



Mentorship as an HR practice

A case study on Region Västra Götalands's pilot project on mentorship programmes

Ebba Friman & Oskar Röström

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Abstract

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Purpose:	<p>The purpose of this study is to investigate what implications a mentorship programme can have on HR-practices. More specifically, the purpose is to identify how mentoring can affect the employees' social work environment as well as personnel development. This will be done through a case study on a mentorship programme within Region of Västra Götaland to help investigate the research questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><i>1. Whether, or how, a mentorship programme, based on experiences, can affect both knowledge transfer and social work environment?</i><i>2. What implications can a mentorship programme have from an HR-perspective?</i>
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Theory:	<p>The theory used in this thesis is social capital theory, first presented by Bourdieu in 1986. Since then, the theory has been developed by several researchers. Putnam presents in 1993, the importance of <i>trust</i> when creating social capital and adds two new concepts to the theory, <i>Bonding</i> and <i>Bridging</i>. In 2001 Lin discussed the importance of <i>networks</i> and connections when creating social capital. This study uses the lens of social capital theory and the four themes of <i>Trust, Bonding, Bridging and Networking</i> when investigating the HR practice of mentorship programmes.</p>
Method:	<p>This study uses an abduction research approach, meaning that is both inductive and deductive. The research method is qualitative. The empirical data is gathered through semi-structured interviews with initiators of the programme such as project managers and HR. trade union representatives as well as the participants. The sampling method is snowball sampling, meaning that one interviewee has connected the researchers further.</p>
Result:	<p>Mentorship programmes accelerate knowledge transfer by years within healthcare. It creates self-assurance, security, confidence, and motivation. Furthermore, it was found that some participants preferred a more open and free programme structure and others wished for more structure. It was found that those who were contemptuous with the open structure identified more benefits of the programme than the ones that wished for more structure.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Trust within the mentor and mentee relationship is the most important building block for a successful mentorship programme. Other important building blocks are time and energy.</p> <p>Conclusions can be drawn that mentorship programmes <i>can</i> be very beneficial in terms of HR-practices. But for it to reach its potential, the organisation needs to continuously work with information transpiring from top to bottom. Information about the main purposes of the programme has somewhat failed in reaching practice, i.e. from theory to practice. However, the learning organisation has developed, meaning that a secondary purpose has been fulfilled. This in itself could lead to an environment where the main purpose of senior employee retention is fulfilled unintentionally.</p>

Foreword

This has been an interesting, exciting, and challenging part of our lives. To the people helping us get through it, we want to say thank you!

Ewa Wikström, thank you for your outstanding work in being our supervisor. Through your support, encouragement, and guidance we have produced a text that we feel proud of. Thank you to the region of Västra Götaland for letting us do our study at your organisation. Amilia Bliding and Alice Tennmark, thank you for your exceptional work providing us with feedback on our text. Thank you to our friends and family for being understanding during stressful periods. We also would like to say thank you to each other, for being understanding, supporting, and encouraging.

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1. Introduction

This chapter introduces the subject for this research, mentorship programmes, why it is of interest and the settings for the study. Followed by a problematization, the research questions and the boundaries and limitations for the study.

The demographic of the world is in change, people are living longer now than 100 years ago. This creates a shift in which age group that has the most amount of people. In Sweden, changes in the population have resulted in distribution changes within age groups, the demographic pyramid has shifted from having a broad base that is thinning out as the ages grow in the 1900s. During the 1900s almost 25 percent of the population was under the age of ten and only eight percent was 65 years or older (SCB, 2022). Since then, the Swedish population, in general, has grown significantly, both as a result of immigration, and people living longer. During the last ten years there are a lot of newborns as well as many older persons present in the demographic pyramid (SCB, 2022), meaning that it does not look like a pyramid anymore, but more like a cupcake with a cherry on top.

In 2028, the Swedish population is expected to exceed 11 million people. There will be more people of all ages, but the people in the ages of 80 and older are estimated to increase by 50 percent, an addition of 255 thousand, compared to 2018 (SBC, 2018). With an ageing population, new things need to be taken into consideration and in 2018, the Swedish government decided on directives concerning efforts towards a more age-conscious and inclusive way of thinking in the Swedish labour market. This endeavour led to the creation of the ‘delegation of senior workforce’. The main purpose of the delegation was to accumulate knowledge and research concerning said concept and by that, contribute to a better understanding of senior workers’ opportunities in the labour market (Delegationen för senior arbetskraft, 2020). Today most of the Swedish population exit the labour market at the age of 64. Longer work life for the population is arguably becoming a necessity, one reason being the financial aspect. When people are living longer the result is longer retirement and less general pension during the long retirement period. Another reason is the lack of competence in the labour market that the senior population holds, especially in the health sector as well as other pedagogical labours such as teachers (Delegationen för senior arbetskraft, 2020).

1.1 Problematization and research question

With a changing demographic there is also a need for change in other areas since the previous way of working with people will become outdated as senior workers will need to work past the general retirement age. As the Delegation of senior workforce (2020) mentions, there is also a problem with competence and knowledge leaving organisations when key-personnel reach retirement age. To solve the problem of people retiring ‘too’ early for their lifespan, they need to be willing to keep on working. As Arman et al. (2021) mention, many senior workers are willing, healthy, and able to continue working and at the same time continue to contribute further than the common retirement age. These senior workers carry many skills, knowledge and experience that otherwise would have been lost due to large numbers of retirements. To keep this competence within organisations, initiatives need to be made within the field of human resources (HR) and personnel management. One example of initiatives could be other types of employment, such as hourly or part-time work, as suggested by Fuertes et al. (2013). Another way could be other tasks at work that are not as cumbersome or a role that involves more teaching (Delegation of senior workforce, 2020). To make senior individuals stay longer within the organisation, arguably, more adjustments may need to be made.

According to Fuertes et al. (2013), if senior employees are encouraged to stay longer, they have more time to pass on knowledge and experience that they have accumulated throughout their working life. This extra time spent within the organisation can look very different depending on the individual's capacity as well as willingness to stay. The authors continue to explain that senior employees are more likely to stay within the organisation working part-time. Meaning that the employer needs to prioritise and put aside time and work for the knowledge transfer to take place, but it does not affect the ordinary work since the senior worker is extending their employment. As previously mentioned by Arman et al. (2021), many senior employees are willing to do this.

The demographic aspect is often mentioned within the HR field when discussing diversity within working groups and teams. Efficiency and productivity in a group are often mentioned when writing about demographics. As mentioned in Spataro's (2003) article, “Sometimes differences have positive effects on work outcomes [...] And sometimes differences have negative effects on the productivity of groups and their members” (Spataro, 2003, p. 2), meaning that it could become a question related to HR since differences within the workforce

can lead to friction between employees. Fuertes et al. (2013) mention that there is a preconception toward senior employees, that they are slower, less effective, less adaptable, have a skill deficit, lack interest in learning or development and have more sick days. None of these things has an attachment to research evidence.

With an ageing workforce, the term *age management* becomes relevant. Berndtsson et al. (2018), explains age management as when organisations become conscious about and have the will to change apparent attitudes towards seniors. However, age management involves all ages, but the senior workforce is what is most often referred to. It is a leadership technique with regards to the employee's individual competence rather than a certain work-related ability connected to a specific age. Age management is concerned with seeing the worker, not their age, but at the same time acknowledge that employees' different needs may vary from one another (Berndtsson et al, 2018). Furthermore, Fuertes et al. (2013) continue to discuss age within organisations with the term 'age management'. They mention that both positive and negative attitudes coexist towards senior employees. Sometimes the negative stereotypes of senior employees undermine their economic value, meaning that it could be a breach between policy and practice. They continue to mention that having an age-diverse workforce is beneficial. Wok and Hashim (2013) researched mixed-age teamwork, stating that it is a positive teamwork relationship. Younger employees learn from older employees as they share their experiences.

Asraf (2020) continues to describe the importance of committed and attached employees to tackle changes within an organisation, everything from organisational change to technical developments. Ferguson and Reio (2010) state that working with the personnel is essential for the survival of organisations. The demographics are changing, and worker shortage makes it harder to retain the personnel with high competencies within an organisation, meaning that the human resources strategies, practices, and policies are of importance to be competitive. Some practices of human resource management are considered to be high-performance workplace and greater productivity practices, for example, incentive compensation, training and selectivity (Ferguson & Reio, 2010). Burmeister et al. (2020) mention that because of the demographic changes that occur, organisations are now more age-diverse, leading to a higher level of social interactions between employees with an age difference. The demographics of the population and organisations need to be considered when working with HR since it affects

the employee's time spent in an organisation (Pataro, 2003; Asraf, 2020; Wok & Hashim, 2013; Ferguson & Reio, 2010).

The region of Västra Götaland (Abr. VGR) in Sweden acknowledges the issue of an ageing workforce and has started to work on meeting the challenges to come. They decided to start mapping and strengthening the efforts to make senior, more experienced employees stay longer in their working life. One of the first things they did was to look at the possibilities to strengthen the mentoring within the healthcare sector (Västra Götalandsregionen, 2019). VGR's take on solving the problem is to implement a new HR-practice, a mentorship programme, which in theory would result in knowledge being transferred to the younger employees and competence would stay within the organisation. At the same time the senior employee, acting as a mentor could get a variety of different tasks, or just work with this programme part time. All these things would need to be individually measured due to the senior employee's abilities. Being a part of a mentorship programme is relationship building since a relationship is formed between a mentor and a mentee. Due to a relationship being formed the mentorship programme might lead to other outcomes in addition to competence retainment, e.g., soft values.

The purpose of this study is to investigate what implications a mentorship programme can have on HR-practices. More specifically, the purpose is to identify how mentoring can affect the employees' social work environment as well as personnel development. This will be done through a case study on a mentorship programme within the Region of Västra Götaland to help investigate the research questions.

The research questions used to investigate this are:

- 1. Whether or how a mentorship programme, based on experiences, can affect both knowledge transfer and social work environment?*
- 2. What implications can a mentorship programme have from an HR-perspective?*

1.2 Boundaries and limitations

To conduct this research some boundaries and limitations have been made to make sure that it is possible to conduct in the provided time period. The research is limited to the labour market of Sweden and the public sector. The Delegation of senior workforce (2020) mentions the healthcare sector as a sector where competence will be lacking due to retirements, therefore this sector is chosen for the study. The case study is conducted within one organisation active in the Swedish public healthcare sector, The region of Västra Götaland (Abr. VGR).

1.3 Disposition

The chapter following the introduction is previous research and studies done on mentoring and mentorship programmes, following this is the theoretical framework of social capital theory. The next chapter is the method section, explaining the case and methodology chosen for the study. The collected empirical findings are presented in the next chapter, followed by an analysis as well as discussion and conclusion.

2. Previous research on mentoring and mentorship programmes

In this chapter, studies regarding mentoring and mentorship programmes are presented. This is to get a better understanding of the kind of research that has been done on the subject previously and where the field of research could be developed further.

A lot of research has been conducted on mentoring programmes in different contexts, but these are exclusively studying the aspects of knowledge transfer, more or less. As an example, such a study was conducted by Bjørnson & Dingsøy (2005) on a small software consultancy firm. The purpose of the mentorship was as stated earlier, to transfer knowledge from experts in the company onto new, inexperienced personnel. The study found that to improve the effectiveness of the mentoring, the partakers would have to have confidence and trust in one another (Bjørnson & Dingsøy, 2005). These relational factors had to be in place in order to enable learning and the passing down of knowledge. Another example, a Finnish article, published in 2012, studies mentoring as a formal HR practice. The study itself was situated in medium- to large-sized organisations in which the benefits, disadvantages and future prospects were analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively (Laiho & Brandt, 2012). The empirical data gathering was conducted through surveys filled by a total of 152 individuals, said individuals were all within the HRM field in several Finnish public and private organisations (Laiho & Brandt, 2012).

Results show that the main aspects and functions of mentoring were those that HR prioritised in their practices, namely knowledge transfer, personnel development, and general work-related well-being. Other issues and aspects of the mentoring were career development and performance related matters but those were not focused on as much as the other aspects, something that came as somewhat as a surprise for the persons involved. Conclusions were that mentoring could be used more extensively in the future but further consideration regarding available resources would be necessary. One of the more eminent conclusions on what would have to improve was information about possibilities and opportunities that could follow with the mentoring, as one in five of the participants in the study experienced a lack thereof (Laiho & Brandt, 2012).

In an article published in 2001, mentoring within the realm of public health nursing (PHNs) was explored (Smith et al., 2001). The authors put emphasis on the benefits of mentoring within said occupation as well as issues, challenges and hardships PHNs often face in their careers. The study states that when PHNs traverse from being new to the occupation to being a full-fledged PHN, there are significant expectations and demands put on them which can be, and often is, the cause of great stress and can in some cases be overly cumbersome. Furthermore, mentoring is presented to be a possible solution to this problem as it supplies the mentee with the support that they need in order to navigate the challenges and pressure their occupation demands. Although mentoring in this text is presented as a solution to a problem, it is also stated that it can indeed have opposite effects, causing anxiety rather than reducing it. Holloran (1993) is mentioned in connection to worsening effects of mentoring, as the study showed that the three most common causes of dissatisfaction with the mentorship, as perceived by the mentees, were power misuse, overly possessiveness and forms of rejection. The article further discusses gender and race aspects and shows how in those cases, where minorities are involved, mentorship programmes can be even more important. Eventually, the article concludes that mentoring is a great asset in any occupation and that the ever-changing climate of healthcare will need investment in talent, experience and time from mentors to facilitate the growth of the novice PHNs (Smith et al., 2001).

In 2002, the journal of nursing care published an article describing the costs and issues that follow high rates of staff turnover within the realm of healthcare (Greene & Peutzer, 2002). One example that is specifically brought up is how a total of 21 nurses chose to resign within the span of 18 months counted from when their employment was initiated. The effects of high staff turnovers, in this case, manifested itself in burnouts caused by senior employees not only being asked to take on extra shifts but also being asked and expected to train and educate the new staff that comes in. A structured model of mentoring was implemented in order to combat these issues. The mentoring programme was aimed at senior and low experienced staff to enrol in a mentor-mentee relationship with the purpose of building and maintaining a trusting relationship between the two. The ambition with the programme was to promote and foster attitudes of team building, to guide inexperienced nurses to better cope with the challenges and insecurities that often come with being new to a job, as well as to acknowledge and adequately utilise senior knowledge and experience by transferring said knowledge and experience onto the younger employees (Greene & Peutzer, 2002).

After some time and evaluation, the study found that only 5 nurses had chosen to resign in comparison to the 21 nurses in the time prior. In addition to this, the mentors and mentees were asked to fill out surveys regarding their attitudes and experiences with the mentoring programme. These surveys showed a significant increase in the general job satisfaction as well as of course, the increased retention of talent. In conclusion, the study states that the programme has been successful, and areas of improvement are continuously being tended to. Furthermore, the study emphasises that the supportive environment the programme creates enables nurses to continue wanting to go to work (Greene & Peutzer, 2002).

Deng et al. (2022) mention in their article that formal mentorship has grown recently, formal mentorship programmes refer to those that have a time frame, are structured, and can have objectives that are specific. Informal mentorship is when relationships are formed naturally without any initiatives. The authors mention the importance of a good match between a mentor and a mentee, this could affect the success of the programme. The author continues to mention the benefits of mentoring and mentorship programmes, such as skill development, networking, help with releasing professional goals as well as personal growth. All of the things mentioned can occur but are reliant on the relationship between the mentor and mentee.

The mentor can provide the mentee with three types of support according to Deng et al. (2022):

(1) *psychological and social support* (i.e., mentor behaviors that promote personal growth such as counseling, friendship, and acceptance), (2) *instrumental support* (i.e., also known as career support and vocational support, which refer to mentor behaviors that facilitate proteges' goal attainment such as coaching), and (3) *role modeling* (i.e., mentor behaviors that the protege identifies with and desires to emulate). (Deng et al., 2022, p. 387)

To summarise, mentoring and mentorship programmes have been used to transfer knowledge, personnel development, to support and help navigate challenges, personnel turnover and to help build relationships between senior and younger employees. Two of the studies were conducted within the healthcare sector, this is because mentoring is a natural part of the field as well as high personnel turnover. This helped to decide what field this study would take place. The majority of these studies are focused on organisational benefits of a mentorship

programme, Smith, McAllister & Crawford (2001) as well as Deng et al. (2022) discusses the support a mentor can bring to a mentee. This is not researched to a large extent: the individual benefits of being a part of a mentorship programme. In the study by Bjørnson and Dingsøyr (2005) the authors mention the importance of trust when mentoring, this made the choice of this study's theoretical lens easier, choosing the social capital theory, where trust plays a large part in enabling social capital to be formed.

3. Theory

This chapter presents the theory of social capital. This is the lens used to look at the empirical data collected. The chapter starts with a presentation of the social capital theory, followed by the themes within the theory, trust, bonding, bridging, and networking.

The theoretical perspective chosen for this study builds on Bourdieu's (1986) definition of social capital. Bourdieu (1986) presents a sociological foundation for analysis of both agency and social stratification that is built on the concept of capital. Capital refers to assets that are applicable and usable in specific situations and contexts. This capital can be used by individuals to establish themselves in different contexts such as in the context of society. For assets to be seen as capital and be valued, it needs to be accepted by individuals active in the same social space. There are different types of capital, for example, cultural, symbolic, economical, and the one that this research will focus on, social capital. Furthermore, Bourdieu (1986) expresses the importance of social networks and mutual relationships as an important resource for individuals that are a part of a community. This also means that the individuals containing capital have the ability to influence people in that social context. According to Lin (2017) the notion of social capital is simplistic: by investing in social relations, results can be expected. Meaning that people invest and engage in interactions and networking to gain profits.

Bourdieu (1986) argues that economical capital gives an advantage over other forms of capital. This is because it gains access to cultural capital. Those who have the financial possibilities to develop their cultural capital can use their position to create social capital. This is also mentioned by Ossenkop et al. (2015), who describe that the amount of social capital available in different social groups can impact the members' career success, meaning that a member of a social group with high levels of social capital is more likely to succeed compared to one without social capital.

Putnam (2000) further develops the theory of social capital and highlights the importance of trust and mutuality and from this, the concepts of bonding and bridging emerges. These concepts were created by Putnam in 2000 and were a reaction to his original theory presented in 1993, because it had received criticism as some claimed his theory to be constraining towards some individuals in terms of decision and choice making. This notion derives from the idea

that social capital in reality can be built upon exclusion of individuals in their access to social capital resources.

Hawkins and Maurer (2010) explain the benefits of the social capital theory as “the concept is unique in its ability to bridge the theoretical gap between individual and community that spans from the micro to the macro in an interactive and independent manner more effectively than many previous socio- economic/-political theories “(p. 1779). In this study, the perspective of the theoretical lens will be of a more individualistic character.

3.1 Social capital trust

Robert D. Putnam (1993) approaches social capital in relation to other forms of capital such as human and financial capital. Whereas these kinds of capital often refer to physical things or properties of different persons, social capital in Putnam’s approach is considered to be born out of trust among individuals and their respective communities. Putnam claims that in communities where social capital is strong, crime rates are often low, general health- and educational levels are higher along with a better general economy than it would be in a community where social capital is lacking (Putnam, 1993).

Nooteboom (2007) describes the relationship between social capital and trust as follows:

Trust is both an outcome and an antecedent of relationships. It forms a basis for relationships, and thus generates social capital. It may be based on institutions, and it may be built from relationships, and then it arises from social capital. (Nooteboom, 2007, p.29)

Further, Veenstra (2002) describes trust as connected to honesty, fairness and caring, someone that is committed to fulfilling the undertaken task. It is also about trusting in someone. The meaning of trust is invoked in concepts such as confidence, belief, faith and perception. Veenstra (2002) describes trust within relationships as trust enables trust, meaning that if you trust one person it is easier to trust another. The author continues by explaining trust as something that can provide support for individuals as well as reduce anxiety.

Trust is an important building block in a mentorship programme and the relationship that forms between a mentor and a mentee. The feeling of trust creates an open climate and environment and enables the mentees to be able to ask all sorts of questions. For a mentee to trust in a

mentor's experience and knowledge is a given, but to be able to ask all the questions as well as question methods and to have discussions. That enabled the mentee to build their self-confidence and self-security, leading to a decrease in feeling insecure. This could later result in other people in the community feeling that they can ask the mentee questions since that individual now is secure in their role. The mentor gets to learn from the mentee as well as the mentee might have learned new more modern skills and methods during their education. Perceiving trust from this perspective, it benefits both the mentor and mentee as individuals but also the whole group, increasing the overall social capital.

3.2 Social capital bonding

In Putnam's (2000) more recent work, he describes 'bonding' and 'bridging' social capital. Bonding social capital refers to the more exclusive social capital of the two. It can often be found in small minorities where the group, in its exclusivity, finds ways to prosper, although its benefits are somewhat limited due to the fact of being exclusive. In other words, what distinguishes bonding social capital is that social capital is exclusive to those who are included and have internal access to its resources (Putnam, 2000). Thus, it is also stated that although the strong social bonds of trust, consensus and unity may enable success for the group to some extent, the very aspects of its nature may also prevent it at some point as it is limited to the existing resources (Putnam, 2000).

This exclusive group could be explained as a group with strong connections. These connections could be demographic abilities or attitudes, people that have the same information and assets. An example of this could be family members or close friends that interact frequently. These types of connections are often very close and therefore exclusive, it is difficult for an outsider to connect or join since they don't share the same assets or resources (Putnam, 2000). One example of bonding presented by Hawkins and Maurer (2010), is that during a crisis, in this example hurricane Katrina, people that do not know each other still help each other (Hawkins & Maurer, 2010). When people have a common goal, they create their own community. This new community shares resources, has the same reference and experiences. It is difficult for someone that has not experienced the same to join and relate to this community. This could be seen as two separate groups form such tight connections that they conjoin and create a new group with new social capital (cf. Hawkins & Mauer, 2010; Putnam, 2000).

Within a mentorship programme, bonding is present as the participants are offered a part in a mentorship programme and can be seen as something exclusive, as it is not offered to everyone. For a mentee to have access to a superior's knowledge and experience and be able to learn from them and form a relationship, is an opportunity that not everyone has access to. When bonding in a mentorship programme is successful, the mentor and mentee have the same knowledge and same experiences as the mentor have passed their knowledge on to the mentee, thus having the same social capital. This is something that could be useful when a senior worker is considering retiring and needs a successor, the mentee takes over after the mentor. To have access to superior knowledge could also be seen as an exclusive resource. By having a mentor, the transition to the mentee becomes more seamless.

3.3 Social capital bridging

In addition to bonding social capital, Putnam (2000) developed its counterpart called bridging social capital. While bonding social capital can enable a social group to manage alright, bridging enables the group to 'get ahead'. Leonard (2004) also emphasises on this, that the members of a group with limited resources must reach outside of their group to move forward in society, they need to climb and move more to enhance their social capital. Putnam (2000) describes that when reaching outside their own group, they create connections, 'bridges' to other groups. This enables them to get access to their different forms of capital such as human (referring to sets of properties of humans) and financial capital.

As mentioned earlier, Putnam (1993; 2000) emphasises on the importance of trust which is also present within bridging. When creating bridges in getting access to other groups' capital, it creates a level of trust between the groups as well. Bridging enables economic growth and development overall. In the example of Hurricane Katrina, Hawkins and Maurer (2010) explain that bridging occurs when exchanges and sharing take place. During the crisis, people shared food, information and supplies, resources of some sort. At this specific time, the socio-economic lines were blurred and crossed. Information travelled through the word of mouth. Some relationships were temporary and some lasted for an extended period of time. It is about helping the ones in need who had less than you. One person that Hawkins and Maurer (2010) interviewed described it as "We are the real rainbow coalition: different races, different classes,

people of faith with nonbelievers. People who would be friendly, but who wouldn't necessarily work together on a regular day" (Hawkins & Maurer, 2010. p. 1786-1787).

In a mentorship programme bridging is present since it is about building bridges between the mentor and mentee enabling them to learn from one another. This means that many people have access to the same resources, in a mentorship programme this means that knowledge is spreading, and senior employees are sharing and teaching inexperienced mentees. In a mentorship programme, people that normally might not talk or work together create bridges. During bridging there is much more of a collaboration and sharing culture, the same as during a crisis. The existing social capital is spreading and is inclusive.

3.4 Social capital networking

Lin (2017) introduces four elements of networking based on social capital, *information, influence, social credentials, and reinforcements*.

Information means the importance of networking and interactions, creating social ties. This creates opportunities during recruitments, for example, a candidate for the job can hear about openings through their network and information about individuals with 'right' competencies can be shared. This is cost beneficial for organisations as well as time effective (Lin, 2017).

Influence refers to the social ties that can influence someone that has a critical role in decision making, for example, a recruiter or agent during recruitment processes or promotions. Stating that the phrase 'putting in a good word' carries weight during decision processes, this is because of the connection already established by the personnel that is recommending someone (Lin, 2017)

The third element, *social credentials*, refers to an individual's resources in the shape of established contacts, social networks, and relations. With these people willing to stand behind someone's back, it states that the person is an asset and at the same time reassures the organisation that the person can provide value beyond their individual value (Lin, 2017).

The final element is *Reinforcement*. Recognition and identity reinforcement is something that is expected to come out of social relations. It is important to be assured of a person's value and worthiness as an individual, but also as a part of a social group. To be a member of a group that has common interests provides support but also public acknowledgement. The person is seen as a part of the group which makes people assume that certain resources exist. The *Reinforcement* element is of importance as it is essential to maintain mental health but also to create an entitlement to certain resources (Lin, 2017).

In mentorship programmes, there are mainly two contributors and thus proprietors of social capital. The mentor contributes by having superior knowledge, experience, and contacts in the relationship whilst the mentee adds to the joint social capital by being a vessel for the knowledge to transfer on to, simply being an enabler of the relationship.

Social credentials can grow and get enhanced through a mentorship programme since a mentor can state that the mentee has the knowledge and experience and can therefore pass it on as well. Like bonding, *Reinforcement* creates social value as the mentee is now seen as part of an exclusive relationship as well as the mentor getting credit for their knowledge and expertise (cf. Lin, 2017).

3.5 Theoretical summary

The social capital theory originally presented in 1986 by Bourdieu has developed severely. Social capital refers to a value that only other people can give and verify. *Trust* according to Veenstra (2002) is confidence building. Putnam (1993) further mentions *trust* as something fundamental for this theory since it enables relationships to be built and connections and collaborations to take place. High levels of trust within the community, as in a workplace, i.e., one's colleagues, managers etc., is argued to facilitate coordination and cooperation for a mutual benefit (Putnam, 1993). Putnam (2000) later developed the theory further by adding the concepts of *bonding* and *bridging*. *Bonding* is an exclusive group that creates a common community, as the two groups become one by their common resources as well as demographics. Bonding could manifest itself in family-owned businesses or other constellations where connections to each other are very strong. These connections could form through shared experiences, like those that can be shared from a crisis where people decide on joining their

efforts together without previously knowing each other, but the shared experience of the crisis conjoins them. *Bridging* is more inclusive, the group itself has less value and creates bridges, collaborations with other groups to get access to their resources and get ahead. Bridging can occur when two separate communities share their different resources, information, contacts, and networks with each other, meaning that the social capital of the new group is summed up. Lin (2017) presents the concept of *social capital networking* clearly, if you devote yourself to social relationships, you get results from it. It later presents four types of relationships that increase social capital.

4. Method

In this chapter, information about how the research was executed and conducted is presented. First, the case of the study is presented followed by the choice of approach and method. Later, information regarding how the data was collected and how it was analysed is followed by the ethical considerations made.

4.1 The case

In the following section, the structure of the Swedish Healthcare system is described, followed by the case study of VGRs mentorship programme.

4.1.1 The health and welfare structure in Sweden

This research is done through a case study. The case is based in Sweden, within the healthcare sector. Swedish healthcare is controlled by three different administrative levels, the first is the Government, the second is administrative regions and the third level is municipalities (Kliniska studier, 2021).

The government and state are responsible for guidelines and policies, and the overall political agenda regarding the Swedish healthcare system. This is done mostly by legislations and regulations or through agreements with and between municipalities and regions. Within this is also the social department, responsible for the execution of the government's goals and also for the budget regarding healthcare. Beneath the social department is the authorities, for example, the Public Health Agency and E-Health Agency and more. Sweden consists of 21 regions. The regions are responsible for organising healthcare, welfare, and ensuring that all citizens have access to sufficient care. The decision makers in the regions are elected politicians, voted by the county citizens. The 290 municipalities in Sweden have the area of the elderly and physical and mental disabilities as well as the healthcare in school to be responsible for. The municipalities are governed in the same way as regions, by elected politicians (Kliniska studier, 2021). This case is a study of the Region of Västra Götaland (VGR).

4.1.2 VGR

The Region of Västra Götaland (VGR) organisation consists of 55 000 employees. The VGR operations are led by the director of the region, whose job it is to execute the political decisions with the help of the region's employees. The organisation is organised through different administrations and companies, examples of companies are the Gothenburg Opera and Västtrafik. Examples of administrations are the primal care, the dentist, and hospitals (Västra Götalandsregionen, 2021 - a).

4.1.3 HR wihtin VGR

The Region of Västra Götaland (VGR) has a group office which the Human Resource (HR) department is a part of with their personal representative. This is where the HR practices being used by VGR are decided. This research is studying the pilot mentorship programme that VGR started using in 2020 as an HR practice. The aim of this initiative is VGR working towards being a more attractive employer. The goal is to retain both younger and senior employees by making them better enjoy their workplace (Västra Götalandsregionen, 2021 - b).

4.1.4 The mentorship programme in VGR

As part of the more extensive initiative of working towards being a more age conscious organisation, this pilot mentorship programme's purpose is to make use of the senior employees' skills and experience, by offering support to inexperienced colleagues, so that they can become more confident in their professional role as well as develop their professional skills. The pilot project is set out to be conducted between 2020 and 2023 (Västra Götalandsregionen, 2021 - b). The pilot programme is still ongoing. Between a mentor and a mentee, the programme lasts around one year. It starts and ends continuously for different people and departments.

The way that the mentorship programme is set up and initiated is that each unit that participates in the initiative receives monetary funding in order to start up and essentially dare try it out. The target group for the programme consists of nurses, assistant nurses, doctors, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, and biomedical analysts and is planned to have involved around 175 mentors once the project is completed (Västra Götalandsregionen, 2019).

The monetary funding received by participating in the programme is 20.000 SEK per mentor/month and is distributed to each unit accordingly. However, the funding is not granted as compensation for the mentors themselves, instead, the money is to be used in order to make time for the different tasks involved in the programme. By doing this, it is expected that costs connected to recruitments will decrease as personnel, both new and senior, will stay within the organisation for a longer period of time. This is expected to result in the units daring to take part in the programme and later evaluate whether this is something they wish to continue doing in the future (Västra Götalandsregionen, 2019).

The way the programme works in practice is that the manager of the unit chooses a suitable mentor between the age of 55 and 68 as well as choosing suitable mentees in need of mentoring. However, the participation in the mentorship programme is voluntary. Later, the manager of the unit contacts the project manager to apply for their participation. When the application is accepted it is up to the unit manager in discussion with the mentor to set up the framework for how the mentoring will take place, therefore, the practicalities of the actual mentoring can differ substantially between different units. Between one and three mentees are assigned to each mentor and the mentees can either be newly educated or just inexperienced, however, students are not qualified for the programme. The mentor is expected to be available to their mentees in their daily work and the time that is set aside to mentor the mentees are customised according to the mentees' needs and conditions of the unit (Västra Götalandsregionen, 2019).

The mentors are expected to get together with mentors from other units to participate in a two-to-three-day long seminar for pedagogical purposes, sometime during the 12 months of participation in the project (Västra Götalandsregionen, 2019).

4.2 Approach and choice of method

To be able to connect theory and the empirical findings in the shape of collected data from a case, this research will take an abduction approach. According to Patel and Davidson (2017), the abduction approach is a combination of a deductive and inductive approach. A deductive approach is said to be the way of following the evidence and proof. That you make assumptions and conclusions based on already existing phenomena. The positives of this approach are that the objectivity in the research is high since it is based on an already existing theory and not

impacted by the researcher's perception. Research with an inductive approach is said to be on the road to discovery. The researcher does not have a base in an already existing theory but studies a phenomenon and later creates a theory based on the collected material (Patel & Davidsson, 2017).

The abduction approach has the benefits of not limiting or locking the researcher to an extent, which is a risk of pure inductive or deductive approaches, but rather gives the researcher the opportunity to deep dive and develop an already existing theory further (Patel & Davidsson, 2017). In this study, the inductive part of the abductive approach brings an understanding to the field and the problematization. The deductive approach helps us lay down the ground for the empirical result, helping us make assumptions and conclusions.

The study is conducted with a qualitative research method, since it is more open-ended than a quantitative research method, meaning that interviews are this research's way of gathering information rather than numbers (Bell et al., 2019). This method is chosen because of the case of the study as well as the HR process chosen to investigate. The case is of the pilot mentorship programme in the Region of Västra Götaland (VGR) and it is not finished, meaning that statistics and conclusions based on that can not be made until the pilot programme has ended in the year 2023. With the research question in mind, the HR process of mentorship programmes is arguably best investigated through interviews, since the purpose is to investigate what can happen to individuals beyond the statistics and numbers. Therefore, the qualitative research method is the most suited since it gives the ability to do so.

In the line of qualitative research, the method of semi-structured interviews was chosen. Semi-structured interviews are a method to gather information on a specific topic. The semi-structured interview technique is more open-ended than some other techniques, meaning it might miss out on some valuable data. The technique is chosen nonetheless since it is a way to explore the interview person's experiences more freely while keeping some of the structural integrity of the interview guide. Thus, enabling the researchers to identify additional relevant aspects when asking follow-up questions (Bell et al., 2019). Rubin and Rubin (2012) mention that one benefit of conducting semi-structured interviews is that the interviewees get inspired to give answers with much detail and length. The interview guide is used as a general frame for the interview as the questions are listed specifically so that each topic is covered adequately. However, the interviewee may choose to answer 'freely', and the question may not follow

exactly how they are written in the interview guide. This enables the interviewer to ask follow-up questions or questions that arise during the interview concerning other topics that were not initially included in the interview guide. As a result, the interview may differ substantially from interviewee to interviewee (Bell et al., 2019). Furthermore, this form of interviewing is described as flexible, and the emphasis lies upon how the interviewee understands the questions or experiences the issues that are being investigated. Leidner (1993) discusses the aspects of the semi-structured interviews as allowing the interviewee room to pursue matters in a free manner with much leeway.

4.3 Data collection

This section explains how the data collection was conducted and how the data were sampled and organised.

4.3.1 Conducting the interviews

During the study, the interviews have been conducted in a synchronous format, meaning that responses to questions have been answered immediately (Bell et al., 2019). This was made possible because of digital meetings through Zoom, a video- and audio communication application making it possible to have face-to-face interviews remotely. The reason for this is the recent Covid-19 pandemic, along with the logistical benefits that come with doing the interviews remotely. Since the studied organisation is scattered across a large geographic area, the interviewees were often far apart from each other which argues for remote interviewees as the best option in terms of effectiveness. Bell et al. (2019) mentioned several benefits to digital interviews, for example, that it is both time and cost effective and it removes geographically difficulties. VGR is an organisation covering a relatively large region and the digital meeting enables interviews with people far away.

4.3.2 Sampling

Getting access to a setting to research a problem statement can be difficult depending on how open or closed the setting and organisation is (Bell et al., 2019). Bell et al. (2019) suggests using the contacts available, such as friends, colleagues, or academics to assist with access. It is important that the research is relevant for the organisation as well. In this case, the pilot mentorship programme is already researched by professors at the University of Gothenburg,

meaning that the research field is already of relevance for the organisation. Bell et al. (2019) mention the importance of gatekeepers, referring to the someone that helps provide support from the organisation, and vouches for the researchers and the research value. In this study, the gatekeeper providing access was one of the professors already studying the pilot programme. After getting access through the gatekeeper to the initiators of the pilot mentorship programme snowball sampling was used to get in contact with participants of the programme.

This research is a case study, the sampling is done within the case leading to a purposive sampling approach, meaning that the participants are not randomly selected but rather strategically chosen because of their relevance. Examples of sampling methods in purposive sampling in qualitative research are theoretical sampling and snowball sampling (Bell et al., 2019). This research uses snowball sampling, “With this approach to sampling, the researcher makes initial contact with a small group of people who are rel-evant to the research topic and then uses these to establish contacts with others” (Bell et al., 2019, p. 395). In this research the gatekeeper enabled access that led to contact with two key persons within the pilot programme; they later provided further contact to other people involved. This further led to additional contacts with both mentors and mentees.

The sampling size, in qualitative research, should be large enough to achieve data saturation but not too large so that the material becomes difficult to understand and analyse. There is no right or wrong number of interviews when conducting qualitative research, but rather motivating the choice and making sure that it is appropriate and satisfaction is achieved (Bell et al., 2019). During this research, people involved on different levels at VGR have been interviewed, this was done to create a full picture of the project as well as the execution, experience, and opinions of it. On levels where more than one person was involved, several people were interviewed. Moreover, in situations where there was only one person in a unique role, that person was interviewed. The sampling size of the study became 16 interviews.

To help analyse the collected material, the concept of espoused theories and theories-in-use are used. The concept was first presented by Chris Argyris and Donald A. Schon in 1974 in their book; ‘Theory in Practice: Increasing Professional Effectiveness’. The theory has been developed and built on many times, Argyris et al. (1985), describe it as follows, “Espoused theories are those that an individual claims to follow. Theories-in-use are those that can be inferred from action” (Argyris et al., 1985, p. 82). Because of this, a decision was made to

differentiate between those planning and implementing the pilot programme, Human Resources, Managers and Trade Union Representatives and those experiencing it, First line managers, Mentors and Mentees.

4.3.3 Distribution and role explanations

The distribution between interviewees is as follows, the first row represents the ‘Espoused theories’ group and the second the ‘theories-in-use’ group.

Table 1.

‘Espoused theories’ group of respondents

Role	Human Resources	Project manager	Trade Union Representatives
Quantity	2	1	2
Role explanation	HR-Managers connected to the mentorship programme	The manager in charge of the mentorship programme and the implementation	Individuals working within the healthcare sector and are trade union representatives to some extent of their role

Table 2.

‘Theories-in-use’ group of respondents

Role	First line managers	Mentors	Mentees
Quantity	4	3	4
Role explanation	Managers working within the departments with personnel responsibilities. Manager over the mentors and mentees	The senior employee, 55 years of age or older	The new, inexperienced employee

4.4 Data analysis

This section explains how the analysis of the collected data was made.

4.4.1 Recordings and transcriptions

When conducting the interviews via Zoom, Zoom's own recording function was used to record the interviews to be able to transcribe the interviews to not lose any important information. Bell et al. (2019), recommend listening to an interview before transcribing it as transcribing is very time consuming and there are often large portions of an interview that are not very useful. Therefore, Bell et al. (2019) recommends only transcribing the portions that are relevant or useful. During this process, both researchers listened to the interviews together, paused it and discussed if something seemed relevant, then the relevant parts were transcribed, and if not relevant, the recording was continued without transcribing. It is important to mention that generally, only a small portion of each interview was left out of transcription. To listen with two sets of ears was decided as an ensuring matter. During this part, the analysing of the material started to some extent, the researchers noticed patterns as early as during the interviews. These patterns were sometimes in line with the chosen theoretical framework, and sometimes not. One example of this is the structure of the mentorship programme and what would be preferred by the participants, another example is the time spent together by a mentor and mentee. Seeing as this was a noticed pattern among others that seemed to be of such relevance, it was included in the study. The themes and patterns not connected to the theoretical framework are included in Chapters 5.1 and 5.2.

The interviews were conducted and transcribed in Swedish, meaning that they needed to be translated into English. Bell et al. (2019) describes three possible issues with this; linguistic, socio-cultural, and methodological. Meaning that translating is a sensemaking process, demanding the translator's own knowledge and experience. These are all things that have been taken into consideration when translating the transcripts, making sure that the meaning is coming across in the right way.

4.4.2 Coding and analysing

Once the transcriptions were considered done, coding took place. This way, the researchers gained a system to navigate the accumulated data quickly and effectively. According to Bell et

al. (2019), open-ended questions require coding to be able to analyse and comprehend the information.

The analysis and sensemaking of the collected data were made in several steps, starting with an initial coding in an inductive way. This is to not let any information slip by, by not only focusing on the chosen theory. An example of this is when the question about how the mentorship programme was structured in their workplace. It has little to no connection to the chosen theory, as seen in the interview guides in *appendix 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6*. Quickly, certain patterns were noticed as interviewees answered similarly or using similar examples and other times not, this was noticed and done as early as when listening to these recordings when transcribing. The researchers identified and mapped out code words that were used in a chart to easily get an overview of each interview as well as to draw parallels between them.

The next step was in a more deductive manner, coding based on the themes of the social capital theory, *Trust, Bonding, Bridging & networking*. After identifying words expressing the same thing but with different words. This is shown in table 3.

Table 3.

Coding based on the theoretical themes of social capital.

Theoretical term	Coding
Trust	Trust Security Support Safety Feeling better Guidance Self-confidence Self-assurance Decision making security Relationship Confidence
Bonding	Experiences Backgrounds Stand on their own Two working as one
Bridging	Knowledge transfer Colleagues

	Building bridges Information Sharing Discussion Learning from
Networking	Contacts Forums Network Colleagues

After this was done, the expressions or examples of a specific theme were categorised in a spreadsheet. An example is shown below in table 4.

Table 4.

Example from spreadsheet of 'Theories-in-use'.

Theoretical themes	First line manager (FLM)	Mentor	Mentee
Trust	<p>“to supply the new with security” (FLM 1)</p> <p>“they become more secure in their profession. They feel secure and are getting better knowledge. A lot of security and the “good enough”-feeling, that it is impossible to know it all, a person that has been working for 30 years does not know everything either because every case is different. Some kind of calmth and security (FLM 1)</p>		<p>“I dare to go out on a limb and look and answer things that I would not have done otherwise, not with the same desire and frequency and it is about having that security to do it and if you do it more often and do it in a better way you become competent faster” (Mentee 4)</p>
Bonding			<p>“I have become so independent that I can manage completely on my own” (Mentee 3)</p>
Bridging		<p>“It is always developing to discuss things, for one self included.</p>	

		One is continuously learning. It is not I who knows everything [...] the adepts have great knowledge too, so it is a give and take” (Mentor 3)	
Networking		“To get to know the younger colleagues who are new in the field” (Mentor 3)	“The mentorship in this department has involved more or less everyone, which in turn affected the entirety of the clinic. Thus, created a certain culture, without hierarchies where there has emerged a network of persons that can partake in, ask and answer questions” (Mentee 4)

After having finished the coding, the researchers were provided with a full picture of the empirical finding, both similarities and differences. Moreover, it made it easier to analyse as it allowed finding good examples and expressions of the theoretical framework. This is presented in the empirical findings and its partial analyses as well as the analysis. The analysis is then discussed in the discussion, connecting the study to previous studies, presenting the theoretical contribution as well as the practical contribution.

4.5 Ethical considerations

Bell et al. (2019) mention that it is important for researchers to have ethical considerations as an integrated part of their research process. There are four things that need to be assured when conducting research: there can't be any harm to the participants, there needs to be informed consent taken place, there can not be any invasion of privacy and there needs to be transparency, no deception can take place (Bell et al., 2019). To assure that these four things are done, the researchers have written an information and consent form that each interviewee has received and read before each interview, *see appendix 1*. This document contains the ethical consideration of the study as well as information about what is being researched. Before any

recording of an interview, the interviewee was reminded and informed that it is voluntary to be a part of this research and that they can withdraw their participation at any time without any reason or questions asked. Following this, the researchers asked the interviewee if they allowed recording of the interview. This was done to confirm that the interviewee had all information and could decide based on transparency.

As to what organisation this study will revolve around is disclosed as the organisation itself has published information about its project. However, to entirely make sure that the inclusion of the organisation's name was permitted, affirmation was communicated from the organisation's side. The researchers do acknowledge that the topic of age in relation to work as well as in general can be of sensitivity to some, this is something that the researchers have kept in mind in order to avoid any form of offence or harm towards the participants, in line with Bell et al. (2019).

Once all interviews were conducted and the data were collected, processed, analysed, and made use of in the study, the raw recordings were deleted. Furthermore, the participants with unique roles or information, meaning that certain information could be traced back to them, were offered to read the finished text. This was offered in order to make final suggestions of change or affirm their participation in the study as well as how they are portrayed in the text. This was communicated at the time of the interview as well by the completion of the study and rapport.

4.6 Method criticism

One of the main points of criticism of using a semi-structured form of interviews is that it is time consuming. One of the advantages of using semi-structured interviews is that it is open-ended, enabling the interviewee to answer freely, perhaps resulting in unexpected findings. In the same way, this can become a disadvantage as the interview can stray 'too much' from its core purpose, risking not covering all areas. Another disadvantage is that answers can differ between interviews and that it is difficult to find common themes and make comparisons. Finally, there is the risk of writing leading questions causing the interviewee to become biased. However, keeping interviews open-ended can help with deflecting this issue (Opdenakker, 2006).

There are certain criticisms concerning the chosen sampling method, snowball sampling. Parker et al. (2019) describe the most prominent point of criticism as being when snowball sampling fails. I.e., when the researcher using the method reaches a dead end with no more, in this case, interviewees, to get a hold of. Another way in which the method can fail is if the researcher is negatively perceived by the target group, making them unwilling to participate.

4.7 Credibility

Credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability are of importance when conducting research, as described by Bell et al. (2019). Rubin and Rubin (2012) mention that qualitative research provides credibility with the qualitative interviews, this is because the process of conducting interviews provides credible results since it is linked to strong evidence through their own experiences, meaning that the findings are believable. Bell et al. (2019) explain transferability as being able to apply the finding in other contexts, the conclusion states what to take into consideration when implementing a mentorship programme, which could be implemented anywhere. Thus, the findings have transferability. Further, Bell et al. (2019) describe dependability as if the findings are applicable at other times, which they are by the fact that they could be used in any setting since it is a practice that is researched. Confirmability is whether the author's objectivity has been kept intact (Bell et al., 2019). This has been done to the extent possible, by questioning and discussions between the researchers to collect and use the right information and not become biased.

5. Results/Empirical findings

In this chapter the empirical findings are presented. The chapter is divided into two sections, based on espoused theories and theories-in-use. Espoused theories refer to what was planned to happen and the reason for doing things a certain way and expecting a specific result (cf. Argyris, Putnam & Smith, 1985). This is the first part of the empirical finding where the result from Project manager, Human Resources (HR) and Trade union representatives. Theories-in-use are based on experiences and how it works in the real world, not in theory (cf. Argyris, Putnam & Smith, 1985). The theories-in-use are the result from the mentors, mentees and first line managers of the pilot mentorship programme. In these two sections the first paragraph presents the main themes found in the empirical data followed by sections where the empirical findings are viewed through the theoretical lens of Social Capital theory providing partial analyses.

Results found in this chapter are based on expectations and experiences had by those interviewed, i.e. the results presented in this chapter are not actual effects. Those are yet to be discovered after the end of the pilot project.

5.1 Project managers, Human Resources & Trade unions

What the project manager, human resources (HR) and trade union representatives are expressing during the interviews could be regarded as espoused. Meaning what they are envisioning the mentorship programme will accomplish, and what the results and effects can be expected to be. The decisions that they made regarding the structure and conditions of the mentorship programme are done according to the results they envision.

There are some common denominators within this group of respondents. They highlight that the purpose of the pilot mentorship programme is to retain and make the senior employees stay longer in their working life and within the organisation. Furthermore, they explain that this mentorship programme can be a way to increase the years that they want to work since mentoring can be “both relaxing and a little more developing if you get a different role” (HR 2).

The mentorship programme is a part of the initiative to become a more attractive employer (HR 1). There is an existing problem of personnel turnover as well. “It's for seniors, as mentors ... I think healthcare ... is in crisis... It is a very bad, or a high workload, the division of labour is not good” (Trade union representative 1). The turnover is especially high among young and new employees. Therefore, the goal is to reduce the personnel turnover as well, by giving them a mentor that can guide them into their new professional role to make them stay longer. Thus, the mentorship programme has dual purposes; make senior employees stay longer in their working life by offering the role of being a mentor and reducing the employment to a part time job if wished for, to help guide the new and inexperienced employees to make them stay as well. The project manager describes the purpose of the pilot project as following:

The mentorship programme has, what to say, three parts, partly the ambition to get older people to stay longer in working life. The second part is to make mentees feel more secure and strengthened with increased patient safety as a result, and then the actual knowledge transfer is the process so that it is like a donor and a recipient and the process in between. (Project manager)

The trade unions mention the importance of workload and appreciation. Stating that the mentorship programme can make senior employees feel valued when being asked to be a mentor, that the “clinical competence is very important, it is something that you can not acquire at school or in textbooks, but it is a different type of knowledge” (Trade union representative 1), saying that it is this knowledge that is important for new employees to learn from.

The mentee's development within seems to be of importance, that the mentee feels secure and safe, and that is something that grows with the help and support from a mentor, the *self-security* develops. The trade union representatives highlight the importance of feeling able and comfortable as a mentee, to ask all the questions without any sort of judgement. When asked what they believed the mentorship programme would lead to they answered:

If you think about the mentee or the younger employee who comes with a lot of knowledge from school, but when you get into working life it does not really seem like you have learned that much at all and you can be very insecure in your role. Of course, you have co-workers, but since the workload is very high, the co-workers may not really be interested or have the time to answer questions all the time. You may feel like you

do not want to bother anyone. But with the mentorship, you get someone that is supposed to answer the questions and sit down with you to solve all these kinds of issues that arise from being new and insecure at work. (Trade union representative 1)

One HR manager highlights that guidance and tutoring is something that would have existed without the help of the mentorship programme. Since the healthcare sector and hospital environment is a learning environment and organisation, it is another thing that is of importance, the soft values and support, to have someone to turn to. Several managers mention that the pilot project is working because the people involved are enthusiastic as the project is relatively new. For the programme to be long lasting it needs to be better implemented in the organisation and seen as something natural.

5.1.1 Trust

All managers, human resource and trade union representatives mention trust as something important and something that they are hoping will form between the mentor and mentee in their relationship. During the interviews, several words were used to describe emotions, feelings and states of mind that fit under 'trust'. Such as *security, support, confidence, feeling better and guidance*, all these things help with building trust between a group of individuals. As stated by Veenstra (2002) trust enables trust within a group of people as well as support.

Putnam (1993) describes *trust* as something essential for social capital to form, there needs to be trust between individuals. If trust is non-existent neither bonding, bridging nor networking social capital can take place and be created.

It is about building a relationship between mentee and mentor and that (in that meeting) was based on the needs of the mentee but also the needs of the operations [...] it was realised that the operations saw this as a help and support even in the difficult situation (pandemic) that they really needed this, that the older professionals stayed and gave security and support to the inexperienced who might otherwise have quit even earlier. (HR 1)

There is an organisational aspect to *trust* being built in the mentorship programme as well, namely, to retain personnel, “If personnel turnover decreases, it probably means that you feel better and have increased security” (HR 2). Meaning that if personnel turnover decreases and people stay within their working life longer, this could be seen as a receipt that people are happier with their work-situation and have a better working environment when given the chance to be a part of the mentorship programme. If the personnel turnover decreases, the mentorship programme can be considered to be a success.

Since knowledge transfer would have happened anyway, as personnel development within the healthcare sector is done through supervision and conversations, this mentorship programme is about accomplishing other things in addition to the already existing guidance. The HR manager describes it as:

Our ambition is for mentees to become more confident in their professional role, that is really the idea, to not only get the traditional guidance that you might have received anyway through a senior nurse or senior doctor but also get that opportunity to discuss as well, also other things than pure professional knowledge and transfer [...], how does VGR work as an organisation, what career opportunities do I get and those parts as well. (HR 2)

The relationship appears to be important as it enables further development in terms of feeling safe enough to ask questions regarding career and personal development. As Veenstra (2002) mentions, *trust is invoked within confidence*. This relationship further enables the mentee to expand their knowledge but as the HR-manager mentions, it is plausible that the knowledge exchange would have taken place nonetheless, but perhaps in other ways. The relationship formed and the trust within it is the important part here since it creates further opportunities.

One of the project managers further describes the effects of feeling safer at work as such: “and if you feel safer at work and you feel safer in your role and the psychosocial part has become better then we interpret it as that the work environment is better of course” (Project manager). The feeling of safety that comes from trust improves the working environment as well. The feeling of calm would also result in a better working environment. The phrase ‘good enough-feeling’ is used on several occasions during the interviews and is used to describe a feeling of self-contempt. Speculations can be made that if a young workforce is granted this feeling,

perhaps through the support of a mentor, then the purpose of the programme is somewhat fulfilled. If all individually share this feeling, it can accumulate and create social capital as the trust in one another is simultaneously increasing.

An HR manager describes the *soft aspects* that the mentorship can offer. They state and confirm what has previously been said that knowledge transfer is something that is constantly happening in the health sector, and this is how it is traditionally, with or without the mentoring efforts. However, there are certain '*soft parts*' that the mentorship programme can offer that help out the sense of security in the mentee

On one hand, knowledge transfer [...] in healthcare takes place constantly through supervision and conversations, it is really a learning organisation, so you probably do not have to think about it much because it would have happened anyway regardless of the mentorship programme or not, but it is probably this other part, the soft parts that you could imagine supporting with the mentor parts then in some way, an increased security, understanding the contextual, how healthcare works, what the roles look like, not the craft but more the things surrounding it. (HR 2)

Drawing on this answer, assumptions can be made that soft aspects aside from the more pragmatic aspects such as knowledge transfer and efforts in decreasing the personnel turnover, are included in the espoused theories of the mentorship programme. If not formally, at least as a plausible outcome, viewed as positive.

5.1.2 Bonding

I think that it affects most of the mentees pretty much. It is a bit like if you think about life in general, it is not so often that a person is unconditionally interested in only you, perhaps your parents when you are really young. But apart from that, it does not happen too often in life without conditions. So, I think that just the fact of having someone that is meant (to support) me is a good thing. And in addition, if things handled in that meeting turns out to be of importance, that it is not only important to me but to other colleagues as well, that I do a good job for example, then I am confident that it affects individuals very positively. (Project manager)

This quote could be understood as an expression of social capital bonding (cf. Putnam, 2000), in the will of reaching exclusivity in a group. There is a conception behind this quote on the importance of wanting to have someone ‘of my own’ that is strictly there for one person and one person only. The interviewee makes the example of a very young person having someone that is unconditionally interested in you, i.e., one's parents. Although this type of relationship will likely not arise from the mentorship programme, one can see similar aspects of it. The espoused theory of the mentorship programme is to mould the inexperienced colleague into becoming more like the experienced mentor. Furthermore, this quote points at the positive aspects of being in a mentor relationship, and that it is also beneficial for your colleagues. It could also be seen as adding to the social capital of the group as a whole meaning that it is social capital bridging.

The mentorship programme has, what to say, three parts, partly the ambition to get older people to stay longer in working life. The second part is to make mentees feel more secure and strengthened with increased patient safety as a result, and then the actual knowledge transfer is the process so that it is like a donor and a recipient and the process in between. (Project manager)

Here, the project manager of the entire mentorship programme describes how the purpose of the mentorship programme is divided into three parts: personnel retention (namely targeted to the senior workforce), granting a bigger security and self-confidence to the inexperienced employees, and finally to transfer knowledge between the two parties. If bonding occurs within the mentor/mentee relationship, there is a high chance of fulfilling these purposes. As inevitably, the purpose is to make the two parties, mentor, and mentee, more alike each other. Therefore, the purpose of the mentorship programme is ultimately bonding through the creation of new social capital.

5.1.3 Bridging

When asked questions regarding the effects on the work environment and the relations created between mentor and mentee, one manager answers:

The participants were asked questions and it hasn't been negative (the effects on the work environment). One could think that jealousy could happen, after all this could be read about in the literature and so on. But instead, it has been seen as a resource (the mentorship programme) and for a mentee, this could mean less workload since there now is a mentor they could turn to and the mentee would feel good about not having to disturb colleagues (with questions etc.) that are busy and stressed, instead they have an intended person. So, the work environment, we assume or will assume will have positive effects on the work environment. That is what we think. (HR 1)

Drawing on this answer, interpretations can be made that the relationships created by the mentorship programme indeed ease tension in the workforce as it enables structured appointments to be held where matters can be discussed with a senior, instead of 'disturbing' peers and superiors when sometimes the timing is not always the best. The bridge created through the mentorship programme can therefore help ease the minds of inexperienced personnel, potentially resulting in a more confident and secure working person.

5.1.4 Networking

Tutoring is very well established in the healthcare system, but people are not so used to the role of being a mentor. So that may be an experience that we've pulled from this that we should have in some way clearly stated what it means to be a mentor and what it includes other than tutoring. Because tutoring is essentially pretty much about learning how to exercise one's profession, like what should I do? You stand there with your hands in someone's wound, as a surgeon, and you learn what to do but tutoring does not really include aspects of career advice or guidance or how you get an understanding of the context or gaining access to networks that the mentorship programme is thought to add on to and create. (HR 2)

This quote that is taken from one of the interviews with an HR manager, can be analysed from the perspective that creating or adding on to networks is part of the aim of the mentorship programme. Lin (2017) emphasises the importance of information in networking when referring to social capital. E.g., When social ties are being made between a mentor and a mentee it creates an arena for information to be shared between the two. Although Lin (2017) makes the example of this information being of the kind that for example being notified about job openings, it is also connected with this theory and knowledge transfer. The mentorship programme enables networks to grow larger and enables resources to be accessed by its members.

5.1.5 Summary

The interview group of espoused theories containing human resources, project manager and trade unions views mentorship programmes as something good. It can help handle the crisis of personnel turnover existing within the healthcare sector. As it is seen as an initiative to become a more attractive employer, it will guide the new inexperienced employees as well as knowledge retention for the organisation. The senior employees will feel appreciated for their knowledge that has been gathered during many years and get to have more varied tasks, hopefully making them work a little longer.

5.2 First line managers, Mentors & Mentees

When interviewing first line managers, mentors and mentees, some main themes were discovered. One aspect all of them brought up several times was *structure*. Mentors and mentees active within the primal care mention that they wanted more *structure* when starting the mentorship programme, since there are little to no rules or guidelines, but a free interpretation to make it fit your organisation or unit. Mentors, mentees and first line managers working in hospital departments prefer that there are no guidelines since that gives them the opportunity to create a mentorship programme that suits their mentor and mentees relationship and department. There have been some differences in time spent together for the pair, mentor and mentee. Some have seen each other for one hour every week, and some have spent around three days a week together.

Since there have been different ways of implementing the mentorship programme, some mentors and mentees have been in the same department and some have been in different departments, as well as different locations. Resulting in that some have seen each other many times a week and some only a couple times throughout the year. The mentees who have had the opportunity to be *at the same locations* have used their mentor more, just to ask small questions and *feel supported* in the day-to-day work. The ones who had their mentor in a different facility needed to save questions and ask them at a specific time. Two mentees mention that they did not use the mentor as much as it would have been possible due to this. Another mentee mentions that it would have been easier if they were at the same location. The analysis yields evidence that those active in the same department and facility build a stronger relationship and get more out of the time being a part of the mentorship programme.

When asked about the purpose of the mentorship programme the majority of the mentors, mentees and line managers mention primarily *knowledge transfer*. They state that the *knowledge transfer* would have taken them several years to develop without the help of the mentorship programme. One first line manager mentions that the purpose of the mentorship programme is to transfer all of the senior employees' knowledge and experience. Later into the interviews many mentees also mention that being a part of this mentorship programme and having a mentor has provided them with *safety* and the ability to build up their own *self-assurance*, and their ability to trust their own decision making as well as their *self-confidence*.

One line manager also mentions staffing planning benefits, since the mentorship programme offers an opportunity to transfer knowledge from a senior employee that is about to retire “if you have good foresight before someone retires, that there is someone who takes over with the knowledge required to perform exactly what they did” (First line manager 3). Several line managers also mention the benefits for someone just starting within the organisation, that they have a designated person to ask for guidance and questions.

The overall attitude towards the mentorship programme was good. Testimonies of results such as improving the effectiveness of *knowledge transfer* and improved *cost-effectiveness* in terms of developing the staff. One first line manager answers when asked whether they wished to continue working with the mentorship programme in their unit: “This is the way to go!” emphasising that he believes in mentoring as a method of personnel development. The Line manager also disclose that two of his staff, two young specialists, applied for the job at his unit

just because they offered structured mentoring. Meaning that the mentorship programme can act as a way of attracting new personnel as well as retaining the workforce (First line manager 3). When the same first line manager was asked if they saw any risks in participating in the mentorship programme to which the first line manager answers no, not any direct risks for the mentors and mentees. However, the line manager discloses that there may emerge negative feelings for persons that are not involved in the programme, as jealousy of these kinds of “benefits” as the line manager chooses to call it, can occur (First line manager 3).

5.2.1 Trust

What can be seen as an expression of *trust* is that during the interviews, primarily mentees mention the Swedish word for ‘*security*’, one mentions it as the sole purpose of the mentorship programme (Mentee 1). The same thing was mentioned by first line managers when asked about the purpose of the mentorship programme, “to supply the new with security” (First line manager 1; First line manager 2). Furthermore, one mentor discusses the increase of *security* in the mentees as an outcome of the mentorship. When asked to define *security* in this sense, the mentor exemplifies how specifically one of their mentees utilised their time in the mentorship programme to build *confidence* in their work as well as *socially* in the work group (Mentor 1). Veenstra (2002) mentions that the concept of *trust* is invoked within *confidence*. Putnam (1993), as well as Nooteboom (2007), mentions that trust is the outcome of relationships between individuals. This is expressed by a mentee as they mention that with their new knowledge gathered during the mentorship programme, they feel more *comfortable* and *happier* at work. At the same time, they express that the knowledge exchange gave them confirmation that the thought process and decision making were correct, that the mentor would have done it the same way, it creates *self-security* and *confidence* (Mentee 1).

The same could be drawn from what a first line manager answers when asked about how the mentees are affected by participating in the programme:

I think that they become more secure in their profession. They feel secure and are getting better knowledge. A lot of security and the “good enough”-feeling that it is impossible to know it all, a person that has been working for 30 years does not know

everything either because every case is different. Some kind of calm feeling and security. (First line manager 1)

Another first line manager gives a similar response stating that “you need to put yourself on a level where you realise that you are not God, I am not almighty...I need to be able to make mistakes as well” (First line manager 3). The manager continues to explain that even people that have been doing this for 40 to 50 years make mistakes and if a person makes four mistakes in four years that is okay, it might feel bad in the moment, but the person will get over it since you are helping so many more people. This is not something that a person is born with but something that must be learned from others, an ability that is enabled through the mentorship programme, to build a ‘*good enough-feeling*’ (First line manager 3).

To summarise, the trust between a mentor and a mentee creates security, leading to self-confidence and self-assurance in a mentee, creating a better working environment in general.

When asked whether the mentorship programme has increased the feeling of trust and security, the mentee answers that one of the biggest reasons as to why they chose to apply for the job was that they were offered a mentorship programme. In their previous jobs, it was a bit like the feeling of being alone, with no one to ‘back you up’. But when they got their current position and got to participate in the mentorship programme, they felt much more *secure* as now they have someone that can guide and support them when needed.

With the mentorship programme, I do not have to go looking for someone to double check if my job is done correctly, now I am scheduled with someone who is supposed to back me up in that aspect. And when you already have that culture in place, and when you do not have to ask for it.... (Mentee 4)

Here, the mentee chooses to use the word *culture* to explain the effects that the mentorship programme has had on the workforce. Furthermore, the mentee testifies how the mentorship programme can increase the *trust*, not only towards the organisation and the mentor, but to the rest of the workplace and in one's *self-ability*, eventually increasing *self-confidence* and knowledge and skills.

5.2.2 Bonding

One first line manager describes two constellations of mentors and mentees. In one of the constellations, the mentor and mentee were complete strangers to one another and described that, if not for the mentorship programme, they would never interact with each other (more on this constellation appears in the 'bridging' chapter). The other constellation, on the other hand, knew each other from before their participation in the programme and therefore had shared experiences, acquaintances, and had similar *backgrounds*. This made their connection and building of relationship easier, they already had similar resources (cf. Putnam, 2000). The mentor's knowledge that had been built up for many years with help of practical experience had been transferred to the younger mentee. It was made possible by the fact that they were scheduled together for a year. Their knowledge transfer and transferring of experience went so well that after the mentor's retirement the mentee could stand on their own feet (First line manager 3). This was also confirmed when interviewing the mentee, who now says that they have the responsibility over the field that they were previously mentored in (Mentee 3). This is an example of when the two individual social capital had become one that they shared, since they now shared the same experiences. In Hawkins and Maurer's (2010) example of Hurricane Katrina, where two separate groups form such tight connections that they conjoin and create a new group with new social capital. In their example, the crisis of a hurricane made them relate and connect, in this case, their similar backgrounds made them connect easier.

When asked to describe how they work with the mentorship programme in practice, one mentee answers that they sat down together about three times every week, more or less as much as they could. These 'cooperational days' were not limited by time as they had the entire day to work together on the same tasks. The mentee describes it as they almost became '*the same person*'. Along the progress that the mentee made in their own development as a specialist, they became more and more *self-propelled*, much like the mentor. The mentee also states that for this specific practice, experience is essential. One could not simply learn this practice by reading in textbooks. Therefore, the results reached within a year are described as being a big success, as they would not reach the same results by any traditional means (Mentee 3). Another mentee states a similar thing regarding how their specific practice is taught. They said that it mainly is done through apprenticeship, meaning that the contact that is going on between the apprentice (mentee) and the tutor (mentor) is very intense and is at large based on practical tutoring, not theoretical (Mentee 4).

Putnam (2000) describes bonding as something exclusive and that those within this exclusive environment have access to its resources. In an interview with a mentor, we received the information that not all members of this exclusive opportunity utilised its resources. The resource, in this case, is the mentor, who has great knowledge and experience.

All the mentees were in the same place, but it was above all one who felt that she benefited from it and wanted to take advantage of having a mentor as well as more clearly and then I ... focused on her schedule and so, when she was there. Then if the others wanted to come it was okay, I'm pretty open about being available ... via Teams or so but it did not seem like it was that popular. (Mentor 1)

Drawing from this, the people in the exclusive environment, in the shape of a mentorship, need to be willing to participate in order to be a part of the experience. It exclusively benefits the people willing to learn and create a learning relationship. Another mentee also describes that they did not utilise the time when the mentor was available. Seeing as bonding is described as something that can happen when there are common denominators such as the same resources, a similar family situation or having been through something similar such as the example of Hurricane Katrina. In this case, there was no clear connection between the mentor and the mentee, making bonding difficult, especially when they do not work at the same location.

5.2.2 Bridging

One of the mentors describes how they are separated from the rest of the work group in terms of the location they work from. Through the mentorship programme, it enabled them to feel more included in the overall work group. As the mentorship programme enabled them to meet with the rest of the group and introduce themselves to the more inexperienced colleagues and through this, got to know them better.

This could be viewed together with the theory of social capital bridging since they seldom before got to meet up with their *colleagues* but through the mentorship programme got to introduce themselves and by this contributed to a community that builds social capital. This

circumstance enabled the possibility of the inexperienced colleagues to have someone to ask questions, discuss issues and other matters with their mentor, thus creating a bridge between the two groups, i.e., mentor and mentees. Simultaneously adding on to the social capital created by trust and increased social capital within the community between mentor and mentee (Mentor 1).

Since bridging social capital is about creating bridges between different groups and being inclusive according to Putnam (2020), an example of this is when a mentor was asked if they were happy with being a mentor, they responded by saying “it was nice, it was a different way to get to know your younger colleagues [...] it became a reminder of what it was like to be new and not know anyone or know anything” (Mentor 1). The same mentor also mentions that they had mentees at another facility than their ordinary department, making them travel to the mentees' facility once a week and be available. The mentor mentions that “they gather their questions [...] it creates a little higher demand on them than if you are in the same place and do it spontaneously when you need help” (Mentor 1).

A mentor answers the following when asked if they liked the role of being a mentor:

It is always developing to discuss things, for oneself included. One is continuously learning. It is not I who knows everything [...] the adepts have great knowledge too, so it is a give and take situation. It is very healthy and very good. Challenging too of course [...] to share one's own knowledge, that is a challenge and to feel that it is as good as it gets and can be used later. (Mentor 3)

By being aware of the fact that the mentor is not omniscient, even though they likely have more knowledge and experience, the conversation can start. Discussions are taking place and contributing to bridges being made and the mentee is learning from the mentor's experience, but also the other way around. It is a learning relationship. The same mentor later describes how useful it is to do things together when asked about their professional development through being a part of the pilot mentorship programme and answers the following:

It is developing as a professional to sometimes be daring in patient situations together with someone else, it is always difficult. Then you feel even more that ‘I must know this’ and that is of course not the case in reality. But still, it can be a bit extra stressful

both for me and the mentee. But still, it is very healthy, we really should do more of that, to together treat the patients because then you see so much more. So, it is always developing to oneself to do this, not only as a mentor but altogether. (Mentor 3)

When interviewing a first line manager regarding the perceived effects on the mentees' side of the knowledge transfer the mentorship programme enables, the first line manager answers that there sometimes is a certain threshold which the mentorship programme enables the mentee to cross over. This threshold was regarding the 'fear' of asking questions to the more experienced colleagues. Another manifestation of the fear or unwillingness to ask questions is apparent in the following quote, as said by another first line manager from another unit: "We had two people who were new in the profession. And to feel that there is some kind of security, that there is one specific person to turn to with questions without having to feel annoying or dumb" (First line manager 1). When having something like a mentorship programme, where it is outspoken that you *should* ask questions, this threshold is easier to transcend. Furthermore, the manager described how persons who would not normally work together now did, through their participation in the mentorship programme: "The older woman (name) would absolutely never have shared her knowledge with the younger man (name) if I (line manager) did not have the incitement to put them on the same schedule for more or less the entire year" (First line manager 3).

Seeing how these two examples of individuals starting to interact with each other, especially persons who would not do so otherwise, parallels can be drawn between crossing thresholds, persons joining together and the social capital term bridging. As these two unexpected individuals interact through the bridge that is the mentorship programme, similar to the interaction taking place during Hurricane Katrina presented by Hawkins & Maurer (2010), where people that would normally not interact did because of the circumstances. When this occurs, social capital can start to form and develop, as knowledge and experiences are shared, mentoring takes place and eventually builds self-confidence in the mentee.

When asked about the layout of one mentor's way of working with their mentees, the mentors' answers:

I had scheduled time where they could catch me if they had questions. One hour a week was set aside and on top of that they could also ask me things on other occasions, I have also been present when working on patients where I have answered questions and discussed things. So, it has been done continuously as well [...] Furthermore I have had mentees in the suburbs as well, because of us being a big reciprocity, we have other locations and one of my mentees were located in the suburbs and then we had digital contact as well as I visited on one occasion to go through the layout. In addition, we have also gone through treatment techniques. So, it has varied. (Mentor 3)

This interviewee states that the mentor had set aside one hour a week for mentoring the mentees. In addition, the mentees had the opportunity to contact the mentor with questions through email, as the mentor was based in another location and the mentees spread out on several different sites. This could be seen as an expression of bridging, since the relationship is based on information exchange.

5.2.4 Networking

When asked the question 'Have you experienced that the mentorship programme has enriched you with a greater network?' a mentor answered, "Yes, maybe in the group here. To get to know the younger colleagues who are new in the field, absolutely! (Mentor 3). This is an example of one mentor that feels as if their network has increased since joining the programme. Drawing on Lin's (2017) theory on social capital networking and specifically concerning social credentials that this mentor is experiencing a mutually beneficial trade in the relationship between the mentor and the mentees.

One mentee described that the mentorship programme has enabled a *cross-unit network*, where questions can be asked and answered by other doctors and nurses. The mentee continued stating that this new 'culture' was indeed a product of the mentorship programme itself as it was initiated by the persons participating in it. The culture was now enabling a climate open for questions being asked and answered as well as new contacts, relationships, and social networks

to be established. Through this new forum, the mentee described that there were no hierarchies, meaning that everyone could participate in the knowledge exchange as well as support each other (Mentee 4)

This example of the effects of the mentorship programme matches up with Lin's (2017) theory on *social credentials*. Furthermore, this notion yields evidence that the organisation as a whole benefits from the mentorship programme as the social capital is increasing the knowledge exchange in the organisation.

5.2.5 Summary

Within the 'theories-in-use' group of respondents such as first line managers, mentors, and mentees there has been much focus on knowledge transfer. The majority of the mentees participating are experiencing a larger trust and security within their own abilities and have built a confidence. The interviewees responded differently on how the structure of the mentorship programme is working. At this point it is very free and open, creating an opportunity to structure it as the mentor and mentee see fit. Some are happy about this, and some would prefer more structure. There have been some differences between the different pairs of mentors and mentees when it comes to time spent together. The relationship and trust between the mentor and mentee are of importance. Bonding has occurred to the level that they have the same social capital but was successful when the mentor and mentee already had something in common before the mentorship programme. Mentees have mentioned that they did not use their mentor as much as possible, stating that for bonding to occur there must be some kind of willingness. Bridging exists more naturally since the mentorship programme is about exchanging experiences and knowledge, it is about give and take

6. Analysis

This chapter continues to analyse the empirical findings and partial analyses presented in the previous chapter. The analysis continues to follow ‘Espoused theories’ and ‘Theories-in-use’ as a way to structure the analysis. The analysis in this chapter takes on a wider perspective than the partial analyses made in the empirical findings chapter. The findings are analysed based on the themes presented in the social capital theory, Trust, Bonding, Bridging and Networking (Putnam, 1993; Putnam, 2000; Lin, 2017).

The main themes presented in the interview group of ‘espoused theories’ are that mentorship programmes can help solve many issues, such as personnel retention of both senior and new employees. Hence, they help each other to stay within the organisation since they create a relationship. Their relationship enables new inexperienced employees to ask questions without getting a feeling of being a liability for their colleagues. In this relationship, the knowledge and experience of the senior employee are transferred onto the mentee. When this is done successfully, they have the same social capital, meaning that bonding has occurred (cf. Putnam, 2000). In this relationship, the mentee gets support and help to build up *confidence* and *self-security*, meaning that they *trust* their own ability to do something as well as in more traditional lines with social capital as the trust in their community, colleagues, mentors, and organisation is increasing (cf. Putnam, 1993). At the same time, this is mainly an initiative to keep senior employees in the working life and within the organisation longer, hoping that they will get motivated to stay when asked to be a mentor. Being asked to be a mentor is meant to be seen as a receipt that your knowledge is too good to let go to waste, it needs to be transferred, thus kept in the organisation. This creates bridging, the mentor is sharing their knowledge and experience, and at the same time the mentee has fresh knowledge from their recent time in school, enabling it to be a give and take relationship (cf. Putnam, 2000). The mentors have also expressed that there is some form of networking taking place, this is because they get to know their new colleagues in a better way than they would have done otherwise (cf. Lin, 2017).

The main themes presented in the other group, ‘theories-in-use’, are *security, trust, confidence, differences in time spent, and different opinions on the structure*. Mostly, the focus is on knowledge transfer and the mentee. When people involved in the mentorship programme were asked about the programme’s purpose, the majority answered that the purpose was to increase

the security and confidence in the mentee with the help of an experienced colleague, i.e. the mentor. There was also an emphasis on the benefits of learning from an experienced mentor through transferring knowledge, meaning that some mentees have learned things quickly, skills that allegedly otherwise would have taken them years to develop. There were however some differences between those working within the primal care units and those working within hospital departments. The mentees within the primal care units spent around one hour every week with their mentor, and they gathered questions throughout the week. Those working within the hospital departments spent around three whole days a week together, creating a learning environment more based on one-on-one tutoring. These different groups have different opinions on the structure of the mentorship program. People working within the primal care departments want more structure, and the people working within the hospital like the lack of a predetermined structure. This makes it possible for each mentor and mentee to create their own structure and way of working. When discussing the structure, *location* was a factor, some mentees had their mentors at the same facility and some in another facility, creating different possibilities and preconditions.

Within the group of 'theories-in-use', trust was mentioned in some way by everyone that partook. Thus, it is arguably important for the mentorship programme. Bonding occurs when the mentor and mentee have something in common besides the mentorship programme, in this case, similar backgrounds (cf. Putnam, 2000). It is clear that bonding only can exist when effort and willingness are present since it is time consuming to transfer all the knowledge and experiences. Bridging manifests itself naturally in the mentorship programme, it is about sharing and spreading knowledge, experiences, and information within the organisation (cf. Putnam, 1993; Hawkins & Maurer, 2010). The mentorship programme works as a bridge to enable this sharing and spreading. Networking in the sense of *social credentials* is present, since the mentor and the programme in itself is a receipt of knowledge of some sort (cf. Lin, 2017). Mentees mention on the other hand that they would like more of this, mentees meeting other mentees and sharing experiences and ways of working.

As shown, there are some differences between the groups of 'espoused theories' and 'theories-in-use'. Espoused theories have an idea about what and how the mentorship programme is supposed to be executed. The group of theories-in-use and basically the result, how it is working and what the experiences are (cf. Argyris et al., 1985). One of the goals of this initiative from VGR was to become a more attractive employer, and since some mentees

applied for a position just because of that, it would mean that they would be a part of the mentorship programme, suggesting that this has been a success. Thus, to be offered help and guidance is perceived as attractive. The fact that this initiative was a way to make senior employees stay longer in their working life, but when asked about the purpose of the study the answer consisted of knowledge transfer, extracting knowledge from seniors, and creating confidence and trust within the mentee's own ability and competence. There seems to be a lack of information concerning the purpose of the initiative in that sense. That knowledge has been transferred is stated, since multiple mentees have mentioned that they have learned more quickly, knowledge that would have taken them years to collect otherwise. Something to take into consideration is that these are the mentees that spend around three whole days a week with their mentor, creating different possibilities. Moreover, these are also the mentees that have bonded. Conclusions can therefore be made that bonding requires time spent together, and it is even easier if they have something in common beforehand (cf. Putnam, 2000).

Following the theme of time, the primal care units' mentors and mentees did not spend as much time together, around one hour each week. These mentors and mentees reached the stage of bridging. Moreover, they shared information and had a more question-based relationship (cf. Putnam, 2000; Hawkins & Maurer, 2010). In this group the mentor and mentee were often at different locations, only seeing each other this one time a week. There are some differences in how the different groups have chosen to execute the mentorship programme. There are differences in the structure and at the same time, the people within the primal care units request more structure within the programme and the people working within the hospitals like that it is open. The reason for this could be differences in the first line managers' way of working, that some of them have structured it more than others. The first line managers and mentees of the primal care units want more structure, but not the first line managers and mentees of the hospital unit, it may be due to the first line managers' way of working but also the structure of the work and/or itself, resulting in different organisational preconditions.

The mentorship programme's structure is very free, with the purpose to adapt it to a unit or relationship, but from the findings in this study, it seems to be a little too free and open. There appears to be an issue with information transpiring through the project since the aim and goal are unclear for many people involved. Networking is something that is not happening to the same extent as is possible. When asked about their network and if it has grown, only a few interviewees mentioned that it has increased, but people have mentioned that they would like

to meet more people involved within the mentorship programme in the same position. An idea is that this might solve the issue with structure since they then have the ability to exchange experiences and ways of working.

Based on the fact that bonding has occurred in only two relationships, where the mentor and mentee now have the same social capital, in one case the mentee and mentor had a similar background and in the other case, they did not (cf. Putnam, 2000). Here time and effort play a large role. Seeing as this other case started as a relationship of bridging, it was about transferring knowledge and sharing experiences and during the time spent together they started to work as one. It is a fact that time and location are of great importance to reach a bonding relationship where the individuals share the same social capital. If time and other things such as locations hinder the relationship forming, they will reach and stay within a bridging relationship (cf. Putnam, 2000). For a relationship to become so strong that bonding occurs, they also need to reach a level of *trust* in each other, so that the mentee gets to try their wings and build *confidence*, much like the one that the mentor has achieved during their many years of experience (cf. Putnam, 1993). Networking and social credentials helps the mentee later, seeing as a mentorship programme, proves some sort of knowledge level.

Trust plays an important part in creating a good work environment as well, because it affects the culture (cf. Putnam, 1993). Mentees have mentioned that the mentorship programme creates a learning environment within the workplace, making it easier to ask questions to people besides the assigned mentor as well. Describing it as a good and safe culture without judgements. This is something that could make the retention of people easier as well.

7. Discussion

The discussion chapter of this research contains a discussion about mentorship programmes as an HR-practice, based on the analysis chapter but with a practical perspective. Furthermore, the discussion chapter acts as a bridge between the theoretical foundation that the previous research chapter supplies and the mentorship programme as a phenomenon.

To put this study's results in the context of the previous research chapter, this study both confirms and develops the field. It confirms Laiho and Brand's (2012) study in which HR needs to be present and close to the mentorship programme and agrees about the fact that information needs to be shared, seeing as that has been an issue within this case study as well. Smith et al., (2001) and Deng et al., (2022) discussed that mentorship programmes can provide support to the mentee. This is present in this study as well since many mentioned it to be the sole purpose of the study. Greene and Peutzer's (2002) study, focused on senior employees' competence retention and employees with little knowledge, and on the relationship between them. In this case study and with the theoretical lens of social capital theory, it is clear that the relationship that was formed is an essential and decisive part of the mentorship programme. Whether either bonding or bridging took place within the relationship, determined to what extent the development of the inexperienced employees reached in a year. I.e., the bonding mentoring relationships appear to have the biggest impact on the social capital.

What distinguishes this study from others is that this study focuses on individual implications rather than the more pragmatic, traditional, and organisational focal points. Even though the organisational focal points exist within the mentorship programme, this study does not investigate them. The study differentiates from others as it explores the 'softer' aspects that come as a result of the mentorship programme. E.g., The study investigates the relationship that is being created, the trust that is being built between mentor and mentee, the security that comes from that trust etc. As mentioned, this study has an individualistic perspective to some extent, providing another perspective on the theory of social capital that is often discussed in the contexts of communities. When viewing a relationship between two people up-close with the lens of social capital, it became clear that *trust* is the most important building block in the relationship between a mentor and a mentee, this since it is an enabler.

Bonding was more difficult to find in the empirical findings than bridging. One reason for this, as mentioned in the analysis, is that bridging occurs more naturally when people that normally would not collaborate start to do so and form a relationship. The analysis also presents that bonding demands more resources. The mentor and mentee need to be at the same place and have an extended period of time together for it to be able to form. The thought that bridging could help enable bonding exists as well, examples from the empirical findings makes it clear that bonding can happen even though there are basically non common denominators. Even if it makes it easier, it just takes longer time and effort, and it can start as a bridging relationship and evolve.

Based on the analysis, it is clear that a mentorship programme has many positive outcomes. The main purpose of the initiative from VGR's perspective was to use the mentorship programme to help retain senior personnel primarily but new employees as well. Based on the interviews, this information has not transpired down the hierarchy of the programme. The studied mentorship programme seems to be more about knowledge transfer, which is a purpose in itself, but not the main goal presented by VGR. The healthcare sector in itself is a learning sector and VGR is a learning organisation, so this does not mean that it is a bad thing to create an even larger and more structured learning environment. This could in itself be a motivation and/or reason for employees to stay longer within the organisation.

The programme is in practice mainly focusing on the new inexperienced employees, the mentees, as well. Making sure that they learn as much from the senior employee as possible, not prolonging the working life of the senior employees by offering a new task such as a mentor to motivate them, even the mentors only focus on the new employees. This study has found that the senior focus is overlooked when the mentorship program is executed.

Mentoring as an HR-practice is a way to transfer knowledge, it creates a learning culture within the organisation, enabling bridging and bonding, but primarily trust. Trust within the mentorship programme, trust within oneself ability, trust in the mentor for support, and trust in the relationship between the mentor and mentee. This affects the social working environment, more talking and discussions occur with people that normally would not spend much time with each other. The social working environment is also affected by the judgement free zone the mentorship programme provides. However, the social work environment seems to come in second place within the priority list, behind knowledge transfer.

To utilise all the resources a mentorship programme can provide, it would benefit from more focus on networking. Based on the lack of structure and the longing for it presented in the analysis, networking initiatives would benefit the programme in itself as well as the individuals taking part in it. First line managers that are supervising the programme and help structure it together with the mentors and mentees. They could exchange experiences, what works and what does not with the set organisational preconditions. This could help save time as well when testing out different ways to realise the programme. Especially if there is a mix between stages, some might have started the programme six months ago and have found their way of working and some might have started two weeks ago, an exchange of ideas could be beneficial.

8. Conclusion

Conclusions can be drawn that mentorship programmes *can* be very beneficial in terms of HR-practices. But for it to reach its potential, the organisation needs to continuously work with information transpiring from top to bottom. Information about the main purposes of the programme has somewhat failed in reaching practice, i.e., from theory to practice. However, the learning organisation has developed, meaning that a secondary purpose has been fulfilled. This in itself could lead to an environment where the main purpose of senior employee retention is fulfilled unintentionally.

Results showed that in some places, the mentorship programme was conducted more successfully and, in some places, less so. However, it was disclosed that the beliefs of both managers and participants were that the mentorship programme is a good thing and that it has great potential, but perhaps it is not utilised enough. In conclusion, the success factors are identified as; there needs to be time and energy put into the project in order for it to work in the specific unit in question, the managers need to believe in the programme in order to motivate the participants and finally, there has to be a need for it. In terms of how the mentorship programme has benefited the HR-function, testimonies of greatly shortened training times were received, which as a result brought down the costs of personnel training. Also, results show that the mentorship programme can act as employee attraction, supporting the HR-function that is involved with recruitment. At the same time, the mentorship programme offers senior workers the possibility to extend their careers as it offers them the new role as a mentor, enabling them to for example have a part time employment.

To answer the research question of whether and how the mentorship programme affects the knowledge transfer and work environment, the conclusion is that it can. However, the study shows that knowledge transfer is first and foremost brought up and favoured as a result of the mentoring and that changes and improvements in the work environment come second. The knowledge transfer may in itself result in an improved work environment in the long run, as once the knowledge and skills of the mentees grow with the knowledge transfer, so does also the *self-confidence* of the mentee. Furthermore, in conclusion, mentoring programmes can foster a culture of learning, and this may happen naturally when *self-confidence* is being strengthened within the workforce.

The choice of theory has proven to fulfil its purpose adequately. However, worth mentioning is that some limitations exist as some of the theoretical terms that were chosen proved to be more difficult than others to identify from the analysed material. One of the more difficult social capital theories for this study is *networking*, as these, in some cases, need more processing and discussion than others. The study has developed the theoretical framework of social capital to some extent. The framework is traditionally often used when viewing communities and larger groups rather than relationships between two individuals as this study does. The study shows that the most important building block when building social capital is *trust*. Trust is an enabler of relationships, meaning that it can help to build people's confidence as well as transfer knowledge, making bonding and bridging social capital occur.

The following are the practical contributions as well as suggestions resulting from this study. As mentioned in the paragraph above, *trust* is an important building block within a relationship. The researchers therefore suggest more focus on relationship building when structuring a mentorship programme, especially in the early stages. This is because it enables them to build a good mentor and mentee relationship, which *can* help build self-confidence, self-assurance, and trust in one's own ability. This could potentially lead to a well-functioning workplace where the culture consists of collaboration and helping each other comes naturally. Resulting in that knowledge transfer occurring more naturally as well.

This study concludes that structure is of importance and lack of structure can be an obstacle for the intended purposes of a mentorship programme. If the purposes and aims are not argued for adequately and informed throughout, motivation and dedication can deteriorate leading to unsatisfactory results. However, should there be too much structure, this can also hinder, as the leeway when it comes to fitting the programme is too small, and the risk of the programme being a burden increase. Arguably, it is important to keep in mind that the need for the programme should first be investigated thoroughly, as only then can one learn what the organisation needs in terms of a structured form of mentoring.

A continuing study researching trust as an enabler in a mentorship programme, is deemed academically and contextually valuable. As found in this study, with the help of the theoretical framework of social capital, *trust* is an important building block in the relationship created through mentoring. In order to facilitate a mentorship programme, trust is essential for the

mentorship to reach potential and eventually become self-propelled once a mentoring culture is established. Furthermore, the researchers of this study recommend doing more extensive research in terms of sampling size. Either conduct research on a larger scale, or possibly compare two differently structured mentorship programmes that are in the same setting. Preferably the mentorship programmes are structured, to some extent, based on the finding of this study. This is to find the best way of conducting a mentorship programme based on a set purpose. Studying mentorship programmes in the suggested ways would enrich the research field of mentorship programmes.

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Appendix 1. *Information and consent form*

Information till deltagare om masteruppsatsen ‘The mentorship programme at VGR’ (Titeln kan komma att ändras).

Syftet med denna studie är att skapa ny kunskap om effekterna av mentorskapsprogrammet på Västra Götalandsregionen. Sådan kunskap är viktig för fortsatt användning av mentorprogram i Västra Götalandsregionen samt för andra organisationer som är intresserade av att själva införa liknande program. Resultaten från studien kan också vara intressant för fortsatta studier inom åldersmedvetet ledarskap och mentorprogram.

Föreliggande studie är ett studentprojekt och kommer att resultera i en masteruppsats vid det internationella masterprogrammet Strategic Human Resource Management and Labour Relations vid Göteborgs Universitet och Handelshögskolan i Göteborg. Studien genomförs självständigt av Oskar Röström och Ebba Friman, under handledning av Professor Ewa Wikström vid företagsekonomiska institutionen, Handelshögskolan Göteborg. Projektet följer det Svenska Forskningsrådets etiska riktlinjer för forskning inom samhällsvetenskap. Information om de etiska riktlinjerna återfinns nedan.

Vi undrar om det vid tillfälle finns en möjlighet att intervju dig som (chef, HR-specialister, fackliga företrädare och anställda) från er organisation om dina erfarenheter av att arbeta med mentorprogram för nya och äldre medarbetare. Intervjun tar ca 45 minuter (ej längre tid) och avser resultera i en masteruppsats under våren 2022. Dina intervjusvar avidentifieras i rapporteringen av studien.

Det är mycket värdefullt för oss att vi får möjlighet att tala med dig om dina erfarenheter. Vi är inte där för att kontrollera ditt arbete eller din insats, utan för att ta del av hur din arbetssituation och upplevelser av mentorprogram ser ut.

Datainsamling

Datainsamlingen består av ett antal kvalitativa, semistrukturerade intervjuer. Intervjuerna kommer, med deltagarnas medgivande, att spelas in för att underlätta vid analyserandet av data. Efter att transkriberingen är genomförd kommer inspelningsfilerna att raderas.

Intervjun kommer att ta 30-60 minuter och frågorna kommer beröra områdena kring mentorskapsprogrammet och dess effekter samt uppfattningen av det. Generella frågor om mentorskapsprogrammet kommer också att ställas, såsom hur mentorskapet går till, målet/förhoppningarna med det och anledningarna till varför det infördes.

Frivilligt deltagande och tystnadsplikt

Deltagandet av intervjun och således studien är frivillig och konfidentiell. Deltagaren har rätten att när som helst avstå och avbryta sin medverkan om så önskas.

Obehöriga personer kommer inte att få tillgång till den insamlade data och deltagarna av studien är skyddad under professionell sekretess. Dock så kan det transkriberade materialet önskas att användas i framtida vidare studier, om detta är fallet kommer en förfrågan att ställas till deltagaren och samma villkor som beskrivs i detta brev kommer att gälla. Personliga namn kommer inte att registreras och deltagaren kommer att bli tilldelad en pseudonym och namn kommer att bytas ut till falska namn när intervjuerna transkriberas och analyseras. Detta gäller även organisationer om detta skulle önskas. Deltagaren beslutar om när det är passande att hålla intervjun (Eventuellt via Zoom, Teams eller något annat som inte kräver ett fysiskt möte) och deltagandet tar plats på deltagarnas villkor.

Hantering av insamlat material

Material såsom intervjuer och anteckningar förvaras på lösenordsskyddade datorer och endast inblandade forskare kommer att ha tillgång till materialet. Intervjuerna kommer att transkriberas på dator och i den sista avhandlingen kan utdrag från intervjuer citeras under en pseudonym. Det insamlade materialet och intervju transkriptionerna kommer inte att användas för något annat ändamål än vetenskaplig forskning och för undervisningsändamål under de villkor som beskrivs här. Intervjufiler kommer att raderas när analysen för detta och framtida relaterade projekt har genomförts, detta om tillåtelse ges.

Resultat och publikationer

Resultaten av studien kommer att publiceras i form av en masteruppsats som slutförs i början av juni. Deltagare kommer att kunna ladda ner uppsatsen från GUPEA (<https://gupea.ub.gu.se>). Deltagare är välkomna att närvara vid den framtida presentationen av projektet om förutsättningarna tillåter.

Vid frågor och mer information, kontakta:

Oskar Röström

XXX

Ebba Friman

XXX

Ansvarig handledare för studien:

Ewa Wikström

Professor vid företagsekonomiska institutionen, Göteborgs universitet

Medgivande för deltagande

Jag har läst och förstår innebörden av deltagandet i denna Masterstudie. De frågor jag haft har blivit besvarade.

- Jag godkänner mitt deltagande och att intervjun får bli digitalt inspelad
- Jag godkänner att mina personliga uppgifter hanteras enligt ovanstående

Datum och plats	Namn och signatur (deltagare)
Datum och plats	Namn och signatur (Studenter)
	Oskar Röström Ebba Friman

Appendix 2. Interview guide HR

Hej!

Våra namn är Ebba och Oskar och vi är de som kommer att intervjua dig samt genomföra studien. Studien går som tidigare nämnt ut på att undersöka effekter av mentorskapsprogrammet i VGR.

Innan vi startar så vill vi påminna dig att det är helt frivilligt att delta i studien och att du när som helst kan avsluta din medverkan utan orsak. Med ditt godkännande så kommer vi att spela in intervjun för att sedan kunna transkribera och analysera informationen. Alla namn kommer att anonymiseras, så ingen information kommer att kunna ledas tillbaka till dig som deltagare. Ljudfilen kommer efter studien att raderas, och med ditt godkännande så kommer transkriberingen användas till vidare forskning av mentorskapsprogrammet.

Innan vi drar igång, har du några frågor till oss?

Är det okej att starta inspelningen?

Namn:

Ålder:

Utbildning:

År i yrkesrollen:

År i yrkesrollen hos VGR:

Berätta lite om dig själv:

Vi kommer att inleda med att ställa lite generella frågor kring mentorskapsprogrammet.

Mentorskapsprogrammet

- Berätta om mentorskapsprogrammet i er organisation?
- Vad är syftet med mentorskapsprogrammet?
 - För vem? hur går det till och när sker det? (Individen, gruppen, organisationen, professionen, arbetsmiljön)
- Vilka är inblandade i utformandet av mentorskapsprogrammet? Varför just dessa?

- Inom vilka områden har mentorskapsprogrammet implementerats? Varför just dessa?

Tänk dig att mentorskapsprogram inte finns.

- Finns det någon annan form av kunskapsöverföring? exempelvis handledning.

Nu kommer vi ställa några frågor kopplat till dig som individ och mentorskapsprogrammet.

- Vad är din roll i mentorskapsprogrammet?
- Hur trivs du med din roll i mentorskapsprogrammet?
- Med tanke på att mentorskapet sker inom vården - en viktig del av samhället - ökar mentorskapsprogrammet HRs möjlighet att stödja verksamheterna att göra nytta för patienter? Ge exempel
- För dig personligen, vad är det viktigaste utbytet som sker i mentorskapsprogrammet?
- tycker du dig se förändringar sen implementeringen av mentorskapsprogrammet? Ge gärna exempel!

Nu går vi in på några frågor relaterat till HR och mentorskapsprogrammet.

- Finns det några effekter eller relationer mellan mentorskapsprogrammet och personalomsättning, personalbrist och arbetsmiljö hos er?
 - Är det något som ni pratar om?
 - Om ja, Vad pratar ni om då? Ge gärna exempel
 - I vilka situationer pratar ni om det?
- Har ni sett några tendenser till förändrade attityder eller ökad motivation sedan implementeringen av mentorskapsprogrammet?
- Ett av syftena med mentorskapsprogrammet är kompetensutveckling, Följs detta upp på något vis?
- Mäts kunskapen i organisationen på något sätt? då i teorin borde kunskap stanna i organisationen med programmet, har ni sett några tendenser än?
- I rapporten skapad av Marianne nämns det många planer och åtgärder samt vikten av att implementera dessa i HR rutiner samt verksamheten, hur går arbetet med det?
Exempelvis på sida 14 där förslaget om att integrera åldersmedvetet ledarskap i chefs och ledarskapsutbildningar.

Nu kommer vi ställa några frågor kring hur ni på VGR arbetar med ålder och var anställda är i livet då detta kan vara relevant för mentorskapsprogrammet.

Åldersmedvetet ledarskap

- Berätta lite om hur VGR arbetar med ett åldersmedvetet ledarskap idag?
- Ur ett HR-perspektiv, vilka är de största utmaningarna för att skapa en åldersmedveten arbetsplats? Exempel?
- Anpassar ni ert arbete på individnivå? på vilket sätt? Ge gärna några konkreta exempel
- Hur tror du mentorskapsprogrammet påverkat de adepter som deltar?
- Hur tror du mentorskapsprogrammet påverkat de mentorer som deltar?
- Vad har ni för motivationsfaktorer för seniora medarbetare att delta i mentorskapsprogrammet? Ge gärna konkreta exempel

Avslutningsvis

- Vad tycker du är det bästa med att få vara med i mentorskapsprogrammet?
- Tycker du är det finns någon risk med att vara med i mentorskapsprogrammet?
- Var finns förbättrings områdena?
- Är det något som du vill nämna eller ta upp som du känner att vi inte har lyft eller berört tillräckligt?

Till sist vill vi säga ett stort tack för ditt deltagande samt tiden du har avsatt för detta, det uppskattas och det har varit riktigt intressant att få ta del av dina erfarenheter och tankar!

Appendix 3. *Interview guide trade union representatives*

Hej!

Våra namn är Ebba och Oskar och vi är de som kommer att intervjua dig samt genomföra studien. Studien går som tidigare nämnt ut på att undersöka effekter av mentorskapsprogrammet i VGR.

Innan vi startar så vill vi påminna dig att det är helt frivilligt att delta i studien och att du när som helst kan avsluta din medverkan utan orsak. Med ditt godkännande så kommer vi att spela in intervjun för att sedan kunna transkribera och analysera informationen. Alla namn kommer att anonymiseras, så ingen information kommer att kunna ledas tillbaka till dig som deltagare. Ljudfilen kommer efter studien att raderas, och med ditt godkännande så kommer transkriberingen användas till vidare forskning av mentorskapsprogrammet.

Innan vi drar igång, har du några frågor till oss?

Är det okej att starta inspelningen?

Namn:

Utbildning:

År i yrkesrollen:

År i yrkesrollen hos VGR:

Hur skulle du kortfattat beskriva ditt yrke:

Mentorskapsprogrammet

- Berätta gärna lite kring vad du vet om pilot satsningen av mentorskapsprogrammet?
- Vad tror du är behovet som ledde till satsningen? Egna erfarenheter?
- Vad tror du är syftet med mentorskapsprogrammet?
 - För vem? hur går det till? (Individen, gruppen, organisationen, professionen, arbetsmiljön)

Om mentorskapsprogram inte finns.

- Hur arbetar VGR traditionellt med kunskapsöverföring? Alltså till exempel innan vissa av avdelningarna anslöts sig till pilotsatsningen av mentorprogrammet.
- Vad är det för skillnad mellan handledning och mentorskap? Ge gärna ett exempel
- Med tanke på att mentorskapet sker inom vården - en viktig del av samhället - tror du att mentorprogrammet stödjer möjligheten att göra nytta för patienter och om det eventuellt ökar kvalitén i vården? Ge gärna exempel i så fall.

Nu kommer några frågor kopplade till mentorskapsprogrammet ur ett fackligt perspektiv

- Hur länge har du haft din roll?
- Tror du att VGR kommer se några effekter eller relationer mellan mentorskapsprogrammet och personalomsättning, personalbrist och arbetsmiljö?
- Tror ni att mentorskapsprogram har möjlighet att förändra deltagarnas arbetsmiljö? På vilket sätt?
- ser facket mentorskapsprogram som något positivt?

Nu kommer vi ställa några frågor kring hur VGR arbetar med ålder och var anställda är i livet.

Åldersmedvetet ledarskap

- Berätta lite kring vad du vet om hur VGR arbetar med ett åldersmedvetet ledarskap idag?
 - har du själv fått någon utbildning inom åldersmedvetet ledarskap?
 - Anpassas det på individnivå? på vilket sätt? Ge gärna några konkreta exempel
- Hur tror du mentorskapsprogrammet påverkat de adepter som deltar? (Socialt, Arbetsmiljö, Kunskapsmässigt, Utveckling-både personlig och yrkesmässigt)
- Hur tror du mentorskapsprogrammet påverkat de mentorer som deltar? (Socialt, Arbetsmiljö, Kunskapsmässigt, Utveckling-både personlig och yrkesmässigt)
- Vad tror du är bra motivationsfaktorer för att få seniora medarbetare att delta i mentorskapsprogrammet? Ge gärna konkreta exempel

Avslutningsvis

- Vad tror du är det bästa med att få vara med i mentorskapsprogrammet?
- Tror du är det finns någon risk med att vara med i mentorskapsprogrammet?
- Är det något som du vill nämna eller ta upp som du känner att vi inte har lyft eller berört tillräckligt?

Slutligen vill vi säga ett stort tack för ditt deltagande samt tiden du har avsatt för detta, det uppskattas och det har varit riktigt intressant att få ta del av den kunskap som du besitter.

Appendix 4. *Interview guide managers & First line managers*

Hej!

Våra namn är Ebba och Oskar och vi är de som kommer att intervjua dig samt genomföra studien. Studien går som tidigare nämnt ut på att undersöka effekter av mentorskapsprogrammet i VGR.

Innan vi startar så vill vi påminna dig att det är helt frivilligt att delta i studien och att du när som helst kan avsluta din medverkan utan orsak. Med ditt godkännande så kommer vi att spela in intervjun för att sedan kunna transkribera och analysera informationen. Alla namn kommer att anonymiseras, så ingen information kommer att kunna ledas tillbaka till dig som deltagare. Ljudfilen kommer efter studien att raderas, och med ditt godkännande så kommer transkriberingen användas till vidare forskning av mentorskapsprogrammet.

Innan vi drar igång, har du några frågor till oss?

Är det okej att starta inspelningen?

Namn:

Utbildning:

År i yrkesrollen:

År i yrkesrollen hos VGR:

Berätta lite om dig själv:

Mentorskapsprogrammet

- Berätta om mentorskapsprogrammet i din organisation?
- Vad är syftet med mentorskapsprogrammet?
 - För vem? hur går det till och när sker det? (Individen, gruppen, organisationen, professionen, arbetsmiljön)
- Vilka är inblandade i utformandet av mentorskapsprogrammet? Varför dessa?

- Inom vilka områden/avdelningar har mentorskapsprogrammet implementerats? Varför dessa?

Om mentorskapsprogram inte finns.

- Hur arbetar VGR traditionellt med kunskapsöverföring? Alltså till exempel innan vissa av avdelningarna anslöts sig till pilotsatsningen av mentorprogrammet.

Nu kommer vi ställa några frågor kopplat till dig som individ och mentorskapsprogrammet.

- Vad är din roll/relation till mentorskapsprogrammet?
- Hur trivs du med din roll i mentorskapsprogrammet?
- Med tanke på att mentorskapet sker inom vården - en viktig del av samhället - tror du att mentorprogrammet stödjer möjligheten att göra nytta för patienter och om det eventuellt ökar kvalitét in vården? Ge gärna exempel i så fall.
- För dig personligen, vad är det viktigaste utbytet som sker i mentorskapsprogrammet, mellan mentor och adept?
 - Tycker du dig se förändringar sen implementeringen av mentorskapsprogrammet? Ge gärna exempel!

Nu går vi in på några frågor relaterat till dig som chef och mentorskapsprogrammet.

- Ser du några effekter eller relationer mellan mentorskapsprogrammet och personalomsättning, personalbrist och arbetsmiljö hos er?
 - Är det något som ni pratar om?
 - Om ja, Vad pratar ni om då? Ge gärna exempel
 - I vilka situationer pratar ni om det?
- Har ni sett några tendenser till förändrade attityder eller ökad motivation sedan implementeringen av mentorskapsprogrammet?
- Ett av syftena med mentorskapsprogrammet är kompetensutveckling, Följs detta upp på något vis?
- Mäts kunskapen i organisationen på något sätt? då i teorin borde kunskap stanna i organisationen med programmet, har ni sett några tendenser än?

Nu kommer vi ställa några frågor kring hur ni på VGR arbetar med ålder och var anställda är i livet.

Åldersmedvetet ledarskap

- Berätta lite om hur VGR arbetar med ett åldersmedvetet ledarskap idag?
 - har du själv fått någon utbildning inom åldersmedvetet ledarskap utöver verktygslådan?

- Anpassar ni det på individnivå? på vilket sätt? Ge gärna några konkreta exempel
- Hur tror du mentorskapsprogrammet påverkat de adepter som deltar?
- Hur tror du mentorskapsprogrammet påverkat de mentorer som deltar?
- Vad har ni för motivationsfaktorer för seniora medarbetare att delta i mentorskapsprogrammet? Ge gärna konkreta exempel

Avslutningsvis

- Vad tycker du är det bästa med att få vara med i mentorskapsprogrammet?
- Tycker du är det finns någon risk med att vara med i mentorskapsprogrammet?
- Var finns förbättrings områdena?
- Vad tror du gjorde att det blev så lyckat hos er?
- Är det något som du vill nämna eller ta upp som du känner att vi inte har lyft eller berört tillräckligt?

Sen vill vi säga ett stort tack för ditt deltagande samt tiden du har avsatt för detta, det uppskattas och det har varit riktigt intressant att få ta del av den kunskap som du besitter.

Appendix 5. Mentors

Hej!

Våra namn är Ebba och Oskar och vi är de som kommer att intervjua dig samt genomföra studien. Studien går som tidigare nämnt ut på att undersöka effekter av mentorskapsprogrammet i VGR.

Innan vi startar så vill vi påminna dig att det är helt frivilligt att delta i studien och att du när som helst kan avsluta din medverkan utan orsak. Med ditt godkännande så kommer vi att spela in intervjun för att sedan kunna transkribera och analysera informationen. Alla namn kommer att anonymiseras, så ingen information kommer att kunna ledas tillbaka till dig som deltagare. Ljudfilen kommer efter studien att raderas, och med ditt godkännande så kommer transkriberingen användas till vidare forskning av mentorskapsprogrammet.

Innan vi drar igång, har du några frågor till oss?

Är det okej att starta inspelningen?

Ålder:

(detta är intressant eftersom studien handlar om åldersmedvetet ledarskap och senior arbetskraft)

Kön:

Utbildning:

År i yrkesrollen:

År i yrkesrollen hos VGR:

Berätta lite om dig själv:

Nu tänkte vi att vi skulle djupdyka lite i frågor om mentorskapsprogrammet på VGR.

Mentorskapsprogrammet

- Kan du kort beskriva mentorskapsprogrammet i din organisation?
 - Vad tror du är syftet med mentorskapsprogrammet? Och hur fungerar det?
- Vilka är inblandade i programmet? Varför just dessa?
- Vad är din roll i mentorskapsprogrammet?

- Kan du berätta om hur en dag ser ut för dig när du är i din roll som mentor?
- Hur trivs du i din roll?
- hur många adepter hade du?
- Jämfört med tiden innan mentorskapsprogrammet, skulle du säga att du trivs bättre på jobbet i dagsläget? Ge gärna exempel på saker som då eventuellt förbättrats eller försämrats.
- Hur tycker du att mentorskapsprogrammet utvecklar dig i din yrkesroll? På vilket sätt?
- Med tanke på att yrket är inom vården, en viktig del av samhället, känner du att du gör nytta? och har denna känsla förändrats på något vis sedan starten av mentorskapsprogrammet?

Åldersmedvetet ledarskap

Eftersom ålder och vart du befinner dig i livet är en aspekt som spelar in i mentorskapsprogrammet kommer här några frågor gällande detta.

- Upplever du att din ålder påverkar hur du blir sedd eller behandlad på din arbetsplats?
 - Om ja: Ge gärna exempel?
- Har mentorskapsprogrammet gett dig en ökad motivation? på vilket sätt?
- Upplever du att du blir mer sedd efter implementeringen av mentorskapet?
- Hur tror du mentorskapsprogrammet påverkar de adepter som deltar socialt?
- Hur tror du mentorskapsprogrammet påverkar adeptens arbetsmiljö?
- Hur tror du mentorskapsprogrammet påverkar adeptens kunskap?
- Hur tror du mentorskapsprogrammet påverkar adeptens utveckling? Både yrkesmässigt och personligt

Nu kommer några frågor kopplat till dig som individ och mentorskapsprogrammet.

- Hur kändes det att bli tillfrågad att bli mentor?
- Har momenten där du varit mentor varit något som du sett fram emot?
 - Om ja, vilka aspekter har varit extra bra?
 - Om nej, har det varit gånger då det istället känts som en belastning? På vilka sätt?
- Typ har mentorskapet berikat dig med t.ex ett större kontaktnät?
 - Om ja, ge gärna exempel

- För dig personligen, vad är det viktigaste utbytet som sker i mentorskapsprogrammet?
- Är mentorrollen en roll som du skulle tänka dig med

Avslutningsvis

- Vad tycker du är det bästa med att få vara med i mentorskapsprogrammet?
- Vad tycker du ha varit mindre bra med att få vara med i mentorskapsprogrammet?
- Var finns det förbättringsområden enligt dig?
- Är det något som du vill nämna eller ta upp som du känner att vi inte har lyft eller berört tillräckligt?

Sen vill vi säga ett stort tack för ditt deltagande samt tiden du har avsatt för detta, det uppskattas och det har varit riktigt intressant att få ta del av den kunskap som du besitter.

Appendix 6. *Mentees*

Hej!

Våra namn är Ebba och Oskar och vi är de som kommer att intervjua dig samt genomföra studien. Studien går som tidigare nämnt ut på att undersöka effekter av mentorskapsprogrammet i VGR.

Innan vi startar så vill vi påminna dig att det är helt frivilligt att delta i studien och att du när som helst kan avsluta din medverkan utan orsak. Med ditt godkännande så kommer vi att spela in intervjun för att sedan kunna transkribera och analysera informationen. Alla namn kommer att anonymiseras, så ingen information kommer att kunna ledas tillbaka till dig som deltagare. Ljudfilen kommer efter studien att raderas, och med ditt godkännande så kommer transkriberingen användas till vidare forskning av mentorskapsprogrammet.

Innan vi drar igång, har du några frågor till oss?

Är det okej att starta inspelningen?

Namn:

Ålder:

Kön:

Utbildning:

År i yrkesrollen:

År i yrkesrollen hos VGR:

Berätta lite om dig själv:

Nu tänkte vi att vi skulle djupdyka lite i frågor om mentorskapsprogrammet på VGR.

Mentorskapsprogrammet

- Kan du berätta om mentorskapsprogrammet i din organisation?
 - Vad tror du är syftet med mentorskapsprogrammet? Och hur fungerar det?
- Vilka är inblandade i programmet? Varför just dessa?
- Vad är din roll i mentorskapsprogrammet?
 - Kan du berätta om hur en dag ser ut i din roll som adept?

- Hur trivs du i din roll?
- Jämfört med tiden innan mentorskapsprogrammet, skulle du säga att du trivs bättre på jobbet i dagsläget? Ge gärna exempel på saker som då eventuellt förbättrats eller försämrats.
- Hur tycker du att mentorskapsprogrammet utvecklar dig i din yrkesroll? På vilket sätt?
- Med tanke på att yrket är inom vården, en viktig del av samhället, känner du att du gör nytta? och har denna känsla förändrats på något vis sedan starten av mentorskapsprogrammet?

Eftersom ålder och vart du befinner dig i livet är en aspekt som spelar in i mentorskapsprogrammet kommer här några frågor gällande detta.

Åldersmedvetet ledarskap

- Upplever du att din ålder påverkar hur du blir sedd eller behandlad på din arbetsplats?
 - Om ja: Ge gärna exempel?
- Har mentorskapsprogrammet gett dig en ökad motivation? på vilket sätt?
- Upplever du att du blir mer sedd efter implementeringen av mentorskapet?
- Hur tror du mentorskapsprogrammet påverkat de mentorer som deltar?
- Har ditt deltagande i mentorskapet gjort dig säkrare eller tryggare i ditt yrke? På vilket sätt? och varför? ge gärna exempel.

Nu kommer några frågor kopplat till dig som individ och mentorskapsprogrammet.

- Har momenten inom mentorprogrammet varit något du sett fram emot?
 - Om ja, vad har upplevts extra bra?
 - om nej, har det istället känts som en belastning? på vilka sätt?
- Nu när du är med i mentorskapsprogrammet, känner du att din beslutsförmåga har ändrats på något vis? och hur?
- Typ har mentorskapet berikat dig med t.ex ett större kontaktnät?
 - Om ja, ge gärna exempel
- Vad tror du mentoreerna får ut av att ingå i mentorskapsprogrammet?

Avslutningsvis

- Vad tycker du är det bästa med att få vara med i mentorskapsprogrammet?
- Vad tycker du är det sämsta med att få vara med i mentorskapsprogrammet?
- Var finns det förbättringsområden enligt dig?
- Om möjligheten skulle erbjudits dig någon gång i framtiden, skulle du vilja vara mentor då?
- Är det något som du vill nämna eller ta upp som du känner att vi inte har lyft eller berört tillräckligt?

Sen vill vi säga ett stort tack för ditt deltagande samt tiden du har avsatt för detta, det uppskattas och det har varit riktigt intressant att få ta del av den kunskap som du besitter.
