunteer network, and the importance of it, in the city as a contrast to the “*bureaucratic*” *system of the municipality* (as quoted by one woman) and how municipality did not want to fund a coordinator two hours per week (the Frontwoman) leading to the group becoming an independent volunteer-based association around three years ago, solely depended on funding. The experience of funding was that independent funds were easier to receive than from the municipality, leading to a feeling that their work may be “*taken for granted*” as the woman who had done a project with the group mentioned.

Meeting 4, 30th June

At this café there was 11 participants, of whom I met four before, and of which six were Neighbourhood Mothers. Again, there is a cosy atmosphere and a feeling of how the women are present to check in with each other and are coming to talk. They talk about previous and coming events. There are plans to make more inclusive happenings, such as conversations meant to cross

cultures, such as with food, dance and a trip for the women to the north of Zealand. The women greet each other with hugs and kisses and enjoy cake and coffee. This time, there is no conversation on why the women are there. Maria says that she wants to include ethnic Danes in the group, and one is already present.