`A FRIEND IN NEED…`

A STUDY OF THE PERSONAL NETWORKS AND THE SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING OF HIGH AND LOW STATUS MIGRANTS IN BUDAPEST

By

Dorottya Hoór

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Supervisor: Balázs Vedres

Second Reader: Jean-Louis Fabiani

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ABSTRACT

The current thesis empirically investigates the differences in the subjective well-being and the social networks of international migrants in Budapest by employing the mixed methodological tools of survey research, social network analysis and semi-structured interviews. In doing so, it also establishes the categories of high and low status migrants as meaningful analytical categories as it finds major differences in the subjective well-being and in the ego-network features of the two groups. It was found that, on the average, low status migrants report lower life satisfaction and tend to have smaller networks, especially when it comes to 'close' contacts. Also, low status migrant have fewer 'friends' and weaker ties. Instead, they have more 'other' kind of relationships and 'younger' ties than high status migrants do. Moreover, lower status migrants also appear to have a denser and less efficient network compared to high-status migrants. The qualitative analysis also revealed the importance of employment and the role of language through its impact on social integration as major factors influencing the subjective well-being of migrants. Lastly, the findings also highlighted the major importance of supportive personal relationships for subjective well-being as well as emphasised the need for adapting different theoretical approaches to migration in order to fully understand the diverse experiences of migrants.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The pursuit of happiness seems to be a central question to human life. It has been concerning the greatest thinkers throughout the course of history, including Blaise Pascal and Aristotle. The first records of scientific engagement with the topic dates back to Aristotle who regarded happiness as the central purpose and the main goal of human life. Nowadays, an increasing number of people decide either voluntarily or under the influence of force to leave their home countries, either temporarily or permanently, in their pursuit of happiness and a better future.

As international migration is an ever-growing phenomenon impacting the lives of an ever-increasing number of people it has also inspired a vast body of theoretical (Basch, Glick Schiller, Szanton Blanc 1994; Portes 2003) and empirical work (Bosetti, Cattaneo and Verdolini 2015; Constant and Massey 2003; Lados, et al. 2013).There are several studies concerning the impact of international migrants both on the sending country (Lados, et al., 2013; Pires, 2015; Mendoza, 2013) or the receiving one (Razin & Sadka, 2000; Bosetti, Cattaneo, & Verdolini, 2015; Kivunja & Shizha, 2015). Such studies mostly look at transnational migrants and their labour market participation (Constant & Massey, 2003; Iguchi, 2012; Grogger & Hanson, 2011), their integration to the host-society (Giusta & Kambhampti, 2006; Subiros, 2011) or the remittances they send to their country of origin (Somun-Kapetanovic, Resic és Balavac 2012; Li és Zhou 2013). Nevertheless, much less attention has been paid to the actual experience of migrants and the impact of migration on their well-being. Nevertheless, as Sumner (1996) argues, from an ethical point of view "*no theory, which fails to find a place for well-being […] could possibly tell the whole story*". (Sumner, 1996, p.195). Therefore, the current thesis approaches the broader field of migration through studying the well-being of high and low status international migrants and offers a more nuanced and complex understanding of the phenomenon by comparing the well-being of high and low status migrants.

However, while everyone has an intuitive understanding of the word 'happiness', views on its exact meaning are likely to vary greatly from person to person. Accordingly, the scientific community is also divided between a more objective and a more subjective approach to conceptualising happiness. On the one hand, advocates of the more objective approach emphasise "psychological well-being" such as Ryff (1996) or "self-determination", such Ryan and Deci (2000) taking a rather objective and more prescriptive approach towards happiness. They focus on the fulfilment of certain needs such as security, autonomy, self-acceptance or a purposeful life as a prerequisite for well-being (Diener, Kesebir, & Tov, 2009). Accordingly, a strong positive relationship between materiality and well-being has been assumed and a vast body of empirical evidence based on objective measures of well-being such as income or wealth has been accumulated supporting the view that happiness is closely related to income (Stevenson & Wolfers, 2008; Senik, 2014). On the other hand, several other studies have come to contradictory conclusions regarding the relation between well-being and income and argued that money has indeed a positive but diminishing effect on happiness. Similarly, social scientists studying the happiness level of wealthiest have also come to contradicting findings (Brickman, Coates & Janoff-Bulman, 1978 in Diener; Diener, Kesebir, & Tov, 2009; Diener, Horowitz and Emmons, 1985) and concluded that the relationship between well-being and wealth is clearly far from straightforward.

Thus, many social scientists argue for a different conceptualisation of happiness, which rather emphasises its *subjective* aspects. Accordingly, the proponents of *subjective well-being* break away from simply equating well-being with material wealth and allow people to judge their own experience entailing both cognitive judgements of satisfaction and affective evaluations of moods and emotions (Diener E. , 1984). As Durand (2013) argued in order to understand and improve well-being, society's policies need a solid evidence base and progress must be measured across several domains, of which subjective well –being – how people think about and experience their lives – is a major component. Proponents of subjective well-being argue that "individuals appraisals of their own well-being hardly reflect empty-headed cheerfulness or raw hedonism. To the contrary, major

constituents of subjective well-being, such as life satisfaction and positive affect, seem to emanate first and foremost from one's goals and values" *(Diener, et al, 2009 in OECD 2013 p.*). Moreover, as the Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress also highlighted the determinants of subjective well-being go well beyond people's income and material conditions (Stiglitz, Sen, & Fitoussi, 2008). Thus, adopting a well-being measure based on income and wealth would fail to capture vital elements of the experience of transnational migrants. Consequently, this thesis operationalizes and measures well-being as subjective well-being, capturing a more complex experience of well-being.

Moreover, some social scientists also argue that social relations are the single most important source of happiness (Reis & Gable, 2003). Within Sociology, the paramount importance of social relations to one's well-being dates back to Durkheim who argues that 'egoistic suicide' results from the lack of social integration of the individual (Durkheim [1952], 2002). Following Durkheim's footsteps several studies had confirmed that social relations are vital components of mental health and consequently of subjective well-being (Myers, 1999; Lieberman, 2014). Therefore, the current work hopes to contribute to this debate by taking an original entry point through looking at the subjective well-being and social relations of international migrants juxtaposed. More precisely, it compares the well-being and social networks of high and low status migrants and aims to answer the following question of:

What are the differences (if any) between the subjective well-being and social networks of high and low status migrants and what is the relationship between the two?

In doing so, the thesis employs mixed methodological tools, as on the one hand it uses quantitative research methods to map the social networks of migrants as well as to measure their level of subjective well-being. However, it also takes advantage of qualitative research methods, especially of semi-structures interview, in order to explore the underlying mechanisms through the narratives of migrants. As part of the data collection process 34 international migrants currently

living in Budapest filled out a questionnaire designed specially for this project over the course of 8 weeks from the beginning of March until the end of April. Additionally, in 12 cases administering the survey was also followed by semi-structured interviews, where respondents discussed their post-migratory experiences in Hungary, while in 15 cases the survey was administered in the homes of respondents also providing the opportunity to observe the respondents in their usual contexts. Based on the obtained quantitative data the subjective well-being and the main features of the personal networks of high and low status migrants were measured and compared, while through a qualitative analysis the underlying factors behind the quantitative results were also identified.

The current thesis presents the research project in five main chapters. First, it gives the readers a theoretical background where the concepts of subjective well-being, social capital and social networks are linked together and placed in the context of migration studies. Highlighting the shortcomings of the existing studies instead of traditional skill based classifications it also proposes high and low status migrants as analytical categories. In the second chapter, it outlines the major methodological choices and the data collection process, which generated both the quantitative and qualitative data that served as the basis for the subsequent empirical analysis. Chapter three outlines the major findings regarding the both the measurement of the well-being of migrants and the underlying mechanisms that help us understand the outcomes. In chapter four, the social networks of high and low status migrants are compared and the potential implications of observed differences for the well-being of migrants are outlined and linked to previous theoretical and empirical work. The last fifth section summarises the main findings and arguments.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

As the current thesis explores the similarities and differences in the well-being and the personal networks of high and low status migrants in Budapest as well as the potential link between the two the first chapter offers a comprehensive literature review on the major theoretical concepts and relevant empirical work as a context to the consecutive empirical chapters. Firstly, it introduces the concept of subjective well-being. Then, it looks at previous empirical studies that look at the well-being of international migrants. It is followed by establishing high and low status migrants as analytical categories used for the comparison of the different experiences of international migrants in Hungary. In the last section, it highlights the relevance of social network analysis for the better understanding the experiences of migrants and lastly, it introduces the concept of social capital to outline the potential connection between the social networks and well-being of high and low status migrants.

2.1. SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING

The current thesis adopts the definition of subjective well-being from the OECD Guidelines on Measuring Subjective Well-Being, defined as

> "good mental states, including all of the various evaluations, positive and negative, that people make of their lives and the affective reactions of people to their experiences." (OECD, 2013, p.13)

This all-encompassing and inclusive definition is meant to cover a wide range of different aspects of subjective well-being. It is concerned with how people experience and evaluate their life as a whole*"* as well as particular domains of their lives." It also identifies three distinct aspects of subjective well-being, such *as 'life evaluation or life satisfaction', 'affect'* and *'flourishing'* (OECD, 2013 p10). *'Life evaluation'* is understood as an overall "reflective assessment on a person's life or some

specific aspect of it" (OECD, 2013, p.29). Such assessment is based on individuals' judgement of 'life as a whole' or its more specific domains instead and is most commonly measured by asking respondents about their life satisfaction in one way or another (OECD, 2013, p.10). In contrast, '*affect'* refers to someone's feelings and emotional state at a given point in time. Measures of affect are concerned with how people actually *experience* life rather than how they remember it and it has two distinct hedonic dimensions: *positive affect* and *negative affect* (Kahneman & Krueger, 2006). Positive affect includes pleasant emotions such as happiness, joy and contentment, while negative affect captures negative emotions including sadness, anger, fear and anxiety. Additionally to life evaluations and affect, definitions of subjective well-being are also concerned with one's good psychological functioning and realisation of his/her potential. Thus, the domain of '*eudaimonia*', also called 'flourishing', is also included, as it exceeds one's reflective evaluation and momentarily emotional states. As Huppert et al (2009) argues it comprises autonomy, competence, interest in learning, goal orientation, sense of purpose, resilience, social engagement, caring and altruism (OECD, 2013, p.32). Therefore, it can be said that eudaimonia has a more instrumental focus than life evaluation or affect, as it emphasises capabilities as much as final outcomes and cover important aspects of people's subjective perceptions about their own well-being, which are not covered by the other two domains (OECD, 2013, p.32).

2.2. MIGRATION AND WELL-BEING

As the Human Development Report also illustrates, there seems to be a wide-spread general assumption, that that most migrants upon resettlement experience improved well-being, especially in relation to income, health and education (Bartram, 2010; United Nations, 2009). However, several available studies on the topic has showed migration is indeed a stressful life event (Poppit & Frey, 2007; Lazarevic, Wiley, & Pleck,). Together, with the related acculturation process, which requires serious adjustments from migrants it can bring about emotional distress and diminished

well-being (Weishaar, 2008; Hull, 1979; Griffin & Soskolne, 2003). Studies have found that international migration can induce social stress through a number of factors such as cultural and social differences (Weishaar, 2008), reduced security in daily life (Sundquist, 1994) and experiences of alienation, prejudices (Weishaar, 2008; Subiros, 2011) and disruption in social relations. Even though the impact of cultural dislocation including "rootlessness", loss, separation, loneliness, anxiety and depression are also believed to have a strong negative impact on the well-being of all migrants regardless of their social status (Dunlop, 2011), the existing research on the well-being of migrants has almost been exclusively focusing on the well-being of forced migrants or refugees.

There are numerous studies highlighting the challenges of the resettlement and acculturation process and their potential negative impacts on well-being, such as increased risk of mental health and behavioural problems (Fazel, Wheeler, & Danesh, 2005; Pumariega, Rothe, & B., 2005; Carswell, Blackburn, & Barker, 2011). Common reoccurring themes believed to influence refugees' post-migratory well-being include pre-migratory experiences (Pumariega, Rothe, & B., 2005), subjective social status (Correa-Velez, Gifford, & Barnett, 2010), social inclusion or exclusion (Correa-Velez, Gifford, & Barnett, 2010) social relations (Smith, 2013; Borwick, et al, 2013; Whittaker, Hardy, Lewis, & Buchan, 2005), religion (Borwick, Schweitzer, Brough, Vromans, & Shakespeare-Finch, 2013; Whittaker, Hardy, Lewis, & Buchan, 2005) resilience (Borwick, Schweitzer, Brough, Vromans, & Shakespeare-Finch, 2013; Whittaker, Hardy, Lewis, & Buchan, 2005) occupational status (Gupta, 2013) and language proficiency (Watkins, Razee, & Richter, 2012; Burchett & Matheson, 2011; Poppit & Frey, 2007).

2.3. HIGH AND LOW STATUS MIGRANTS AS ANALYTICAL CATEGORIES

Besides the vast body of empirical research on migration, most studies seem to share the major weakness of treating migrants as a homogeneous group as they tend to look at either only a certain segment of the labour market (e.g. low skilled migrants) or other groups of migrants (e.g. refugees). In contrast, the few studies that acknowledge the heterogeneity of migrants have shown that high

and low-skilled migrants have very different post migratory experiences (Voicu & Vlase, 2014; Grogger & Hanson, 2011). It was found that high-skilled migrants integrate better than other immigrants do (Voicu & Vlase, 2014) and local policy makers often aim to create a welcoming environment in order to retain high-skilled migrants (Föbker, Temme, & Wiegandt, 2013), while migrants in low-skilled jobs often face prejudices and discrimination (Subiros, 2011).

However, those few studies that look at different groups of international migrants tend to use skill based categories, such as high-skilled, semi-skilled and low-skilled migrants. While there is no single definition of what exactly unskilled or low-skilled, and skilled or highly skilled mean, the categories established by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) are a good indicator of what low-skilled and high-skilled cover in general (Office for National Statistics, 2012). However, using such classification for the understanding the differences in the experiences of international migrants has two major shortcomings. Firstly, such classifications are based on the *current* occupational status of migrants in the host countries, which in the light of 'brain waste' phenomenon causes major difficulties in the accurate assessment of the skill-set of migrants. 'Brain waste' refers to a situation of skill downgrading, where international migrants work jobs that require significantly lower skill-level than the migrants' original skill level, and is a highly common phenomenon amongst international migrants, especially amongst refugees and asylum seekers (Burchett & Matheson, 2011). Secondly, the categories of highly skilled and unskilled migrants classify only those individuals, who are currently *holding a job* in the host country. Consequently, it excludes several groups of migrants, who are not actively participating in the labour markets, such as refugees and asylum seekers, international students and stay-home parents, failing to acknowledge their experiences as international migrants.

Thus, the current thesis introduces the categories of high and low status migrants and proposes a comparative study in order to understand the vastly different experiences of international migrants. The introduction of these analytical categories has several advantages. Firstly, the categories of high

and low status migrants are far more inclusive than other skill based classifications. The category of high status migrants does not only entail highly skilled labour migrants or 'gold collar' workers as Fullilove (2008) refers to highly-skilled professionals, but to all "expatriates" entailing families members of highly skilled professionals, who may not necessarily participate in the labour markets themselves but also obtain a relatively high social status. Moreover, as we are also witnessing a cross-border mobility of students around the world, who are often considered to be crucial by educational institution for enhancing their academic prestige (Altbach & Knight, 2007), the category of high status migrant is also inclusive of international students.

On the other hand, the category of low status migrants entails low-skilled migrants as well as other marginalised migrant groups in contemporary Budapest, such as asylum seekers and refugees. Additionally, these categories capture the concept of social status of migrants in the host society, which is also known to impact the health and subjective well-being of migrants (Correa-Velez, Gifford and Barnett, 2010; Haught, et al., 2015; Moroznik, Coe and Ryff ,2010). Lastly, by focusing on the two opposing ends of the social scale the contrasts between the two groups helps to highlight the differences in their experiences. Therefore, the current thesis contributes empirically to the field of both migration studies and happiness research by offering a comparative perspective on international migrants occupying different social statuses in the same wider social and economic context of contemporary Budapest, Hungary.

2.4. Social Capital

2.4.1. The Concept

As the well-being of migrants has been strongly linked to subjective social status (Correa-Velez, Gifford, & Barnett, 2010), social inclusion or exclusion (Correa-Velez, Gifford, & Barnett, 2010) and social relations (Correa-Velez, Gifford, & Barnett, 2010; Smith, 2013; Borwick, Schweitzer, Brough, Vromans, & Shakespeare-Finch, 2013; Whittaker, Hardy, Lewis, & Buchan, 2005) the current thesis theoretically draws on the rich literature of *social capital*. As Halpern elegantly writes,

social capital is about how people are connected to one another, making it an extremely useful concept for the study of micro level social structures. The popularity of the concept is often attributed to its ability to capture the essence of many sociological concepts including social support, social integration, cohesion, trust and norms.

In the past decades, several great scholars have engaged with the idea of social capital. For Bourdieu the concept was based on goal-relevant resources and it was a rather exclusionary force, which he used for explaining persistent social inequalities (Bian, 2008; Gaunlett, 2011). He also considered social and other forms of capital to be contextual and constructed, thus his analytical insights are often disregarded in the evolving literature on social capital (Fine, 2001). Instead, it is James Coleman's (1988) concept which is usually taken as the starting point for further scientific inquires. In his eye, social capital is a function of social structure that produces certain kind of advantages, but not only by the powerful elites but by all segments of society (Gaunlett, 2011). Very importantly, Coleman considered social capital productive "making possible the achievement of certain ends that would not be attainable in its absence" (Coleman, 1988). Yet, whose name is almost synonymous with social capital in the academic world is Robert Putnam. Putnam (1993) focuses on social structures and their facilitating role in social action (Burt, 2001). He emphasises the role of different social organisations such as trust, norms and networks in facilitating coordinated action and increasing the efficiency of society. He defines social capital as the "connection among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them" (Putnam, 2000).

2.4.2. MEASUREMENT OF SOCIAL CAPITAL

However, besides the burgeoning literature on the concept of social capital, as Borgatti and Everett argued it "has mostly been used in a theoretical context; only a few researchers have had to confront the issue of measurement" (Borgatti & Everett, 1998). Thus, social capital has remained

a highly abstract concept within the confines of Sociology. However, as the Australian Bureau of Statistics argues

> the measurement of social capital can potentially provide valuable insights into the social networks and links that individuals and communities have, and importantly how these networks and links can be utilized to contribute to positive outcomes for the individual and community alike *(Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2002, p.V.)*.

As Freeman put it, social network analysis is a social scientific approach which is based on the study of interaction of social actors and focuses on the social relationship linking individuals (Freeman, 2004), offering a convenient link between the concept of social capital and its measurement. As the proposed project hopes to explore how these interactions and social relations of individuals relate to their well-being it takes a social network approach. In Conflict and the Web of Group Affiliation (1922) Simmel discussed the role of group composition to explain certain fundamental aspects of social life. By emphasising connectedness and relationality, he laid down the social theoretical foundations of social network analysis (Smith-Doerr & Powell, 2005). Similarly to social capital, the social network approach also emphasises the importance of the patterning of social ties in which actors are embedded establishing a convenient link between the concept of social capital and social network analysis. Thus, in order to map out the micro social structures in which transnational migrants are embedded the thesis utilises the tools of social network analysis to study the social networks of international migrants in Budapest.

In general, there are two distinctive approaches in social networks research design to study social networks: full network research design and personal network research design. In studies with full network research design a set of nodes is taken as a starting point and then all of the given types of ties are measured amongst the nodes (Halkin & Borgatti, 2012). Even though such design can yield extremely rich data, defining the natural boundaries of the observed group could run into difficulties as well as accessing all entities and measuring all their ties within the group. Alternatively,

one may pursue a personal network research design, where a collection of unrelated respondents are sampled and asked for an exhaustive list of people with whom they have some kind of relationship based on shared interactions, the enactment of certain social roles or some exchanges (Halkin & Borgatti, 2012). Even though opting for personal network research design forgoes the opportunity to assemble a full network and analyse global network measures, it enables the comparative analysis of different groups of alters, in this case low and high status migrants. Accordingly, the current thesis operationalises social relations of individuals as ego/personal networks defined as networks consisting of a single actor (ego) together with the actors they are connected to (alters), and all the links among those alters (Everett, & Borgatti, 2005). Thus, on a broader theoretical level the thesis offers a contribution to the body of rather abstract work on social capital by placing an emphasis on the empirical measurement of ego networks[1] of high and low status migrants and by linking it to their well-being.

2.4.3. Social Capital and Well-being

In order to understand how social relations can impact the well-being of migrants this section considers the different channels through which social capital may enhance well-being. Even though, the concept of social capital is often stretched to a great length and has a myriad of different definitions (Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 2000; Lin, 2001; Burt R. S., 2000), they all converge in their understanding that social capital entails some kinds of resources, which are embedded in social networks and can benefit the individuals involved, offering a direct conceptual link between social integration and well-being. Several theories have been proposed to explain how social capital can influence well-being (Burt R. S., 2000; Wellman & Wortley, 1990; Berkman L. , 1986; Alexander, et al, 2008), but two major themes seem to emerge regarding the mechanisms through which social ties can benefit individuals: firstly, and most importantly, through social support and secondly, through access to material resources.

[1] The terms 'ego network' and 'personal network' are used interchangeably throughout the thesis

Social Support

When talking about the importance of social networks for well-being the majority of the literature focuses on the importance of social support, which is often conflated with the concept of social capital. Even though there are several authors using and defining social support differently (Berkman L. F., 1984; Dean & Lin, 1977; Wellman & Wortley, 1990; Henderson, 1977; Song, Son, & Lin, 2014), they converge in their understating of social support as a relationship-based, assisting function, which is considered as the 'content' of ties in the network (Song, Son, & Lin, 2014). It was showed that "social integration fosters the production of social support […] and it directly leads to more actual instrumental support, indirectly increases all types of support through expanding network size [.]"(Song, Son, & Lin, 2014, p.119). Accordingly, scholars also see the importance of social support in its buffering or cushioning impact in stress situations and in the provision of a sense of belonging and of being helped (Chua, Madej, & Wellman, 2014; Song, Son, & Lin, 2014).

It has also been argued that social support is a multidimensional construct thus there are different forms of social support and not all ties provide the same type of assistance to individuals (Cutrona & Russell, 1987; Berkman L. , 1986; Wellman & Wortley, 1990). Furthermore, social support can also vary in its frequency, intensity and the extent of it as well, thus several authors attempted to categorise social support into subcategories. Wellmann (1990) differentiates between five different types of support that social ties can provide: 1)emotional aid, 2)small services 3)large services 4)financial aid and 5)companionship, while Berkman (2000) distinguishes four subtypes of social support including: emotional, instrumental, appraisal and informational support (Berkman, Glass, Brissette, & Seeman, 2000).

Access to Material Resources

A second way in which social capital can impact well-being is through the access to material goods and resources. Social networks in this sense are believed to operate through regulating an

individual's access to opportunities (Berkman, Glass, Brissette, & Seeman, 2000). In general, based on the features of such personal networks, scholars have identified three different ways in which social networks can be the source of social capital: through network ties, network structures and network resources (Bian, 2008).

Proponents of the first view often simply equate social capital with one's network ties. They regard network ties as mechanisms, which can be used to mobilise social resources (Bian, 2008). They often differentiate between 'strong' and 'weak ties' and argue that these different personal ties have different benefits and advantages (Granovetter, 1973; Granovetter, 1983; Six, 1997; de Souza Briggs, 1998). Most famously, as Granovetter (1973) pointed out weak ties are valuable resources of novel information that can be highly advantageous in the job market, which thus can be indirect sources to valuable economic resources.

Nonetheless, theories centering on the strength of social ties tend to overlook other important structural features of social networks which might be equally important for determining the well-being of migrants. Thus, instead of focusing only on the strength of social ties the second approach looks at other network structural features. Advocates of this view tend to place emphasis on the density of social networks, but are also divided among themselves whether dense or sparse networks generate higher social capital. On the one hand, one of the main advocates of the `*closure* argument`, Coleman (1988) argues that dense networks, where everyone is connected to each other, create more social capital through facilitating the establishment of group norms, cooperation, trust and solidarity (Coleman, 1988). It is argued that network closure for group members is important for two main reasons. First, it has the potential for information that inheres in social relations. For example Baker (1984) notes that the quality of information deteriorates as it moves across intermediaries (Burt, 2000). Secondly, and more importantly, network closure facilitates sanctions that make it less risky for people in the network to establish trust (Coleman, 1988). Thus due to

more reliable communication channels and the establishment of trust the closure argument predicts that dense networks, lead to a higher level of social capital.

On the other hand, social capital arising from *brokerage* can be associated with better employment opportunities and other benefits of access to diverse information. According to Burt sparse networks are better catalyst for entrepreneurial activities, which can lead to higher social capital and participation in and control of information diffusion underlines the social capital of structural holes (Burt, 1992). Burt regards social capital as a function of brokerage opportunities and draws on some main ideas of social network analysis, such as the strength of weak ties, betweenness centrality, the benefits efits of exclusive exchange partners and the structural autonomy of complex networks (Burt, 2000). Additionally, Burt also proposed that a lack of ties between the alters may benefit the ego and predict higher promotion speed in organisational settings (Burt, 2000). Thus, translated to the context of transnational migrants, brokerage might imply better integration to the host society in terms of employment, informational access and civic participation (Voicu & Vlase, 2014) and thus can be expected to contribute to the well-being of migrants through providing better access to different economic and informational resources.

Consequently, the proposed research also speaks to this open debate on the optimal social network structures for social capital formation and their implied effects on the well-being of international migrants. Moreover, the few studies that so far concerned themselves with the social ties and the well-being of migrants focused exclusively on the *composition* of the personal networks of migrant, mostly in terms of local vs trans-local ties (Jin, Wen, Fan, & Wang, 2012; Cheung, 2014; Giusta & Kambhampti, 2006; Visser, Bailey, & Meijering, 2015). However, none of them has engaged in exploring other structural features of these social networks that can potentially have a significant impact on well-being.

2.5. SOCIAL NETWORK ANALYSIS AND MIGRATION

Lastly, as Bolibar et al (2015) asserts "social network analysis is a good strategy for operationalizing […] theoretical explanations in relation to personal networks of immigrants" (p.580). They found that the analysis of personal networks is especially suitable to empirically assess the classical assimilation theories and the modern transnational approaches to migration. As classical assimilation theories posit that migration involves a break with the society of origin and over the course of years as part of an acculturation process takes place until migrants become incorporated into a common cultural life of host country by acquiring the memories, sentiments and attitudes of the given society (Alba & Nee, 1997; Parks & Bugess, 1921). In terms of personal networks, it would entail a loss of social ties from the country of origin their gradual replacement with new ties in the host country.

On the other hand, transnational migration theories question the classical assimilation theories and deny the existence of a clear breaking point of pre and post migration life (Parrenas, 2010; Portes & al, 1999, Waters, 2011). Proponents of transnational migration theories argue for a non-linear, multi-local understanding of migration and claim that immigration does not necessarily lead to the loss of social ties with the home country, but rather means the expansion of personal social networks by adding new ties in the host country to the original home ties (Salaff, Fong, & Wong, 1999; Parrenas, 2010; Portes & al, 1999, Waters, 2011). Consequently, personal networks of such transnational migrants would include several ties from the country of origin as well as some from the host society as well. Thus, the project also offers a novel empirical contribution to the existing work concerning different theoretical approaches to migration through examining the composition of personal networks of international migrants in Hungary.

The chapter offered a comprehensive literature review on the major theoretical concepts and relevant empirical work as a context to the consecutive empirical chapters. Firstly, it introduced the

concept of subjective well-being and then looked at previous empirical studies that investigated the well-being of international migrants. It also established high and low status migrants as analytical categories used for the comparison of the different experiences of international migrants. In the last section, it introduced the concept of social capital to outline the potential connection between the social networks and well-being of high and low status migrants. Lastly, it also highlighted the relevance of social network analysis for the better understanding of the experiences of migrants.

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND DATA COLLECTION

The following chapter describes the employed mixed methodological design as well as summarises the details of related data collection process. Firstly, it justifies the methodological choice of mixed methods research design and gives a general account of the scope of the project. Second, it elaborates in details on both the quantitative and qualitative data collection process. It discusses the content of the employed survey including the choices of subjective well-being questions, ego-network questions and demographic questions, which later provided the quantitative data for the subsequent analysis to address the research question. The chapter also briefly summarises some of the major difficulties and limitations of survey research encountered in the field. Lastly, the chapter also summarises the collection of qualitative data through semi-structured interviews and home visits.

3.1. MIXED METHODOLOGY

The project relied on mixed methodological tools to study the differences in the subjective well-being and social networks of migrants and the link between the two. It combined social network analysis and survey research with in-depth interviews to capture not only the micro social structures that migrants are embedded in, but also to explore the mechanisms through which they shape their experiences. As McCarty pointed out "when applied in different contexts, network analysis undoubtedly benefits from a combination of formal models and qualitative accounts that enlighten each other and illustrate contextual mechanisms" (Bellotti, 2014, p.4), which is a crucial element to the understanding of the potential differences in features of the social networks of high and low status migrants and their potential impact on the well-being of migrants .

The project thus employed a sequential mixed method design. At the first quantitative stage, respondents completed a questionnaire on their subjective well-being, personal networks and basic demographic data. The obtained quantitative data was suitable for basic statistical analysis, which

as Bellotti argued "is extremely useful in modelling network structures and their dynamics to observe commonalities and differences across networks" (Bellotti, 2014, p.3).

However, as Abbot pointed out, statistical inferences are also limited as they must adopt a single causal narrative to be tested against the data, whilst as he rightfully argues, social phenomena always entail multiple narratives (Abbot, 1992). Moreover, as statistical inference has inherently simplistic assumptions, which disregards the complexities, contexts and nuances relying on statistical analysis alone would risk the loss of description of intransitive mechanisms and the narratives of (Bellotti, 2014). Thus, a second, qualitative stage of data collection was also incorporated into the research design. As part of this qualitative stage, with some of the respondents a semi-structured interviewed followed the completion of the survey, providing the opportunity to break away from the rigid structure of the questionnaire and enabling the placement of the quantitative data and personal networks in a wider biographical context (Bellotti, 2014). Thus, qualitative analysis could help to uncover the underlying mechanisms through which social networks shape the well-being of both high and low status migrants and to explore the content and meanings of these social relationships.

Therefore, relying solely on the quantitative data generated by the survey would provide a rather simplified and perhaps even a distorted view of the migrants experience and well-being. It might have provide a snapshot of someone's well-being or ego network, but the broader context, meanings and histories would remain uncovered. In contrary, the interviews allowed for a better understanding of not only the current static level of happiness or satisfaction of individuals measured by the questionnaire but also their underlying causes and mechanisms. They also allowed for the exploration of the experience of well-being of migrants and the interplay between its different aspects through their narratives of migrants themselves. Thus, the current research project successfully bridges the core dichotomy of cases versus units of analysis between qualitative and quantitative approaches and highlights the fact that each social science study, regardless to its sample size and quantification of measurements is a case study in itself (Bellotti, 2014).

3.2. SCOPE OF THE PROJECT

According to the mixed methods design, the thesis draws on a variety of data sources. The research project took place in Budapest over the course of 8 weeks from the beginning of March, until the end of April. The data was obtained from 34 international migrants living in Budapest during individual personal meetings. Firstly, I registered, or attempted to register, the answers of all participants to a more than 40 items long survey regarding their well-being and personal networks, in order to obtain some quantitative data on their subjective well-being and personal networks. Additionally, in 12 cases administering the survey was also followed by semi-structures interview, where I discussed the migratory experiences of respondents outside the rigid confines of the survey. Lastly, in 15 cases I also had the opportunity to interact with and to observe my informants in the context of their homes.

The participants comprise a diverse group. The sample consisted of 15 males and 18 females aged between 17 and 48, with an average of 31.2 who came from 18 different countries (China 2, Croatia 1, Georgia 2, India 2, Iran 1, Lebanon 1, Phillipines 1, Russia 3, Slovenia 1, Spain 3, Ukraine 1, USA 4, Afghanistan 5, Ethiopia 2, Nigeria1, Palestine 1, Sudan 1, Somalia 1). Additionally, the respondents also came from vastly different socio-economic backgrounds. The group included 9 current CEU students, both at the MA and PhD levels, 4 former CEU students now working as professionals in Budapest, 9 other professionals or students also living in Budapest but without any affiliation to CEU, as well as 11 people with either already an official refugee status or currently in the process of seeking asylum in Hungary.

While I have relied mostly on my direct personal contacts to reach current or formerly CEU affiliated people, indirect social connections and snowballing proved to be a highly efficient way to contact other foreign professionals or students who currently live in Hungary. Furthermore, one of my official inquires addressed to the Hungarian Baptist Organisation enabled me to gain access to their temporary shelter for refugee and asylum seeker families in Budapest (Baptista Integracios

Kozpont Menekulteket es Oltamazottakat Befogado Csaladok Atmeneti Otthona II), where upon 3 visits I have visited and interviewed 9 people in the context of their homes. I have reached the other two participants with an asylum seeker or refugee status via my contact at the Bevandorlasi Hivatal and through CEU's weekend courses offered for refugees, while I also paid an additional visit and spoke to one person with asylum seeking status at the Baptist Shelter for Homeless (Baptista Integracios Kozponz Hajlektalanok Atmeneti Szallasara) at Soroksar temporarily hosting several asylum seekers.

3.3. QUANTITATIVE DATA & SURVEY DESIGN

3.3.1. SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING QUESTIONS

The quantitative data was obtained from a survey consisting of five main parts and registered during an individual face-to-face meeting with each respondent. The first part contained 20 questions aiming to collect information on the subjective well-being of respondents. As the adapted definition of OECED on subjective well-being covers several distinct dimensions, such as life evaluation, affect and flourishing, the questionnaire also adopted several different questions targeting all three dimensions in order to be able to measure subjective well-being the most throughouth way while also following the most recent and wide-spread trends (OECD, 2013, Rappoport 2009) in measuring well-being and happiness research [2]

3.3.2. EGO NETWORK DATA

The second part of the survey contained the elements of Personal Network Research Design, which aims to collect information about the personal or ego networks of different migrants in Budapest. As the standard first step of personal network studies it also begun with a *name generator* creating a list of relevant alters for social support. In general there are two main approaches to personal-

[2] See appendix for questions

network alter elicitation, such as either collecting a random sample of all alters based on some criteria or looking at a non-random set of alters. For instance the current study, similarly to most studies of social support, tried to elicit all alters that meet certain criteria of support (McCarthy & Molina, Draft Under Review). Barrera in fact has developed a standard to measure social support, where he identified six different types social support: material aid, physical assistance (sharing of tasks), intimate interaction (expression of feelings and personal concerns), guidance (offering advise) and feedback and social participation (recreational and leisure activities). Originally, in his study two questions were prompted for each category in order to elicit the names of network members. The first question is addressed to elicit alters in each category and the second one is aimed to indicate which of the individuals who were named had *actually* supplied that type of support during the past month, thus both perceived and actual social support can be measured and assessed (McCarthy & Molina, Draft Under Review).

However, as this thesis follows the tradition that is concerned with individuals' subjective experiences of well-being, only questions on perceived social support were included in the survey. Even though the original study had covered six different domains of social support, the current study employed a simplified version of Barrera's name generator in the hope of reducing burden on respondents and achieving a better response rate as well as more accurate answers. Therefore, the applied name generator collapsed Barrera's original six domains into the three most relevant domains for the experience of subjective well-being, such as material support, emotional support, which combines intimate interactions and guidance, and social participation. Accordingly, it included three name generating questions:

1) material support: "*People often encounter unexpected negative events. If you suddenly found yourself in a financially difficult situation, whom would you ask for financial help?"*

2) emotional support, adapted from Burt name generator also used in the American Household survey: *"From time to time, most people discuss important personal matters with other people. Who are the people with whom you usually discuss your own important personal matters?"*

3) and social participation: "*Relaxation and fun are also part of our daily lives. Who are the people you usually spend your free-time with?"*

The included questions also closely correspond to some of the major dimensions of social support identified by Wellman as financial aid, emotional support and companionship (Wellman, 1990), thus later could be used assess ego's access to different kinds of social support.

While reducing the number of prompting questions significantly reduces the required work load of participants and thus their error rate, keeping three distinct dimensions can provide a more complex picture than other single-dimensional name generators (eg Burt). Bellotti also pointed out that people often differentiate their relationship into independent subgroups according to various criteria such as the kind of support they provide or their context of interaction (Bellotti, 2014). Similarly, as Wellman (1990) argued different ties provide different kinds of social support. However, as such multiplexity of ego-networks could not be captured by standard one-dimensional name generator including two additional name generating questions can provide valuable insights into the social lives of transnational migrants in Budapest. Consequently, in chapter 5 the further analysis of obtained data could be used to explore the relationship between social relations, social support and subjective well-being.

Second, as most personal network research designs, the survey asked the respondents some *name interpreter* questions. Such name interpreter questions usually elicit additional information about ego's perceptions of the attributes of each alter and about their shared relationship (Halkin & Borgatti, 2012). Accordingly, respondents were asked about the sex of each alters, their locations, the length of their relationship to the alters and the nature of their relations as well, which was categorized as either romantic/spouse (1), family member (2), colleague (3), friend (4) or other (5).

Obtaining such information on the attributes of alters and ego's relation to alters provide data suitable for the compositional analysis of ego-networks, which also gives an opportunity for operationalizing the theoretical implications of different migration theories in relation to personal networks of migrants (Bolibar, Marti, & Verd, 2015).

Lastly, the survey also incorporated *name interrelator* questions, which required the respondents to indicated whether the nominated alters themselves are connected, and if so how they are connected (Halkin & Borgatti, 2012). Such data about the perceived relation between alters was collected by asking respondents whether the previously listed alters know each other, and if so whether they would talk to each other even in the absence of the ego. Replies were coded as three categories:

0: the two people do not know each other, or even if they do they are not likely to talk to each other, even in ego's presence

1: the two people do know each other, but they are not likely to talk to each other when ego is not around

2: the two people do now each other and are likely to talk to each other even when ego is not present.

Collecting such additional information enabled the mapping and the subsequent visualisation of alter-alter relations and ego networks. Moreover, it also offers suitable information for the exploration of the structural features of ego-nets and its potential implications for social capital theories.

3.3.3. DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

Lastly, the third and last block of the survey included 16 mostly demographic questions. It covered basic information such as citizenship, place and date of birth, gender, marital status, educational level and it also included questions related to their migratory experience (year of moving to hungary,

reason for moving). It also attempted to gather information that could be suitable to assess their current and prior socio-economic status, thus questions on current employment status and occupation, last employment status and occupation before migrating, their perceived financial situation compared to the average in both Hungary and their home country and a question about their monthly income with 50.000 HUF brackets as possible answers choices were also included.

3.3.4. Processing Survey Data

Based on the completed surveys a comprehensive data set was created. First, responses to the survey questions were coded and recorded in excel. Second, all network related data was entered and processed in E-NET. While several softwares such as UCINET, EgoNet and Vennmaker are suitable for ego-network analysis, E-net deemed to be a particularly suitable choice for my analytical purposes as the program was designed specifically for personal network analysis obtained via personal network research design (Halkin & Borgatti, 2012). Accordingly, E-NET could handle data pertaining to egos (age, sex, marital status, nationality… etc), to the relationship between ego and alters (eg kind of help: financial help, emotional support or leasure time), as well as to the attributes of alters (age, sex, location..etc) and to the relationship among the alters. It also allowed for the visualisation of ego-networks as well as for the computation of different ego-network measures, which then could be added to the comprehensive data set alongside the coded responses of the survey and used for further analysis.

3.3.5. Limitations of Survey Research

Even though the survey deemed to be an invaluable source of information on the subjective well-being and social relations of high and low status migrants, administering the questionnaire ran into several different difficulties highlighting some of the major limitations of survey design.

Translatability

The obtained survey data might be susceptible to some bias due to language differences and in some cases to language difficulties, as well as to related cultural differences in response style. Regarding the translatability of subjective well-being questions, it was noted that it is particularly difficult to translate the English word 'happy' into other languages (Bjornskov, 2010). Also, some cultures might be more selective with the use of 'very happy' as for example on a scale from 0 to 10 the French tend to place 'trex heureux[3]' in the range of 9-10, while the English would usually place it between 8 and 10 (Veenhoven, 2008). Such problems were the most salient in the case of some asylum seekers whom I interviewed at the Hungarian Baptist Aid's Temporary Shelter for Refugee and Asylum Seeker Families in Budapest. As some of them did not speak at a sufficient level of English, I conducted some of theirs surveys and interviews in Hungarian. However, in three cases, I had to rely on a young translator between Hungarian and Pharsi as the respondents did not speak neither English nor Hungarian at a sufficient level for immediate communication. In other cases, even when the main language of the communication was English some respondents seemed to have difficulties in expressing themselves or fully comprehending the questions, thus I had to re-word or explain the questions several times. Therefore, some information might have literally gotten lost in translation in these cases contributing to the later outlined choice of life satisfaction scores as a subjective well-being measure over a more complex multi-item measure.

Problems with Comprehension

Moreover, even for those with whom I managed to directly communicate, sometimes understanding the concept of survey research, especially using selected answer categories and answering on an ordinal scale ran into difficulties. Thus, even though the instruction asked them

[3]French equivalent of the English 'very happy'

to "give a score from 0 to 10 where 0 means 'not at all' and 10 means 'completely', to some of the pertinent questions such as "Overall, do you consider yourself a happy person?" I often received a yes/no answer. After my further prompt for a number from some participants I have managed to obtain a quantified answer, however in some cases the respondents may not have fully grasped the question or the sensitivity and the more subtle differences offered by a 0-10 scale than of a yes/no binary category. Thus, they seemed to be more inclined to select either more extreme values, which is also reflected in the variance of their responses. On the contrary, others had a tendency to eventually select the neutral answer of 5, as they seemed undecided and but at first they often offered much longer answers, such as: "*I don't know…Sometimes I feel happy... Sometimes I feel sad..I don't know*" or "*…uhm… I am happy that all my four children are here together and …uhm… they are learning the language... I am very happy about that….uhm… I get sad when I think of the past or remember my family*" (Translated from pharsi to Hungarian). However, while these encounters may have compromised slightly the quality of the obtained quantitative data, they have provided extremely rich qualitative data. Therefore, complementing the quantitative data obtained from the survey with qualitative data proved to be a highly beneficial methodological choice.

3.4. QUALITATIVE DATA

As the previous section highlighted some of the shortcomings and difficulties of survey research, complementing the quantitative data with qualitative information had high added value to the research project.

3.4.1. INTERVIEWS

To explore the context, histories and specific contents of social relations as well as the meanings associated with well-being semi structured interviews were also conducted with several survey respondents. The interviews usually happened quite effortlessly as the natural extension of filling

out the survey as several of the respondents were keen to talk about their experiences outside the constraints of the questionnaire. These talks provided a great opportunity to learn more about the respondents experiences in Hungary as international migrants as well as about their personal insights on the broader topic of happiness. While the questionnaires could quantitatively capture the presence or lack of several dimensions of well-being these talks offered a better understanding of the underlying factors and lived experiences eliciting certain numerical or simplified responses given by the participants earlier.

Starting our encounters with the completion of the survey first gave a natural direction to the subsequent conversation as well. Most of the time I had to intervene only minimally to the flow of the conversation, thus leaving my respondents the room to freely express themselves within the broader topics of well-being and social relations and to offer their own narratives. Accordingly, I did not have a strict script of questions to be asked, but there were some reoccurring questions that rose naturally as follow-ups to the previously administered questionnaire. Thus, I often asked many people reflecting on their score given to the two evaluative questions what would improve their scores to the maximum 10. In cases, where obtaining data from the name generator was problematic or showed an unusual pattern, such as the lack of ties to their home countries, I also asked the interviewees whether they keep in touch with some people from home. Additionally, some major common themes regarding migrants experience in Hungary emerged throughout these conversations providing an excellent base for a qualitative analysis of the major factors impacting the well-being of international migrants in Budapest, which is presented in details as part of chapter 4.

3.4.2. HOME VISITS

Additionally, I was also able to conduct the interviews and/or register the questionnaires and spend some time with twelve respondents in the context of their homes, which enabled me to get me some more insights into their social and economic situation. Two out of these twelve people were

living in the heart of Budapest, and one of them was a working professional, while the other one was a stay-home parent. They have invited me to their home for a coffee where I have spent approximately two hours, administering the survey and discussing their experiences in Hungary. The other ten people were all housed in the shelters of Hungarian Baptist Aid. Nine of them, with whom I had the most extensive contact, lived in the Hungarian Baptist Aid's Temporary Shelter for Refugee and Asylum Seeker Families in Budapest (Baptista Integracios Kozpont Menekulteket es Oltamazottakat Befogado Csaladok Atmeneti Otthona II). Over the course of three visits, I spent overall approximately ten hours at the shelter. Initially I was welcomed by some of the social workers who assembled a list of potential respondents and assigned some children to help me by translating between me and those Afghan refugees who do not speak neither English nor Hungarian well enough to complete the questionnaire without the help of an interpretaor. As people live their lives in a natural rhythm at the shelter, my time there was punctuated by long pauses waiting for potential respondents to be available. During this time, I had time to extensively engage with both the refugee children and the social workers and to gain some insights into the everyday life of the shelter. People usually invited me into their rooms for the interview, which was shared by their entire family, or alternatively sat with me in the common room of the building. The tenth person I has interviewed in his home context was also housed by Baptist Aid but at their Shelter for Homeless (Baptista Integrációs Központ Hajléktalanok Átmeneti Szállása) at Soroksár which besides several hundred homeless people also hosts several international asylum seekers as well.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it can be said that the data collection process was both an extremely enriching personal and professional experience. It has highlighted some of the shortcomings of survey research and thus confirmed the application of mixed methodological tools as the most appropriate way to study the social relations and well-being of high and low status migrants in contemporary

Budapest. Applying mixed methodological tools enabled the collection of diverse and suitable data, which provides an excellent starting point for a detailed analysis of the differences in the subjective well-being and social networks of high and low status migrants and the relation between them in the subsequent chapters.

4. THE SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING OF HIGH AND LOW SATUS MIGRANTS

In order to address the research question and gain a better understanding of how the well-being of high and low status migrants differ the current chapter attempts to empirically measure and to explore the subjective well-being of the two groups. It firsts confronts the problem of quantitative measurement of subjective well-being amongst migrants in Hungary, and then applying a single-item life evaluation question it compares the reported levels of subjective well-being across the two groups. It then discusses the findings regarding the differences in the life satisfaction of high and low status migrants and also highlights potential limitations of using life satisfaction as a measure of subjective well-being. In the second part of the chapter, a qualitative analysis based on the semi structured interviews follows in order to gain a better understanding of the underlying factors behind the observed differences in life satisfaction.

4.1. MEASUREMENT OF SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING

4.1.1. MULTI-ITEM MEASURES OF SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING

The previously outlined multidimensional nature of subjective well-being was also reflected in the data questionnaire used for my data collection. The employed survey included 16 questions on subjective well-being and its different dimensions, such as commonly used single item life-evaluation questions ('Overall, do you consider yourself a happy person?', or 'Overall, how satisfied are you with your life?'), several positive and negative affect questions (e.g. 'Over the course of past week how often did you feel useful/relaxed/stressed/lonely…etc') and euidamonic questions as well (e.g. 'Overall, to what extent do you feel that things you do in your life are worthwhile?'). This, on the one hand allowed for separately assessing the different dimensions of subjective well-being,

while on the other hand could also enable the creation of a multi-dimensional and all-encompassing subjective well-being measure as well.

Accordingly, as in the case of surveys including multiple questions on subjective well-being, a methodological decision had to be made as to whether to report responses to each question separately or to aggregate some questions into broader multi-item measures (OECD, 2013). Such multi-item measures are sometimes preferred as they can capture the evaluative, affective, eudaimonic and other domain specific aspects of subjective well-being as well (OECD, 2013 p190). In general, it is also argued that summarising such a long multi-item measure into one main measure greatly simplifies not only the reporting process but also produces a more reliable estimate of subjective well-being by reducing the impact of random measurement error (OECD, 2013).

When constructing complex subjective well-being measures, it is believed that affective states can be compared and reasonably aggregated (Kahneman & Krueger, 2006), and aggregate positive and negative scores can be summarised across items of similar valence. Thus '*positive affect'* could be computed as the average score for 'feeling useful', 'feeling relaxed', 'feeling close to others' and 'feeling happy yesterday', while '*negative affect'* could have been composed similarly from 'feeling stressed', 'feeling lonely', 'experiencing existential insecurity' and 'feeling anxious yesterday'. In principle, positive and negative affect scores can also be summarised into an '*affect balance'* score for each respondent, reflecting the net balance between positive and negative affects by subtracting the negative affect score from the positive affect score (OECD, 2013 p 191). Lastly, this affect balance score can be complemented by the scores of two evaluative and two eudemonic questions, and an aggregate subjective well-being score for each respondent could be computed as their mean score to assess whether a difference between high and low status migrants could in their subjective well-being could be observed.

However, the application of such an overall subjective well-being index, which aggregates multiple well-being questions of the employed survey runs into major difficulties. Firstly, precisely because life evaluation, affect and eudaimonia represent conceptually and empirically different constructs, it is difficult to interpret what exactly an aggregate index would mean (OECD, 2013 p.194). Moreover, as the relative importance of these dimensions for the overall well-being of a person is vastly unexplored and potentially differs across individuals, there is no clear basis to determine their relative weights when creating an index (Kahneman & Krueger, 2006).

Furthermore, using an aggregate measure to compare the levels of subjective well-being of high and low status migrants would be particularly problematic due to issues specific for my sample. Due to the special salience of the issues of translatability and comprehension amongst low status migrants the obtained quantitative results would be highly biased. Firstly, the obtained data might be highly susceptible to language differences and in some cases to language difficulties, especially amongst low status migrants. Due to problems with comprehension and translatability, the non-response rate to certain questions, especially of those considering different aspects of well-being (eg. Affect and eudaimonia) is especially high amongst low-status respondents. In contrast, all interviews with high status migrants were conducted in English, where the comprehension of questions seemed to cause no visible problems resulting in a 100% response rate to all questions of the survey. As an aggregate subjective well-being measure includes multiple questions on all aspects of subjective well-being the impacts of difficulties of translations and comprehension related problems amongst low status migrants would also be accumulated. Consequently, the mean subjective well-being score of the two groups which is meant to be used to compare the well-being of two groups would suffer from a measurement bias endangering a meaningful comparison between high and low status migrants. Therefore, relying on an aggregate measure of subjective well-being to assess the relative well-being of high and low status

migrants in Budapest is highly likely to fail to capture actual real differences in the subjective well-being of high and low status migrants.

4.1.2. LIFE SATISFACTION

Alternatively, single item life evaluation measures, the most established and most widely used measures amongst the existing measures of subjective well-being, especially when single headline figures are to be reported in the media, is used to assess the subjective well-being of high and low status migrants. The popularity of single item life evaluation measures reflects both the conceptual fit between overall life satisfaction and economic models as well as the easy availability of data (Boarini, Comola, Smith, & Manchin, 2012) offering a viable alternative to aggregate measures to assess and compare the well-being of migrants.

The employed survey also contained two evaluative questions: "Overall, do you consider yourself a happy person?" and "Overall, how satisfied are you with your life?". Unlike previously, across both high status and low status migrant groups I could obtain a 100% response rate to these questions, as the comprehension of these concepts seemed to cause much less of a problem as certain affect or eudemonia questions did. Moreover, as they are single item questions, problems of comprehension and translatability are not accumulated in the aggregation process as it is for multi-item measures. However, as evaluative questions usually point to the same underlying concept of life satisfaction (Kahneman & Krueger, 2006), similarly to the World Values Survey, the results of the second life evaluation question in the survey, "Overall, how satisfied are you with your life?", was chosen for further analysis.

4.2. RESULTS

Mean life satisfaction scores for both high and low status migrants were computed to compare their levels of subjective well-being. The mean life satisfaction score for high-

status migrants was 7.13 and 4.81 for low status migrants, and employing an unpaired two tail t-test the difference in life satisfaction between the two groups showed the difference to be statistically significant at a 5% level with a p-value = 0.015. The difference in the variance of the life satisfaction scores of the two groups was also striking, as for high status migrants it was a rather modest 1.27 while for low-status migrants it was a much higher 7.76. It is also extremely indicative to look at the minimum and maximum values for each group. While the maximum was 10 for both groups, even the minimum value in the high-status group, which was 5, exceeded the average life satisfaction score of low status migrants, where the minimum value was 0. Thus, quantitative results indicated that low-status migrants on the average are much less satisfied with their lives than high status migrants.

4.3. DISCUSSION

The difference found in the life satisfaction of high and low status migrants is rather unsurprising in the light of previous empirical work on the topic. As several studies showed, migration and the related acculturation process are often a stressful live events (Poppit & Frey, 2007; Lazarevic, Wiley, & Pleck, n.d.). They require serious adjustments and can bring about emotional distress and diminished well-being (Weishaar, 2008; Hull, 1979; Griffin & Soskolne, 2003) for transnational migrants. However, as Dunlop (2011) argued the experience of professional migrants is usually far less acute than of forced migrants/refugees. He argues that high-skilled professionals have far more available resources to help them through this process, while they might also have stronger cultural and language affinities, which can further ease their burden of relocation and integration, and cushion the negative impacts of acculturation on their well-being (Dunlop, 2011). Lastly, perceived social status has also been linked to migrants's well-being (Correa-Velez, Gifford, & Barnett, 2010) and as the the resettlement process of refugees and asylum

seekers is usually associated with a drop in social status and the acquisition of social stigma (Burchett & Matheson, 2011; Lazarevic, Wiley, & Pleck. n.d) it can be expected that on the average they also report a lower level of life satisfaction. Thus, my empirical findings fall in line with the expected results as suggested by previous research, that low status migrants are more likely to experience and report a lower level of well-being than their higher-status counterparts.

Furthermore, material components also seemed to exhibit a major impact on the subjective well-being of migrants. As a positive relationship between income and happiness has been established (Boarini, Comola, Smith, & Manchin, 2012; Stevenson & Wolfers, 2008; D., Stevenson, & Wolfers, 2010; Senik, 2014), a lower subjective well-being score could be expected for low status migrants, as several of them live below the poverty line in contrast to high-status migrants, who on average reported to earn above the Hungarian national average.

Moreover, many theories, including Freud's pleasure principle or Maslow's hierarchical needs model, suggest that meeting certain physical and psychological needs are vital for happiness. More specifically, Omodei and Wearing (1990) showed that the degree to which individuals' needs were met were strongly positively related to their life satisfaction, which can be an explanatory factor behind the difference in the life satisfaction of high and low status migrants. While on average high-status migrants in the sample have a disposable monthly income, around 200.000 HUF, refugees and asylum seekers typically earn less than 50.000 HUF, which is far beyond the poverty line. Additionally, most of them live in a temporary shelter house run by Baptist Aid typically offering accommodation for a 3 to 6 month period, where they typically share either a room with their family, which often means 3-4 people and have shared access to other facilities, such as bathroom and kitchen together with approximately another 30 people.

Also, as well illustrated by an episode from the administering process of the survey with an Afghan woman at the Baptist Aid's shelter it is not hard to see how the basic Maslowian needs for the security of property, resources and employment are highly compromised under such conditions. Upon hearing my question on her life satisfaction she laughed at me with disbelief and slightly raised her voice: "*Do you call it a life?"* – she demonstratively pointed around the stuffy room, which was crowded with beds and served as her and her three children's current home. While her and I sat on two chairs, the children were eating on the floor occupying the rest of the place in the room and filling the air with the smell of heavy spices. "*Four people living in room…This not a life*". As her situation was not the exception but rather the rule for how most refugees and asylum seekers live, there is no surprise that it is also reflected in the relatively low life satisfaction amongst low status migrants.

4.4. LIMITATIONS: LIFE SATISFACTION VS SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING

However, one needs to be cautious when interpreting life satisfaction results and assessing subjective well-being. Life satisfaction akin to other evaluative questions includes a retrospective cognitive judgement of the current situation of people against their imagined "standard" or ideal situation (Kahneman & Krueger, 2006). In contrast, subjective well-being is a rather complex and global construction, where people's feelings and psychological flourishing are much more prominently factored in as well.

This distinction was also reflected not only in the occasionally substantive gap between the respondent's rating of their happiness and life satisfaction, but also in some of the subsequent interviews. In one case, even while filling out the questionnaire and reading the question asking to evaluate her happiness one girl immediately stated: "*Do I feel lucky? Yes. But happy? No."* In the subsequent interview she elaborated further: "*I am not really happy…. But I should not really say it, because I am lucky. I'd say living here is easy [...] For example, I have a personal trainer, because in Spain I could not afford such luxuries. Plus I go to MüPa. … uhm … but I*

don't really feel happy." Alongside with her quantitative scores for her self-rated life satisfaction (8) and her aggregate subjective well-being score (5,9), it becomes apparent how her SWB score is more heavily influenced by her emotions, while life satisfaction captures the more objective elements of her well-being and life evaluation.

Similarly, Diener also argues that life satisfaction and subjective well-being are "two varieties of happiness and satisfaction" and "people differ in the degree they weight their emotions when calculating life satisfaction judgements" (Diener, Lucas, & Oishi; 2009, p.65). Moreover, it was also found that in cultures, where subjective well-being is highly valued people tend to place more emphasis on the most positive domains of their lives, while in cultures where happiness is not so highly valued people weight their negative domains more when judging their life satisfaction (Diener, 2006b).

Even though, life satisfaction scores may be less than perfectly accurate in measuring the subjective well-being of high and low status migrants in Hungary, in this case the superior quality of the data compared to an aggregate subjective well-being score compensates for its other potential shortcomings. Nevertheless, such quantitative measures only capture the levels of the subjective well-being of migrants but do not reveal anything about what experiences constitute them. Therefore, the last section of this chapter looks into the underlying factors behind the well-being of transnational migrants in Budapest through the analysis of the qualitative data resulting from the semi-structured interviews.

4.5. WHAT SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING MEASURES DO NOT REVEAL? A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

Even though looking at the life satisfaction and subjective well-being scores of migrants reveals a lot about the overall *levels* of their well-being, it tells us very little about what constitutes these lived experiences. Thus, this section performs a qualitative analysis of the twelve semi-structured interviews with the respondents about their experiences in Hungary.

It also highlights some of the main factors that influence the well-being of migrants, and points out how these might be contributing factors towards the observed difference in the reported levels of subjective well-being of high and low status migrants.

4.5.1. EMPLOYMENT

There are some major themes emerging from the interviews which appear to be affecting migrants' well-being. Firstly, employment is an overarching theme which seems to heavily impact the well-being of migrants. As the interviews show both the absence or presence of employment and the quality of the job are highly important factors for the well-being of migrants.

Unemployment

Unemployment and the inability to find a job were considered as major sources of frustration and stress by several respondents. Several asylum seekers and refugees, including several highly educated people, have expressed their frustration over not being able to obtain a job. An asylum seeker who has a college degree in Education from Ethiopia and currently lives in Budapest with his wife and four children has explained:

> "*There are many things … [impacting my happiness]… I am politically safe now, so I am happy about that. .. But the condition does not allow me to work here… You see, I cannot even travel [to another country to work]. I have many children, who study here, I cannot disrupt their education. My son is at Óbudai Egyetem and my daughter, she is 18, she is at highschool. … and I cannot find a job, even though I really want to… Right now I am studying accounting, mathematics, and finances at IBS… maybe that will help. And I just keep thinking and thinking… It is really difficult.*"

Similarly, several other respondents –regardless of their status- identified their inability to find a job as their "main problem": *"You see, the main problem is… there is no work here".*

Accordingly, in line with several previous studies (Burchett & Matheson, 2011; Department of Health, 2005), obtaining a job and the related security were commonly identified as the greatest possible improvement in respondents' well-being and/or life satisfaction during the interviews. Several respondents named obtaining employment upon being asked what could be an improvement to their current well-being:

"*Improvement? … Maybe more security. You know, job and stuff*".

"*Improvement? A job. Something to do.*"

Job Quality

Furthermore, employment did not only seem to be a major factor for those who are currently out of work, but job quality seemed to be a crucial theme in the narratives of those who are currently employed as well. It is especially salient in the cases of those professionals for whom the job was a major part of their decision to relocate to Hungary. In some cases, it has contributed to the general dissatisfaction of some respondents:

> *"I am not really happy…. But I should not really say it, because I am lucky. [..] I tried to make friends but when I saw I could not…I… I shut down…[pause]…Also, the job is not as good as I thought it'd be.*"

While, in other cases job satisfaction had the opposite cushioning effect, as it seemed to compensate for other rather negative experiences. One respondent who had talked about her unpleasant experiences during the acculturation process, describing both learning the culture and building social networks as a difficult process, spoke fondly about her job and identified it as one of the main reasons why she "likes it here" and has extended her original 6 month stay here for a longer period.

> *"I miss the sea. I am from Alicante. We have sea everywhere. I miss the water. And the smell of the sea. . And also the sound of it. […] Also, the cultural difference. People here are less…warm. […]*

Also, the language […] But I love my job….and I really enjoy it… It is really important for me. […]this is why I stayed and like it here."

Therefore, it can be seen that employment can impact the well-being of migrants in multiple ways, and unemployment has highly detrimental effects on individuals` well-being. As unemployment is particularly common amongst asylum seekers and refugees, the lower levels of subjective well-being and life satisfaction for low status migrants can be, at least in part, explained by the detrimental effects of unemployment on well-being.

Fulfilling Basic Needs and a Sense of Purpose: Theoretical Background to Unemployment and Well-being

Employment can impact well-being in two major ways. Firstly, employment, often being the major source of economic resources seriously is closely related to the material aspect of well-being. As life satisfaction and subjective well-being have been linked to the degree to which individuals' needs were met (Omodei and Wearing, 1990) unemployment can interfere with one's well-being by leaving their needs for security (economic, social, vocational and psychological) unfulfilled and causing them to experience a diminished sense of well-being. This impact is especially salient amongst low status migrants where unemployment is especially high and who are struggling to establish a new life and existence in Budapest and are experiencing disruption in their security multiple ways. Thus, for low status migrants securing a job is imperative for fulfilling their needs for security and thus for increasing their sense of well-being.

Moreover, besides disabling the fulfilment of basic economic needs, unemployment can seriously interfere with what Paul Dolan, professor of Behavioural Sciences at the London School of Economics, calls the *pleasure purpose principle*. He argues that happiness is not just a constant experience of pleasant feelings, but it is rather the combination of both pleasure and purpose over time (Dolan, 2014). In other words, he says that in order to achieve

happiness it is not enough to have pleasant feelings and experience all the time, but people also need to find meaning in things, which ultimately can also help to get through the momentarily rather unpleasant experiences as well (Dolan, 2014). Based on his empirical work, he also points out that work is one of the main sources from which people can derive a sense of meaning or purpose. In contrast, unemployment, besides interfering with basic needs for security, can also threaten people's sense of purpose and leave them feeling meaningless and purposeless further lowering their sense of well-being.

4.5.2. LANGUAGE AND SOCIAL INTEGRATION

Language as a Source of Stress

Secondly, the language barrier and the consequent inability to connect with local people were highlighted by all respondents as a major sources of anxiety. As one participant reflected on the difficulty of the `language situation`: *"Oh, the language situation….I never thought it would be this bad*". Similarly, another respondent described her recent negative experience with the language:

"*For example….. last time I tried to buy condensed milk in a shop…it took an hour to find the fucking condensed milk… everything was in Hungarian …and I did not know the word for it… so I kept looking for it… and the shopkeeper did not know any English…*"

This episode highlights well how the lack of local language knowledge can be a source of daily frustration even throughout the course of performing day-to-day tasks.

Language as a Barrier

Also, the lack of Hungarian knowledge and the difficulty of learning it seems to be a major barrier towards establishing personal relations with locals and thus towards integration into the local society. As one respondent put it:"*We tried to learn Hungarian but we gave up… but… for example I miss being able to talk to the neighbours."* Another respondent reflected similarly on her experience with the language barrier and connecting to local people: *"I tried to make friends…but when I saw I couldn't…I …. I just shut down […] I thought maybe I just don't match with Hungarians".*

Accordingly, many respondents reported negative experiences with locals and described Hungarians as cold, closed or unfriendly:

> "*People here are really closed. You go to Croatia, meet a foreigner and in five minutes you know the names of his kids and everything about them*"

> *"You see, …in Spain, if you are a foreigner, everyone tries to make you feel good and comfortable. But in Hungary… if you are a foreigner …you need to adjust to locals… Also, if you are standing with a map in Spain, people gather around you and try to help… even if they don't know the place or the language…here… even if you ask for help, people just send you away*"

Thus, similarly to prior research on the topic (Watkins, Razee, & Richter, 2012) the qualitative evidence captures how the language barrier underpins several psychosocial difficulties and can diminish the well-being of both high and low status migrants by being a major source of stress and inducing feelings of unwantedness, incompetency and social isolation.

Overcoming the Language Barrier: Adaptation Strategies

However, through the example of some migrants who successfully overcame the language barrier, the interviews highlight the importance of language for well-being and for social integration. In general, migrants had two major adaptation strategies to the language situation. The first one entailed learning the local language, which also acted as a way of

connecting better to local people. It is well-illustrated by the example of a Nigerian refugee, who described his initial experience with local people as highly negative. He described them as "*xenophobic and full of prejudices*", "*who do not even try to get to know [him]".* However, later he continued by saying:

> "*But you see, learning the language really helps. I am getting to know the good side of people too… […] so I am OK here. Many friends left and went to other places, because they did not like it… They did not like the language, the people and country… But you see, I am OK here. I don't want to leave…. I am learning the language, I am pretty good with it now…*"

Learning the language featured frequently among other respondents too, who were eager to talk about their efforts to learn the language. Also, the progress they made in learning Hungrian often seemed to be a source of pride. Thus, learning Hungarian, the local language, appears to be a major adaptation strategy many migrants opt for.

Alternatively, migrants may use another language as lingua franca to connect to others. While it could be either their mother tongue or another language, in the current sample it was predominantly English. However, occasionally also Spanish and Pharsi fulfilled this role. The experience of one respondents from India illustrates well this kind of adaptation strategy:

> "*Yeah, the language is hard. But I have been very lucky… The people I know all know English… It might be a disadvantage only in some jobs…. But yeah… I guess I knew the right places [to find English speakers]"*

Another professional woman living here with her husband describes her similar experience on making friends in Budapest: *"No, it was not really hard. We were very lucky, because of his colleagues. They all speak English".* Accordingly, the woman and her husband also have an extensive social network with many Hungarians, mostly comprised of the male colleagues of the husband and their partners.

Isolation

However, for those migrants who were unable to employ either of the two adaptation strategies, the sense of loneliness and isolation is daunting. One student from Georgia has extensively described her experience of loneliness as follows:

> "*I feel alone and isolated… I don't know any people… I used to have two, three people with me all the time back home. .. Weekends are nightmares […] I try to meet new people. I have subscribed to a gym, I love swimming… I've bought a guitar and I've joined a French class. … But it is quite difficult…*"

This isolation, as also reflected by the lack of local social ties in their ego networks, is the most prominent amongst asylum seekers and refugees. As many of them do not have adequate Hungarian or English skills, which are usually the main channels of communication in contemporary Budapest, their social connections tend to be much poorer than those of high-status migrants. Additionally, their existing ties are also often limited within the confines of their ethnic diasporas, hence the high density of their social networks (for details see next chapter).

The theoretical link between one's well-being and social relations is not new to Sociology, as it dates back as far as the nineteenth century. Durkheim, in his pioneering work, the *Suicide* (1897), talked about the importance of social integration into society. In his discussion about 'egoistic suicide' he argued that suicidal acts can be attributed to the lack of social integration of the individual and asserted that the more people need to rely on their own resources in certain society the higher the suicide rate in the given country (Durkheim [1952], 2002). He also argued that integration to the family is a vital aspect of this social integration and the density of the family is a crucial contributing factor to immunity to suicide, already hinting at the importance of social ties as a source of social support (Durkheim [1952], 2002). Therefore, the next chapter looks at the major

differences in the personal social social relations of high and low status migrants and their implications for their well-being in more details.

CONCLUSION

This chapter aimed to empirically assess the differences in the subjective well-being of high and low status migrants in Budapest. Firstly, it confronted a decision between multi-item aggregated subjective well-being measures and single-item live evaluations in order to quantitatively measure the well-being of high and low status migrants. It then concluded that in the current research project life satisfaction scores are a more reliable measures of subjective well-being, than a multi-item aggregate measure, due to some peculiarities of the data collections process, such as issues of translatability and comprehension. It then, in line with previous research findings, found a significant difference in the life satisfaction scores of high and low status migrants.

In the second section of the chapter, it continued with a qualitative analysis in order to look beyond quantitative measures capturing only the levels of subjective well-being and to better understand the experiences of migrants that shape their well-being. As a result, it was found that there are two major themes that impact the well-being migrants through multiple channels. Firstly, it was found that employment, including unemployment and job quality, is a major factor shaping the experiences of both high and low status migrants. Moreover, it was also argued that as unemployment is especially common amongst low status migrants it can be a major contributor towards their diminished life satisfaction on average as a groups through interfering with the fulfilment of their basic needs and negatively influencing their greater sense of purpose as well. Second, it was also found that language is another key factor for the well-being of migrants mainly through their experiences with connecting to people and with social integration. Thus, the next chapter looks at the

features of the social relations of both high and low status migrants in order to better understand how they can also shape their sense of well-being.

5. THE PERSONAL NETWORKS OF HIGH AND LOW STATUS MIGRANTS

The previous chapter highlighted the importance of social integration for the well-being of migrants, which is understood and measured as the extent of participation of individuals in social networks (Brisette, Cohen, & Seeman, 2000). Nevertheless, little is known about how exactly social relations influence's migrants well-being. The next chapter combines the theoretical insights of social capital literature and empirical benefits of social network analysis in order to map the features of social networks of high and low status migrants and to relate it to the findings of the previous chapter about the well-being of migrants. The chapter maps the differences in the size, composition and structure of personal networks of high and low status through different ego-networks measures. Additionally, by drawing on the earlier theoretical and empirical works within the literature on social capital, social integration and social support it attempts to link the differences in the social networks of high and low status migrant to the previously observed difference in their levels of subjective well-being.

5.1. MEASUREMENT OF PERSONAL NETWORKS

In order to assess the differences in the social relations of high and low status migrants different ego network measures were used. As Halgin and Borgatti (2012) points out ego-network measures fall under two main categories: compositional measures and structural ones. Alter-alter relations were coded as present in two cases: a)if ego claimed that the two people either talk to each other without the presence of ego as well b) if ego said that the alters know each other, occasionally might even talk to each other but it is not very likely when ego is not present as well. Accordingly

the personal networks of respondents were re-created and the relevant ego network measures were computed for each respondent. Then, an average score of each measure was computed for the groups of high and low status mgirants. To determine the statistical significance of the observed differences in the average scores of the two groups two-tailed t-tests were used to compare the mean scores of different network measures of high and low status migrants and results were interpreted at a 5% significance level.

Moreover, the name generator also used multiple prompting questions to identify potentially different people with different roles in the ego's network for the purpose of the analysis. The three questions used correspond closely with the three major dimensions of social support identified by Wellman, such as financial support ("Who would you ask for financial help?"), emotional support ("Who would you discuss your personal matters with?") and social companion ("Who are the people you usually spend your free-time with?") (Wellman & Wortley, 1990). However, financial and emotional support are argued to have paramount importance for well-being and also believed to imply a closer relationship between ego and its alter (Wellman & Kenneth, 2001). Furthermore, many respondents seemed to have disproportionately high number of people who they only "hang out with" but provide no major emotional or financial help. Consequently, several measures were computed twice: once for all the alters featuring in ego`s network (all), and once only including those alters who provide either emotional or financial support (close) to ego. This distinction provides insights into the features of closest and most supportive relations ego have, which might differ from the features of full ego-network. For results see Table 1 in the appendix.

5.2. FINDINGS

As the summary of the ego-network measures in table1 also shows, two distinctive social network patterns emerged corresponding to the groups of high status and low status migrants. In order to illustrate the observed the differences in the size, composition and structure of high and low status migrants' ego nets, one respondent's network from both groups with the closest network measures to the group means were selected[4] and subsequently visualised.

5.2.1. SIZE

The size of ego-networks is usually measured as the number of alters the ego has. As Table 1. shows high status migrants seem to have a larger network on average, as the average size is 9.32, while it is only 7.45 for low status migrants, however this difference proved to be statistically non-significant. On the other hand, taking into consideration only the 'close' ties of migrants, the average size of the personal networks of high-status migrants is 5.96, while it is less than half (2.73) for low status migrants, which seems to be a highly significant difference between the groups. Thus, while looking at the whole personal networks of high and low status migrants shows that low status migrants have relations to only slightly fewer people, it can also be seen that on average they have less than half as many 'close' ties as high status migrants do.

Accordingly, a larger portion of the social ties of low status migrants function as only social companions through shared free-time activities, and they can rely on much fewer ties for emotional and financial help. However, as Wellman claimed such close ties are some of the most important ways for households to reduce uncertainties and to buffer stress (Wellman & Kenneth, 2001; Wellman & Kenneth, 2001). Thus, the observed difference in the average size of social networks, especially in the size of 'close' relations, could be a contributing factor to the previously found

[4] See Table 2. in the Appendix for the network measures of visualised high and low status ego networks.

differences in the well-being of high and low status, causing low status migrant to report a lower level of well-being on the average.

5.2.2. COMPOSITIONAL MEASURES

Compositional measures, which are aimed to capture the configuration of ego-networks regarding some features of the alters, can also be broken down to two further main categories. The first one deals with some categorical values and simply summarises the distribution of alters based on some categorical characteristics. Based on the alters' attributes the distribution of alters for each ego were computed as the percentages for:

1) the kind of relationship between ego and alter (romantic partner/spouse, family member, colleague, friend or other)

2) whether the alter is currently living in Hungary or abroad (HUN vs Abroad).

The second type of compositional measures look at the composition of alters in terms of continuous variables (Halkin & Borgatti, 2012) and in the current study it was used to assess the length of relationship between ego and its alters. Accordingly, the average length of the relationship between ego and all alters were computed as a continuous variable. Also, as family members are reasonably assumed to have a relationship with ego since birth, the age of respondents is likely to have a major impact on the average result. Thus, in order to capture the length of non-kin relations acquired by ego throughout his or her life course the average length of relationships was computed after excluding alters who were listed as family members as well.

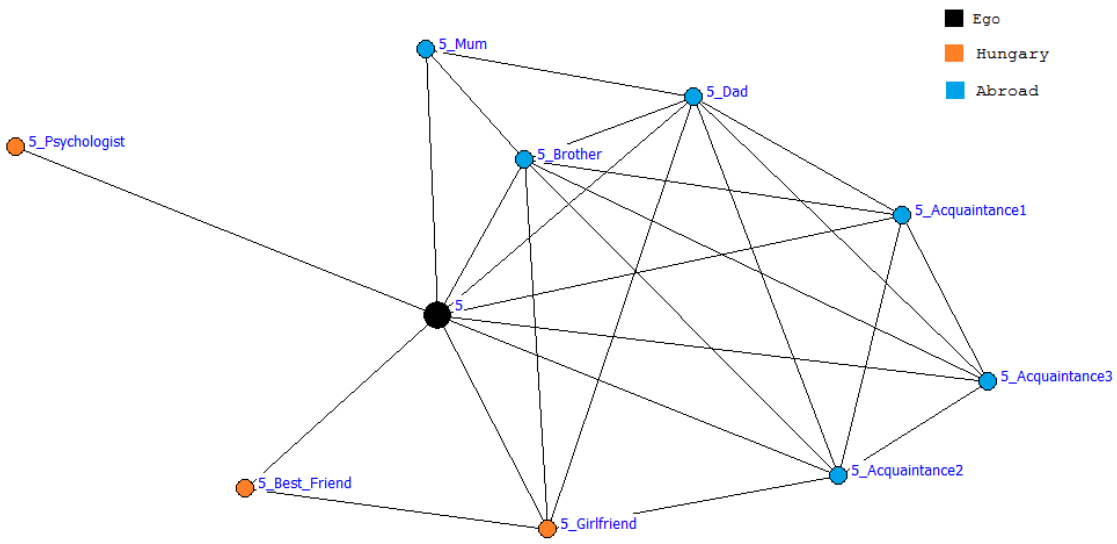

Figure 1. Geographical Locations of Alters in a High-status Migrant Ego-network

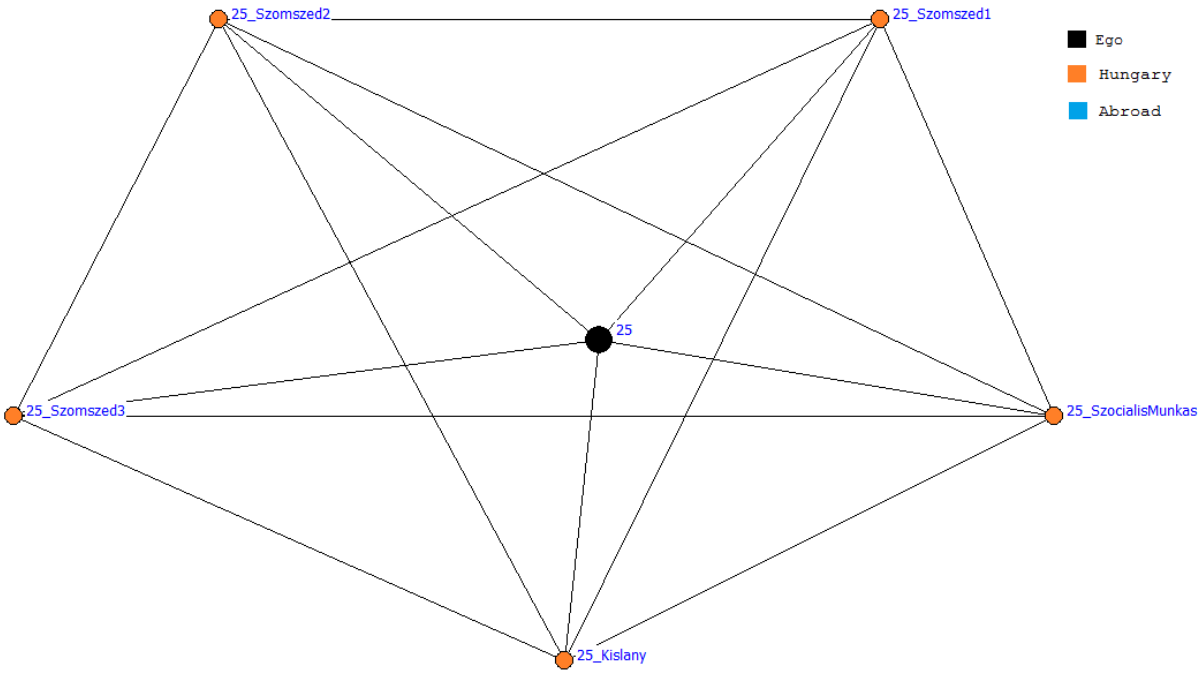

Figure 2. Geographical Locations of Alters in a Low-status Migrant Ego-network

As Table1 also shows, there are striking differences in the composition of the ego-networks of high and low status migrants. Firstly, there is a major difference in the geographical location of alters as on average 81.3% of all the alters of low status migrants resides in Hungary, it is only 50.3% for

high-status migrants (see also Figure 1 and 2). Moreover, when taking into consideration only 'close' contacts the gap widens even further as 82.4% of the close contacts of low status migrants resides in Hungary, while it can be said about only 45.0% of the close contacts of high status migrants.

Moreover, there are also major differences regarding the types of relationships their social networks are composed of (see Table1). While there are no major differences in the number of social ties that would fall under the category of `Romantic Partner/Spouse` or `family member`, a large difference can be observed between the portion of ties that the respondents consider as either 'friend' or as 'other' (see also Figure 3 and 4). While 60.0% of all ties of high status migrants is perceived as a friendship by the ego, it is only 22.2% for low status migrants. In contrary, while high status migrants only reported 4.18% of all their ties not being either a friend, romantic partner/spouse, colleague or a family member, it was 40,0% for low status migrants.

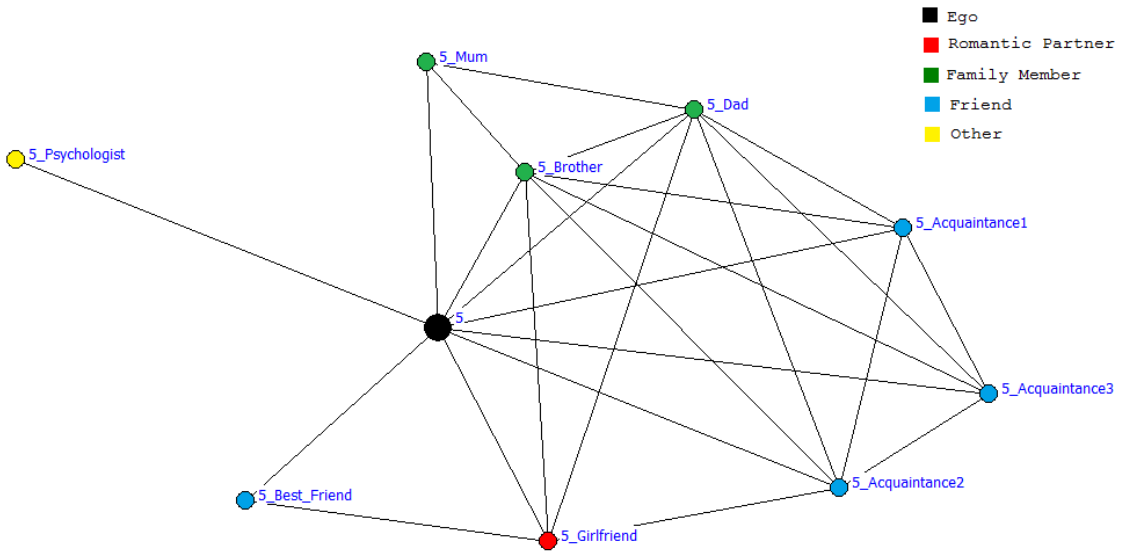

Figure 3 Type of Relationships between Ego and Alters in a High-status Migrant Ego-network

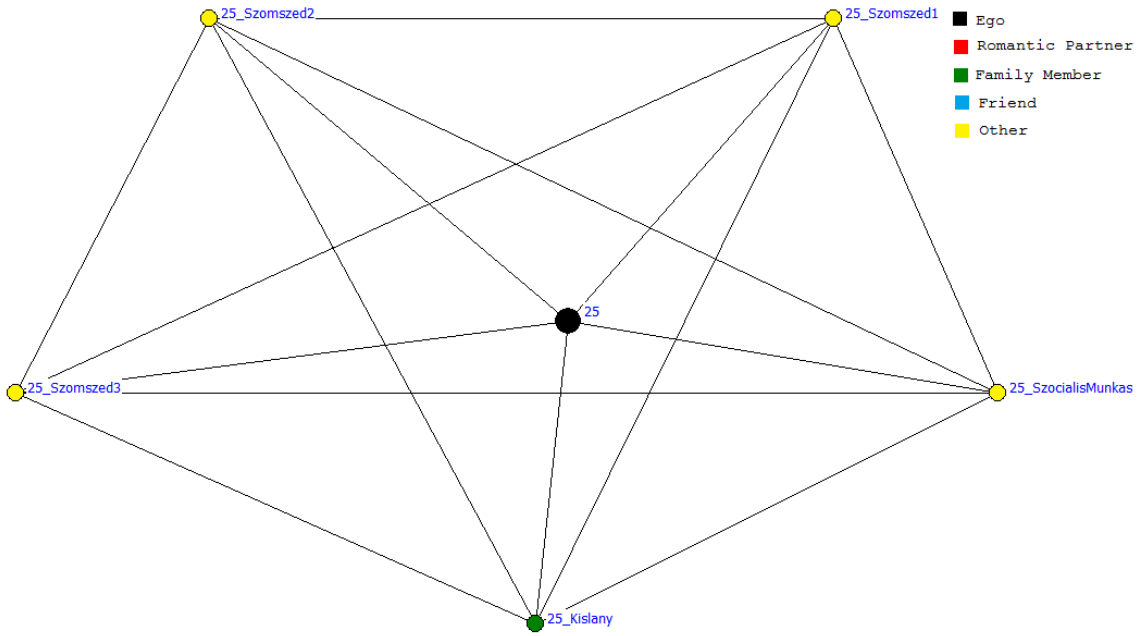

Figure 4 Type of Relationships between Ego and Alters in a Low-status Migrant Ego-network

Additionally, there seems to be another major difference in the average length of the relationship between ego and alters. It was found that the average length of all relationships between ego and other alters is 9.98 years for high status migrants and 1.15 for low status migrants, which is a statistically highly significant result. After excluding family members, this changed to 4.73 and 1.23 respectively for high and low status migrants.

These outlined differences in the compositional ego network measures do not only reveal the compositional differences of the personal networks of high and low status migrants but also highlight the adaptation of different migration strategies by the two groups and our need for adapting different theoretical approaches to understand their experiences. Firstly, the compositional measures of low status migrants clearly show how their migratory experience can be explained by classical assimilation theories asserting that the migration process entails a break with the society of origin and progressive substation of the contacts with new ties in the host country (Alba & Nee, 1997; Parks & Bugess, 1921). It is well-reflected by the high proportion of their alters also living in Hungary as well as by the relative newness of their ties, which reflect a loss of their

pre-migratory contacts and their gradual replacement by local contacts in the host country, Hungary.

Moreover, understanding the experience of low status migrants from an assimilation theory perspective also helps us to understand the implications of the compositional differences for their well-being. As Wellman (1990) pointed out, friends are crucial for social support, as they normally tend to make up a large part of one's social network and to provide vital emotional support and companionship. However, in the case of low status migrants friendship ties also suffered major damages due to the disruptive effect of migration, which is also reflected by the low number of close alters and the strikingly low proportion of 'friends' in their social circles. Instead, almost half of the social relations of low status migrants was categorised as 'other', which in most cases meant a social worker, neighbour or a legal advisor. This highlights how low status migrants try to rebuild their social networks as well as how they seek some of the necessary social support from alternative sources. However, as this process is naturally lengthy and often also hindered by language and cultural barriers as described in the previous chapter, the lack of friends in their social circles and the absence of their emotional support and companionship can be a major contributor to their lower sense of well-being.

On the other hand, the compositional features of the ego-networks of high status migrant well-illustrate modern transnational migration theories which argue for a multi-local and non-linear migration process and deny the existence of a clear breaking point of pre and post migration life and the substitution of ties in the origin country with new ties in the host country (Parrenas, 2010; Portes et al, 1999; Waters, 2011). The high proportion of ties living somewhere other than Hungary and the higher average 'age' of relationships between egos and their alters illustrate well how immigration does not necessarily lead to the loss of social ties with the home country, but rather means the expansion of personal social networks of high status migrants by acquiring new ties in the host country and by also persevering ties in their home countries as well (Salaff, Fong, & Wong,

1999). Consequently, it can be seen that these high status migrants build transnational networks without having a clear-cut boundary between their pre- and post-migratory lives unlike their low-status counterparts (Bolibar, Marti, & Verd, 2015). Also, in the context of social support, Wellman (1990) found that physical accessibility is not related to the major dimensions of social support, such as companionship, emotional aid and financial aid (Wellman & Wortley, 1990). Therefore, it can explain why high status migrants, besides having a much larger share of their social ties not living in Hungary still can receive the adequate level of social support contributing to their sense of higher subjective well-being.

5.2.3. STRUCTURAL MEASURES

The collected the data was also suitable for the study of the structural features of personal networks such as density and structural holes. (Halkin & Borgatti, 2012). Thus, the density which measures what percentage of all possible ties in the ego network is actually present (Hanneman & Riddle, 2005) was calculated separately for both the whole ego network and for the 'close' network for both groups. Also, the effective size, which shows the total impact of ego, computed as the number of alters that ego has minus the average number of ties that each alter has, was measured for both full ego nets and 'close' nets (Hanneman & Riddle, 2005). Also, the efficiency, which normalises the effective size of networks by the actual size of networks and measures "the proportion of ego's ties to its neighbours that are "non-redundant" was also computed (Hanneman & Riddle, 2005). Lastly, multiplexity, also reffered to as multistrandedness, which captures the "arrangement of relations and alters around an individual" and shows whether ego and alter have more than one kind of relation between them (Alexander, Chamberlain, Hollows, Laughton, & Pitman, 2008, p.8) was calculated as well. It was computed as the average number of times an alter is mentioned in the name generator and its minimum possible value is 1 expressing that ego is receiving different types of social support from completely different alters as no person features more than once

providing more than one kind of social support to ego (Alexander, Chamberlain, Hollows, Laughton, & Pitman, 2008).

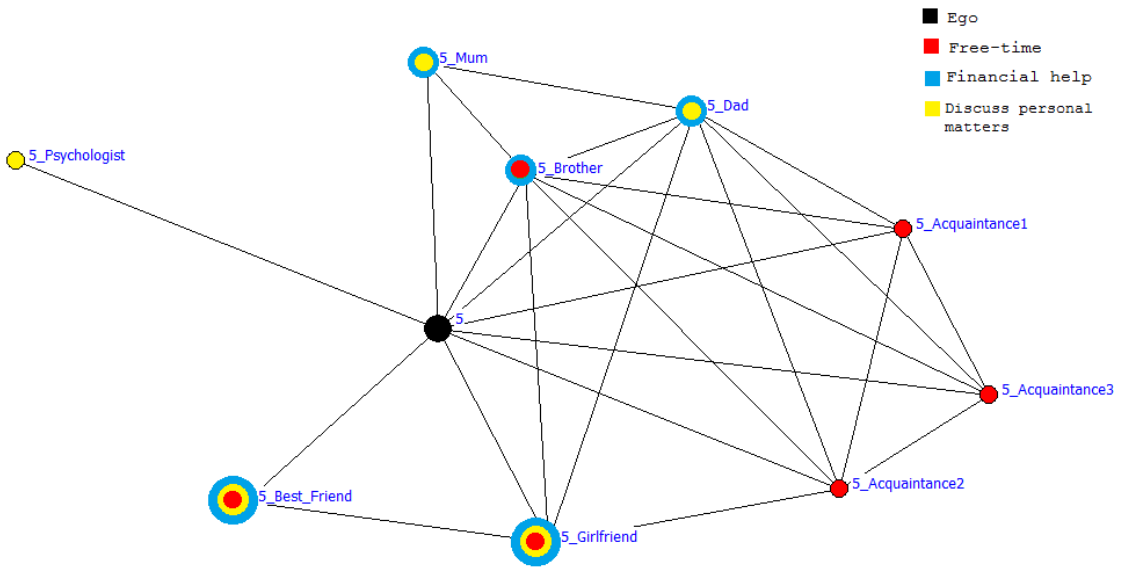

Figure 5. Multiplexity: Types of Interaction/Support Provided by Alters to Ego in a High-status Migrant Ego-network

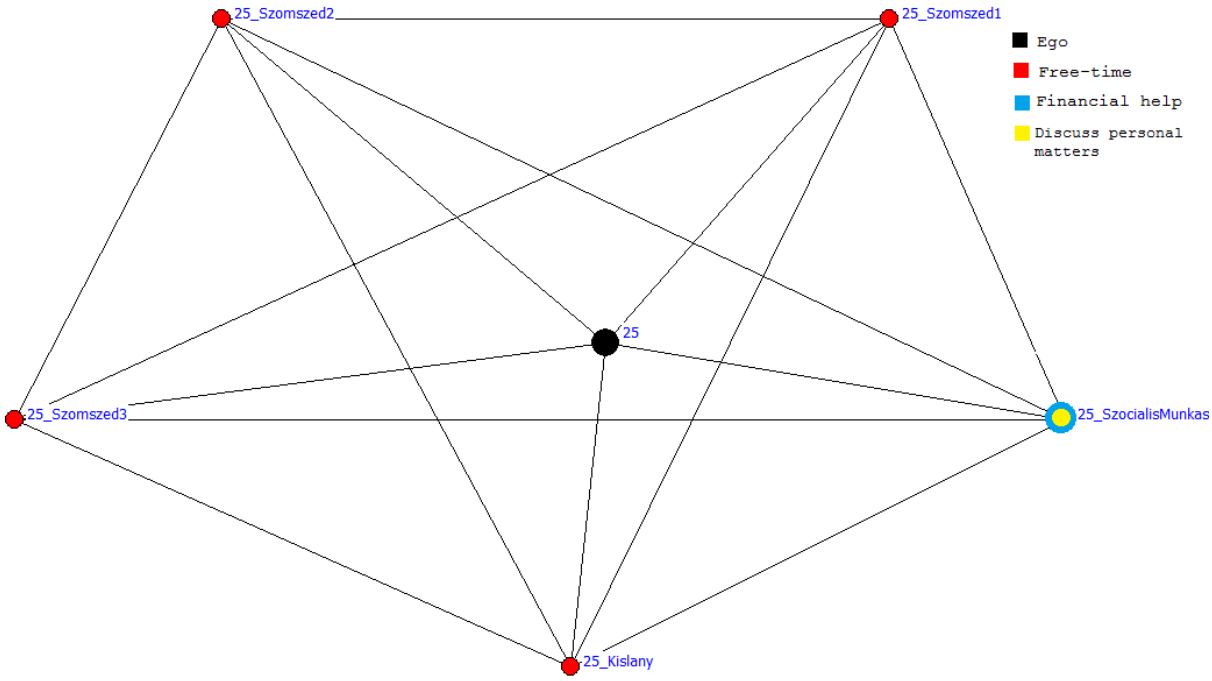

Figure 6 Multiplexity: Types of Interaction/Support Provided by Alters to Ego in a Low-status Migrant Ego-network

As Table1 shows there are not only compositional differences in the networks of high and low status migrants but also structural ones. Firstly, as a multi-question name generator was used the

multiplexity of relationships could also be measured by computing a multistraiandedness measure. The results show that low status migrants tend to obtain different kinds of social support from different people, while high status migrants tend to have larger overlap between these roles and their alters often provide more than just one kind of assistance (see also Figure 5 & 6). Also, as Kapferer (1969) argued, multiple contents in a relationship signal a strong tie between ego and alter (Kapferer, 1969), which according to Wellman also has implications for social support. He asserts that strong ties, meaning relationship with people who occupy multiple-role relationships, have more detailed knowledge of each other's needs and receive attention more easily from each other, thus provide better emotional aid, small services and companionship (Wellman & Wortley, 1990, p.564). Therefore, as high status migrants have more strong relationships, they might also be able to access more adequate social support from their alters than low status migrants can contributing to their increased sense of well-being.

Second, structural measures also reveal that high status migrants on the average have sparser, more efficient and less constrained networks than low status migrants do. It shows that their alters tend to be less connected to each other than the contacts of low status migrants are, which can also be the source of different kinds of social capital, such as the access to material goods and resources as well as to better opportunities. According to Burt's structural hole argument less constrained social network, with higher efficiency and effective size, embeds more social capital for the ego (Burt R. , 1992). As Figure5 also shows, high status migrants tend to be connected to multiple social groups and consequently potentially have access to more diverse and non-redundant information (Burt R. S., 2000). Accordingly, they might also take advantage of controlling the informational flow between these different groups (Burt R. S., 2000). Such position of brokerage and its potential benefits might imply better integration to the host society in terms of employment, informational access and civic participation (Voicu és Vlase 2014) and thus can be expected to contribute to the well-being of migrants through providing better access to different resources.

Conversely, following the closure argument low status migrants could potentially benefit from their more tightly knot social groups, as Coleman (1988) argues that such networks, create more social capital through facilitating the establishment of group norms, cooperation, trust and solidarity (Coleman 1988). Even though no empirical evidence was found in my data to support this view as low status migrants on average tend to report a lower of well-being, it is also possible that the potential positive impacts of closure are outweighed by the previously outlined negative impacts of other compositional and structural features of the social networks of low status migrants.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it can be said that the outlines compositional and structural ego-network measures reflect the emergence of two distinctive patterns respective of the status of migrants. On the average, low status migrants tend to have a smaller network, especially when it comes to 'close' contacts, fewer 'friendships' but more 'other' kind of relationships, and less strong and younger ties than high status migrants do. Moreover, lower status migrants also tend to have a denser and less efficient network compared to high-status migrants.

These differences in the social networks of the two groups also reflected the vastly different migratory experiences of high and low status migrants and the consequent need for a multi-layered and differentiated theoretical approach to international migration, as the networks of high-status migrants captured the experiences of modern-day transnational migrants while the networks of low-status migrants reflected well the empirical features of classical assimilation theories.

Furthermore, these observed differences also highlight the major importance of social relations and micro social context for the well-being of migrants and by drawing on earlier theoretical works it explained how they could contribute to the diminished sense of well-being of low status migrants. However, further empirical work to better explore the channels and mechanisms connecting social

network features and well-being would be highly valuable in validating the current findings and providing more insights into the role of social relations for subjective well-being

6. CONCLUSION

The current thesis empirically investigated the differences in the social networks and subjective well-being of high and low status migrants living in Budapest, as well as the complex interplay between the two. In doing so, it employed mixed methodological tools including social network analysis, survey research and semi structured interviews to adequately address the question.

It found major differences in the subjective well-being and social networks of high and low status migrants in Budapest. Due to some of the limitations of the collection of survey data, such as language barriers and problems of comprehension, the subjective well-being of high and low status migrants was quantitatively measured by a single-item life satisfaction question instead of an aggregated multi-item subjective well-being measure. It was found that low status migrants on average report significantly lower level of life satisfaction than high status migrants do.

The qualitative analysis of semi structured interviews revealed two main factors that seemed to both directly and indirectly impact the well-being of low status migrants. Firstly, the lack of employment through interfering with the fulfilment of basic economic and psychological needs of low status migrants appeared to have a major negative impact on the well-being of low status migrants. This relationship between life satisfaction and employment also highlighted the complex interplay between the objective and subjective elements of well-being. Second, the language barrier and the consecutive problems with cultural and social integration seemed to be another major factor influencing the overall well-being of migrants. The semi structured interviews revealed two adaptation strategies of migrants in this regard, such as learning the local language or opting for a another common language, mostly English, to connect with other people. In cases where none of the strategies could be successfully implemented social isolation seemed to be daunting. Thus, to understand the ways in which social integration and subjective well-being are related a social network analysis of the personal (ego) networks of high and low status migrants was performed.

Regarding the social networks of high and low status migrants major differences were found in the size, composition and structure of their ego networks. The obtained compositional and structural ego-network measures reflected the emergence of two distinctive patterns in the social networks of high and low status migrants.It was found that, on the average, low status migrants report lower life satisfaction and tend to have smaller networks, especially when it comes to 'close' contacts. Also, low status migrant have fewer 'friends' and weaker ties. Instead, they have more 'other' kind of relationships and 'younger' ties than high status migrants do. These observed differences highlighted the importance of social networks for the experience of subjective well-being by being a major source of social support as well as by providing access to material resources. Moreover, by relying on earlier works from the field of social capital and social support research, it was also argued that social support provides the main link between the social networks and well-being of migrants and the lack of adequate social integration of low status migrants can contribute to their overall diminished sense of well-being by impairing their personal social support systems.

Additionally, the compositional ego network measures of high and low status migrants captured well the different migratory strategies of the two groups. While, the personal networks of high status migrants reflected their transnational migratory experiences, networks of low status migrants resembled patterns associated with classical assimilation theories. These findings strongly emphasise the need for abandoning those theoretical frameworks of migration which neglect the heterogeneity of migrants and fail to acknowledge their vastly different experiences. Accordingly, by finding major differences in both subjective well-being and social networks between the two groups, the thesis also established high and low status migrants as meaningful analytical categories, which transcend the traditional skill based classifications of migrants, by incorporating the current wider social context of migrants as well as by including previously neglected groups.

Lastly, the thesis also illustrated the benefits of mixed methodological design. While the quantitative data enabled the measurement and comparison of subjective well-being and social networks of

high and low status migrants, the qualitative data provided a deeper understanding of experiences behind the quantitative measures and complemented it by offering insights into the major factors shaping the well-being of migrants.

APPENDIX

Table 1 Summary Table of Size, Compositional and Structural Ego Network Measures of High and Low Status Migrants

Ego Network Measure	High Status	Low Status	P-value
Size			
size of network	9,32	7,45	0,2161
size of `close` network	5,95	2,73	0,0013 ***
Compositional Measures			
percentage of all alters residing in Hungary	50,36	81,29	0,0028 ***
% of `close` network members who reside in Hungary	45,05	82,43	0,0040 ***
% of all alters providing emotional support who also lives in Hungary	47,87	78,18	0,04248 **
% of all female alters	55,16	49,45	0,6074
% of all male alters	44,84	50,55	0,6074
average length of knowing all alters in years	9,78	1,15	0,0000 ***
% of romantic relations/spouse of all alters	8,82	6,06	0,3837
% of family members of all alters	24,30	31,72	0,5252
% of colleagues of all alters	2,72	0,00	0,2105
% of friends of all alters	59,97	22,19	0,0062 ***
% of other kind of relations of all alters	4,18	40,02	0,0165 ***
The average length of knowing all non-family member alters	4,73	1,23	0,0002 ***
Multiplexity	1,59	1,17	0,0003 ***

Structural Measures			
density of network	0,23	0,33	0,0468 **
effective size of network	5,68	3,23	0,0068 ***
efficiency of network	0,60	0,44	0,0400 **
constraint in the network	0,37	0,50	0,0386 **
density of `close` network	0,26	0,35	0,1964
effective size of `close` network	3,41	1,98	0,0078 ***
efficiency of `close` network	0,58	0,50	0,3967
constraint in close network	0,44	0,68	0,0807

Table 2 Life Satisfaction Scores and Ego-network Measures of Visualised Ego Networks

	Ego 5 (high status)	Ego 25 (low-status)
Life Satisfaction	8,0	5,0
All_Degree	9,0	5,0
Close_Degree	6,0	1,0
ALL_HUN	33,3	100
ALL_Length	11,1	0,8
ALL_Partner	11,1	0,0
ALL_Family	33,3	20,0
ALL_Colleague	0,0	0,0
ALL_Friend	44,4	0,0
ALL_Other	11,1	80,0
Non_Family_Length	1,7	0,0
Multiplexity	1,8	1,6
All_Density	0,2	0,5
All_Effsize	5,4	1,0
All_Efficiency	0,6	0,2
All_Constraint	0,3	0,7
Close_Density	0,2	0,5
Close_Effsize	4,0	1,0
Close_Efficiency	0,7	1,0
Close_Constraint	0,4	1,0
Close_Hierarchy	0,0	1,0

_ _ _

Well-being and Personal Networks Questionnaire

Thank you very much for taking your time to help me with my research. As part of my thesis research I am looking at the relationship between the well-being and social networks of non-Hungarians/foreigners who currently live in Hungary.

I would like to ask your help by going through this survey with me, which mostly includes questions on your feelings, your personal network and demographic data. It will approximately take 20 minutes to complete it.

It is important for you to know that the research is completely anonymous, the obtained information is treated with high confidentiality, and the material will be used solely for the purpose of my research. Also, during the questionnaire you will be asked to name some people. Please remember that you do not need to use their full or real name, but please be consistent with the one you decide to use.

- **Subjective well-being**

First, I would like to get to know more about how you feel. Below are some statements about feelings and thoughts. Please choose the answer that best describes your experience over the last week. Please, remember the questionnaire is anonymous and the information is treated confidentially so try to be as honest as you can.

Statements	None of the time	Rarely	Some of the time	Often	All the time
H_1: I have been feeling optimistic about the future					
H_2: I have been feeling useful					
H_3: I have been feeling relaxed					
H_4: I have been dealing with problems well					
H_5: I have been thinking clearly					
H_6: I have been feeling close to other people					
H_7: I have been able to make up my mind about things					
H_8: I have been feeling stressed					
H_9: I have been feeling lonely					
H_10: I have been experiencing existential insecurity					
H_11: I have been feeling depressed					

Below there are some more questions about how you feel. Please give a score from 0 to 10 where 0 means 'not at all' and 10 means 'completely'

Questions	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
H_10: Overall, do you consider yourself a happy person?											
H_11: Overall, how satisfied are you with your life?											
H_12: Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?											
H_13: Overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?											
H_14: Overall, to what extent do you feel that things you do in your life are worthwhile?											
H_15: In general, do you think that people can be trusted?											
H_16 In general, do you think you are free to decide for yourself how to live your life?											

H_17 Compared to the average living standards in Hungary how would you describe your own living standards?

1. Much better

2. Slightly better

3. Around average

4. Slightly lower

4. Much lower

H_18 Compared to the average living standards in your home country how would you describe your own living standards?

1. Much better

2. Slightly better

3. Around average

4. Slightly lower

4. Much lower

- **Personal Network Generator**

Now, I would like to move onto talking about your personal network. First, I will ask some questions about the most important people in your life, and then about the relationships between these people.

You can name as many people as you want for all the questions and the order of names do not matter. In order to keep the survey anonymous you can just tell me first names, nicknames, initials or any other kind of identifications you feel like. However, it is important that if a person features more than once in your answers, you always use the same name for him or her.

ENW_19: People often encounter unexpected negative life events. If you suddenly found yourself in a financially difficult situation, whom would you ask for financial help?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

ENW_20: From time to time, most people discuss important personal matters with other people. Who are the people with whom you would discuss your own important personal matters? You can again name as many people as you wish to, and you may name some of the ones you have already named in the first question, just please make sure to use the same name as you have used previously.

1. 4.

2. 5.

3. 6.

ENW_21: Relaxation and fun are also part of our daily lives. Who are the people you usually spend your free time with? You can again name as many people as you wish to, and you may name some of the ones you have already names in the first two questions just please use the same name as you have used previously.

1. 5

2. 6

3. 7

4. 8

Now, I would like to ask you some information about these people, and about the relationship between them.

_ _ _

ENW_22 Expressed in years, for how long do you know NAME 1?

ENW_23 In which country is NAME 1 currently residing? (HUN → ask city too!)

ENW_24 What is the gender of NAME1?

ENW_25 From the below list which one describes the best the nature of your relationship with NAME 1?

1 Romantic partner/Spouse

2 Family member

3 Colleague

4 Friend

5 Other, if so please specify

	Name	Length	Location	Gender	Nature
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
15					
16					
17					
19					
20					

Now, I would like to ask you about the relationship between these people. Please give a score between 0 and 2, where:

0: means that these two people do not know each other, or if they do, they are not likely to talk to each other at all if you are not around.

1: means that these two people do know each other and occasionally might even talk to each other, but they are not very likely to do so when you are not around.

2: means that these two people know each other, and are very likely to talk to each other even if you are not around.

ENW_26: So, on the scale from 0 to 2, how would you rate the relationship between '*Name 1*' and '*Name 2*'? *Continue until table is filled.*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	**8**	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
1																				
2																				
3																				
4																				
5																				
6																				
7																				
8																				
9																				
10																				
11																				
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14																				
15																				
16																				
17																				
18																				
19																				
20																				

_ _ _

- **Demographic Questions**

Lastly, I would like to ask you some questions on your basic demographic data in order to help me get more insights into the data.

D_27 What is your citizenship?

.....

D_28 What is your place of birth? (country, city)

.....

D_29 What is your date of birth?

.....

D_30 What is your gender?

Female Male Other

D_31 What is your marital status?

Married/Civil partnership

In a relationship

Divorced

Widowed

Single

D_32 What is your highest level of educational attainment?

.....

D_33 Where did you complete it? (in which country?)

.....

D_34 In which year did you move to Hungary?

_ _ _

……

D_35 What is your current employment status? Here I would like to know if you hold a job.

- Employed
- Full time: More than 35 hours per week
- Part-time: Less than 35 hours per week

- Non-active (student, retired..etc)

D_36 What is your current occupational status? Or what is your current job?→ SELECT CATEGORY BASED ON ANSWER

- Non active
- Stay-home parent, housewife/househusband
- Student
- Unemployed or temporarily out of work (CODE PREVIOUS OCCUPATION)
- Retired (CODE PREVIOUS OCCUPATION)
- Self-employed
- Agricultural worker, farmer
- Professional (lawyer, medical practitioner, accountant, architect, software developer..etc)
- Shop or business owner, craftsmen or other self-employed
- Company owner
- Employed
- Employed professional (doctor, lawyer, accountant, architect, software developer…etc)
- Top or middle-manager (managing director, head of department, junior manager)
- White collar – working mainly at a desk
- White collar in service sector (bank, travel agent, language school) or travelling (sales)
- Blue collar – supervisors, foremen, skilled worker (electrician, plumber, administrative assistant)
- Blue collar - unskilled (agricultural worker, kitchen assistant, maid, grocery clerk, factory assembly worker)
-

D_37 Compared to the average in Hungary how would you describe your financial situation?

1. Much better

2. Slightly better

3. Around average

4. Slightly lower

4. Much lower

D_38 Compared to the average in your home country how would you describe your financial situation?

1. Much better

2. Slightly better

3. Around average

4. Slightly lower

4. Much lower

D_39 What was your last employment status before moving to Hungary? Here I would only like to know if you held a job.

- Employed
- Full time: More than 35 hours per week
- Part-time: Less than 35 hours per week
- Non-active (student, retired..etc)

D_40 What was your last occupational status before moving to Hungary? → SELECT BASED ON ANSWER

- Non active
- Stay-home parent, housewife/househusband
- Student
- Unemployed or temporarily out of work (CODE PREVIOUS OCCUPATION)
- Retired (CODE PREVIOUS OCCUPATION)
- Self-employed
- Agricultural worker
- Professional (lawyer, medical practitioner, accountant, architect, software developer..etc)

- Shop or business owner, craftsmen or other self-employed
- Company owner
- Employed
- Employed professional (doctor, lawyer, accountant, architect, software developer…etc)
- Top or middle-manager (managing director, head of department, junior manager)
- White collar – working mainly at a desk
- White collar in service sector or travelling (sales)
- Blue collar – supervisors, foremen, skilled worker
- Blue collar - unskilled

D_41 What was your main reason for moving to Hungary?

……

……

……

D_42 Considering all different sources after taxes and expressed in HUF which category does your monthly income fall into from the following categories? I will start reading out different categories and you can just tell me stop at the right category.

- Less than 50.000 HUF per month
- 50-100.000 HUF per month
- 101-150.000 HUF per month
- 151-200.000 HUF per month
- 201-250.000 HUF per month
- 251-300.000 HUF per month
- 301-350.000 HUF per month
- 351-400.000 HUF per month
- 401-450.000 HUF per month
- 451-500.000 HUF per month
- More than 500.000 HUF per month

That was all for now. Thank you very much for your time and help. As I said in the beginning, for our next meeting I am going to visualise a map of your personal network based on your responses. I hope to further explore it with you as well as some of your thoughts on happiness.

Note to self:

Current CEU

Former CEU

Non-CEU

Refugee/Asylum Seeker

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