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THE ROLE OF LIFE EVENTS AND RELATIONS IN CAREER
DECISIONS

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Abstract

The purpose of the thesis was to investigate which formative and relational life events that may be particularly important for career decisions. To understand career choices, the thesis used a life story approach and portrayed how individuals reflected and found meaning from experiences and events. The sample consisted of thirteen interviewees, and five categories emerged from the analysis: (1) friends and acquaintances as inspiration, (2) door openers as the way in, (3) making sense of luck, (4) revelations along the way, and (5) mastery as propulsion. Moreover, the thesis noticed how individuals' sensemaking of particular life events can contribute to outcomes in career decisions and development. In particular, the findings revealed that relations have influenced the interviewees' career decisions, directly or indirectly. Further, the study revealed that mastery played a critical role in career development. Lastly, the interviewees' sensemaking of the life stories included serendipities and epiphanies at different stages of the narratives.

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1.0 Introduction

In this thesis we are interested in investigating what influences individuals' career decisions. To delve into this, we want to explore career choices as an emergent phenomenon, based on relational and formative experiences. Our goal is to gain a deeper understanding of what types of events that are exceptionally valuable for an individual's career decisions. To better understand this, it is essential to understand what a career is. According to Hall (2002), a career consists of a series of connected work experiences and activities which find place throughout a person's life. Career management comprises individual activities that form people's career experiences and transitions. These activities consist of components of career development such as the way in which an individual handles changes and career events over time and recognizing one's career interests or making a career choice (Wang & Wanberg, 2017).

Research has traditionally investigated what influences individuals' career decisions. Ability, biographical data and personal characteristics are among the factors that have been shown to affect career choices. Experience has also been found to influence career choices (Wang & Wanberg, 2017). Further, social conditioning, social position, and life events are thought to significantly influence career choice in the social learning and cognitive approach. Environmental systems, such as one's family, neighborhood, school, neighbors, friends, workplace, and the culture of the larger environment, are thought to influence and construct one's career development in the person-in-environment perspective (Zunker, 2006; Zunker, 2008).

Yet, what we find interesting and will look into, is which formative experiences that might form an individual's career decisions. By using a life story approach, the interviewees can provide stories with meaningful events and experiences from their lives. These experiences include relations, serendipities, epiphanies and mastery. As of now, research shows that life events have proven to be central in shaping the lives of individuals (Schwarzer & Luszczynska, 2012), and serendipity or chance has shown to take part in developing individuals' careers (Mansfield, 2006; Bright, Pryor, Chan, & Rijanto, 2009; Mitchell, Levin, & Krumboltz, 1996). Epiphanies

have shown to present key roles in forming how people engage with professional and organizational challenges (Pratt & Crosina, 2016; van Iterson, Clegg & Carlsen, 2017), whereas relationships are a critical component for career development (Gersick, Bartunek, & Dutton, 2000). Further, high self-efficacy has proven to positively affect the set career goals, committed effort, and chased career strategies that lead to the achievement of those goals (Ballout, 2009). Nevertheless, we believe that the literature in these areas are underinvestigated. We therefore want to contribute to this field with our thesis, by telling people's life stories when studying career decisions. Human beings use life stories to make sense of experiences and events, and we believe that these stories will explain how such happenings have shaped the career decisions of the individuals (Bruner, 1986).

2.0 Literature review

2.1 Narratives

A narrative approach for career decision-making aims to interpret how prior experiences may have contributed to shape individuals' career, as decisions are an essential element of the stories the individual narrates (Cochran, 1991, cited in Charokopaki, 2019). The narrative approach method originates from Bruner (1986), and aims attention at the personal stories of individuals, and on the significance and the meanings which the individuals assign to their experiences as they express themselves (Charokopaki, 2019). When personality psychologists started to shift their concentration to people's lives, they identified terms such as "story" and "narrative" to be particularly valuable in conveying the conjunction and the meaning of lives (McAdams, 2001). When humans need to arrange and systematize a big load of information, they create stories (McAdams, 1997).

In McAdams' (2001) life story model of identity, he argues that the identity of a person takes the form of a story, and that the story contains plot, character, setting, scenes and theme. His study implies that people tend to reconstruct the personal past and notice the present in respect of an internalized and developing self-story. Further, life stories are built upon biographical facts. However, the stories go remarkably beyond the facts, as individuals will selectively choose appropriate

features of their experience when they imaginatively explain both the past and future when they create stories that give meaning, both for themselves and for their audiences. As life stories are co-authored by the person herself or himself, in addition to the cultural circumstances in which that person's life takes place and are given meaning, life stories are psychosocial constructions (McAdams, 2001).

2.2 Life events

Life events are thought to significantly influence individuals' career choice within social learning and the cognitive approach (Zunker, 2008). Generally, life events are central in shaping the lives of individuals. Critical life events can shape individual biographies and are often landmarks in defining narrative identity, which is a person's internalized and evolving life story (Schwarzer & Luszczynska, 2012). Stories organize the changes of human intention and action sequences in time (Bruner, 1986; McAdams, 2001). Causal coherence provides narratives of one's life that explain how one event caused or led to other events in one's life. Further, attitudes and preferences may be explained in terms of the life events that may have caused them (McAdams, 2001).

Unusual, unexpected, and emotional events tend to have a deeper impression and provide the basis around which life narratives that are constructed (Brewer, 1986). Memories that are considered autobiographical are usually those that provide a motivational explanation for later developments. Memories that are significant at the time of retrieval are therefore likely to be included in a life story (Conway & Holmes, 2004). Moreover, autobiographical memories emerge and develop in a social context (Welch-Ross, 1995).

Personal event memories can take different forms. Whereas some are especially vivid, others may seem mundane or of little relevance for self-definition (Pillemer, 1998). The most important life events can be divided into the six following categories: originating events, turning points, anchoring events, analogous events, redemptive events, and contaminating events (McAdams, 2001). Originating events are memories that contain the origin of interest, vocation, relationships, life goals, etc. (Pillemer, 1998). Like turning points, these events mark the beginning of a new life path. Additionally, turning points are characterized by events that revise the

direction of a person's life. Anchoring events, on the other hand, refer to memories that affirm and reinforce an ongoing interest, attitude, or commitment held by the rememberer. They may lead to the existing beliefs and values of the person. Analogous events represent episodes that are readily compared with similar other events to suggest a pattern or theme available in a person's life story. They serve as a reminder of what to do or not to do, based on these earlier experiences. Redemptive and contaminating events consist of negative events that the person later considers to have a positive influence on their life. Both of them often have a motivational mechanism (Pillemer, 1998).

Originating events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mark the beginning of a new path ▪ Often tied to long-term goals ▪ Tend to be a plan to meet those goals
Turning points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Events that revise a life direction ▪ Mark the beginning of a new life plan
Anchoring events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Signal what to be valued ▪ Signal what to be avoided ▪ May lead to revision of ground beliefs and values
Analogous events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Triggers a memory of a similar past event ▪ Repeated or reinforced earlier life events ▪ Reminding a person what to do or not, based on earlier experiences
Redemptive events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Negative events that later are viewed to have a positive influence on their life ▪ Tend to have a motivational mechanism
Contaminating events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Negative events that later are viewed to have a positive influence on their life ▪ Tend to have a motivational mechanism

Figure 1: Subdivision of life events (McAdams, 2001)

2.3 Serendipities

Serendipity or chance can play a major part in developing individuals' careers (e.g., Mansfield, 2006; Bright, Pryor, Chan & Rijanto, 2009; Mitchell, Levin, & Krumboltz, 1996; Roe & Baruch, 1967). The term serendipity is a label for a broad and multifaceted phenomenon (Yaqub, 2018). One definition is "the art of making an unsought finding" (Andel, 1994, p. 631). Cunha, Clegg, and Mendonça (2010) emphasize the accidental discovery of something valuable. At its core, serendipity is a process of metaphorical association – seeing something in another thing.

Meyers (2007) described serendipitous discoveries as "happy accidents". Floreczak (2015) uses a similar description, namely "a delightful surprise". In other words, it

is sort of an unexpected discovery. According to Cunha, Clegg, and Mendonça (2010), unexpected discoveries may occur because people are in the right place at the right time. Thus, there are contextual elements to serendipity that may either ignite or impede the value creation (Cunha, Clegg, & Mendonça, 2010). The unpredictable nature is another characteristic of chance events. Sometimes you might seize a remarkable opportunity while at other times, you miss out on an excellent chance (Chen, 2005).

Enactment is crucial in serendipity. This is because surprises can happen, and nothing be made of them. According to Krumboltz (2009) serendipity requires action, as it is not waiting for an event to occur. Examples of such actions include a response to create favorable circumstances, recognize opportunities when they arise, and capitalize on unplanned events in a timely manner. Making something from the unexpected is not purely a matter of luck. According to Merton and Barber (2004) luck most often favors prepared minds, those who are ready to benefit from it. They argue that preparedness is linked with qualities such as alertness, flexibility, courage, and assiduity. In this sense, serendipity may be viewed as capability rather than chance (De Rond, 2014). Mansfield (2006) states that to take advantage of different ideas and circumstances, one must be strongly focused and at the same time prepared as the ideas and circumstances arise.

Other researchers support the notion that serendipity requires readiness. According to Makri and Blandford (2012) serendipity requires an element of “insight”. Those involved must be open or ready for serendipity to occur. Erdelez (2004) states that a person must be in a certain state of mind to be able to recognize the value of random encounters. Organizational researchers have not looked much into the construct or importance of the involved being prepared for chance (Cunha, Rego, Clegg, & Lindsay, 2015). A study by Williams, Soeprapto, Like, Touradji, Hess, and Hill (1998), on the other hand, found that the most common type of chance involved someone else’s intervention.

A study reported by Bright et al. (2009) suggests that most unplanned events experienced by individuals throughout their career path are more connected than independent. The influence of multiple concatenated positive events appeared to be

greater than single or multiple independent positive events. Bandura (1982) supports the notion that chance plays a critical role in shaping the course of human lives and that unplanned events are connected. According to him, chance encounters affect individuals' lives through reciprocal influence of personal and social factors.

2.4 Epiphanies

Another form of insight that can lead to changes in individuals' lives is epiphanies. Research regarding how people make sense of epiphanies still remains enigmatic, albeit Dane (2019) developed a theory in this area exploring how people make sense of epiphanies concerning their work or career. His findings show that people have a tendency to perceive their epiphanies as a result of good fortune and that people generally are reluctant to take credit for their epiphanies. For the most part, people tend to attribute their epiphanies to forces beyond themselves; as serendipitous circumstances. His findings do further imply that people believe the epiphanies arose because they were open to the possibility of being transformed, and by achieving a state of "readiness" one may set the stage for an epiphany to occur (Dane, 2019).

Historically, the term epiphany stems from the ancient Greek word "epiphainsthai". The meaning of this word is "to come into view" or "appear" (Arnold, 2002). The word is also used to describe moments of significant and sudden insight (Paris, 1997, cited in McDonald, 2008). Nevertheless, the term is used in a variety of ways, and sometimes the term is defined equally as insight itself. An insight appears when one's mental representation of a specific problem, tension, or situation is suddenly transformed, such that one perceives the target through a new and useful light (Kounios & Beeman, 2014).

Further, researchers have also described an epiphany as "a showing forth, an illumination" (Beja, 1971, cited in Dane, 2019), or as "*a sudden recognition or insight into the essential meaning of something*" (Jauregui, 2007, cited in Dane, 2019, p. 4). Another important contribution to the literature is Jarvis (1997), who characterized an epiphany as a "*sudden discontinuous change, leading to profound, positive and enduring transformation through reconfiguration of an individual's most deeply held beliefs about self and world*" (cited in McDonald, 2008, p. 91).

Dane (2019) suggests that by this standard, an insight-based solution may be described as an epiphany in a work-related task or problem.

Epiphanies are also frequently referred to as “aha-moments”, and can be viewed as an unexpected, sudden and momentary explanation of discovery and insight (van Iterson, Clegg & Carlsen, 2017). While researchers have portrayed several explanations for how insights arise (e.g., Hélie & Sun, 2010; Kounios & Beeman, 2009; MacGregor, Ormerod, & Chronicle, 2001), the fact that insights appear suddenly, often with surprise, confirms the view that insights are fostered through nonconscious thought (Kounios & Beeman, 2014; Sio & Ormerod, 2009). Moreover, research suggests that nonconscious processes in general, and more particularly insights and epiphanies, present key roles in forming how people engage with professional and organizational challenges (Pratt & Crosina, 2016; van Iterson, Clegg & Carlsen, 2017).

2.5 Relations

Relations can play a big part in individuals’ careers. As relations can serve as a means to achieve career goals, relationships are a critical component for career development (Gersick, Bartunek, & Dutton, 2000). Networks can be referred to as “*one of the most powerful assets that anyone can possess: it provides access to power, information, knowledge and capital as well as other networks*” (Elfring & Hulsink, 2003, p. 409). Moreover, several studies highlight that every experience, decision and interaction with the working world is affected, understood and shaped by relationships (Flum, 2001; Gergen, 2009; Richardson, 2012). Furthermore, research implies that relationships are an important source of satisfaction, life enrichment, personal growth and development (Berscheid, 1999 cited in Dutton & Ragins, 2007; Dutton & Ragins, 2007).

Blustein (2011) explores how previous and existing relational influences are internalized, with implications for how people experience interests, aspirations, values and motivation. He argues that relationships form the cornerstone for experience, including experiences that are work-based. Moreover, several studies demonstrate the significance of relational support in facilitating career exploration and progress in decision making (Ketterson & Blustein, 1997; Phillips, Christopher-

Sisk & Gravino, 2001, Blustein 2011). In addition, Bosley, Arnold and Cohen (2009, p. 1489) propose the concept of career shaper which is “*a concept that can be applied across disciplinary and contextual boundaries and reflects the range of people who provide an individual with career support, advice and access to development opportunities, with perceived consequences for the individual’s career*”. Career shapers can be friends, family or colleagues who intentionally or incidentally shape individuals’ careers, or line managers and HR staff who have responsibility for career development, in addition to professional career advisers. Career shapers can be perceived both as facilitating career development or hindering development if they fail to give career support when they could have done so (Bosley, Arnold & Cohen, 2009).

According to Berscheid (1999, p. 261, cited in Dutton & Ragins, 2007) “*relationships with other humans are both the foundation and the theme of the human condition: we are born into relationships and live our lives in relationships with others*”. Put differently, relationships are a fundamental part of people's lives, and research implies that relationships often can serve as meaning in an individual’s life (Berscheid, 1999, cited in Dutton & Ragins, 2007; Dutton & Ragins, 2007). However, all relationships throughout life are dynamic, unique and serve disparate meanings, and there are many different aspects of our life where relationships can arise.

Humans are social animals by nature and relations with others have a considerable impact on the behavior of individuals (Insel & Young, 2001). According to Andersen and Chen (2002), relationships are fundamental concerning individuals’ ability to evolve their sense of the self. This can further be explained by how beliefs and feelings individuals have about themselves are strongly affected by interactions with others. Further, both previous and existing relationships will form individuals’ behaviors and emotions. Hinkley and Andersen (1996) argue in their study that interaction and events with other individuals will influence the way one perceives oneself and also one’s behavior in interactions with new people.

3.0 Research question

Research has traditionally investigated several areas when it comes to how an individual's career choice has been influenced, and findings suggest that factors such as ability, personality characteristics, biographical data and experience are associated with career choice (Wang & Wanberg, 2017). Career development theories, on the other hand, include a social learning and cognitive approach and a person-in-environment perspective. In the social learning and cognitive approach, social conditioning, social position, and life events are thought to significantly influence career choice. In the person-in-environment perspective, several environmental systems are thought to influence and construct one's career development. Such systems may be one's family, neighborhood, school, neighbors, friends, workplace, and the culture and customs of the larger environment (Zunker, 2006; Zunker, 2008). What we found particularly interesting, is how researchers argue that life events are central in shaping the lives of individuals, how serendipity or chance can play a major part in developing individuals' career, how epiphanies can affect individuals' career choice, how relationships are a critical component for career development, and how mastery is necessary for career development (Schwarzer & Luszczynska, 2012; McAdams, 2001; Mansfield, 2006; Dane, 2019; Gersick, Bartunek & Dutton, 2000; Ballout, 2009).

Narratives and life stories are particularly useful in understanding the coherence and the meaning of lives and can provide insight into how individuals build their lives (McAdams, 2001; Bruner, 1986). With this, we want to add value to the literature by studying how individuals use their life experiences to create meaning, and further how this has affected their career choices. Additionally, we want to investigate individuals' career choices by exploring McAdams' (2001) typology, with the six different categories of the most important life events. Moreover, we believe that life stories can provide the answer, and therefore, the purpose of our thesis will be to investigate the following question:

“Which formative and relational life events seem particularly important for career decisions?”

4.0 Methodology

4.1 *The Life Story Interview*

Life stories and narratives are especially useful in understanding the coherence and the meaning of people's lives (McAdams, 2001). A big contribution to this research approach is McAdam's life story model of identity (1985; 1993; 1996, cited in McAdams, 2001), which asserts that people provide their lives with wholeness and meaning by creating internalized and evolving narratives of the self.

Storytelling is an essential form of human communication, and when people tell a story from their own lives, they increase their knowledge of themselves and uncover a deeper meaning of their lives through reflections (Atkinson, 1998). Atkinson (1998, p. 8) has further defined a life story as:

“The story a person chooses to tell about the life he has lived, told as completely and honestly as possible, what is remembered of it, and what the teller wants others to know of it, usually as a result of a guided interview by another.”

The life story interview allows informants to tell their own story by making the informant highlight their own experiences and ways of thinking (McAdams, 2001; Johannessen, Christoffersen & Tufte, 2016). Moreover, the informant's life story does not necessarily explain what happened in the particular event, but more importantly why it was essential and what it means for the informant (McAdams, 1997). Further, life story interviews put emphasis on not asking too direct questions when the informants tell about their own experiences (Atkinson, 1998). The aim of interviews based on storytelling is to get the informants to connect events and experiences to each other, and narratives can assist in the learning of how we build our lives (McAdams, 2001; Camic, Rhodes & Yardley, 2003; Bruner, 1986). The purpose of this study is to identify different important life events, elements and beliefs as a complete story and make sense of them. More specifically, we want to figure out and learn how individuals create meaning from these stories, and how it has affected their life choices regarding career and career development.

4.2 Research design and data collection

This thesis will attempt to contribute to identifying patterns in how individuals have developed their careers through formative experiences. In order to achieve an understanding of how these experiences influenced career choices, we connected these experiences to life narratives. Consequently, we focused on context and particularly how unique life events have happened over time, and also how these specific life events have had an influence on the participants (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

Life story interviews contribute to position experiences into sequences and can foster rich and unrelated statements when referring to personal experiences (McAdams, 2001; Jovchelovitch & Bauer, 2000). We believe that this made it easier to connect important events together. Moreover, we decided to use an inductive approach, as the aim is to draw theory from our data collection (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Further, we gathered our data through semi-structured interviews and had two segments. The segments were professional athletes and consultants. We aimed at having a conversation with the respondents rather than pure questioning, and we therefore focused on open-ended questions.

4.3 Interviews

Our interview guide was designed to make the interviewees reflect upon previous life events that have contributed to shaping their careers. To achieve this, we deployed a semi-structured interview guide consisting of predefined questions (see Appendix 9.1). We found it valuable to base our interviews on some degree of structure and guidance as we were interested in investigating certain subjects. However, we avoided being too dependent on the guide as we were interested in following the natural course of the conversation. We rather led the conversation to subjects that have influenced the development of the individuals' careers, which is what we will further investigate in our study. By deploying this approach, we hoped that the interviewees would reflect and conclude on which events that have been critical for their career choices and development. Here, our task was to make sure not to interrupt the interviewees when they told their stories. Instead, we tried to ask relevant and challenging follow-up questions that made them dig deeper. These

questions were open rather than closed to ensure that the stories the interviewees told us are from their point of view.

We started off the interview by asking the informants to tell us about themselves, such as their education, work experience, etc. We did this in order to set a starting point and establish a tone. Trying to get to know the interviewees to some degree may be critical as life stories are personal (McAdams, 2001). Throughout the interview, we followed the predefined themes when we were asking questions and asked follow-up questions when necessary.

4.4 Data sample

In order to learn a lot about a specific phenomenon, the case of study should be information rich. Therefore, qualitative methods focus on a small sample that accordingly needs to be purposeful (Patton, 2002). We used purposive and convenience sampling with regards to our sampling strategy. This means that the sample consisted of respondents within the population that has specific characteristics that are valuable for our study, and purposive sampling falls under a non-probability sampling strategy (Bryman & Bell, 2015). In total, we conducted thirteen interviews, where the participants were divided into two segments, namely professional athletes and consultants. Most of the interviewees worked in the same organization, Company X, and the minority of our sample was separated among diverse organizations. Out of the thirteen interviewees, two were males (see Figure 2). Each interview typically lasted for one hour. Our impression was that the interviewees were open and willing to tell their stories and reflect upon them. The interviewees received information about the purpose of the interview in advance, in order to increase the possibility of receiving in-depth answers.

4.5 Choice of method

As we aimed to study the formative experiences contributing to career choices, we considered qualitative interviews to be the natural and most useful methodology for our study. The qualitative methodology often uses broad research questions to study one or more phenomenon in-depth (Bryman & Bell, 2015). This is in line with our objectives as we studied the informants' descriptions of their life events in depth. Furthermore, qualitative methodology is characterized by close involvement between the researcher and the interviewees, so that the researcher can understand

the world through their eyes (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Kvale (1996) refers to this as “wandering with the interviewee”.

Qualitative research is attuned to the unfolding of events over time and to the interconnections between the actions of participants of social settings (Bryman & Bell, 2015). This matched our study which aims to understand the interconnections between the life events of the participants. In order to gain an understanding and insight into the life stories shaping the interviewees’ career development, we used a narrative approach. This means that the interviewees tell their subjective stories from their perspective (Greenhalgh, Russell & Swinglehurst, 2015). We used this approach in order to understand how their personal story has led them to where they are today.

4.6 Data analysis

Due to the qualitative nature of our master thesis we used a narrative approach which tries to build a chronological story of happenings and events to better understand what data to aim attention at, and what to leave out (Greenhalgh, Russell & Swinglehurst, 2015). Moreover, the narrative approach allowed us to draw meaning from separate sources besides perceived links among the various experiences. Narratives may also tell us how people evolved into who they are, who they are on their way of becoming, and why they behave and act as they do (McAdams, 2001). Further, the life story approach consists of the interviewees’ understandings, clarifications and descriptions of several events throughout life that display their individual sensemaking of former experiences.

Prior to the analysis, all interviews were transcribed, and we read the transcripts several times and tried to recognize considerable similarities and themes among the interviewees’ stories. This was performed in a repetitive manner until no other major themes were identified. Further in this process we made separate timelines for the interviewees (see Appendix 9.2), where we developed codes that introduced the different themes. As a result of this, we recognized five main themes which we believe described how life events and experiences have led to and formed the interviewees to where they are today with regards to their career. We ended up with the five categories *friends and acquaintances as inspiration, door openers as the*

way in, making sense of luck, revelations along the way and mastery as propulsion. Furthermore, we have used McAdams' (2001) typology of life events as a theoretical basis in our thesis. We did also include analysis of the life events and experiences that we believe have affected the interviewees' career path and did not limit our findings solely to the interviewees' descriptions and interpretations.

To summarize, we examined the interviews as a series of influences and events over time and later found and classified categories across the interviews. We looked into the interviews individually in order to prevent the risk of ignoring meaningful information besides avoiding group thinking. We coded the emerging themes and then clustered them into five main categories to organize the findings in a sensible way.

4.7 Ethical considerations

It was voluntary to participate in our study. We sent out a declaration of informed consent prior to conducting the interviews in order to give the interviewees an opportunity to get acquainted with the information of the study and the usage of the information they provided us with (see Appendix 9.3). The interviewees also had the opportunity to withdraw without consequences (Crow, Wiles, Heath & Charles, 2006). We guaranteed the participants confidentiality and have therefore provided our interviewees with aliases. Our interviews were based on the individuals' personal life stories and experiences, and therefore contain personal information. However, we made sure not to ask questions demanding sensitive information.

We used a recorder during the interviews. This was done in order to capture relevant and valuable information that we would otherwise have had problems capturing. After the data from the interviews were transcribed, the record files were deleted. We made sure that the data will not be known for anyone else than us.

5.0 Meeting the interviewees

In order to provide a better understanding of who the interviewees are, we have presented our interviewees in a succinct manner below. The most powerful experiences are highlighted, in addition to a short presentation of their background.

	What do they do?	Formative experiences
Odin	28 years old, works as a Manager in Company X. He holds a BSc and MSc in Accounting and Auditing from Østfold University College and BI Norwegian Business School.	Sport became important to Odin early on, providing an arena of strength and willpower as he went to a top-sport high school in his youth. Guided by a negative motivation to avoid ending up like his parents, higher education became crucial for Odin. He was influenced by a stellar lecturer, as well as his friends and acquaintances into the direction of becoming an auditor. During the exploratory period of making a career choice, Odin experienced an epiphany when he read about revision as a profession. He has been exceptionally successful following this path, highlighting important colleagues and leaders along the way, and is currently working as a manager in the recognized Company X.
Balder	27 years old, works as a Business Consultant in Company X. He holds an MSc in Business Analysis and Performance Management from Norwegian School of Economics.	Becoming successful was clearly a calling for Balder, something that has defined his career path and his focus on achieving good grades to open acknowledged doors. He started at a prestigious business school studying economics as he experienced mastery in mathematics and believed that noteworthy career opportunities would arise. Throughout these years, Balder travelled and worked abroad. He explained that he experienced an epiphany and turning point regarding his career in this period, as there was a change in his reflections about what really matters.
Eir	25 years old, works as a Business Consultant in Company X. She holds a BSc in Management and Organisation from Lancaster University and an MSc in Organisation, Management and Work from University of Oslo.	Eir strongly identified relations as the biggest influence on her career path. Growing up in a privileged community and a career-focused home, it was expected that she performed at a certain level. She was also influenced by her social circle; successful friends and a big network pushed her even further in a fortunate direction. However, her success would not be possible without her perceived mastery within her field. Moreover, Eir told us that it was by chance that she ended up in Company X.
Embla	26 years old, works as a Business Consultant in Company X. She	To get Embla out of the comfort zone became important to Embla's parents early on, as she was an underconfident and anxious child. As a result, they sent her to a high school in the

	holds an MSc in Business with a major in Strategy from BI Norwegian Business School.	city instead of the local high school, giving her new impulses. During these years, Embla met a career-focused environment, and the change of scenery was extremely influential in terms of why her career path ended up like it did. She even talked about this event as a turning point and highlighted relations as important influencers, both her parents and her friends. Further, Embla experienced an epiphany when she searched for a full-time job, as it became clear for her what she wanted to work with and what was important to her in a job.
Hillevi	40 years old, works as a Senior Advisor in Company Y. She holds a BSc in Physical Education Teaching and Coaching from the Norwegian School of Sport Sciences and is currently taking executive education at BI Norwegian Business School.	Hillevi knew from an early age that she wanted to become a professional athlete. From early on, she showed great talent and she competed professionally for twelve years. She told us that all her choices related to education have been adapted to her sports commitments. Even after retiring from sport, she said that important takeaways from her sports career affected her new career path massively. Guided by a supportive mentor and leader, she found herself valuable in her new career, leading to a turning point. She further told us that she has always been interested in helping others and that she experienced an epiphany during her executive studies, where her ambitions of becoming a leader, or helping leaders, suddenly felt completely right.
Hedvig	27 years old, works as a Senior Consultant in Company X. She has an MA in International Relations from University of St. Andrews, and an MBA from Rotterdam School of Management.	Politics, social issues and sustainability became important to Hedvig early on. Born in a family where the big questions were asked, Hedvig knew from an early age that she needed to do something meaningful in her career. For a long time, she wanted to become a journalist, telling important stories. However, Hedvig's stepfather influenced her in another direction. She told us about a conversation between them that became a turning point, and a shift from journalism to international relations. Hedvig did also define an internship during her studies as another turning point, as it changed her direction with regards to profession further. Hedvig did also mention several coincidences along the way, which made her end up where she did.

Frøya	32 years old, works as a Business Consultant in Company X. She holds a BSc in Business Administration from BI Norwegian Business School and an MLitt in Finance and Management from Scotland.	As a kid, Frøya thought it seemed nice to work in a bank because they wore fancy clothes. However, she never really had a clear career path. She mentioned her father and uncles who were businessmen as role models and inspiration for why she chose business studies. After completing her bachelor's degree, she completed a summer internship in England within the finance industry. Her boss affected her attitudes towards career development by inspiring her to go with the flow and not make too many plans. Frøya's part-time job in a consultancy firm when moving back to Norway led to an aha-moment when she realized that this was what she wanted to do.
Thora	25 years old, works as an Accountant in Company X. She holds a BSc in Accounting and Auditing from Østfold University College.	Being occupied with gymnastics from childhood contributed to Thora developing a high sense of structure and organization skills. This proved helpful when attending a demanding study programme, where she needed to put in a lot of work. Mastering the studies provided her with a sense of achievement and self-efficacy, which increased her motivation. During her first year of study, a motivating lecturer became important for her further career. The lecturer convinced her of the societal benefits of the occupation and contributed to her choice of doing a BSc instead of quitting after the first year. Thora never had clear plans for her career, and by chance participated in a company presentation during her last year of study. She applied for a position in the same company, and got the job, which she describes as "a bit random".
Idunn	31 years old, works as a Senior Business Consultant in Company X. She has studied one year of Physics, holds a BSc in Business Administration and an MBA from Norwegian School of Economics.	As Idunn developed a socially engaged side, studying physics for one year made her realize that this study program was too narrow. This, combined with the fact that her former boyfriend introduced her for his field of study within economics, made her realize the societal benefits and the wide application of this study. Receiving poor results on a physics exam led her to experiencing a turning point where she decided to quit the physics studies and start studying business administration. When working in the

		Ministry, she experienced a lack of focus on career development, which she experienced to be demotivating. This, amongst others, made her curious about working in the consultancy industry. Her former boyfriend and acquaintances working in consultancy firms provided insight in the work as consultants and were therefore influential for her starting in the consultancy industry herself.
Nanna	28 years old, works as a Group Instructor, Personal Trainer and Nutritionist.	Doing gymnastics since she could walk, Nanna never really considered doing something else than sports for a living. She highlighted the fact that her dad and grandparents used to perform gymnastics, and it was therefore natural for her to follow this path. Being an athlete proved to be a big part of Nanna's identity and formed the basis for the decisions she made. However, she emphasized how her former expectations did not match the reality of her occupation, which made her lack motivation. This led to her decision to start studying nursing the upcoming fall.
Alfhild	26 years old, works as a Business Consultant in Company X. She holds a BSc in Business and Finance and an MSc in Finance from BI Norwegian Business School.	Being a social person and always knowing she wanted to work with people was highlighted by Alfhild as essential in her career decisions. During her studies this desire was confirmed, as she always preferred working in groups rather than studying by herself. This experience impacted her decision to work as a consultant. Further, she emphasized the significance of other peoples' experiences and thoughts when it came to shaping her career. She also highlighted the fact that she was open to different opportunities and impressions which led to her experiencing the epiphany of realizing she wanted to work as a consultant. Furthermore, she stressed the impact coincidences play in terms of who you meet and what you experience.
Bergtora	26 years old, works as a Business Consultant in Company X. She holds a BSc in Finance from East	Having an interest in math and numbers from early on played a big part in the development of Bergtora's career. She also highlighted the relational aspect in her career choices and development. For instance, her family was concerned with education and she

	<p>Carolina University and an MSc (QTEM) in Finance from BI Norwegian Business School.</p>	<p>exemplified this with her grandmother giving the grandchildren money for every completed semester. Furthermore, Bergtora mentioned a girl she talked to as a 13-year old, who made her realize that she wanted to go to college. This coincidental meeting led her to prioritizing her already existing golf career which in turn gave her the opportunity to study abroad with a scholarship. The summer after her first year of studying, she had a summer internship at Company X. She experienced an epiphany due to realizing that this job was a good fit for her. Talking to her cousin’s husband who spoke warmly of the consultancy industry also contributed in her decision to work for Company X.</p>
<p>Livunn</p>	<p>30 years old, works as a Senior Business Consultant in Company X. She holds a B.A. in International Relations and Affairs from The George Washington University and an MSc in Administration and Management from The University of Edinburgh.</p>	<p>Growing up with parents who were concerned with education was highlighted by Livunn as influencing her education and career choices. This focus led to some sort of pressure on her and her siblings’ career decisions, in terms of them all choosing high status professions. Growing up in an area of Oslo where people were career oriented, Livunn also mentioned pressure from the environment. Further, she explained how she barely was accepted at the high school she applied for, but experienced having very good teachers who motivated her. She ended up graduating with the school’s best grades. Livunn mentioned this period as influential for her career aspirations and highlighted the ability to perform at a relatively high level as an influential factor in her choice of direction.</p>

Figure 2: Meeting the interviewees

6.0 Findings and discussion

We identified five interesting categories that we consider to illustrate how life events and experiences have formed the interviewees to become who they are today in terms of their career. The five categories are: *friends and acquaintances as inspiration, door openers as the way in, making sense of luck, revelations along the way and mastery as propulsion*. These categories are illustrated and defined in

Figure 3. However, we do not declare that these categories are an extensive list, but rather recurrent themes throughout the interviews. We do also believe that the five categories should be considered as interconnected influencing factors, as we noticed through our analysis how some of the practices may influence one another, in a sequence of life events. Consequently, the stories we will present may contain elements of several categories at once.

6.1 Main findings

Category	Definition	Typology
Friends and acquaintances as inspiration	The category addresses the events and experiences where friends and acquaintances have inspired or influenced the interviewees regarding various career choices. The category implies that certain life events, in particular when a choice concerning direction or path exists, are relationally salient.	The events can typically be seen as anchoring events, turning points and originating events. Anchoring events as relations have provided valuable sources of insight into what is valued by the individual. The events may be seen as turning points as the relational influence or inspiration may contribute in marking the beginning of a new life plan. The events can also be seen as originating events as they have marked the beginning of a new path.
Door openers as the way in	Central in this category are the events and experiences where certain people have had a big impact on the interviewees' careers. Door openers in this context consist of leaders and acquaintances who have given the interviewee attractive opportunities businesswise, either by providing a way into an organization or a position, or by challenging the interviewee to accomplish goal	The events in this category can be viewed as turning points, originating, anchoring and redemptive events. It can be perceived as originating events as door openers can mark the beginning of a new path and turning points as door openers can contribute in revising the life direction of the interviewee. The events may be seen as anchoring events as they can signal what to be valued and what to be avoided. Additionally, the events can be characterized as redemptive events as they may be negative events that later on have a positive influence on their life,

	attainments in their current role.	in addition to having a motivational mechanism.
Making sense of luck	This category refers to the interviewees' sensemaking regarding how coincidences and chance have led them to where they are today. The category shows how unseen opportunities and unplanned events have arisen in the interviewees' stories, and how these have affected the direction in their career path.	The events can typically be viewed as originating and anchoring events. It can be seen as an originating event as the coincidences may mark the beginning of a new path, and as an anchoring event as the coincidences have provided important insight into what is valued by the individual.
Revelations along the way	The category revolves around the events and experiences in which the interviewees experienced an epiphany that turned out to influence their career choices. The category implies that such events can occur several times and can come to play a big part in career decisions.	The events in this category can be viewed as turning points, anchoring and originating events. Turning points as the epiphany may lead to a new life plan, and anchoring events as the epiphany may signalize what to be valued. It can also be perceived as originating events as the epiphany may mark the beginning of a new path.
Mastery as propulsion	Central in this category is experienced mastery and how this can be viewed as a force or energy to follow a selected path. First, a birthing interest will typically find place, and if the individuals experience mastery, it will reinforce their motivation to continue on that path. Differently, if the individuals experience absence of mastery, it will lead to a turning point.	The events can be seen as originating, anchoring and redemptive events, along with turning points. Originating events as a birthing interest typically mark the beginning of a new path and is tied to long-term goals. Anchoring events as it signals what to be valued or avoided. Turning points as they revise a life direction and mark the beginning of a new life plan. Lastly, the events can be viewed as redemptive events as lack of mastery may be a negative event that later influenced life in a positive way.

*Figure 3: Main findings***6.2 Friends and acquaintances as inspiration**

The category addresses the events and experiences where friends and acquaintances have inspired or influenced the interviewees regarding various career choices. The category implies that certain life events, in particular when a choice concerning direction or path exists, are relationally salient.

The stories of how the interviewees figured out what direction they wanted to go in their life regarding their career particularly appeared when the interviewees talked about choice of education and acquiring their first full-time job. In these stories, friends and acquaintances influenced their choices, both directly and indirectly. Moreover, such events where friends and acquaintances influenced choices tended to arise several times throughout the stories which may indicate that these narratives are examples of sequences of events that have led them to where they are today. However, we decided to highlight events that have been common in the sequence. A few stories included how the interviewees consulted and sought advice directly from their friends and acquaintances, whereas other stories included how the interviewees were indirectly influenced by social comparison to their social circle. The common denominator across the stories is that all became more aware of their career path by being affected by their friends and acquaintances. A few interviewees told stories about their choice regarding education and workplace.

“(...) And some acquaintances I know happened to work as accountants, and I asked them if it was an exciting profession. (...) At last, I ended up studying to become an accountant. (...) Of course I am somewhat affected when friends and acquaintances state that something is interesting, but also wise to do.” [Odin]

“(...) I believe it has played a role when it comes to, what should I call it? The direction I ended up choosing. It [the influence] both came from the new impulses from [the new] high school, but mostly from my new social circle as I believe friends have affected me quite much. (...) At one point, you start to think about what others do, and you figure out that she did that,

and she did that, and you start to look up to girlfriends who really make it and are successful, and you kind of explore different opportunities through others. So yeah, I believe my social circle from [the new] school has been very important to me when it comes to my career choices.” [Embla]

These stories were highlighted as events where the interviewees were affected and influenced by relations when it comes to choices of direction, namely education and workplace. Odin sought advice directly from his network, emphasizing that this affected his decision to study to become an accountant. Embla, however, showed an example of being indirectly affected by mirroring her own choices to her new network from high school and her friends. A few interviewees did also tell stories where their choice was influenced by socio-economic factors.

“(…) I feel that growing up in an environment where education has been very important, like, growing up at the west side of Oslo, where I believe that everyone I went to high school with has at least completed a bachelor’s degree. (…) It is kind of a thing, like a cultural socio-economic issue which has been triggering this [my path] along the way. I mean, half of my class from high school have become doctors, so…” [Livunn]

“(…) To have friends and family, I mean, to have a mother and father who has education on a master’s degree-level, I think that has a lot to say. Because in my home, it was never an option for me not to take a master’s degree. I had to take a master’s degree, because that would open all the doors for me in the future, and if I did not take a master’s degree, no doors would open. (…) If all my friends were hairdressers, I would probably be a hairdresser myself. It is like, sad but true, the environment you are born into, is the environment you will end up in, for better or for worse. (…) And I would say that I have friends that are resourceful, people who are working very hard and are school-savvy. And when they started to get summer jobs, internships and full-time jobs in prestigious companies, I was thinking that I wanted to achieve this too.” [Eir]

The stories emphasized how socio-economic factors have affected some of the interviewees. Both Livunn and Eir portrayed an environment where questions regarding completing higher education did not exist, and it goes without saying that they should complete a master's degree and acquire a prestigious job. Altogether, the stories highlighted how friends and acquaintances, families, social networks and socio-economic environments have played a significant role when it comes to affecting what type of education the interviewees ended up choosing, in addition to influencing where they ended up working.

6.2.1 The significance of friends and acquaintances as inspiration

Our findings show that the interviewees were directly or indirectly influenced by their friends and acquaintances when it comes to important choices regarding their careers. In some cases, the interviewees sought advice directly from their friends and acquaintances, whereas in other cases, they were influenced by comparing themselves to their social circle or socio-economic environment. Nevertheless, the interviewees were affected by their friends and acquaintances in some way.

Insel and Young (2001) argue that relations with others have a considerable impact on the behavior of individuals. Several studies (e.g., Flum, 2001; Gergen, 2009; Richardson, 2012) do also highlight that all experiences, decisions and interactions with the working world are affected, understood and shaped by relationships. Confirmingly, all our interviewees underlined that relations have played a considerable role in their life stories with regards to their career choices. Further, Odin's and Embla's stories specifically emphasized the significance of friends and acquaintances and how they have affected and shaped their careers. In particular, Embla reflected on the importance of her social circle, as she attended a private high school in the city centre instead of the local public school. She underlined that the transition played a major role when it came to her career path, as she perceived the importance of career differently after the change of school.

Moreover, research demonstrates the importance of relational support in facilitating career exploration and progress in decision making (Ketterson & Blustein, 1997; Phillips, Christopher-Sisk & Gravino, 2001, Blustein 2011). Still, there is a gap in the literature that expressly investigates how individuals perceive the role of

informal career helpers in shaping their careers (Arthur, 2002, cited in Bosley, Arnold & Cohen, 2009). Nevertheless, Bolsey, Arnold and Cohen (2009) found that friends and acquaintances can be career shapers who intentionally or incidentally shape individuals' careers. Our findings support Bolsey and colleagues' research, as the stories of the interviewees clearly showcased that friends and acquaintances have been informal career shapers. We argue that this is a contribution to the literature as the research area is underinvestigated, and our findings give a more comprehensive picture of the complexity of how relations affect individuals' career in a sequence of events, where some of them are relationally salient.

Interpersonal influence has a prominent role in social explanations of many topics (Jussim & Osgood, 1989). The experience of being affected by a social circle or a socio-economic environment like Embla, Eir and Livunn portrayed can be explained by social comparison (Festinger, 1954). Social influence can change a person's intentions, beliefs and behaviors (French, 1956; Marsden, 1981). This is confirmed by our findings, more specifically supporting Sewell, Haller and Portes (1969) who found that interpersonal influence plays a notable role when it comes to academic and occupational attainment. Our findings reveal that the socio-economic environment played a remarkable role when it comes to important choices regarding career decisions. For instance, in Eir's story, she emphasized that she would follow her friends no matter what due to social pressure and approval, and she said that the environment you are born into is the environment you will end up in.

Moreover, the life events in this category can be perceived as turning points, anchoring or originating events (McAdams, 2001). In Odin's story, he emphasized how acquaintances provided valuable sources of insight when it comes to what should be valued, and it can therefore be viewed as an anchoring event. Furthermore, it marked the beginning of a new path, particularly Odin's choice of studying to become an accountant. One could therefore argue that this was an originating event. Idunn was inspired by her acquaintances working as consultants and her boyfriend studying economics to change the field of study. This was therefore a turning point.

6.3 Door openers as the way in

The category concerns life events in which certain people have affected the interviewees' careers by acting as door openers. Door openers in this context consist of acquaintances or leaders who have given the interviewee attractive career opportunities. In the stories told by the interviewees, these opportunities consisted of providing a way into a new firm or position. Additionally, the interviewees were challenged in their current role, and this led to new opportunities later on. These events were highlighted by the interviewees as peak moments in their careers. The stories appeared when talking about how the direction of the career had evolved. The events appeared at different occasions throughout their career, pointing to the fact that opportunities provided by the network tend to find place several times throughout the career.

In the stories of the interviewees, their leaders were often mentioned when talking about their career development. Several of the interviewees mentioned how their leaders had provided them with new opportunities in terms of giving more responsibility or challenging tasks. Others mentioned how their leaders facilitated for development in terms of acting as a mentor by offering support and advice. Some of the interviewees told how their leaders had provided them with attractive opportunities in their current position by offering support and acknowledging their potential:

“(...) To see the importance of how much one of the closest leaders really has, as a role model and as a motivator, and can help to drive the person forward and not backward, and not to kill the potential and abilities. And that, I think, is crucial to have. (...) It is very much how my leaders have welcomed me, and seen potential, and had faith in me. (...) And then I joined another subsidiary there, called Y, and got a manager there who was absolutely fantastic. (...) Who saw me, and like, gave me opportunities as a project manager in many projects, because he kind of saw some of my qualities that I can use.” [Hillevi]

“(…) My boss has meant a lot to me. He has given me opportunities and pushed me and challenged me all the time. (…) Some key people who have given me the opportunity have educated me.” [Odin]

These stories illustrate how the interviewees’ leaders facilitated attractive opportunities businesswise. Hillevi illustrated how one can gain responsibility at work due to being acknowledged for one’s potential. This emphasizes the value of having a leader who recognizes one’s abilities. Odin, on the other hand, had a leader who took on the mentor role in addition to providing opportunities and challenges. Others discussed how close relations had introduced them to new career opportunities.

“(…) My father does also work in sustainability, which is perhaps important to mention, but it all happened simultaneously, and we have discussed topics back and forth, and I think that was an important influence. He was the one who introduced me or told me about the team I am working for in Company X too. So that was quite important.” [Hedvig]

The story of Hedvig showed how close relations opened the door to new career directions by introducing her to the field. Further, a few told us about how their acquaintances provided career opportunities.

“(…) I think networking, and I think that, and I saw that when I was younger with part-time jobs, too. After all, the first relevant part-time job I got was through my neighbor. My neighbor, an incredibly talkative guy, who just knew everything about me, and then he went to his HR director asking "do you need any help this summer? I know this nice girl". (…) So you need some people who will stand up for you.” [Eir]

Such stories prove the value of how the social network can open doors to opportunities due to knowing the right person. A social network can contribute in informing about vacant career positions or by directly providing a job. The stories in sum show how door openers came to play a big role in shaping the careers of the

interviewees in several ways. For some, this happened in terms of facilitating at work, whilst for others, the door openers offered a new position.

6.3.1 The significance of door openers as the way in

Our findings imply that the social network plays a big role when it comes to career decisions in terms of paving the way for new opportunities. This is evident from the interviewees' stories of how acquaintances in their network informed about available positions, gave insight into a particular industry, and even provided a way into the company (de Janasz & Forret, 2008). Baker (2000) supports this finding, adding that our relationships can, amongst others, provide new ideas, timely information, job opportunities, and social support. However, there is lacking literature on the importance of relationships in terms of how career decisions are made (Phillips, Christopher-Sisk & Gravino, 2001). Our findings therefore contribute in this field, giving a richer and more detailed picture on how relations have influenced career decisions. Our findings further point to the fact that such relational events are attributed great importance in terms of career development. From the interviews, it was obvious that these events were perceived as formative experiences that influenced their career decisions. Moreover, our findings imply that such relational events often appear as a sequence of actions that find place several times throughout the career.

The stories further highlighted the impact of leaders on the individuals' careers in terms of being able to provide valuable resources such as relevant tasks at work or obtain guidance (de Janasz & Forret, 2008). The story of Hillevi highlighted how she started as a project manager for several projects due to her boss seeing potential in her. The story of Odin, on the other hand, showed how his boss gave valuable assistance by challenging and pushing him as well as giving good opportunities. This illustrates the value of instrumental assistance, which consists of advice, contacts and coaching (Kram, 1988). With the exception of Kram (1988), there is a lack of research on helping encounters in individuals' life stories, and our findings contribute to this literature.

Our findings illustrate the benefits a social network may provide in terms of finding new job opportunities. For example, Eir told about how she landed a job: "After all,

the first relevant part-time job I got was through my neighbor". In fact, some scholars state that our acquaintances tend to be more helpful than our close friends for finding jobs because our acquaintances are a source of more unique information, whereas our close friends may know about the same job openings (Granovetter, 1974). The value of networks in general is widely recognized in career management (Raider & Burt, 1996; Sullivan, 1999), and the benefits of effective informal career help may be considerable (Kidd, Jackson, & Hirsh, 2003). However, there is a lack of research on how individuals perceive the role of informal career helpers in shaping their careers (Arthur, 2002, cited in Bosley, Arnold, & Cohen, 2009), in which our findings illustrate. For example, Hedvig's father introduced her to a new field, ending up becoming her occupation. From the interview, it was clear that she perceived him as central in her career decisions. Our findings therefore add to this field of research by illustrating how informal career helpers might influence individuals' career choices.

The stories did also highlight that acquaintances and leaders in the interviewees' networks have taken on different kinds of career shaper roles (Bosley, Arnold & Cohen, 2009). Hedvig's father provided information about working within the specific field, and he can in this case be referred to as an informant. Hillevi and Odin told us how their leaders gave them feedback and recognized the potential in the employee, acting as witnesses. Odin told how his leader also provided him with advice and pushed him, taking on the role as an adviser. Eir, on the other hand, was offered a new position by her neighbour. Her neighbour can in this case be referred to as a gatekeeper.

Referring to McAdams' typology (2001), our findings show that life events in this category can be seen as turning points, originating, anchoring or redemptive events. In Hedvig's case, her father introducing her to the new field in her career marked the beginning of a new path in her life, which may be referred to as an originating event. Hedvig also experienced her stepfather talking her into studying international relations instead of journalism, which she wanted to during high school. This turned out to be a turning point for her. Hillevi and Odin, however, told about how their leaders were of big value to their career development, and such experiences might be anchoring events. Idunn, on the other hand, experienced missing opportunities

for career development in her previous job, which made her long for a new career path. This experience was of negative character when it happened, but later proved to have a positive influence on her career path by achieving the development she wanted in Company X. The experience also had a motivational mechanism, which points to the fact that this event may be seen as a redemptive event.

6.4 Making sense of luck

This category refers to the interviewees' sensemaking regarding how coincidences and chance have led them to where they are today. The category shows how unseen opportunities and unplanned events have arisen in the interviewees' stories, and how these have affected the direction in their career path.

One of the interviewees told about coincidences and how chance has influenced where she is today. Additionally, this story included mastery and performance as something that has affected her path.

“(…) During my last year at my bachelor’s degree, a lot of people were visiting our class. They promoted and talked about different companies and jobs. One day, Company X came by and held a company presentation. I participated by chance and had no specific plans for my next career move, I simply just studied and enjoyed that, and I was not sure about what I wanted to work with. But then I just applied for one of the open positions in Company X and got the job six months before I graduated. It was a bit random and I was quite lucky to be honest, as I have ended up somewhere I am very happy and content. However, some of the reason for why I ended up where I did, I think it is because I have always enjoyed and been good at math, and I have worked hard and focused to achieve good results. I would not end up where I am today without the hard effort or if math did not come so naturally to me.” [Thora]

This story highlighted how Thora perceived several events to be coincidental and that some of her career outcomes happened by chance. Thora portrayed an unplanned meeting with Company X and described how this led her to get a job in the company. Still, she did also emphasize that her skills in math, in addition to hard

work has led her to where she is today. Further, a few interviewees told additional stories about coincidences, where they also mentioned that relations have influenced their career path.

“(…) I would say that I made my own choices in a way. It was not like I did it only because everybody else did it, but somehow that was kind of the way into the business school I went to as well. To be honest, I feel that it was quite random, but I am also very grateful looking back as it was the right choice for me.” [Embla]

“(…) I think it [career] is often driven by chance. What you hear about things, and then you kind of just get “oh, that sounds exciting”, and then you just follow that interest. My father does also work in sustainability, which is perhaps important to mention, but it all happened simultaneously, and we have discussed topics back and forth, and I think that was an important influence. He was the one who introduced me or told me about the team I am working for in Company X too. So that was quite important. But it is kind of random, I think.” [Hedvig]

As in Thora’s story, these stories did also highlight how the interviewees perceive several events to be coincidental. Yet, these stories did also emphasize the importance of relations and how they have affected their choices. Embla highlighted that she chose her career path by chance. She stated that she was unaffected by her network. Still, she chose a similar path as her friends and acquaintances. More importantly, she highlighted that she was grateful for the outcome, as it was the right choice for her. In Hedvig’s story, she emphasized how she was accidentally introduced to her new career path by her father. Altogether, these stories emphasized how happenstance and chance have played a significant role in the interviewees’ career path.

6.4.1 The significance of making sense of luck

Our findings show that an important part of the interviewees’ life stories regarding career choices are coincidences. Mastery, achievements, relations and acquaintances were also mentioned as something that has influenced their career

path in these stories. However, Beitman (2016) found that coincidences play an important role in career development, and that it can be instrumental in helping people find work. In our findings, it became particularly clear that the interviewees perceived coincidences and chance to have played a big role when it comes to where they are today, and that unseen opportunities and unplanned events have affected their career path positively. Confirmingly, several studies (e.g., Rice, 2014; Mansfield, 2006; Bright, Pryor, Chan & Rijanto, 2009; Mitchell, Levin, & Krumboltz, 1996; Roe & Baruch, 1967) have already investigated this, and argue that serendipity and chance can play a major part in developing individuals' careers.

In some of the stories, the interviewees emphasized that they ended up somewhere by chance but highlighted that they were very content with the outcome. To exemplify, Embla stated in her story that "I feel that it was quite random, but I am also very grateful looking back as it was the right choice for me". One may argue that this is a serendipitous discovery, as it is an accidental discovery of something valuable or that the interviewee was able to see something in another thing (Cunha, Clegg & Mendonça, 2010). Another interesting point may be that our findings show that the interviewees have been in the right place at the right time (Kindsiko & Baruch, 2019). An example of this is Thora who went to a company presentation for Company X by chance and ended up getting a job there. This may be what Florczak (2015) described as "a delightful surprise", which in turn is an unexpected discovery.

Further, Thora told in her story that it was "a bit random and I was quite lucky, to be honest". Chen (2005) argues that sometimes you might seize a remarkable opportunity, while at other times, you miss out on an excellent chance. On the other hand, luck can be seen as when opportunity meets preparation (Beitman, 2016). This can be similar to what other researchers (e.g., Makri & Blandford, 2012; Erdelez, 2004) call readiness and that serendipity requires a person to be open and ready for serendipity to occur, or that a person is in a certain state of mind to be able to recognize the potential value of random encounters. Furthermore, several researchers support this notion, arguing that serendipity requires action and prepared minds, and that serendipity may be viewed as a capability rather than

chance (Krumboltz, 2009; Merton & Barber, 2004; De Rond, 2014; Mansfield, 2006).

Our findings reveal that coincidences and chance have played a big role in the interviewees' career path, and several of the interviewees have experienced serendipitous discoveries. Additionally, we argue that the interviewees had prepared minds and possess certain capabilities which have made them seize fortunate opportunities. These findings support and contribute to the literature of coincidences and serendipities linked to career development. What is interesting in our findings is the components of mastery and relations, as it is not clear to us if this has been investigated altogether previously. We therefore argue that our findings contribute with new insights regarding career decisions and development.

With respect to McAdams' (2001) typology, the life events in this category may be seen as originating and anchoring events. It can be viewed as an originating event as the coincidences may mark the beginning of a new path. For instance, Thora's career path in Company X was introduced by chance, as she unexpectedly attended a company presentation. Further, the events can be perceived as anchoring events as the coincidences have provided important insight into what is to be valued by the individual. This can especially be seen in Embla's and Thora's stories, as they described the consequences of the coincidences to be valuable as they were certainly content with the outcome.

6.5 Revelations along the way

The category revolves around the events and experiences in which the interviewees experienced an epiphany that turned out to influence their career choices. Such events appeared at different times throughout the lifetime, implying that epiphanies can occur several times, and can come to play a big part in career decisions. A few stories revolved around how the interviewees came to the decision of workplace.

“(…) I had a revelation, I noticed that, early on when I chose the field of study, then, it was like, salary had a lot to say, and future income had a lot to say. And that is how it was until the bachelor. At the time, my ambition was to go into finance and work in banking or something similar. But then

I took a year off and worked for some time abroad and got to know a bit about what it was like to work full-time. What is really important when you are at work? (...) And I came to the conclusion that it is not just future income potential, there are other things like... Culture, and the values of the company, and... Yeah, you can say, work-life balance, that you do not have to work to death, or have the opportunity to do... Freedom to control your everyday life. So, there were other factors that came into play. And what I noticed starting [working] now, is that those values are something I felt very familiar with back then. (...) But after that year off, I think at least there was a consultancy company that stood out, and that is where I started. So yes, it was in a way a revelation to me.” [Balder]

“(...) Yeah, well, I really think just when I decided that the consulting business ticks off the most points, then I got a revelation. I was kind of like, okay cool, this is really perfect. So yeah, things kind of fell into place. Perhaps a little revelation back then. (...) But it was probably like everything else, that you were simply a little open to, and receptive to, different opportunities and impressions. And then suddenly it was quite clear, then.” [Alfhild]

The stories show how epiphanies can affect the careers of individuals due to their sensemaking of the experience. The interviewees interpreted the epiphanies as some sort of revelation of values, preferences and what is important to them. This led them to experiencing a state of clarity regarding which path to follow in their career life. Whereas Balder’s epiphany took place after a period of reflecting on the matter, Alfhild emphasized how the aha-moment occurred due to being in an open and receptive state of mind. Further, some of the interviewees’ stories show how epiphanies can confirm that the choices already taken were correct for them.

“(...) This is what I want to do. (...) Oh, wow, this is really cool, you can really do anything here. And I thought like, this really suits me. (...) This was a good match. I fit in here. I felt that a lot. And I had that feeling... When I started, as I said, on health projects, I felt like, this is what I want to do, you know. It is exactly here, in this setting, where I get to be a consultant,

which I think is really cool, and I get to work with health, which is what I also wanted to do. So being a consultant working on health projects is like, that is exactly what I want. So, it was a big revelation, actually.” [Bergtora]

“(…) And then I was kind of wow… This is cool, a lot of great people work here, and it is so organized. They also focus a lot on career development, which I really appreciate. And things are sort of structured and everything is proper. So, it was a bit like… Then I felt like I was in the right place.” [Frøya]

These stories illustrated that epiphanies also can occur afterwards making a big career-related decision, confirming that the decision taken was right for them. Our findings are saturated with interviewees’ descriptions of how epiphanies came to play a role in the career choices of the interviewees by affecting their choice of workplace. Both Bergtora and Frøya experienced epiphanies affirming that their new job was a good fit for them. The stories in sum show how epiphanies can turn out to be critical in individuals’ career paths.

6.5.1 The significance of revelations along the way

Our findings imply that events involving epiphanies have been present in many of the interviewees’ life stories. From the interviews, it was obvious that the epiphanies occurred most often while working, and for some, while studying. These aha-moments were highlighted by the interviewees as having a big impact on their career choices, bringing about a substantial change in their lives (Dane, 2019).

Some of the interviewees told about events where an epiphany regarding what is important for them in terms of career came into view. For example, Alfild told about her experience when she realized what career path to follow: “I really think that just when I decided that it is the consulting business that ticks off most of the points, then I got a revelation”. This finding builds upon the meaning of the word epiphany which is “to come into view” or “appear”, which points to coming to realization of what is important when it comes to work (Arnold, 2002).

Further, our findings show that these moments occurred because the interviewees were open for new possibilities. When talking about why she chose the consultancy business, Alfild stated that “It probably was like everything else, that you were simply a little open to, and receptive to, different opportunities and impressions. And then it was like that suddenly it was just okay, it was quite clear, then.” This notion is supported by Dane (2019) who found that people believed the epiphanies occurred because they were open to experiencing an epiphany. He further argues that by achieving a state of “readiness” one may set the stage for an epiphany to occur. One may therefore wonder if perhaps the interviewees experiencing epiphanies were in a state of “readiness” by being ready to accept the meaningful consequences of perceiving events in a solution-producing manner when their epiphanies occurred. Further, this adds to Dane’s (2019) literature on when and why people are able to generate epiphanies.

Furthermore, Balder told about how his gap year made him reflect upon what really mattered to him in terms of career. This led him to experience an epiphany where it was suddenly clear what he wanted in his career. According to van Iterson, Clegg & Carlsen (2017, cf. Dechamp & Szostak, 2016), spaces for reflection are amongst those things that cannot be underestimated in the generation of epiphanies. Thus, it seems that reflecting on this matter made Balder able to experience the epiphany and in turn finding out what really mattered to him in terms of career decisions.

Lastly, the epiphanies were highlighted by the interviewees as having been meaningful to their career choices due to the interviewees assigning these events meaning and value. Our findings thus imply that the individuals’ sensemaking is central in the epiphanic experience. This is supported by McDonald (2008) who found that an epiphany is an intentional experience made meaningful and enduring by assigning it personal meaning. Regarding McAdams’ (2001) typology, such life events as these can be categorized as anchoring and originating events, as well as turning points. It dawned on Balder what mattered to him regarding his career, and he thereby came to realize what he valued. Arguably, this experience may also be seen as a turning point, as Balder experienced this event as a turning point that revised his initial career plan. Alfild experienced an epiphany where she realized

that she wanted to work as a consultant, which marked the beginning of a new path in her career.

6.6 Mastery as propulsion

The category refers to how mastery has played a key role in the interviewees' career paths. The category implies that mastery is essential, and something that needs to be in place. When it is absent, it can point the interviewees in a new direction with a new life plan.

The stories of how mastery came to play a big role in the interviewees' career choices appeared when talking about education or work experience. During the interviews, it became obvious that when the interviewees experienced mastery within their field of study or career, their motivation was enhanced. A few interviewees told stories about how mastery has been the main energy for their performance.

“(...) You are kind of programmed to continue with the things you grasp and feel that you can do. So, the mastery I experienced, for example when it comes to reading other people and my teamwork skills, I have received very good feedback on it. And it has played a big role when it comes to me wanting to continue with this path and develop myself. (...) I would definitely not take a master's degree in the same field as my bachelor's degree if I had not mastered it in the earlier stages. I actually believe it has played a massive role, and that you will continue with things when you have a sense of mastery.” [Alfhild]

“(...) If I am in a session and feel that I have nothing to contribute with, and I do not feel any mastery or understand what they are talking about, then I kind of become invisible to myself. It is very crucial for me that I feel that it is achievable to gain the competence I need and want when I am taking a career choice. Not that I necessarily must know everything beforehand, but I need to know that I have something to contribute with in the long run. If the gap is too big, I would not continue. So, mastery is extremely important to me, almost as a driving force.” [Hillevi]

The stories illustrated that mastery is a powerful motivation that influences the chosen career path of the individuals. The interviewees explained how they experienced mastery not only as necessary, but also as an intensified desire, for them to continue their chosen career path. Whereas experienced mastery was directly affecting the choices of master's degree in Alfild's case, Hillevi explained how mastery affected her choices regarding career. Further, a few interviewees told stories about mastery and how their career path changed when there was an absence of mastery.

“(…) I received horrible feedback on an exam in my physics studies. That was a turning point for me. In general, I was not satisfied with the study programme, even though I received tolerable grades. However, I did not think it was super exciting and I also had quite high expectations for how it would be to study. With those expectations combined with the bad feedback on the exam… It was definitely not experienced mastery. It just became a turning point, it was almost like a voice in my head said “this is not what I am meant to do”. I had also seen classmates who were very smart and perhaps more suited to this type of study where you have to sit very focused on one single task for a very long time. I just realized that it was not the best fit for me.” [Idunn]

“(…) In the beginning it was a bit like… Kind of an interest and you do not quite know what you are starting at, or how it will end, but I thought, okay, I will just try and see how it works. Because prior to attending that study programme, I began at another study which did not feel right for me, I did not feel any mastery, and I just quit. So yeah, perhaps it is a bit semi-random in a way that I ended up on that path, but the first path was at least not for me.” [Alfild]

These stories shed light on how absence of mastery led the interviewees to a new career path. Idunn's story shows how lacking mastery can lead to a decrease in motivation, which again causes a new path to occur with time. In Alfild's case, she experienced absence of mastery which led to a new birthing interest within

finance. In sum, these stories emphasized how mastery has played a significant role in the interviewees' continuation of life choices regarding career path, and how a new path aroused when the interviewees experienced an absence of mastery.

6.6.1 The significance of mastery as propulsion

The last category that emerged from our empirical analysis is mastery as propulsion. Central in this category is experienced mastery and how this can be viewed as a force or energy to follow a selected path. Our findings show that mastery has been critical for the interviewees, and if the interviewees experienced absence of mastery it led to a turning point and changed their career path. This illustrates the vital role of self-efficacy, which is defined as individuals' beliefs about their capability to mobilize cognitive resources and courses of actions needed to successfully perform a specific task within a given context (Bandura, 1982; 1997). Bandura (1982; 1997) viewed personal mastery of experiences as the most effective method of improving one's feelings of self-efficacy.

Ballout (2009) argues that individuals with high self-efficacy beliefs will set higher career goals, commit more effort, and chase career strategies that lead to the achievement of those goals. This is something that ultimately leads to career success (King, 2004; Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998; Day & Allen, 2004). Alfhild told about how her experienced mastery during her bachelor's degree led to setting higher goals in terms of deciding on studying a master's degree. Day and Allen (2004) further argue that career self-efficacy is related to indicators of both career success and performance effectiveness. Furthermore, Stuccliffe and Vogus (2003, cited in Ballout, 2009) note that individuals construct a complete sense of competence and efficacy that allows them to acquire control and mastery over task-related behaviors. This may be seen in the case of Alfhild whose sense of competence and efficacy probably was developed with help from the positive feedback she received on her people skills in her work. In Idunn's case, her lack of competence and efficacy related to physics seem to have decreased her experience of mastery within this field.

In some of the stories, the interviewees emphasized how important perceived mastery has been for them. For instance, Alfhild stated that "it has played a big role

when it comes to me wanting to continue with this path and develop myself". This is supported by several researchers who argue that individuals with high self-efficacy exert extensive control over their life events and favorably master decision-making tasks and behaviors in career decision-making (Taylor & Popma, 1990; Abdalla, 1995). This is further highlighted by the empirical evidence by Noe and Wilk (1993) which supports the influence of self-efficacy beliefs on career development and growth.

Further, Idunn and Alfhild told stories that emphasized how mastery has played a significant role in their continuation of life choices regarding career path, and how a new path aroused when they experienced an absence of mastery. The lack of self-efficacy made the interviewees change their path, allowing a new birthing interest to come forward and striving for career development in this new area where self-efficacy was present. One may therefore argue that these findings substantiate the findings regarding self-efficacy beliefs and career development, growth and success. Further, one may argue that the findings regarding absence of mastery expands the existing literature in the field by providing insight into an area that we believe is poorly investigated.

Moreover, life events in this category may be seen as originating, anchoring and redemptive events, along with turning points (McAdams, 2001). In Idunn's and Alfhild's case, they both lacked mastery in their previous study programmes, which led to a new birthing interest. As this marked the beginning of a new career path, these experiences can be referred to as originating events. Idunn told how the combination of receiving a poor grade on an exam in combination with not being happy with her field of study contributed to her realizing that this was not the right path for her. She realized what she valued regarding her career, and this event may be called an anchoring event. Arguably, Alfhild and Hillevi describing how important experienced mastery is for them in their careers, may point to the fact that such events are also experienced as anchoring events. Interestingly, Idunn's and Alfhild's new career paths revised their life direction and marked the beginning of a new life plan. Therefore, these events can be referred to as turning points. Idunn's story of poor results on an exam may also be called a redemptive event as it was a

negative event at that time but influenced her in going in another direction which influenced her life positively.

6.7 The categories combined

In our findings section we presented how we believe the five categories individually have led to and formed the interviewees to who they are today with regards to their career. Our empirical analysis further revealed that each of the five categories may have an impact on career choices, which we have made an effort to demonstrate in the discussion section. However, we argue that instead of viewing the five categories as individual mechanisms, they should be considered as interconnected influencing factors, as we throughout our analysis noticed how some of the practices may influence one another, in a sequence of life events.

Our study revealed that the participants were particularly influenced by relations throughout their life stories, both in terms of comparing themselves to their social network, by asking friends and acquaintances for advice or by having relations as door openers. Our study did also reveal that mastery played a critical role in career development. It became evident that mastery has affected their selected career path and how and why the interviewees ended up where they are today. Further, the interviewees' sensemaking of the life stories included serendipities and epiphanies at different stages of their narratives. In order to demonstrate how the categories are interconnected influencing factors, we have illustrated this in a model below:

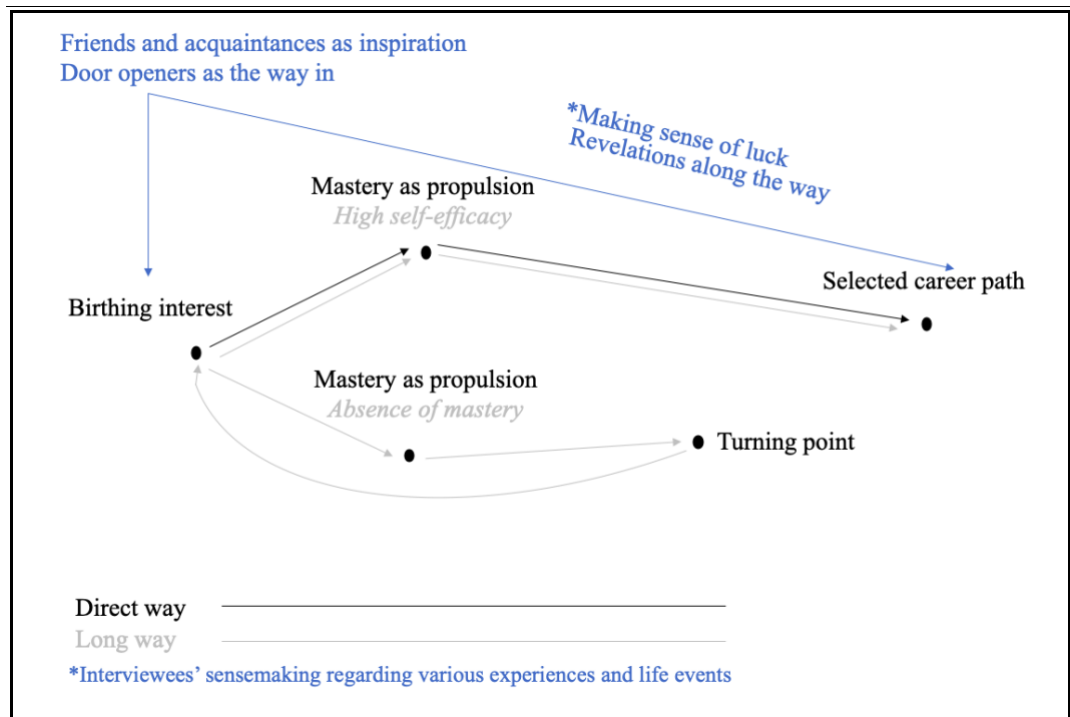


Figure 4: The dynamics between the five categories

In particular, our findings demonstrated two different ways, the direct way and the long way. First, a birthing interest will find place (e.g., choice of direction, education or industry). In the direct way, the interviewees experienced mastery and high self-efficacy with regards to their choice, thus leading to a successfully selected career path. Differently, in the long way the interviewees experienced absence of mastery after the birthing interest, and this typically led to a turning point. In these cases, a new birthing interest would find place, followed by high self-efficacy in the new direction. Finally, a successfully selected career path would come into sight.

We return to some of the stories of the interviewees to gain a deeper understanding of the model. To exemplify in a sequence of life events, Odin’s story comprised a birthing interest in accounting, which was influenced by his friends and acquaintances. Further, he experienced mastery both in his study and profession. He did also describe his colleagues, and specifically his boss, to be important after selecting a career path in Company X. This demonstrated that door openers have played a significant role in his selected career path. Another example is Idunn’s life story. She highlighted that she had a birthing interest in physics, but after receiving

horrible feedback on an exam, she experienced an absence of mastery which ultimately led to a turning point. Thereafter, she had a new birthing interest in economics where she experienced mastery and high self-efficacy. Hence, she successfully selected a career path in a new field, and the turning point became a blessing, looking back. A different perspective is exemplified in Thora's story. She portrayed a birthing interest in accounting due to her experienced mastery with numbers. She enjoyed her studies and selected a career path in Company X by chance. Her sensemaking regarding her employment in Company X emphasized that she was lucky to be at the right place at the right time, as she bumped into a company presentation at her school by coincidence. Thora's sensemaking of this life event is an example of the category making sense of luck. Nonetheless, she did also point out that hard work and mastery has played a role in why she ended up where she did, confirming that the categories should be considered as interconnected influencing factors.

These findings are exceedingly interesting, as no previous research has found the connection between absence of mastery and a turning point in career decisions. Additionally, our findings of the direct way and the long way is utterly original, and we believe this opens up for a new research area in the career literature. Further, the identification of the five categories individually, and as interconnected influencing factors, have deepened the literature of life stories regarding career decisions and development. In other words, our findings give valuable insight into what types of life events that may be imperative in career decisions. Consequently, our findings support existing literature, expand explored perspectives, in addition to introducing new findings and a new research area.

6.8 Practical implications

This research study has attempted to gain a deeper understanding of which formative experiences and influences that have been important in the participants' lives regarding career decisions. The study revealed that the participants were particularly influenced by relations, both in terms of comparing themselves to their social network, by asking friends and acquaintances and by having relations as door openers. Our study did also reveal that mastery plays a critical role in career

development. Further, the participants' sensemaking of the life stories include serendipities and epiphanies.

This thesis contributes to the theoretical understanding of career development, and through the life story interview approach with the five categories, we have built upon and broadened the theory of career development and career decision-making with a life story approach. We have therefore demonstrated that life stories and narratives are important for investigating career development and career decisions. A few incidents of former research have disclosed aspects of the role of life stories in career development, and as such, we believe that our research has contributed to extend the career development literature with a life story approach with a deeper focus on relations and mastery, in addition to serendipities and epiphanies.

6.9 Limitations and future research

There are several limitations to this research study that need to be discussed. The first limitation involves the study's sample and its variation. The sample consisted of thirteen research participants, where eleven out of thirteen participants work in the same organization, Company X. Additionally, most of the participants were young adults. To acquire a wider range of perspectives and life stories, it could be advantageous to include participants at different stages in life, as well as including additional participants from other organizations. Another limitation is the depth of our findings from the sample. Three of the interviews which are included in the thesis stem from our pilot experiment. Despite our revision of the interview guide after the pilot experiment, the interviews did only last for approximately one hour. It could therefore be beneficial to acquire even deeper insights from the narratives by having longer and more fruitful interviews. This could possibly result in an even greater understanding of what influences an individual's career path and development. Furthermore, only two out of thirteen participants were men, and the differing gender balance may have influenced our findings. Further research should therefore take the influence of gender into account.

Additionally, and despite the fundamentals in the interviewees' sensemaking of their life stories, it is important to note that the interviews were based on self-report and the interviewees own stories. This can make the findings sensitive to social

desirability bias, as the interviewees may shape their stories based on how they want to be perceived rather than how it actually was.

In terms of further research, we suggest that it may benefit from investigating others' life stories and experiences related to career in other occupations and organizations. This may reveal if our findings are specific to the similar environment of our participants. Further, we identified a need for better insight into relational influences on individuals' career development, in particular relational events. We did also identify lacking research on individuals' perception of informal career helpers in shaping their careers, and more research investigating the individuals' sensemaking may help to expand the field of career development. Further, we recommend diving deeper into the interplay between the categories and our model, in particular advance our findings of the direct way and the long way.

Lastly, a longitudinal study may provide a more extensive understanding of the impact of the five categories. By gathering data on various occasions, further research may also be able to recognize changes in the influence of each category. Moreover, it would be of interest to further investigate how the different categories are interconnected, in particular in what ways they are dependent on each other. Another appealing aspect of further research would be to analyze whether similar categories are discovered.

7.0 Conclusion

The aim of this thesis was to investigate which formative and relational life events that may be particularly important for career decisions. We have examined and discussed career decisions as an emergent phenomenon through relational and formative experiences by using a life story approach. Regardless of the limitations in this study, we found interesting suggestions for theory and practice. Our thesis contributes to the existing literature by providing a more comprehensive picture of how formative experiences and events have influenced individuals' career decisions. From our analysis five interesting categories emerged: *friends and acquaintances as inspiration, door openers as the way in, making sense of luck, revelations along the way and mastery as propulsion*. A few incidents of former research have disclosed aspects of the role of life stories in career development, and

as such, we believe that our research has contributed to extend the career development literature with a life story approach with a deeper focus on relations and mastery, in addition to serendipities and epiphanies.

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9.0 Appendices

9.1 Interview guide

Intervjuguide for respondenter

Innledning

Kort introduksjon av oss og masteroppgaven + samtykkeerklæring.

Kan du fortelle meg litt om deg selv? (alder, kjønn, hva/hvor du har studert, jobb, interesser)

I dette intervjuet er vi interessert i å høre mer om hva som har påvirket dine karrierevalg frem til i dag. Vi er interessert i å høre om det er noen hendelser eller perioder som har vært spesielt viktig, og vi vil derfor starte med å be deg om å fortelle oss om de viktigste periodene eller hendelsene i livet ditt. Deretter vil vi be deg om å reflektere over betydningen disse kan ha hatt på karrierevalgene du har tatt frem til i dag. Videre ønsker vi å høre om dine forventninger rundt karrierevalg frem til i dag, og til slutt ønsker vi å høre om dine tanker rundt fremtidig karriere.

Før vi setter i gang ønsker vi å poengtere at det ikke finnes noen rette eller gale svar på spørsmålene vi stiller, og vi lurer også på om du har noen spørsmål før vi starter intervjuet?

A. Livshendelser

På det første spørsmålet ønsker vi at du bruker litt tid på å reflektere over hvilke perioder eller hendelser som har vært betydningsfulle når det gjelder dine veivalg i karrieren frem til i dag. Kan du forsøke å forklare oss de viktigste periodene og hendelsene fra livet ditt som har påvirket valgene dine?

Støttespørsmål:

- Hvis du skulle tegnet opp disse periodene eller hendelsene på en tidslinje, hvordan ville den sett ut?
- Hvorfor har disse hendelsene eller periodene vært viktig for ditt karrierevalg, og er det noen hendelser eller perioder har vært mer avgjørende enn andre?
- Hvordan ble det klart for deg hvilken retning du ville gå?
- *Hvis du tenker tilbake på barndommen din og ungdomsårene, kan du komme på noen hendelser eller perioder som er knyttet til valgene du har tatt?*
- *Hvilke tanker gjorde du deg rundt valg av videregående linje og høyere utdanning?*

B. Forming av karrierevalg

Nå har vi fått et godt innblikk i hvilke perioder eller hendelser som har påvirket dine karrierevalg. Og nå lurer vi på om å det har vært andre faktorer som har påvirket dine valg?

Støttespørsmål:

- I hvilken grad har andre spilt en rolle i disse valgene?
- *Har noen personer vært spesielt motiverende eller inspirerende?*

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- I hvilken grad har du følt på press når det gjelder karrierevalg?
 - Hvordan har mestring spilt en rolle når det gjelder dine karrierevalg?
 - Har du på et tidspunkt fått en åpenbaring når det gjelder karrierevalg?
 - Har du opplevd et vendepunkt i livet som har medvirket til disse valgene?
 - *Har det oppstått noe uforventet eller spesielt som har påvirket dine karrierevalg?*

C. Forming av forventninger

Ut ifra det du har fortalt så langt har vi fått et godt bilde av formende erfaringer rundt ditt karrierevalg. Nå er vi interessert i hva som har formet dine karriereforventninger. Først lurer vi på om du kan fortelle oss om dine forventninger rundt karriere frem til i dag?

Støttespørsmål:

- Hadde du noen tanker eller forventninger da du var yngre når det gjelder karriere?
- Har disse forventningene forandret seg med tiden - i så fall hvordan?

Nå lurer vi på hva som har bidratt til å forme dine forventninger når det gjelder karriere frem til i dag? Kan du fortelle oss om hva som har påvirket forventningene dine?

Støttespørsmål:

- Er det noen spesifikke hendelser eller perioder som har medvirket til å forme forventningene dine - og kan du eventuelt fortelle oss om disse?
- Har andre personer i noen grad påvirket forventningene dine?
- *Føler du at karrierepress har spilt en rolle når det gjelder dine forventninger?*
- Har du på et tidspunkt fått en åpenbaring når det gjelder forventninger til karriere?
- Har du opplevd et vendepunkt i livet som har medvirket til disse forventningene?

D. Fremtidig karriere

Nå har vi fått et godt innblikk i hva som har formet dine karrierevalg og forventninger. Nå lurer vi på om du kan fortelle oss om dine tanker rundt fremtidig karriere?

Støttespørsmål:

- Hva tror du vil bidra til å forme din fremtidige karriere?
- Har du noen tanker om hvordan relasjoner kan bidra til å forme din karriere i fremtiden?

Refleksjon

Takk for at du tok deg tid til å delta i dette intervjuet. Avslutningsvis ønsker vi å høre om du har noe å legge til eller om det er noe du føler du ikke har fått sagt?

Støttespørsmål (kan benyttes underveis om nødvendig)

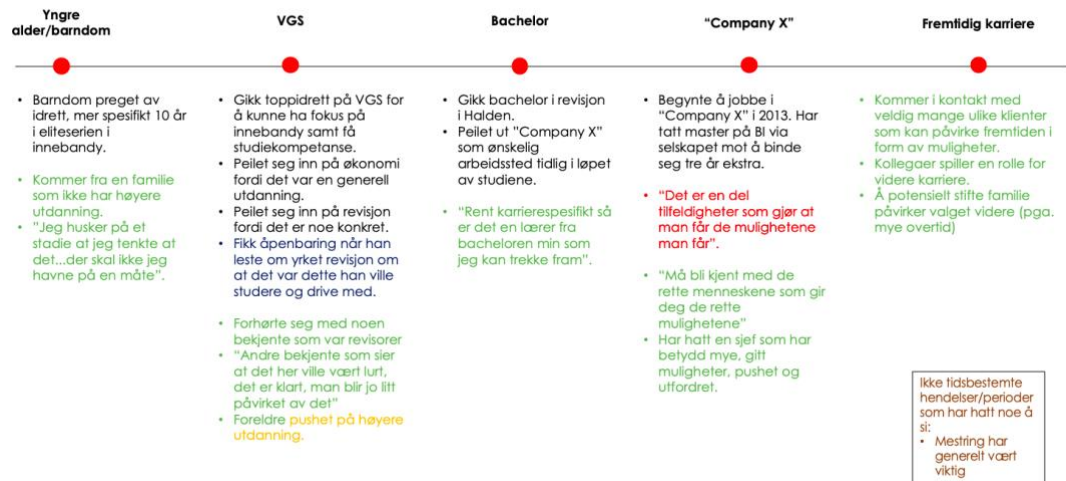
Hvordan opplever du det?

Kan du si mer om det?

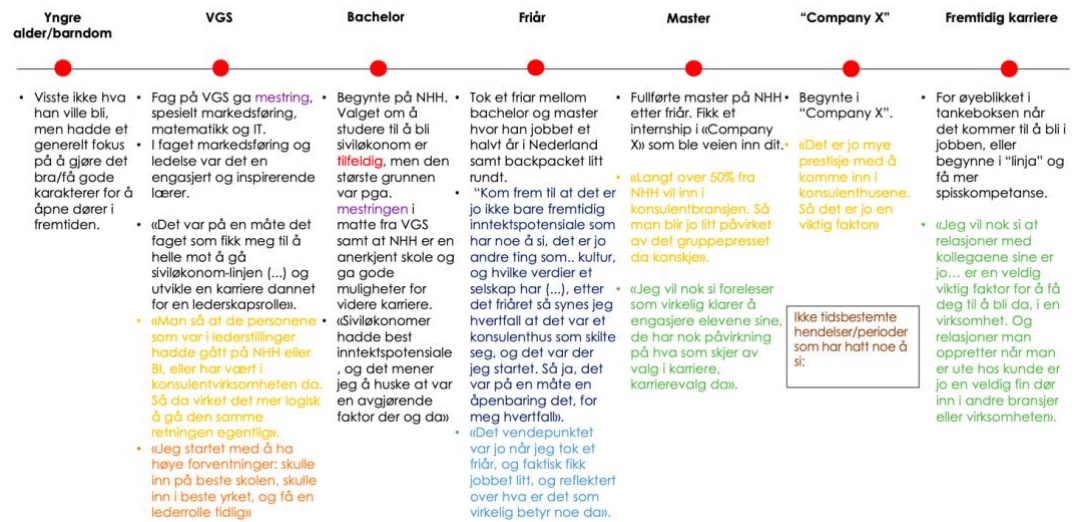
Hva mener du med det?
 Kan du utdype?
 Kan du gi et eksempel?

9.2 Initial analysis

Odin, idrettsutdøver



Balder, konsulent



Eir, konsulent

Yngre alder/barndom	VGS	Bachelor	Sommerjobb/ Internships	Master	"Company X"	Fremtidig karriere
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> «Når jeg var barn så ville jeg bli popstjerne (...), jeg drev med mye musikk når jeg var yngre og jeg vurderte å begynne på Foss og gå musikklinja, også bare fant jeg ut at det var litt stress og jeg var ikke egentlig så flink». «Man får jo på en måte som barn veldig tidlig disse samtalene med lærere og sånn, vite hva man er flink på, og jeg har nok visst på en måte at jeg har vært med på det sosiale, både, liksom myke tingene da, enn de harde, tekniske tingene». 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fant ut av hva hun skulle studere videre. Eliminerte ut ifra ferdigheter og snitt. Skulle ikke studere i Oslo. «Jeg tror det aldri har vært klart for meg (...)». Det går tilbake til den elimineringsprosessen som jeg gjorde på VGS i form av utdanning, og at jeg vet, jeg visste hva jeg ikke ville, og så har jeg tatt det litt derfra». «Hadde alle vennene mine vært friser, så hadde jeg sikkert vært friser jeg også. Trist nok, det der miljøet du blir født i, er det miljøet du ofte ender opp i. På godt og vondt». 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tok bachelor i England. «Til slutt fant jeg en linje der jeg hadde en venn som studerte, så jeg visste at jeg på en måte hadde en å falle tilbake på den». 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nevner perioden når folk rundt begynte å få relevante sommerjobber/internships som noe som har påvirket henne. «Folk begynner å få internships, folk begynner å tenke på jobb, og da merket jeg jo at jeg ble mest sann formet av det sosiale rundt meg». «Og det tror jeg er 99% sosialt. Altså, det sosiale rundt meg, jeg har foreldre som pusher meg, jeg har venner rundt meg som pusher meg, ikke i form av at de pusher meg ved å si ting, men du ser at de gjør ting, og så blir du sann "Å, jeg må også gjøre det"». «Jeg vil helt klart si at jeg har blitt presset av å ha veldig, veldig flinke folk rundt meg». 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tok master på UIO. Nevner siste året på masteren som en periode som har påvirket. «Det siste året på masteren din, når du begynner å skjøne at "Å, nå må liksom folk søke etter jobb"» «Jeg hadde disse vennene fra CBS og NHH som... jeg skjønte veldig tidlig at du må søke jobb tidlig, så jeg søkte jobber et år i forveien». «Å ha mor og far som har mastergradnivå utdanning, tror jeg har mye å si (...), hos oss var det ingen, det var ingen prat om at jeg ikke skulle ta master, jeg skulle ta master på en måte, for det åpnet alle dører for meg, og hvis jeg ikke tok det så, så åpnet ikke døren». «Hadde jeg ikke mestret bacheloren min, så hadde jeg jo ikke tatt masteren». 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sier det er tilfeldig at det er "Company X" hun endte opp i. «Jeg tror at jeg har prøvd å bevise for folk, og også det der med at jeg kommer fra UIO, og vært sånn jeg kan klare å få jobb i det private- jeg også liksom». «Det er jo på en måte, men trist nok sånn statusgreie da. At du føler liksom mestring av å kunne si til folk da... at du f.eks. jobber i "Company X"». 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> «Jeg tror liksom du må ofre litt ting hvis du skal nå veldig langt. Og det er det jeg ikke vet om jeg er villig til å gjøre». «Jeg tror nettvær har...er så viktig for deg». «(...) men så tror jeg for karrieremulighet er, det at du har opparbeidet deg en god relasjon, både utenfor og i jobb, tror jeg er helt... Ja. Essensielt».

Embla, konsulent

Yngre alder/barndom	VGS	Bjørknes- og Bergenstiden	Bachelor	Master	"Company X"	Fremtidig karriere
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engstelig som ung Hadde mye drømmer, ville bli dyrlege Barnomsvenner beskrives som "annerledes", har valgt andre veier Alltid sett opp til folk i dress og synes det har vært veldig kult 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begynte på VGS i byen [Oslo] fremfor kommunal VGS på Kolbotn. Foreldrene sendte Embla til Oslo pga. engsteligheten for å gi henne en utfordring/nytt miljø Vennekrets/nytt miljø omtales som mer karrierefokuserf. "Det var nok litt det som var veien inn på BI også". Vendepunkt "Jeg tror egentlig det har hatt mer å si enn det jeg tror" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Valg av høyere utdanning. Skulle prøve å komme inn på jussen og måtte ta opp fag på Bjørknes. Ikke motivert. Tok et mellomår i Bergen med noen enkeltemner imens hun prøvde å finne ut av hva hun ville studere. Ekskluderte juss. "Avgjørende for at jeg på en måte fant ut av hva jeg ikke ville gjøre" Pushet av foreldrene, spesielt moren til å gå juss. "Man utforsker jo litt mulighetene gjennom andre tror jeg, så vennekrets har hatt mye å si faktisk" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bachelor i økonomi og administrasjon på BI. Delvis i Bergen, delvis i Oslo "Veldig tilfeldig" "Man gikk med flowen også på en måte" Hadde deltidsjobb i en bank "Og da skjønte jeg at jeg må på en måte fortsette utdannelsen min for å komme over det nivået jeg var, så det var egentlig det som påvirket meg til å hoppe inn på master" Valg av BI noe preget av relasjoner fra VGS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Master i Business med fordykning i strategi, i Oslo. Valg av arbeidssted førte til en åpenbaring i søkeprosessen rundt hva som var viktig for hun samt hva hun ville. "Men igjen også da venner og omgangskrets, man bruker jo det nettverket man har, og de også kan fort overbevise deg om hva du vil gjøre da" "Jeg fikk egentlig først forventninger når jeg begynte på master" "Samfunnets forventninger blir dine egne" "(...) mine forventninger har nok blitt preget av hva som forventes av en som går på BI og tar en mastergrad" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begynte å jobbe i "Company X" som konsulent. "Man har et nettverk rundt seg, som vil deg godt da" Ikke tidsbestemte hendelser/perioder som har hatt noe å si: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Idrett Deltidsjobber → inntrykk av hva man ikke vil drive med "Eliminering har fungert bra for meg" Mestring har generelt vært viktig 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tror de første årene som konsulent/i "Company X" har veldig mye å si for fremtiden. "Det er klart man har forventninger til fremtiden (...), kanskje ha den progresjonen man har hatt de siste årene, og fortsatt liksom ha bakkekontakt (...), være den personen man vil være" "Jeg tror venner har sykt mye å si, på hva man velger å gjøre, og hva man tør å hoppe ut i og ikke. Det har hvertfall mye å si for meg da. Omgangskrets".

Hillevi, idrettsutdøver

Yngre alder/barndom	VGS	Taekwondo-satsing Bergen	Taekwondo-satsing Oslo	Arbeidslivet	Executive master	Fremtidig karriere
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> «Jeg tror jeg alltid liksom fra barndommen hjalp de som var mindre eller, hjalp dem som du så var litt sånn utenfor på en måte, da var jeg alltid liksom, prøvde å hjelpe til da». «Alltid vært interessert i psykologi, tror jeg har vært liksom litt undrende barn, liksom reflektert litt og ja». 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> «Så har jeg alltid tenkt på meg selv, at jeg er mot de myke fagene, jeg er ikke mot de harde fagene, det visste jeg jo liksom på VGS». 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dro til Bergen som 18-åring, bestemte seg for å satse og prøve å komme seg til OL i 2000. Kom ikke med. Måtte ta et bevisst valg om å fortsette å satse eller ikke. «Nå gjør jeg et valg, og det er jo å følge drømmen min (...), så var det en tanke som aldri slapp meg, og det var dette her... Ja, veldig mye opptatt av visualisering da, men det var liksom, selv om jeg ikke ønsket det, så kom det opp et bilde i hodet mitt på at jeg kunne mestre, kunne lykkes, kunne prestere da, i konkurranse og sånn». Studerte psykologi i Bergen. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flyttet til Oslo og brøt med psykologistudiet. «Nå bryter jeg med det Bergensmiljøet, drar til Oslo alene, oppsøker nye miljøer, og så begynner fra scratch på en måte». Begynte å studere webdesign. «Valget av liksom studiet, ble basert på hvor mye tid hadde jeg til overs da, av taekwondo-satsingen». «Det var en sånn ting mamma sa, at du kan satse, men du må studere liksom». «Den hele røde tråden, hvertfall fra jeg begynte å satse, går jo veldig på...valgene går ut ifra den satsingen da». «Minst anstrengende utdanning for å kunne håndtere en satsingsområde da. Og da ble det idrett på idrettshøgskolen». 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jobber p.t. som seniorrådgiver innen HR, spesifikt med karriereveiledning, omstillingsprosesser, coaching, osv. «(...) at jeg kanskje ser noe potensiale, eller mulighet i hver enkelt da, og så ønsker jeg å gi da, og det for meg, føles kanskje, ja, en mestring for at jeg ser at det jeg gjør, gir effekt for den andre liksom». «Det er veldig mye hvordan de lederne mine har tatt, tatt meg imot, og sett potensiale, og hatt trua på meg da». Nevner en spesielt god leder i xxx som har betydd mye for utviklingen. xxx som vendepunkt. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Går executive master på BI for øyeblikket. «Jeg tror jeg kan være flink til å lede folk, og ha den balansen på å se folk, og samtidig være målorientert og resultatorientert da (...), så det er derfor jeg går på BI, for å si det sånn. For at jeg har trua på at, enten at jeg kan hjelpe til at andre blir bedre eller at man kan lede og ja, gjennom ledelse, eller gjennom å hjelpe ledere da». Barn har påvirket at hun ikke begynte på masteren før. «Jeg vet hvertfall at når jeg begynte her nå i fjor, på det studiet her i prestasjoner i organisasjoner, så kjenner jeg på at "Åh", jeg føler meg liksom litt sånn hjemme». 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rakk ikke dette spørsmålet grunnet dårlig tid.

Hedvig, konsulent

Yngre alder/barndom	VGS	Bachelor	Fridr	Master	Arbeidslivet	Fremtidig karriere
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jeg har liksom alltid vært interessert i å lese, og stille spørsmål ved ting jeg leser eller er interessert i, kommer fra en familie som diskuterer veldig mye rundt (...), om samfunn, om miljøet, om liksom de store tingene». «Åsne Seierstad når hun var i Afghanistan, det har liksom brent seg fast på netthinnen min, og det var derfor jeg skulle bli journalist. Jeg bare husker jeg så henne på TV og det regnet bomber rundt henne, og jeg bare "fytoen, for en syk viktig jobb hun har". Det er også et definierende øyeblikk tenker jeg». 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ville studere journalistikk. «Jeg har en stefar som har vært kjempe, jeg tror han har påvirket meg veldig» (så sa han, "men Nora, hva med å studere international relations?", som var det jeg endte opp med å studere». Det var en samtale de hadde i Hellas, og hun definerer det som et vendepunkt (fra journalistikk til statsvitenskap). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tok bachelor i International Relations på St.Andrews, og ville fremdeles bli journalist. «Og det valget om å dra til utlandet, for det tenker jeg kanskje også kan være relevant, det var det at jeg var så drillei av å være i Norge, jeg følte jeg ikke hadde noen gode venner på VGS». Hun forstod at hun ville jobbe mer business-orientert enn journalist-orientert. «Der pengene går, der er det makt. Jeg kom i kontakt med sånn micro finances society (...), og det gjorde at jeg da etterhvert ble interessert i ansvarlige investeringen». Hadde et internship i løpet av studiene som forsterket business-forståelsen, defineres også som et slags vendepunkt (fra journalist til business). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vanskelig å få jobb med kun bachelor, tar et fridr for å finne videre retning. Kom ikke inn på GMAT. Jobber et halvt år i India, og et halvt år i Singapore. «Pluss at jeg ikke kom inn på GMAT første gang, det er masse tilfældigheter dette her handler om». <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-size: small;"> <p>ikke lidsbestemte hendelser/perioder som har hatt noe å si:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Å påvirke/ha en betydningsfull jobb er veldig viktig Tilfældigheter Mestrings </div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tok MBA i Rotterdam. «Det var en mer sårn generell retning, for jeg skjønte at jeg liksom måtte ha business-perspektivet for å klare å overbevise folk. Da holder det ikke bare å være statsviter, men man liksom må snakke språket til de du skal prøve å overbevise». Hadde en forventning om å jobbe i utlandet. Ble slutt med kjæresten hennes fra London, og det ble naturlig å flytte hjem og jobbe i Norge. «Man ser jo for seg en type fremtid, og så endrer jo det seg når relasjoner endrer seg også». 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begynte i "Company X" i 2018 på et bærekraftsteam. Faren jobber også innen bærekraft. "Det var han som introduserte, som fortalte om det teamet i «Company X». Så det var viktig. Men det er på en måte tilfældig». «Jeg tror at jeg har en eller annen forventning om at det jeg gjør hver dag, skal få effekter som er større enn meg. Det er forventninger jeg har hatt hele tiden, og som jeg fremdeles ham. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> «Jeg ser for meg at jeg kommer til å jobbe innenfor samme tema [bærekraft], det er jeg helt sikker på». Jeg merker det har mye å si, akkurat det teamet som jeg jobber på nå er liksom dødsule! Nevner kunder, muligheter, lønn, praktiske utfordringer, familie osv som ting som kan påvirke. «Jeg tror liksom at familie, nære kolleger tror jeg er kjempe viktig, hvertfall for meg, veldig, veldig viktig».

Frøya, konsulent

Oppvekst	Bachelor	Internship	Deltidjobb	"Company X"	Annet
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foreldrene har vært opptatt av lekser, men "aldri pushet på noe ambisjoner eller retning" Har alltid hørt mye på sin far som er bedriftsleder I familielselskaper satt hun heller med onklene, som også var businessmenn, enn de andre barna Som liten ville hun bli bankdame (siden de hadde fine klær), på vgs ville hun bli journalist/eiendomsmegler og gikk derfor medier og kommunikasjon, og deretter påbygg Var usikker på hva hun ville etter VGS og tok et fridr hvor hun jobbet på hotell 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begynte i Bergen, fant ut det ble for lite, flyttet til Oslo Usikker på hvilken retning hun ville etter bacheloren 3.år på bachelor var hun med i Næringslivsutvalget der hun fikk bygd nettverk og jobbe tett mot bedriftene. Fikk på denne måten mer innsikt og økt nysgjerrighet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ville enten mot finans- eller konsulentbransjen, så hun fikk internship (sommer) i England innen finans Sjefen hennes syntes hun stresset for mye med å legge planer, mente hun burde tenke veien blir til mens hun går. Dette har hun festet seg ved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flyttet tilbake til Oslo etter internship og jobbet deltid i et konsultentselskap "Jeg fikk testet begge deler og skjønte det var konsulent jeg ville bli" En form for aha-opplevelse å finne ut hva hun ville Positiv hendelse. "Jeg så det var mye frivillige folk, at det var mye forskjellige mennesker" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begynte i "Company X" rett etter masteren i Finans og management (Skottland) og vært der siden "Det er veldig viktig for meg å lære og prøve nye ting. Det er nok også derfor jeg trives godt som konsulent" " Mestrings sammen med utfordringer og utvikling henger nok tett sammen med hvorfor jeg har valgt å bli" De to første ukene i "Company X", som bestod av kurs, fikk henne til å innse at hun kunne få den utviklingen hun ønsket "Da følte jeg at jeg var på riktig plass, da" Innså etter et par år at å ta litt tak selv og si ifra gjorde at hun fikk gjøre mer av de tingene hun ville Tror det neste vendepunktet blir når man får barn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Jeg tror litt av den røde tråden er at jeg ikke helt vet hva jeg vil bli når jeg blir voksen" "Veien har liksom blitt til mens jeg har gått"

Thora, idrettsutdøver

Oppvekst	Bachelor	"Company X"	Fremtidig karriere
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moren har jobbet med økonomi og muligens medvirket i studie/karrierevalg. Har kunnet hjelpe til med skolearbeid "Jeg har alltid vært litt usikker på hva jeg ville. Jeg har alltid vært litt sånn vingelpetter." Har turnet hele livet og tror pågangsmotet og viljestyrken kommer derfra "Jeg har blitt organisert og strukturert på grunn av den turningen som har tatt veldig mye tid og det har hjulpet meg på veien." Har alltid villlet jobbe med mennesker Tok et fridr etter vgs for å tjene penger og reise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begynte på årsstudium i Økonomi og handel fordi hun ikke visste hva hun ville og alltid har vært god i matte Fant underveis ut at hun var god og bestemte seg for å bygge videre på det til en bachelorgrad Hadde en flink og motiverende foreleser som overbeviste om samfunnsnyttan av yrket. "Han var med å påvirke at hvertfall jeg fortsatte med bachelor i stedet for å bli ferdig etter det årsstudiet. Det var mest det, pluss at det var interessant å lære noe nytt om noe jeg egentlig ikke kunne noen ting om." Bachelor i Regnskap og revisjon Et halvt år for avsluttet bachelor kom noen fra «Company X» på bed.pres. "Så bare slang jeg inn en søknad og fikk jobben et halvt år før jeg var ferdig." "Så det var litt tilfældig egentlig. Men jeg var veldig fornøyd" Måtte jobbe mye hardere enn før pga. vanskelighetsgraden, noe som ga mestringsfølelse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begynte i «Company X» rett etter bachelor, jobbet der i tre år til sommeren (stilling: revisjonsmedarbeider, senior) Skjønte ingenting av det hun drev med første året, fikk mestringsfølelse da hun begynte å skjønne ting "Veien ble på en måte litt til mens jeg gikk, og så endte jeg her, da." "Jeg har vært vinglete. Jeg har gitt det en sjans og så har det blitt det." Største utfordring i yrket: følge med på hva som skjer i næringslivet Viktig å kunne ha noen å sparre med, som hun har i dag i «Company X» Viktig å bli utfordret intellektuelt <div style="font-size: small;"> <p>"Hvis jeg skulle oppsummert, ville jeg sagt at veien har liksom blitt litt til mens jeg har gått, at det har blitt litt tilfældig, men så har jeg endt opp et sted hvor jeg er veldig fornøyd. Men grunnen til at jeg har endt opp der jeg har gjort, tror jeg er fordi jeg har vært målrettet. At jeg har jobbet hardt for det."</p> </div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Når ikke høyere stilling enn senior uten mastergrad "Så jeg står litt ved et veiskille nå hvor jeg er litt usikker på hva jeg skal gjøre videre fordi jeg ikke har den masteren, jeg har jo bare tatt bachelor." Ønsker og forventer å fortsette å utvikle seg Kan bli påvirket av mennesker og nevner muligheten for å åpne øynene for noe helt annet dersom noen er gode til å snakke Fremhev relasjoner; både i form av betydning for fremtidig karriere (nettverksbygging) og det å trives på jobb (det sosiale er viktig. Viktigere å kunne jobbe med noen hele tiden enn å evt. tjene litt mer men jobbe for et mindre selskap/avdeling) Lønn og trygghet mener hun også spiller inn

Idunn, konsulent

Oppvekst	Årsstudium	Departement	"Company X"	Annet
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ville bli aksjemegler som 7-åring, ville bli kjernefysiker for CERN da hun studerte Fysikk Trivdes godt med alle fag bortsett fra økonomi på vgs. "...Livets ironi". Ikke fornøyd med faglæreren "Jeg var jo veldig realfagsinteressert, sikkert litt på tross av, eller på grunn av at min far er siviløkonom. Jeg skulle IKKE bli økonom, jeg skulle bli alt annet enn hva pappa var, sikkert litt sønn rebelsk tenåring." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Studerte fysikk i Oslo, syntes studiet var snevert relativt tidlig Opplevde å bli mer samfunnsengasjert i senere tid og derfor mer opptatt av økonomi, kombinert med at hennes daværende kjæreste studerte økonomi. Han introduserte henne for samf.økonomi, samfunnsnytt av det og bredden i økonomi Dårlig tilbakemelding på en eksamen kombinert med å ha samarbeidet med klassekamerater som hun opplevde bedre egnet for studiet, førte til et vendepunkt, hun skjønte at dette skulle hun ikke gjøre Handelshøyskolen i Bergen, økonomi Samfunnsøkonomi, makroretning Masterfaget "Velferdsstatens utfordringer" var hovedårsaken til at hun ønsket å jobbe i departement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gikk bredt ut da hun søkte jobber alle tre ganger Første jobb: Landbruks- og matdepartementet, vikariat "Veldig naiv tanke om at man har lyst å være der det skjer og der man sitter og bestemmer hva man skal bruke mer offentlige midler på. Være med å fordele de godene til det beste for alle." Vikariat i Arbeids- og sosialdepartementet Nærings- og industridepartementet (fast stilling) Jobbet der i 3,5 år, hospitererte ett år drene/ tok vikariat i en annen avdeling (Næringsdepartementet), for å lære mer Hadde da jobbet 5,5 år i offentlig sektor og ville prøve noe annet, og ville en eller annen gang i livet prøve privat sektor "Jeg hadde flere jeg kjente i «Company X», så jeg hørte mye om dem. I tillegg jobbet min samboer i xxx på daværende tidspunkt, han hadde akkurat skiftet jobb så han fortalte jo mye" Hovedmotivasjon til å jobbe i «Company X»: jobbe i team Ulempe med departement: manglende fokus på karrierebygging, Lønn og ansvar kan justeres, men en fortl på det samme nivået etter et vist antall år. En er med å forme beslutningsgrunnlaget, men ikke å ta selve beslutningene "Det er ganske stagnerende" Ledere har bidratt i hennes karrierevalg og -utvikling ved å la henne jobbe med ting relevant for fremtidig karriere 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begynte i «Company X» januar 2019, som erfaren på senior 2-nivå Ble opprykket til senior 3 oktober 2019 Fordele med «Company X»: karrierebygging, noe det ikke er fokus på i de fleste departement. I tillegg til evnen til å bidra i beslutninger 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Man har liksom lagt en stein ned, og så en stein til, og en stein til. Og så er det ikke nødvendigvis noen god grunn til hvorfor man startet på A, og endte opp på A, men når ser på de enkeltstegene, så ser man det er et mønster, da" "Det at jeg endte opp i «Company X» er som mye annet, tilfeldig." "(...)jeg er en person som, (...), må føle mestring der jeg er her og nå før jeg ser veldig mye fram"

Nanna, idrettsutøver

Oppvekst	Idrettskarrieren	Fremtidig karriere
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Jeg har turnet i kanskje 20 år av livet mitt. (...) Jeg vil vel si det er det som på en måte har preget hvordan livet mitt ser ut nå. Og så er det selvfølgelig ting som har skjedd underveis. Kanskje mindre hyggelige opplevelser. Sånn som Thailand og mamma bor i Larkollen, at liksom ting, som har gjort at jeg kanskje har blitt sterkere i hodet." Å begynne med turn var naturlig siden faren og besteforeldrene hennes også har drevet med det "Jeg vet ikke om jeg fikk et valg..." "De første 10 kanskje, var mer barnelek, og litt moro, og så skjønte jeg kanskje ikke hvor flink jeg var før jeg begynte å bli dratt med litt på landslaget og så ble det litt sånn, ble det fort veldig seriøst. Og da det ble seriøst, så ble det veldig seriøst." "Det er liksom hele turnprosessen som har bare gjort at man på en måte blir en utøver oppe i hodet da, og det å få de utøveregenskapene med å være strukturert, målbevisst, å vite hele tiden hva man vil og ikke gi seg før du får det til, den har slått gjennom uansett hva jeg har byttet over til" "Så egentlig så tror jeg bare at jeg har bare skapt min egen bane, egentlig. Og så har de som har levd rundt meg som har vært veldig nære, som mamma, pappa, søsteren min og diverse, har på en måte bare gjort det mulig for meg. Fordi de har på en måte pusset meg videre i den retningen som de har sett at jeg allerede har begynt på. Så de har tilrettelagt hele tiden." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Har hovedsakelig drevet med turn, men også dans, vektløfting, crossfit, samt konkurrert i bodybuilding og fitness "Så sånn litt, jobb og sånn, så er jeg kanskje mest praktisk anlagt. Og veldig opptatt av å hjelpe mennesker og veldig glad i å jobbe med mennesker, og derfor ble det veldig naturlig for meg i og med at trening og idrett er det fellet jeg har mest kunnskap i, eller rundt." Har jobbet med idrett spesifikt i nesten 10 år, som trener innen ulike grener, som gruppeinstruktør, som PT og kostholdsveileder "Det var det jeg har vært god på, så det var bare helt naturlig for meg å gå videre med det også." "Det er helt naturlig for meg å hjelpe andre i å bli bedre på det jeg er god på. For jeg har sett hvor mye det har gjort meg, så da vil jeg det skal gi alle andre like mye." "Det har egentlig bare vært en naturlig greie hele veien, det har ikke en gang vært spørsmål om å gjøre noe annet." "Trodde det skulle være et lettere yrke å gjennomføre, jeg hadde egentlig ikke forventet at det skulle være så mye ekstraarbeid. Jeg hadde ikke forventet at jeg hele tiden må være på jobb. (...) Så der vil jeg si at det krasjet litt med de forventningene jeg hadde til yrket." "Så jo, all den forventningen der, den var jo skyhøy hele tiden. Men det er jo på en måte bare turnkarrieren som har vært lang. De andre karriere jeg har hatt, har vært mer kortvarige, så jeg har på en måte begynt nesten på topp, og så har jeg endt på topp, og så har jeg gjort meg, for da har jeg byttet." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Har bestemt seg for å begynne på sykepleien, hovedsakelig pga. hvor mye det krever å jobbe som selvstendig næringsdrivende. Ønsker mer tid til familien samt å sikre en økonomisk fremtid "(...)kanskje det største vendepunktet. Sånn å gjøre noe helt annet. Så det er litt skummelt, og, hva vet ikke hva man kommer til og så har man alltid vært trygg fordi man har vært god på det man holder på med og holdt på i samme retning hele tiden, og plutselig så skifter det helt" "Folk påvirker folk, hele tiden. Både lærere og studenter og selvfølgelig familie. Men jeg tror mest av alt at de jeg kommer til å møte og bli kjent med kommer til å ha en stor påvirkning, uten at jeg vet når og hvordan."

Alfhild, konsulent

Oppvekst	Årsstudium	Bachelor og master	"Company X"	Fremtidig karriere
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Har alltid vært en ganske sosial person og har alltid likt utfordringen det er å tilpasse seg ulike mennesker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Psykologi Skjønte at det ikke var noe for henne "Og så var det heller på en måte litt sånn semi-tilfeldig også på en måte for det var litt hva og hvem man snakket med og erfaringer fra andre." "En form for interesse og man vet ikke helt hva man gikk til og litt sånn, okei jeg prøver det og ser om det funker." "noe form for påvirkning eller innflytelse av hva man hører fra andre, da." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business og finans I løpet av studietiden likte hun bedre å jobbe i team enn å sitte alene og lese, noe som har dratt henne i konsulentretningen Hva andre har snakket om, og fortalt de har trivdes med, har og påvirket valget av karrierevei "Man får jo ganske mye påvirkning av andre opp gjennom, både studietid og venner og alt utenom også." Følte en form for eget pålagt press tidlig i karriereløpet, da hun ikke visste hva hun ville i karrieren Siste år på bacheloren ble det klart for henne hva hun ville Fikk en form for åpenbaring da hun fant ut at konsulentvirksomheten passet med hennes ønsker. Mener selv hun fikk det gjennom å prate med folk og å være åpen for ulike muligheter og inntrykk Master i finans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begynte i «Company X» august -19 "...selv om jeg har valgt en kvantitativ retning på en måte, og noe som egentlig kanskje involverer litt mer sånn pc-skjerm, så har jeg alltid visst at jeg vil jobbe med folk, og da er sånt som konsulentbransjen på en måte kanskje det som jeg så på det som mest optimale sånn sett, da. (...) Så den... liksom erfaringen gjennomgående livet at jeg liker å jobbe med mennesker da, eller å være med mennesker." "Jeg tror egentlig mye at det er sånn, selv om man har en viss form for retning man er ute etter, så tror jeg det er mye litt tilfeldigheter også. Eller sånn, hvem man kommer bort av personer, hvilke opplevelser man har med ulike ting" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ønsker å utvikle seg der hun er nå "Hvis man tenker liksom langt langt frem, så tipper jeg det kommer til å være litt sånn form for tilfeldigheter igjen, men ettervert som man er innom flere forskjellige områder, hva man utvikler en spiskompetanse og interesse for."

Bergtora, konsulent

Oppvekst	VGS	Bachelor	Jobb	Master	"Company X"	Fremtidig karriere
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Har spilt aktivt golf lenge. Begynte å satse da hun var ca. 13 år, og frem til 2016 "Jeg føler kanskje at det som har påvirket meg mest, har vært det at jeg alltid har likt tall, fra jeg var liten av. Matte er noe som jeg har mestret. Og også på en måte hva man... veldig mye hva man hører av andre folk, da. Mye prat." Vokst opp i en familie som er opptatt av utdanning Mormoren ga alle barnebarna penger for hvert studiemester de fullførte Snakket som 13-åring med en jente som gikk på college, og da gikk det opp for henne at dette ville hun. Det var da hun begynte å satse på golf 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gikk samfunnsøkon omisk linje på Fagerborg da hun anså dette som det letteste, fordi hun fikk tilbud om scholarship andre året på vgs og fordi hun reiste veldig mye 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finans, fire år i USA Litt tilfeldig det ble denne retningen, men har likt matte og tall fra barneskolen. I tillegg kjente hun flere som hadde gått samme linje på samme sted, og hun visste hun kunne bruke dette på mye Gikk på college med golfstipend Visste ikke hva hun skulle bli, så planen var å bli proff (golf) Vurderte medisn, men omretledes løp/ opplegg i Norge Dro på veiledning på Sonans for å høre hvor mange fag hun måtte ta opp for å komme inn på medisn. Det var snakk om minst to år, og derfor uaktuelt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regnskapsmedarbeid er i xxx (oljeselskap) ett år "Det var også veldig tilfeldig egentlig, fordi da drev jeg og søkte på all mulig av økonomistillinger da, for det er jo litt sånn greit å få brukt det man har studert." Efter et år i xxx tenkte hun at hun måtte ta master, da hun visste hun ville bli konsulent. Gjeme i de fire store, da hun hadde hørt mye positivt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> QTEM i Finans, BI Utveksling ett år (Roma og Brussel) Valgte finans fremfor samfunnsøkonomi da hun følte finans virket mer spennende og var litt nærmere konsulent Summer intern i «Company X»-18, i Risk Fikk en slags åpenbaring i.a. internshippet om at dette passet godt for henne, her passet hun inn Trivdes og fikk tilbud som konsulent etter endt internship, noe hun da takket ja til Snakket mye med mannen til kusinen sin, som snakket varmt og konsulentbransjen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begynte i «Company X» august -19 "Jeg tenker at det er veldig viktig at man står opp hver dag og tenker at det betyr noe for noen at jeg står opp." Jobber mye med helse nå, hjelper helseprosjekter med prosjektgjennomføring. Dette føles meningsfullt Fikk en slags åpenbaring da hun begynte på helseprosjekter om at det er dette hun vil Blir motivert av å få tilbakemelding fra kolleger at hun mestrer jobben og gjør fremskritt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tror kolleger vil bidra til å forme karrieren fremover Familie, kjæreste (de man snakker med) Kunder (evt. få jobbtilbud)

Livunn, konsulent

Oppvekst	VGS	Bachelor	Jobb	Master	Jobb	"Company X"	Annet
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spilte tennis på konkurransenivå frem til hun var 17 år, noe hun tror har påvirket hennes ambisjonsnivå "Jeg vil jo si at det at jeg har blitt påvirket i karrierevalg hjemmefra. (...) begge foreldrene mine har vært veldig opptatt av utdanning, (...) alltid vært underforstått at jeg og mine to yngre søsken skal studere da, og gjerne noe akademisk, så det har vært et slikt konstant, på en måte, nesten litt sånn press." "Og så later jeg også det at jeg har vokst opp i et miljø hvor studier har vært veldig viktig, liksom vokst opp på Oslo vest hvor det er nesten litt sånn, jeg tror ikke jeg har gått på skole med en eneste person som ikke har endt opp med å ta en bachelorgrad hvertfall. (...) halvparten av klassen fra vgs har tatt leder, så..." Deltaelse flere år på sommercamper i England hvor hun traff mye folk fra hele verden bidro til å gjøre henne nysgjerrig på verden 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Jeg vil jo kanskje si at det første som jeg følte påvirket valgvalget var jo enven til å (...) kunne prestere på et relativt høyt nivå. Og det tenker jeg at jeg følte egentlig ikke før jeg kom på videregående. (...) Og kommer egentlig inn på vgs litt sånn med et ramaskrik på den skolen jeg ville. Men hadde da en opplevelse hvor jeg hadde veldig, veldig gode lærere rundt meg og var veldig sånn, ble veldig motivert. Og plutselig liksom gikk fra ikke så bra til å avslutte vgs-karrieren med skolens beste karakterer." "Det tror jeg påvirket veldig mitt valgvalg" Ca. midt på vgs ble det klart for henne at hun ville studere politikk i Washington 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bachelor i Washington, D.C. (internasjonl politikk). "Og så tror jeg også jeg valgte studier basert på en litt sånn idealistisk holdning, sånn, nå skal jeg ut og endre verden. Og så tror jeg at jeg oppdaget ganske raskt, eller, oppdaget etterhvert i studiene at det er ikke så lett som det." "Jeg kom til et punkt i studiene hvor jeg ble litt mer kynisk. Det tror jeg var en ganske sånn viktig ending for meg." "Så jeg endret egentlig mening litt sånn etter bachelorgraden. (...) internasjonl politikk er litt sånn flytende grad. Så jeg var litt sånn, jeg må ha litt verktøy å henge ting på, sånn at jeg kan litt sånn karrieremessig at jeg vet jeg har litt mer å gi da, til en fremtidig arbeidsgiver som jeg kan konkret si dette, dette kan jeg." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dro tilbake til Norge etter bachelor og hadde vikarjobber. Sakte jobber og fant ut det var få muligheter og så da behov for å studere noe mer "sikket". "Tror det kom fra et litt sånn sikkerhetsperspektiv" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Edinburgh, administrasjon og ledelse Fikk amerikansk kjæreste etter fullført master og flyttet tilbake til USA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jobbet ett år i USA med flere ulike jobber i kortere engasjementer/prosjekter Erfaringen med denne form for jobbing førte til at hun søkte kun hos konsulentelskaper i Norge siden hun trivdes med denne arbeidstformen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seniorkonsulent. Jobbet i «Company X» snart 3 år "Og da var jeg litt usikker på hva jeg skulle gjøre, så da søkte jeg ut mulig, og endte da opp i «Company X», da." "Jeg tror kanskje at det å gå inn i konsulentbransjen har vært litt påvirket av det at jeg har vært litt sånn, ikke helt sikker på hva jeg vil. Og at det er et sted jeg kan gå inn og få mange forskjellige muligheter." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Miljø og relasjoner har gjennom hele livet har medvirket mye i valgene hennes. Hun forteller om press fra familie og omgangskrets, og vektlegger det sosioøkonomiske perspektivet (er fra Holmenkollen) Trekker frem selvilliten fra å gjøre det greit på studier påvirker ambisjonsnivået når det gjelder karrierevalg

Relasjoner

Forventninger

Vendepunkt

Åpenbaring

Tilfeldigheter

Mestring

Press/påvirkning fra samfunnet

Ikke tidsbestemte hendelser/perioder

Opplevd verdi/ meningsfylt

Miljø/ sosioøkonomisk aspekt

9.3 Information letter to participants

Vil du delta i forskningsprosjektet ”Hva påvirker karrierevalg”?

Dette er et spørsmål til deg om å bli intervjuet i ca. 30-60 minutter i et forskningsprosjekt hvor formålet er å se nærmere på idrettsstjerner og konsulenter karriereutvikling, og hva som har vært med på å forme individers karrierevalg. Masteroppgaven vi skriver er en del av et forskningsprosjekt som omhandler hva som skaper gunstig karriereutvikling i organisasjoner.

Mer om prosjektet «Hva skaper gunstig karriereutvikling?»

Formål

Formålet med det overordnede prosjektet å forstå mer av hva som skaper gunstig karriereutvikling for mange typer arbeidstakere i ulike typer profesjoner og organisasjoner. Vi er ute etter å forstå mekanismer og betingelser for god karriereutvikling i skjæringsfeltet mellom individ og organisasjon – hva som på den ene siden skaper mestring, vekst og livsberikelse for individet og på den andre siden bidrar til prestasjon og utvikling i organisasjoner. Dette er et forskningsprosjekt i regi av Handelshøyskolen BI og i samarbeid med OsloMET. Prosjektet tenkes utført over flere år med mange grupper av studenter (i hovedsak Master of science) involvert.

Hvem er ansvarlig for forskningsprosjektet?

Handelshøyskolen BI ved Professor Arne Carlsen ved Institutt for ledelse og organisasjon er ansvarlig for prosjektet.

Prosjektgruppen består av følgende faste personer personer: Arne Carlsen (Handelshøyskolen BI, leder), Christina Nerstad, OsloMet; Anders Dysvik, og Nicky Dries, Handelshøyskolen BI. For 2019/2020 deltar to grupper av MSc studenter ved Handelshøyskolen BI: 1) Ingvild F. Falck-Ytter & Stine V. Jørgensen, og Fatima Niang & Ingrid Ystgaard. Professor Arne Carlsen ved Handelshøyskolen BI, Institutt for Ledelse og organisasjon, er veileder for begge gruppene.

Hvorfor får du spørsmål om å delta?

Du blir spurt om å delta i prosjektet fordi du tilhører en profesjon med sterke krav og forventninger til karriereutvikling.

Hva innebærer det for deg å delta?

Deltakelse i studien vil innebære at du deltar i et individuelt intervju der vi ønsker å få vite mer om dine erfaringer og refleksjoner om egen karriereutvikling. Intervjuet tar ca. 30-60 minutter. Det inneholder spørsmål knyttet til den problemstillingen vi har skissert. Vi tar lydopptak og notater fra intervjuet.

Det er frivillig å delta

Det er frivillig å delta i prosjektet. Hvis du velger å delta, kan du når som helst trekke samtykke tilbake uten å oppgi noen grunn. Alle opplysninger om deg vil da bli anonymisert. Det vil ikke ha noen negative konsekvenser for deg hvis du ikke vil delta eller senere velger å trekke deg.

Ditt personvern – hvordan vi oppbevarer og bruker dine opplysninger

Vi vil bare bruke opplysningene om deg til formålene vi har fortalt om i dette skrevet. Vi behandler opplysningene konfidensielt og i samsvar med personvernregelverket.

- Prosjektgruppen nevnt ovenfor vil ha tilgang til datamaterialet.
- Navnet og kontaktopplysningene dine vil vi erstatte med en kode som lagres på egen navneliste adskilt fra øvrige data. Ved prosjektslutt blir dataene anonymisert ved at kodenøkkel og alle andre opplysninger som kan identifisere deg slettes.

Deltakerne og deres arbeidsplass vil ikke kunne gjenkjennes i eventuelle publikasjoner knyttet til prosjektet.

Hva skjer med opplysningene dine når vi avslutter forskningsprosjektet?

Prosjektet skal etter planen avsluttes innen 30. desember, 2025. Personopplysninger og lydopptak vil slettes ved prosjektslutt, mens anonymiserte versjoner av transkriberte intervju beholdes av ansvarlig institusjon ved Professor Arne Carlsen.

Dine rettigheter

Så lenge du kan identifiseres i datamaterialet, har du rett til:

- innsyn i hvilke personopplysninger som er registrert om deg,
- å få rettet personopplysninger om deg,
- få slettet personopplysninger om deg,
- få utlevert en kopi av dine personopplysninger (dataportabilitet), og
- å sende klage til personvernombudet eller Datatilsynet om behandlingen av dine personopplysninger.

Hva gir oss rett til å behandle personopplysninger om deg?

Vi behandler opplysninger om deg basert på ditt samtykke.

På oppdrag fra *Handelshøyskolen BI* har NSD – Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS vurdert at behandlingen av personopplysninger i dette prosjektet er i samsvar med personvernregelverket.

Hvor kan jeg finne ut mer?

Hvis du har spørsmål til studien, eller ønsker å benytte deg av dine rettigheter, ta kontakt med Ingvild F. Falck-Ytter, e-post: ingvild.f.falck-ytter@student.bi.no,

Stine V. Jørgensen, e-post: stine.v.jorgensen@student.bi.no, eller Professor Arne Carlsen, e-post: arne.carlsen@bi.no

Personvernombud på Handelshøyskolen BI: Vibeke Nesbakken
(vibeke.nesbakken@bi.no)

NSD – Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS, på epost
(personverntjenester@nsd.no) eller telefon: 55 58 21 17.

Med vennlig hilsen,

Ingvild F. Falck-Ytter og Stine V. Jørgensen
Arne Carlsen

Samtykkeerklæring

Jeg har mottatt og forstått informasjon om prosjektet «*Hva påvirker karrierevalg?*», og har fått anledning til å stille spørsmål. Jeg samtykker til:

Å delta i intervju

Jeg samtykker til at mine opplysninger behandles frem til prosjektet er avsluttet, ca. 30. desember, 2025.

(Signert av prosjektdeltaker, dato)