

An analysis on the Inclusivity and Integration of South Asian Women in High Skilled Job within Danish Labor Market

By Isha Thapa



A Master's Thesis

Supervisor: Susi Meret

Censor: Peter Marcus Kristensen

Aalborg University: Development and International Relations

MAY 30, 2024

AALBORG UNIVERSITY

Acknowledgements

My experience towards writing this thesis has been an incredible journey where I would like to thank everyone who helped me along the way to completion.

First and foremost, I would like to thank my every supportive, critical yet encouraging supervisor, Susi Meret. You have been the perfect guide light to me when I felt lost. You helped me overcome a lot of insecurities and questions which I had that assisted me complete my thesis in record time. Thank you for being ever so patient and optimistic with me.

Secondly, I would like to thank the women who participated in this study and gave me their valuable insight, experience and stories that made this thesis possible. Thank you for trusting me with your stories and giving me a chance to share it. Also, a huge thanks for being open, bold and candid about your thoughts.

Thirdly, my family for being the solid rock in times of crisis. My husband, Rohan, for always lending an ear when I wanted to share anecdotes about my writing. Always giving me suggestions and words of encouragement when thoughts of doubt engulfed me. And my little daughter Eva, the ever cheerful, happy and cute, part of my life who with her innocence and babbles has been a huge part in helping me deal with any curveball that came my way.

And lastly, I would like to thank my friends, Asmita Thapa, Hind Azbe and Maryam Bahrami, for giving me the biggest encouragement as well as being the greatest critic of my work. I cannot thank the three of you enough.

Table of Contents

Abstract	4
Chapter 1: Introduction	5
1.1 Motivation.....	5
1.2 Problem Formulation.....	6
Chapter 2: Background	7
2.1 Danish Flexicurity Model	10
2.2 Distribution of population in the Danish Labor Market	12
2.3 Women's Role in Danish Labor Market	12
Chapter 3: Critical State of the Art	14
3.1 Previous research encircling the immigrants in Danish Labor Market	14
3.2 Experimental Evidence of Discrimination in the Labor market in Denmark.....	18
3.3 Western Versus Non-Western.....	21
Chapter 4: Methodology.....	23
4.1 Epistemological Approach.....	23
4.2 Applied Theories.....	24
4.3 Group of Interest	25
4.4 Empirical Data	25
4.5 Data Collection	26
4.6 The Candidates	27
Chapter 5: Theoretical Analysis	28
5.1 An Intersectional Approach	28
5.2 Social Capital Theory.....	30
5.3 Approaches to Labor Market Theory	34
Chapter 6: Analysis.....	38
6.1 Introduction of Candidates	38
6.2 Respondents' understanding of Denmark and the Danish work life upon their arrival to the country.....	40
6.3 Cultural Aspect	42
6.4 Obstacles in working course related jobs	42
6.5 Why is language a barrier?.....	44
6.6. The importance of Social Network in Danish Labor Market	45
6.7 Intersectionality of South Asian Women	47
6.8 Labor Market Assimilation of South Asian Women	51
Chapter 7: Discussion	52

7.1 Different Visa, Different Opportunities	54
7.2 Culture and Gender	54
<i>Chapter 8: Conclusion</i>	55

Abstract

The inclusion of women and immigrants has always been an ongoing debate and an area of study in the Danish Labor Market. This thesis attempts to analyze the reasons of why the high skilled immigrant women from South Asia are working low skilled, wage-based employment in Danish Labor Market.

Denmark is a country that values social welfare among other things which is why more and more immigrants choose to settle here. In recent years, this country has seen a surge in the numbers of immigrant population. With labor scarcity in the job market and a shortage of high skilled employees Denmark is seeking workers to fill the void. In this thesis I try to understand how this void is not being met through the population who already lives here.

Statistically, there is a significant gap in between native Danish women and immigrants' women about their participation in the labor market. Many plans and policies have been implemented to bridge the gap with very little success and little impact on the overall goal. The hypothesis that has been made regarding these women is that they possess low skill or are linguistically challenged, or even having cultural and religious boundaries. But this is all just a superficial study and there is not a lot of concrete evidence to support such proposition. The women that I came across during my research are extremely qualified, intelligent, well-educated and young and yet are often times overlooked.

This thesis is not about the inclusion of South Asian women in the labor market since most south Asian women are financially independent and are earning for a living. On the contrary, this study is to understand, analyze and explore the underpinning and reasoning that despite being such head-strong women why are they working low skilled menial, lower wage jobs?

I chose to study about South-Asian women in particular is because of how little study is done with this group of immigrant women. Most of the research and study is conducted on Latin, African and Middle eastern women while South-Asian women are at many times unnoticed. That is why I plan to go forth with this particular group of women and explore the issues from their perspective.

The theoretical framework sustaining this study is linked to Social capital, intersectional approach and Labor Market approaches and how these influences the South Asian women integrate within the Danish Labor Market. These theories will provide the groundwork in understanding the positioning of South Asian women and provide with the possible measures to overcome the barriers that they undergo in the labor market.

This thesis concludes by answering the key research question and placing all the topics that we encountered during the research with possible outcomes, suggestions and approach. Most of the solutions to overcome the barriers for women in the labor market is divided into two folds. One is to accept the shortcoming within oneself and making changes to overcome them through support, guidance and confidence. The second is policy based, where more inclusive policies are needed to be implemented where the shortage of labor that is occurrent in the labor market is met with immigrants that already reside in Denmark rather than seek elsewhere.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Motivation

Immigration as defined by Cambridge Dictionary is *“the act of someone coming to live in a different country”* (Cambridge, 2024). National Geographic Organization (TNG, 2024) further elaborates it as *“(...) immigrate for a variety of reasons, such as employment opportunities, to escape a violent conflict, environmental factors, educational purposes, or to reunite with family. The process of immigrating can be complicated and is often driven by a few key principles including uniting families, boosting the economy with skilled professionals, promoting diversity, and helping refugees”*.

The process of moving to a different region or country is not a new phenomenon at all as it has historically been going on since the dawn of life. The overview towards it, however, has changed multiple times in a lot of ways.

Geographically speaking, what is at stake is not the migration journey as such, but rather the travelling across borders. The opportunities or the lack of same that migrants face in a new country are different particularly when the context of the receiving country is culturally and linguistically another. To understand what ‘migration’ and ‘migrant’ is in the minds of the immigrants and in what way they want to further their role as individuals and citizens in the country they wish to settle in. Denmark is among the countries that in the recent years is experiencing a surge in high skill South Asian migrants (Niraula & Valentin, 2018). What transpires as highly skilled is debatable since it doesn’t identify what kind of skills. In a Danish context, terms like højtuddannede indvandrere (highly educated immigrants), højtuddannet udenlandsk arbejdskraft (highly educated foreign labour), and højt kvalificerede udlændinge (highly qualified foreigners) are commonly used in policy documents and by key actors on the Danish labour market, such as the Confederation of Danish Industry. These terms are translated into English as "highly skilled immigrants" (Niraula & Valentin, 2018).

The thesis focuses on women migrants from South Asia who have come to Denmark from the period of (2014-2018) with hopes to build their and their families’ future. These women have come to Denmark on a) family reunification visa, b) student visa and c) green-card visa. The challenges these women face in the labor market is what this thesis is about. The integration of these women is primarily in the low skilled fields such as child/elderly care, service and cleaning despite having high education attainment. This research is conducted to understand

why these women possessing high literacy rate are not integrated in high skilled, professional workplaces.

1.2 Problem Formulation

The non-western population in Denmark is very varied. It includes people from Asia, Africa and South America which are the world's most diverse, populated and culturally and ethnically rich (Statistics Denmark, 2024). Asia in itself is too vague a geographical term to describe what goes under South Asia, North Asia, Arab and MENAPT countries. The influx of immigrants from all non-western countries has increased in the past decades and is constantly growing (Integrationsministeriet, 2022). This has led to the participation and the inclusion of non-western population in the Danish labor market. Women's presence in the labor market is also growing with more and more non-western women seeking employment and other labor economic opportunities (EC, 2024). Yet, issues are seen in the nature and the way these opportunities emerge. Among the issues there is not only the efforts of including more women with migrant background on the labor market, but also to offer them prospects that are best suited towards these women's educational qualifications and skills they have. This thesis addresses the equitability of Danish labor market in regard to non-western women.

The focus is on the women with South Asian heritage and their employment area on the Danish labor market. The reason for selecting women originating from the South Asian countries is because very little study has been done of women from this geographical area. Additionally, the migration from South Asia to Denmark is new compared to other parts of the world and it would be interesting to learn the insights and experiences of these women living and working in Denmark.

So, the main research question that this thesis aims to address is:

"What are the 'underlying' factors behind the lower integration and inclusion of South Asian Women in high skilled jobs within the Danish labour market?"

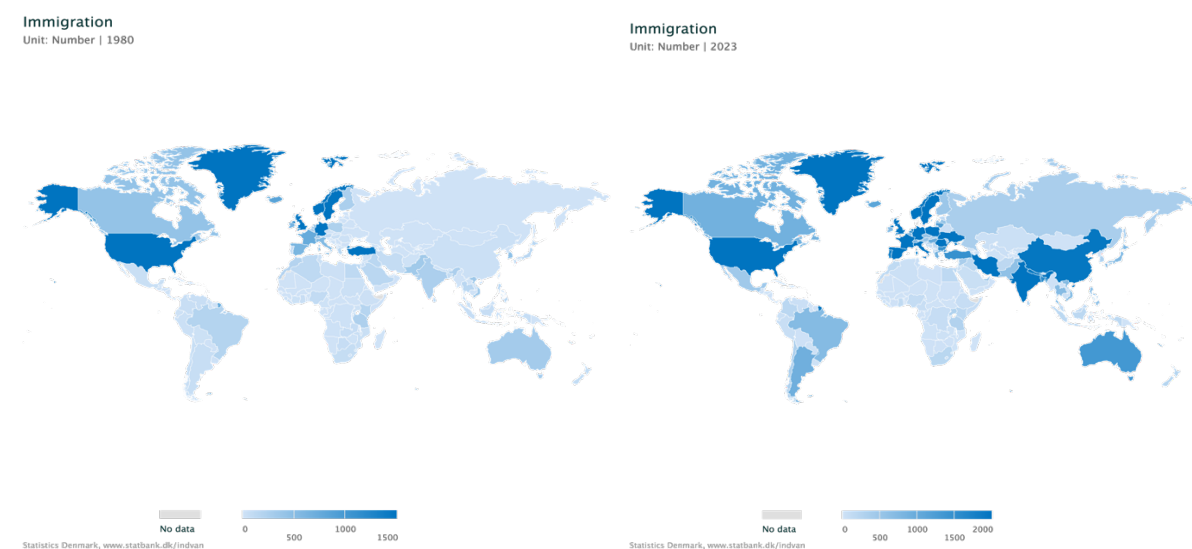
Chapter 2: Background

The process of immigration in Denmark as compared to other European countries is relatively new. During the industrial revolution in the 1800s and early 1900s, many workers from Sweden, Germany and Poland reached to Denmark to participate in large construction activities such as building railways, canals and fortification of Copenhagen (3F, 2021). By the year 1885, 8.1% of total population of Copenhagen was born abroad (Østergaard, 2007). In the years 1883 to 1912, large influx of immigrants' (Polish seasonal workers) came to Denmark. The remnants of this can be seen in the Roman Catholic churches built during that time by Polish Roman Catholic populations (Polakkasernen, 2018). Then, following an economic boom in the 1960s, immigration as an occurrence was again largely seen where great number of migrant workers were brought from Chile, Turkey, Pakistan and ex-Yugoslavia (EC, 2024). International events in the 20th century gave rise to higher migration rates with displaced people and refugees arriving Denmark (Nannestad, 2004). In 1973, due to growing unemployment, Social Democratic Party of Denmark put an immediate halt to labor immigration from countries outside the European Economic Committee (EEC). This stop was the practiced by the whole North (and Germany), but migration rates kept growing for family reunification and the decision of the guest workers (predominately Turks) to stay (Olesen, Elkjær, Sørensen, Olesen, & Farbøl, 2019). IN 1983, the Danish Parliament (Folketinget) passed a new Aliens Act which was based on recommendations made by majority of the 1977 committee on immigration law. This came to be known as the most liberal act on all of Europe (Olesen, Elkjær, Sørensen, Olesen, & Farbøl, 2019).

In the 1980s. the immigration to Denmark surged again. Although family reunions were still happening, a large number of refugees mainly from Poland, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon and Sri Lanka were starting to come. The inflow of refugees continued, in 1990s, more refugees from former Yugoslavia and Somalia started dominating the immigration numbers (Pedersen, 2000). The Aliens Act has been amended continuously since the 2000s. Between the years 2015 to 2019, the Act was modified over 100 times during the administration of Inger Støjberg who was the Minister of Immigration, Integration and Housing at that time (Pace & Bennetzen, 2022). In 2015, then Prime Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen declared a new integration policy that would focus on ensuring employment to refugees immediately after being granted Asylum in Denmark (2022).

The integration of migrants has been a greatly politicized issue in Denmark, considerably influencing national elections in the 21st century. Despite its politicization, various key milestones in the development of Denmark's national integration system can be identified. In 1999, integration emerged as an autonomous policy area with its own dedicated law and ministry, separate from general social affairs. Since the formation of this self-standing policy, immigration patterns have evolved, and with a notable increase in immigration. Initially family reunification and asylum were the primary motivators behind migration flows, however, in the recent years, a substantial number of visa applications have been for work and study purposes (EC, 2024).

Figure 1: Comparison in the area of immigration of the year between 1980 and 2023.



Source: (Statistics Denmark, 2024)

The map of the world from the 1980s to 2023 (Fig. 1) shows the change in the influx of migration in Denmark. The greatest number of people in the 80s were arriving predominantly from the United States, Turkey, Germany and other Nordic countries whereas in the present, the shift is seen in the Asian part of the globe. In the year 2023, the total of 71,561 immigrated to Denmark with the highest number of influxes predominantly from Ukraine. (Statistics Denmark, 2023).

In 2023, immigrants and descendants in Denmark constitutes of 924,423 or 16 % of the total population. In which 10 % of the Danish population were immigrants and descendants of non-Western origin, while 6 % of the population were immigrants and descendants of Western

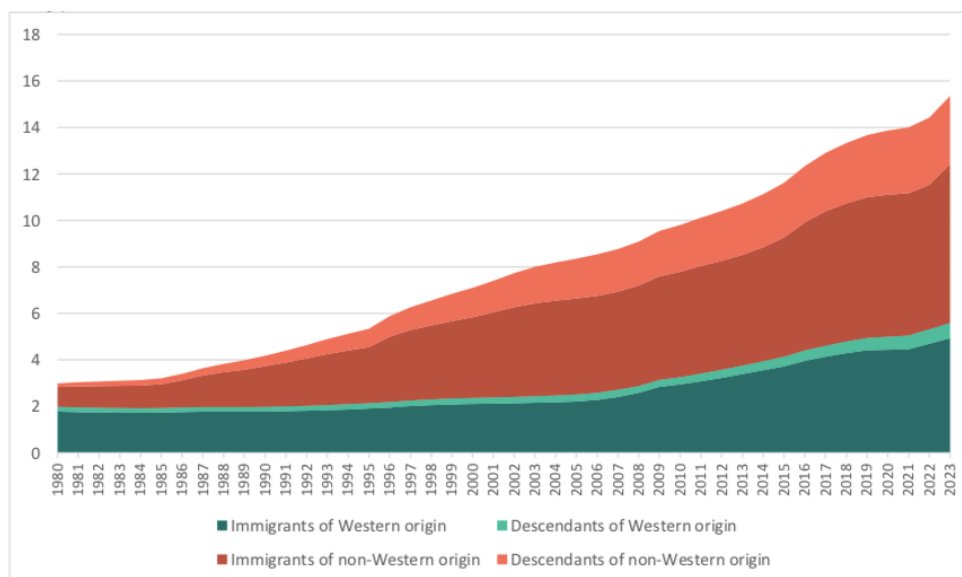
origin. Immigrants and descendants from MENAP¹-countries and Turkey including other non-Western countries comprise of 10% of the Danish population (International Migration Denmark, 2023).

Table 1: The population in Denmark by origin and population category, on 1st July 2023 (persons, percentage)

	Persons	Proportion of total population
Non-Western origin		
Immigrants	413,052	7%
<i>Hereof MENAP-countries and Türkiye</i>	180,301	3%
<i>Hereof other non-Western countries</i>	232,751	4%
Descendants	176,056	3%
<i>Hereof MENAP-countries and Türkiye</i>	114,919	2%
<i>Hereof other non-Western countries</i>	61,137	1%
Total	589,108	10%
<i>Hereof MENAP-countries and Türkiye</i>	295,220	5%
<i>Hereof other non-Western countries</i>	293,888	5%
Western origin		
Immigrants	295,596	5%
Descendants	39,719	1%
Total	335,315	6%
All immigrants and descendants	924,423	16%
Danish origin	5,019,722	84%
Total population	5,944,145	100%

Source: The Immigration Database of The Ministry of Immigration and Integration (IMBEF02A), managed by Statistics Denmark.

Figure 2: Proportion of immigrants and descendants of the total Danish population by origin, from 1st January 1980 to 1st January 2023 (percentage)



Source: (Statistics Denmark, 2023)

¹ MENAP-countries and Türkiye is a supplement and includes: Syria, Kuwait, Libya, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Somalia, Iraq, Qatar, Sudan, Bahrain, Djibouti, Jordan, Algeria, The United Arab Emirates, Tunisia, Egypt, Morocco, Iran, Yemen, Mauretania, Oman, Afghanistan, Palestine, Gaza, The West Bank, East Jerusalem, Pakistan and Türkiye.

The ratio of immigrants and descendants within the total population has grown significantly with a rise of over 10% since the year 1980 to 2023. Here, the growth in the percentage surged from 3% in the 1980 to 15.4% in 2023 which in numbers is roughly 758,000 persons. The number of immigrants and descendants of non-Western origin has always grown in a steady rate, however, the proportion of immigrants of Western origin has increased significantly in the past decade. This is especially seen in the surge of growing refugee population from Ukraine. This growth is then followed by Romania, Poland, Germany and India as the highest ratio of immigrants' inflow where India is the only non-Western origin country out of the top 5 countries (International Migration Denmark, 2023).

During my research about the number of south Asian women (specifically from Bangladesh, India, Philippines and Nepal) immigrating to Denmark, I found most women from India immigrated with a work visa. And the data for the other three countries suggested, women immigrated especially for on study visa. In the year 2023, from Bangladesh, 504 women came on a student visa, 1 came on family reunification visa and 24 came on work visa. In the case of Philippines, in 2023, 41 women came on student visa, 374 on Au-pair visa, 14 on family reunification and 72 on work visa. Similarly, from India, there was 1 woman coming on family reunification, 231 on student visa and 1144 on work visa. And lastly, from Nepal, 6 women came on family reunification, 4 on Au-pair visa, 665 on student visa and 34 on work visa (Statistics Denmark, 2023).

From the data mentioned above, we can see that only in the year of 2023, a total of 3,115 women specifically from Bangladesh, Nepal, India and Philippines immigrated to Denmark for study, family reunification and work. This also shows that after deducting family reunification, 3,093 women who came for work and education, could be high skilled. And this is only a number of women from four countries. The statistics for the entire world's population who is high skilled migrating to Denmark is much higher.

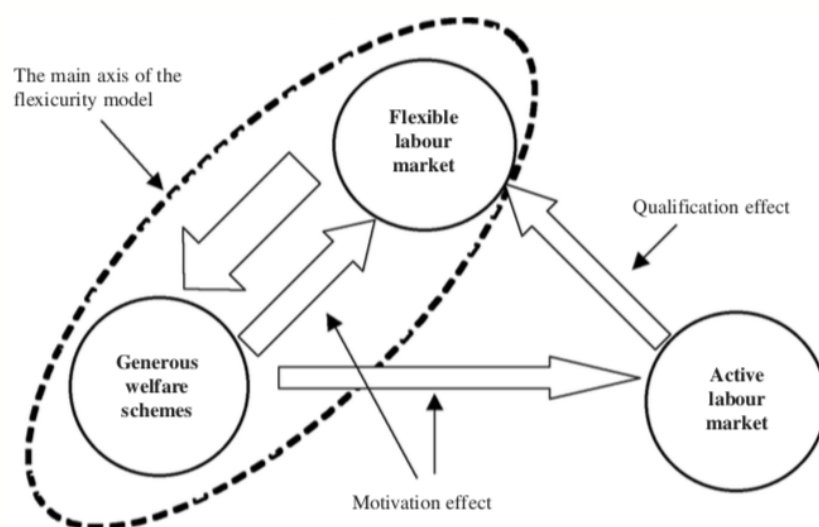
2.1 Danish Flexicurity Model

The influx of population from Immigrants regardless of their origin is due to the nature of Denmark's comprehensive welfare state. The term 'welfare state' refers to the benefit schemes that is organized to all sections of the public such as pensions, disability benefits,

unemployment insurance, social assistance as well as services such as healthcare, education, elderly and child-care. Nearly all institutions in Denmark have a strict public policy that provides economic security in terms of sickness, disability, unemployment and old age. Although the residents in Denmark pay a hefty tax, a general tax payment is favored by the population paid by employees and employers where the whole population is not only insured but entitled to economic security and public services (Breidahl, Hedegaard, Kristian, & Larsen, 2021).

The Danish Labor market model often described as a ‘golden triangle’ has gained quite a lot of attention due to its **‘high income security’** for the unemployed, **‘flexible labor market’** and **‘active market policy’**. The mobility in the job market that is measured by job mobility, job creation, job destruction and average tenure is comparatively higher than other countries. The relatively modest level of job protection in the Danish Labor market has encouraged people to take risks which the workers don’t hesitate about due to high social security as well (Bredgaard, Larsen, & Madsen, 2006). This cycle of hiring and firing of employees to attain needs of the marketplace where the employee too has a benefit of social security against unemployment is known as Flexicurity. According to the European Commission, Flexicurity is *“an integrated strategy for enhancing, at the same time, **flexibility and security** in the labour market”* (EC, European Commission: Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, 2024). The Flexicurity model is implemented to build a system where the labor market is productive, flexible and competitive (STAR, 2023).

Figure 3: The Danish Flexicurity Model

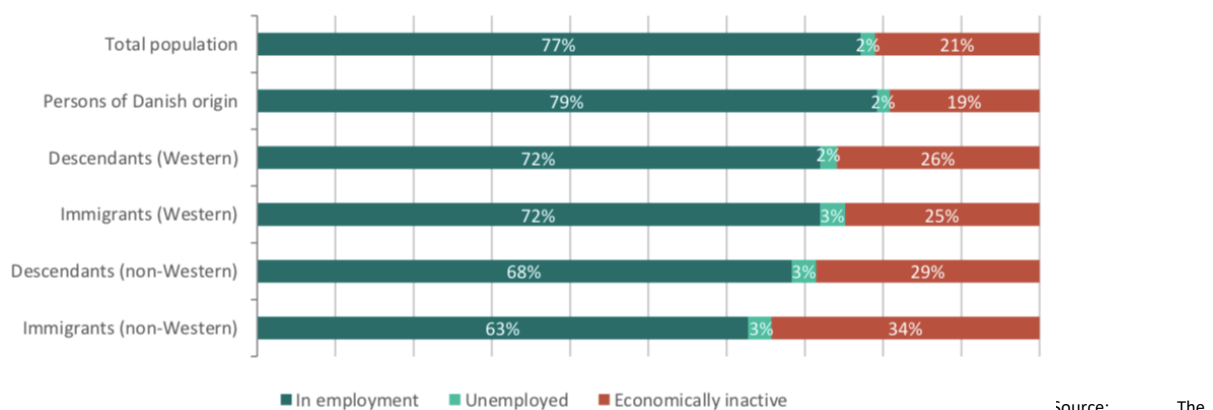


Source: Opportunities and challenges for flexicurity – The Danish example (Bredgaard, Larsen, & Madsen, 2006)

2.2 Distribution of population in the Danish Labor Market

In the year 2021, under the age group (16 to 64 years) three out of four persons (77%) were in employment and were economically active in Denmark. Putting that into numbers out of a total of 3,660,000 economically active persons over 2,820,000 persons were actively working and employed of whom more than 430,000 are immigrants and descendants.

Figure 4: Persons of the economically active age group (16-64 years) by origin, population category and labour market participation, November 2021 (percentage)



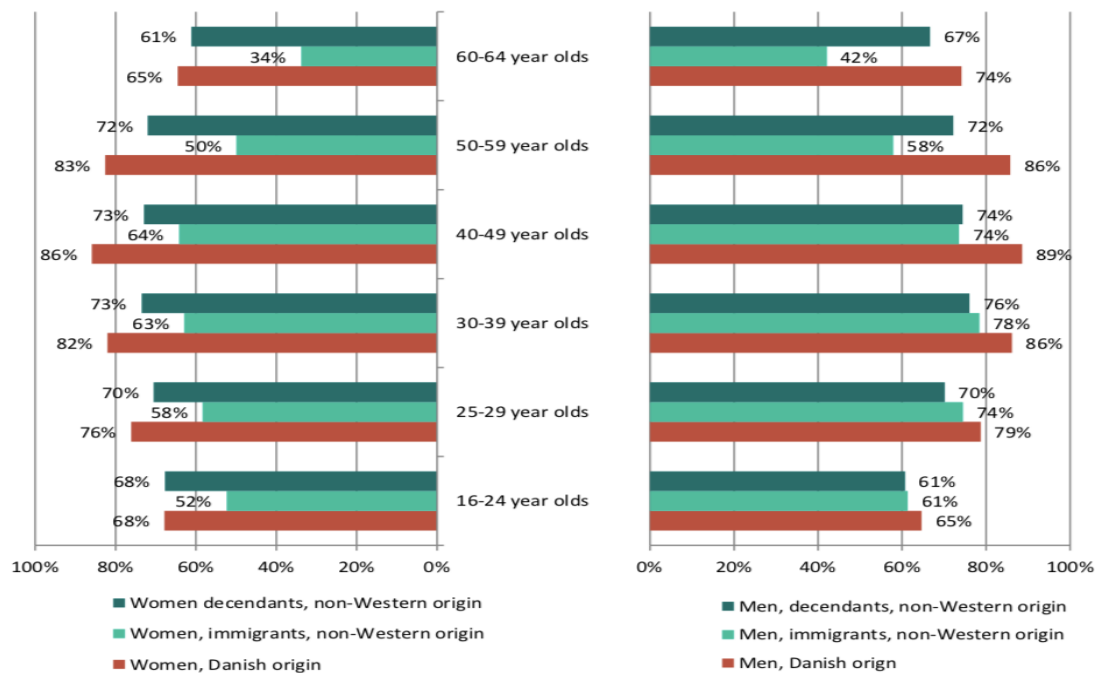
Immigration Database of the Ministry of Immigration and Integration (IMRAS17), managed by Statistics Denmark.

In the figure below, the activity and employment rates from 2022 shows the activity of the Danish Origin ratio in the labor market is the highest with 79.9% employment rate and 81.4% economic activity rate followed by immigrants from Western countries with 72.3% employment rate and 75.1% economic activity rate.

2.3 Women's Role in Danish Labor Market

The figure below (fig. 5) has neatly categorized the various intersections in terms of gender, age and origin in the labor market. **The employment rates of immigrants of non-Western origin and Danish origin contrasted quite significantly especially in the age group of 60-64-year-old.** The imbalance in the section of origin is quite obvious with the difference prevalent in both genders. However, when observing through a gender-based approach, the difference is stark. Danish origin men and women's involvement in the labor market is nearly similar if we take the age group 40-49 years, 86% women and 89% men are actively employed which is not a significant difference. Conversely, if we compare the employment rate within the same age group of 40-49 years, it comes to Danish men 89% and non-Western women 64% that shows a huge gap.

Figure 5: Employment rates of immigrants and descendants of non-Western origin and of persons of Danish origin by age group and gender, at November 2021 (percentage)



Source: The Immigration Database of the Ministry of Immigration and Integration), managed by Statistics Denmark.

There is a disbalance of equity in inclusion of non-Western Asian women in Danish Labor market. While women all across the globe in general are still considered a liability in the job market, Asian women are subject to higher rates of discrimination and inequality (Forbes, Yang, & Lim, 2023). In an experimental study done in Belgium, it was found that women from non-western origin were overlooked by HR professionals although they were equally qualifying for the job as native Belgian applicants (TBT, 2019). Similarly, in a study done in Denmark in 2017, researchers Malte Dahl and Niels Krog found evidences of discriminations in the labor market. (Dahl & Krog, 2018)

This difference in the involvement of immigrant women into the labor market can be initiated by different factors such as **language, education and networking** (KVINFO, 2023). International Migration-Denmark explains the gap is due to the *“lack of general and professional qualifications among the women, a lack of personal network to help and support them when searching for a job, and the challenges they may face due to cultural and family-related traditions”* (International Migration Denmark, 2023)

Chapter 3: Critical State of the Art

This chapter is dedicated to the findings of quantitative data for this research. The research articles, news, experimental studies, books as well as statistics and factsheets will be used as viable source of data that would help us further the argument that has been risen in this study. In the course of these past few months, I have come across some very interesting papers that explored the state of Immigrants in the Danish Labor market. This chapter will help us point out some important topics that would explore the intricacies within the Danish Labor Market, the opportunities well as the hurdles.

3.1 Previous research encircling the immigrants in Danish Labor Market

The research on immigrants in the Danish job market is done from by many scholars. Most research are done on immigrants predominately from MENAPT countries and other Muslim inhabited countries. Latin American research are a close second. But nonetheless, they still give a picture of the situation of immigrants who are actively involved inside the job market are seeking a way in.

I) Mobile Brains and the Question of 'Deskilling': High-skilled South Asian migrants in Denmark (Niraula & Valentin, 2018) is a research paper published in the Nordic Journal of Migration Research by Anshika Niraula and Karen Valentin. This article draws on two ethnographic research projects at the intersection between migration studies and education. The authors conducted a biographic narrative interview with 35 high skilled migrant workers out of which 17 were from South-Asian countries who arrived in Denmark on study permit, work permit, family reunification visa and green-card schemes. All the respondents were selected on the basis of their higher level of education. The article states that the prevalence of high skilled immigrant working low skilled jobs in high in Denmark leading to unfulfilled expectations and unexpected trajectories. The authors also encourage these immigrants to *"explore the acquisition and utilization of skills and knowledge as a continuously evolving process of learning within the 'odd jobs' or in various everyday contexts"* (Niraula & Valentin, 2018).

II) Employment among immigrant women and men in Denmark - The role of attitudes by Mette Deding and Vibeke Jakobsen (Deding & Jakobsen, 2008) is a working paper submitted to The Danish National Center for Social Research. This paper sets to examine the cultural factors that creates the employment gap between immigrants and Danes. The authors specifically study about traditional attitudes towards gender roles and its influence in the inclusion of women in the danish labor market. The authors perform the study through a survey where they selected candidates of age 18-45 from Turkey, Iran, Pakistan and native Danes. The total number of respondents from Turkey, Iran and Pakistan were 1,575 and 873 Danes. The analysis was done though a medium of surveys and questionnaire that asked about education, employment, language and skills.

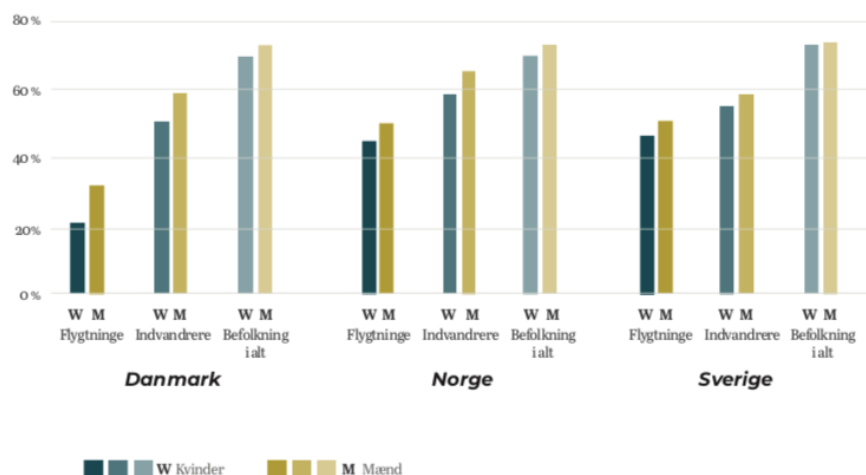
The findings of this study for the Danes showed that although Denmark is high in gender equality, women were still the primary caregiver for the children. This, however, did not matter in terms of education and employment since women were quite active in the labor market notwithstanding being a mother. Similarly, among immigrants, it was seen that employment rates for women plummeted after having children – *“the immigrant women are to a lesser extent able to combine work and family obligations”* (Deding & Jakobsen, 2008). The immigrant women on average also tend to have more children than Danish women which explains the lower employment rate. The paper concluded by stating that religion has nothing to do with the barriers in the labor market, but family situation and gender roles are major variable that prevent seamless assimilation of immigrants in the Danish Labor Market.

III) Inclusion and equitability in the support for non-western women to access the Danish Labour Market by Liliana Haydeè Núñez- Andersen (Andersen, 2022) is a Master’s thesis which aims to find support for non-western women to enter the Danish labor market. This thesis doesn’t try to find the barrier and has established that the bias is there but what are the ways to disregard the hurdles and find solutions towards an equitable and inclusive job market. The author does a qualitative analysis and interviews representatives of the Integration service in different municipalities. Andersen also gets in touch with a political advisor and interviews two professors from Aalborg University. The research is mainly policy based and has made no contact with the immigrants. Secondly, this research is also primarily based on Latin reunified spouses. The author concludes with the remark, *“The Latin American*

Reunified spouses might be economically self-sufficient, but they lack institutional Social Capital, that web of network and resources that native Danish have in order to achieve labour market insertion and mobility” (Andersen, 2022).

IV) Barrierer for Kvinder med Indvandrere og Flygtningebaggrund – på det Danske Arbejdsmarked by Cheralyn Meador (Meador, 2020) is a report presented to KVINFO about the non-western women in Danish Labor Market. The analysis is made through the use of Statistics Denmark 2020 data. The author introduces by stating that the study and research for immigrant and refugee women’s role in the labor market in Denmark is quite underwhelming. The report displays that according to Statistics Denmark, the employment rate for non-western women of age group 16-64 in 2018 was 49.8% which is significantly lower than non-western male immigrants with 61.9%. Also, compared to other population groups in Denmark, a large portion of non-western immigrants aged 16-64 are either unemployed or completely outside the labor market. In 2018, it was found 47% of non-western women were out of employment for 15 years or more. The women who have been unemployed for 15 years or more are mostly from Lebanon, Afghanistan, Somalia and Iraq. Similarly, women from Philippines come in second for unemployment for 15 or more years, and women from Thailand, Russia and Ukraine come in third.

Figure 6: Employment rate of Immigrant women, Refugee women and Danish women in Nordic countries



Source: Statistics Denmark 2020

As seen in the figure above, the report mentions the difference in employment rates of women of danish origin with Non-Western women (immigrants and refugees). According to a 2018 OECD report, female refugees face special challenges termed as 'triple disadvantaged' in the labor market with being a woman, immigrant and a refugee (Liebig & Tronstad, 2018).

V) White Migrations: Gender, Whiteness and Privilege in Transnational Migration by Catrin Lundstöm (Lundstöm, 2014) is a book that tends to specify how 'white migration' is an oxymoron term where migrants are most never pictured as white people. It further goes to explain how there is a difference in words in literature regarding white people and people of color. For example, white migrants are largely stated as expats while migrants from other countries are simply called immigrants. The author explains about the intersection of gender and whiteness as a central place where the concept of intersectionality is particularly oriented towards contradictory locations/ that has been inherited from both sides of oppression and opportunities depending on where the person is originally from. This book follows the route where the author finds how the labor market has been rooted to differentiate people migrating from a 'white' or privileged country or a developing/underdeveloped country.

VI) The Unarticulated Barrier - A study of unintentional racial- and discriminatory practice and how it can affect internationals' access to the Danish labour market by Emilie Lykke (Lykke, 2019) is also a master's Thesis which intends to figure out the barriers that hinder educated and experienced people from not finding a job in Denmark. The author plans to investigate what is that unarticulated 'something' that is halting the smooth integration of immigrants. In this research, Lykke does a qualitative analysis by drawing an ethnographic interview with 5 individuals from 5 very different countries (Pakistan, Syria, USA, England, Poland). The author states the finding as, *"cultural racism and hidden discrimination is a naturalised part of the dominant discourse in the Danish society. The discrimination is expressed so subtly that, even though it can be felt, it can be difficult to acknowledge it as discrimination. There is something there, but it is difficult to define, since it contains the sum of many different unacknowledged things, it is not 'just' cultural racism or banal nationalism, but is related to both, and can primarily be made sense of as part of experience"* (Lykke, 2019)

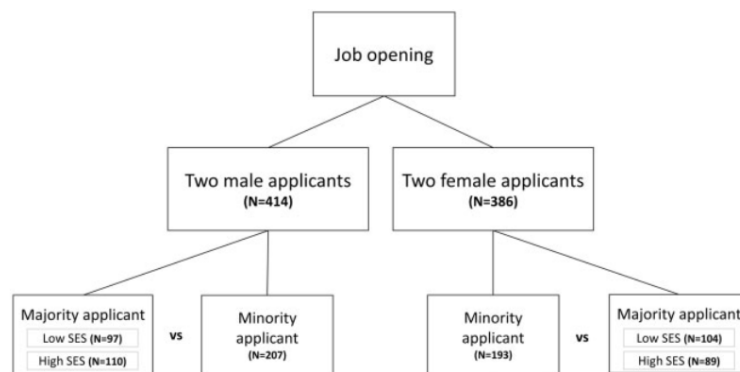
3.2 Experimental Evidence of Discrimination in the Labor market in Denmark

There have been a few articles and research papers that probed my mind towards this topic regarding how labor market biases occur in Denmark are what are the intersections affected by this. Through my research, I came across three significant papers. Two of them are articles of a PhD Dissertation published in the journal European Sociologist Review which was printed in 2018 written by Malte Dahl and Niels Krog called Detecting Discrimination. The third article on this experiment that intrigued me is called “Labour market discrimination: Relative, additive, and multiplicative effects” written by Jeevitha Yogachandiran Qvist & Christian Albrekt Larsen for Aalborg University.

I) Experimental Evidence of Discrimination in the Labor Market: Intersections between Ethnicity, Gender and Socio-Economic Status” by Malte Dahl and Niels Krog (Dahl & Krog, Experimental Evidence of Discrimination in the Labour Market: Intersections between Ethnicity, Gender, and Socio-Economic Status, 2018) is a research article included in the PhD dissertation book called Detecting Discrimination. In this article, the authors perform field experiments to present evidence of ethnic discrimination in the recruitment process in the Danish Labor Market where fictitious job applications were randomly assigned either a Danish sounding name of a Middle Eastern sounding name and sent to real job vacancies. The study specifically talks about previous research done on this topic however, discrimination as a word is highly tricky and sensitive in execution where events and statements can be misjudged or overlooked which can remain *“unclear to what extent the experience of discrimination correspond to a reliable representation of reality”* (Pager & Shepherd, 2008). This is why conducting of these experiments in the field is vital to measure the actual behavior of the employers when studying a topic as sensitive as discrimination.

The authors randomized the assignment into three treatments – gender, ethnicity and socio-economic status (SES) using proxy names. The empirical analysis was collected from September 2015 to June 2016 with 800 applicants applying to 400 job openings.

Figure 7: Assignment to treatment and control groups



Source: (Dahl & Krog, 2018)

“The findings demonstrate that discrimination varied substantially by gender, which serves as a call to future correspondence experiments to manipulate gender to estimate general measures of ethnic discrimination” (Dahl & Krog, Experimental Evidence of Discrimination in the Labour Market: Intersections between Ethnicity, Gender, and Socio-Economic Status, 2018). Another finding from this study was to discover that ethnic minorities men were specifically penalized. There has been a set assumption on the cultural identities of that population group. The paper ends by urging other researchers in the future to delve deep into this matter and *“to replicate and extend work in this area by disentangling the effects of other components alone and in combination to contribute towards measuring and understanding ethnic discrimination”* (Dahl & Krog, Experimental Evidence of Discrimination in the Labour Market: Intersections between Ethnicity, Gender, and Socio-Economic Status, 2018).

II) Alike but different: How cultural distinctiveness shapes immigrant-origin minorities’ access to the labour market by Malte Dahl (Dahl, 2019) is another research article included in the PhD dissertation book called Detecting Discrimination. This study was made to understand how the discrimination happens in the labor market. The author states that there have been studies that has fund evidence showing how employers discriminate against second generation immigrants on the basis of physical appearance and names despite these people having acquired fluency in the language and formal education from that country. The study was performed in a similar manner as the previous study as the CVs were send with 1 proxy traditional Danish name, 1 middle eastern name and 1 middle eastern name with a head scarf of the same person to different companies. A total of 1,350 generic applications

were sent to several job openings through an online job portal in Denmark. This study reports three main findings. According to the author,

“First, in line with previous studies, I find overall evidence of discrimination against immigrant-origin minorities in the labour market. In line with the expectations, the results demonstrate a clear hierarchy when comparing the number of invitations received to job interviews. Majority applicants received 4.6 percentage points more invitations to attend interviews than minority applicants without a headscarf. When the minority applicants wore a headscarf, this difference increased to 11.5 percentage points, implying a significant penalty of wearing the headscarf of around 7 percentage points. Second, contrary to the expectations, the additional implicit information that contradicted cultural stereotypes did not moderate differences between the ethnic majority and the two immigrant-origin minority groups. This indicates that group-based discrimination is persistent and not easily altered by individuating information. In other words, individuals with an immigrant-origin minority background remains to be discriminated against, also when they signal cultural similarity. Third, these differences are both evident in public and private sector jobs and consistent across occupational categories, thus contradicting the common notion that the diversity policies and standardised application templates in use in public sector jobs eliminate discrimination.” (Dahl, 2019)

III) “Labour market discrimination Relative, additive, and multiplicative effects” by Jeevitha Yogachandiran Qvist and Christian Albrekt Larsen (Qvist & Larsen, 2023) was a study conducted from October to December 2022 to determine the difference in treatment of employees and job candidates based on age, gender, ethnicity, religion and preference to work full-time or part-time. The data were analyzed with 5,017 employers on a scale system from 0 to 10 with 0 being very unlikely to 10 very likely where the employers were asked who they would hire based on their attributes and preference mentioned above.

The findings to this study show that the age supersedes any form of discrimination with ethnicity/religion and then gender following second and third. *“(...) our study points to important mechanisms beneath the weak or absent gender discrimination found in correspondence studies. In a setup that includes only applicants well above the age of first-time parenthood and with employers who are aware of being monitored, we find gender bias favoring male applicants. However, more importantly, gender bias is most present among male employers and employers in production workplaces. This suggests a complex interplay between the gender of the applicant, the gender of the employer, and the work tasks (...)”*

(Qvist & Larsen, 2023). This study too is concluded by asking future researcher to continue the research and understand the implications of gender discrimination in the recruitment process.

3.3 Western Versus Non-Western

The term 'immigrants' is a very umbrella term that consists of people migrating for education, seeking refuge or asylum, reunified family members or simply for work. Additionally, when the discussion about immigrants arise another term is casually used that is 'Non-Western'. Non-Western, as a term, is also particularly vague when used to describe the origin of people. What even is Non-Western? Does it mean non-white? If so, then why is there a large white population living in the 'non-western' continent of South America?

"The idea of Western knowledge is illusory because it is based on the false assumption that the West has a monopoly on knowledge production and dissemination. This assumption has been perpetuated by a Eurocentric view of history, which has sought to portray Western civilization as the pinnacle of human achievement, while downplaying the contributions of other cultures' communities across the globe" (Mojab, 2023).

The Western Origin includes of Immigrants belonging to countries with American and European influence which includes all of Europe, the UK, Andorra, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Norway, San Marino, Switzerland, Vatican City, Canada, the USA, Australia, and New Zealand. Likewise, non-western refer to every other country in the world which includes more than 150 countries in Africa, South America and Asia (Utecht, 2023). Even in the 21st Century, most IR scholars have quite conveniently used the term Western to signify the Global North and Non-Western as Global south. This has led to believe in the Non-Western or the Global South through the narratives is that modernity, capitalism and international society that originated from the West is the path to prosperity. The idea that is lost in such narratives is the role of colonialism, suppression and empire building are the *"making and unmaking of subjectivities of the people in the non-western world"* (Chatterjee, 2014). *"The history of the unequal and brutal exchanges between the West and the other is therefore not a one-way process; it came into being qua a series of complex interactions that together constituted the post-colonial subject"* (Chatterjee, 2014).

This is evident in every statistics and papers that are published in Denmark that classify anyone from outside the Europe or the Americas as ‘non-western’. This classification does not favor the immigrants very much since it is seen to have strong implications in the policy as well as the narrative behind policymaking.

“(…) The establishment and operation of these concepts by Statistics Denmark, which maintains a population register (the CPR register) that covers all residents of Denmark, has profound implications for the problematization and government of the population group known as non-Western immigrants. Social statistics, as Foucauldian scholars argue, is a fundamental technology of power of the modern state. The statistical knowledge produced about non-Western immigrants creates the group as such by describing its “own regularities” (Foucault, 2007): the rate of criminalisation of its members, their employment rate, income level, education level, and so forth. This knowledge enables politicians, media professionals, and social scientists to talk about non-Western immigrants – people from over 150 countries across the world – as a somewhat monolithic object of governmental intervention and social scientific inquiry (...)” (Zhang, 2020)

This sort of mentality is highly prevalent in most policy makers where some specific laws are passed targeting to the non-western immigrants and refugees mostly immigrants from MENAPT countries that represents about 55% of non-western population.

Similarly, in 2018 Denmark passed a controversial law that states, by the year 2030, poor urban “ghettos” with high concentration of immigrant population will be redeveloped into something called “parallel society”. This has caused outrage amongst the residents, some calling it a “outright racism” (AFP, 2023). Immigrants have constantly felt like a second-class citizen in Denmark where citizens who have been born and raised in Denmark and have non-western parents are termed as ‘descendants’ of immigrants which is *éfterkommere* in Danish.

Chapter 4: Methodology

In this chapter, I shall discuss the methodological approaches and considerations that are applied to this thesis. First and foremost, I will introduce the epistemological approach defining this thesis and also explaining a little about race and experience. Secondly, I will present the choice of theories that are applied and operationalized to address the research problem. An Intersectional Approach, Social Capital Theory and Approaches to Labor Market Theory are regarded to further explain the research. Then, I explain the choice of empirical data and of data collection. In this case, I rely on semi-structured interviews of respondents that have voluntarily agreed to be interviewed. Besides, this chapter also details the criteria used for the analysis of the available interviews, introducing to the content analysis and explaining how this was carried out.

4.1 Epistemological Approach

Epistemology, in short, is about the theory of knowledge. In simple words Denzin and Lincoln (2000) state that,

“epistemology asks, how do I know the world? What is the relationship between the inquirer and the known? Every epistemology...implies an ethical – moral stance towards the world and the self of the researcher.” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000)

The language, perception, interpretation and associations of the world and the individual is validated through the ontological approach, epistemological approach delves further into the nature, origin and scope of knowledge, epistemic justification and the rationality of belief (Steup, 2014; Truncellito, 2020; Borchert, 1967). Constructivism is a process where reality that is projected by the observer in way that the observer creates, evolves and distorts the reality which then gives meaning to others just as the observer describes (Jonassen, 1991; Foerster, 1984).

Social constructivism additionally highlights the significance of culture and contexts to understand what appears in a society and creating knowledge on the basis of such understanding. The nature of social constructivism from an epistemological viewpoint reflects that the knowledge of a social constructivist is experimental in a social setting where they prefer to work in social group and setting using the format of trials and errors to discover

knowledge. In this case the social group could be as large as a race or gender or as small as a family group where interactions within the group or between various groups is common (Jha & Devi, 2014). According to Ian R. Owen, Social Constructivism is,

“the claim and viewpoint that the content of our consciousness, and the mode of relating we have to other, is taught by our culture and society; all the metaphysical quantities we take for granted are learned from others around us” (Owen, 1992)

Epistemological Approach helps us understand is that a person perceives the world as it is interpreted either by oneself or as diffused by the society. This is what solidifies the feeling of ‘us’ and ‘a sense of belonging’ or in simple words ‘race’.

4.2 Applied Theories

Although an elaboration for the choice of the given theories will be discussed in later chapters, a short introduction is presented. The choice of theory that are most relevant with this research are:

a. An Intersectional Approach

The non-Western population of Denmark are indeed classified into one broad umbrella term but in reality, the differences are numerous and significant. An Intersectional approach will help recognize the Social positioning of non-western women in the basis of origin, gender, age, ethnicity, religion and class and how these factors contribute to the integration of these women in Danish Labor Market.

b. Social Capital Theory

French sociologist Bourdieu interprets that, *“social capital resides in the individual and is linked to social connections that a person can utilise for advancement”*. Additionally, it will help establish *“more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition”* (Claridge, Institute for Social Capital, 2015). Social Capital Theory will help to understand social networks and thereof lack of and their importance in establishing oneself in the Danish Labor Market.

c. Approaches to Labor Market Theory

Labor Market theory is an employer and employee-based theory where it is determined who benefits in the labor market. Dual Segmented labor Market Theory implies that labor markets are divided into segments that have different characteristics, settings and results. The primary

segment comprises of high skill, wage, security and quality jobs whereas the secondary segment has low skill, wage, security and quality jobs. Labor Market theory will help us find out about the duality and prevalence or cause of such duality in the labor market of Denmark.

4.3 Group of Interest

The initial focus of this paper was to study about statistical category of 'Non-western' women in general but during my research, I realized that the category of 'Non-Western' is a very large term to put under one umbrella. Singularly talking about 'Asian' there are MENAPT countries, East Asian countries, South Asian Countries and West-Asian Countries. 'Non-Western' in this case refers to Asian, African and South American countries with some countries in North America as well so it was best to choose one sub-category within the 'Non-Western' category umbrella, thus, landing me to the 'Non-Western South Asian' group.

Similarly, instead of just selecting women coming on reunified spouse visa, it seemed best to select adult "non-western south Asian" women who have a higher education of sorts. This includes students, reunified visa and green-card visa. The only category of visa that this study has overlooked is women migrating to Denmark on 'Refugee Visa'.

4.4 Empirical Data

The empirical data for this thesis is collected through a semi-structured interview of 9 respondents. The respondents are all South Asian women withing the age bracket of 25 to 45. The respondents were also selected on the length of stay in Denmark. It was expected that the results would be better if the women that I interviewed were young, had a high education attainment (either from their own country or in Denmark) and have lived in Denmark for over 5 years. The nature of questioning was based on Biographic Narrative Interpretive Method where I interviewed 8 of the respondents face to face and one respondent online through MS-Teams.

Since the nature of this research paper is based on the qualitative research, the empirical data will also be accumulated through qualitative method with some statistical evidence and information prescribed under quantitative data. The qualitative data will be collected through primary and secondary sources.

The data for this research will be accumulated through primary and secondary sources. Primary Data is defined by Cambridge English Dictionary as, *“information that you collect yourself, rather than get from somewhere else”* (Cambridge Dictionary, 2024). The primary source of data that will be collected for the study will be gathered from:

- a) Empirical data collected from interviews of 9 women² from different South Asian Countries namely, Nepal, India, Bangladesh and Philippines.
- b) Questionnaire published in LinkedIn as well as various social media to garner further in depth understanding about the Danish Labor Market for South Asian women.

Similarly, secondary source of data will also be explored. Cambridge Dictionary defines secondary data as *“data that is publicly available, rather than data that an organization collects for itself”* (Cambridge Dictionary, 2024). Secondary data will be collected from:

- a) Relevant research papers, journals, books, articles, blogs and news published by various scholars, philosophers, researchers, journalists and authors regarding this subject matter
- b) Relevant data, reports and policies about immigration, labor market inclusion of Asian women in Denmark from sources such as Statistics Denmark, policies, plans and reports published on OECD, European Commission and Danish Agency for Labor Market and Recruitment.
- c) Observations based on the author’s life as a South Asian woman living and working in Denmark and the relationships with other women from similar backgrounds

4.5 Data Collection

In the beginning, the chosen method for data collection was sought to be the conventional sociological approach of semi-structured interview but after having some prior friendly meetings with the interviewees, it was concluded that Biographic Narrative Interpretive method (BNIM) would best suit the theme of this research. *“A biographical narrative is a story that relates the key events and facts about a person's life from a first-person perspective”*

² The women were selected through social events where I was introduced to them by my friends. Upon listening about my research, some of them showed great interest in becoming a part of this research.

(Suyom, 2024). Biographic Narrative is a qualitative psychosocial methodology that draws its characteristics from German practice of in-depth hermeneutics. Also, to add the fact that instead of semi structured interviews, a biographic narration will provide a deep exploration of life histories, lived experiences and personal interpretations of the interviewees' socio-historical context (Roseneil, 2012). The main theme of BNIM interview is that a single question is enough to kick start the topic to flow and the interviewee is in no pressure to disclose events or incidents he/she isn't comfortable to share with. After initial introduction about name, age, gender and education, the interview progressed with one single question first, "Can you tell me something about **your life story**? How did you come to Denmark? Please elaborate about your hurdles, opportunities, setbacks and positive prospects regarding your family, work and life as an Expat Asian Woman in Denmark."

The interviewees were offered to pace the story in their own way without interruption or guidance. This open-ended space encouraged the interviewer to share more freely. After this question is sufficiently answered, I followed up with further questions regarding the events and experiences that had been recounted asking for a more detailed narrative. The questions that followed were in the same sequences of topic that the interviewee had discussed and is ready to share and discuss about in a deeper manner.

Every meeting with the interviewees was in person so it was possible to analyze the expressions and body language too. The average time for the interviews took from 45 minutes to 1 hour.

4.6 The Candidates

The selection of the candidates for the interview for this research paper was through friends' friends or co-workers or acquaintances. The choice of these women was based on their level of education, background of education, current profession, age and most importantly the country of origin. Out of the nine candidates that were interviewed, four of them are from Nepal, two of them are from Philippines, one from India and two from Bangladesh.

As you can see that most candidates are from Nepal. The reason behind this is a) the author of this research paper is from Nepal so to collect candidates from Nepal was convenient, b) regardless of convenience, the Nepalese candidates are also deserving of better opportunities given their education, age and drive and c) the population of Nepalese coming to Denmark is

growing each year, so it is a case of probability that from a pool of South Asian population, Nepalese is on the higher scale.

I could have just picked all Nepalese and concluded my research based on Nepalese data, but I wanted to see what women from other South Asian countries feel about this topic. So, there were few candidates from Philippines, India and Bangladesh who showed great interest in this topic and wanted to share their opinion, experience and story that is how I came across these 9 truly amazing women.

The limitations that I faced during the process of conducting interviews was that the topic of vulnerability could be a sensitive theme for some women since it is not comfortable to lay your heart out in front of a stranger. Another delimitation for this research is the time restriction. Since the interviews were conducted with 9 individuals from 4th of April to 30th of April, more interviewees were compelled to be left out. A longer research period could have resulted in an extensive research over this matter with far superior conclusions.

Chapter 5: Theoretical Analysis

This chapter introduces to the main theories and their operationalization, explaining how they relate to the thesis' problem formulation (page: 6) The theoretical framing also refers to the main group addressed in the thesis consisting of Asian women with comparatively high educational attainments, who have come to Denmark in the last 10 years (2014 - 2021), helping to reflecting about how their background and origin can eventually affect issues of access to the labor market.

5.1 An Intersectional Approach

Intersectionality as a term has its roots in black feminist activism and was first coined by American critical legal race scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989 on her paper, 'Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex' (Coaston, 2019). Crenshaw defined Intersectionality as a reference to multiple discrimination on the basis of class, ethnicity, racism and sexism faced by black women commenting on '*single-axis framework that is dominant in antidiscrimination*

law, feminist theory and anti-racist politics' for focusing mainly on the experiences of privileged members of subordinate groups (gov.scot, 2022).

According to Crenshaw (Crenshaw, 1989),

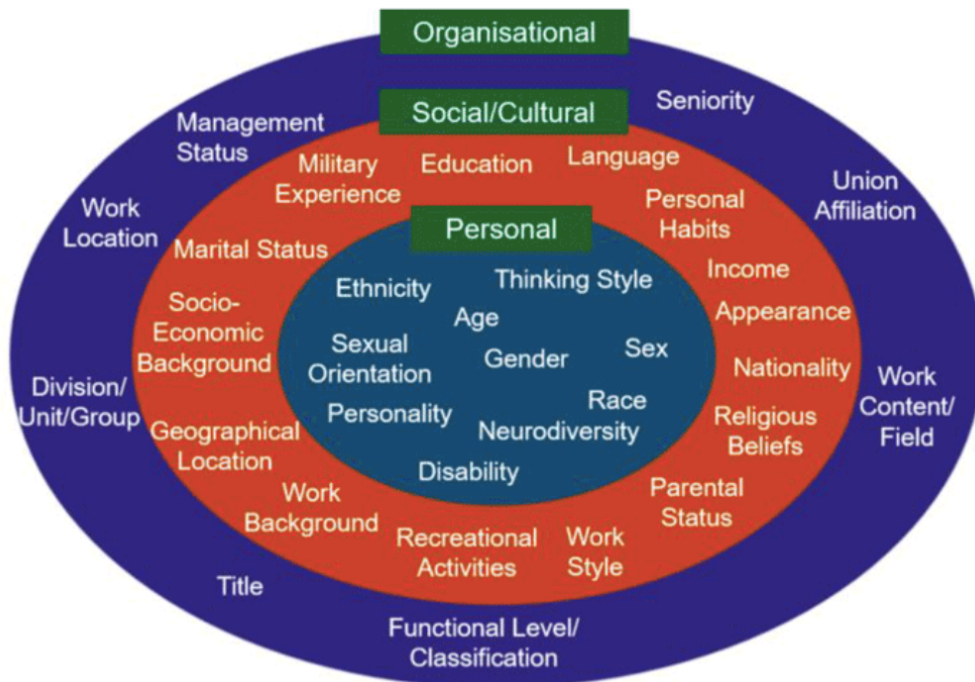
"Intersectionality is a metaphor for understanding the ways that multiple forms of inequality or disadvantage sometimes compound themselves and create obstacles that often are not understood among conventional ways of thinking."

'Intersectionality' as an approach is today used by a wide array of disciplines; for instance, the concept of intersectionality has been advocated by The Equality and Human Rights Commission with building their own definition that allows them to use the concept practically in monitoring equality and human rights. According to Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC, 2017),

Intersectionality is an analytical tool that we use for the purpose of equality and human rights monitoring to show the distinct forms of harm, abuse, discrimination and disadvantage experienced by people when multiple categories of social identity interact with each other"

In the year 1990, Marilyn Loden and Judy Rosener developed a framework known as the diversity wheel that would consider various dimensions of diversity within the institutions and individuals. This tool is valued to understanding the different characteristics and how they intersect with systems and structures, thus shaping a person's experience. The figure below shows how personal, socio/cultural and organizational which is derived from Loudon and Rosener's framework (Loden & Rosener, 1990). The core dimension refers to personal characteristics such as gender, age, race, sexual orientation, etc. Similarly, the social and cultural dimension is portrayed by the individual's influences caused by society, family, nationality, culture, environment, religion, etc. And the outermost dimension are the organizational structures that influences a person such as workplace, processes and structures that they operate in, area, etc. which could comprise of systemic biases and barriers (gov.scot, 2022).

Figure 8: Diversity Wheel demonstrating how personal characteristics intersect with systems and structures to shape a person's experience



Source: (gov.scot, 2022)

As shown in the figure, the intersectional approach is essential in studying subjects that covers race, religion, gender, origins and various other sections that contribute to the identity and formation of an individual, also in relation to his/her surroundings.

When applied to the focus of immigrant women's integration, an intersectional approach can help understand the social construct of Non-Western (South Asian) women in Denmark who despite possessing a relatively high human capital experience hard time in accessing the labor market in occupations that respond to their qualifications. Also, an important task of this theory is to help address the intricacies that may pertain to the discourse regarding race and gender and ethnicity and how this can also affect their hindered opportunities despite their skills.

5.2 Social Capital Theory

Social Capital as a theory was first introduced by the influential French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1930-2002) who was interested about the ways in which society is reproduced and the dynamics of power in a society. According to Bourdieu,

“Social capital is the sum of the resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition.” (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992)

Bourdieu's theories of social stratification and his works on the sociology of culture are still relevant and highly influential. Bourdieu was fascinated with the dynamics of culture and how culture is constantly evolves and in which way it connects to social stratifications and the exercise of power (Claridge, 2015). Some of his contributions was the study of various forms of capitals that individuals wield, and which can be economic, cultural, social and symbolic (Claridge, Introduction to Social Capital Theory, 2018).

Bourdieu viewed Social Capital as an individual property rather than a collective one where he implies that social capital is the result of an individual's investment and collective property attributes to cultural capital instead (Claridge, 2015). This contradicts with the American political scientist Robert David Putnam and his theory of Social Capital. According to Putnam (Stukas, Daly, & Cowling, 2005), social capital is treated as a public good, and mainly identified with civil society and forms of engagement and volunteerism. Putnam has been credited to have popularized the term 'social capital' (Claridge, 2018). Putnam argues that social capital is basically the totality of trust involved a society, which is crucial in characterizing the political culture of modern sciences (Claridge, Introduction to Social Capital Theory, 2018). For Putnam, social capital signifies to the types of social organizations such as networks, norms and trust that enable action and cooperation for mutual benefit which can be a catalyst of interpersonal cooperation (Putnam, 2000).

The relevance of Bourdieu's Social Capital theory reigns higher than any other. While the theory of social capital elaborated by other scholars focuses primarily on trust, reciprocity and moral obligations, Bourdieu's theory rather than focusing only on a positive or negative aspect, takes in account the true experience of people through ethnographic research. The main theoretical interest are the consideration of social conflicts and struggle, forms of power and forms of domination and deprivation in Bourdieu's philosophy (Siisiainen, 2003).

Bourdieu's Social Capital theory is best suited for our research. In order to understand in the simplest way, according to Bourdieu's, the job market is a place where job seekers try to enter and establish themselves and for that they will be required to use and enhance their cultural and social capital (Legusov, 2019). Similarly, for immigrants (south Asian women in our study), they too have to go through the process to building a social capital and increase their chances to find better opportunities.

5.2.1 Social Capital, Social Network and Social Trust

Many sociologists and scholars have emphasized the importance of social networks in forming social capital. Bourdieu pointed out that social capital is an "institutionalized network constructed through a certain investment strategy" (Xu, Zhang, & Huang, 2023).

According to Machalek and Martin (2015),

"Social capital contends of social relationships are resources that can lead to the development and accumulation of human capital."

Social Capital without social network refers to relations, feelings, norms that are a generally the result of social embeddedness. This perception of social capital is associated to the positive feelings from joint connection or shared values such as patriotism without a particular tie to any networks. For example, two college alums recognize their school mascot even if they never had any prior contact. Another example would be two people supporting the same sports club. (Moody & Paxton, 2016).

Social Networking, on the other hand, (Liu, Sidhu, Beacom, & Valente, 2017)

"...focuses on the role of social relationships in transmitting information, channeling personal or media influence, and enabling attitudinal or behavioral change."

In scenarios involving social networking, issues of trust, reciprocity, care, enmity, recognition are all the factors that determine how actors interact with each other and that is how channels of network is built (Moody & Paxton, 2016). Social Networking is based on the attributes presented by an individual through their work, word of mouth, behavior and interaction and has little nothing to do with the sense of belonging, mutual feeling, bonds and values. However, some argue that Social Network is a part of Social Capital. Regarding the lack or relative scarcity of an established social network and a weaker social capital, deriving

from the fact that the women are new to the Danish society and have more difficulties to establish ties and connections are considered to represent among the factors that shape for difficulties in facilitating access to the labor market, and more specifically within the wished sectors (Firth, 2024). For most people, friendships and networks are formed throughout a lifetime, through schools, jobs, universities, neighborhood and other formal environments where the connection with new people is established through shared interests or experiences such as work, hobbies, life events, family situations, living area and most importantly a common language. Immigrants that have migrated from a different country lack this basic rope of connectivity with their new country. This in turn results in fewer opportunities with regards to employment and job (Tuominen, Kilpi-Jakonen, Velazquez, Castaneda, & Kuusio, 2023).

Another important term that we tend to overlook is 'Social Trust'. Social trust is the most recurrent factor in various approaches personal and interpersonal capital. If people trust each other, the communication, agreements and exchanges of goods and services is made easier. Trust is not only important as a concrete exchange but also in abstract form of cooperation. Social capital is strengthened through generalized as well as particularized trust that bridges and bonds the relationship (Torpe, 2003). As Seligman states,

"The emphasis in modern societies on consensus (is) based on interconnected networks of trust - among citizens, families, voluntary organizations, religious denominations, civic associations, and the like. Similarly, the very "legitimation" of modern societies is founded on the "trust" of authority and governments as generalizations" (Seligman, 1997)

The more trust one has towards an individual or a community the higher the social capital is built with stronger social network. This form of social capital is cumulative and self-reinforcing in nature (Siisiäinen, 2000).

The factor regarding social capital, social network and social trust is that people have links and contacts to that specific industry to which their friends and community are acquainted to. For example, a woman from Indonesia who doesn't, or only speak little Danish and has a limited Danish network of relationships will rely on her closest friends and community members to find her a job in Denmark. If her friends are working as housekeepers or employed within the care system, the chances that she too will find a job as a housekeeper

or within the care sector are higher (Pace & Bennetzen, 2022) this also in spite of her former educational background. However, if her friends and other community members are working in larger and specialized organization, requiring some of the skills that the potential employee has, it is highly likely that she can have fewer more chances to find a job among her peers in one of the organizations where her network has suggested her (KVINFO, 2024). This is the strength of having a strong network in a foreign country. Further explanation and analysis regarding the impact of lack of social capital and network will be elaborated in the discussion chapter.

5.3 Approaches to Labor Market Theory

From the quantitative data that have been presented in the chapter 3, (Critical state of the art), there is indication that the Danish Labor Market shows biasness towards women migrant workers. On the basis of the empirical data that has been collected from the research, it is noteworthy that the South Asian women are consistently being offered or are currently working within unskilled jobs that are often unrelated to their professional background, when this is the case. This draws speculation if the Danish Labor Market offers equal opportunities of access to comparatively more skilled employments and to what extent it is selective and stratified

Labor Market Theory consists of three major approaches: Neoclassical Labor Market Theory, Institutional Labor Market Theory, *Dual* and *Segmented* Labor Market Theory. Neoclassical Theory is the most dominant and mainstream approach (Brožová, 2015). It assumes that the labor market is a competitive field where employers and workers both have complete information, freedom of mobility and rationality and where the wages are based on the supply and demand of labor supply. Institutional Theory and Segmented theory (Woodbury, 1987; Reich, Gordon, & Edwards, 1973) both critique the Neoclassical theory. Institutional Theory argues that the labor markets is not perfectly competitive, and that social, legal and political institutions and agenda are determinant to regulate it. This theory states that workers and employers have unequal bargaining power over one another, and unemployment is involuntary and persistent which can be addressed by improvement of labor protection, representation and standards. *Dual* and *Segmented* Theory implies that labor markets are divided into segments that have different characteristics, settings, groups

and results. The primary segment comprises of high skill, wage, security and quality jobs whereas the secondary segment has low skill, wage, security and quality jobs. According to this theory workers face hurdles to move and rise between segments and alleviation in promotion to access and mobility can help reduce unemployment (Launov, 2004). Since Dual Segmented labor theory resonates more with our research, we shall discuss more about it below.

5.3.1 Dual and Segmented labor market theory

This theory of dual segmented labor market was developed in late 1960s and early 70s by a group of scholars who have all shared the experiences of having engaged in community work and research in their respective cities. This community work and research that they performed in their inner-city ghettos brought forth the idea of segmentation in the labor market (Harrison & Sum, 1979).

This theory is further explored in terms of developed vs underdeveloped countries, for example, by Michael Piore (Piore M. J., 2001) who describes that the developed countries attract migrant workers from a less developed countries to fill in jobs which the natives are reluctant to take up. Piore states the labor force migration is a two-way process that would benefit both the sending as well as receiving country. He explains,

“(...) Both countries thought of the migrants as temporary. In the sending country the migration was supposed to relieve population pressure and overcome rural unemployment (...). In the receiving country, migrants were supposed to complement native labour, taking jobs that the latter did not want and in his way overcome critical labour shortages. Over time, however, the migration process has been the source of an increasing number of problems and a focal point of clashes between native and foreign populations (...)” (Piore M. , 1979)

On the basis of this perspective, it is obvious that these two segments in the labor market will put natives and immigrants into two different segments and push to different direction. But to understand this in a simpler manner let us observe the labor market on the basis of segments.

Out of the segments and subsegments, the core is dominated by the primary labor market which possess a higher degree of market power. There is higher profitability, high economic value and job stability to the employees as well with this segment since these jobs are more likely to be unionized. The periphery of the core resides in the secondary labor market which is characterized with employees who work with labor-intensive technologies and lack of market power which restricts their ability to pay high wages. In this secondary labor market, inadequate capital leads to lower productivity which inhibits these companies to expand more and acquire market power (Harrison & Sum, 1979).

Doeringer and Piore, however, argue that an

“important difference between primary and secondary markets is the extent of the presence of ‘internal labor markets’ within the firm: structures with well-known (if not always literally written) work rules, promotion procedures, and sanctions against unacceptable behavior, all reinforced by the managerial tendencies of modern unions”
(Alexander, 1974; Kelley, 1978).

Immigrants tend to enter from the bottom of the pyramid and advance from within. The presence of a well-defined career ladder makes promotions predictable whereas in a secondary labor market, firms lack this degree of structure. In the secondary labor market system, the production and work process are simpler, often repetitive and with a relevant supply of unskilled workers who learn these tasks quickly and easily. The easier task with an easier means to enter this labor market traps the worker into a loop where this new worker who is untrained in anything else is unable to seek opportunities elsewhere.

The “basics” of the so-called primary and secondary labor market segments allow us to circle back and refer it to the role here played by labor migrants. Danish citizens are often held inside the primary segment within the labor market which is characterized by a more secure job with higher incomes, higher contract stability, and higher power. Immigrants are more likely to enter the secondary sector where work is less secure which could be anywhere from low skilled service sector, cleaning companies or packing industries where the workers are easily disposable. These jobs are especially degrading to those who have an education in a high skilled area but are forced to stay at the bottom of the barrel to earn a living.

However, in regard to primary and secondary labor market, one crucial factor that could help determine if an immigrant will be held back in a secondary market or will they have a prospect to work in a primary market, the Assimilation Approach plays a big role.

5.3.2. Assimilationist Policies and effects on the labor market

In order to well integrate into any new community, society of country, an immigrant has to incorporate themselves into the values and elements of that society. Many scholarly articles on migration suggest that a country of immigration expects newcomers to integrate into their own society. Britannica defines Assimilation as,

“the process whereby individuals or groups of differing ethnic heritage are absorbed into the dominant culture of a society. This process involves taking traits of a dominant culture to such a degree that the assimilating group becomes socially indistinguishable from other members of the society” (Pauls, 2024)

In a Danish Context, the assimilationist approach plays a significant role in the Labor Market. It is expected that in order to properly assimilate into the country and work Danish jobs, one has to go through the process of assimilation that means to fully adopt Danish values and rules, learn the language and embrace all the factors of Danish identity (Rodríguez-García, 2010).

In this research, the south Asian immigrant women's integration into the Danish labor market can be theorized through Dual Segmented Labor Market theory and how assimilationist policies help to understand the labor market better. This suggests that until the 'newcomers' or the immigrants/expats are not yet acculturated into the host country, the prospect of them having an equal foot inside the danish system can be difficult.

Chapter 6: Analysis

In this chapter, I present an introduction of the respondents and explore into their stories, struggles, and opportunities in Denmark's labor market. All these respondents are young and have arrived in Denmark within the past decade. But their story varies largely from one another. I conducted interviews with these respondents using a Biographic Narrative approach (See page: 26), allowing them to freely discuss their experiences without time or topic restrictions. I categorized their thoughts and statements for analysis based on topics and issues.

6.1 Introduction of Candidates

The table below gives an overview of the candidates

<i>SN</i>	Name (proxy)	Origin	Current residence	Age	Education	Current Work	Arrival year	Visa Type During arrival	Current Type	Visa
<i>a.</i>	Rashmi	Nepal	Soborg (Sjælland)	27	Bachelors in International Sales and Marketing	Housekeeping	2015	Family Reunification	Student	
<i>b.</i>	Kathy	Philippines	Holbæk (Sjælland)	31	Bachelors in Hotel Management	Housekeeping	2015	Au-Pair	Family Reunification	
<i>c.</i>	Mira	Nepal	Hunddige (Sjælland)	36	Bachelors in Logistics	Packaging	2014	Green Card	Permanent residence	
<i>d.</i>	Zina	Philippines	Copenhagen (Sjælland)	33	Bachelor's in Education	Housekeeping	2016	Au-Pair	Family Reunification	
<i>e.</i>	Jaya	Bangladesh	Vejle (Jutland)	28	Masters in European Studies	Unpaid Internship	2021	Student	Student	
<i>f.</i>	Sweta	India	Copenhagen (Sjælland)	41	Fashion Designing	Packaging	2018	Family Accompanying	Family Reunification	
<i>g.</i>	Bella	Nepal	Copenhagen (Sjælland)	34	Bachelor's in communication	Self employed	2015	Student	Family Reunification	
<i>h.</i>	Sonja	Bangladesh	Copenhagen (Sjælland)	34	Masters s in Tourism	Housekeeping supervisor	2014	Student	Family Reunification	
<i>i.</i>	Anika	Nepal	Copenhagen (Sjælland)	34	Master's in Public Health	Cleaning	2014	Student	Family Reunification	

Table 2: Introduction of candidates

a. Rashmi

Rashmi, young, energetic girl from Nepal arrived in Denmark back in 2015 with a family reunification visa since her husband was studying in Denmark. She married at the age of 18 and had attained a high school diploma. She started working odd jobs such as cleaning and waitressing and ultimately started working as a housekeeper in one of Copenhagen's 4-star hotels. Eventually Rashmi pursued her education and since has completed her AP degree³ and is about to be finished with her Top off⁴ too.

b. Kathy

Kathy, from the Philippines, was the first candidate that I interviewed. She first came to Denmark in 2016 on an Au-pair visa and worked in a few other European countries before landing back in Denmark in 2021. Here she met a Danish man and is happily married. Kathy is working as a housekeeper since the past 3 years and has a bachelor's degree in Hotel and Restaurant Management.

c. Mira

Mira, also from Nepal arrived in Denmark in 2014 on a Green-card Visa. Before that she finished her Masters in Logistics from Molde, Norway. She worked as a housekeeper in the beginning slowing moving upwards to becoming a supervisor then manager in the housekeeping department. She quit this field completely and started working as a warehouse assistant since 2021.

d. Zina

Zina, also originally from the Philippines came to Denmark in an Au-Pair visa back in 2015 where she worked with different families as Au-pair until 2021 when she married a Danish man. After changing her visa status to family reunification, she has been working as a housekeeper in one of the hotels in Copenhagen. She studied bachelor's in education back in Philippines.

e. Sweta

³ An Academy Profession (AP) degree program, or AP degree, is a specialized course of study that equips students with practical skills, ensuring they are prepared for employment upon graduationInvalid source specified..

⁴ The top-up degree consists that comes after AP Degree is of approximately 1½ years of study (90 ECTS) and is typically within a predefined field or one related to the acquired AP degree. Upon completion, the student will have earned a Professional Bachelor DegreeInvalid source specified..

Sweta, 41, is from India who has a Diploma in Fashion Designing with a bachelor's in commerce. She arrived in Denmark in 2018 on a family reunification visa as her husband worked in Denmark in the IT field. She is currently working as a warehouse assistant.

f. Jaya

Jaya, a young 28-year-old, recently graduated from Masters in European Studies came to Denmark in 2021 on a student Visa from Bangladesh. She is in her establishment period of visa and is currently working as an unpaid intern at a Swiss company and lives in Vejle, Denmark.

g. Bella

Bella came to Denmark in 2014 in a Student Visa. She completed bachelor's in international business management in 2019 and went on to pursue master's in communication but due to maternity complications, she couldn't complete her masters. Currently she is in a Family Reunification Visa and in the process to establish her hairdressing salon in Copenhagen.

h. Sonja

Sonja, 34, is from Bangladesh and came to Denmark in 2014 on a student visa. She did her AP then Top off degree in Hospitality and Masters in Tourism and Hotel Management. Currently she is working in one of Copenhagen's 4-star hotels as a Housekeeping Manager.

i. Anika

Anika (34) too came to Denmark on a Student Visa and studied bachelors in Global Nutritional Health and Master's in Public Health. She graduated in 2022 and took a maternity leave for a year. Now she is back in the job market since 2023 September and is actively searching for a job in her study field while working as a cleaning assistant on the side.

6.2 Respondents' understanding of Denmark and the Danish work life upon their arrival to the country

Denmark in a global prospect is an example for good lifestyle, better career, prosperity, stability and welfare. Although the people pay high tax, the trust is high in the government that the money will be put to better use (MOFAD, 2023). Even the President of France, Emmanuel Macron, has praised Denmark's Flexicurity model of flexible labour market model stating *"Danish approach to labour market reforms is a source of inspiration to many countries, France included. Denmark is a role model"* (Denmark, 2024). Bearing this mentality

hundreds of thousands of immigrants come to Denmark seeking a better tomorrow. The influx of immigrants is not just limited to developing or underdeveloped countries, but equally high in developed countries (Denmark M. o., 2024; Dyvik, 2024).

Sweta who arrived to Denmark with her son, says how her experience reflects common misconceptions about job integration. Despite her qualifications as a fashion designer, she faced several challenges and push back due to language barriers and cultural differences. She recollects her arrival to Denmark with these words:

“I was very excited. Since this is an international market where they value ethnic arts, I thought I could easily establish myself. I was a professional in my field where I made ethnic paintings on fabric. I thought they would appreciate my art here because they love handmade designs and articles. I went to several galleries and boutiques, but they all refused my art. They said since I don’t speak Danish. But art is art. Why do I need to learn Danish for my art?”

Similarly, Jaya who finished her bachelor’s in Development Studies from Bangladesh was extremely positive to move to Denmark in 2021 to study Masters in European Studies. Upon arrival, she faced various obstacles from unstable living conditions to unstable low skilled jobs. She shares her experiences saying,

“I had a very positive experience with my university. I loved what I was studying, and I loved my teachers. The problem I faced was with work. I applied for many part-time jobs with my previous credentials, but I never received any reply back. I had to force myself to work in a restaurant as a waitress. We, non-Europeans, do not receive any social security benefits so we have to work harder to earn money. I used to work 20 hours during school sessions and in summer I used to work anywhere from 60 hours a week to 80 hours sometimes 7 days a week. In a restaurant field, there are no rules, no unions to protect you or guide you. When you are new and know nothing of how the system works, it’s easy to fool and manipulate you. The pay is low, and the work is more.”

Bella highlights the pragmatic approach of many immigrants, prioritizing visa extension over career development. She starts by saying,

“I am not saying I am any different. I came to Denmark in 2014 to study. I didn’t have much plan for the future back then. My focus was not about building a career. My priority was to extend my visa as far as I could. Study was just a steppingstone for me, but my goal was to stay in Denmark and earn money. I did my bachelors and masters working various odd jobs such as cleaner, housekeeper, kitchen help, etc.”

This sentiment is echoed by many who resort to low-skilled jobs for stability. A study conducted by the 3F union (Myklebust & Petter, 2021) reveals that Denmark is home to

45,000 migrant residents who have completed at least three years of university or other higher education. Of these residents, half are working in unskilled or very low skilled positions that do not require any educational qualifications. Additionally, only 10% of migrants from Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, and Nepal are employed in jobs that necessitate an education (Bendixen, 2022); this in spite of the qualification they arrived with or attained in the first years of residence.

6.3 Cultural Aspect

There are many South Asian immigrants, including Kathy, who are compelled to send remittances home due to various family and societal obligations. Despite aspirations for career growth, these expectations are often the reason's that dictate the respondents' employment choices. Kathy explains,

"Our culture is very toxic. We are forced to send money to our parents regardless of our own personal need. I have been sending money to my mother every month for 10 years now and yet she never stops demanding. My husband says that I am being manipulated by my parents but what can I do? I have to bear that responsibility. He is Danish, he will never understand our Filipino culture. Although toxic they are my family. So, I have to work whatever job I find and send money home."

The other respondents also concur that cultural aspect is one of the reasons why many South Asian immigrants are forced to work low skilled jobs. Since the expectations from family is high once the respondent has travelled to a developed country. Sonja chimes in:

"Once you have left your country and immigrated to a more developed country either it's US, Canada, Australia or Europe, the perception of family towards you changes regardless of your gender. They expect you to send help home in the form of money or expensive gifts. Not only the family but even friends and relatives shamelessly demand for branded outfits, jewelries and accessories. They think that once someone has travelled abroad, they are loaded with money. And the fault is not only theirs, it's ours too. We fulfill their demands. We are so set out to show that we have made it here that we send money and spend on lavish gifts. And in order to earn that money, we are forced to work whatever job is available. Especially when you are here as a student and have zero experience but thousands of expectations, you give up and continue working low skilled jobs."

6.4 Obstacles in working course related jobs

When asked this question among the candidates as to what was the obstacle to find jobs in their course field, did they apply for the job and if not why? The answers I received were very

wide-ranging. In some cases, respondents were not allowed to search for other jobs due to strict criteria within the visa type (for example Au-Pair visa). Similarly, one such respondent was unable to find their course related jobs due to unfavorable immigrant policies (for example green-card scheme). The experiences of every respondent are different from one another based on external variables and internal variables. We shall explore all of these cases. Both Zina and Kathy from the Philippines arrived in Denmark in an Au-pair Visa type where they were assigned to a specific family and had no social security in Denmark. This hindered them to find other jobs additionally with the visa they had, they were also not allowed to look for another job. Only after getting married to a Danish man they finally changed their visa under Family Reunification and now they can now work full-time and pursue any jobs they desire. But since the degree they pursued is outdated (over 10 years old), it will be difficult to find any jobs related to their education. Hence, they have both been working as Housekeepers in Copenhagen.

Zina in this case explains,

"I have been feeling down for a long time. But since getting married, my visa status has changed and now I have a Danish CPR card. I joined Danish language and soon I plan to study Pedagogy so that I can work as a Pedagogue in the future."

Relatedly, when I talked to Mira about her choice of working as a housekeeper in the past and now as a warehouse assistant when she has a Masters in Logistics from Norway, she answered,

"The main reason why I didn't look for a job in my educational background is because the requirement under 'green card scheme' was that I had to earn 320,000 Danish kroner before tax per year. If I don't make that much money in a year, then I won't be able to renew my visa for next coming years. So, I didn't have time to just, you know, stay and look for logistic job and not work to fulfill my criteria to stay. So, I just jumped into working any jobs that would help me earn that amount. And housekeeping that time was the easiest entry in the job market"

The above mentioned three interviewees were not able to apply to jobs related to their educational background due to some restrictions or criteria that needed to be fulfilled. However, also when we look at cases where there were fewer visa restrictions, or none, and no specific economic criteria the women still had very few opportunities to be employed in their educational field. Anika, who finished master's in public health in Denmark, has been actively seeking jobs for over 8 months answers,

“They want someone who has experience. And I have done, I have gained like a couple of experience working with different organisations when I was studying. But they don't count it as a whole because it's not a year or something. It has to be in one year or two years of experience. So that has been a little challenging. How am I supposed to get experience when you don't hire me? Besides, I do have experience, although in 3 separate organizations but it's still an experience. I don't understand. Maybe the reason is something else and they use 'experience' as a label, so they don't have to explain themselves.”

Jaya, a Bachelor's in Development Studies graduate from Bangladesh is on the verge to leave Denmark because she feels that she is been neglected in the job market,

“I was desperately searching for internship in 2022 where I must have applied to over 100 companies and organizations, I never received a call back. Now that I am graduated, I am working an unpaid internship for an organization and on the side, I have been applying to various vacancies but again no positive response. I keep getting the same generic reply back with no explanations of why I was not selected. Many of my friends I know have left Denmark and either gone to Canada, US or back to Bangladesh. If I don't find a job within one more year, I too will have to leave Denmark”

6.5 Why is language a barrier?

Language proficiency is an important step towards career advancement, but learning Danish presents a lot of challenges. Since it has been categorized as one of the difficult languages to learn, Danish needs a bit of patience and determination (Popadakova, 2020). Linguist Ocke Bohn jokes, *“Danish, the language of a thousand vowels and swallowed consonants, can be devilishly difficult to learn unless you learn it from your mother”* (Ravn, 2019).

When we talked about difficulties in landing a job with our candidates most of them replied with Danish language being one of the main hurdles. Candidates like Mira highlight the difficulty of mastering Danish, compounded by societal norms favoring English. Mira goes on,

“I can communicate like basic things with people, but that won't be enough to work professionally. And I haven't seen any immigrants who speak only English and been working as an executive post in any company. I have been through Danish classes I completed pd3 that's the highest of basic Danish classes any immigrants can do and yet, my Danish is not good enough. I want to practice but neither I have Danish friends nor a Danish husband.”

When I asked Rashmi, who has been living in Denmark for 10 years already as to why her Danish is so poor despite completing Danish Language. She responded saying,

“That answer is 2-fold. First is that as an outsider we need courage to speak Danish with Danish people in anticipation of being ridiculed. And after speaking with difficulty, instead of replying back to us with patience, Danish people switch into speaking English. So, the second fold is that everybody speaks really good English in Denmark. The motivation just fades off.”

In spite of their efforts to learn Danish, candidates like Sweta find English sufficient for her daily interactions and professional settings. The practice of speaking English in workplaces reduces the urgency to learn Danish, hindering the efforts of integration. She explains,

“As an expat in Denmark, we are all working in the same level and similar jobs. Every job I have had (cleaner, warehouse assistant, delivery person, etc.) are occupied by immigrants from different countries so the working language there is English. I studied level 2 of my Danish, but I have yet to use it. Since I never got any opportunities in my education field which has nothing to do with language and the place, I work now doesn’t require Danish, I feel the need to sharpen my language is unnecessary and a waste of time.”

Sonja who is a housekeeping manager says,

“In the service industry the main medium of communication is in English. All the employees working under me are immigrants and refugees who speak English and the higher ups that I have to report to also communicate in English. Danish is barely a necessity. I, however, have a good command in Danish but I don’t use it professionally.”

Ironically, not knowing Danish is a barrier to high-skilled, quality jobs, while English is the most common language used in low-skilled, low-quality jobs in Denmark (Norman, 2022).

6.6. The importance of Social Network in Danish Labor Market

As we have already talked about Social Capital in previous chapter where we highlighted the factors such as social trust and social networking and the value their bring in finding jobs in Danish Labor Market. With an intention to a qualitative response to my research on the importance of social network, I asked all of the candidates to elaborate about their experiences or understanding of social network is in the job market. Mostly all of the candidates understood the term and were very eager to share their familiarity and occurrence of social network in their work lives.

Sonja started in the bottom of the barrel. After coming to Denmark, she worked as a housekeeper in numerous hotels for several years slowly transitioning to the role of housekeeping supervisor and now with 10 years down the lane: she is a housekeeping

manager. The road is not easy for immigrants like Sonja who came to Denmark as students and are subjected to pay a hefty tuition fees every semester while working part-time without any social benefits. Regarding the topic of social network, she elaborates,

“No matter how capable one is, it is rarely seen that someone got a job just based on their application. Network is a big deal in Denmark. Even after completing my bachelor’s in hospitality, I couldn’t find relevant jobs and was working as a housekeeper but during my internship period, I got the opportunity to work in the reception desk of my hotel. That was the start of me building network. I then started joining several clubs of hospitality. One of them called DHYP (Danish Young Hospitality Professionals) was particularly helpful in establishing me in the hospitality industry. I got to know a lot of people from the service industry which gave me confidence and now I work in a managerial level.”

Sonja's career progression underscores the significance of social capital in Denmark. Networking opportunities provided her with avenues for advancement, contrasting with Anika's struggle to establish connections. Anika explains that for her language has not been as big of a barrier as lack of networks have been. She states,

“Network is such an important tool. I have heard stories that sometimes a company would hire a person purely based on network. I think it’s called internal hiring where the new employee is recommended by someone from inside the company and the company just posts a vacancy announcement as a formality. That is a big disadvantage for people like us. We don’t have a lot of networks or foundation here. How do we build network? It’s so difficult to be friends with Danes as they are a closed-up group of people. We don’t have previous generation of family living here to penetrate the job market and create networks. All our opportunities are based on luck not network.”

Bella asserts that social networking plays a significant role in facilitating the integration of employees into the labor market. However, she offers a nuanced perspective on social networks, suggesting that they also contribute to a more complacent attitude among individuals. Bella posits that some individuals have ceased to explore opportunities beyond their immediate networks, opting instead to follow familiar paths uncritically. This behaviour, in her view, indicates a tendency for people to adhere to the actions of their close connections without seeking broader or alternative options. She adds,

“These days Social og Sundhedshjælper (SoSu) or elderly care is becoming very popular among Nepalese women. The reason is because now it’s common knowledge of the process to apply. So, you need this level of education and this level of Danish fluency then you can easily enter. Now people think “oh, the process is so easy, I can do it” so now lots of Nepalese girls and women are doing SoSu.”

Additionally, Bella continues

“But again, it’s not always so easy with our community. Maybe it’s the nature of some Nepalese that they don’t want to see other people do as good as you and succeed. Or maybe get in a higher position than you are professionally. I know of one person (let’s call them A) who was working in an engineering firm and one day one of their friends who was also an engineer in the same field (let’s call them B) saw a vacancy in the office A is in. So, if A wanted to recommend, there would have been a high percent chance than B would get in or at least be called for an interview. But even after so many requests from B, A never recommended B. The reason, we might never know. And this has happened many times over to many other people I know.”

6.7 Intersectionality of South Asian Women

The women that were interviewed for this research are fairly young below age 42 with high educational attainment and background. And besides their education, these women are also hardworking, intelligent, persistent but ironically their skills are being used in the jobs that are way under their expertise hence ‘deskilling’ them (Niraula & Valentin, 2018). It is hardly ever seen that a South Asian woman is working a higher management job. According to a report developed and published by The Diversity Council in June 2022, it states that Danish women too are underrepresented in leadership positions in Denmark (TDC, 2022). So, if Danish women themselves are facing this bias, what is to be told of immigrant and refugee women?

If we have to analyze these women on the basis of the intersectional approach, they can be categorized into two sections: women and ethnicity. Both these intersections have been tremendously stereotyped in the labor market.

6.7.1 Stereotypes, Stigmatization, Prejudice

Oxford Dictionary defines stereotype as

“a person or thing that conforms to a widely held but oversimplified image of the class or type to which they belong”.

Some stereotype in relation to people and employment is the assumption that certain type of people is fit to work certain jobs. One of the most general idea is that women, stereotypically, are best at taking care of a young child. Another notion involving stereotyping ethnicity could be that people from South Asia are best for nanny jobs or housekeeping or

elderly care. This can lead to limitation on a person's capabilities, lack of self-esteem, confidence which can lead to frustration and dissatisfaction at work and life (Kadari, 2018).

a. Stereotyping Women

The formation of stereotypes surrounding 'women's jobs' is influenced by historical social, cultural, and economic factors. Culturally, women in many societies are designated roles centered around nurturing and caring, leading them to professions like nursing, teaching, and domestic work (Mbakile & Morris, 2024). Socially, women are often viewed as most suitable for jobs that require empathy, care, and understanding, resulting in their overrepresentation in fields such as social work, human resources, and nursing. Economically, women historically were not involved in higher income-generating roles. Before the Industrial Revolution, men predominantly held labour-intensive and factory jobs, while women stayed at home to care for the family in what was considered a 'safer' environment. With the advent of mechanized labour, women began entering the workforce. However, those in 'pink-collar' jobs earned significantly less than their male counterparts. This disparity in income persists in many parts of the world, where women continue to earn far less than men for the same work (LaPierre, 2023). This study found that women are predominantly stereotyped into roles such as cleaning, housekeeping, packing, service, and care for the elderly and children. It's surprising, considering these women reside and work in one of the world's most progressive countries, where they are still undervalued. Many of the women I interviewed expressed dissatisfaction and frustration at being confined to these specific jobs. Additionally, those who attempted to pursue different fields faced mockery and ridicule. Sweta recounts her experience of working as a delivery person for a major courier company where she was dismissed of her opinions on many occasions,

"Working here was not my choice at first but it was part-time, so I joined this courier company, and I was the only one woman working there. Everyone else was a male and they would not give me any opportunities because I'm a woman. During employees meeting when I was the only women there and if I suggested any change or gave advice on anything within the company, they would mock me and say you are temporary. Or you can't do this job for long you are a girl. I mean I had been working there for over 6 months and yet, the hostility never faded. They would tease me and say that I won't be able to carry this or finish that task. It was too cumbersome to take it anymore and I quit."

b. Stereotyping Ethnicity

There are some jobs that have been allotted to only women of certain nationalities. Jobs such as elderly care, childcare, nursing, housekeeping as such are listed out to women specifically from South Asia namely, Philippines, Thailand, Nepal, etc. These countries have systematically been exporting labor to North America, the Middle East and Europe. In 1998, The Philippine government authorized a ban on Filipino migrant workers to be employed as au-pair. It was due to excessive reported cases of exploitation, abuse, discrimination and prostitution of these migrant workers all across Europe and Middle East. In 2010, the ban was lifted on three European countries, Denmark, Switzerland and Norway after a bilateral agreement was signed with all these three countries (CFO, 2017).

It is quite observable that if you come across a Filipino woman, it is obvious that she is working either a housekeeper, au-pair or a nurse. The stereotyping of jobs has gone so far that some parents from Nepal and Philippines send their girls to study nursing once they finish high school so that these girls can go abroad as nurses since the demand of nurses is very high in the western countries.

International Labor Organization estimates “(...) *that the Philippines supplies 25 percent of all overseas nurses worldwide and 83 per cent of foreign nurses in the U.S. In the last 10 years, the Philippines sent close to 90,000 nurses overseas (...)*” (Matsuno, 2020)

Kathy and Zina who are both from the Philippines and came to Denmark on an au-pair visa have similar stories about them being stereotyped into working in the field of child-care first and now housekeeping. Both these women have now found peace with whatever they are doing but they believe that placing people from certain countries into certain jobs is inhumane, unjust and ignorant. They believe that since women from South Asia are termed as cheap labor, they are hired nanny or SoSu. Zina, further goes on,

“A lot of families in the Philippines want their daughters to study nursing so that they can go abroad when they grow up as nurses. The thought is planted in their head since the girls are young.”

This is the hope of many parents in many south Asian countries where they expect their children to go to richer countries and earn more. Same is the case in Nepal where many women enter the field of nursing in hopes that they will be able to settle in the EU, Gulf countries or the United States (Nienczura, 2019). This trend in the rise of supply of nurse and caregivers from South Asian countries is due to the shortage of nurses and care givers in UK, USA and certain countries in Europe. The increase in the demand for nurses is propelled by

issues like population growth, a growing number of elderly population and medical advances that change the role of nurses and require a larger workforce. So, recruiting nurses from South Asia has become an appealing quick fix to tackle the continuous increase in nurse shortage in these countries (Matsuno, Nurse Migration: The Asian Perspective, 2021).

c. Established prejudice

This prejudice when comes to ethnicity is also very common within the immigrant population itself. Certain group, ethnicities and races are viewed with mistrust, fear and stigma.

Kathy states,

“Women from the Philippines are thought to be submissive and very timid. We are expected to not voice our opinions and stay obedient. That is the prejudice of the other world when they see a Filipino woman.”

Rashmi continues,

“We are pictured to work in the service field. Whenever ‘they’ hear someone from Nepal, ‘they’ think that person is either a cleaner, housekeeper or a kitchen assistant. The perception of us is limited to these low paying jobs and it’s like we can’t do anything better. Like for India, people think they are smart and should be working in IT or some tech related sector but Nepalese, although regarded as very hardworking, are always placed in these sectors of low skilled jobs. It’s very degrading as a whole country.”

Prejudice is a better term when we compare with stigmatizing people or ethnicities. During my interview with Sonja who is now a Housekeeping Manager, she confessed having a type of belief that a person from a certain country or belonging to a certain race is not to be trusted when it comes to work. She explains,

“I try to give equal opportunities to every applicant that apply to be hired but when I see a candidate from Africa, I set that CV aside. I have worked with people from Africa before and from my experience, they are lazy when it comes to work”

In this case we can see how there is prejudice and stigma within the immigrant population itself. Even within the immigrants, there is a common belief of one being better than the other. This is not only common among western immigrants having a feeling of superiority over non-western immigrants. But the ratio of discrimination and prejudice is higher within non-western population.

6.8 Labor Market Assimilation of South Asian Women

As we have gathered that the assimilation of South Asian women is predominately in the service, cleaning, elderly and childcare and warehouse, it is important to understand how this is prevalent in Denmark. Since the labor market is segmented, immigrants' integration into the labor market is principally in secondary sectors where the jobs are unskilled, menial and repetitive. In the secondary sector, workers tend to change jobs frequently and involuntarily depending on the change in demand of the business cycle as opposed to primary sector where employees are required to possess specific set of skills and prior training (Felbo-Kolding, 2018).

During my conversation with the respondents, I found that most of these women (5 out of 9) had changed over 5 jobs. The reasons varied from higher wages, or convenience to flexible hours at work. Sweta, who has been living in Denmark for about 6 years opened up saying,

"I have already worked in over 4 or 5 different companies. I couldn't stay idle at home feeling depressed about my failed career. I had to do something, so I started out with a lot of odd jobs like cleaning, dog walking, packing and so on eventually landing as a warehouse assistant. When I was doing other jobs in the past, they were low skilled with almost no employment benefit. But this one is better. I think I will stay here."

When immigrants finally get to the professional level where their job matches with their education, it often is achieved through an old-fashioned way for example, like a pyramid. Sonja, who studied a Bachelor's in Hotel Management and a Master's in Tourism had to claw her way up in the hotel industry. She initially started as a housekeeper. There she built networks and did internships and after 10 years in Denmark, she is working as a Housekeeping Manager. But she isn't resentful about the ordeal and simply says,

"It is never easy. Even for a Danish here in Denmark. I think even if you get a job through your internal sources, you will have to be able to prove your merits. I worked hard and build a foundation that helped me reach to this position. This has made not only me, but everyone I work with appreciate my worth."

Regarding integration in the job market, assimilation of an individual also plays an important role. Bella talks about assimilation in the job market saying,

"I think you need to get assimilated with the culture of the country you are living in. I mean if you don't respect their language, their culture how can you expect them to respect your culture? And by respecting their culture, I, by no means, mean to abandon your belief system or religion. I mean learn the language and try to participate in their events. We call Danish as a closed society where the outsiders are not welcome but if

you think about it all of our cultures are closed to the outsiders. For example, have you ever invited a Danish to celebrate Dashain or Tihar with you? No! None of us have and we judge them. And the irony is that we live HERE and blame them, their government, their system. How is that fair? Maybe if we assimilate better and integrate ourselves into the Danish life, maybe the biases we feel might not be so defined."

Chapter 7: Discussion

This chapter provides a focused summary of the empirical analysis conducted in the above section and address the research question: **"What are the underlying factors behind the lower integration and inclusion of South Asian Women in high skilled jobs within the Danish Labour Market?"** The thesis has come across different reasons for the lower integration of high skilled South Asian women in high skilled jobs in the Danish labor market. Some of the causes were identified through the collected interviews which have qualitatively supplied some of the findings provided by the extant research and observations.

An important observation based on the thesis' findings is that despite experiencing a shortage of labor force in the labor market, Denmark is still overlooking its immigrants who already possess the skills required by the market. A representative of the New Dane Association (Foreningen Nydanske), which is established to improve the integration of foreigners in Danish labor market recently argued that:

"If you wish to use your educational background, you are very much left on your own. And even if you have your education officially approved in Denmark, you are still worse off than native Danes. You lack network and knowledge about the labour market that you want to enter" (Bendixen, 2022).

So, the question remains, why is the labor market overlooking the skilled migrant population that is already here and is rather hiring workers directly from their country? And which role do gender and South Asian heritage play in this? When I tried to delve further for what the reason might be for this, I came across some very interesting papers. Author Zul Ahmed (2022) in his article says that the country has a fear of losing cultural identity. He continues by saying that many Danes believe that since immigrants share different values and tradition, it will be difficult for them to integrate into the Danish society. Similarly, Patrick Kingsley (2012) in his book "How to be Danish" explores the experiences of non-western immigrants

in Denmark and their challenges integrating in the Danish labor market. The author is however hopeful that once immigrants *assimilate* themselves into the Danish lifestyle, culture and language, it might not be as difficult.

Likewise, one of the other reasons that came forward during my research is the prevalence of social networking which confirms the Social Capital theory. Social networking plays a major role in Denmark where the process of internal hiring is very common. In Danish work culture, it is not mandatory for a company to post a formal work vacancy and can hire new employees through internal hiring method (Beskæftigelsesministeriet, 2025). But this process has larger implications on immigrants who possess no networks and have no one to vouch for them inside the company. And with no new job vacancy posting, the immigrants are in total oblivion of demand of new employees by the companies. This was emphasized by several of the interviewed women. Like Rashmi and Sonja both share about when in need of an employee, the management asks the employees for reference. This way the vacancy announcement is not made public and the hiring is made based on the employees' contact.

The experiences of South Asian women being stereotyped in some particular sectors in the Danish labor market is also very prevalent and highly neglected by the policy makers. The story of every immigrant is similar to the other when it comes to the labor market. Women in the labor market are overlooked and denied jobs that match their full potential and to add a woman from a certain ethnicity, race or origin, it makes it even harder to find an equal footing (ILO, 2024). Although there is no data to show specifically the employment rate of South Asian women in Denmark neither there is any data of how many South Asian women having high skills and higher education are working low skilled jobs, my qualitative interviews pointed at the obvious that the respondents are in fact unable to find jobs that aligns with their education background.

Additionally, most of the respondents that I interviewed agreed that language has indeed been a major barrier to find better opportunities. Although there are many new international companies, start-ups, NGOs/INGOs founding in Denmark and are actively seeking employees that have a high proficiency in English, these respondents are not able to find a position in any of such companies.

So, from the empirical data, we gathered that factors such as social networks, stereotyping, language and lower assimilation of immigrants do play an important part in the integration of

skilled immigrant in the labor market. But besides those listed above, here are some other factors that might have contributed to the low integration and inclusivity in high skilled jobs.

7.1 Different Visa, Different Opportunities

Respondents arrived in Denmark with different visa types (see table 2, p. 38) Some came in student visa and later changed to Family Reunification while others have done the opposite. So, the question is, “does visa matter when it comes down to opportunities in Denmark?”

The answer might not be that simple. Sometimes visa type might help for some cases. For instance, a student visa means that a person can build up networks of friends, teachers, community, etc. in the duration of his/her student life which that person can use after graduation to look and apply for jobs. Same cannot be said for people that come to Denmark on a family reunification visa where there is no time to build networks. However, when I interviewed respondents who initially arrived on a student visa and have since changed their visa to family reunification about how well of a network, they have built in all these years in Denmark and if the prospect of them finding a better job is higher, I received similar answers of getting no help from the friends or classmates. (also see 6.6 Importance of social network in Danish labor market: pp 45). This experience is in exempt to the case of Sonja (see here pp.46). All the others who came in with a student visa said that the visa did not play any role to help them in landing a job in their course field. They all agreed that the friends that they made during their study period drifted apart and were not in contact after graduating. Only those remained friends who were from same country or community. So, they have no clue about how to approach people they no longer are friends with regarding jobs.

7.2 Culture and Gender

When we talk about culture and gender, both these terms are mutually inclusive in many ways. Culture is what negates the gender norm and provides separate rule and ways of lifestyle and behavior pattern for male and female. In other words, gender is shaped, molded and carved by culture. Since culture is responsible to give meaning to being a male or a female, Gender (like race and ethnicity) works as an organizing principle for the society. This is obvious in the division of labor according to gender. In most societies there are a clear set

of patterns that categorize what is 'women's work' and 'men's work' in the household, community and job market.

I saw this difference mentioned by a few of my respondents (see here pp.49-50) how they were raised different and how culture was a formidable factor in shaping their roles based on their gender. Most women in South Asian countries are raised to be quiet, submissive, non-threatening and non-assertive while the male counterparts are encouraged to be the opposite. Like for instance, Zina, who recalls that *"When I was young, my mom used to hide us under the table if there were any new visitor in our home. With that we grew up shy, hesitant and introverts"*.

From my many years living in Denmark I observed how South Asian women have been hesitant to go for what they deserve. One young girl who just arrived from Nepal in January 2024 (let us call her Sami), has recently completed her Master's in Development Finance is currently working in a cleaning company full-time. When I asked her why she wouldn't look for jobs within her education field, she looked at me as if I had lost my mind. The idea was completely alien to her. She is been made to believe that there are no professional jobs for people from her country, so she never even tried. Can we call it a cultural thing? Yes, this can also be culturally related.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

With the rise in immigration in Denmark, there is also been a surge in incoming migrant population that possess higher skills, education and experience. It is crucial to stop overlooking these immigrants and value their expertise. With globalization at its peak, the barrier to seeking jobs for immigrants needs to be lessened. This is especially aimed to those who have the skills but lack the language proficiency. The empirical data that I collected suggested that inability to speak Danish caused a lot of low self-esteem, low confidence and hesitance among the immigrant women. If this was the case with women who were highly educated and smart, what is the state of those who are not as intelligent, smart or educated?

To entirely omit the language is not the objective of the statement but it is also important to realize that Danish labor market is losing on its highly skilled workers for the sake of language proficiency. Perhaps, we could find other ways to maintain the reliability and relevance of language for instance while applying for permanent residence.

Similarly, this research also allowed to understand the importance of social networking in the Danish labor market. Through the empirical data as well as observation, it was verified how big of a role networking plays when getting a job. It also portrayed the importance of community among South Asian women. Since the first source of network for south Asian women is the community itself, almost all of these women have been able to find a job through the network they have built within the community. However, this has also allowed the women to become more hesitant in seeking opportunities elsewhere and outside their comfort zone which has in result affected their chance to get opportunities within their education and skills area. For this, since the problem is within the women themselves as a cohort it is required for women to step up and build their confidence, seek advice, give a helping hand and lead the way for others to follow.

Likewise, the intersectional approach towards this thesis shows how the ethnicity and gender plays an interlocking factor in finding job opportunities for South Asian women in the labor market. Since south Asian women have been predominately working in service, cleaning, warehouse and care sectors, the association of these women is linked with only those four precise sectors. If a woman decides to break the stereotype and seek opportunities elsewhere or in a professional setting, she is often met with scrutiny, prejudice, stigma and mistrust. In order to break this mentality, more women need to come forward and apply for jobs that are suitable to their education and skills. The only way to do this is with confidence and help from each other.

The nature of the labor market is to keep evolving. The set of skills that were prevalent only a decade ago could be replaced by a newer set of skills. So, it is important for employees to keep upgrading their skills aligning the needs of the labor market (OECD, 2024). Out of the 9 respondents, only 3 of them have a recent degree and 6 of them have a degree that is outdated. Also, the issue is that most of the women who are not happy with what they studied in the past have very little measure to get re-enrolled into the education in Denmark because of high tuition fees for international students. Most of them are waiting to get a permanent residence which will allow them to get their desired education for free.

When I asked the respondents my final question about their plans for the future involving their employment, most of them were hopeful. Some are planning to upscale their business, while others are planning to navigate into higher skilled jobs with updated skills and expertise. With a rise in medium scale industries and companies in Denmark, the requirement of employees fluent in English has been a growing trend. The entrepreneurial culture in Denmark is also thriving in recent years with cleantech industries, INGOs, IT and life sciences booming (Denmark, 2024). This has presented an optimistic value amongst the newer group of immigrants and recent graduates to seek their luck in finding opportunities in the labor market.

In recent times, many South Asian women are venturing into entrepreneurship and finding success in Denmark too. These women broke the barriers of gender, language and networks. These women upon arriving to Denmark, brought skills that were sometimes innovative and other times endearing. Punam Shrestha, originally from Nepal opened up a little bakery at her own home and registered it in 2022 under the name 'Cake Up'. As of 2023, she mentioned that her company is in profit. Her future plan for her company is to expand to Copenhagen and introduce her unconventional taste to a broader audience. Other South Asian women who have found success in Denmark outside the conventional labor market are: Kriti Prajapati, from India, is a comedian with the name 'Kritical Comedy' who does comedy shows all over Copenhagen. Chao Viet Kitchen is a Vietnamese restaurant owned and run by a Vietnamese lady. The restaurant is among one of the high rated Vietnamese restaurants that serves authentic Vietnamese food. Harps fitness is a gym operated by a 41-year-old south Asian mom. She also offers online classes on fitness and wellbeing. Nina's Favorites is a curated jewelry collection where the owner brings in carefully curated jewelries from Punjab, Mumbai and Karachi. And there are many others.

In conclusion, from the research, I believe that the South Asian high skilled women immigrants need to be well integrated in the Danish labor market and it is certainly possible. The means for this to gain fruition is through effective policies that cater to the skills of these women do not hinder them with added barriers such as stereotypes, language, and prejudices. As for the women, it is crucial that they seek opportunities to build an effective network and gain social trust through groups, community and clubs that serve their interest and ambition. This way the path to utilize their skills and education is not as difficult and this in return will be able to help high skilled south Asian women find high skilled jobs within the Danish Labor Market.

Bibliography

- Cambridge. (2024). *Cambridge Dictionary*. Retrieved from <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/immigration>
- TNG. (2024). *The National Geographic*. Retrieved from <https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/resource-library-united-states-immigration/>
- Niraula, A., & Valentin, K. (2018). Mobile Brains and the Question of 'Deskilling': High SKilled South Asian Migrants in Denmark. *Nordic Journal of Migration Research*, 19-35.
- Statistics Denmark. (2024). Retrieved from <https://www.dst.dk/en/Statistik/emner/borgere/befolkning/indvandrere-og-efterkommere>
- Integrationsministeriet, U. o. (2022). *INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION – DENMARK*. Ministry of Immigration and Integration Report to OECD.
- EC. (2024). *European Commission*. Retrieved from https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/women-labour-market-work-life-balance/womens-situation-labour-market_en
- 3F. (2021, May 19). Retrieved from <https://www.3f.dk/bjmf>: <https://tema.3f.dk/bjmfimmigrant/about-the-union/a-brief-history-of-the-danish-workers-movement>
- Østergaard, B. (2007). *Indvanderne i Danmarks historie. Kultur- og religionsmøder (in Danish)*. Syddansk Universitetsforlag.
- Polakkasernen. (2018, June 9). *Logo Muzeum Izba Polska*. Retrieved from <https://polakkasernen.dk/en/polish-traces-on-lolland-falster/a-bit-of-history/>
- EC. (2024, January). *European Website on Integration*. Retrieved from https://migrant-integration.ec.europa.eu/country-governance/governance-migrant-integration-denmark_en
- Nannestad, P. (2004). Immigration as a challenge to the Danish welfare state? *European Journal of Political Economy*, 755-767.
- Olesen, N. W., Elkjær, A., Sørensen, T. B., Olesen, & Farbøl, R. (2019, November 07). *Nordics Info Aarhus University*. Retrieved from <https://nordics.info>: <https://nordics.info/show/artikel/danish-immigration-policy-1970-1992-1>
- Pedersen, P. J. (2000). Immigration in a High Unemployment Economy: The Recent Danish Experience. *IZA Discussion Papers No. 165*.
- Pace, M., & Bennetzen, K. S. (2022). Female Migrants' Experiences of Labour Market 'Integration' in Denmark. In I. Isaakyan, A. Triandafyllidou, & S. Baglioni, *Immigrant and Asylum Seekers Labour Market Integration upon Arrival: NowHereLand A Biographical Perspective* (pp. 29-54).
- Statistics Denmark. (2023). Retrieved from <https://www.dst.dk/>.
- (2023). *International Migration Denmark*. Copenhagen: Ministry of Immigration and Integration.
- Breidahl, K. N., Hedegaard, T. F., Kristian, K., & Larsen, C. A. (2021). *Migrants' Attitudes and the Welfare State: The Danish Melting Pot*. Massachusetts: Edward Elgar Publishing, Inc.

- Bredgaard, T., Larsen, F., & Madsen, P. K. (2006). Opportunities and challenges for flexicurity – The Danish example. 61-82.
- EC. (2024). *European Commission: Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion*. Retrieved from [www.ec.europa.eu: https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=102&langId=en#:~:text=What%20is%20flexicurity%3F,security%20in%20the%20labour%20market](https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=102&langId=en#:~:text=What%20is%20flexicurity%3F,security%20in%20the%20labour%20market).
- STAR. (2023). *Danish Agency for Labour Market and Recruitment*. Retrieved from <https://www.star.dk/en/about-the-danish-agency-for-labour-market-and-recruitment/flexicurity/>
- Forbes, N., Yang, L. C., & Lim, S. (2023). Intersectional discrimination and its impact on Asian American women's mental health: A mixed-methods scoping review. *Front Public Health*.
- KVINFO. (2023). Retrieved from <https://kvinfo.dk/>: <https://kvinfo.dk/integration-og-beskaeftigelse/?lang=en#:~:text=The%20employment%20rate%20for%20female,group%20of%20women%20are%20unemployed>.
- Deding, M., & Jakobsen, V. (2008). Employment among immigrant women and men in Denmark - The role of attitudes. *The Danish National Centre for Social Research*, 1-41.
- Andersen, L. H. (2022, June). Inclusion and equitability in the support for non-western women to access the Danish Labour Market. Aalborg, Denmark: Aalborg University.
- Mealor, C. (2020). *Barrierer for Kvinder med Indvandrere og Flygtningebaggrund – på det Danske Arbejdsmarked*. Copenhagen: KVINFO.
- Liebig, T., & Tronstad, K. R. (2018). Triple Disadvantage? A first overview of the integration of refugee women. *OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers* 216.
- Lundstöm, C. (2014). White Migrations: Theoretical Outline. In C. Lundstöm, *White Migrations: Gender, Whiteness and Privilege in Transnational Migration* (pp. 1-197). London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Lykke, E. (2019). The Unarticulated Barrier - A study of unintentional racial- and discriminatory practice and how it can affect internationals' access to the Danish labour market. *Master's Dissertation*. Aalborg University.
- Dahl, M., & Krog, N. (2018). Experimental Evidence of Discrimination in the Labour Market: Intersections between Ethnicity, Gender, and Socio-Economic Status. *European Sociological Review*, 34(4), 402-417.
- Pager, D., & Shepherd, H. (2008). The sociology of discrimination: racial discrimination in employment, housing, credit, and consumer markets. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 181-209.
- Dahl, M. (2019). Alike but different: How cultural distinctiveness shapes immigrant-origin minorities' access to the labour market. In M. Dahl, *Detecting Discrimination - How Group-based Biases Shape Economic and Political Interactions: Five Empirical Contributions*. Frederiksberg: SL grafik.
- Qvist, J. Y., & Larsen, C. A. (2023). Labour market discrimination Relative, additive, and multiplicative effects.
- Mojab, F. (2023, May 11). *University of British Columbia*. Retrieved from <https://socialwork.ubc.ca/>: <https://socialwork.ubc.ca/news/a-critical-reflection-on-the-false-concept-of-western-knowledge/>

- Utecht, J. L. (2023, March 21). Retrieved from <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/comparative-discussion-western-non-western-theories-utecht-mba/>
- Chatterjee, S. (2014). Western Theories and the non-Western World: A Search for Relevance. *South Asian Survey*, 1-19.
- Zhang, C. (2020, September 30). *The Disorder of Things*. Retrieved from <https://thedisorderofthings.com/>: <https://thedisorderofthings.com/2020/09/30/the-epistemic-production-of-non-western-immigrants-in-denmark/>
- AFP. (2023, October 6). Retrieved from <https://www.thelocal.dk/>: <https://www.thelocal.dk/20231006/families-slam-racist-danish-law-to-clear-immigrant-parallel-societies#:~:text=Everywhere%20else%20is%20'non%2DWestern,it%20with%20%22parallel%20society%22>.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2000). Introduction: The Discipline and Practice of Qualitative Research. *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 1-34.
- Steup, M. (2014). Epistemology. *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.
- Truncellito, D. (2020). Epistemology. *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.
- Borchert, D. M. (1967). Epistemology. *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.
- Jonassen, D. H. (1991, September). Evaluating Constructivistic Learning. *Educational Technology*, 31(9), 28-33.
- Foerster, H. V. (1984). Principles of Self-Organization — In a Socio-Managerial Context. In *Springer Series in Synergetics* (Vol. 26).
- Jha, A. k., & Devi, R. (2014). Social Epistemology and Social Constructivist Pedagogy for School Reforms. *Pedagogy of Learning*, 2(1), 12-18.
- Owen, I. R. (1992). Applying social constructionism to psychotherapy. *Counselling Psychology Quarterly*, 5(4), 385-402.
- Claridge, T. (2015, April 22). *Institute for Social Capital*. Retrieved from www.socialcapitalresearch.com: <https://www.socialcapitalresearch.com/bourdieu-on-social-capital-theory-of-capital/>
- Cambridge Dictionary*. (2024). (Cambridge University Press) Retrieved 2024, from <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/>: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/secondary-data>
- Suyom, J. V. (2024). Retrieved from <https://www.scribd.com/document/423004681/What-is-a-Biographical-Narrative#:~:text=A%20biographical%20narrative%20tells%20the,us%20insight%20into%20someone%20else's>
- Roseneil, S. (2012). USING BIOGRAPHICAL NARRATIVE METHODS AND LIFE STORY METHODS TO RESEARCH WOMEN'S MOVEMENTS: FEMCIT. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 129-31.
- Coaston, J. (2019, May 28). *VOX*. Retrieved from www.vox.com: <https://www.vox.com/the-highlight/2019/5/20/18542843/intersectionality-conservatism-law-race-gender-discrimination>
- gov.scot. (2022, March 9). Using intersectionality to understand structural inequality in Scotland: Evidence synthesis. *Equality, Poverty and Social Security*. Retrieved from www.gov.scot: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/using-intersectionality-understand-structural-inequality-scotland-evidence->

- synthesis/pages/3/#:~:text=Crenshaw%20used%20the%20term%20intersectionality, is%20dominant%20in%20antidiscrimination%20law..
- Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics. *University of Chicago Legal Forum*.
- EHRC. (2017). *Measurement Framework for Equality and Human Rights*. Equality and Human Rights Commission.
- Loden, M., & Rosener, J. (1990). Workforce America! Managing Employee Diversity as a Vital Resource.
- Bourdieu, P., & Wacquant, L. J. (1992). An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology.
- Claridge, T. (2015, Apr 22). Retrieved from <https://www.socialcapitalresearch.com/bourdieu-on-social-capital-theory-of-capital/>
- Claridge, T. (2018). Introduction to Social Capital Theory. *Social Capital Research*.
- Stukas, A., Daly, M., & Cowling, M. J. (2005). Volunteerism and the creation of social capital: A functional approach. *Australian Journal on Volunteering*, 35-44.
- Putnam, R. D. (2000). *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. Simon and schuster.
- Siisiainen, M. (2003, October). Two concepts of social capital: Bourdieu vs. Putnam. *International Journal of Contemporary Sociology*, 40(3).
- Legusov, O. (2019). Using Bourdieu's Theory of Practice to Investigate the Experience of Ontario College Graduates Who Are Russian, Ukrainian, and Belarusian, and Seek Career Employment and Permanent Residency in Canada. *JOURNAL OF COMPARATIVE AND INTERNATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION*.
- Xu, H., Zhang, C., & Huang, Y. (2023, February 09). Social trust, social capital, and subjective well-being of rural residents: micro-empirical evidence based on the Chinese General Social Survey (CGSS). *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 10(49). Retrieved from [https://www.nature.com/articles/s41599-023-01532-1#:~:text=Therefore%2C%20social%20trust%20strengthens%20the,Helliwell%20and%20Putnam%2C%202004\).](https://www.nature.com/articles/s41599-023-01532-1#:~:text=Therefore%2C%20social%20trust%20strengthens%20the,Helliwell%20and%20Putnam%2C%202004).)
- Machalek, R., & Martin, M. W. (2015). Sociobiology and Sociology: A New Synthesis. *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*, 892-898.
- Moody, J., & Paxton, P. (2016). Building Bridges: Linking Social Capital and Social Networks to Improve Theory and Research. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 1491-1506.
- Liu, W., Sidhu, A., Beacom, A. M., & Valente, T. W. (2017). Social Network Theory. *The International Encyclopedia of Media Effects*.
- Firth, E. (2024, May 8). *The Local Denmark*. Retrieved from <https://www.thelocal.dk/20240508/why-more-than-half-of-jobs-in-denmark-arent-advertised>
- Tuominen, M., Kilpi-Jakonen, E., Velazquez, R. G., Castaneda, A., & Kuusio, H. (2023). Building social capital in a new home country. A closer look into the predictors of bonding and bridging relationships of migrant populations at different education levels. *Migration Studies*, 11(4), 598–630.
- Torpe, L. (2003). Social Capital in Denmark: A Deviant Case? *Scandinavian Political Studies*.
- Seligman, A. (1997). The problem of trust.
- Siisiäinen, M. (2000). Two Concepts of Social Capital: Bourdieu vs. Putnam. *ISTR Fourth International Conference "The Third Sector: For What and for Whom?"*. Dublin.
- KVINFO. (2024). Retrieved from <https://kvinfo.dk/integration-og-beskaeftigelse/?lang=en>

- Brožová, D. (2015). Modern labour economics: the neoclassical paradigm with institutional content. *Procedia Economics and Finance*, 30, 50-56.
- Woodbury, S. A. (1987). Power in the Labor Market: Institutionalist Approaches to Labor Problems. *Journal of Economic Issues*, 1781-1807.
- Reich, M., Gordon, D. M., & Edwards, R. C. (1973). A Theory of Labor Market Segmentation. *The American Economic Review*, 359-365.
- Launov, A. (2004). An Alternative Approach to Testing Dual Labour Market Theory. *IZA Discussion Papers*, No. 1289.
- Harrison, B., & Sum, A. (1979, September). The Theory of "Dual" or Segmented Labor Markets. *JOURNAL OF ECONOMIC ISSUES*, 13(3), 687-706.
- Piore, M. J. (2001). The Dual Labor Market: Theory and Implications. In D. Grusky, *Social Stratification, Class, Race, and Gender in Sociological Perspective, Second Edition*. New York: Routledge.
- Piore, M. (1979). *Birds of Passage: Migrant Labor and Industrial Societies*. Cambridge University Press.
- Alexander, A. J. (1974). Income, Experience, and the Structure of Internal Labor Markets. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 63-86.
- Kelley, M. (1978). The Pattern and Process of Job Discrimination in an Industrial Plant. *Cambridge: Industrial Relations Section*.
- Pauls, E. P. (2024, March 22). *Britannica*. Retrieved from <https://www.britannica.com/>: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/assimilation-society>
- Rodríguez-García, D. (2010). Beyond Assimilation and Multiculturalism: A Critical Review of the Debate on Managing Diversity. *Journal of International Migration and Integration*, 251-271.
- Denmark, M. o. (2024). *Denmark.dk*. Retrieved from <https://denmark.dk/>: <https://denmark.dk/society-and-business/the-danish-labour-market>
- Dyvik, E. H. (2024, Feb 15). *Statistics Denmark*. Retrieved from <https://www.statista.com/>: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/571909/number-of-immigrants-in-denmark-by-country-of-origin/>
- Myklebust, & Petter, J. (2021, July 17). *University World News*. Retrieved from www.universityworldnews.com: <https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20210717135624887>
- Bendixen, M. C. (2022, Feb 06). *European Website on Integration*. Retrieved from <https://migrant-integration.ec.europa.eu>: https://migrant-integration.ec.europa.eu/news/denmark-high-proportion-highly-qualified-migrants-working-unskilled-jobs_en
- Popadakova, M. (2020, Sep 01). *The International*. Retrieved from <https://www.the-intl.com>: <https://www.the-intl.com/post/why-is-it-so-hard-to-learn-danish>
- Ravn, L. (2019, May 23). Retrieved from <https://omnibus.au.dk/>: <https://omnibus.au.dk/en/archive/show/artikel/mord-eller-mor-derfor-er-det-saa-svaert-at-laere-dansk/>
- Norman, R. T. (2022, December 13). *Scandinavia Standard*. Retrieved from <https://www.scandinaviastandard.com/>: <https://www.scandinaviastandard.com/when-trying-isnt-enough-how-immigrants-experience-the-danish-language/>

- TDC. (2022). *The Danish gender equality paradox in leadership roles INSIGHTS ON THE ROOT CAUSES AND LEVERS TO BUILD MORE BALANCED LEADERSHIP*. Copenhagen: The Diversity Council.
- Niemczura, J. (2019, July 04). Retrieved from <https://joeniemczura.wordpress.com/>: <https://joeniemczura.wordpress.com/2019/07/04/about-the-65-failure-rate-on-june-2019-nepal-nurse-license-exam-some-factors-to-consider/>
- Matsuno, A. (2021). Nurse Migration: The Asian Perspective. *Asian Programme on the Governance of Labour Migration Technical Note*.
- Felbo-Kolding, J. (2018). *Labour Market Integration On the multiple dimensions of immigrant labour market integration*. Copenhagen: SL grafik.
- Ahmed, Z. (2022). Exploring the Sentiment Toward Immigrants in Denmark: A Socio-Cultural Analysis.
- Kingsley, P. (2012). *How to be Danish: a Journey to the Cultural Heart of Denmark*. New York: Marble Arch Edge.
- Beskæftigelsesministeriet. (2025). *Rules for companies operating in Denmark*. The Danish Ministry of Employment. Retrieved from <https://joinhorizons.com/countries/denmark/hiring-employees/>
- ILO. (2024). *International Labour Organization*. Retrieved from <https://webapps.ilo.org/infostories/en-GB/Stories/Employment/barriers-women#unemployed-vulnerable>
- OECD. (2024). Retrieved from <https://www.oecd.org/>: <https://www.oecd.org/els/emp/skills-and-work/changingskillsneeds/>
- Denmark. (2024). Retrieved from <https://denmark.dk/>: <https://denmark.dk/society-and-business/entrepreneurship>
- TBT. (2019, July 04). *The Brussels Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.brusselstimes.com/60085/jobseekers-face-discrimination-based-on-their-origins-scientific-study-shows>
- Mbakile, S., & Morris, D. (2024, Jan 18). *Luvi.sh*. Retrieved from <https://www.luvi.sh/>: <https://www.luvi.sh/womens-jobs-stereotype-a-modern-take-on-gender-roles/>
- Kadari, P. (2018, November 30). *Coppel Student Media*. Retrieved from <https://coppelstudentmedia.com/>: <https://coppelstudentmedia.com/83593/opinions/ending-the-smart-asian-stereotypes/>
- LaPierre, S. S. (2023, March 15). *Digital Content Next*. Retrieved from <https://digitalcontentnext.org/>: <https://digitalcontentnext.org/blog/2023/03/15/the-pink-collar-pay-gap-persists/>
- CFO. (2017). *A Guide for Europe bound Filipino Au Pair*. Manila: Commission of Filipinos Overseas.
- Matsuno, A. (2020). *Nurse Migration: The Asian Perspective*. ILO/EU Asian Programme on the Governance of Labour Migration Technical Note.