MASTERTHESIS

'NO MAN IS AN ISLAND'

A study on how co-ethnic networks shape the personal and professional development of higher educated, second generation co-ethnics from Turkish descent

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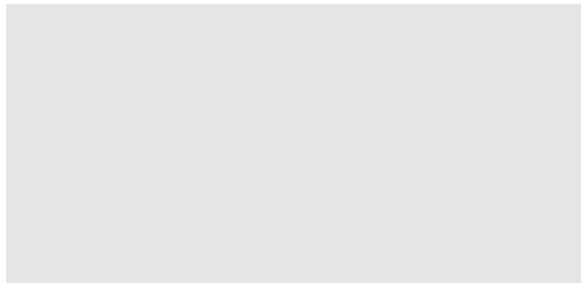
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Abstract

This research has been focused on the experiences and perceptions of higher educated, second-generation co-ethnics from Turkish descent who have been part of co-ethnic network Anatolia. Through qualitative, in-depth interviews, the meanings and perceptions of participants were analyzed. The goal of this research was to investigate how Turkish co-ethnic network Anatolia shaped the personal and professional development of co-ethnics in the transition to the labor market. Findings show the contribution of co-ethnic networks can be distinguished in three points: they contribute to human, social and cultural capital. First, human capital is created by developing a feeling of empowerment, recognition and understanding by being a member. Second, being a co-ethnic member of Anatolia contributes to social capital by broadening their personal and professional network with other co-ethnics, through community building and being introduced to recruiters and employers. Third, cultural capital in terms of know-how, familiarity with the organization, organizational and business skills is developed.

In conclusion, this makes co-ethnic networks function as 'bonding' as well as 'bridging' ties, in which it is not only useful 'to get by', but co-ethnic networks also function 'to get ahead' (Lancee, 2010, Vermeulen and Keskiner, 2017).

Next to this, businesses and (higher education) institutes can see co-ethnic networks as important networks to enhance cultural diversity within their organizations, by introducing themselves to this diverse audience and make the barrier to apply smaller. These findings can be considered as a starting point for future research in diversity within the labor market transition for higher educated, second-generation co-ethnics.

Introduction

The transition from being a student to becoming a young professional is a pathway that carries a lot of barriers for young adults from migrant descent. These barriers arise early on, beginning from the lower socio-economic position, educational level, and lack of support of groups of migrant descent. However, while educational levels of these groups are rising, the problems within the labor market are rising too. Past studies show that Turkish and Moroccan second-generation youth have a disadvantage in labor market position regardless of educational level, in which research shows that 23% experiences unemployment for a short period after leaving university, compared to 16% within native peers. Discrimination and the lack of contacts and support have been offered as the main arguments for this position (Waldring, Crul, Ghorashi, 2014). Other arguments contain the effect of internalized negative views on self-esteem and job performance (Ghorashi and Ponzoni 2013). It is also proposed that minorities are 'trapped in segregated social networks, which isolate them from the kind of information and influence that can help them advance in their careers'. (McDonald, Lin, AO,2009). This translates into strong connections between co-ethnics, and a lack of connection with people from native descent which can create isolation and diminish efficacy in labor market transition (Vermeulen, Keskiner, 2016, McDonald, et. al, 2009). Being in co-ethnic networks also receives criticism and disapproval by the ethnic majority over the years, since some see it as an expression of segregation and isolation from natives (Slootman, 2018). However, strong connections with family- and ethnic based networks are also known to create trust and solidarity, promote cooperation and make access to resources available to all members of the co-ethnic network (Lancee, 2010, Coleman, 1988).

In relation to the labor market, research about the importance of networks is gaining more attention (Granovetter, 1973, Topa, 2011). Networks, both personal as professional, are seen as an asset that can create career advancement by providing information and create job market possibilities (Flap, Völker, 2001, Kraaykamp, Vullings, 2002).

When looking at networks of co-ethnics, literature is limited to first-generation migrants, that are known to have a network that is characterized by a lower educational attainment and labor market position (Lancee, 2012). Most of the literature that has been focused on higher-educated, second generation co-ethnics, has been researched from a sociological perspective, examples are Lancee (2010), Waldring, Crul, Ghorashi (2014), Vermeulen, Keskiner (2017), Slootman, (2018). Within these articles, co-ethnic networks are seen as bonding capital, defined to 'get by' instead of bridging capital, defined 'to get ahead'

(Putnam, 2000). Bonding capital, referring to within-group connections, is thereby not seen as influential for labor market outcomes, since 'it does not provide one with new and valuable information that is useful in finding a (better paid) job' (Lancee 2010). Instead, they are only seen as a form of community support and identity forming (Vermeulen, Keskiner, 2017). Meanwhile, there is still little information about the nature and influence of higher-educated, co-ethnic networks, which raises the question if higher educated co-ethnic networks can also function as bridging capital. This is because second generation, higher educated co-ethnics are expected to have more knowledge about the labor market, have better Dutch language proficiency and a higher educational level which distinguishes them from their ancestors (Vermeulen, Keskiner, 2017). They are seen in more influential positions, and their labor market position rises (NJI, 2021)

Therefore, it is interesting to research the co-ethnic networks higher educated, second generation co-ethnics engage in, and how they influence the personal and professional development of their members within the labor market transition.

This will be done through a case study by researching the perceptions and experiences of higher educated, second-generation youth from Turkish descent that are (ex) members of co-ethnic network SV Anatolia.

The research question of this thesis is as follows:

How does the Turkish co-ethnic network Anatolia shape the personal and professional development of higher educated, second-generation co-ethnics in the transition to the labor market?

Established in 1999, SV Anatolia is the largest co-ethnic student network for higher educated students from Turkish descent in the Netherlands, and therefore a relevant sample for this research. The goal of Anatolia is to bring like-minded individuals with an affinity for Turkish culture together, and they aim to develop strong bonds between their members. They organize various social and academical events and have a professional focus by working together with big companies and organizing career-related activities such as networking days, inhousedays and professional workshops (Vermeulen, Keskiner, 2017). Next to being a member there is also an opportunity to be part of the board, in which members spent 8-10 hours weekly on organizing all activities.

Researching how co-ethnic networks are advancing careers and shape the labor market transition is important to bring insights and information about the pathways of second-

generation co-ethnic youth. Through this research, businesses and (higher education) institutes can gain more information about co-ethnic networks which can help to reach a diverse audience and create opportunities to work together on diversity policy. It is also relevant for the self-positioning of co-ethnic networks, in which it can enhance their visibility within society and businesses. Whereas previous research has used quantitative ways (Vermeulen, Keskiner, 2017), a webanalysis (Slootman, 2018) and surveys (Lancee, 2010) to come to their findings about co-ethnic networks, this research will present a qualitative, in-depth view of the perceptions and experiences of co-ethnics by using interviews.

The structure of this thesis is as follows; first, there will be a literature review focusing on human, cultural and social capital theory as proposed by Bourdieu (1984). This will explain the background of co-ethnics by researching their education, skills networks and equipment when entering the labor market (Bourdieu, 1984). The literature review will be followed by the research approach, in which choices about methodology will be explained. Next, an in-depth analysis of the data will be presented. Finally, the results of this research will be discussed by giving an interpretation of the data and discussing the practical/theoretical implications of the findings. The thesis will be concluded by writing down limitations and suggestions for further research.

Theory

2.1 Human capital

Within the job search process, human capital is seen as the main variable for labor market outcomes. It refers to the degree of educational qualification, knowledge, skills, and experience of individuals that determine the likelihood of being employed and successful (Garcia, 2015, Heath, Cheung, 2007).

A big number of native students within higher education stem from privileged positions, e.g., having family members that also went to university, speak the native language, and come from higher economic backgrounds. This makes higher educated students more familiar with relevant codes of conduct within different environments. Parents influence the human capital of their children by offering (material) support, by guiding them through education and by being a role model. It is also proven that parents with a higher educated background are able to offer access to information and extracurricular activities, and high-income families invest more time and effort in schooling (de Graaf, de Graaf, Kraaykamp, 2000). Consequently, considering the

aspects of parental support, educational level and skill development, native students have a high level of human capital.

However, students from Turkish descent often stem from parents with lower educational levels, lower Dutch language proficiency and come from working-class environments. Some co-ethnic parents do not have the opportunities to support their children due to financial reasons, a lack of information about possibilities or due to language barriers. Therefore, there is a difference between parental support that children of minorities receive compared to natives which leads to a lack of human capital. The scarce parental support regarding the transmission of information, relevant skills and material resources within education and the job market then leads to disadvantages for minority students compared to Dutch counterparts (Garcia, Vázquez-Quesada & Van de Werfhorst,2015). This leads to the second sub question:

How do co-ethnic networks shape their human capital?

(in terms of ambitions and self-confidence)

2.2 Cultural capital

The knowledge of how to behave, dress and know the normative codes that are important in dominant environments is a form of cultural capital (Bourdieu,1973, de Graaf, 2000). Cultural capital is gradually acquired through socialization, in which those who come from higher social classes learn the characteristics that are valued earlier on in their development, which gives them access to various social settings (Ryan, D'Angelo, Erel, 2015). These characteristics and normative codes of cultural capital are acquired by being familiar with social contexts, but also from leisure activities such as going to theaters, academic-related events as museums (Bourdieu, 1986). Those activities create a familiarity within professional, high-status settings in which the normative codes are learned in a subtle way. For example, within a professional setting, not only speaking the 'legitimate language' is important, but also to speak it in a grammatically correct, formal and articulate way (Puwar, 2001).

Learning these social codes and behaviors takes time and effort, in which individuals who are part of the norm have an advantage compared to the ones who are less familiar with the dominant codes (Bourdieu, 1986). Therefore, having a point of reference when stepping into a dominant environment makes it easier to adjust, and fit in organizational settings (Vermeulen, Keskiner, 2017, Gracia, Vázquez-Quesada & Van de Werfhorst,2015).

Another aspect of cultural capital is acquiring skills that are essential within the labor market. These skills are developed through childhood, but also learned from experience. One way to

acquire skills is through participating in student associations. Within the Netherlands, participating in student associations is very common, in which a lot of influential individuals have been part of the same well-known associations such as Minerva or Vindicat. Students voluntarily spend 8-10 hours a week to organize social and professional activities. Within these associations, they meet other students, socialize, and develop skills (Ebede, 2015). Participating in student associations also help to develop core competencies that are important in career advancement such as communication, critical thinking and personal development (Bok, 2006). It relates to the development of interpersonal skills, leadership ability and management, skills that are important to have in a competitive labor market. Therefore, organizations value the participation in student associations, which can help students to differentiate themselves between other talents (Pinto, Ramalheira, 2016, Ebede, 2015).

This also relates to human capital literature, in which it is assumed that 'the more skills individuals acquire in education (general human capital) and within a firm (occupation-specific human capital), the higher their labor productivity, which, in turn, increases their labor market returns' (Becker, 1964, Muja et al., 2019).

While participating in extracurricular activities are important ways to distinguish an individual from other talents, the influence of cultural capital is widely seen within hiring processes.

Research shows that recruitment processes show bias towards minorities because of stereotypes and prejudices (de Jong, Ghorashi, et. al., 2021). This implicitly causes a preference to hire job candidates with common aspects that fit within the normative standard (Pedulla, Pager, 2019, Esed, 2002). Essed (2002) describes the profile of preferred professionals as 'masculine, white, able bodied, highly educated, pre-senior but not too young' (Essed, 2002). Next to these traits, participation in extracurricular activities that resonate with white, upper middle-class culture such as hockey, or participating in student association are also valued within the hiring decision (Elrick, 2016).

But, since cultural capital is a created through socialization, not everyone has access to the same amount of cultural capital. As mentioned before, co-ethnics stem from a lower socioeconomic position than natives. Many parents of migrants have a lack of knowledge and financial resources to let their children participate in leisure activities (Peguero, 2011). Because normative codes are learned through exposure to higher status, white dominant settings, co-ethnics find difficulties navigating through organizational environments. Co-ethnics from Turkish descent have been socialized with normative codes of a different, collectivist culture, which creates discrepancies in behavior and values compared to the individualistic Dutch

culture (Hofstede, 2011). This mechanism is enforced when looking at the definition of the 'organizational fit' of organizations, in which the white dominant norm is persistent, and therefore excludes the cultural capital of co-ethnics (de Jong, Ghorashi et al., 2021). Consequently, co-ethnics from Turkish descent don't fit the profile of preferred professionals, which differentiates them from other job candidates and can create bias in hiring (de Jong, Ghorashi et al. 2021).

Being aware of the importance of student associations in relation to developing skills, meeting other students and creating cultural capital, co-ethnics from Turkish descent have organized themselves in their own association in which they articulate their Turkish identity. Within this association, Anatolia, they organize different kinds of activities in which they distinguish themselves with traditional fraternities by focusing on voluntarily participation, social engagement and focus on minority identity (Vermeulen, Keskiner, 2017).

This leads to the second sub-question: *How do co-ethnic networks shape their cultural capital?*

(in terms of knowing about & mastering professional skills)

2.3 Social capital

The importance of social networks for the labor market is well documented by many scholars (Granovetter, 1974, Mouw, 2003, Topa, 2011). As the popular saying goes, 'your network is your net worth'. Instead of formal job search methods, at least fifty percent of jobs are found through informal channels (Granovetter, 1974; Topa, 2011). Having personal connections influences the career trajectory of individuals, by creating easier points of access to information about job searches, employment, and job opportunities. This information is usually informally spread by network connections that are acquainted within the job field, employment, and organizational status. Past studies show that having a strong social network can enhance the position on the labor market (Graaf, and Flap, 1988). Therefore, social networks are a form of social capital that consist of the amount of people in a network that are willing and able to lend support to create personal advancement (Flap, Völker, 2001).

Within social capital, a distinction can be made between bonding and bridging capital.

Bonding capital is described as connections within a homogenous group, such as family ties and ethnic networks. Bridging capital refers to connections across different groups, e.g. the connections of co-ethnics with natives, or with people from different job areas.

In literature, Putnam (2002) explains this distinction as 'whereas bonding social capital is to 'get by,' bridging social capital is to 'get ahead'. This is based on the nature and function of the connections. For bonding capital, having a strong relationship, solidarity and trust within the

group can enhance the willingness to help share and exchange resources within the community (Lin, 2001;66, Lancee, 2010). But bridging capital with e.g., natives, creates opportunities for upward mobility because it gives access to different valuable resources such as job-related information and opportunities, by forming a bridge between unconnected networks (Granovetter, 1973).

Compared to co-ethnics, natives are generally higher educated, have more prestigious jobs and/or a network of different types of professionals, and are less often unemployed. This gives natives more access to information about job-related resources, 'for instance, they are generally better informed about specific job openings, about how to find jobs, and about how to present themselves to employers' (Kanas, Tubergen, van der Lippe, 2009). Having this network increases the chances that their connections hand out information about job openings and experiences, which increases the likelihood of finding a job (Calvo-Armengol, Jackson, 2004, Brammoulé, Saint-Paul,2010).

However, access to these networks is not equally distributed (Burt, 1992). The value of some networks is higher than others, depending on education, socioeconomic position, and environment. When looking at the networks of co-ethnics, studies show that co-ethnics often have a strong social orientation towards, and broad network amongst co-ethnics and people with other ethnic-minority backgrounds (Slootman, 2018). Within these networks, the importance of trust and solidarity is high. Co-ethnic networks are characterized by working class environments with a lower educational level, higher unemployment and less influential connections compared to natives. For example, higher educated co-ethnics are often first-generation students, meaning that they are the first ones in their families to go to university. These first-generation students lack role models, information, and support about labor market processes due to their network, which creates difficulty navigating through university and the labor market transition (Meerman, De Jong and Wolff 2018; Slootman and Wolff 2017). Based on the characteristics of these co-ethnic networks, in which there are less connections with other native groups and communities that can support them in their career advancement, co-ethnic networks are considered to be bonding networks, used 'to get by'. This limited reach of different positions within their network can affect the access to labor market information and jobs (Waldring, Crul, Ghorashi, 2014). It also contrasts with bridging capital with natives, which is valued for better employment, access to information and job opportunities with co-ethnics (Heath and Yu, 2005, Kanas, Tubergen, van der Lippe, 2009). Therefore, by having social capital that consists of co-ethnic networks, it is assumed that co-ethnics are withheld from valuable information and resource, as only networks with natives are seen as bridging capital

(Vermeulen, Keskiner, 2017). Researching if co-ethnic networks relate to this assumption, leads to the third sub-question:

How do co-ethnic networks shape their social capital?

(in terms of support from others, access to information and bonding & bridging capital)

3. Methodology
3.1 Research design

This research is part of the project 'Jongeren netwerken, ongelijkheid en agency' initiated by researchers of the Vrije Universiteit, Hogeschool van Amsterdam, Inholland, Diversity Talks and ECHO, funded by the network organization Kenniscentrum Ongelijkheid. The aim of this research is to gain insights in multicultural networks and how they influence youth from migrant descent in the Netherlands.

An essential part of this project is to study how youth from migrant descent experience being part of a co-ethnic network in relation to the labor market transition. Within this research, I have chosen to study this by particularly researching the experiences and perceptions of the members of co-ethnic network Anatolia in relation to the labor market.

The philosophy of this research is social constructive, in which we see that the experiences and socially shared beliefs shape different realities that need to be considered. Reality is seen as subjective and different for everyone, in which all perspectives of participants are valuable to create an understanding of the phenomenon of co-ethnic networks. These perspectives or meanings are formed through interaction with others and historical and cultural norms, and are therefore subjectivist of nature (Cresswell, 2007). Gioia et al. (2013) sees participants as "knowledgeable agents' that have knowledge about their perception of reality. Interviewing participants and looking for interpretations beyond written information will give us more revelations about the influence of co-ethnic networks on the labor market transition.

Therefore, I followed a qualitative approach in which individual experiences of the target group were centralized. Within qualitative research, the aim is to make sense of, and interpret meanings that people ascribe to a social or human problem (Cresswell, 2007). Within this research, a qualitative approach is chosen to study how the target groups give meaning to a co-ethnic network and how these co-ethnic networks then shape their reality within labor market transition.

3.2 SV Anatolia

The chosen methodology is a single case study in which the focus is on the current and former board members of co-ethnic network SV Anatolia. The focus on this group of higher-educated, second-generation youth from Turkish descent that has been part of the board of Anatolia is because of multiple reasons. First, I have chosen for co-ethnic network SV Anatolia because it is the first minority association for higher educated students with Turkish descent in the Netherlands. They originated from 1999, established by second-generation students from Turkish descent. Their reach contains over 900 members, in which they actively organize formal and social events. This makes Anatolia the largest active, higher educated co-ethnic network from Turkish descent in the Netherlands (Advalvas,2020). Secondly, literature shows that this group shows a strong group cohesion, Turkish identity and shared language compared to other minority groups, which makes the co-ethnic network ties interesting to research (Slootman, 2019).

Finally, I have chosen Anatolia because of my own experiences with this co-ethnic network. As a higher-educated, second-generation student from Turkish descent myself, I have been a board member of Anatolia from 2018-2019. Being a member of this co-ethnic network has given me interesting insights and a positive experience, which made me curious to investigate the experiences and perceptions of other members. It also facilitated my access to this network, in which the interviewees were part of a convenience sample. By asking my own network and friends whom I met while being in the board of Anatolia if they wanted to share their experiences, I was able to collect twelve interviews. This was also partly a purposive sample, in which I specifically chose current and former board members of this association. Reason for this is because of their active participation within the network. From own experience and the stories of interviewees, the board members spend around 10 hours a week on events, meetings, and tasks of Anatolia. By being actively part of committees and fulfilling different roles, their experience is possibly different from members that only attend the activities, or non-members.

Therefore, this research is a single case study in which the focus will be on the experiences and perceptions of current and former board members of Anatolia. By studying this network through multiple interviews, we gain an in-depth, richly described understanding of the network experiences of individuals who are/were actively engaged in co-ethnic networks in relation to the labor market transition.

3.3 Data collection

The data that is presented in this research were collected through twelve, in-depth interviews with both working and studying, second generation, higher-educated youth from Turkish descent that were part of the board of Anatolia. For this profile, I searched for six students and six professionals, all higher educated (HBO/WO), second-generation youth from Turkish descent who have been part of the board of Anatolia and are or were studying in Amsterdam. From the participants, I have interviewed four men and eight women. All participants were active board members for a period of minimum one year during their study trajectory. Because of the importance to reflect on the labor market transition, I selected people that were working and/or near the end of their studies. The participants all had different study backgrounds, and the professionals were working in different functions and industries such as consultancy, as a manager, as a teacher and within the municipality.

The goal of the interviews were to capture the meanings and experiences that (former) active members had about co-ethnic network Anatolia in relation to the labor market. By combining the perspectives of individuals that are in the beginning of the transition to the labor market and working individuals, the aim was to develop a deeper understanding about the influence of co-ethnic networks on the labor market transition.

This has been done through semi-structured interviews in which key themes such as educational trajectory, career choices, job transition and their membership were discussed. The interviews lasted between 35 minutes to an hour and were recorded. In the interviews, I explained the research and structure of the interview, asked for their consent to be recorded and made clear that the answers were anonymized. Altogether, it was a semi-structured, informal interview in which the answers of participants were leading to describe a deeper understanding about the influence of co-ethnic networks.

Because I was part of Anatolia and the participants were from my own network, a certain bias could not be avoided. First, I have selected interviewees whom I know, and that have been part of the board of Anatolia, which excludes other co-ethnics that might have different experiences as members. Second, since the participants and I belonged to the same network, it might have been more difficult to share honest, critical opinions about the co-ethnic network in the interviews. However, I have tried to reduce this bias by making clear that the answers are anonymized and not shared with others. Because I know the network from within, there might have been bias in how I was leading questions. To avoid this, I have asked simple questions and built my questions upon the answers of interviewees, instead of leading the conversation.

Next, within the interviews, participants often spoke about the experiences within Anatolia that were known to me but not others. Being aware when this happened, I tried to limit this bias by explicitly asking what these experiences were. While I have done my best to reduce bias by asking simple questions, building further upon the answers, and trying to create a safe space in which all participants could answer the questions in all honesty, it is not an exception that certain biases were prevalent in the interviews.

3.4 Data Analysis

After collecting all the data through the interviews, the interviews were transcribed and analyzed through an inductive, 'bottom-up' approach. This was done through the coding program atlas.ti. Within this program, a coding scheme following Gioia's method to define constructs and concepts was created. Gioia's methodology is a systematic way of performing inductive research. The aim of Gioia's method to 'imbue an inductive study with 'qualitative rigor' while still retaining the creative, revelatory potential for generating new concepts and ideas' is very important in this research (Gioia, et al. 2013). This is done by formulating first-order codes and looking for similarities and differences to create categories. The second step was to analyze these first-order categories for emerging themes or phenomena, to formulate 'aggregate dimensions'. This second-order analysis was done by using researcher-centric concepts, which incorporate scientific literature with the experiences of interviewees (Gioia et al. 2013). An example of this analysis can be seen in figure 1. This approach fits this research best because it gives the space to interpret information from the participants in a systemic but broad way. By analyzing the interviews through a lens of similarities and differences, room for new concepts were created. Centering the experience of interviewees first and analyzing them through a scientific lens, helped to understand and investigate the experiences within co-ethnic networks and their influence on co-ethnic networks.

Figure 1. Example of coding scheme

Aggregate Dimensions	2nd Order theme's	1st Order concept
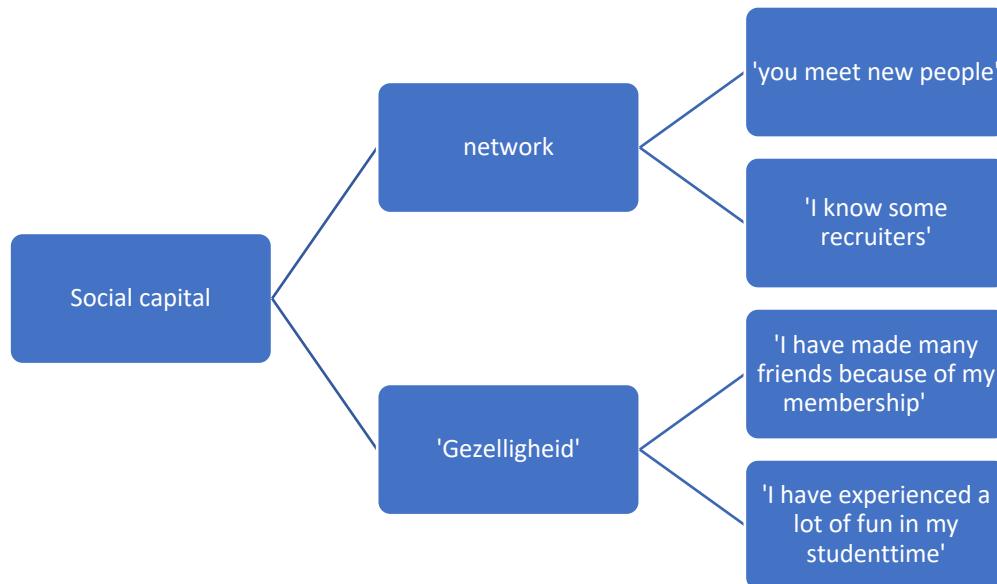
4. Results

In this section, the results will be described. First, the personal background, motive and the network before, during and after Anatolia will be discussed. This will help to understand what membership in co-ethnic networks mean for co-ethnics. Second, I will focus on how participation in Anatolia shaped the labor market transition of co-ethnics, by describing the capabilities and skills they have acquired.

4.1 Personal Background

When looking at common characteristics of the interviewees, most of the members are first-generation students. Given the fact that their parents are not familiar with the various processes and mechanisms regarding higher education and labor market context, they indicate a lack of parental support in terms of guiding them throughout their educational career. In the following quote, it is also revealed that the interviewees lacked information about important labor market mechanisms before participating in the co-ethnic network.

'I was not told from home things such as 'this is important to do', 'It is important to network', 'It's important to develop yourself in several areas and not just to get your diploma', because my parents were not higher educated, they just didn't have the experience.

Next to the educational level of their parents, the lack of information can also be attributed to the lack of role models within their environment. Many interviewees state that they didn't have someone they looked up to, that could answer their questions or that could support them in higher positions. This made them less aware of possibilities within job functions, and general know-how in the labor market transition.

Leading up to the beginning of their studies, before participating in Anatolia, the lack of parental support and missing role models caused a lack of information about the labor market and corporate life. Participants share that they didn't know much about the corporate life, such as what to expect and which possibilities were available. Next to this, interviewees shared that they had prejudices about prestigious companies at the Zuidas, the business district of Amsterdam. Talking about their perspective on de Zuidas, one interviewee said:

'Only blonde, white men get there. A white woman if you're lucky'.

'That distance was too big for me, before I entered Anatolia. I didn't expect that I, with my migrant descent and not all too high grades, would be welcome at such a big office'.

Next to prejudices, these quotes illustrate that participants had low self-confidence about their own position in regard to prestigious companies. Their perception about prestigious companies influenced the way they saw themselves within the company. As seen in the quotes, working at one of the Zuidas offices seemed unattainable for them, because of the high requirements and prejudices about employees. Lacking the network, information and role models, caused for participants to have less self-confidence in their own position and ambitions.

4.2 Motivation for membership

Interviewees became part of Anatolia in the first years of their higher education. They became members through recommendations of mutual friends, banners in the university or searching for them themselves. Reason for their participation in a student association like Anatolia was for multiple reasons. The most common motive was 'gezelligheid', to get to know others,

making friends, going to activities. Many interviewees are not from Amsterdam and were looking for a network of students and friends within the university.

Second, interviewees mentioned that they saw being part of a student association as a way to enhance their CV's and to distinguish themselves from other future applicants.

'There is always competition in your industry, and you have to stand out from that. I always think the more on my resume the better. That was one of the reasons I did this, to distinguish myself. You have to stand out in such a society.

However, they specifically chose to be a member of Anatolia based on the focus on their co-ethnic identity, which distinguishes Anatolia from other traditional student associations. Within the interviews, participants mentioned that there is a lack of diversity in traditional student associations in which they didn't feel a cultural fit. Interviewees mentioned that the focus on alcohol consumption and partying in traditional student associations didn't fit the lifestyle of the interviewees due to personal preferences, religious backgrounds or differences in norms and values. Another reason for participation given by interviewees, was the desire to be in contact with other co-ethnics. Many students came from white environments in which they didn't have co-ethnic friends, which was something they wanted to explore. One interviewee explained this as:

"Actually, it was the first student association I encountered with a multicultural background. I had the idea that I would feel somewhat more comfortable there. Not that I don't have Dutch friends. But before, I didn't have many Turkish friends. And I was curious about that".

Motives for participation	● 87	0
	○ (Mismatch) alcohol culture	8
	○ Other studentassociations	5
	○ CV enhancement	3
	○ Diversity	9
	○ Lack of network	4
	○ Shared norms and values	5
	○ 'Gezelligheid'	1
	○ Recognition	2
	○ Knowledge about studentassociations	1
	○ Accessibility	1
	○ Level of education	5
	○ Standing out	3
	○ Purpose	4
	○ From white environment	5
	○ Connection	2
	○ Differences in norms and values	7
		5

Figure 2: Distribution of codes in relation to the motivation for participation

4.3 Network & empowerment

Interviews show that co-ethnics broadened their social network through their membership in Anatolia. They have met a lot of other co-ethnic students and created strong friendships. According to the interviews these friendships developed from the similarities they shared based on their ethnic identity, educational level and socio-economic position. Participants mentioned that they missed having a network with co-ethnics, and wanted to be more connected with their Turkish identity.

"I missed a connection I could make, the one with people who could actually really understand me with the things you're going through, and that you see and experience from home."

'You meet people who are somewhat in the same situation. So, well, for example, a non-Western background, or a Turkish background. So you do feel that 'click' in terms of culture, for example.

These quotes show that the common ethnic identity, socioeconomic background, and educational level amongst co-ethnics created a feeling of recognition and understanding. By having a common aspect, they felt understood and not in their culture, norms and values, and identity, which interviewees state that they miss in other environments.

Next to the feeling of recognition, findings show that interviewees were empowered through this network. By feeling connected, recognized, and understood, interviewees mention that they were able to express themselves better.

One interviewee mentions this as:

"They are people who help me move forward. And who let me see things from other perspectives. It feels like we're the same. We know each other and we are almost all the first generation of Turkish students. You do have something that makes you think - this keeps us grounded."

This quote shows that the co-ethnic network has a strong sense of solidarity and empowerment. They mention that by feeling 'sameness' they understand each other and feel recognized in their identity. By seeing how other co-ethnics navigated through their lives, creating friendships and doing fun activities, interviewees state that it made them feel more confident in being themselves as well as broadened their student life. The friendships that they have developed with other co-ethnics, made them feel seen, accepted, and contributed to their educational experience as mentioned in the interviews. For example, whereas first they only went to the university for school, interviewees shared that they started to hang out more at university. Next to contributing to the interviewee's happiness, this caused a sense of belonging within the university in which interviewees mention that they went more to the university and felt more at place.

The friendships and bonds that were created are strong according to interviewees. While sameness as described as the same ethnic identity, educational level and socioeconomic background were important factors in the beginning of their friendships, interviewees mention that there are many differences between individuals within the co-ethnic network.

But it has shown me that there are also many people within the Turkish community here in the Netherlands who still think differently. You have people who think different politically, and also about religion, who find that more important. But there is actually not really one kind of Turkish-Dutch person. That's something I've seen a lot, and I actually thought it was very beautiful.

This quote shows the internal diversity within the co-ethnic network. Differences in interests, study backgrounds and characteristics caused for a meaningful exchange of perspectives and broadened their mindsets according to interviewees.

4.4 Bridge to the labor market

While personal networks are important to foster friendships and enhance perspectives, these networks also contribute to community building, give access to information and support co-ethnics according to interviewees. By creating ties with other like-minded individuals, they feel a sense of solidarity and support that exceeds student life as interviews show. Because they meet people and make friends from different study backgrounds, they indirectly create a network of specialists within different fields and industries for in the future. After graduating, interviewees state that they have gained a big professional network within different kinds of organizations.

Findings show that having this network of professionals of which one can reach out to when necessary, is an important contribution to the labor market. One interviewee said:

"Friends of mine who were also part of Anatolia are now working in big companies. For example, someone is now working at De Brauw Blackstone. And he also said: "If you want to apply, let me know. Then I'll help you. Then I recommend you.'

This shows a valuable connection between students and professionals, in which they show willingness to support each other due to a sense of solidarity. The awareness of having this supportive network, even if they're not making use of it, contributes to a sense of security or confidence, as seen from the data.

According to the interviews, alumni want to help and advice these students, based on the information they gained throughout their own working experience. This leads to a form of community building. The interviews show that they share their experiences and information

about the labor market, job application and work environment and create space to answer questions. They help with writing motivation letters, give tips about the application procedure, and inform about possibilities. Next, the interviews indicate that these friendships give access to companies, through referrals and recommendations. Interviewees find that asking their community is an informal, approachable way of gaining information. As one interviewee said, *"sharing is multiplying'*. When asked about the importance of sharing, he said:

"You notice that within Anatolia there were sometimes people who lacked kind of role models. Someone 'higher' who could give tips and tricks. Which I myself have always missed a bit. (...) I know how that felt. So when people come to me with a request for help, I am certainly not afraid to help".

As seen in this quote, this form of engagement with other co-ethnics shows a strong sense of solidarity, empathy, and support, in which the lack of own resources made the interviewee feel responsible for making an own contribution. Another interviewee shared her motive as:

I love to help them so that they also get a job and have an income. That they are facing a good career, working on their CV and getting experiences somewhere. You want to help others so that they get further.

This illustrates a form of empowerment of former members to current members. By sharing their knowledge about the labor market, profession, or job application, they want to enhance the position of co-ethnics from Turkish descent.

This motivation to help other co-ethnics is not only limited to their own network according to the interviewees. From the former members that are now professionals, many say that they are motivated to contribute to diversity in the place they work. They are setting up, or being part of diversity committees, and recommend Anatolia to recruiters. From the interviews, this is partly due to the consciousness they have developed about diversity and inclusion within their time at Anatolia, and partly due to their own ethnic background, in which they want to feel more represented. By using their knowledge and experience into helping organizations to becoming more diverse, they want to empower other co-ethnics as mentioned from the interviews.

4.4 Organizational Skills
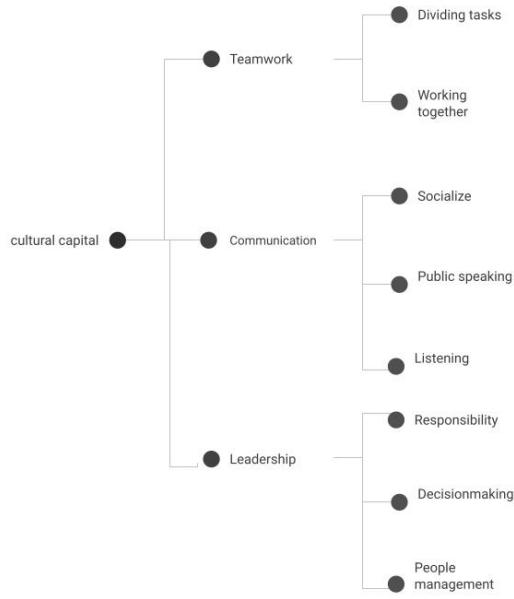
Figure 3: Cultural capital

Within Anatolia, interviewees state that they have learned a great amount of personal, professional, and organizational skills by organizing events, fulfilling different tasks, and responsibilities and working together.

The most developed skills consist of teamwork, communication, and leadership. Interviewees mention that they have learned more about working in a team, taking on responsibilities, listening to others, and take different perspectives and workstyles into account. Other skills that they have developed consisted of time management, decision-making and communicative skills. A couple interviewees mentioned to have an introvert character, in which they became more social by being urged to socialize and practice public speaking. They state to have learned how to communicate with their team members, divide tasks and present themselves. Some of the interviewees mention that they have developed leadership skills.

At some point, because you are the chairman of a committee, you have to lead several people. Among other things, you should think about yes, how can you efficiently manage a team, you should also think of conflict situations.

This shows that they learn how to lead teams, manage conflict situations and be solution oriented. One interviewee referred to this *as 'firefighting'*, creating quick solutions for unexpected problems.

Another interviewee summarized his experience as:

"You learn how to be a committee member or a board member, you learn a lot of things, mainly planning things and organizing things. And I could very much take that with me into later financial or later business life, because you notice that in the office it is very important that you have time management, but also communication."

This shows that they value the skills that they have developed and see this as useful within their career.

According to the interviews, participating in the network then functions as a safe context to exercise, make mistakes, and learn from them. From the professionals that were interviewees, almost all of them agreed that practicing organizational skills within a safe environment with less stakes, helped them in their future career when faced with similar situations.

The findings show that the development of these skills lead to more confidence and personal development. By practicing various tasks within Anatolia, they gain a know-how about certain situations. Being aware of their experience and knowledge, they are more confident in speaking up and taking action.

'that self-affirmation, for me that was something I was really able to get out of Anatolia. Like I know I can do it, I haven't done it until now, couldn't do it, and now I'm going to do it and indeed it works. So in that respect you also get a confidence boost.'

This confidence can also be seen as the results of the efforts they make within the network, something interviewees want to contribute to in the future.

I really feel that the fact that I proved myself with Anatolia that if you put in the effort you can really do something for other people. That has also given me self-confidence and that now also triggers me to continue to mean something to people after my studies.

Interviewees mention that all these organizational skills contribute to enhancing their resume. They state that in many jobs, extracurricular activities are important, to show core competences. By being a part of Anatolia, they can prove that they are competent of these skills, which makes them more confident during a job application according to interviewees.

4.5 Business skills and networks

According to the interviews, one of the events that Anatolia organizes, inhousedays explicitly contributes to shaping the labor market position. Inhousedays are paid partnerships with organizations in which students visit the company to 'take a look in their kitchen', as a tool to gain a diverse pool of candidates as seen in the findings. According to the interviewees, this is an accessible way to meet companies and look for opportunities after graduation. While other associations also offer these inhousedays, findings show that participants look for other co-ethnics within the network as a motive to attend.

'I'd rather go to an in-house day with my friends and the people I know than a random sorority that I don't know anyone in, that I don't know anything about. So the step is bigger to take.'

The interviews show that within these events, they meet the company, get in touch with recruiters and see if the organizational culture is a good fit. Students get information about the application process, and gain the ability to network with employees. Findings show that students use this opportunity to ask questions to recruiters, in which they can show their motivation and leave a good first impression. The interviews also show that they get to know more about how to behave within a company, by experiencing the company culture from within. By learning the codes of conduct and behavior, it creates familiarity and contributes to their confidence according to interviewees.

'The ultimate goal of in-house days is that participants apply and are hired, but gaining knowledge and knowing what the possibilities is the most important'

From the interviews, organizing inhousedays is seen as a mutual benefitted arrangement. On the one hand, as interviewees mention, companies want to stimulate members of Anatolia to apply for jobs, to reach a diverse audience. On the other hand, Anatolia receives a financial compensation, and they lower the barrier to apply for their members.
Therefore, visiting an inhouseday is a moment for Anatolia and their members to be introduced to the business life. A good example for this comes from an interviewee that gained interest in the field of law after visiting an inhouseday, and changed her studies based on that experience.

'That in-house day actually determined my entire future. And I am very grateful for that.'

This quote illustrates the impact of inhousedays, in which introducing the industry to students is helpful for co-ethnics to find out what they like and want to do in the future. By experiencing the organizational culture from within and gaining information about the company, interviewees mention that the step to apply became lower. For example, some of the interviewees mention the people in their network that have applied and were hired after going to the inhouseday.

As mentioned, before going to an inhouseday, the perception is that coethnics won't fit in because of their cultural differences in a white environment.

"But if you do go to an in-house day, you see, although it was said otherwise, that it can also be different. You also get to know people who have a different background, who work there. So that is special to see.'

This quote illustrates that regardless of the perception about organization, gaining information and experiencing the organization from within changes their perspective, in which the organization becomes more accessible and broadens their options.

Another contribution of inhousedays according to the findings is empowerment. As mentioned before, visiting inhousedays, getting to know the organizational culture and being in contact with recruiters creates a sense of recognition. This contributes to the self-confidence of co-ethnics, in which they are more sure of their own abilities and are willing to apply.

The bottom line is that I now apply for a job earlier, I am a bit more confident, because they contact those student associations with a diverse background.

Next to empowerment and self-confidence, findings show that gaining a real-life insight of an organization and making personal connections makes the organization more accessible, creates willingness to apply and broadens the options of co-ethnics. Next to this, this quote illustrates that companies that have an active intention to enhance diversity, make the organization more attractive to apply to for co-ethnics.

Organizing the inhousedays is done by the acquisition committee. Within Anatolia, findings show that the five interviewees that were part of the acquisition committee developed other skills that are specifically relevant within the labor market transition. They learn how to contact big organizations, how to speak with recruiters and they organize inhousedays. According to the interviews, the goal of this committee is to form a bridge between companies

and students from Turkish backgrounds. Interviewees mention that in order to create a partnership, they need to contact multiple organizations, which makes them familiar with different kinds of companies and organizational cultures. Through contacting these companies, interviewees state that they have gained an insight in organizations and their recruitment procedures, as well as build a network with recruiters.

It is also very useful that I have regular contact with the recruiters, and that I know a little bit about how things work in such a company, or how it goes with applying for a job. So I think that also gave me a point ahead.

This quote shows that they gain access to information and a network within a company. Findings show that they develop know-how within the labor market for example by learning how to write formal emails, call recruiters and learn about professional mannerisms within businesses.

One interviewee illustrates this by referring to the unwritten strategies and skills within organizations that are learned through experience and exposure.

It is one of those things that you cannot fully estimate or know completely at the front.

5. Conclusion

This study researched the many ways of how co-ethnic network Anatolia shapes the personal and professional development of higher-educated, second-generation youth of Turkish descent in the transition to the labor market.

Before entering the labor market, it can be concluded that higher educated, second-generation co-ethnics from Turkish descent lack parental support, role models and information about the labor market. This lack of human, social and cultural capital, caused for lower self-confidence in their ambitions in which the step to apply for companies seemed high.

However, based on the results of this theses, co-ethnic networks are shaping the personal and professional development of co-ethnics in the transition to the labor market by contributing to their human, social and cultural capital.

First, findings show that being a member of Anatolia contributes to human capital by creating a feeling of empowerment, recognition and understanding. By meeting other co-ethnics from the same socioeconomic background, they felt recognized in their own cultural identity

which empowered them to be confident in themselves and in their ambitions. Being a board member at Anatolia reinforced the cultural identity of the members, in which Anatolia formed a safe environment in which members felt a sense of belonging. These findings support prior literature of Slootman (2018), who describes this as 'reinventing' the ethnic identity, by reasserting and reshaping the ethnic identity to fit higher education levels (Slootman,2018). This can be related to an 'achieved identity', which leads to self-confidence and wellbeing (Marcia 1980; Phinney 1989).

Second, being a co-ethnic member of Anatolia contributed to social capital by broadening their personal and professional network with other co-ethnics, through community building and by meeting recruiters.

Within Anatolia, they met a lot of other co-ethnics from the same background, educational level and ethnicity. This 'sameness' was the baseline for creating strong, meaningful friendships. However, the internal diversity within the co-ethnic network was especiallt valuable for their social capital. This is because they met individuals with different characteristics, study backgrounds and mindsets, which contributed to their personal development by broadening their views and contributing to their personal network. These friendships lead to community building and created a support system with a strong sense of solidarity and willingness to support each other.

After graduating, former members of Anatolia became professional network connections that were working in different industries and positions, and had a strong willingness to help others. By gaining knowledge about job-related activities, having role models and knowing about career opportunities, individuals navigate better within the labor market transition. Having this support system, regardless of using it, empowers co-ethnics in their ambition and self-confidence.

On a professional level of social capital, co-ethnic members develop important network ties with recruiters when participating in inhousedays. This gives them an insight in organziations, as well as create important connections that can help them in their labor market transition and for finding a job.

Finally, co-ethnic networks shape the personal and professional development by contributing to their cultural capital in terms of know-how, familiarity with the organization and organizational and business skills. These skills are all valuable within the labor market and future job functions. Having developed these skills and proving this within the resume, gives co-ethnics a distinctive feature which contributes to their self-confidence and self-profiling during their job application. Participating in Anatolia is thereby seen as a valuable

extracurricular activity, in which they can show their competences. These findings support literature about the hiring procedure, in which organizations value extracurricular activities as well as shared aspects such as being a member of a student association (Pinto, Ramalheira, 2016, Elrick, 2016)

Consequently, by visiting inhousedays and/or being part of the acquisition committee, co-ethnic boardmembers gain know-how in the codes of conduct within a professional environment. Developing this familiarity with professional environments functions as an enhancement of their professional identity as well as confidence and ambition in how to present themselves within organizations. By having this cultural capital, they are more confident to fit in well established organizations and fit more boxes in job applications. Through composing mails, staying in contact with recruiters and knowing how organizations work, they become more confident in applying to jobs. This resonates with prior research in which cultural capital is essential to adjust in a dominant environment (Vermeulen, Keskiner, 2016)

5.2 Theoretical relevance

Based on these findings, two conclusions become prevalent when looking at co-ethnic networks in terms of bonding and/or bridging capital.

First, co-ethnic networks are not only functional to 'to get by' as mentioned in previous research, but also 'to get ahead' (Lancee, 2010, Vermeulen and Keskiner, 2017). By bringing co-ethnics from the same ethnicity, education level, and socioeconomic position together, strong within-group connections are created that foster empowerment, recognition and the reinforcement of identity. By developing skills, they gain know-how, access to information and experience within labor market mechanisms. This contributes to their self-confidence in their ambitions and capabilities. Having these bonding ties and participating in this network is thereby an important strategy to enhance the position on the labor market of higher educated, second-generation co-ethnics.

These results are consistent with the literature about co-ethnic migrant networks, in which co-ethnic networks are seen as strong bonding ties that provide resources and information that can improve their labor market position (Keskiner & Vermeulen, 2017, Sanders, 1996. At the same time, our findings oppose the perspective of Lancee (2020) in which bonding capital is seen as not useful for career advancement.

Second, next to bonding capital, co-ethnic networks also function as bridging capital.

By being a boardmember of Anatolia, co-ethnics broaden their personal and professional networks. Within literature, migrant connections are often only seen as bonding capital based on the common ethnicity (Lancee, 2010), Vermeulen & Keskiner, 2017).

While it is often assumed that co-ethnic networks are homogenous, this network consists of internal diversity in terms of different studies, job positions, personalities that are also important in heterogeneity within a network. By having this network, a new form of social capital consisting of professional co-ethnic connections are created. This network is based on trust and solidarity and provides access to a wider circle of information and resources such as job opportunities and expertise.

This professional network is broadened by other ties as well. By visiting inhousedays and participating in the acquisition committee, co-ethnics are introduced to organizations and recruiters. This network is of valuable because co-ethnics meet individuals from different backgrounds and professions, that are useful in career advancement. As mentioned before, by meeting recruiters and go to organizations, they gain points of reference and know-how which can help them advance in their careers. Therefore, co-ethnic networks shape the labor market transition by functioning as bonding as well as bridging capital, in contrary to Vermeulen & Keskiner (2017)

5.3 Limitations

However, certain limitations within this study need to be acknowledged. First, the small sample of the study is not representative for all higher-educated, second-generation youth of Turkish descent in the Netherlands. This is because becoming a boardmember requires extra time and participation, which depends on the motivation, (financial) possibility, interest and knowledge of a student from Turkish descent.

However, majority of the answers of participants are aligned with previous literature within co-ethnic networks such as Slootman (2018), which makes some of the results of this theses transferable to other co-ethnic groups. While not all experiences are relevant for other co-ethnics, mechanisms about empowerment and identity are comparable.

Second, it needs to be acknowledged that the interviewees are all individuals with own intersections of identity, opinions and background. There is a heterogeneity among this group, that shapes their experience, role of context and dynamics over time. The role of socio-economic position, being a first-generation student, parental support and the environment can play a big role in how much the co-ethnic network shapes their experience within the labormarket.

Future research can therefore focus on a broader aspect of labormarket transition and their experiences, by broadening the sample and comparing the outcomes to students from Turkish descent that haven't been part of Anatolia. This could show the heterogeneity between the group, and also provide a clear overview about the effects of co-ethnic networks.

5.4. Practical implications

The goal of this research was to research and understand how co-ethnic networks shape the personal and professional development of higher educated, second generation youth from Turkish descent. Based on the findings, there are four areas of practical implications

➤ *Institutional level*

On an institution level, especially within governmental and higher education institutes, this research contributes to give an in-depth insight in the perception of co-ethnics in relation to co-ethnic networks which can be used in politics and policies. While being a member of a co-ethnic network is often frowned upon during societal and political debates, this research has showed that co-ethnic networks contribute to a great amount of human, social and cultural capital for higher educated, second-generation youth from Turkish descent.

➤ *Labor market*

Findings of this research showed that co-ethnic networks are useful for the labor market in different ways. First, the co-ethnic network and participating in inhousedays and acquisition committee, lowers the barrier for co-ethnics to apply in companies which enhances the labor market position. Second, through partnerships, business can enhance their diversity reach by introducing their companies. By engaging in diversity initiatives, their organization becomes more attractive for a diverse audience. This can contribute to the recruitment of diversity and enhance diversity policies within organizations. Next to this, former members who are now professionals are committed to create more diversity within their own organizations. Therefore, partnerships in co-ethnic networks are important strategies to create diversity within an organization.

➤ *Co-ethnic networks*

Through an in-depth analysis about the experiences and perceptions of members of Anatolia, co-ethnics can feel representation and self-confidence in their position as higher educated, second-generation youth from Turkish descent. Due to the many proven contributions of these networks, co-ethnics can solidify their membership when exposed to external prejudices or during a job application.

Finally, building a network of professionals and a support system is not only beneficial for their own social, cultural and human capital, but also 'to the next generation of their offsprings whom they can share this network with'*(Waldinger 1996,Zhou & Bankston 1998).*

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