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Experiences of Immigrant Entrepreneurs in the Falafel Trade in Malmö

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Abstract

This research investigates how immigrant entrepreneurs in the falafel business in Malmö position themselves in relation to the host society. Interviews with five immigrant entrepreneurs in the falafel trade were conducted to explore their life stories, business endeavours and their relations with the host society. The data was then analysed to establish the degree to which they feel embedded in different arenas of the host society and their society of origin. This study confirms the disadvantageous position of immigrants in Swedish society, though demonstrates the various strategies they utilise to improve their situation through entrepreneurship. The study, the first of its kind in Malmö, is important in the context of rising xenophobia in Sweden and segregation in the city.

Key words: immigrant entrepreneurs, belonging, embedding, social spaces, discrimination

Table of Contents

1 Introduction.....	1
1.1 Aim and Research Question	1
1.2 Research Problem	1
1.3 Context.....	2
1.4 Clarification of Terms.....	4
1.5 Delimitations.....	5
1.6 Thesis Structure	5
2 Literature Review	6
3 Analytical Frameworks.....	9
3.1 Embedding.....	9
3.2 Social Spaces	10
4 Method	14
4.1 Methodology	14
4.2 Method of Data Collection	14
4.3 Strengths and Weaknesses of the Method	16
4.4 Validity and Limitations	17
4.5 Method of Analysis.....	18
5 Analysis	19
5.1 Findings	19
5.1.1 Reasons for Entering Self-Employment in the Falafel Trade.....	19
5.1.2 Experience of Entrepreneurship	21
5.1.3 Ethnicity and Ethnic Economies.....	21
5.1.4 Social Status and Self-Esteem of Being an Entrepreneur.....	23
5.1.5 Discrimination	24
5.1.6 Emotional Identification with the Host Society.....	25
5.2 Theoretical Discussion.....	26
5.2.1 Embedding	26
5.2.2 Social Spaces	28
6 Conclusion	31
7 References.....	33
8 Appendices	I
Appendix 1 Interview Protocols	I
Appendix 1.1 Interview Protocol 1	I
Appendix 1.2 Interview Protocol 2.....	III
Appendix 2 Interview Consent Forms (in Swedish).....	V
Appendix 3 Interview Transcripts	X
Appendix 3.1 Interview Participant 1	X
Appendix 3.2 Interview Participant 2	XVI
Appendix 3.3 Interview Participant 3	XXI
Appendix 3.4 Interview Participant 4.....	XXV
Appendix 3.5 Interview Participant 5	XXIX

1 Introduction

1.1 Aim and Research Question

The aim of the research is to *establish the ways in which immigrant entrepreneurs in the falafel business in Malmö position themselves in relation to the host society, and the extent to which they are embedded in different arenas of the society*. By exploring their life stories through qualitative interviews, the research seeks to understand how immigrants entrepreneurs relate to and feel about their milieu, establishing the degree to which they feel that they are part of the society, painting a nuanced picture of integration by focussing on how immigrants experience the host society, rather than how the host society experiences immigration.

The framing question for this research is:

How do immigrant entrepreneurs in the falafel business in Malmö position themselves socially and in what ways are they embedded in different arenas of the society?

1.2 Research Problem

In recent years, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of immigrant entrepreneurs in Sweden (Hjern 2004, 741). The globalised world economy and the post-industrial era have polarised the labour market into roughly two segments: high-level professional and managerial jobs and low-level service sector jobs (Ålund 2003, 78). In Sweden, the post-industrial changes to the structure of the economy happened in tandem with a decrease in the employment rate of the foreign born population. This can be partly explained by the changing nature of the economy. In industrial times, cultural and linguistic skills were not so important for employment, but in the post-industrial service economy these are given high priority by employers, with the consequence that the native population is preferred over immigrants (Devoretz 2004, 18-19). Furthermore, labour market discrimination and devalued human capital due to migration tend to reduce employment prospects for immigrants (Slavnic 2013, 31, Khosravi 1999, Wahlbeck 2008). Thus, the choices left to immigrants are: idleness with a dependence on social welfare, or self-employment (ibid.). The Swedish government encouraged the self-employment option, particularly during the 1990s, believing that it would contribute to economic growth and integration into society (ibid., Ålund 2003, 82).

It is commonly believed that entrepreneurship among immigrants is a fast track to integration, yet evidence indicates this is not the case, and there are many problems inherent in this route. On the

surface, it would appear immigrant entrepreneurship is positive for integration because, at the macro level it provides employment opportunities and broader economic growth and, at the micro level, because it enables immigrants better access to the labour market than they would have as employees (Hjerm 2004, 742). However, it has been demonstrated that immigrant entrepreneurs have a lower income than immigrant employees (ibid. 751), meaning that they are not necessarily ‘better’ integrated. Moreover, entrepreneurship does not improve immigrants’ living standards or reduce their social exclusion (Slavnic 2013; 32). At a more social level, immigrant businesses in Sweden are often small, and their cross-cultural interactions are confined to a minimal number of customer contacts (Hjerm 2004, 752).

This research fills a gap in our knowledge about the situation of immigrant entrepreneurs in Malmö. There is a dearth of scholarship on immigrant entrepreneurship in Sweden and elsewhere (Hjerm 2004, 742), and there are no existing studies specifically about the case of Malmö. The city is a particular case: as discussed in the next section, it is a diverse and outward-looking city, yet also riddled with integration problems.

It is also considered relevant that the research inquires into the experience of entrepreneurs of Middle Eastern background. All the interviewees are from the Levant: two from Lebanon and three from Iraq. This is relevant because:

“immigrants from countries in the Middle East are over- represented in self-employment compared to natives as well as compared to other immigrant groups in Sweden today. But it is well known that especially self-employed immigrants from the Middle East often have low earnings and that their businesses have lower survival rates than businesses established by natives” (Ahmed, Andersson & Hammarstedt 2009, 3).

This disadvantageous, position combined with the situation in Sweden and Malmö regarding segregation and Islamophobia (Anderson 2014, Schall 2016, Otterbeck 2002), make this group a pertinent case to examine.

1.3 Context

In the period following the Second World War, Sweden evolved from being ethnically homogenous to a multicultural society. In common with other Western European countries, Swedish private enterprises found themselves with a shortage of labour to meet the demands of a growing economy, and so labour immigration was encouraged (Cerna 2009, 9). This continued steadily until the end of the 1960s when

economic growth began to wane, and measures were introduced to control labour immigration. After 1970, when labour migration peaked at 77,000 people, labour migration essentially came to an abrupt halt (ibid.,10). These restrictions continued for many years after, and aside from minimal numbers of labour migrants, the only immigration came in the form of refugee migration and family reunion (ibid.). Despite this restrictive turn in labour immigration policy, Sweden pursued multicultural policies with the intention to facilitate integration (Geddes & Scholten 2016, 137, Otterbeck 2002, 149). During the financial crisis of 2008, the Swedish government switched labour immigration policy to a demand driven approach (Emilsson 2014, 134). This meant that employers had the power to import labour from outside Sweden, with almost no restrictions (ibid.,136). In 2015 during the so-called refugee crisis, Sweden opened its borders to 163,000 asylum seekers as part of a large scale humanitarian operation. However, 6 months later the borders were firmly closed (Barker 2017, 1). Measures were taken to stem the intake of asylum seekers (ibid., 3). In 2018, there were 2,543,420 people living in Sweden with a foreign background (SCB 2019a), out of a total population of 10,246,901 (SCB 2019b), This means that around a quarter of inhabitants have a foreign background. Sweden is, therefore, arguably a multicultural nation.

Malmö, the third largest city in Sweden, has a high immigrant population. The city suffered economic difficulties, beginning in the 1970s and lingering until the end of the 20th century, leading to a population decline of 35,000 people. After a low point in the 1990s, there was a push to reinvigorate the city, with the construction of the Øresund bridge connecting Denmark and Sweden, as well as Malmö University (Anderson 2014; 12). In more recent years, many people have migrated to Malmö, and 32% of the population were born in other countries. The most populous groups are from Iraq, the countries of the former Yugoslavia and Denmark (Malmö Stad 2016, 10). The population in Malmö in the 21st century increased from 262,397 in 2001, to 307,758 in 2013 (Anderson 2014; 12). The multiculturalism of Malmö is championed by many, including the former mayor of Malmö, Imlar Reepalu, himself originally from Estonia (ibid.), who “stresses that the demography of immigration is positive for Malmö” (Lawrence, 2006). The diversity exemplified in the city has been widely praised (Al Hassani 2018).

At the same time, Malmö has garnered a reputation for problems with violent crime and social unrest (Anderson 2014; 12). The socio-economic segregation of immigrants is identified as a serious issue, and is said to be behind the rise in crime rates. Unemployment amongst immigrants is high, which can partly be explained by labour market discrimination (Devoretz 2004, 21). It has also been highlighted that men and women of Arabic origins have low social and civic participation (Anderson

2014, 13). Tensions are mounting from native Swedes, with Malmö being accused of “failed integration” (ibid.). Anti-immigrant sentiments are on the rise in Sweden as a whole and Skåne, the county that Malmö is part of, has seen great increases in support for the Sweden Democrats, an explicitly anti-immigration party (Schall 2016, 170). Furthermore, Islamophobia, present since the 1980s, remains an issue, though it is thought to be improving (Otterbeck 2002).

Notwithstanding the segregation, a characteristic food of the immigrant community, falafel, is highly accepted all over the city. “[t]oday, the list of immigrant fast food is topped by an Arab vegetarian alternative – falafel” (Olsson, 2009). National Geographic’s ‘Best Trips 2018’ included Malmö for its gastronomy, citing falafel as its most popular street food (National Geographic 2018). Falafel was brought to Malmö by immigrants from the Levant, and has since become integral to the city’s contemporary identity (Rogowski 2015). The meal can be found in over 60 eateries in Malmö, ranging from food trucks to high-end restaurants (Burns 2018).

1.4 Clarification of Terms

Firstly, the use of the term ‘Swedish society’ and ‘host society’ are used synonymously throughout the research, and are catchall terms to describe the ‘conceptual understanding of the social order of the Swedish nation’. While Swedish society exists, in an ontological sense, the understanding of what constitutes ‘Swedish society’ is in many ways subjective; certain things that are part of Swedish society can be objective facts, but the very idea of Swedish society comprises many possible understandings and is a complex idea and therefore hard to grasp and pin down exactly. This is, on the one hand, disadvantageous because it is not so scientific to utilise a vague concept that underpins the study. On the other hand, it is advantageous because this is partly what the study seeks to understand: the perception of immigrant entrepreneurs towards ‘Swedish society’. In that sense, the study seeks to comprehend what it means to them and how they feel in relation to it and fit in, based on their own understandings that are expressed.

Secondly, ‘immigrants’ and ‘immigrant entrepreneurs’ are used extensively in this paper. Of the immigrant entrepreneurs interviewed in the study, all of them are of Arabic background. Three of the interviewees were born in Iraq and the other two were born in Lebanon (though of Palestinian families). Two of the Iraqis and one of the Lebanese people interviewed migrated to Sweden with their families when they were just a few years old, meaning that they were brought up in Sweden and are therefore arguably, in a cultural sense, Swedish. Thus, the term ‘immigrants’ could be contested in the cases of those that moved to Sweden at a very young age, as they have spent the majority of their lives

in Malmö. However, they are of immigrant background, thus the terms immigrants and immigrant entrepreneurs applies here.

Entrepreneurship refers to business ownership. The terms entrepreneur implies that an individual owns a business and is self-employed in this business.

1.5 Delimitations

Concerning delimitations, a case study of 5 immigrant entrepreneurs is a means to access the subject of immigrant entrepreneurship. As mentioned earlier, there are a limited number of studies into the outcome of entrepreneurship (Hjerm 2004, 742) and few in the Swedish context (Hammarstedt 2001, 149). It is beyond the scope of this research to attempt to access the broader subject of immigrant entrepreneurship, so in order to operationalise this study, it will focus on a case of 5 immigrant entrepreneurs in Malmö. This is seen as a relevant inroad into the topic: there are no studies into immigrant entrepreneurship in Malmö, which makes the case relevant, and 5 qualitative interviews will provide enough data to link to the agreements and debates within scholarship.

1.6 Thesis Structure

Firstly, a literature review is provided, which consists of the literature relevant to this research and the debates therein. Secondly, the analytical frameworks are outlined: two concepts are used to assess the data. Thirdly, the methods section explains the methodological standpoint, the method of data collection, as well as the method of analysis. Lastly, a conclusion summarises the study.

2 Literature Review

Relevant literature in the field of immigrant entrepreneurship includes: explanations for immigrant entrepreneurship, the nature of the employment, integration of immigrants, emotional identification with the host society, and the role of ethnicity. The literature largely focuses on but is not limited to Swedish scholarship, as similar trends can be found in literature from North-Western Europe in general (Baycan-Levent and Nijkamp 2009, 391).

There is a consensus among scholars that the high propensity of immigrants to become entrepreneurs is primarily due to the lack of alternative employment options. Ålund (2003) highlights that processes of globalisation and the changing structure of the global economy has led to Western European countries becoming post-industrial, service based economies with a segmented labour market that “simultaneously generates high-level professional and managerial jobs and a proliferation of low-skilled, low-income service jobs” (ibid., 78). Immigrants fit into these structures by providing useful services that the native population avoid, because they lack other opportunities (ibid.,78). Slavnic (2013), in a comprehensive review of the field of Swedish immigrant entrepreneurship, describes many studies that show that immigrants become self-employed for reasons of: structural discrimination; a lack of recognition of their previous education, experience and skills; the huge obstacles of entering the Swedish labour market; and the desire to avoid idleness and dependence on state welfare (ibid., 31). This lack of employment opportunities is echoed by other studies (Ålund 2003, Wahlbeck 2008, Khosravi 1999, Hjerm 2004), and the literature suggests that in most cases immigrants essentially have two options: unemployment or self-employment.

It would, however be overly simplistic to conclude that lack of choice is the sole motivation for immigrant entrepreneurship. Khosravi (1999) suggests that one of the reasons that immigrants opt for self-employment is due to the higher financial gains compared to immigrants in the general labour market (ibid., 494). However, a study by Hjerm (2004) showed that immigrant entrepreneurs fare worse than immigrants that are otherwise employed (ibid., 746). This is not to say that immigrant entrepreneurs do not work hard. Indeed, immigrant entrepreneurs work exceptionally hard, just for little reward (ibid., Wahlbeck 2008). Another reason for immigrants entering self-employment is the social status that it bestows. Wahlbeck (2008), in a study of Turkish entrepreneurs in Finland, demonstrated that the status of being a business owner elevates immigrants to a higher social standing that they could otherwise not attain (ibid, 59). This is, in part, echoed by Caglar (1995). In a study German-Turks in the kebab business in Berlin, it was found that entering the döner kebab trade was not solely a livelihood strategy; being self-employed was valuable for self-perception and prestige: they are not

‘just workers’, they are businesspeople. However, their social status is not recognised in wider society due to negative perceptions of Turks in Germany (ibid., 427). Indeed, reasons for immigrants entering self-employment are myriad and multiple causalities may exist simultaneously.

Discrimination is something continually faced by established entrepreneurs. Immigrant entrepreneurs experience discrimination from Swedes on a daily basis, as explained by Khosravi (1999) who found that potential customers chose not to engage with immigrants in business transactions on the grounds of their foreign background (ibid., 500). Ahmed, Andersson & Hammarstedt (2009) demonstrated that immigrants face discrimination when they attempt to purchase existing businesses. Slavnic (2013) notes that business owners face systematic discrimination from authorities (ibid., 31).

Ethnicity is an important subject to take into consideration when studying immigrant entrepreneurship and it features in much of the literature. Some research considers immigrants to be a homogenous group with regards to social integration and ignores the differences between them in terms of background and reason for migration (Slavnic 2013, 31). However, other research overemphasises ethnicity in immigrant entrepreneurship. The term ‘ethnic entrepreneurs’ is sometimes used synonymously with ‘immigrant entrepreneurs’ in the literature (Wahlbeck 2008, Hjerm 2004, Ålund 2003). This is problematic, as Rath and Kloosterman (2000) emphasise:

“Exactly what distinguishes ethnic entrepreneurship from entrepreneurship in general is seldom or never (theoretically) made explicit: does this adjective refer to the origins of the entrepreneur, his or her management strategies, personnel, clientele, products, or a combination of these? The majority of researchers assume without any further reflection that there are real differences, just because they are dealing with immigrants. Explanations for every aspect of immigrant entrepreneurial behavior are directly related to ethnocultural traditions, ethnic moral frameworks and ethnic behavior patterns, ethnic loyalties or ethnic markets. Thus, they reduce immigrant entrepreneurship to an ethnocultural phenomenon existing within an economic and institutional vacuum (ibid., 666).”

Indeed, research sometimes overstates the ethnic dimension as explanatory of immigrant entrepreneurship. Ålund (2003) also criticises research that inadvertently implies that ethnic entrepreneurs are representative of their ethnic group, become self-employed due to their ethnicity and seek to create an ethnic economy in support of this ethnic group (ibid., 83). The literature on immigrant entrepreneurship has a strong link to ethnic economies, which describe how immigrants, faced by discrimination and marginalisation, strategically use co-ethnic bonds of trust and loyalty to support economic endeavours. Co-ethnic networks are utilised and co-ethnics and family members are employed in businesses (ibid., Wahlbeck 2007, 545, Slavnic 2013, 29).

Integration is a prickly and complex subject within migration studies, and this research does not seek to focus on the large questions related to integration of immigrants. However, since the study explores the relationship and social position held by immigrant entrepreneurs, it is necessary to consider integration. As aforementioned, in some senses entrepreneurship supports economic integration, though it is not necessarily a better livelihood strategy, as immigrants who are employed tend to fare better than entrepreneurs, and cross cultural interactions are minimal (Hjerm 2004, 751-2). With regards to other types of integration, Becker (2009) argues that the emotional identification of immigrants with the host society is a crucial aspect of the integration process, yet it is largely neglected in scholarship which tends to focus instead on structural elements of integration, such as education and labour market participation. Immigrants' emotional identification with the host society is ordinarily seen to have not real consequences on the integration process and is confined to private feelings and individual psychology (ibid., 201). Such emotional connections are pertinent to this inquiry, and closely correlate with the concept of 'Embedding' outlined below in the analytical framework used for this study and to which we now turn.

3 Analytical Frameworks

Two analytical frameworks are used to assess how immigrant entrepreneurs navigate their position in Malmö society. The first is ‘embedding’ from Ryan and Mullholland and the second is ‘social spaces’ originally from Bourdieu.

3.1 Embedding

This section traces the evolution of ‘embeddedness’ from Polyani to Granovetter. It then discusses the conceptualisation by Ryan and Mullholland and how it functions as an analytical concept.

Polyani, an economic historian, was the first to use the term ‘embeddedness’. This initial conception refers to the way in which the idea of ‘economy’ is embedded in the social world and non-economic institutions (Polyani 1957, 245). In non-market, pre-capitalist societies economic activities were steered by principles such as reciprocity and redistribution. This differs from market societies where social institutions, which can include religion and the state, as well as economic institutions guide the economy (ibid.).

The concept of embeddedness was developed by Granovetter, who criticised the neoclassical ‘undersocialised’ perspective of individual rational-choice theory, which holds that economic activities are ‘disembedded’ from social and cultural relations (Granovetter 1985; 481-2). He contends, rather, that the behaviour of individuals cannot be isolated from social context, and they are also not inextricably bound to specific place they hold in the junction of social categories that they fit into. Thus, actions and behaviour of actors are embedded in the systems of on-going social relations (Granovetter, 1985: 487).

The work of Granovetter has been further elaborated in various fields, including migration. Within social science scholarship, including everything from economic geography to business studies, the concept has acquired new and multifarious meanings (Hess 2004, 166). With each new version of the concept, any comprehensive meaning becomes more diluted and blurry, and specific meanings are therefore contingent on the field of scholarship. Embeddedness has been utilised extensively in migration scholarship. For example, work by Korinek et al. (2005) demonstrated that decisions to migrate are embedded in specific social networks.

In their development of the concept, Ryan and Mulholland emphasise the dynamic and spatial nature of ‘embedding’. Embedding, used as a verb, differs from the static notion of embeddedness, “capturing a multi-layered process with different degrees of attachment and depths of trust and

reciprocity between actors within various social domains” (Ryan and Mulholland 2015, 1). As time passes, relations and bonds with people and places can evolve, making this a dynamic process (ibid. 4). It is also important to consider the spatial and material context that migrants find themselves. The socio-economic, cultural and physical characteristics of particular places influence the resources and opportunities available to immigrants, which will in turn affect the different arenas and networks to which they are embedded (ibid.). Embedding is also transnational, including migrants’ relations to their place of origin as well as to the place they have moved to (ibid.). This is a key advantage of embedding as an analytical tool: it is able to highlight the concurrent and changing relationships that migrants hold with different localities and peoples.

Embedding enables a deeper, multi-dimensional understanding of the migrant experience in the host society. Different arenas within the society can be identified to break down how someone relates to their milieu. Korinek et al. (2005) propose the following areas: household, workplace, neighbourhood and wider community. While there may be overlaps in these categorisations, immigrants can be embedded in certain spheres but not others, for example, they may feel embedded in workplace relations and at the same time disembedded from the wider community (Ryan and Mulholland 2015, 5). Furthermore, individuals have varying layers of connection: it is not as simple of being either embedded or disembedded. Rather, one could be embedded to a higher degree in one arena, while being embedded to a lesser degree in another. Moreover, the nature of embeddedness can differ, based on values such as: loyalty, obligation, trust, sociality, ease, effort, frequency and duration (ibid., 6). All of this allows for a nuanced view on immigrant integration that goes beyond binary notions of ‘integration vs. segregation’.

When applied to the interview data of the experiences of immigrant entrepreneurs in Malmö, this tool can shine a light on the various and complex ways in which they are embedded or disembedded in different spheres of life, providing deeper insight into their lives.

3.2 Social Spaces

This section starts by explaining ‘social spaces’ and other relevant concepts, drawing on the work of Bourdieu, following which studies are highlighted that have applied social spaces in research into immigrant entrepreneurship to demonstrate its applicability.

‘Social spaces’ is a useful tool for assessing how individuals are positioned in the social world and in relation to others. Bourdieu (1990) conceptualised the social world as a series of undetectable relations that “constitute a space of positions external to each other and defined by their proximity to,

neighbourhood with, or distance from each other, and also by their relative position, above or below or yet in between, in the middle” (ibid. 16). Social space can be explained by using the metaphor of geographic space that consists of different regions, divided up. This space is created so that those actors, groups or institutions that are closer together in the space share more in common than those that are situated further apart. Thus, the distances between them represent the social distances (ibid.). Ultimately, “Social space tends to function as a symbolic space, a space of lifestyles and status groups characterised by different lifestyles” (ibid.; 20).

An important concept linked to social spaces is ‘capital’. Capital is the total of amassed labour, in material or embodied form, which individuals or groups can exert on the social world (Bourdieu 1986, 16). In other words, it is what enables actors, groups and institutions to change or navigate their objective position within social reality. Capital comes in four forms. First, economic capital is money or material possessions that can be converted into money (ibid.). Second, cultural capital is, put simply, an individual’s skills and traits, cultural objects they own such as books, or objective institutionalised attainments like educational qualifications (ibid., 17). Third, there is social capital. Social capital is the cumulative potential resources a person has due to their network of relationships with other people and their membership to groups that enables them to access credit (ibid. 21). Fourth, there is symbolic capital, which is “the form that the various species of capital assume when they are perceived and recognised as legitimate” (Bourdieu 1990, 17). Thus, while symbolic capital is labelled as a specific form of capital, it is simply a legitimate and recognised form of the other types of capital. Other forms of capital can be converted into symbolic capital, for instance an educational certificate, which is considered cultural capital, is converted into symbolic capital and denotes prestige to the holder, thus it “frees its holder from the symbolic struggle of all against all by imposing the universally approved perspective” (ibid., 21). Subjects accumulate all the forms of capital and the relative weight of their combined capital creates their assets (ibid.), though all forms of capital can be converted into others (Bourdieu 1986, 24).

‘Habitus’ and ‘field’ are two more related concepts. Habitus is the subjective and individual traits, attitudes, physical and mental characteristics, and any other ways an individual is defined (Hardy 2014, 231). Agents become aware of their own social position due to habitus, as they classify themselves according to their social conditionings, choosing their attributes (clothes, hair, friends, drinks etc.) that fit with their social position. In other words, they select the goods and services that closely correlate with the position they hold. Furthermore subjects are able to assess the differences between representations and practices and social positioning, for example determining someone’s

social positioning based upon their accent (Bourdieu 1990, 19). 'Field' can be conceptualised in three ways. Firstly, it refers to the notion of a playing field, where a game is carried out. Secondly, it can be understood as a battlefield where a fight or struggle takes place. Lastly, as a geographical area, confined by boundaries (Hardy 2014, 231). A subject can master a field, by understanding how it works and struggling to obtain what is perceived as a better position (ibid., 232).

The concept of social spaces can be applied to the case of immigrant entrepreneurs in Malmö. By assessing their social positioning and where they fit in relation to other actors in society, as well as assessing the different forms of capital they hold and their habitus and field, a picture of their situation will become apparent.

Scholars studying immigrant entrepreneurship have used the concept of social spaces and its related concepts. Seminal research by Caglar (1995), which is highly relevant to the current research, used social spaces to examine the social positioning of German Turks in the döner kebab business. Caglar assessed the types of capital held by German Turks, finding that, while they possess essentially the same economic capital as Germans and almost the same cultural capital, they possess a deficiency in symbolic capital, because they are seen as having low status. Turks are perceived negatively in German society and, despite their economic achievements in becoming successful entrepreneurs, they are denied the recognition of symbolic capital. As a response to this, they have taken measures to 'Westernise' their restaurants, removing 'ethnic' trappings and opting for new and efficient technology, in order to give the restaurants the air of McDonalds. Interestingly, döner was selling better than ever as an ethnic fast food, and the market did not demand them to strive to Westernise their business. The reason they chose to do so was simple: trading economic capital, for symbolic capital so they can be recognised and seen as legitimate (Ibid.:425-8).

The approach taken in Caglar's research is used to study the situation in Malmö. By assessing the social positioning of immigrant entrepreneurs in relation to the host society, a picture of this narrative should emerge. However, it cannot be directly applied, as there is no evidence to suggest that entrepreneurs have attempted to 'Westernise' the falafel restaurants in Malmö.

Khosravi (1999) also applies Bourdieu's social spaces in a study of Iranian entrepreneurs in Stockholm, Sweden and found similar conversions of forms of capital. The social position of Iranian entrepreneurs in Stockholm is such that they hold economic capital, yet they lack the cultural capital that they desire. While entrepreneurship furnishes them with economic capital, this is in discordance with their cultural ambitions. The theorising of social spaces holds that a subject can shift fields, though this requires a conversion of one type of capital into another type (Khosravi 1999, 505). For example, if

one invests economic capital into education they can increase their symbolic capital. Iranian entrepreneurs have thus sought avenues to convert their economic capital into cultural capital, either by pursuing additional cultural activities or adapting their businesses to suit their cultural interests. Here we can observe, in line with Caglar's study, that entrepreneurs negotiate their social positions by converting one form of capital into another. These studies are helpful in guiding the analysis of the positioning of immigrant entrepreneurs in Malmö's falafel trade.

4 Method

4.1 Methodology

The methodological position taken in this research is constructivist. Constructivism is a perspective that holds the following tenets: the observer is not independent of the world being studied; the world contains ‘social facts’, i.e. truths that exist in the social world that are collectively agreed; knowledge production is influenced by the perspective of the researcher; information needs to be placed in its context to try to understand factors that have influenced an outcome; facts are value-laden and there is no ‘truth’ (Silverman 2006, 10-11).

Subjects like identity and belonging are suited to a constructivist approach. The research focuses on immigrant entrepreneurs’ experiences and feelings of belonging in the host society, which are by definition subjective. Constructivism enables the research to go deeper, deconstructing the intricacy behind the answers, recognising that the interviewer will have an impact on the research and will seek to understand the broader context of the data, asking ‘what factors could explain why the person answered the question in such a way?’

4.2 Method of Data Collection

The method for collecting primary data is in-depth qualitative interviews. Five interviews with immigrant entrepreneurs in the falafel business were conducted, inquiring into each person’s background, their experience in the falafel business in Malmö, and their relationship with the host society. In qualitative studies, the researcher interprets what they see, hear and understand (Creswell 2009, 176). Accordingly, the data is interpreted to paint a picture of the position held by immigrant entrepreneurs in relation with the Swedish society, their emotional connection and ‘embeddedness’ in different socio-economic arenas of their milieu. Interviews are more appropriate than a quantitative study as they allow enable a ‘deeper’ analysis (Silverman 2006; 39), which is ideal for making sense of the complex experiences and perceptions of immigrants and their relationship with the host society.

An emotionalist interview approach is employed. Positivist interviews seek objective facts, whereas emotionalist interviews seek genuine subjective experiences. The crucial element with emotionalist interviews is to connect with the interviewees and create a conducive environment to facilitate clear communication (Silverman 2006; 129). The name aptly fits the type of interview: it is an emotional undertaking between interviewer and interviewee to create ‘authentic’ knowledge, with less of a concern for ‘bias’ (Ibid.;129-30). This type of interview is best suited to the research, as the

research concerns the specific experiences of immigrants and how they relate to the host society, and emotionalist interviews are particularly focussed on highlighting subjective experiences.

A protocol was necessary for the interviews and to guide semi-structured interviews. An interview protocol includes: the heading (names, date, place), instructions for the interviewer so they followed a standard procedure, key questions for the interview, as well as prompt questions to enable the interviewee to elaborate more on the subject (Creswell 2009, 183). The interviews were semi-structured and the interviewer did not need to ask each question from the list provided, rather they were flexible to allow the conversation to take its own course. The questions were designed to be as open as possible, and it was necessary to continually reflect about the interviews and the data and make adjustments to the questions as needed (Creswell 2009,184). Two examples of the protocol can be found in the appendix, the first from the first interview and the second from the last, the difference between them being the development of the questions.

Of the five interviews, three were conducted in Swedish with the help of assistants. This was necessary because of the language barrier, as the researcher's Swedish is insufficient to conduct nuanced interviews. To have a more controlled data set it would have preferable to have one assistant, but difficulties of scheduling required the introduction of a second assistant. Concerning the actual method, the speech of the interviewees was not directly translated and relayed to the researcher by the person assisting, who would then respond with questions; rather, the people assisting actually conducted the interviews themselves. This decision was made in the light of the emotionalist approach employed, meaning the interviewer should attempt to form a bond with the interviewee to better facilitate discussion. As the researcher understands some Swedish, he interjected with questions that were seen as pertinent at the time. A detailed briefing was given to the assistants concerning the aim and background of the study, as well as the protocol for the interviews. For the purposes of this study, the two that helped with the interviews are identified as Assistant 1 and Assistant 2. This method, however, is acknowledged as less than ideal and these points are further elaborated in the limitations section below.

There are other details of the interviews that need to be mentioned. Each interview was recorded and is available upon request, as well as transcriptions of the interviews, which can be found in the appendix. The first interview (P1 2019) and the fourth interview (P4 2019) were led by Assistant 1, while the third interview (P3 2019) was conducted by Assistant 2, who also translated the interviews into English for the transcripts. The other two interviews were conducted in English by the researcher. A consent form was created stating that the participant will remain anonymous and their confidentiality

is ensured (Silverman 2006, 309). These can be found in the appendix. Each interview took place on the premises of the business owned by the person interviewed.

4.3 Strengths and Weaknesses of the Method

There are many strengths and weaknesses to this research. It is a strength that the phenomenon is sufficiently narrowed down and focussed and it is possible to say “a lot about a little” (Silverman 2006; 18). Five interviews with falafel sellers about their experiences are analysed and interpreted and are compared with the body of literature on immigrant entrepreneurship, thus the simplicity of the case being studied enables much elaboration. Another strength is that interviews are useful for “voices and experiences which they believe have been ignored, misrepresented or suppressed in the past” (Ibid.; 120) and this study highlights voices of people of Middle Eastern background, who hold a disadvantaged position in society, meaning that it is relevant to elucidate their experiences. A key weakness with interviews is the ‘human element’ that both the researcher and the interviewees bring in. The potential issue with interviewees is that, when talking about specific topics that are dear to their hearts, they bring in their own biases and “they will document their past in a way which fits it, highlighting certain features and downplaying others” (Ibid; 50). As this research examines feelings and emotions in relation to the place they are living, there is the likelihood that they will not necessarily provide a balanced and measured account. In the data analysis, there is the problem of ‘anecdotalism’ where the researcher uses a few cases to demonstrate a point and ignores contradictory data to bolster their case (ibid., 59, Creswell 2009, 192). Indeed, the researcher must be careful not to solely use data that supports their argument (ibid., 63) and present a holistic analysis.

Another weakness with the chosen method is that a narrative produced through a qualitative approach would be prone to subjective biases, whereas quantitative methods, such as surveys, tend to be more reliable due to the fact that they are consistent and the sample size is larger (Silverman 2006, 50). A quantitative study could certainly be applied to this research, yet this would not produce a ‘human’ picture of the subjects and would lack the depth of a qualitative study. According to Silverman (2006) “qualitative interviewing is particularly useful as a research method for accessing individuals’ attitudes and values - things that cannot necessarily be observed or accommodated in a formal questionnaire” (Ibid; 55). These two methods, quantitative and qualitative, could be combined to provide both a broad and deep analysis, yet such tasks should not be undertaken if there are time and resource constraints (Ibid.; 62), which in this case there are.

4.4 Validity and Limitations

One strategy to ensure validity is triangulation, meaning that other sources of data are used to validate the findings (Silverman 2006, 292). The data will thus be verified in comparison with other studies identified in the literature review, and used in the analysis to compare. Other strategies include using “rich, thick descriptions to convey findings” (Creswell 2009, 191), clarifying researcher bias and including contradictory data to demonstrate data that disproves the narrative (Silverman 2006; 59). Interview reliability means that the same results would be acquired through repeated research (Ibid.; 271), but by using qualitative interviews there is almost no way in which the study could be reproduced to get the same results. Thus, grounding the study in the existing literature safeguards the reliability of this research.

There are several further limitations of the study that need to be considered. Firstly, the interviews were difficult to obtain. There was little appetite from the business owners to participate in the study, either due to the language barrier (it was difficult to communicate the study to potential participants, as the researcher has limited Swedish language skills), many did not have the time, or simply were not interested. It would have been preferable to acquire more interviews, but it simply was not possible.

Secondly, there is the issue of the interview method. The data gathered are impacted by the fact that there were three different people that conducted interviews. Each interviewer will naturally have their own subjective manner of social interaction that will influence the outcomes of the communication and the information gained from the interviewees. On reflection, it would have been more scientific for solely the researcher to conduct the interviews and for the people assisting to directly translate everything.

Thirdly, the bias of the researcher and their profile of the researcher undoubtedly impacts the data collected (Creswell 2009, 197). The researcher is a white, British male with limited Swedish skills. While he visits falafel restaurants frequently, he is undeniably an outsider, meaning that trust was likely more difficult to attain. The interviewees may have answered the questions in a certain way due to a lack of trust or comfort with the researcher and their assistant, seeking to guard certain pieces of information that they perhaps consider risky to hand over to a researcher. However, that is not the impression that was received, and it seemed that interviewees were quite comfortable talking to the researcher and the two others assisting.

Another crucial limitation is the inexperience of the researcher and their potential bias (Creswell 2009, 192). This is the first time that the researcher has conducted serious research and interviews,

meaning that the questions asked and the manner with which the interviews were conducted was probably not so skilfully executed, though the researcher improved their technique as they went along. Initially the researcher was too ‘politically correct’ and was hesitant about asking sensitive questions about, for instance, racism for fear of being insensitive. The researcher realised, on reflection, that the act of hesitating to ask these questions and ‘tiptoeing’ around them could be perceived by participants as more insensitive than simply being straightforward with them. Despite every attempt to be objective in the research, there is no doubt that the researcher’s subjective outlook influenced the way that they understood and interpreted the data.

4.5 Method of Analysis

Data from the interviews was assessed in a systematic manner. Important concepts and topics from the literature review and theoretical framework were identified, and the transcripts of interviews were coded accordingly. The topics identified from the literature review used to assess the most important phenomena in the data were as follows: reasons for self-employment; experiences of entrepreneurship; ethnicity and ethnic economies; discrimination, both in an everyday sense, and at a structural level; and emotional identification with the host society. The material identified as relevant from the analytical framework on the concept of embedding was used to analyse the different arenas in the social world in which participants are embedded or disembedded; and a more abstract analysis was conducted of the social positions of participants, their situation regarding levels of the different forms of capital and how they negotiate their position within the host society.

5 Analysis

The analysis is separated into two main sections. In the first section the findings of the research are presented and compared with previous literature. The second section uses the analytical frameworks as a lens through which to discuss the findings.

5.1 Findings

5.1.1 Reasons for Entering Self-Employment in the Falafel Trade

One of the reasons that those interviewed entered the business is because there is a market for falafel and therefore an opportunity. Falafel is highly popular in Malmö, as explained by Participant 5: “It’s a big business in Malmö. You can open up 500 falafel places and there’s still a market” (Appendix 3.5, line 185-186). Similarly, Participant 2 noted:

“[w]hen immigrants came to Sweden and they saw that falafel is so popular in Malmö they were very shocked. And this thing gave a lot of work to these people. ‘Oh falafel is so popular. I can work with falafel. I can open a falafel place.’ It’s an opportunity for Middle Eastern people to get work, to have something, to get a dream maybe. To have their own thing in society. And it’s something that the society loves also. So it’s a good thing” (Appendix 3.2, line 43-47).

This can, on the one hand, be interpreted as positive: there is a demand for falafel in Malmö and so there are possibilities for immigrants to acquire employment. On the other hand, if this is the sole work opportunity available to immigrants, it reflects the general consensus in the literature that immigrants have no other option than self-employment (Ålund 2003, Wahlbeck 2008, Khosravi 1999, Hjerm 2004, Slavnic, 2013).

However, there is not enough evidence in the results to suggest that lack of opportunities is the principal driver, and there are other motivations for entering the trade. While some participants expressed that falafel provides opportunities for immigrants, not one of them mentioned that they had no other choice. Participant 1 did suggest that the cause for half of those immigrants opting to open falafel restaurants do so because “[t]hey don’t have a job” (Appendix 3.1, line 90), yet his and several other participants motivations were based on a love for the profession: “I like working with food... Yes, a passion” (Appendix 3.1, line 38). Participant 2 has a dream of being a fireman, yet chose to remain in the family business and now says “I like it, I never thought I would work with food. But I love it.” (Appendix 3.2, line 21). This passion for working with food and in the restaurant business is

also reiterated by Participant 5. Hence, it cannot be supposed that self-employment in the falafel business is entirely due to lack of employment options.

Indeed, family commitments also play an important role in entrepreneurship. Participant 3 previously held another job, but became self-employed because it was insufficient to support his family financially with a stay-at-home mum. This reflects the proposition of Khosravi (1999) that motivations for self-employment can be driven by higher financial gain (ibid, 494). However, the same participant explained that he could not hire any workers, as he cannot afford to pay their wages. He relies instead on family members who work for little money a finding that suggests that the business is not particularly lucrative and would therefore correspond with the work of Hjerm (2004), who found that immigrant entrepreneurs fare worse than immigrants who are employed by a firm (ibid., 746). Ultimately, the business motivation of Participant 3 is his family:

“[i]t's for my family. I want to help my family, so that they have jobs. My daughter has this place with her husband, and my other daughter has another place that she runs with her husband. We're a big family... A job is a job. That's what I've taught my children since they were 10, after school they came to help me in the restaurants. Now they're like me, they can't stay at home, they want to work, they're happy” (Appendix 3.3, line 55-62).

Similarly, Participant 2 explained: “I don't have anything else but my family. I can give them like 10 years of my life 100%. That's okay. They deserve that, of course. They help me with everything else” (Appendix 3.2, line 10-12).

Others entered the business as a direct result of their family. Participant 1 started working for his father in Iraq and, upon arrival in Sweden, started his own business. Participant 4 inherited his business from his father and Participant 5 started working for his grandfather's falafel restaurant from a young age before acquiring his own restaurant. Consequently, it becomes apparent that family plays a significant role in the lives of participants, influencing their decision either to support them in the present and the future, or in their entering work in the falafel business.

The findings suggest that self-employment in the falafel trade is not simply a mono-causality of lack of employment opportunities; rather there are multiple explanations as to why people decide on this route.

5.1.2 Experience of Entrepreneurship

Being an entrepreneur in the falafel business is tough. Participant 3 emphasised the hard work and dedication required to be successful, and has also acquired a high cholesterol level from working with oil for many years. Participant 1 said that he works every day, including public holidays, and Participant 5 also stated that he works a lot. Hjerm (2004) and Wahlbeck (2008) found that immigrants work more hours per week than full-time working employees. While this demonstrates how much hard work goes into running a small business, it does not necessarily strictly reflect that the hard work is entirely a negative consequence of entrepreneurship. Both Participant 1 and Participant 5 said that they are passionate about what they do. Participant 5 was particularly wedded to his work to the extent that “If my wife will take the children and travel a week I will be at work 24/7 and without thinking that I’m working” (Appendix 3.5, line 81-82).

5.1.3 Ethnicity and Ethnic Economies

Several participants described differences between Swedes and immigrants in terms of work.

Participant 3 revealed that:

“[i]t’s hard for Swedes to work with kebab and falafel. You have to work 30 days a month, you have to work many hours. It’s stress all the time. You run out in the morning buying vegetables and bread. We foreigners can’t live like Swedes. They work 160h a month, we can’t. We want to. I want to now. I want to just work 160h a month, more days free. Have a calm time with my family, but I can’t. So for Swedes it’s very hard to work in the restaurant. If they only work five days and close two days they don’t make enough money. I have worked almost six years in Kirseberg, every day alone for six years, never free. Getting up early, going to the store, going to the restaurant, make falafel, salads” (Appendix 3.3, line 98-105).

Much of the literature highlights that, as a result of the changes in the global economy, immigrants enter self-employment at the lower rungs of the economic ladder, working low-income service jobs that the native population tend to elude (Ålund 2003, 78). While the research continues to hold that there are multiple reasons for self-employment, there is undoubtedly an opportunity presented to immigrants in Malmö to fill a demand for cheap food - an opportunity that Swedes avoid. Participant 1 hypothesised that Swedish people do not want to have the burden of responsibility of owning their own place, preferring to be employed.

Despite these differences, there is a seeming link between the entrepreneurship in the falafel trade and accessing others in the society. Participant 5 went as far to say that falafel has been a bridge between immigrants and Swedish society:

“I think it was a big bridge. I have been there from the beginning and I have been there when my grandfather started the falafel place in Rosengård and, [back] then the teachers who were working there, that’s how it started, the teachers... came and were like ‘what is it, it costs 10kr, what the hell is it?’ And then they were standing in the line and then try it and ‘oh it was so good, and was so cheap’. On the weekend they come with their car and bring their family. And then the policemen came and they started to eat. And then it became really big. I was at work one time and we had a really big motorcycle club came... 50 bikers came and stood in line and asked ‘can I have one falafel?’ [laughter] So I think it was a big bridge, and I’m very proud that it’s the symbol of Malmö.”
(Appendix 3.5, line 168-179)

Similarly, Participant 2 was proud that: “80%-85% [of customers] are real Swedish people” (Appendix 3.2, line 50) and emphasised the importance of his employees being able to communicate in Swedish with customers. This conflicts with the findings of Hjerm (2004) who found that cross cultural interactions in the businesses are minimal and immigrants mostly interact with co-ethnics (ibid., 752). While the depth of the interactions and subsequent relationships between the participants and others in society may be shallow, owning a falafel restaurant evidently becomes a means for immigrants to form bonds with the wider community.

The experiences of Participant 3 are exemplary of how entrepreneurship in the falafel trade enables connections with many people in Malmö. While working for 7-8 years in his restaurant in a particular area of Malmö, “I became very famous. Two or three times Sydsvenskan [a local newspaper] came to my restaurant to write about me and my falafel. I started doing something special for my guests. I started taking their picture and placing it on the wall. I had over 500 pictures there” (Appendix 3.3, line 29-32). Later in the interview, he explains that “When you work, you get to know a lot of people” (ibid.) and he claims to know 2,000 people in the area his restaurant is located. All this shows that “migrants become more embedded in local social relations the longer that they stay in one social setting” (Korinek et al. 2005: 795). Indeed, Participant 3 invested efforts in connecting with the broader community of the area, so much so that his efforts have been publicly recognised.

While ethnicity is important, it does not play a crucial role in entrepreneurship. All the participants are of Arabic background, and so is falafel. Participant 1 worked with falafel in Iraq and Participant 3 displayed an understanding of the food, as he wanted to “show people my falafel”

(Appendix 3.3, line 26). The other three of the participants, while being born overseas, grew up in Sweden and entered the falafel business because their family was already established in the trade. There is undoubtedly an ethnic dimension to be observed here, as they are selling food from ‘their’ ethnic background, but ethnicity does not explain the entrepreneurship itself. Research often assumes that entrepreneurship is guided by some kind of “ethnocultural traditions” (Rath and Kloosterman 2000, 666), which ignores any broader socio-economic factors, such as those given previously.

There are hints of an ethnic economy, though the evidence is not strong enough to be sure about this. Participant 3 did offer that “[m]y family members will work for 5-6000kr, but I can't employ anyone for 15-16000kr because then there's no profit anymore”. Co-ethnics and family members are employed in ethnic economies (Wahlbeck 2007, 545), which is the case for this participant. Nevertheless, there is simply not sufficient proof in the data that there is an ethnic economy, and to ascertain such a thing would require much deeper and longitudinal research, which is beyond the scope of this research. Furthermore, Participant 5 made explicitly clear “I don’t want to have just Lebanese or Syrian people” (Appendix 3.5, line 209-210), which contradicts notions of an ethnic economy.

5.1.4 Social Status and Self-Esteem of Being an Entrepreneur

Being an entrepreneur or businessperson is a source of pride. Participant 1 stated: “[y]ou want to get your own place, rather than being hired by someone else” (Appendix 3.1, line 91) and participant 5 offered that “restaurant owners are very proud” (Appendix 3.5, line 64-65). Here, it is evident that the participants consider business ownership as a dignified and prestigious pursuit. Caglar (1995) found that self-employment provides immigrants with a positive self-image, since it is not merely a way to make a living but carries symbolic success and offers economic integration (ibid, 427). On top of this, it is important to consider the context of Sweden, where unemployment is stigmatised and having a job is crucial to individual wellbeing (Hjerm 2004, 751), a point to which Participant 3 concurs: “[w]e try to show people that are from my country that here, when you work, you get to know a lot of people. If you don't work you just sit at home watching TV, it's boring, you become alone, you can't live well. It's important to work with whatever” (Appendix 3.3, line 57-59). Therefore, it seems that another incentive for entrepreneurship is to gain a greater sense of pride and self-esteem.

Participant 5 was particularly proud of his diligence regarding employees, taxes and specific in-house policies he has implemented. Most participants emphasised their businesses are ‘white’, that is that they pay their taxes and do not pay employees ‘under the counter’. However, Participant 5 has gone a step further. He is recognised by Skatteverket (the Swedish tax office) for “paying the right

salary with everything, the rights for the employers, and the pension and everything” (Appendix 3.5, 147-148). He says his restaurant is one of the few restaurants in Skåne (the region that Malmö belongs to) that has been recognised for this, and he emphasised the importance of this practice and how he is demonstrating to other business owners to do things “the right way” (Appendix 3.5, 153). Furthermore, he also indicated that he has an in-house policy of hiring 50% women and has employees from a mixture of backgrounds. Wahlbeck (2008), in a study of Turkish business owners in Finland, found that immigrant entrepreneurship denotes a degree of social status and recognition that could not necessarily be acquired through other means (ibid., 59). Hence it could be argued that part of the reason for the importance placed on the diligence expressed by Participant 5 could be to gain recognition and an elevated social status that is denied to immigrants that are not entrepreneurs.

5.1.5 Discrimination

All participants said that they did not experience discrimination on an everyday, individual basis, apart from rare incidents. Participant 2 elucidated that:

“Of course it’s a problem. It’s a problem everywhere. But I don’t feel it, when I come to my job I don’t feel racism, I don’t see racism. Maybe some people have, but I’m thinking so little and I care so little about racism that I don’t see it. But if I go around and think “is he racist, his he, is he?” then I will see something, but if I don’t think about it I won’t see it, I won’t feel it. It’s like that.” (Appendix 3.2, line 60-63)

The other participants echo this to varying degrees. Participant 4 said he had never experienced anything racist and does not think about it, though he suggested that where his wife lives in Trelleborg there are a lot of Sweden Democrats and, while her neighbours are friendly towards him, “[t]here’s probably a lot happening behind my back, but I’ve never noticed anything.” (Appendix 3.4, line 48). Participant 5 said that he does not feel racism everyday, but one time a month “you’re meeting an idiot” (Appendix 3.5, line 131). Interestingly, he went on to say that he feels sad because he can speak perfect Swedish and people that recently come to Sweden and don’t speak such good Swedish are likely to have a tougher time (ibid.). Indeed, the three participants that grew up in Sweden are much more likely to have an easier time dealing with issues like racism as they have an advantage with regards to language compared to those that moved to Sweden later in life. However, the two participants that came to Sweden as adults did not see individual racist incidents as serious problem,

which differs with the findings of Khosravi (1999), whose study found that Iranian immigrant entrepreneurs in Stockholm experience racism regularly.

The majority of participants did not express concerns with structural discrimination, aside from Participant 1 who had a problematic relationship with the authorities that he attributed to racism. “[w]hen you need something from the authorities then you feel it [being an immigrant]. When you look for a job, for a flat, buy a house, Skatteverket (the tax office), Miljöhälsan (environmental agency), migration [agency], Vårdcentral (health clinic)” (Appendix 3.1, line 129-131). Participant 1 became particularly emotional about this point and said that the authorities checked his business every week, looking for problems. When asked whether this constitutes racism, the same participant stated “[y]es, but hidden. Not in the streets, it’s hidden. Behind the walls.” This quote succinctly summarises this anecdote: in everyday interactions he experiences little or no racism, yet when dealing with authorities and navigating the different societal institutions he feels racism. However, this stands in contrast to the feelings expressed by Participant 3, who said that “[t]here is no black and white here in Sweden. Everyone's the same. If you go to hospital, to school, they treat everyone the same. No difference at all. In Arab countries there is this, Arabs showing each other they are different. Arabs aren't good to each other, Swedes are good towards each other. I've seen this with my eyes” (Appendix 3.3, line 74-77). None of the other participants, when asked about their relationships with the authorities, said that they experienced any problems or felt that they were treated particularly differently. Participants 2 and 5 explained that the authorities are unforgiving and disconnected when it comes to regulations, penalising them for minor issues without any opportunity for them to explain or make amends. Participant 2 said that this was nothing to do with his business in particular and it is the same for everyone. Thus, there is no consensus among participants about the relationship with the authorities. For Participant 1 the authorities display structural racism, but the others did not express similar concerns. Slavnic (2013) highlights the distinction between actual and perceived racism. Participant 1 perceives racism from authorities, though it cannot be established if this is actual racism (*ibid.*, 32). In any case, racism has deeply affected the perception of Participant 1 towards Sweden as a whole.

5.1.6 Emotional Identification with the Host Society

Most participants identified as Swedish, the exception being Participant 1. The reason Participant 1 does not feel Swedish is due to his negative relationship with the authorities: “[e]ven if I have Swedish citizenship, I don’t feel Swedish. The authorities, every time I call... when they come around and check, I feel the difference” (Appendix 3.1, line 117-118). Becker (2009) notes that studies of

immigrant integration tend to focus on structural aspects of integration, such as education and labour market integration, while the emotional identification of immigrants with the host society is largely ignored (ibid., 201). Examining the case of Participant 1, it can be observed that even though he speaks fluent Swedish, has Swedish citizenship and is not only integrated into the labour market as an employee but an employer, he still does not consider himself Swedish. Hence, even though all the right boxes are ticked with regards to conventional indicators of integration, the consistent feeling of rejection by state authorities has given him the feeling that he does not belong. This is in juxtaposition with Participant 3. “I feel like a part of Sweden. I live here and have lived here for a long time. My family really likes Sweden. I can say one thing: I am Swedish, but Muslim. There are a lot of people who are Swedish but Muslim” (Appendix 3.3, line 169-171). Participant 3 also expressed a feeling of fair treatment in public institutions that could explain this identification. In this line of thinking: if one feels part of the public institutions of the country, then one feels they belong.

Indeed, the relations with the authorities could explain the identification with the host society. Participant 5 said “I know I’m Swedish because I’m giving a lot to the society. I’m raising my children to be good people. We have 35 employees that are getting meals and paying taxes, and I’m paying taxes, so no one can tell me that I’m not Swedish” (Appendix 3.5, line 121-123). We can infer from this and the previous excerpts that Swedish identities, for our participants, is tied to the relations with the state authorities. Those that feel comfortable with and included by them feel Swedish, while those that feel rejected do not feel Swedish.

5.2 Theoretical Discussion

The two analytical frameworks are applied, embedding and social spaces, to review the findings from the interviews.

5.2.1 Embedding

Most participants, directly or indirectly, highlighted the embeddedness of their business in family relations. As elaborated in Section 5.1.1, all participants expressed strong family bonds, and how this influences their decision either to begin working in the falafel business, or to support them in the present and the future. Loyalty and obligation are two values that can be attributed to this behaviour.

Regarding embedding in family relations in the place of origin, Participant 4 is disembedded. Participant 4 said that his family in Sweden has contact with his relatives in Iraq but he does not. “My family has a lot of contact, but I was a kid when we left and I don't have any contact” (P4 2019, 3).

Geographical distance could therefore be said to play a key role here. Ryan and Mullholland (2015) found the assumption that geographical proximity is necessary to maintain close ties is not strictly true, and migrants can maintain close relationships despite vast geographical distances (ibid., 8). However, in this case it is evident that the distance has impacted this individual's connections to family in their place of origin. However, this could be explained by the fact he emigrated from Iraq in early life, meaning any relationships with family members did not get a chance to develop.

Participant 5, On the other hand, feels a close connection to his family in Lebanon, as well as the culture and the place itself, though over time it has changed a little. "I don't feel like it's home but I have a very strong connection to everything: food, music, my relatives live there" (Appendix 3.5, line 110-111). When he was younger, he visited often to find inspiration, but "[n]owadays it's like every two years, but before it was like 3 times a year. No I don't have time. I wish I could visit more often" (ibid., 4). While he retains a strong feeling of embeddedness in his place of origin, his relation has somewhat changed due to the inability to visit so frequently, demonstrating the dynamic nature of embedding.

Other participants, however, have different ways in which they are embedded in their place of origin. Participant 3 decided never to go back to Lebanon after fleeing for a second time when war broke out again in 2006. Participant 4 said "[m]y family are there probably every other year, but I never go there because I don't know anyone. I'd rather go to vacation in another warm, nice country" (Appendix 3.4, line 882-84). Hence these participants show disembedding from the physical locality of their place of origin.

Another changing form of embedding can be found in friendship ties. Participants 4 and 5 discussed that their friend circles are comprised of people from various backgrounds, and Participant 5 said "[s]o we're very mixed and I think we're on the same level in what we think and we feel very proud to be from where we come from, but we're very proud to be Swedish too" (Appendix 3.5, line 93-94). Here, mixed cultural identities can be observed, but the participant feels that he and his friends have a healthy relationship with their identities. Both participants, however, mentioned that they do not see their friends so often anymore due to family commitments. Again, through the application of embedding participants demonstrate that their relationships change over time, and embeddedness is never static (Ryan and Mullholland 2015, 4).

5.2.2 Social Spaces

Falafel restaurant owners enhance their economic and symbolic capital by supplying a demand for vegetarian and vegan food. Participant 4, when asked about the future of his business, said

“Yes I’m trying to expand, we plan to do more vegetarian and vegan [options], there are so many new products: vegan kebab, chicken, sauces, and even mayonnaise. In Malmö you find everything.”

(Appendix 3.4, line 30-31)

This suggests that Participant 4 is responding to a demand from consumers for vegetarian and vegan options, and it can be supposed that the reason is for financial gains. However, it could also be argued that changing the form of the food is a trade off for symbolic capital. Caglar (1995) found that German Turks in the kebab business attempted to rectify their devalued symbolic position in society by adapting their restaurants to what they perceived as mainstream norms, even though they stood to potentially lose financial capital in the process (Caglar 1995, 427-8). Applying this line of thought to this research, it is fitting that, immigrant entrepreneurs are changing the form of the food to what the mainstream desires, and therefore potentially enhancing their social capital. By adapting cultural food, they are trading cultural capital, into symbolic capital (Bourdieu 1990, 21). While the obvious reason for adapting the food would be to enhance financial capital, it could also be said that this adaptation seeks to change the connotation of immigrants because, as aforementioned, swathes of the population perceive immigrants in Malmö negatively (Andersson 2014, 13). Thus, if the food is changed to agree with the mainstream, then immigrants gain more recognition and legitimacy that they lack.

Falafel reduces the distance in the social space between immigrants and Swedish society. As explained in section 5.13, Participant 5 offered that falafel has been a bridge between immigrants and Swedish society. While falafel could certainly be said to be a livelihood strategy for immigrants in Malmö, it also arguably constitutes a symbolic tool that brings the host society closer to the immigrants that live in it. In Bourdieu’s (1990) theorisation of social spaces, the proximity of actors, groups or institutions to one another denotes their similarities and differences: if they are closer to one another, they share more similarities, while if they are further apart they have less in common (ibid., 16). In Malmö the socio-economic segregation of immigrants is a severe issue (Anderson 2014, 12), and therefore this literal segregation corresponds to the social space where it could be said that there is a big gap between immigrants and Swedes in Malmö, meaning that there is little common ground. Falafel, as perceived by Participant 5, has helped to reduce this distance and has brought the groups closer together.

Nevertheless, it is apparent that there remains a distinction between immigrants involved in the falafel businesses and Swedish society with regards to the positions occupied in the 'field'. In section 5.1.3, Participant 3 put into words his reflections about why Swedes do not work in falafel businesses: that immigrants cannot be like Swedes and work less. Seemingly there is a distinction to be made between the lifestyles of the different groups (Bourdieu 1990, 20), as immigrants are not able to occupy the same social positioning and have the same lifestyle. 'Field' refers to the abstract idea of a playing field where a game is held, a battlefield where a fight takes place and a confined geographical area (Hardy 2014, 231). The unequal distribution of capital within the field stems from the effect of capital, that is, "the appropriation of profits and the power to impose the laws of functioning of the field most favourable to capital and its reproduction" (Bourdieu 1986, 19). In other words, the imbalanced structure of the field is produced by capital, which reproduces and retains capital and is therefore denied to segments of the population. Thus, immigrants hold an unfavourable position within the field and cannot live like the native population that hold, for example, proportionally higher cultural capital, which provides them with access to more advantageous positions within the field. Indeed, when asked whether there is a distance between falafel businesses and Swedish society, Participant 2 responded, "yes, we're separated"(Appendix 3.2, line 105).

One participant highlighted that cultural capital is beneficial for gaining economic capital. Participant 2 thought that the high number of "real Swedish people" (Appendix 3.2, line 50) frequenting his business was due to the fact that his employees speak good Swedish and interact with customers, making them feel welcome. This highlights that one form of capital can be converted for another. In this case the cultural capital, or skills (Bourdieu 1986, 17) in the form of language, is instrumental in bringing in customers and therefore acquiring economic capital.

It is apparent that to achieve an advantageous social positioning, immigrant entrepreneurs have to understand and navigate the field of the Swedish state and its bureaucratic mechanisms. The matter of taxes and relations with the authorities is significant for several of the participants and was something that they felt they had to manage well in order to cope and be successful. Participant 4 explained that *"[t]he problem with immigrants in Sweden is that you don't know anything: in your home countries there's no system, there's no tax office, no tax, you can drive against a red. But if you get mixed in with politics it's a problem. Here it's the other way around. You can get involved with politics, you can say whatever you want, you can say you're a racist, no one cares, but if you don't pay taxes, everyone has to pay tax, if you don't pay, it's wrong. That's how the system works."* (Appendix 3.4, line 69-74)

The importance of understanding and adapting to the field is crucial. The field is comprised of social structures (Bourdieu 1989, 14) and is a 'space' in which 'the game' or the 'battle' is carried out (Hardy 2014, 230-1), which in this case is the organisation of Swedish Society. "A subject can master a field, by understanding how it works and struggling to obtain what is perceived as a better position" (Hardy 2014, 232). Indeed, immigrants must grasp and adapt themselves to the functioning of the bureaucratic mechanisms at the heart of the Swedish state in order to 'play the game' and attain an improved social positioning.

Moreover, it is essential to navigate state bureaucracy in order to be recognised as legitimate in society. Participant 5 stated: "I'm paying taxes, so no one can tell me that I'm not Swedish" (Appendix 3.5, line 123). Applying the same logic, this can be interpreted as: 'to be accepted legitimately as part of the society, one must conform to the norms and values enshrined in the social structures of the field', which in this case is the state taxes and organisation. Indeed, Participant 1's feelings of rejection by state authorities have led him to feel that he is not Swedish. With this in mind, the field of Swedish state mechanisms is one denoting symbolic value to those that comply.

One of the participants is effectively trading economic capital for symbolic capital. In section 5.1.4 of this study, it is shown that Participant 5 is proud that he has been recognised by the Swedish tax office for his diligence regarding taxes and employees. By ensuring he pays his workers and their pensions to a certain standard, he is sacrificing economic capital to gain recognition. Thus, Participant 5 is converting one form of capital for another (Bourdieu 1986, 24). He has no obligation to go the extra mile for his employees, but by paying them decently and ensuring their pension and other payments are covered, he is seeking to attain the recognition that goes along with it, or in other words, to build symbolic capital.

6 Conclusion

There are various conclusions to be drawn from this research. The main one is that the experiences and perceptions of those in the falafel trade are complex and do not conform to a single narrative. The reasons for immigrants entering self-employment in the falafel business are myriad and overlapping. Previous literature suggests that the main motivation is the lack of available employment opportunities, yet participants in this research indicated that this was not a major contributing factor to their endeavours as entrepreneurs in the falafel business. While falafel arguably presents an opportunity for immigrants to gain employment in Malmö, their decision to opt for this route was also based on an overlapping mixture of: passion for the work, higher financial gain, family obligations/commitments and social status and self-esteem.

Discrimination is not a serious issue at an everyday individual level, though the relations with the authorities can be problematic. Aside from isolated incidents of racism, participants did not feel racism “[i]n the streets” (Appendix 3.1, line 129) was a serious problem to them. Regarding structural discrimination, however, one participant claimed to experience racism from the authorities to the extent that he did not feel Swedish. Experiences of the other participants contradict his perception, and all others felt they were Swedish and identified with the society, meaning no clear conclusion can be drawn here. Participant 5 highlighted that while he was fortunate to have grown up in Sweden and speaks perfect Swedish, he worries about how recently arrived immigrants that do not have such good Swedish skills experience racism. This points a direction for future research. Not only did three out of the five participants grow up in Sweden, but all of them are entrepreneurs meaning that they do not have to contend with labour market discrimination faced by other immigrants (Devoretz 2004, 21). Thus, their experiences are likely to be more positive as they are excluded from an arena where discrimination is rife. It would therefore be fruitful to examine the perspective of immigrant workers in the falafel businesses, who are likely to have a different perspective.

Findings about embedding were mixed. Familial ties were significant for the participants, and were often instrumental in their entering the falafel business. At the same time, some participants had little or no embedding in their place of origin. Indeed, for some their connection to the place of origin changed over time and nowadays they had little connection. The same can be said for friends, and two of the participants that grew up in Sweden said that they see their friends much less than they used to due to familial or work commitments. Crucially, their endeavours in the falafel business led to greater embedding in the wider community, as they have met more people and one had become famous in his own right.

Participants occupy varying positions in the social spaces. It is apparent that immigrant entrepreneurs hold an unfavourable position in the social spaces and cannot occupy the same positions as Swedes, due to lower cultural and symbolic capital. However, participants showed that they were attempting to enhance their symbolic capital, either by adapting the food they sell to mainstream demands in the case of Participant 4, or by going above and beyond in paying employees' taxes as in the case of participant 5. An important finding was that immigrant entrepreneurs must navigate the field of Swedish state bureaucracy in order to cope and be successful, but also to be recognised as legitimate. It seems that 'Swedishness' is tied to relations with state authorities and one must be on good terms with them to consider themselves as Swedish.

This research has elucidated the experiences of immigrant entrepreneurs in Malmö, but more research would be useful. As there is a lack of scholarship into immigrant entrepreneurship in general (Hjerm 2004, 742) and none exists in the context of Malmö, this research has sought to fill this gap and highlight the situation of immigrant business people in the falafel trade, elaborating on their lives and experiences. In crossing this threshold, this primary study has created a solid basis to go deeper. A study with a broader and deeper scope, using more data is advised. Furthermore, a study exploring the situation of immigrant workers in the falafel business, as opposed to entrepreneurs, is relevant, as they are more likely to face issues such as labour market discrimination.

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8 Appendices

Appendix 1 Interview Protocols

Appendix 1.1 Interview Protocol 1

Name of interviewer(s): Jonas Pour Mozzaffar, James Morrison-Knight

Name of interviewee: Firas

Date: 2019/04/30

Location: Falafel Baghdad

Important notes:

- This research examines the experiences and feelings of immigrant entrepreneurs in the falafel business in Malmö
- The study aims to find out the way they socially position themselves in relation to the host society and the different arenas of the host society and place of origin, in which they are embedded
- Questions are formulated accordingly, and the questions listed below should be used as a guideline but does not need to be followed strictly
- An ‘emotionalist’ approach to interviewing is needed. Through the interview process the interviewer should aim to form a bond with the interviewee to create a comfortable environment for the interviewee
- The interviewee must be informed about the research and that they will remain anonymous and confidential, and the interviewee must sign the consent form otherwise the interview cannot take place.

Interview Questions

Background of participant

- What’s your place of origin?

- (If not Swedish) How, when and why did you come to Sweden?
- What is your education and work background?
- Did you work in the falafel business in your home country?

Falafel business

- Why did you get into the falafel business?
 - Why falafel? Is this something that you are passionate about?
- Were there any other jobs or businesses you wanted to do before?
- How is the competition among falafel businesses in Malmö?
 - There are a lot of falafel restaurants in Malmö now, is it hard to compete with other businesses?
 - Do you have contact with other people in the business?
- How do you see the future for your business?
 - If you could, how would you change your business?
- How are the relations with the authorities?

Relation to Swedish society

- Falafel has become very popular in Malmö. How do you feel that this has affected immigrants in Malmö?
 - Has the popularity of falafel impacted the way that immigrants are treated by the host society?
 - How do you think that Swedes and other people in Malmö think and feel about falafel? And how do they feel about immigrants?
- Do you feel that you have achieved deserved recognition for being a business man, in the eyes of society

Appendix 1.2 Interview Protocol 2

Name of interviewer(s): James Morrison-Knight

Name of interviewee: Sadoo

Date: 2019/05/20

Location: Laziza

Important notes:

- This research examines the experiences and feelings of immigrant entrepreneurs in the falafel business in Malmö
- The study aims to find out the way they socially position themselves in relation to the host society and the different arenas of the host society and place of origin, in which they are embedded
- Questions are formulated accordingly, and the questions listed below should be used as a guideline but does not need to be followed strictly
- An ‘emotionalist’ approach to interviewing is needed. Through the interview process the interviewer should aim to form a bond with the interviewee to create a comfortable environment for the interviewee. The interviewer should read the situation and allow the interviewee to talk about what they feel is important to them
- The interviewee must be informed about the research and that they will remain anonymous and confidential, and the interviewee must sign the consent form otherwise the interview cannot take place.

Interview Questions

Background of participant

- When did you start in the falafel business?
- Before you had your own falafel business in Malmö, what did you do?
- What is your place of origin?
 - (If not Swedish) Why and how did you come to Sweden?
 - Did you come by yourself? With your family?
 - What is your education and employment background (in your place of origin)?
 - How many languages do you speak?

- How connected do you feel to your background?
 - Do you have contact with people in XXX country?
 - Where are your friends in Malmö from?

Falafel business

- Why did you get into the falafel business?
 - Why falafel? Is this something that you are passionate about?
 - Were there any other jobs or businesses you did in Malmö?
- There are a lot of falafel shops in Malmö. How are your relations with the other businesses?
 - How many falafel shop owners do you know? How much contact do you have with them?
 - How is the competition between businesses?
- How do you see the future for your business?
 - Do you want to expand the business? Or get a bigger restaurant?

Relations with Swedish society

- Tell me a bit about your social network
 - Where do you friends come from? Are they ‘Swedish’?
 - Do you have strong connections with your place of origin (family etc)?
 - How are the connections with people of the same ethnicity?
- How connected do you feel with Swedish society?
 - Do you feel Swedish? Do you feel included in the society?
 - Do you feel accepted (welcomed) or rejected by Swedish society?
 - What is your experience with racism in Malmö?
 - How is your relationship with the authorities (Skatteverket etc.)?
- Falafel is popular in Malmö. How has this affected the relationship between Arab immigrants and Swedish society?
 - How do you think Swedes feel about falafel? How do they feel about immigrants?
 - Has falafel changed anything about the relationship between immigrants and Swedish society?
- As a businessman, how is the social status that goes with it?
 - Do you feel it is recognised by the society?

Appendix 2 Interview Consent Forms (in Swedish)




Samtycke för deltagande i intervjuforskning

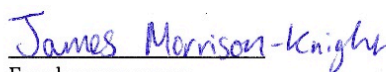
Jag vill frivilligt delta i ett forskningsprojekt, som utförs av James Morrison-Knight från Malmö University. Jag förstår att projektet är utformat för att samla information om falafelverksamheten i Malmö.


1. Mitt deltagande i detta projekt är frivilligt. Jag förstår att jag inte kommer att få betalt för mitt deltagande. Jag kan sluta deltagande när som helst utan några problem.
2. Jag har rätt att avslå för att svara på någon fråga eller att avsluta intervjun.
3. Deltagande innebär att intervjuas av James Morrison-Knight. Intervjuen kommer att ta cirka 45 minuter. Anteckningar kommer att skrivas under intervjun och intervjun kommer att spelas in.
4. Jag förstår att mitt namn eller det företag som jag ingår i inte kommer att identifieras i forskningen och att min anonymitet och konfidentialitet som deltagare i denna studie kommer att förbli säker.
5. Endast forskaren, forskarens handledare och examinator får tillgång till tejp, transkriptioner eller anteckningar som tagits under intervjun.
7. Jag har läst och förstått förklaringen till mig. Jag har svarat på alla mina frågor till min tillfredsställelse och jag accepterar frivilligt att delta i denna studie.
8. Jag kommer att få en kopia av detta samtycke formulär.



Min signatur


Undersökarens underskrift


Mitt tryckta namn


Forskarens namn


Datum


Datum

För ytterligare information eller frågor, kontakta forskarens handledare:

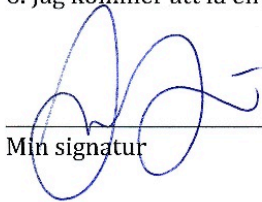
Dr. Sayaka Osanami Törngren
sayaka.torngren@mau.se

Samtycke för deltagande i intervjuforskning

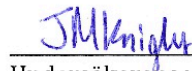
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5. Endast forskaren, forskarens handledare och examinator får tillgång till tejp, transkriptioner eller anteckningar som tagits under intervjun.
7. Jag har läst och förstått förklaringen till mig. Jag har svarat på alla mina frågor till min tillfredsställelse och jag accepterar frivilligt att delta i denna studie.
8. Jag kommer att få en kopia av detta samtycke formulär.

Min signatur



Undersökarens underskrift



Sadoo Iskandarani

Mitt tryckta namn

James Morrison-Knight

Forskarens namn

2019-05-20

Datum

2019-05-20

Datum

För ytterligare information eller frågor, kontakta forskarens handledare:

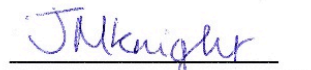
Dr. Sayaka Osanami Törngren
sayaka.torngren@mau.se

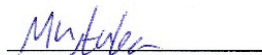
Samtycke för deltagande i intervjuforskning


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8. Jag kommer att få en kopia av detta samtycke formulär.

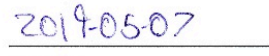

Min signatur


Undersökarens underskrift


Mitt tryckta namn


Forskarens namn


Datum


Datum

För ytterligare information eller frågor, kontakta forskarens handledare:

Dr. Sayaka Osanami Törngren
sayaka.torngren@mau.se



Samtycke för deltagande i intervjuforskning

Jag vill frivilligt delta i ett forskningsprojekt, som utförs av James Morrison-Knight från Malmö University. Jag förstår att projektet är utformat för att samla information om falafelverksamheten i Malmö.

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8. Jag kommer att få en kopia av detta samtycke formulär.

Mustafa

Min signatur

JMKnight

Undersökarens underskrift

Mustafa

Mitt tryckta namn

James Morrison - knight

Forskarens namn

30/04/19

Datum

2019-01-30

Datum


För ytterligare information eller frågor, kontakta forskarens handledare:

Dr. Sayaka Osanami Törngren
sayaka.torngren@mau.se


Samtycke för deltagande i intervjuforskning

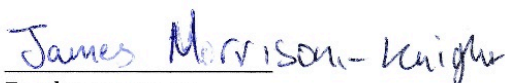
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Appendix 3 Interview Transcripts

Appendix 3.1 Interview Participant 1

Interview with Firas (Participant 1)

This interview was conducted by Jonas Pour Mozzaffar and translated by Timmy Larsson. The text in bold font is Jonas' speech, and the text in normal (non-bold) font is the speech of participant 1.

1 **What's your education and what jobs have you had?**

2 I worked in restaurants all my life. When I was 15, my Dad had a restaurant in Baghdad, I worked for
3 him. My Dad sold the restaurant and I continued to work there. When I came to Sweden in 2006 as an
4 asylum seeker I bought a wagon, a pasta wagon, after 3 months. I worked outside of the Migration
5 Office, it went really well. I sold it, and bought a restaurant on Bergsgatan.

6 **Which restaurant?**

7 Campus Falafel. Then we sold it, and bought this place. It goes well.

8 **So you are from Baghdad?**

9 Yes, from Baghdad.

10 **How old are you?**

11 38

12 **And so you were... How old were you came here?**

13 25

14 **Why did you come to Sweden?**

15 There was war.

16 **You came here directly?**

17 No not directly, the war started in 2003. I stayed there but it got worse, there were too many bombs and
18 I thought: I need to go.

19 **Why Sweden?**

20 My sister lives here. She came in 1991 and married a man, he's also from Iraq. Not because of the war,
21 she works as a teacher.

22 **So it was practical?**

23 Yes exactly, because I knew someone

24 **When you worked in Baghdad, did you also work with falafel?**

25 Yes, falafel and shawarma. It's popular food

26 **Your Dad worked with the same thing?**

27 Yes

28 **And specialised in falafel in Iraq?**

29 It's like here in Sweden: it's healthy, it's cheap, you can eat it every day. You can't eat meat or pizza
30 every day. It doesn't work. At the same time, this is fresh and cheap. And you know, in every country
31 there are the rich and there are... there's a limit...

32 **You mean workers?**

33 Yes, workers. They can afford to eat falafel every day. A lunch costs 30 kronor, 40 kronor with a
34 drink. Or you can pay 200 krona and get a little piece of fish, a piece of broccoli and one potato.

35 **Were there other jobs you wanted to do?**

36 No, I like working with food. Before I taste it, I know how it tastes.

37 **So you have a passion?**

38 Yes, a passion.

39 **So you had a wagon first, did you sell falafel?**

40 No pasta

41 **So you worked with falafel here and when you owned Campus?**

42 Yes

43 **How is the falafel business/competition in Malmö?**

44 You know... Arabs have tasted falafel before, they know how it should taste. Swedes don't know how
45 falafel should taste. They can't know if the falafel is good or not, they have to go around Malmö and

46 taste here and there. 3, 4, 10 times, 100 times. Which is better, which is the best in Malmö? I know how
47 to cook falafel, I know how it should taste. It's fresh or it's old, I know. Sydsvenskan did a
48 competition. They came here to eat, they didn't say anything, but we came in 2nd place. They tried 38
49 places in the whole of Skåne.

50 **Were there fewer falafel restaurants in Malmö before?**

51 No

52 **There are more?**

53 Yes

54 **Why?**

55 I don't know

56 **I heard there was a price crash , falafel rulle was 15 kronor...**

57 Yeah they will say that. The meat, shawarma for example. They sell it for 45 kronor, but here it costs
58 55 kronor. When people taste it, they see the reason why it costs more. The quality of the meat,
59 Swedish meat, is better. And other places don't do it the same.

60 **The others don't have the same passion?**

61 No

62 **Is there competition with others?**

63 No. I won't lower my prices like some others. Why? Quality, passion, hard work. People don't think
64 about 5 or 10 kronor, it's not a big thing if they can eat fresh, good food.

65 **How do you see the future of your business?**

66 I won't change it or make it bigger. If you have a small place there are a lot of people, but if you get a
67 big place, few people will come.

68 **We're interested in the role of falafel in the relation between immigrants and majority Swedish.**

69 **How has falafel played a role?**

70 I have a lot of customers from many places, not so many Swedes but people from everywhere. The
71 media come often and we have a lot of customers. They come from Stockholm, Gothenberg, Germany,
72 Copenhagen. It's a lot of work and a lot of fun.

73 **Interesting that you don't have so many Swedes that come here. Would it be the same as the**
74 **falafel places in the centre?**

75 People come from central, Mollevangenstorget to eat lunch. They come back. Where do the people
76 come from? From all over the world.

77 **How do you think Swedish people think about falafel? Is it exciting?**

78 It was [exciting], but not anymore. At first people asked 'what is tabbouleh? What is dolma? What is
79 hummus? What is baba ganoush'. It was exciting for Swedish people. Then, I made buffets for parties,
80 every month I have a party. For businesses and birthdays. We make a big salad, meat, falafel, chicken,
81 kebab, sauce. All.

82 **It's Malmo's symbol, falafel. Why do you think so?**

83 I think there are more than 50 restaurants, maybe 80. In other cities, in Germany, France, Holland...
84 everywhere, there's nothing. There is falafel, maybe there's one place, two, four, but not more than
85 that. Next to Mollevånenstorget the whole street is full with restaurants. Between one [restaurant] and
86 one [restaurant], there is one [restaurant]. Not just Mollevångenstorget or Bergsgatan or Södra
87 Forstadsgatan, all over the city!

88 **Why do you think it's just Malmö and not the whole of Europe?**

89 I don't know. I think people... they open a restaurants... half of them, not all, but half are
90 inexperienced. They don't have a job, maybe they work in taxis. They get 200,000 or 300,000 kronor
91 and open a restaurant. You want to get your own place, rather than being hired by someone else. They
92 like it even more, not like Swedish people. This is what I think. Swedish people want to be hired, so
93 they don't have to take the responsibility of having their own place. They don't like it.
94 Chains or not? When you have your own [place] it's not easy. The tax office are pushing you. The
95 environmental board are pushing you. All the authorities, they are pushing you. When you sit up [grow
96 bigger/have success] they tell you to sit down. "Please sit down, please sit down and sit in the same
97 place". They don't want you to grow. The tax office is number one. Then the environmental board.
98 They're hard, very hard.

99 **With food?**

100 If you sell more, they push more. You become so tired (in the head). It's true. Sometimes I feel like
101 selling everything and leaving they press me a lot. I pay my workers. Everything is white. I pay my
102 taxes.

103 **They are suspicious?**

104 They come all the time. [They] Check the collective working rights. The logbook: log in, log out.
105 Every time it is ok. Even though it is fine, they push me.

106 **How do you hire employees?**

107 They come looking for work. If he is clean, looks good then I try them.

108 **You learnt from your dad?**

109 Yeah you could say that!

110 Do you feel that you... a businessman or entrepreneur?

111 A businessman. Yeah, you could say that. I work every day, weekends and red days.

112 Do you feel that Sweden as a society... the authorities...

113 Everything goes well

114 In Sweden, are you Iraqi or Swedish?

115 That is hard. Really hard...

116 **Do you feel that...**

117 I don't feel Swedish. Even if I have Swedish citizenship, I don't feel Swedish. The authorities, every
118 time I call... When they come around and check, I feel the difference. There were two women, they
119 were a catastrophe for me. I have to go to court. I have to find someone to solve this problem for me.
120 They come every week. They check everything. Everything. You have to pay this, and that and that.
121 "Why do you put the water there? Why is it like this? Why like that?" I was asking friends. I'm not the
122 only one that works in Malmö... Or how, they come every week! She pushed me very, very, very hard.
123 I was thinking I should bring a Swedish man to talk to her. Someone to be between her and I. No, not
124 possible. How can you solve it?

125 **INTERRUPTION: PHONE CALL**

126 **Do you think she's the problem or the society?**

127 She.

128 **How do Swedish people see immigrants? How does it feel to be an immigrant?**

129 In the streets, when you go out to buy something, you don't feel it [being an immigrant]. But when you
130 need something from the authorities, then you feel it. When you look for a job, for a flat, buy a house,
131 skatteverket, miljö, vårdcentralen.

132 **Do you think it's because you're Arabic? Why are they so hard?**

133 It's because there are some dirty people. Not everyone.

134 **And if you had blond hair and blue eyes?**

135 Yes, there would be a difference. 100%. Not in the streets, no one says anything, no one is questioning,

136 talking shit at you. But with the authorities...

137 **Would you say this was racism?**

138 Yes, but hidden. Not in the streets, it's hidden. Behind the walls.

Appendix 3.2 Interview Participant 2

Interview with Mustafa (Participant 2)

This interview was conducted by James Morrison-Knight. The text in bold font is James' speech, and the text in normal (non-bold) font is the speech of participant 2.

1 **My first question is about the background, how you got into the business. And you said yesterday**
2 **that your father started the business?**

3 Yeah, my father started this falafel place. And at that time I was 14-15 years old, and it was not okay
4 for me to work. But still I wanted to be here everyday. So I came here everyday and sat here and
5 watched the other guys work, just watch every day. And at the time, like, I gotta try, I gotta try and
6 gotta try. That's how it started.

7 **Did you go to university or study something?**

8 My dream was to be a fireman. It still is, but I love to work also. And I feel good when I feel that I am
9 standing with my family. Of course, I can still stand with my family when I do my thing, but I wanna
10 do it 100% with my family 'cause I'm not married, I'm not... I don't have anything else but my family.
11 I can give them like 10 years of my life 100%. That's okay. They deserve that, of course. They help me
12 with everything else.

13 **Does your father still run the business or are you in charge?**

14 It's me for the most part. But of course, he is still my father.

15 **Were you born in Sweden?**

16 No, I was born in Iraq but I came here when I was 2 years old. So basically I was here all my life.

17 **Why did your father get into the falafel business? Was it something special about falafel?**

18 Everyone knows how to do falafel, but nobody can do [it] like another one. Everybody has their own
19 taste. My fathers falafel, everybody thinks it's the best one.

20 **Is it something you are passionate about?**

21 I like it, I never thought I would work with food. But I love it.

22 **Nowadays, there are a lot of falafel businesses in Malmö. How is the competition between the**
23 **businesses? Is there any way of organising between the businesses?**

24 No there is nothing like that. Everyone has their own way, you know. For us, it doesn't matter if people
25 make their falafel cheaper, we're not worried. With our neighbours, just like 5-10 metres, we're all
26 good. Sometimes maybe I'm out of plastic bags, I go ask them. We're very good. If we put higher
27 prices, sometimes we do it together.

28 **How do you see the future for your business?**

29 Many people say you should make Jalla Jalla bigger. But for me, I think smaller is much better.
30 Because when 20 happy people get inside Jalla Jalla, it's a very small place, high music, a lot of
31 energy, so people are like talking with each other, dancing with each other. But if 20 people go inside a
32 big restaurant, everybody chooses a little corner, everybody hiding. But when you go inside you always
33 have the same feeling, it's much better.

34 **It's like an atmosphere kind of thing?**

35 Yes, but it's sad because sometimes families can't sit inside and that's a little bit.. you know.

36 **I guess there's not enough space.**

37 Yes exactly, but in summer with tables [outside] families can come all summer everyday. So I think a
38 falafel place should be small. It's nicer I think.

39 **I want to ask about relations with Swedish society. I think most of the people in the falafel**
40 **business they are of a foreign background. And falafel has become very popular here in Malmö,**
41 **you know, it's the food. So how do you think the popularity of falafel has impacted how**
42 **immigrants are seen by the Swedish society or in the local area?**

43 When immigrants, many people, came to Sweden and they saw that falafel is so popular in Malmö they
44 were very shocked. And this thing gave a lot of work to these people. "Oh falafel is so popular, I can
45 work with falafel. I can open a falafel place." It's an opportunity for Middle Eastern people to get
46 work, to have something, to get a dream maybe. To have their own thing in society. And it's something
47 that the society loves also. So it's a good thing.

48 **Do you feel that people recognise that you are a businessman in the society? Do you feel accepted**
49 **by the society?**

50 Yes. Most of my customers in Jalla Jalla, 80%-85% are real Swedish people. I think that's really
51 amazing.

52 **Is it due to the location?**

53 I don't really know. I don't know the exact reason, but I think it's because the people that work in Jalla
54 Jalla, everyone speaks Swedish and they're kind to the people, so I think it makes it a little bit different.
55 They can talk, they can joke, they understand each other. That's really important. Most falafel places,
56 not all the people talk good Swedish. So it's hard for the customer to feel welcome or understood. It
57 happens many times that we talk with the customer and we have maybe 5 minutes or 10 minutes of just
58 talking. If the customer can't feel they can have this conversation, it's really important.

59 **How do you feel about racism in Swedish society?**

60 Of course it's a problem. It's a problem everywhere. But I don't feel it, when I come to my job I don't
61 feel racism, I don't see racism. Maybe some people have, but I'm thinking so little and I care so little
62 about racism that I don't see it. But if I go around and think "is he racist, his he, is he?" then I will see
63 something, but if I don't think about it I won't see it, I won't feel it. It's like that.

64 **So you don't think about it on a daily basis?**

65 I don't think about it. Maybe it happens, but I don't focus on it.

66 **How's the relationship with Authorities? Like the municipality, and the different agencies that
67 you have to deal with like the tax office, the environmental office?**

68 Like Skatteverket?

69 **Yeah**

70 It's good... they're very hard. They don't accept any wrongs. Little mistakes cost you a lot of money.
71 But I think it's a little bit too hard, because people who have companies like us, like my father, if I
72 don't stand with him he has so much... he has so much to buy, to fix with the restaurant. It's easy to
73 make a little mistake and that should not cost a lot of money. So sometimes if you do a little mistake, it
74 can cost you a lot, a lot of money.

75 **So you think it's unfair?**

76 Yeah it's too much, we already pay too much every month. And I understand, I accept it to pay, but
77 sometimes when we make a mistake it's not on purpose and it costs a lot of money.

78 **Do you think that's specifically about your business or is it the same for everyone?**

79 I think for everyone it's like this. I have friends with restaurants and shops and they say the same thing.
80 If a customer goes inside and I don't ask them if they want a receipt I can get 15000 [kronor]... I have

81 to pay 15000 [kronor]. And you don't have a chance to talk with someone, you have to write a message
82 and explain, and they answer in two weeks. At least give me a chance face to face to speak. Write a
83 message, send it to us, maybe you get a chance to, I hear back that it's okay or it's not okay. I don't
84 have the chance to meet someone from Skatteverket to speak about the mistake. I would be very happy
85 to meet face to face.

86 **So there's a problem with the authorities and small business owners**

87 Yes and we're talking about a lot of money. I don't wanna explain on a paper.

88 **And you have a lot of bills to pay**

89 Yes

90 **I haven't got any more questions, but do you have any more thoughts or things you want to say?**

91 I wish there to be a... I don't know the word in English: utbildning. Like, if I want to be fireman I have
92 to go to utbildning.

93 **Ah like training or a school?**

94 Yeah like a training to teach people how to work in a falafel place.

95 **Like a falafel högskola?**

96 Exactly, something like that, something short, for 6 months. I can go to this company and "okay I need
97 three people who can work, you have that?" "yes, we send them". I have people that can work in one
98 day. Because when I want people to work I have to train them, can they work? Maybe if I can fix
99 people who can work very fast. They train it, they can educate them. Maybe something this is
100 something we can do with the Swedish society. Because many people seek work every day, they go to
101 Arbetsformedling [employment agency]. Many of these people can work with falafel and maybe want
102 to. Maybe we can have Swedish people who work with falafel. But they have to go get training, and
103 learn.

104 **Is there a distance between the businesses and Swedish society?**

105 Yes we're separated. Then we can be together... Ladies, there are no women who work in falafel
106 places.

107 **Would you like to have some women working?**

108 Yes of course if they can, why not? I've never seen a woman working. That would be something very
109 good. Maybe Swedish ladies. Many places will open in other cities in Sweden. It would work, I know it
110 would. But...

111 **You need to invest a lot?**

112 Yes, but I know it works.

Appendix 3.3 Interview Participant 3

Interview with Ammo (Participant 3)

This interview was conducted and translated by Timmy Larsson. The text in bold font is Timmy's speech, and the text in normal (non-bold) font is the speech of participant 3.

1 **When did you start in the falafel business?**

2 In 2008.

3 **What did you do before?**

4 I worked in construction, I have worked in many construction sites, like hotels, I can build anything
5 you want. I built this entire café myself. Everything except the couches. I do carpentry, painting,
6 electrical work.

7 **Where are you from?**

8 I'm Palestinian, though from Beirut, Lebanon. My father was a general in the army. He taught me how
9 to shoot when I was seven. I followed him always, he taught me very harshly, how to live cleanly. He
10 told me that to succeed I need to live cleanly, if I cheat I will fail.

11 **When did you arrive to Sweden?**

12 1985 after the war in Lebanon. I fled to Sweden without my father knowing. When I arrived to Sweden
13 I called my family to tell them I was in Sweden. My father was very angry with me then. He didn't
14 want me to leave, he wanted me to stay. But since I was shot, I lost a finger, I was hurt in many places
15 so I decided I didn't want to stay in Beirut. As a 34-year old hurting all over, but as someone who can't
16 just sit at home I didn't want to stay but I knew I needed to do something.

17 After living in Sweden for a while I moved to Saudi Arabia for a few months, then I moved back to
18 Beirut for eleven years and worked in construction there. I married and had four children there. In the
19 beginning of 2006 I opened a cafeteria in Beirut, but after 3-6 months the war started again between
20 Israel and Lebanon. Then me and my family moved to Sweden and I decided to never move back to
21 Lebanon.

22 Since I arrived in Sweden I started working as a painter for MKB, but I quit because I didn't make
23 enough money to support my family with a stay-at-home mum.

24 That's when I decided to start making food. I can make food like magic, for one person or a hundred, it
25 doesn't matter.

26 And since everyone likes falafel here I decided to show people my falafel, I have my own recipe for the
27 falafel and my own recipe for the sauce.

28 I have shared this recipe with people too, I don't care about keeping it secret.

29 People learned about my falafel through word of mouth. I've never had any advertisements. I became
30 very famous. Two or three times Sydsvenskan came to my restaurant in Kirseberg to write about me
31 and my falafel. I started doing something special for my guests in Kirseberg, I started taking their
32 picture and placing it on the wall, I had over 500 pictures there.

33 Last year Malmö kommun came to me and asked me if I wanted to be in a competition for the falafel
34 festival, but I declined. I don't want food to be a competition. So after a week they came again and told
35 me they wanted people to taste my falafel because they really liked it, so a week before the festival they
36 bought 400 falafelrulle to give out to the people for free. My whole family, 5 people, we made those
37 falafelrulle in 4 hours. Since then I've gotten more customers.

38 I really like falafel, it's much better than kebab or chicken. Falafel has a better profit margin, but since
39 they're cheaper you need to sell a larger volume. Paying rent, electricity, water, that's where the actual
40 problems are, all of your profit goes there.

41 My family members will work for 5-6000kr, but I can't employ anyone for 15-16000 because then
42 there's no profit anymore. I've had visits from Arbetsförmedlingen, they asked me if I wanted
43 employees, and I asked back do you want falafel? It's 30kr, but if I employ someone it's going to be
44 60kr.

45 **What's your relation to the other falafel restaurants?**

46 We don't have any relation. We see each other every other day when we buy ingredients, and talk about
47 how business is going. Some people want huge profits every day but that's not possible. People can't eat
48 falafel every day. If the weather is good we sell a lot and if it's bad we don't sell much. It's like the
49 waves of the ocean, it goes up and down. It's very good in summer but not good at all in winter. If you
50 want to work in a restaurant, selling food, you have to show the customer that it's not only about
51 making the transaction, you have to be fun, kind, laugh. There are many restaurants, customers will
52 find the ones that treat them right. If you own a restaurant you have to show the customer it's their
53 restaurant, not yours.

54 **How do you view the future of your restaurant?**

55 It's for my family. I want to help my family, so that they have jobs. My daughter has this place with
56 her husband, and my other daughter has another place that she runs with her husband. We're a big
57 family. We try to show people that are from my country that here, when you work, you get to know a
58 lot of people. If you don't work you just sit at home watching TV, it's boring, you become alone, you
59 can't live well. It's important to work with whatever. If I don't have customers I will clean outside, pick
60 up cigarette-butts. It doesn't matter if you're a doctor or a lawyer. A job is a job. That's what I've taught
61 my children since they were 10, after school they came to help me in the restaurants. Now they're like
62 me, they can't stay at home, they want to work, they're happy.

63 To get back to falafel, there are a lot of wealthy people that haven't tried falafel. I had a plan once to
64 write a letter to the king to come try my falafel. Crown princess Victoria went to Palestine (Lebanon) a
65 while ago, to visit a refugee camp. I saw that in the TV and it made me think there are no better people
66 in the world than the Swedish. It's a dangerous place, she could get shot, but she went to visit the poor
67 people there. She's going to be the queen of Sweden, but she did that anyway. Sweden's the best!

68 **Do you feel like part of the Swedish society?**

69 Absolutely. I feel like a part of Sweden. I live here and have lived here for a long time. My family
70 really likes Sweden. I can say one thing: I am Swedish but Muslim. There are a lot of people who are
71 Swedish but Muslim.

72 **Do you feel accepted [welcomed] by Swedish society?**

73 Absolutely. Sweden has welcomed several hundred thousand people. I have seen something here, I've
74 seen with my eyes and heard. There is no black and white here in Sweden. Everyone's the same. If you
75 go to hospital, to school, they treat everyone the same. No difference at all. In Arab countries there is
76 this, Arabs showing each other they are different. Arabs aren't good to each other, Swedes are good
77 towards each other. I've seen this with my eyes. Here there is no difference, everyone is the same
78 almost. 95% everyone is the same.

79 **Have you experienced racism?**

80 I've never met a racist at all. Maybe it exists. Maybe if a racist comes to me I will be kind to him. If a
81 racist comes to me he will be welcome, I will show him maybe you're a racist but I'm not racist. One
82 time I had some issues with my car, someone was angry with me. I said to him "hey, how are you?" If I
83 was shouting at him "idiot" and such... Think. You can cause a problem and you can remove a
84 problem. You decide yourself. But racists, they exist, yes. You can't work with them, it's hard. A

85 couple of weeks ago I had some issues at Clas Ohlson, I was sitting by the stairs, looking at something
86 important at my phone. Someone came and said "get away from here", I just laughed. He talked a lot of
87 shit. Everyone working at Clas Ohlson, they're great. I told him "sorry, I don't want you to come close
88 to me." I moved. I said "show me respect, I'm kind." He didn't want to. He said "you're on welfare", I
89 told him "no, I work." And then the girl [Clas Ohlsson worker] called the guards. The guards came and
90 I told them to not do anything to that man. I think since I was kind to him he became calmer. If you
91 fight you lose, if you don't fight you don't lose. As long as you can avoid fights it's better. Racism
92 exists everywhere in the world.

93 **How does falafel affect the relationship between immigrants and Swedes?**

94 People want good food. They want cheap food. There are a lot of people here, students, working
95 people, it's expensive to live. Sometimes people look for cheap food. Falafel is cheap and good. Really
96 good. Everyone likes falafel. There are a lot of Swedes who want to make falafel. I know some guys,
97 this dude, Mattias, he wanted to make falafel in my kitchen, and his friends were filming it, so I tried to
98 teach him. He didn't pass. It's hard for Swedes to work with kebab and falafel. It's hard work. You have
99 to work 30 days a month, you have to work many hours. It's stress all the time. You run out in the
100 morning buying vegetables and bread. We foreigners can't live like Swedes. They work 160h a month,
101 we can't. We want to. I want to now. I want to just work 160h a month, more days free. Have a calm
102 time with my family, but I can't. So for Swedes it's very hard to work in the restaurant. If they only
103 work five days and close two days they don't make enough money. I have worked almost six years in
104 Kirseberg, every day alone for six years, never free. Getting up early, going to the store, going to the
105 restaurant, make falafel, salads. I know almost 2000 people in Kirseberg. There is a big problem. When
106 you work with falafel you work with oil. After working for 7-8 years you can get high cholesterol. I've
107 got this due to working with oil. I run a lot and walk a lot, I never thought I would get high cholesterol,
108 but I went to the doctor and he said I have high cholesterol so now I need to take medication. And I
109 also have diabetes since 20 years that I have to medicate for.
110 If you plan to work with food, reconsider. It's hard work. Stress. Hard work. And good luck!

Appendix 3.4 Interview Participant 4

Interview with Muktler (Participant 4)

This interview was conducted by Jonas Pour Mozzaffar and translated by Timmy Larsson. The text in bold font is Jonas' speech, and the text in normal (non-bold) font is the speech of participant 4.

1 **What's your background? How long have you been working with falafel?**

2 8 years

3 **How did you start?**

4 I started working with my father and I took over the business, I worked with falafel at home in Iraq too.

5 **Did you work with something else before?**

6 Actually not, I was studying before

7 **Why did you come to Sweden?**

8 We came to Sweden because of political reasons, my father was a politician, because of threats and
9 such, you weren't allowed to work as you wanted and had to pay a lot to the state. His brothers were
10 jailed, one received capital punishment. So we had to flee.

11 **Was it in connection with the war?**

12 No, earlier, around 1990.

13 **How old are you?**

14 27, born in 1992.

15 **Do you think you will keep working with this?**

16 Yes, I have this [restaurant] and another in Lund. I don't see why I would leave, I feel free with this
17 work. I tested it initially just to see how it feels. I don't like it when people tell me what to do, but now I
18 don't feel a need to work somewhere else.

19 **Is the restaurants yours and your fathers?**

20 It's mine. My father had it with a different name (Popeye grill), but I changed the name and now it's
21 mine

22 **Why falafel?**

23 Honestly it was my father. He knew how to make falafel. We started 11 years ago, there wasn't as
24 much falafel then. It's nice and easy, people buy it, it's cheap. Everyone can buy it. You can't eat meat
25 every day.

26 **How's the competition?**

27 There are many falafel places but they're all special in their own way. We have more Iraqi falafel, with
28 our own sauces, if you ask 'down there' [towards Möllan] there's a lot of competition but not here.

29 **What does the future look like? Are you planning to expand?**

30 Yes I'm trying to expand. We plan to do more vegetarian and vegan [options], There are so many new
31 products, vegan kebab, chicken, sauces, and even mayonnaise. In Malmö you find everything.

32 **Is it difficult to make money from it?**

33 You have to have a system to work after, everything is hard without a system, not just falafel,
34 everything. If you don't have someone responsible for a certain task it's going to be hard. When you
35 hire someone you have to make sure they know there's a system to follow.

36 Before, in Malmö, a falafel would be 10kr a roll, you go after what the chickpeas and vegetables cost,
37 the ones for 10kr their veggies aren't the best, they try to get the vegetables that are going to be thrown
38 away, sometimes they get them for free so they are 'cheapskates' since their point is to make it as
39 cheap as possible. We try to have normal vegetables, it's better in the end. A roll can cost me maybe
40 15kr to make and I sell it for 35kr. Falafel has the best margins, and is the highest volume product.

41 **Would you call yourself Swedish?**

42 Yes, I'm married to a Swede, I feel like a Swede, I've lived here since 1998, studied here, never had any
43 problem, I have never thought about that, maybe if you live in a different city where there are only
44 Swedes you would think about this but I've always lived where it's mixed so I've always felt Swedish.
45 No one has said anything racist to me, many say that there are racists, there are probably racists, but not
46 that I've thought about. My wife lives in Trelleborg in an area where there is mostly Swedes. I know
47 many are Sweden democrats there, I'm there almost every day at her family, their neighbours are very
48 nice to me, There's probably a lot happening behind the back, but I've never noticed anything.

49 **What's your relation to the authorities?**

50 When I started the business I was a beginner so there was a lot of small issues with Skatteverket, [the
51 tax office] for instance, I forgot to use the "personalligare" (a book wherein the employees fill in their

52 name) so I was fined, but with regards to Skatteverket [tax office], I haven't had any problems in
53 several years. There are many who work "black" (without paying taxes), but the tax office will get their
54 money anyway. I have an AB, I take a salary from there, I don't have the need to work "black". It's
55 much easier to employ now, you get a lot of support from the employment bureau, I just call them and
56 tell them what I need and they send someone. It's not worth the risk to employ someone without paying
57 tax. I have 6 employees; they're all from the employment agency.

58 **What's Swedes relation to falafel?**

59 In the Middle East it's very well known, but here in Malmö it's much more than in other cities of
60 Sweden. The falafel in Malmö is much better than in other places. If I sold a frozen falafel here people
61 would laugh at me, but they do that in other cities. In Malmö people know what falafel is supposed to
62 taste like.

63 **Are your friends mostly Swedish?**

64 I don't have time really for friends, I have three kids, but my friends are mixed. I play football, for a
65 time I was playing in Malmö FF and Trelleborgs FF, Limhamn Bunkeflo, there was a good mixture of
66 Swedes and Arabs, I have no issues, whenever I have time I see some of my Swedish friends. It's more
67 about how a person is, there are many racists, you were talking about racists, this guy over there [points
68 across the street], he was beaten by racists, but I've never seen anything, no one has been racist towards
69 me. You just have to do right by yourself. The problem with immigrants in Sweden is that you don't
70 know anything: in your home country there's no system, there's no tax office, no tax, you can drive
71 against a red. But if you get mixed in with politics it's a problem. Here it's the other way around. You
72 can get involved with politics, you can say whatever you want, you can say you're a racist, no one
73 cares, but if you don't pay taxes, everyone has to pay tax, if you don't pay, it's wrong. That's how the
74 system works.

75 I've been working weekends a lot, when people drink you see other things, even then I haven't seen
76 much, we're open until 5 in the morning, we have a lot to do there are many swedes eating here, but
77 I've never heard anything from a Swede. If you don't behave well, you can hear something (racist), but
78 I've never had problems with that.

79 **Do you have a connection with Iraq?**

80 My family has a lot of contact, but I was a kid when we left and I don't have any contact, I have been
81 very busy with work and my family, so I don't have any contact, but my family has good contact with
82 our relatives there. It's much easier now with technology to keep in touch. My family are there

83 probably every other year, but I never go there because I don't know anyone. I'd rather go to vacation in
84 another warm, nice country.

Appendix 3.5 Interview Participant 5

Interview with Sadoo (Participant 5)

This interview was conducted by James Morrison-Knight. The text in bold font is James' speech, and the text in normal (non-bold) font is the speech of participant 5.

1 **What is your connection to the falafel business and how you got into the restaurant business in**
2 **general?**

3 First of all, it was my grandfather who started the falafel that we know in Malmö. He had a falafel
4 place in Lebanon, so he had a crazy idea one time to sell falafel in Malmö and people said “no no no,
5 Swedish people just want meat”. My father is the eldest son and I’m the first son, his name was Sadoo
6 too. That’s why we have the same name. So I started with him from the beginning, to just help him out,
7 maybe when I was 13. I’ve been in the business since then.

8 **So did you help out in Falafel No. 1?**

9 Yeah

10 **When did he first sell falafel in Malmö?**

11 I think it was '92 or '93.

12 **And he came from Lebanon?**

13 His place that he had in Lebanon... We are Palestinian from Lebanon, so we were living in Sabra, it’s a
14 place where the Palestinians live, a poor place, and his falafel was very famous in the whole of Beirut.
15 It’s a place that they don’t go and visit, but they knew about his falafel so people come there. Exactly
16 like when he was opening in Rosengård, no one goes on vacation to Rosengård, but people from the
17 whole of Malmö go to Rosengård to eat that falafel.

18 **Why did he come to Sweden?**

19 War.

20 **So he came as a refugee?**

21 Yeah, they couldn’t live there anymore. The like security from everyone...

22 **So where were you born?**

23 I'm born in Beirut too. First my father and my uncle came here. Then my grandfather and my other
24 uncles came here with their whole families. And then we have been in the business from day one, '84.

25 **You came over in '84?**

26 Yes, I'm born in '81, so it's like I was 3 years old.

27 **So you kinda grew up here, you spent most of your childhood here?**

28 Yeah, I'm Swedish.

29 **So you consider yourself Swedish?**

30 Yeah I do. Whatever other people [may] say, I consider myself Swedish (laughs).

31 **Do you feel connected to Lebanon? I imagine you have family there**

32 Yeah, everyone from my father's side is living here in Sweden, but everyone from my Mother's side is
33 in Lebanon. I work with Lebanese food and I have always worked with Lebanese food, I'm so
34 connected to it. I travel a lot there and get so much inspiration about it. So I'm proud of that part too.
35 But I'm proud of the mix too.

36 **How many languages do you speak?**

37 Swedish, bad English like you hear [laughs], and Arabic.

38 **Did you go to university?**

39 I dropped out of Gymnasium in the middle of it, I was working too much and I felt that, well I always
40 feel like I'm a working guy more than a school guy, so I could never sit still. So I got my own way and
41 I started working with my father and we opened Falafel No.1 and we have like 4 restaurants. Then I
42 worked and got my own family and had to open my own business, so that's when I left falafel No. 1. It
43 was over 10 years ago that I left.

44 **You had Laziza since...**

45 I've had Laziza for 9 years. There was one year in between that I was just... I didn't know what to do, I
46 was just travelling a lot and I went to Lebanon to find inspiration.

47 **Is the restaurant business something that you are passionate about?**

48 The food is what I'm passionate about. The inspiration for the food comes from my Mother. When I
49 had people over, my Mother was cooking and everyone said "oh that food was very good". I want to

50 give people that food, so my inspiration is about home food. That's what I like in all cultures. If we talk
51 about Chinese food, I don't think we really eat Chinese food in the restaurants here. What people make
52 at home, that's the best food. There's more soul, because everyone, it doesn't matter which culture you
53 talk about, they talk about their mothers' food because there's so much love.

54 **Did you want to do any other jobs or businesses in Malmö, or did you always want to work with**
55 **food?**

56 Always with food. I said that if I get rich some day and have many restaurants, then I will still want to
57 have one restaurant that I'm standing there and cooking and serving people food. That's what I love,
58 that's what I do, that's what I go home and do every day too [laughs].

59 **About the falafel business in Malmö: do you know, in your experience, what are the relations like**
60 **between the businesses?**

61 I don't think there are... People are doing their own thing and they try not to look at the other thing and
62 some other guy comes up and wants to have a very cheap price and after a few months is like "ok it
63 works like this". I don't think people talk about it. The thing is they are very friendly about it, the
64 restaurants, not just the falafel businesses, all the restaurants in Malmö, people... restaurant owners are
65 very proud, I can go to any place and we are just talking about experience and asking each other. So I
66 can go to a 5 star restaurant and I can go to them and... it's so much different if we're getting
67 experience from each other. But there's no one talking like "no no we have to keep the price here".

68 **There's not a collaboration?**

69 No no... I have thought about trying to make it like this so we can do [give] something back to our city
70 because everyone that has a restaurant in Malmö, they really love Malmö. So, we could work more
71 together to make Malmö an even better place live in. I think about that, but I didn't have time to...

72 **How do you see the future of your business? Would you like to expand it or keep it the same? Do**
73 **you want to get more restaurants?**

74 We're expanding everyday. In August we're going to open one more place near Malmö university, so
75 we're going to have almost 35 employers in August. I have two restaurants and now we're going to
76 open the third one and we'll see what happens... As long as I'm passionate and love what I do, and I
77 still think it's fun. I love to come to work every day. For me it's not just about money. I have to love
78 my job. Now we're going to open the third restaurant and if I still think it's fun then I can open a fourth
79 restaurant. But if I think I'm losing the soul of it, then I will stop.

80 **So it's more important that you feel content with what you're doing?**

81 Yeah, I'm lucky. I come to my work every day, if I will... If my wife will take the children and travel a
82 week I will be at work 24/7 and without thinking that I'm working. 'Cause it feels home here too. I
83 really love my job. I was thinking, I wish people if people can love their job as much as I do because
84 there are so many friends that have restaurants that are going very well, but they don't like to go to
85 their restaurant and I feel so sorry for them. When you love your job, people are going to notice.

86 **It comes back to you?**

87 Yeah, it comes back to you.

88 **So I'm going to ask you a few questions about your relationship with Swedish society. Can you
89 tell me a bit about your social network? Who are your friends? What are their backgrounds?**

90 My closest friends are very, very mixed. We are, everyone is married and we don't see each other like
91 we did before, like 10 years ago. Now everyone has children, but we were like a big... like 15-17
92 friends and there were people that have their background in Turkey, Albania, Swedish people, Persian
93 people, Arabic people. So we're very mixed and I think we're on the same level in what we think and
94 we feel very proud to be from where we come from, but we're very proud to be Swedish too. And
95 that's about my friends... and we get other friends from the network with working too and I have all of
96 my employees who come from... Now with all the Syrian people that come here too we get new
97 friends from working together and we see their points of view. So I have mixed friends and got many
98 new friends when I moved to Limhamn and there are a lot of Swedish people who live there, because I
99 feel like I am blessed to live in the middle because I can talk to everyone and know everyone so I'm
100 not limited. If you're just Swedish and you don't have another background, it's hard for you to connect
101 with people that have just been living here 3 or 4 years or if you just came to Sweden then it's hard for
102 you to find Swedish friends. So I'm feeling blessed that I'm both.

103 **So you feel content about this mixed identity that you have?**

104 Yeah of course. I learned from my grandfather very early and he said to me one thing that I say once a
105 month I always say it. He said to me one time "we are blessed to have two backgrounds. We can stand
106 in the middle and take what is the best from that culture and keep it and throw away all the bad things.
107 And we can take the other culture, and take the best of it and throw away the bad things." So that's
108 what I'm trying to raise my children about, because no culture is perfect. You just take the best parts.

109 **Do you feel a strong connection to Lebanon, even though you didn't grow up there?**

110 I have a strong connection to it. I don't feel like it's home but I have a very strong connection to
111 everything: food, music, my relatives live there. All of that stuff, very close connection it.

112 **Do you visit often?**

113 Nowadays it's like every two years, but before it was like 3 times a year. No I don't have time. I wish I
114 could visit more often.

115 **How connected do you feel with the Swedish society?**

116 I'm connected in every way. I'm very proud of Sweden. The hard Sweden became in those last years is
117 not Sweden, it's not my Sweden. When we can in '84 when someone said something racist is was like
118 "shh you can't talk like this" it was a very bad thing to say. Now you can see that people are open
119 about what they think about some people. They can be open with it. That's the thing about racism in
120 the whole of Europe, I'm Swedish and I know that I'm more Swedish than a lot of people that don't
121 have fathers and grandfathers from errr... I know I'm Swedish because I'm giving a lot to the society.
122 I'm raising my children to be good people. We have 35 employees that are getting meals and paying
123 taxes, and I'm paying taxes, so no one can tell me that I'm not Swedish.

124 **On the subject of the racism, you mentioned that back in the '80s it was a taboo thing, like "you
125 can't be racist", but now you said it's changed?**

126 A little bit, but that's like how the whole of Europe has changed. I think some people are more open
127 minded and some people are... and it's like a small, you always hear the small group saying different
128 things. That's in every question. I don't feel racism every day, the opposite. I moved to Limhamn and
129 there' so many people around me who are Swedish and from other cultures and they're so interested
130 and come and ask about the restaurant and the food. So I don't feel people are racist there. But you
131 have one time a month that you get reminded, you're meeting an idiot. I can meet like... you know
132 when I'm standing here I can meet like 200 people here every day and when I'm around I see so many
133 people, but you meet one idiot. And you remember him, and you don't remember the nice things that
134 people say. But I feel... then I get a little sad because I can speak perfect Swedish, I have been born
135 here and I... My children speak perfect Swedish and my wife and I feel like if I can hear that
136 sometimes, what can other people hear who don't have... who people can see just came to Sweden.

137 **So people who don't have the language skills and aren't as well adjusted to the society?**

138 Those people who needed the society. So that's... some idiots and that's what you remember.

139 **What's your relationship with the authorities, like Skatteverket and what's it called Miljö...?**
140 Miljöhälsan. I think they're doing a great job. Though maybe they should have more experience of
141 open business because sometimes they should have people outside, because sometimes you feel like
142 there are some people that don't know anything about your business who like to tell you what to do.
143 They should be a bit more open, but feel that's a really good thing about everything, all the controls.
144 Like with Miljöhälsan, people don't get sick. And with Skatteverket errr.... Well, we know what
145 happens with Skatteverket when they don't pay their taxes, then they have problems and they have like
146 employees that like don't get the right money. But here we're one of the few restaurants in Skåne that's
147 a lunch restaurant is connected to... I don't know how to say in English... they make sure you're
148 paying the right salary with everything, the rights for the employers, and the pension and everything.
149 That's the thing that I'm very proud of that we're connected to them because... and I feel that its so
150 good, that some people from the government want to say that you have to be connected. Malmö Stad, if
151 they wanna buy food from us they have to know that we're connected to them, because we want to do
152 the right thing for our employees. That's very good. That's what I'm trying to... When we're talking
153 about being connected with other places, to show them that you can do it the right way. And it's still
154 gonna be okay. You don't have to be afraid of it. Because some of the other people, like some of the
155 new coming guys they're a bit afraid of how to do some of the stuff and we need to learn [teach] them
156 more than just judging them. One of my friends opened a restaurant in Germany and he says it's crazy,
157 no one works like we work in Sweden.

158 **In what way?**

159 Imagine with a card machine in one week it's used just once. People still pay in cash. 30% of the
160 restaurants in Malmö don't take cash and I'm thinking in 5 years it will be 80% that don't take cash,
161 because it costs a lot of money to take cash.

162 **So there's an extra fee if you take...**

163 Yeah you have to pay when you put in money in the bank, and you have to buy the change and it costs
164 a lot.

165 **Falafel is a very popular food in Malmö. It's the fast food, it's become the symbol of Malmö. My
166 question is: how has falafel impacted the relationship with Arab immigrants and Swedish
167 society?**

168 I think it was a big bridge. I have been there from the beginning and I have been there when my
169 grandfather started the falafel place in Rosengård and, [back] them the teachers who were working

170 there, that's how it started, the teachers were going... They saw the line, and first of all it was the
171 Arabic people from Beirut who knew that my Grandfather's was going to open and they remember that
172 they have eaten falafel at his place [in Beirut], so they were the guys standing in the line and the
173 teachers from the schools came and were like 'what is it, it costs 10kr, what the hell is it?' And then
174 they were standing in the line and then try it and 'oh it was so good, and was so cheap.' On the
175 weekend they come with their car and bring their family. And then the policemen came and they started
176 to eat. And then it became really big. I was at work one time and we had a really big like err...
177 motorcycle club came, and maybe 50 motorcycles in the street. It was like a food truck or something.
178 And then like 50 bikers came and stood in line and asked 'can I have one falafel?' [laughter] So I think
179 it was a big bridge, and I'm very proud that it's the symbol of Malmö. And then when we opened our
180 first place here in the city and we had a falafel place in the middle of the city and people in Rosengård
181 and... it was near the hospital and people who were working in the hospital would come in and were
182 like "what is this?" and they would come in and then so many people were working there, and they
183 started to get even bigger in the whole of Malmö. And we're so proud of it that so many places have
184 opened now. We're not taking it in a bad way, we're taking it in good way. They come here, then they
185 open it, then they're feeding their families. That's something we're very proud of. Because it's a big
186 business in Malmö. You can open up 500 falafel places and there's still a market.

187 **How do you think Swedes think about falafel?**

188 When I'm talking to people, like many students feel that it's part of their student... it makes good
189 memories. Everyone I talk to about it, falafel has good memories behind it. Because okay "we go there
190 and it was so good, we still love it, we can still remember a really good falafel".

191 **How do you think Swedes feel about immigrants?**

192 I think Swedish people, we always talk about Swedish people and we forget that Swedish people are
193 the most open minded people, what I feel. Because when we opened the first falafel place in the city
194 there, I had a 80 year old woman walk in and was like "what is this falala...?" and we told her about it
195 and she asked "Can I try one?" And then she came like once a week and would take one falafel. You
196 would never get a Lebanese 80 years old to try something new. And the Swedish people and English
197 people, along with the German people are those that travel the most, so they're interested in other
198 cultures. So I feel the falafel wouldn't have been that big without the Swedish people too. So they are
199 open minded.

200 **So you think that's the reason it's become so popular?**

201 Yes of course.

202 **As a businessman, do you feel the social status that goes along with being a businessman, do you**
203 **feel that makes a difference?**

204 Yeah of course I feel that. We had a company party 4 or 5 months ago. We met here and went to
205 another place to eat together, all of us together. And when I walk in the street with my 30 employees I
206 feel very proud, that's like... Now that I have a big business... Because some of them it's their first job
207 in Sweden and I see them with other that have like 20 years experience working in Sweden. Others
208 have been born in Sweden and they're mixed together and we came back here and we danced together.
209 I'm very proud, we have a policy that we have 50% women, 50%. People don't judge people, I don't
210 wanna have just Lebanese or Syrian people. I'm trying to show Malmö what it is to have a restaurant,
211 who works here and work hard and just wanna have food on the table.

212 **Do you feel your social status as a businessman is recognised by other people outside of the**
213 **restaurant world?**

214 Yeah yeah, my business here is recognised. I feel like I get the respect I deserve from the restaurant
215 business people, they know about us... in a good way. I feel like I have a status, they respect what we
216 do. You have a lunch restaurant, working day time. For many restaurant people they're like "how are
217 you doing it, you can't earn money on lunch" and I'm like "yes you can" because if you do good food
218 and you have a lot of people that come you will not earn err... you will earn a little bit less but you will
219 have more people that come. So it's a hard way to work, I love that. In this restaurant we have almost
220 70 people who can't come in here because there's not place for them. People think "oh I have to go
221 early if I want to get a table there". So if we can get it to work then every can do it.

222 **Is it a hard business?**

223 Yeah. You have to love it because if you love your business... it's a hard business but everything
224 comes with work. If you love what you do then you learn. It's like if you get really into cooking then
225 you will learn the good recipes, you will learn everything. Now I have been in the business almost 20
226 years so I have a lot of experience so I am finding new ways to make everything better and better. But
227 it's really really hard, I have so many friends that have their places and they have so many problems
228 to... they don't understand how expensive everything is. Because... All the employees that stop here
229 and then try to start their own business, I've tried to teach them that you have to calculate the right way.
230 They're coming back and saying "Sadoo we're paying everything in taxes" and I'm saying "yes I told

231 you this". It's not that easy, maybe in other countries it's different: you pay for the food and the rent
232 and that's it, the rest is yours. But we're getting so much back from the society anyway. In other
233 countries if your daughter gets sick you have to sell the house to afford it. It's good in Sweden.