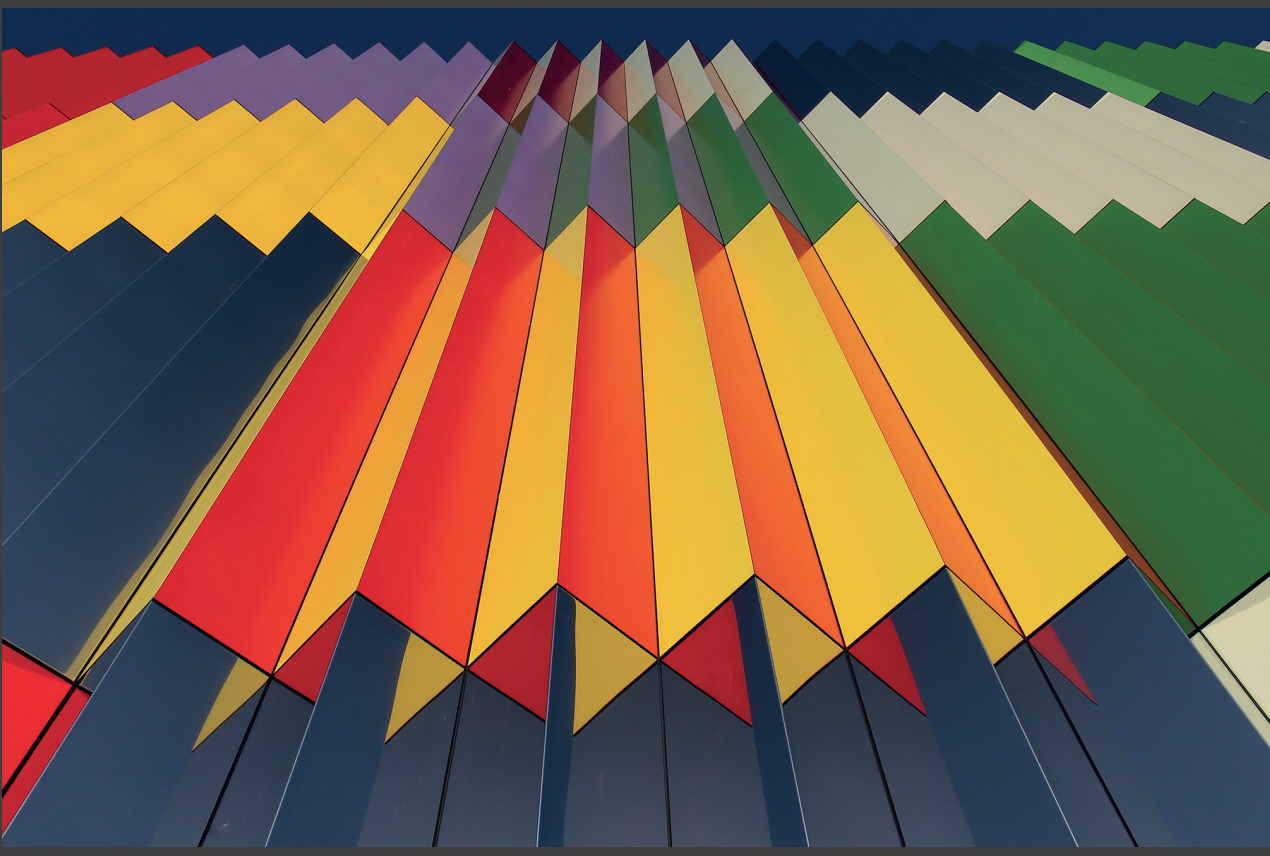
Miguel Morillas

THE TERMS OF INCLUSION

HOW MIGRANT PROFESSIONALS NEGOTIATE INCLUSION IN ORGANIZATIONS



STOCKHOLM SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS

THE TERMS OF INCLUSION

This dissertation explores what happens when organizations make efforts to include migrant professionals. Drawing on sociology and organization studies, the dissertation analyzes a program targeting highly skilled migrants striving to become part of a new workplace. An 18-month ethnography reveals the complex power relations involved in inclusion processes. It shows how inclusion brings about multiple tensions, providing opportunities to expose unequal power structures. By situating the analysis in tensions, this monograph disentangles the conditions under which inclusion takes place.

Taking the migrant professional's perspective, this dissertation responds to the question, 'how are the terms of inclusion engaged with?'. It argues for an understanding of inclusion as a process characterized by negotiation under arbitrary conditions. Such negotiation often contradicts official discourses of migrant professional success. This finding brings the reader into the everyday barriers and enablers migrant professionals experience regarding skills, professionalism, ethnicity, culture, class, language, and religion in a new organizational context. The dissertation proposes to give a central place to the terms and conditions under which 'the other' is invited to be part of an organization and society.

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The Terms of Inclusion

How Migrant Professionals Negotiate Inclusion in Organizations

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Stockholm School of Economics

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To
Elia, Gael & Minna

Foreword

This volume is the result of a research study carried out at the Department of Management and Organization (DMO) at the Stockholm School of Economics (SSE).

The volume is submitted as a doctoral thesis at SSE. In keeping with the policies of SSE, the author has been entirely free to conduct and present his research in the manner of his choosing as an expression of his own ideas.

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Producing this dissertation has been a journey full of meaningful events. In its making, I got married, had two incredible children, and moved countries (twice). The world witnessed a pandemic, a war broke out in the heart of Europe, my motherland Peru went through two short-lived coup d'état and a return to the football World Cup after 36 years. It has been at times difficult to find the energy to finalize such a long manuscript. There have been moments of anger and frustration, prolonged fatigue, confusion and despair, but also satisfaction and elation.

Generating a dissertation such as this, besides an individual endeavor, is also a collective effort. There are many people that have been crucial in helping conceive, streamline, re-arrange, and polish this dissertation. I want to thank particularly Laurence Romani for her unconditional support and crucial guidance in moments of doubt. Her persistent encouragement has made possible the development of the core ideas of my research. I am also highly indebted to Ingalill Holmberg, who accompanied me throughout the production of this dissertation, and whose vision has been illuminating. I also want to express my gratitude to Patrizia Zanoni and Christian De Cock for helping me turn some drafty thoughts into a dissertation. I deeply appreciate a number of scholars who supported me through this journey, provided feedback, and were valuable dialogue partners. These include Ahu Tatlı, Karin Svedberg Helgesson, Andreas Werr, Dan Kärreman, Sara Louise Muhr, Seyda Bagdogan, Minna Paunova, Florence Villesèche, Jacobo Ramírez, Lotte Holck, Andreas Diedrich, and Charlotte Holgersson, among others. Claire Maxwell, Nana Wesley Hansen and Gregor Schäfer also deserve my gratitude for their support during the very final lap. It has been an honor to think alongside all of you!

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Copenhagen, April 20, 2023

Miguel Morillas

Contents

List of fictitious names, acronyms, and abbreviations

CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
EDI	'Equality, Diversity and Inclusion' area at Servall
EO	Swedish Employment Office
HR	Human Resources
Model Settlers	Identity framework that signals how Settlers should be
Program	The 6-month internship program for migrant professionals (run by 'Servall')
Servall	the Case organization (Pseudonym)
Settlers	Migrant professionals participating in the Program Showcased Settlers
YP	'Program for Swedish youth unemployment'

Empirical chapters

Within the interviewee quotes, author's comments or clarifications are italicized: for example, [*here*].

1 Introduction

Full acceptance is a deeper notion than inclusion.
Since inclusion is offered on terms already set by the wider society,
it involves assimilation (…).
Full acceptance, however, involves renegotiating the terms and redefining
the current norms (…) so as to create secure spaces within
them for each person's individual qualities.'
Bhikhu Parekh

1.1 Who decides how people are included?

The physical movement of people is what seems to define this era of humanity (Sassen, 2007). In the current century, people move from one place to another more than at any other point in history. This mobility has led to a diverse national or societal workforce as well as an increased diversity within organizations. This dissertation examines what happens when people, who are seen as different from the dominant social norm (e.g., the national or societal norm), join an organization. We could call such persons 'marginalized'; they represent a diversity perspective. For simplicity, this group are referred to in this thesis as 'minorities'. There are, in organizations and in society alike, different ways in which minorities can become part of the group. The focus of inquiry in this dissertation is how a person from a minority group joins a mainstream (i.e., majority, dominant) group; or, put differently, how an organization that respects a person's differences can still make the person part of the larger group. This question is linked to the topic of inclusion, which is broadly defined, in the organizational sense, as a commitment to satisfy people's needs for both belongingness and uniqueness (Shore et al., 2011). Inclusion is now a common part of organizational practices.

Inclusion in organizations increasingly counts as a responsible practice, and one of the ways in which organizations can contribute to a sustainable society. A commitment to 'leaving no one behind' (United Nations, 2015) has become a mantra in corporate jargon and in organizational life. This has led to an increased research interest in organizational inclusion in the last three decades (Oswick & Noon, 2014). In parallel, organizations have laid notable efforts to include minorities with the objective of creating inclusive environments for everyone (Bilimoria et al.,

2008; Ferdman, 2014). In the contemporary world, inclusive organizations (Adamson et al., 2021; Podsiadlowski, 2014) support the incorporation of minority groups joining new countries and workplaces.

However, as the opening quote suggests, inclusion seems to be defined by dominant norms in organizations. Organizations simultaneously seem to be inclusive and define the conditions of inclusion. The possibility that organizational inclusion is conditional has been understood in different ways. 'Mainstream' research sees inclusion as a tool that organizations use to get the most out of their workers while fulfilling their ethical commitments (Ferdman & Deane, 2014; Mor-Barak, 2015), such as by correcting asymmetries between majorities and minorities. Inclusion does not occur in a vacuum; there are certain conditions and frameworks for inclusion. For example, everyone is expected to speak the working language of the organization. This is referred to as the 'terms of inclusion' or the conditions that must be fulfilled to be seen as belonging. Organizations find 'objective' benchmarks of inclusion that minorities fulfill; for example, measurable goals of inclusion such as ethnic quotas. This mainstream understanding of terms of inclusion means that majorities and minorities agree on what inclusion is and what it takes to be included. As such, minorities are generally positive about inclusion and mobilize their capacities (skills, competencies, ethnic identity) towards that end.

From a critical perspective, the question of achieving inclusion is somewhat different. Inclusion here involves the existence of inequality from the outset: inclusion itself constitutes an asymmetrical relation between majorities that include and minorities that are being included (Schinkel, 2018). This standpoint stresses that organizational efforts to include often do not live up to what they promise (Ortlieb et al., 2021; Thomas, 2018) and minorities may not be able to be included despite well-intentioned efforts (Dobusch et al., 2021; Priola et al., 2018). Therefore, from a critical perspective, it is argued that efforts to include are not sufficient to reverse exclusion since inequality is the norm (Zanoni et al., 2010). Despite organizations taking actions to be inclusive, the root cause of inequality such as economic disparity, racism, and genderism (Holvino, 2010), or the ultimate interest being profitability (Tyler & Vachhani, 2021; Zanoni, 2011), remains unaddressed. In this asymmetrical relation minorities occupy a position of subordination. From this perspective, regardless of the minorities' individual capacities, inclusion cannot be achieved.

Both mainstream and critical approaches lead to a common point: inclusion ultimately takes place under conditions laid out by a dominant group. To-be-included minorities need to fit with the conditions decided by a dominant group. This suggests that inclusion is characterized by *conditionality* where majorities include minorities under certain conditions or terms; for example, terms that classify minorities in certain work placements and identities (Ortlieb et al., 2021; Tyler, 2019; Zanoni & Janssens, 2007). This dissertation further examines how organizational and social norms maintain inclusion under certain conditions.

The asymmetry between 'includers' and the 'to-be-included' contradicts the aim of inclusive organizations to make minorities belong (Buse et al., 2016; Mor-Barak, 2015) with the participation of those being included (Ely & Thomas, 2001; Shore et al., 2011). Participation overlooks power asymmetry, as participation is understood in relation to organizational processes, such as decision-making in the organization or general 'inclusive practices' (Chaskin et al., 2012; Mor-Barak & Cherin, 1998). Inclusive organizations, by bringing minorities on board, expect to enable feelings of belongingness and higher valuation (Ferdman, 2017). However, the participation of minority groups *per se* is not likely to (re)define the conditions of inclusion.

This dissertation focuses on agency to analyze how minorities engage with the conditions in which organizations attempt to include them. Agency refers to the minorities' capacity to navigate and potentially change the conditions they find in organizations. As inclusive organizations are to an extent open spaces, this means the conditions of inclusion of minorities could in principle be agreed and complied with, but also resisted, contested, and re-negotiated (Gagnon & Collinson, 2017). Minorities, both as individuals and groups, can find ways to cope, resist and strategize within their subject power position in organizations (Hajro et al., 2018). For instance, agency is tangible when minority groups react to inequality at the racial, cultural or economic fronts by mobilizing against dominant discourses (Konyali, 2014; Lamont & Fleming, 2005; Yosso, 2005). Therefore, focusing on agency can help to better determine how minorities relate to the terms of their inclusion.

This dissertation builds on previous work using agency (Ghorashi & Ponzoni, 2013; Pio & Essers, 2014; Van Laer & Janssens, 2017; Zanoni & Janssens, 2007) to better understand the power-laden relations in inclusion processes. Taking a critical management studies (CMS) perspective, the thesis attempts to disentangle how the conditions laid out by inclusive

organizations operate. Therefore, this dissertation aims to answer the broad research question: *How may minorities engage with the terms of their inclusion?* To provide an answer, an ethnographic study is conducted of an inclusion program targeting migrant professionals experiencing employment precarity.

1.2 Agency and migrant professionals

Following a CMS perspective, inclusion involves a relationship where a minority group is in a relatively subordinate position compared to the dominant norm. Majorities and minorities voluntarily participate in organizational life, aware that correcting asymmetries is a desirable outcome. It could then be said that inclusion is a reciprocal process of mutual recognition (Tyler, 2019) that rests on cooperation in freedom. As in any interaction between social groups, this implies the existence of a space of action for the minority to be included (Sewell, 1992, Fuchs, 2007). As actors with agentic capacity, minorities are expected to act reflexively by continuously monitoring their own actions within social constraints (Giddens, 1986). For instance, minorities are able to reflect and act in a relatively autonomous way in order to include themselves and negotiate meaning (Lamont & Fleming, 2005; Zanoni & Janssens, 2007). Focusing on agency involves observing different possibilities of action (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998). Minorities may mobilize in strategic ways to adapt to new contexts (Berry, 1997), to cope with barriers (Hajro et al., 2018), and to disguise and resist power (Dahl, 2014; Ponzoni et al., 2017).

This study closely examines a group of migrants engaging with their surrounding conditions, and purposely focuses on migrant professionals which is one of the fastest-growing groups organizations attempt to include globally (Kerr et al., 2016). The term 'migrant professionals' is used to refer to highly skilled migrants while emphasizing their workplace inclusion in a professional context. The inclusion of migrant professionals is promoted in developed migrant-receiving countries and international organizations alike (Shachar, 2006; Zikic, 2015). At the same time, migrant professionals are targets of inclusion because they often experience unemployment, under-employment, or their skills simply go unrecognized (Nohl et al., 2014; OECD/European Union, 2015). While in need of inclusion, migrant professionals are a resourceful group with skills and competencies that put them in a relatively strong position compared to low-skilled minorities. They represent a group that may be perceived as being in no need of inclusion or being on the brink of full inclusion.

The inclusion of migrant professionals therefore provides an intriguing case to further study. Migrant professionals hold education and professional competencies equivalent to professionals in the host countries. Further, migrant professionals have the ability to navigate their way around structural obstacles (Al Ariss et al., 2012: 93) and potentially be promoted inside organizations (Legrand et al., 2018). These factors together put them in a good position to dispute the conditions by which they are included. Therefore, migrant professionals, as a minority group with leverage to negotiate, can help reveal how inclusive organizations impose limits on those who are 'almost there'. If migrant professionals constitute a relatively powerful minority, it may be expected that their demands pose a threat to organizational norms (Risberg & Romani, 2021). The demands of migrant professionals could therefore be assumed to substantially change the terms of inclusion.

1.3 A case of migrant professionals in an inclusion program

To answer the research question, this dissertation explores a group of migrant professionals and the efforts to include them by the case organization 'Servall'. Servall has a mission to include migrant professionals both within the organization and in the Swedish labor market. Servall is a particularly interesting organization as it lays the conditions for inclusion under the optimistic frame of being a 'win-win' – that is, a win for the organization and a win for migrant professionals.

Servall includes migrant professionals through an inclusion Program (hereinafter, 'Program') that offers 6-months, full-time, minimally compensated internships for migrant professionals (hereinafter, 'Settlers'). Between 2017 and 2019, I spent 18 months working collaboratively with managers and Settlers in different tasks connected to the Program. The tasks undertaken included formal tasks (such as providing support functions for the Program and promoting the Program) and informal activities (such as joining lunches and coffee breaks). I acted in the dual-role of colleague-researcher and the research goals of the dissertation were communicated from the start. During the study period, the managers carefully defined the Program mission and the Program's place within Servall's identity.

The empirical sources (in text and speech) were inductively generated, mainly by using a reflexive ethnographic immersion into the everyday life in Servall (Bourdieu, 2003) and in close collaboration with research participants. The approach was critical in that it framed the Settler's engagement with the terms of inclusion from a power-sensitive lens. The use of critical reflexivity

(Cunliffe, 2016) provided a unique angle to explore the possibilities of how migrant professionals subverted the terms of their inclusion (Madison, 2022).

The group of migrant professionals studied consisted of a heterogeneous group with regards to nationality, religion, language, and ethnicity. A common characteristic among them was the acquisition of a university education and work experience in their countries of origin, and arriving in Sweden within the 7 years prior to fieldwork commencing. Settlers moved to Sweden for different reasons, which often involved an abrupt change in their life plans. In most cases, migrating to Sweden was unplanned; they either followed a partner who found employment in Sweden or arrived with a refugee status. This meant arriving in a new high-income country without a social network, and relying on their diplomas and work experience gained in their countries of origin. As a result, migrant professionals had to navigate a new labor market and deal with a loss in status. Their first years in Sweden entailed hardships, often involving crucial decisions with respect to their personal lives and their professional future. All Settlers shared stories where despair and personal growth were common. More importantly, many shared their vision on how things could be better in both their professional and personal lives – and the organization.

The fieldwork captures the Settlers present and past experiences of precarity, as most face or faced working conditions in Sweden that were incommensurate with their education and professional experience – one being the 6-month internship offered by the Program.

1.4 A Bourdieu-inspired theoretical framework

This dissertation locates migrant professionals as reflexive agents within the context of inclusive organizations. The focus is on migrant professionals' engagement with the terms of their inclusion under asymmetric relations. A Bourdieusian approach is used as

Organizational inclusion is embedded into a broader logic of inequality affecting minorities (Leong, 2021; Tatlı et al., 2015). Bourdieu's lifelong project of bridging concepts such as agency and structure is harnessed to frame the inclusion of migrant professionals. A Bourdieusian-inspired theoretical framework is then used to consider agency into a broader space characterized by unequal social relations (Bourdieu, 1989), suited to this dissertation's CMS perspective. Bourdieu situates minorities and migrants' agentic possibilities as contained by oppressive conditions. In his later piece 'Pascalian meditations', he characterizes migrants as a dominated

group which were 'summoned to conform to "the universal" as soon as they mobilize to claim the rights to universality which they are in fact denied' (Bourdieu, 2000: 72). This nicely describes the 'agency contention' that migrant professionals may experience under inclusion processes.

To further examine agency struggles and sources of tension, Bourdieu is complemented with insights from French Pragmatic Sociology (FPS) (Boltanski, 2011; Boltanski & Thévenot, 1999) which allows me to focus on the 'critical capacity' of migrant professionals in everyday life situations (Boltanski, 2011: 43). In this way, some accusations of 'determinism' to Bourdieusian approaches (Burawoy, 2012, 2018; Celikates, 2012) are freed for the framework. The framework can then capture sources of tension, demands by migrant professionals, and how organizations respond to these demands. To do that, the Bourdieu-inspired framework articulates together the concepts of 'symbolic power', 'misrecognition', 'recognition', and 'restoration' (Boltanski, 2011; Bourdieu, 1979, 1980, 2000).

The framework helps to show that symbolic power operates by establishing and sustaining the terms of inclusion in Servall. The terms of inclusion are likely to be misrecognized, that is they are accepted to be legitimate. Sometimes, by focusing on everyday demands, the terms of inclusion can also be recognized; for example, they may be partially unveiled as asymmetrical, unequeal and arbitrarily imposed. The theoretical framework allows us to see how, when there is a demand that could threaten the terms of inclusion, there institution reacts – what is referred to as 'restoration'. Through restoration, attempts are made to re-establish symbolic power. This theoretical framework provides an alternative way to study, inclusion: inclusion is analyzed as a negotiation process of challenge- and-response (Zartman, 2008) by which migrant professionals make demands against institutions that protect asymmetry.

1.5 Four novel contributions to inclusion research

This dissertation makes four novel contributions to inclusion research.

The first contribution re-directs the scholarly discussion on inclusion towards conditionality. It argues for a new perspective in researching inclusion, keeping the terms of inclusion as central. From this perspective it challenges both the mainstream and critical streams of inclusion research. To the first, it contends the emphasis on organizational practices may reproduce inclusion under unequal conditions instead of creating inclusive environments (Mor-Barak, 2015; Shore et al., 2011). To the latter (Dobusch, 2017; Dobusch et al., 2021; Priola et al., 2018), it

proposes a focus on conditionality as an alternative perspective to the prevalent use of the inclusion-exclusion boundary work.

The second contribution shows how inclusion is a negotiated process. Rather than experiencing exclusion because of their identities (Burchiellaro, 2021a, 2021b; Priola et al. 2014, 2018), minorities actively engage with the hegemonic norms in organizations and open the possibility of questioning them. Negotiations expose the terms of inclusion as being constantly on the brink of being recognized as arbitrarily imposed. In this fragile context (Rennstam & Sullivan, 2018), the dissertation shows how negotiations require institutional responses that restore the status quo. Focusing on negotiations relocates the inclusion-exclusion framework and highlights processes of dispute and closure in organizations.

The third contribution re-signifies minority agency by highlighting the capacity of migrant professionals to question power in organizations. It discusses the current view on inclusion that downplays the capacity of minorities to engage with the core of power within organizations (Boogaard & Roggeband, 2010; Van Laer & Janssens, 2017; Zanoni & Janssens, 2007). It contributes to advancing the possibility that minorities can fully resist beyond adaptation or micro-resistance (Contu, 2008), and considers the prospect of collective resistance to the terms of inclusion.

The fourth contribution argues that the optimistic discourses backing organizational practices can have consequences for inclusion (Gill, 2014; Swan, 2010). Based on the role of optimistic discourses building the terms of inclusion in this dissertation, optimism is an identified (Ortlieb et al., 2021; Tyler, 2019) but unexplored dimension in inclusion research (Prasad & Mills, 1997). The importance of optimism in shaping agency is exposed and suggested as a dimension to be taken seriously.

1.6 Research aim and dissertation structure

This dissertation contributes to the inclusion and diversity literature by providing a new perspective on how minorities engage with the conditional terms of their inclusion. I focus on migrant professionals as a particularly agentic minority group, who have the potential to interrogate inclusion as constructed by majorities. Therefore, the research aim is twofold*: (1) to determine the agentic capacity of migrant professionals and (2) to determine the negotiation capacity of migrant professionals* in organizations. This is done by showing negotiable conditions in the inclusion of a

minority group. By fulfilling its research aim, this dissertation contributes in advancing knowledge on inclusion within a social justice agenda.

The dissertation is divided in nine chapters.

Following this introduction, Chapter 2 presents an overview of how minority agency has been addressed in inclusion and diversity research. It explores the power capacity attributed to minority agency by classifying it into three types – participative, dis-empowered, and micro-resistant. Finally, the chapter justifies why migrant professionals are a suitable group to study due to their potential agentic capacity to negotiate power.

Chapter 3 presents the theoretical framework. The theoretical framework draws insights from sociology of domination (Primarily Bourdieu and Boltanski) to provide a lens from which to analyze inclusion processes. The concepts of 'symbolic power', 'misrecognition' (Bourdieu, 1985; 1991), and 'restoration' (inspired by French Pragmatic Sociology; see Boltanski, 2011; Boltanski & Thévenot, 1999, 2000) are both articulated. The theoretical framework is designed to capture interaction dynamics while keeping an agency-centred approach. The chapter delineates expectations for analyzing the possibilities and limits of migrant professionals.

Chapter 4 explains the methodological approach, research techniques and structure of the empirical analysis. The empirical material draws on 51 interviews with migrant professional workers. This includes Settlers (n=30), Servall managers engaged with the Program (n=19), and other Servall employees (n=2). Empirical material also includes field notes and Servall corporate documents (intranet, workshop, and promotional material). This chapter explains how the empirical material was generated by: (a) using conversations with managers and corporate documents to determine the conditions of inclusion established by Servall; and (b) investigating migrant professionals' mobilization against those conditions of inclusion. This chapter also presents the logic and the structure of the analysis (Gioia et al., 2013). It concludes by describing personal field reflections around the author's own positionality and the emergence of key concepts of the study.

Chapters 5 and 6 comprise the empirical part of the dissertation. Chapter 5 shows how the conditions, under which Settlers should become included, are constructed. This chapter is an analysis of the organizational setting and how Servall managers use power to build and give a sense of purpose to the Program. This chapter foregrounds the second part of the empirical

analysis where migrant professional agency is explored. Chapter 6 focuses on the agency of Settlers. By using three ideal types of agency identified in Chapter 2, it shows the different ways in which migrant professionals mobilize agency to relate to the terms of inclusion. This chapter depicts ways in which migrant professionals both embrace and question aspects of the Program and Servall.

Chapter 7 analyzes the engagement of Managers and Settlers over the terms of inclusion. It brings together the two empirical chapters (Chapters 5 and 6) and uses the theoretical framing of symbolic power, recognition, and restoration to articulate the limits and possibilities of migrant professionals to modify the terms of their inclusion. The analysis allows us to see how arbitrary terms of inclusion can be both recognized and misrecognized, and how this leads to different forms of engagement. The chapter responds to the research question directly.

Chapter 8 presents the four contributions to inclusion research in detail. First, inclusion is first and foremost about the conditions of inclusion and proposes specific terms of inclusion as a common ground for the theoretical and empirical understanding of inclusion. Second, minorities can dispute the conditions imposed on them: they can make demands and can renegotiate meaning and material constraints. Third, minorities are more empowered under inclusion processes than was previously assumed. Minorities can at any time dispute power in the open and temporarily suspend this domination by the majority. Fourth, optimistic discourses have a role in framing inclusion. Optimistic discourses constitute power and therefore shape minority agency in organizations.

Chapter 9 concludes by summarizing the key research findings in relation to the research question and research aims. It explains the limitations, practical implications and future research opportunities.

2 An agency-centered perspective of inclusion: Exploring migrant professionals

This chapter positions the study in the literature on organizational inclusion and diversity and unpacks the ways in which minority agency has been depicted. The guiding research question is: *how have minority possibilities to question the terms of inclusion been understood?* The review shows how this possibility to question the terms of inclusion has been studied in different ways, as a participative minority (Section 2.3), a dis-empowered minority (Section 2.4), and a micro-resistant minority (Section 2.5). Each of these three ways of understanding minority agency are discussed (Section 2.6). As to the current understanding of agency, migrant professionals are considered to be a particularly relevant minority group (Sections 2.7 and 2.8), providing a strong case for studying migrant professionals. The inclusion of migrant professionals offers an intriguing case on the limits and possibilities of minorities as they engage with the conditions of their inclusion. The chapter ends by identifying the need for a theoretical approach suited to studying the constrained agency of migrant professionals.

2.1 Organizational inclusion as a site for engaging with conditionality

The inclusion of minorities is a commonly discussed topic in areas such as business ethics and human resource management. It has increasingly been acknowledged that organizations need to be more inclusive and do more inclusion work. Inclusion and diversity are today often an integral part of organizations' Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Environmental and Social Governance; the implementation of inclusion and diversity policies and practices has been in growing demand both in Europe and North America since the 1960s (Dobbin et al., 2011). Examples of the cross-cutting nature of inclusion is its insertion into the higher education curricula, the growth of consultants and firms, and the increasing presence of diversity specialists in organizations (Adamson et al., 2021). Therefore, inclusion seems to be moving from a 'soft' area of organizations into becoming central to organizational life.

Inclusion can be seen in two ways: as an organizational ideal, and as an organizational practice (Tyler, 2019). As an ideal, inclusion is a desire to integrate organizational members to feel part of a totality. This ideal aspires to levelling the field for all players so that an 'inclusive organization' can be accomplished (Podsiadlowski, 2014). This ideal strives for minorities to participate in organizational life on an equal basis with others (i.e. the majority). As an

organizational practice, inclusion reflects a series of coordinated actions to achieve the ideal to include everyone. The practice of inclusion is an organizational effort closely connected to organizational members participation (see Goodin, 1996: 351-353; also Mor-Barak, 2015: 85), meaning that inclusion can be studied empirically as concrete initiatives, interventions, and programs in organizations.

The concept of inclusion is strongly connected to diversity – yet some believe these concepts are not equivalent. While diversity emphasizes demographic composition (Roberson, 2006) and is therefore stagnant, inclusion is construed as a dynamic process (Evans, 2006) where organizations strive to create an environment where everyone – not only minorities – are recognized and feel like they are insiders (Pelled et al., 1999; Janssens & Zanoni, 2008). Yet being inclusive is tainted by power relations (Özbilgin, 2009); inclusion takes place at the interaction between majorities (includers) and minorities (to be included). At this interaction, majorities include minorities under forms of *conditionality* (Ortlieb et al., 2021); for example, under terms that locate minorities in certain work classifications and identities (Tyler, 2019; Zanoni & Janssens, 2007). Inclusion is therefore laid out under the norms, expectations and discourses often sustained by majority groups.

Conditionality is a form of power that pervades social relations and directs these relations into particular courses of action. The ways in which conditionality often manifests is within social norms that may not be obvious. It could operate as identity norms that invite some aspects of the individual self while excluding others (Burchiellaro, 2021a; Tyler, 2019). It could also manifest beyond identity, as a semi-dependence on the provision of material resources by a more powerful group (Gould, 2003). Conditionality operates as a blueprint for behavior, and set limits within which minorities may seek ways to achieve their goals (Broom & Selznic, 1964). Therefore, conditionality means that inclusion is asymmetrical.

This asymmetrical character of inclusion represents a relevant problem. While there has been an extensive discussion on the need to include others, the conditions under which inclusion takes place have rarely been explored in detail. As inclusion entails engaging with conditions, this dissertation seeks to better understand how this interaction take place. As minorities rely on their individual capacities to engage with conditions, an agentic lens is necessary. This allows us to observe engagements with conditionality from the minority perspective. The following section introduces what is meant by agency and the agentic possibilities of minorities.

2.2 Agency and the agentic possibilities of minorities

Agency is broadly defined as the capacity for an agent to act based on choices, aspirations, and needs (Safouane et al., 2020). Agency refers to the ability to 'make things happen' given constraints and opportunities. Yet, agency requires the compass of structure: the material, social, and personal inheritances from the past that both enable and set the limits to what can be done by people in the present (Giddens, 1986). By focusing on minority agency, it could be seen how the structures of agency are 'worked upon' by minority actors who then draw from them, and who then either reproduce the structures or change them through the very process of acting (Stones, 2007: 4868). Minorities can mobilize agency at different degrees, and use reflexive capacities to question their surroundings in the context of inclusive organizations (Dahl, 2014 ; Ghorashi & Ponzoni, 2013; Zanoni & Janssens, 2007), professional contexts (Lamont & Fleming, 2005), and society at large (Lamont & Bail, 2008; Yosso, 2005). It is therefore worth reviewing how minorities can mobilize agency within the boundaries of an inclusive organization.

Minorities are embedded in unequal structures they need to navigate (Acker, 2006). That is often the reason why organizations 'need to actively include' in the first place. When organizations are inclusive, this involves defining those to-be-included and a rationale for constructing groups as 'in need of inclusion'; this often results in a deficit approach (Essed, 2002; Ponzoni et al., 2017) or by showing groups in need of inclusion in a positive light (Ortlieb et al., 2021). This invites the reconsideration of how groups are included against the backdrop of the organizational context. Inclusive organizations are aware of forms of structural discrimination they need to address, while at the same time unintentionally reproducing forms of discrimination; for example, by encouraging identity frameworks that essentialize ethnic minorities (Boogaard & Roggeband, 2010; Ortlieb et al., 2021). Therefore, it is intriguing how minorities act under inclusion conditions that may be conflicting.

The review of the extant literature puts the spotlight on minority engagement. The focus here assumes minorities are conscious and aware of the world, of themselves, and other actors (Fuchs, 2007), and have the capacity to act despite structural limitations. Agency also involves the ability to question, negotiate and potentially modify the framework of inclusion. Minority agency then implies the potential to have some control over the social relations in which minorities are enmeshed with majorities, and the ability to transform these social relations to some degree (Sewell, 1992). For instance, this could be done by minorities constructing identities of

themselves as different to the organizational norm (Ghorashi & Ponzoni, 2013). Therefore, focusing on minorities multiple possibilities of engagement offers many ways to relate to the conditions of inclusion.

There may then be a mystery as to why minorities mobilize agency – especially to question power – in inclusive organizations which should provide a supportive context. Inclusive organizations can be springboards for minorities to participate on equal terms (Bernstein et al., 2020); however, organizations, to appear inclusive, also need to keep minorities as the 'others' to-be-included (Dobusch, 2017). This represents different organizational scenarios to which minorities may react. This chapter tries to summarize the existing streams of the literature dealing with the interaction between minority engagement with conditions of inclusion, in the empirical context of organizations that are purposely inclusive.

Three streams of research around minority agency are presented. These streams critically discuss the ways in which minorities have been looked at by inclusion scholars. The review evaluates the baseline assumptions of the literature on the role of minority groups. The first stream, the 'participative minority', emphasizes that organizations strive to set the right environment for inclusion, to which minorities are expected to adapt (Section 2.3). The second stream, the 'dis-empowered minority', suggests that minority identities become excluded and their opportunities to be themselves experiences constraints (Section 2.4). The third stream, the 'micro-resistant minority', locates minority at the level of micro-politics and, therefore, minorities are unable to change the organizational status quo (Section 2.5).

2.3 The participative minority

2.3.1 Calibrating inclusion and inclusive practices

This stream of the literature has tried to understand the organizational conditions that best promote inclusion and how that possibility is enacted or limited. Inclusion is achievable and measurable through the design of inclusive organizational environments; i.e., by establishing inclusive organizational practices (Nishii, 2013; Bernstein et al., 2020). These practices are geared towards increasing the participation of minority groups and, foremost, individuals (Ely and Thomas, 1001; Roberson, 2006). Removing barriers to participation enables a full contribution (Miller, 1998).

This stream is based on a performance-oriented understanding of inclusion that uses inclusion as a competitive advantage. In the words of Mor-Barak (2015: 155), the concept of inclusion refers to the individual's sense of being part of the organization in both the formal processes, such as being able to access information and decision-making channels, and the informal processes, such as having lunch with colleagues. To achieve this, organizations need to foster a sense of belonging while respecting individual differences (Ferdman, 2014; Shore et al., 2011). Policies and good practices should be geared towards the creation of individual feelings of inclusion within the group. Such conditions ensure the participation of minorities as equals with majorities.

Given that minorities lack the right external enablers to inclusion, organizations need to put together frameworks that prevent exclusion. The main concern is how to change the organizational context to foster inclusive behavior such that everyone feels like an insider regardless of their differences (Bilimoria et al., 2008; Ferdman, 2014; Pless & Maak, 2004; Roberson, 2006). This involves setting up and implementing inclusive organizational practices. Organizations are looking to find the ideal contextual conditions that can reap the benefits of diversity (Shore et al., 2018). Inclusion is enabled by adapting the organizational context that reflects the reality of diverse backgrounds. This results in an increasing participation of minorities creating a 'win-win' scenario.

Inclusion can be encouraged through critical and reflexive mechanisms at the organizational and team levels. From an organizational level, managers can build frameworks for reflecting and learning in order to accommodate different perspectives (Ely & Thomas, 2001). An inclusive organization allows for the integration of different and multiple voices into the organizational discourse (Pless & Maak, 2004: 143). From a team-level perspective, Bernstein et al. (2019) suggest the implementation of 'generative interactions' to challenge the taken-for-granted assumptions about other individuals, generating alternative social actions that include minorities. Inclusion is primarily something done by organizations and which minority members follow.

Organizations appear as places where inclusion could be almost designed regardless of its members, leading them to search for the right 'inclusion framework' (Shore et al., 2011). Ferdman (2017) differentiates between inclusion processes taking place in organizations and those taking place in society. Inclusion appears as a top-down initiative inside organizations to ensure that everyone has similar access to participate and opportunities to advance, and that rules

apply equally to everyone. In this way, discrimination is expected to be addressed. Yet, separating and de-emphasizing the influence of broader society is troublesome. The agency of minorities in organizations is hardly detachable from societal structures. For instance, in the way national discourses affect religious and ethnic minorities which limits them but also gives meaning to their actions (Essers & Benschop, 2007, Van Laer & Janssens, 2011). Unlike the predominance of the organizational perspective, minority agency cannot be defined under strict organizational boundaries.

The assumption is that once organizations set the right conditions, minority individuals can be included. An inclusive organization can therefore be configured in logical steps. Often these steps start with the identification of exclusionary practices, the creation of spaces of interaction and reflection, and the creation of a (new) scenario conducive to inclusive practices (Bernstein et al., 2020; Ely & Thomas, 2001; Pless and Maak, 2004). Inclusion is a natural result of a reflective interaction of majorities and minorities. From the view of the organization, it is assumed that inclusion is mainly about participation under equal conditions.

2.3.2 Participating in the inclusive organization

Full participation is both an act of fairness (Ferdman, 2017; Pless & Maak, 2004) and advantageous for organizations (Winters, 2014). The assumption of participating is that through full participation, minorities can make a difference in collusion with the organizational order (Berry, 1997). Inclusion can be expected in the form of accommodation to an enabling organizational environment. This stream understands the inclusion rationale as enabling minorities to participate in different areas of organizational life, such as decision-making processes. In doing so, minorities are construed as prone to participate and readily disposed to follow a linear path towards inclusion.

Minorities are depicted then as *willing to participate* in all aspects of organizational life. The assumption of this stream is that minorities can readily mobilize power and resources inside organizations. This stream therefore assumes the scope of minority possibilities to be far-reaching in an attempt to reach full participation. Therefore, minority agency is represented as *participative*.

Minority groups participation is contingent upon the capabilities of individuals (Janssens and Steyaert, 2020). To a great extent, minority individuals are expected to seek to be included

without any intervention. Organizational practices that foster motivation and incentive structures play a key role here in whether individuals actively seek to be included. Yet, while minorities appear willing to participate, their organizational context is often understood to be exclusionary (Bernstein et al., 2020). Inclusive organizations have the moral commitment to counter these exclusionary dynamics (Pless & Mak, 2004) by letting minorities practice their uniqueness (Shore et al., 2011). Full participation is therefore the consecration of a minority's individual identities and should lead to inclusion.

This stream rarely explores how (good) organizational practices can clash with the complex and conflicted experiences of everyday inclusion of ethnic minorities. Janssens and Zanoni (2008) drawing on but departing from this stream, claim further contextualization is required in the majority-minority relations. In particular, minority inclusion is framed under majority norms even when organizations commit to be inclusive. The participative stream neglects that beyond individual agency, there are both organizational (Zikic et al. 2010) and the extra-organizational barriers that shape participation. These barriers operate at the societal and 'deep structural' levels and, therefore, are not likely to disappear with inclusive organizational practices. As it will be shown in the next stream, when inclusion is put into practice, new unpredicted forms of exclusion emerge.

2.4 The dis-empowered minority

2.4.1 When inclusive organizations exclude minority identities

This stream of the literature considers the ethical and political character of inclusion (Ahonen & Tienari, 2015) and places the intrinsic value of minorities as its main concern. This stream dives deeply into the structural power dynamics that prevent full inclusion. The assumption is that while inclusive practices may appear neutral and non-exclusionary, they operate to exclude minorities (Nkomo, 2014). Such experiences disproportionally affect minority groups by their social identities including ethnicity, class, gender, and dis/ability. These minority *identity* dimensions are part of organizational life and take central importance for inclusion.

This stream grounds the understanding of inclusion and exclusion as two sides of the same coin (Bendl et al., 2022; Dobusch, 2014; Goodin, 1996; Ponzoni et al., 2017; Ortlieb & Sieben, 2014). When organizations are inclusive, this involves identifying some minority identities intelligible to be included (intelligible) while other minority identities remain excluded (non-intelligible)

(Dobusch, 2020: 391; See also: Priola et al., 2018). Inclusion-exclusion dynamics emerge at different organizational and societal levels: organizational practices (Priola et al., 2018; Tyler & Vachhani, 2020), inter-ethnic relations (Dobusch et al., 2021), and in inclusion discourses themselves (Dobusch, 2020). Inclusion turns into exclusion because it is impossible to match organizational efforts to include with the identity subjectivities of those to be included.

These works explore how dominant discourses construct the identities of minority groups, and how these constructions frame everyday practices. When organizations try to include minorities, inclusion efforts bring along norms that are conducive to identity exclusion (Ahonen & Tienari 2015; Bendl et al., 2009; Burchiellaro, 2021b; Priola et al., 2018; Tyler, 2021). For instance, an example is found in a study where inclusion is dominated by mimicry (Bhabha, 1994). Dobusch et al. (2021) show how mimicry fixes inclusion efforts into a colonizer-colonized binary narrative. Minorities mimic the majorities; minorities perceive majorities to be professional and aspire to the idea of becoming professional themselves. This leads to minorities' feeling ambivalent as it seems impossible to mimic the majorities professionalism exactly (2021: 317). Minorities therefore do not feel included as themselves because a 'normalization of behavior' closes spaces of dissent (2021: 325). The assumption is that minorities are trapped in a deeply colonized psyche which favors the majority. Even if inclusion is promoted, institutionalized asymmetrical power relations secure the exclusion of the minority's identity.

In an organization aiming to include refugees, Ponzoni et al. (2017) identify that despite refugees showing positive attitudes, their identities are constructed as 'lacking' (Essed, 2002). The idea of lacking derives from the dominant national culture being seeing as the norm which leads to refugees themselves accepting this idea. Ponzoni et al. (2017) show that while refugees are aware of what they lack, they display extreme gratitude and adaptability. Refugee employees feed into this narrative of lacking as they strive to show how hardworking, reliable and serious they are (2017: 229). However, refugees normalizing the discourse of 'lacking' involves accepting their exclusion. For Ponzoni et al. (2017) exclusion is the result of limited reflection by both majorities (that try to include) and minorities (that try to be included) in relation to the discourse of lacking. While Ponzoni et al. (2017) acknowledge that while refugees have maneuvering capacities, their capacity to question their attributed identity of 'lacking' is limited.

Exclusion also results from the unspoken norms of social classes such as in elite professional circles (Ashley, 2010; Ashley & Epson, 2013 and 2017). General inclusion initiatives turn into

exclusion by excluding those considered 'visually and audibly' working class (Ashley, 2010: 723). Even when a necessity to include is turned into an organizational effort, this coexists with the need to maintain the legitimacy of elite professional groups, enabling their organizational members to filter out non-elite candidates. This results in the marginalization of working-class identities, such as when working class individuals need to display corporate culture to be seen as competent players (Giazitzoglu & Muzio, 2021). Professionals must then play by the rules of the upper-class backlash against the organizational norms and this additional norm of class exclusivity (Ashley, 2010), to the extent that lower-class individuals re-assess their own class identity and judge themselves as class imposters (Goffman, 1956). This is conducive to feelings of class disaffiliation and class exclusion.

An analysis of the normativity implicit in organizations shows how inclusion discourses contain exclusionary elements. Identity constructs created by the dominating social groups are not accommodating enough. Some groups remain 'out of sight' in organizational life, such as people with a disability and people diagnosed with autism (Dobusch et al., 2020; Jammaers et al., 2016). Inclusive practices create categories in which minorities need to fit or otherwise risk of exclusion. Priola et al. (2014, 2018) explore how heteronormative discourses restrict some minority identities and not others. This obeys to socio-historical norms operating in the background of organizational efforts to include, that ultimately define the condition for exclusion and inclusion. Resonating with the historical conditions of a Western European country, LGBTQ+ identities are included in organizations following a modern liberal ethos so far excluded from the public sphere. Organizational discourses therefore establish the conditionality of inclusion and exclusion. However, despite agentic capacity, some minority identities remain out of sight and therefore they remain excluded.

In a similar way, organizational practices are also able to establish right and wrong identities. Ortlieb et al. (2021) show how practices linked to organizational efforts to include have strong normative effects. Opposing the existent national discourses, refugees strive to construct themselves as hard-working and good citizens. Yet, organizational controls construe them as 'good', 'glorious' and 'grateful' signaling categories in which they are expected to fit. Such categories serve to make minority groups intelligible to dominant groups (Butler, 2005); that is, to fit in while reducing the scope for expressing their identities. Inclusion comes then with

'strings attached', where fitting in is a pre-condition for inclusion (Ortlieb et al., 2021). Inclusion involves assimilation and often harming the self-identity of minority groups.

The conditionality of inclusion is also mediated by profitability. This signals that the inclusion of some minority identities are mediated by a market ethos; for example, when difference is created and appropriated by organizations for business goals (Tyler, 2019) revealed in practices of 'over inclusion' (coined by: Tyler & Vachhani, 2021). Over inclusion happens when some elements of a group identity are commodified while others are detached. Based on two episodes where the same organization was exposed to difference, Tyler and Vachhani (2021) show how the responses were different. Overinclusion was shown when the organization 'celebrates' difference, profiting from selling diversity; in another episode, a minority member is considered not suitable and excluded. Overinclusion complements exclusion as a negative mechanism that commodifies inclusion by marketizing identities.

This stream suggests that although inclusion may be implemented, it is not possible to bridge the inseparability of inclusion and exclusion. Including a targeted minority (to attempt recognition) (Ortlieb et al., 2021; Ortlieb & Sieben, 2014) leads to the exclusion of unrecognized minority identities (Priola et al., 2018; Tyler & Vachhani, 2021). Organizations appear to tailor the identity of minorities depending on the prerogatives of the majorities.

2.4.2 Agency limited by identity norms

In the interplay of majority-minority, the agentic possibilities of minorities become limited by hegemonic norms. The minority space of maneuvering is to a great degree reliant on the the 'available identity templates' (Ortlieb et al., 2021: 282). This results in minorities following a path dictated by normative identities in order to fit in. As minorities are conditioned to fit into certain identity molds, inclusion or full acceptance under 'equal' terms is impossible. This stream suggests there is little space for minorities to explore individually driven alternatives to hegemonic norms. For instance, those that do not necessarily involve one's own identity but question widespread ethnic or gender stereotypes. Due to the strength of such norms, minorities are not able to escape these identity molds and not are able to challenge them.

In trying to understand the impossibility of inclusion, this stream assumes minority individuals to be mainly receivers of normative power effects. Moreover, the possibility of minority to react to identity compartmentalizing is policed by hegemonic normativity. This supposes that

minorities attempt to 'come as they are' but normative hierarchies deny that possibility. Therefore, when inclusion is pursued, the capacity of the minority to react to power is limited – minorities are therefore depicted as *dis-empowered.*

In this stream, minorities appear to have limited capacity to react as power resides mainly in the norms that construct the minorities' identity. In turn, the hegemonic identity norms are hardly negotiable and obliterate the minority identity expression. Agency is therefore limited as it is impossible for the minority to express themselves.

2.5 The micro-resistant minority

Until now, the question that follows the main views on minority agency is whether minorities can negotiate normative constraints or not. This stream of the literature specifically explores the agency of minorities, putting the actor and their capacity to change at the center; for example, by showing how minority individuals can resist and negotiate power (Gagnon & Collinson, 2017; Pio & Essers, 2014). This stream suggests that minorities can react to organizational and identity norms. Focusing on agency can help understand how minorities can cope and strategize around the identities they are attributed (Lamont & Fleming, 2005). This section underscores the capacity of minorities to oppose power.

2.5.1 Resisting identity constructions while complying with power

This stream focuses on the reactions of minority groups to the asymmetrical power relations involved in inclusion. Unlike the previous literature streams, inclusion efforts do not lead to exclusion; they generate forms of resistance while complying with power. This stream puts the agency of minorities in the forefront as participants in organizational inclusion processes. Minority individuals are featured as reflexive agents, to a certain extent able to critically assess inclusion discourses; for example, when organizations attempt to construct their identities as 'negative' or 'positive' (Ghorashi & Ponzoni, 2013; Jammaers et al., 2016). Drawing on Zanoni and Janssens (2007) definition of agency-as-resistance, I portray the different forms of resistance associated to minority individuals.

This stream portrays resistance exerted at the micro-level – in the meanings, identities and subjectivities in everyday practices (Dick, 2015; Thomas & Davies, 2005). Resistance is micro-resistant (Zanoni & Janssens, 2007), which typically remains low-profile and avoids any open declaration of intentions (Scott, 1990; Ybema & Horvers, 2017). This involves minorities

performing alternative practices to official ones, and evident in small disagreements 'backstage' (Goffman, 1956). These episodes show how minority resistance can, at varying degrees, engage critically with discourses that aim at constructing their identities in different forms. Micro-resistance appears as a response to societal barriers (Al Ariss & Özbilgin, 2010) such as professional subordination (Boogaard & Roggeband, 2010; Dahl, 2014) and societal stereotypes affecting minorities (Essed, 2002; Van Laer & Janssens, 2017). Practices of micro-resistance coexist with the organizational status quo, creating a dialectical relationship between resistance and compliance (Ybema & Horvers, 2017; Zanoni & Janssens, 2007) where individuals resist but also comply.

Several forms of micro-resistance emerge in organizational efforts to include minorities. Dahl (2014) studies how low-skilled ethnic minority employees react to the way managers construct them by using social attributes that are 'made up' for them. 'Made up' refers to ethnic majority managers use of power to define ethnic minorities employees as if they were 'made' for menial labor (Adamson, 2015), particularly certain physically-intensive tasks. Minority employees often identify with those categories attributed to them (Hacking, 1986; see also: Ashcraft, 2013) helping co-constitute power imbalances. However, Dahl (2014) shows how some ethnic minority employees reject such categorizations. In an illustrative example, in a parking patrol, she describes how minority employees want to avoid the category of 'repeater'. To the extent that one ethnic minority employee with a poor command of the majority language, did not report the assaults she suffered in order to avoid being considered a 'repeater'; that is, in order not to be associated with a poor command of the local language (the alleged reason for some assaults). Paradoxically, resistance to repel negative categorizations reinforces compliance with power.

In a different twist, Boogaard and Roggeband's (2010) study of the Dutch police force shows more paradoxical effects of micro-resistance. Boogaard and Roggeband (2010) show that minority' employees in high status positions resist societal prejudices by mobilizing their professional identity as a positive identity. For example, by affirming a superior position against others, such as those in lower administrative positions. Those areas considered inferior are overrepresented by ethnic minorities and affected by deficits in language fluency (which disproportionately affect ethnic groups, including their own). Therefore, attempts to resist inadvertently reproduces the same discourses and hierarchies that perpetuate their own marginalization (Boogaard & Roggeband, 2010). For Boogaard and Roggeband (2010), the fact

that the Dutch police force is an ethnically and gender hierarchized organization creates a self-reinforcing logic. The logic of minorities to comply with a positive identity to empower themselves; however, this comes at the cost of discriminating against other minority individuals.

2.5.2 Micro-resistance as strategic compliance

Other scholars provide a more detailed analysis of how 'micro-resistance' takes the form of a strategic disguise. Minority individuals are capable of reacting to negative stereotypes by building 'positive identities' to be seen as desirable workers. To that extent, resistance can potentially release minorities from unfavorable terms of inclusion. Zanoni & Janssens (2007) show how minority individuals engaging with organizational controls attain different degrees of micro-emancipation. Their study first exposes how resistance and compliance are intimately interrelated. Departing from earlier studies, ethnic minority individuals are portrayed as able to resist attempts to align their identities with organizational objectives (Zanoni & Janssens, 2007; See: Alvesson & Willmott, 2002). Zanoni & Janssens (2007) show the degrees to which minority individuals can question discursive (how minority identities are constructed) and material (e.g. working schedules) controls. In an illustrative example of resistance, one minority employee called Ahmed resists the stereotype of the minority group he belongs to by constructing himself as a de-ethnicized 'responsible empowered professional' (Zanoni & Janssens, 2007: 1382). Ahmed manages to 'micro-emancipate' by offering loyalty to the organization in exchange for permission to modify working shifts to practice his religion (I will return to Ahmed's story at a later point). The focus on resistance shows a trade-off between complying with the organizational logic of profit in exchange for a space of cultural autonomy. Resistance and compliance are tightly connected following the negotiation power of the individual. Resistance disputes both the official discourse (from a micro level) that constructs ethnic minorities identities (only) as professionals but also advances minority members ethnic identities.

Resistance-compliance shows minorities' strategic compliance. By pursuing individual goals, minorities do not work against other minority individuals – as in Boogaard and Roggeband (2010) – but as *individuals* they can escape management control. Strategic compliance is shown, such as when minorities appropriate dominant discourses only if it helps them build positive identities (Zanoni & Janssens, 2007: 1394). For instance, in Zanoni and Janssens (2007), an ethnic minority woman appropriates the appreciation of the 'Moroccan sense of motherhood' to build a positive identity as a midwife, satisfying both her workplace and ethnic community.

This appropriation also led to increasing her decision-making-making power in the diversity policy of the organization (2007: 1389). Micro-emancipation is defined as an individual project and rests in the capacity of minority individuals to find their own spaces to free themselves from repressive social and ideological conditions (Alvesson & Willmott, 1992: 432). This suggests a view that minorities do not necessarily want to be included but find ways to include themselves on their own terms.

Resistance-compliance can be seen as an individual's struggle (Fleming & Spicer, 2008). Struggle stresses the interplay between resistance and compliance in everyday experiences and actions (Van Laer & Janssens, 2017: 198). This interplay is dynamic and often contradictory, involving feelings of ambivalence among minority individuals. Minority individuals experience contradictions that lead them to challenge and reproduce unequal power relations. Building on those contradictory feelings, minorities 'reject and redefine' dominant stereotypes. Van Laer and Janssens (2017) show how individuals from ethnic minorities display strategies that apparently lead to inclusion; for example, by showing how Muslim minority professionals are aware of and reject stereotypes such as media representations and fixed ideas about cultural practices. These rejections force individuals from ethnic minorities to redefine their identities away from these societal stereotypes. However, individuals often come to the frustrating realization that is impossible to change the majority's stereotypes. Compliance arises therefore from the experience of not being able to solve these contradictions which then in turn lead to the social reproduction of stereotypes.

Van Laer and Janssens (2017) show how resistance involves individuals' reimagining the social order ('rejection') and struggling to change it ('redefinition'). Yet, resistance surrenders to compliance and ends up in generalized feelings of exclusion ('adoption'); for example, when ethnic minority professionals learn the effects of highlighting some identity features could have on ethnic majority opinions. This is illustrated in the purposive emphasis on secularism by Muslim individuals, knowing that doing so will result in 'a broad smile' (Van Laer & Janssens, 2017: 210). Minority individuals are aware of the negative social categories associated with them and from which they are not able to escape (Dick, 2015). Minorities are therefore aware of the impossibility of equal inclusion, which leads to compliance and a search to fulfill individual aspirations.

Minority individuals comply as they see neither further possibilities to develop positive identities nor changes to the terms of inclusion, or both (Zanoni & Janssens, 2007; Van Laer & Janssens, 2017). Compliance then relies very much on the individual and strategic advancement in relation to available opportunities. For instance, when minorities make conscious choices to re-appropriate but eventually conform with the identities majorities attribute to them; professional identity in Ahmed's story (Zanoni & Janssens, 2007), or ethnic/religious identity for Muslim minority professionals (Boogaard & Roggeband, 2010; Van Laer & Janssens, 2017). Compliance appears when the individual realizes the (im)possibility to question inclusion, accepting things as they are. Therefore, minorities devise strategies for individual advancement conscious of their subordinated subject position.

Contrary to the idea of minorities being passive, this stream shows how minorities mobilize at a low scale. Yet, the idea of agency-as-resistant – or micro-resistant – could be characterized in individual, scattered and disorganized forms of reacting to power that nonetheless do not question hegemonic power (Contu, 2008). Minorities are able to mobilize against opposing conditions in their most immediate surroundings. Despite the existence of awareness and resistance, scaling up discontent and modifying hegemonic power remains a possibility that is not realized. Agency is situated in the realm of micro-politics and, therefore, unable to speak up to power.

2.6 Summarizing the agentic possibilities of minorities

This chapter is guided by the question – how have minority agency possibilities to question the terms of inclusion been understood? The review of the literature offers three interpretations of minority agency. Each of the three streams differs in the extent to which minorities have control over their most immediate context and how much they are (potentially) able to transform this context. In this section, the limitations of each stream are exposed, and a further study of minority agentic possibilities is proposed.

2.6.1 Agency as participation

The main concern in this stream of literature is the discussion around what are the best ways to create inclusive environments. The capacity of the minority to question its surrounding environment is not a main concern. In inclusive environments, minority agency participation in

organizational life is the main goal. The assumption is that minority individuals have enough motivation and resources to attempt to fully participate; individuals attempt to disclose their authentic selves or be part of decision-making boards (Mor-Barak & Cherin, 1998; Ferdman, 2017). Participation is however defined along the lines of the inclusive organization.

Minorities are therefore oriented towards objectives aligned with the specific organizational goals at play. Organizations in turn commit to the removal of barriers that block employees from using their full range of skills and competencies (Roberson, 2006). This pre-supposes that the minority underlying motivation is to be included (Adamson et al., 2021) and contribute to achieving organizational goals. Minorities are ready to use resources available and act – primarily – for the benefit of the organization.

This view is in line with 'positive' and benevolent organizational discourses that represent minorities as model entrepreneurs who are driven, self-made, or even 'glorious' (Ortlieb et al., 2021). Minorities could change their situation for good by relying on their own individual will power and resources. This situation is however located at the individual level: inclusion is first and foremost a task of self-inclusion (Ferdman, 2017). This may take for granted the leverage of minorities, and may overstate the agency of organizational members, such as managers, in driving inclusion (Noon, 2018).

Presenting minority agency as willingness to participate, however, comes at the cost of overseeing other dimensions that minorities may use as part of their agentic capacity. For instance, agency could be used to antagonize organizational and societal discourses or ideologies (see Section 2.5). This perspective of agency is however oblivious of the frictions between organizational 'designers' and targeted to-be-included groups (Adamson et al., 2021). Therefore, seeing minorities as 'ready to participate' prevents an exploration of minority capacity to engage in power relations.

Given the main interest is in finding one-size-fit-all solutions for inclusion, this stream searches for the general rather than the situated experience of minorities. Therefore, most studies do not differentiate on the type of minority considered. The specific conditions that may affect minorities as a particular group (ethnicity, race, gender, class, disability) are not explored in-depth. Rather, minorities are perceived as a sum of individuals that attain inclusion when participating in organizational life. Therefore, agency is construed as a willingness to participate in the inclusive organization.

2.6.2 The impossibility of being oneself

The previous stream of literature focused on barriers to minority individuals having agency within organizations which may underestimate the role of societal barriers (Dobusch et al., 2021). The two other views on agency – dis-empowerment and micro-resistance – explore how the structure of societal barriers shapes inequality in organizations (Acker, 2006). The dis-empowerment stream of the literature stresses how the expression of minority identity and being able to be oneself is met with constraints. The focus is on the way organizations 'get wrong' alternative ways of being for minorities. The dis-empowerment stream emphasizes how the 'inclusive organization' excludes certain minority identities. Organizations are not inclusive enough as they normalize power asymmetries (Ahonen & Tienari, 2009; Swan, 2010) and are unable to capture the complex identities of minority groups, which leads to exclusion (Burchiellaro, 2021a; Dobusch, 2014; Tyler & Vachhani, 2021).

The dis-empowerment stream construes minorities as located under the dominant norms in society and organizations. Despite having agentic capabilities, minorities are entangled into the repertoires, categories and routines of the dominant group (Lamont, 2000). Minorities may defy the subordinated place they are given by history, societies or organizations, but they do not get to change the norms that subordinate their identities in the first place. Agency is subsumed into an exercise of identity self-expression.

Minorities strive to express features of their identity such as different lifestyles, religious practices, or expose their limiting conditions (Adamson et al., 2021). There is a perpetual attempt to be accepted as the 'right kind' of person (Burchiellaro, 2021a) without leaving out any parts of one's identity. Yet racial, class and patriarchal, heteronormative expression do not allow for the possibility of full identity recognition. Under these circumstances, organizations exploit and negate minority identities and rights whilst proclaiming inclusivity (Tyler & Vachhani, 2021). As result, minorities cannot make themselves 'intelligible' (Butler, 2005), and cannot possibly be accommodated in the inclusive organization. Given the impossibility of identity recognition, minority agency is inserted in a logic where exclusion is the pre-destination.

2.6.3 Re-positioning the self

The limited engagement with minority capacity to resist hegemonic norms is addressed by the micro-resistance stream of literature. Here the possibilities of minority individuals making a change takes centre stage. Agency is drawn from being aware of the subordinated position

minorities tend to occupy, which enables individuals to question power (Van Laer & Janssens, 2017). Minorities have a certain degree of awareness of the reasoning behind their subordination which is grounded on the dominant norms. This stream of the literature locates minority subordination behind agency (Yosso, 2005), which leads minorities to rethink the norms that may subordinate them. Minorities can act strategically to change those norms; for example, by challenging and re-appropriating negative attributions (Zanoni & Janssens, 2007).

Minorities may, however, not have the material or symbolic resources to get the most out of their mobilizations. Indeed, the reason to need inclusion in the first place is a concern about (historical) exclusion (Robertson, 2004) and being identified as a 'lacking' group (Essed, 2002). For instance, the resources (broadly speaking) minorities control tend to be relatively scarce compared to those held by majorities – the case of migrant and ethnic minorities is a good example (Ortlieb & Sieben, 2014). From a subordinate position, minorities are destined to antagonize power from the bottom up. Consequently, minorities may have limited scope to transform hegemonic norms and *at most* can operate at the micro-level. This means that minority agency is confined to a 'lower scale' of action, such as in the lower rungs of organizations, backstage, or in hidden negotiations (Mikkelsen & Wåhlin, 2020). This level of minority agency is individual-centred and is likely to be unable to confront 'official' power upfront.

Minorities attempt to re-position themselves, craft positive identities, and question power from below (Ghorashi & Ponzoni, 2013). Against the backdrop of negative hegemonic assumptions about minorities, minorities mobilize themselves to recast themselves in a positive light. In the words of Zanoni & Janssens (2007), there is an intention to create spaces of micro-emancipation, leading to a 'partial, temporal movement breaking away from diverse forms of oppression' (Alvesson & Willmott, 1992: 447, in Zanoni & Janssens, 2007). In this way, minorities aim to circumvent the hegemonic norms of minority identity and advance individual life goals.

Table 1. An agency-centred perspective of minority inclusion

Stream	What characterizes minorities?	What is minority agency rationale?
Participative minority	Participating	Minorities use their individual capacity to participate
Dis-empowered minority	Powerless	Minorities strive to express their identity to the fullest
Micro-resistant minority	Micro-resistant	Minorities resist hegemonic identity constructions

2.7 Partial intelligibility as empowerment

A review of the inclusion literature provides insights into the agentic possibilities of minority individuals, providing tentative ideas on what characterizes minority agency. In the critical literature, the agentic capacity of different groups are, to a great extent, shaped by the given identity of a group. Being 'oneself' often refers to the capacity of individuals to express their identity such as being refugee (Ortlieb et al., 2021; Ponzoni et al., 2017), a member of a sexual minority (Burchiellaro, 2021a, 2021b), etc. or being able to skip the problems associated with being non-fully intelligible, by strategically complying (Zanoni & Jansssens, 2007). However, inclusion also involves spaces of *intelligibility* – not only unintelligibility.

Often, minorities are assumed to base their agency on highlighted identities pre-defined as marginalized (Tatlı & Özbilgin, 2012). Critical works have tended to study the to-be-included group as occupying a subordinated (subject) position where their identity is constructed by majorities. Being defined as recipients of arbitrary power may limit a full exploration of minority agency; that is, one salient 'marginalized' identity dimension is resolutely attributed to minority groups, discarding other identities. As a result, the exploration of agentic capacity is constrained by the assumed limits of its marginalized identity (Tatlı & Özbilgin, 2012). However, a professional identity may be understood as subordinated (for instance, being a newly arrived migrant) but may be accompanied by material and symbolic resources from their profession (Mozetič, 2020). This adds complexity to subject positioning because economic capital, class belonging, level of instruction, and professional experience may be positively recognized in organizations (Nohl et al., 2014), therefore making those individuals or groups that 'possess' them partially intelligible.

These resources add strength to the agentic capacity of some minorities despite e.g. ethnic belonging. In particular, critical studies tend to define minority groups as belonging to a unique social identity such as 'refugees', 'women', 'ethnic minority', 'LGTBQ+ group', 'disabled', despite identities intersecting (Boogaard & Roggeband, 2010). By compartmentalizing a person into one fixed identity group complicates the exploration of other potentially salient dimensions and their intersection. Indeed, minority manoeuvring capacity may be stronger (could question power more than expected) and broader (could encompass multiple dimensions such as professional identity or the less studied class identity) than generally assumed in the literature (Weiß, 2005). This suggests the need to consider minorities identified by a single social identity as only partially understood.

The critical understanding of inclusion focuses on how minorities are able to be understood by majorities, while ignoring how to resolve this. The ability of making oneself intelligible may contribute to the capacity to mobilize. Certain social groups are considered often more 'includable' than others (Kunz, 2016), suggesting these groups may have greater leverage when engaging with hegemonic norms in organizations than others. The next section argues for greater consideration of migrant professionals as a specific minority group to study.

2.8 Migrant professionals in focus

Migrant professionals make up a group that may well fall into the idea of partial intelligibility. Migrant professionals are broadly defined as highly skilled non-nationals holding a university degree or equivalent experience in a professional area (Iredale, 2001: 8). They are both migrants and professionals, identities that often involve tensions where they intersect (Mozetič, 2020). For example, in terms of fit, a migrant professional in a knowledge-intensive organization could be expected to have a 'natural fit' and possibility amplifying the scope of their agency. Moreover, this also has implications in their capacity to mobilize.

Individuals capacity to make themselves partially intelligible plays a vital role in inclusion. In the context of organizations, this has typically been a given by labor and professional identity (Ashcraft, 2013). Migrant professionals are perceived to be 'halfway' or partially included (Kunz, 2016). Professionals are defined as 'individuals in [an] occupation that demands advanced education, application of skills based on technical knowledge, with high standards of competence and responsibility' (Roberts, 2005, in Atewologun and Singh, 2010: 333). Minorites broadly can find a strong anchor in their professional identity. For instance, studies that have focused on

distinct types of migrant professional groups ascertain the specific leverage capacity of these groups (Imoagene, 2018; Konyali & Crul, 2017; Pio & Essers, 2014; Van Laer & Janssens, 2017). The position migrant professionals occupy may also allow them to mobilize agency within professional contexts.

Focusing on migrant professionals is justified as this group tends to have many of the material and symbolic resources taken for granted by the literature; they have high levels of instruction and material resources that enable self-reliance and autonomy (Ferdman, 2014; Shore et al., 2011). The resources migrant professionals have may result in a higher level of impact in their actions inside organizations (Legrand et al., 2018). Therefore, studying migrant professionals allows a deep exploration of engagement with the conditions of inclusion within an organization, going beyond the current approaches discussed in previous sections (Sections 2.3 to 2.5).

Another reason to focus on migrant professionals, is that it may be possible to observe how, in situations of tension, organizational norms may be pushed to the edge. Studying migrant professionals, in the context of an inclusive organization (one overtly committed to accommodating minority groups), provides an ideal setting to study the relationship between bargaining power and organizational attempts to be inclusive. Inclusive organizations in general may be more receptive and malleable to migrant professionals, leading minorities to express agency and participate in power relations (Roberson, 2006). This seems to be the case of migrant professionals, which are typically referred as an 'assimilable' group (Kunz, 2016) that may be more likely to participate in the higher rungs of organizations (Legrand et al., 2018). In this context, centring on migrant professionals could help understand how inclusive organizations respond to a relatively empowered minority.

The next section further substantiates why migrant professional are a suitable group to study compared to other minorities.

2.8.1 Migrant professionals engaging with power

Other areas of organizational studies, such as human resource management, have a long history of studying the experience of migrant professionals dating back three decades (Al Ariss & Özbilgin, 2010; Cerdin & Selmer, 2014; Inkson et al., 1997 to cite a few examples). However, the diversity and inclusion literature only offers research on groups similar to migrant professionals such as refugees (Kangas-Müller et al., 2023; Ortlieb & Sieben, 2014; Ortlieb et al.,

2021, Ponzoni et al., 2017) and second-generation ethnic minorities (Van Laer & Janssens, 2011; Zanoni & Janssens, 2007). These minority groups appear to have less maneuvering possibilities than migrant professionals, with the latter having a high level of education or professional experience.

The label of migrant professionals – and generally any form of highly skilled migrant group – is often used in contrast to low-skilled migrants. In principle, the difference between highly skilled (professional) and low-skilled migrants is straightforward. However, this difference is not just nominal (i.e. skilled vs non-skilled, white vs blue collar). Low-skilled migrant workers tend to experience disadvantages for structural and tangible reasons as they lack the education or skills required for 'white collar' jobs (Waxin et al., 2019). The factors influencing low-skilled migrants' inclusion are usually predictable and often leads to migrant overrepresentation in lower status jobs. Such characteristics make migrant professionals inclusion experiences different. Unlike low-skilled migrants, migrant professionals are supported by a relatively good endowment of economic resources, professional prestige, and expected ability to adapt to new organizational contexts (Nohl et al., 2006; Nohl et al., 2014). The 'professional' therefore takes a central importance in their capacity to mobilize both outside (e.g. labor market) and inside organizations (in the workplace).

How migrant professionals stand out from other minorities' can be seen from different dimensions; for example, professional development often enables their mobility. Professional trajectories of migrant professionals are characterized by being boundaryless (Arthur, 1994; Arthur & Rosseau, 1996) where they develop 'protean' careers, managed by themselves instead of relying on organizations (Crowley-Henry, 2007; Stahl et al., 2012). Migrant professionals follow career opportunities in other countries as they see external employment options provide greater opportunity (Crowley-Henry, 2007). Skills and development of competencies are at the foreground of their decisions, including mobility decisions and ways of interacting with other organizations.

The agency of migrant professionals has also been studied as individual strategies in organizations (Hajro et al., 2018); for example, migrant professionals' capacity to overcome barriers and transform them into opportunities. Migrant professionals use psychological resources, such as cognition, to map barriers and opportunities (Aten et al., 2016), to the extent that barriers are sometimes even welcomed as challenges. For instance, migrant professionals

could be adaptive, dealing with barriers by maintaining a strong future carrier orientation and navigating the challenges of new organizational contexts (Aten et al., 2016). Individual strategic action presents a positive view on the bargaining power of migrant professionals to overcome barriers.

Migrant professionals are also able to compensate for the lack of relevant networks in their new host country. Despite their professional credentials (i.e. comparable levels of education and skills to non-migrant professionals), migrant professionals are assumed to fall short of meaningful contacts compared to their local peers (Khattab et al., 2020; Neergaard & Behtoui, 2012; Seidel et al., 2000). One common explanation is that migrant professionals, being itinerant workers, may have had a shorter period of time in the receiving country and have not been able to build a significant number of contacts. Some studies show that, despite facing problems connecting with the 'right' social networks, migrant professionals can use social networks to improve chances of being professionally employed; for instance, by accessing networks of professional co-nationals (Thondhlana et al., 2016).

Bargaining power is also noticeable in the way migrant professionals carry cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986), that is, education and professional experience (Nohl et al. 2014: 59). While migrant professionals' education can travel across countries it may encounter problems of validation (Schittenhelm & Schmidtke, 2011; Weiß, 2005, 2006). However, when migrant professional education is certified, it is associated with labor market success (Nowicka, 2014). After validation, in the transition from the labor market into organizations, migrant professionals are expected to compete under similar conditions to organizational members. Erel (2010) shows how migrant professionals can competently transform their skills of origin into new skills in the new context.

From different dimensions (mobility, networking, and cultural capital) migrant professionals represent a resourceful minority group. While agency is a common denominator, there are various categories of migrant professionals (O'Connor & Crowley-Henry, 2019). The next section narrows migrant professionals to the 'non-Western' group and from the standpoint of organizational inclusion.

2.8.2 The social position of peripheric migrant professionals: Resourceful yet 'in need of inclusion'

Migrant professionals have been studied in different ways, to the extent that multiple categories referring to them have created inconsistencies (Crowley-Henry et al., 2018). There is a wide range of labels for different types of migrant professionals. The labels used include self-initiated expatriates, international appointees, qualified immigrants, ethnic minority professionals, highly skilled ethnic minorities, foreign-born professionals, and transnational professionals (Cerdin & Selmer, 2014; Holck, 2018; Inkson et al., 1997; Skovgaard-Smith & Poulfelt, 2018; Van Laer & Janssen, 2011; Yu, 2016). These different labels point to variations of migrant professionals yet signal their resourcefulness.

For instance, a longstanding interest on mobility has characterized migrant professionals as boundaryless (Cerdin & Selmer, 2014; Inkson et al., 1997). Migrant professionals are depicted as moving between countries and organizations to pursue professional advancement, to the extent they are often referred to as international appointees and self-initiated expatriates. These two migrating groups are voluntarily moving within the networks of corporations and international organizations, independent of host countries' labor markets and institutions (Nowicka, 2006). For instance, they often support themselves with private funds without relying on organizations in the receiving country. In this situation, these types of migrant groups do not need to navigate the national and organizational context on arrival, making their inclusion a non-issue. International appointees and expatriates are therefore expected to be exempt from inclusion commitments in hosting organizations.

This representation of migrant professionals as appointees and expatriates bears an Anglo-European centeredness as they are depicted as being self-sufficient. This contrasts with the plight of most migrant professionals originating from 'non-Western' countries (Salt, 1997). The concept of migrant professionals being a self-sufficient group, along the lines of appointees and expatriates, may have left the study of the experiences of most migrant professionals – non-Western migrant professionals – unaddressed (Al Ariss et al., 2012). Further, appointees and expatriates as privileged forms of migration may not be representative of the overall group of migrant professionals (Weiß, 2005; Kunz, 2016). In the context of inclusion, exploring the possibilities of appointees and expatriates to mobilize is less relevant that other types of migrant professionals. Therefore, this dissertation centers on the bulk of migrant professionals –

migrants from peripheric countries to the Global North (core). The concept of 'periphery' is adapted from Wallerstein (1974) World System Theory, which separates groups of countries based on a transnational division of labor. Migrant professionals coming from peripheric countries, while resourceful, may be in 'need' of some form of inclusion.

Most migrant professionals – those of peripheric origin migrating into the core – are not completely autonomous and are partially dependent on host country institutions. Their experiences are often characterized by hard processes of labor market accommodation; for example, the professional credentials of peripheric migrant professionals are not easily recognized (Nohl et al. 2014; Weiß, 2005). Members of this group experience the need to 'prove themselves', ending up in organizational positions of lower status relative to their education and experience (Al Ariss et al., 2010; Ramboarison-Lalao, 2011). Inside organizations, migrant professionals from peripheric countries are 'naturally' associated with low-skilled tasks and therefore run a higher risk to fall into precarity (Behtoui et al., 2017; Holck, 2018). This suggests that most migrant professional are typically perceived as in *need of inclusion* in the host labor market and by organizations (Nohl et al., 2014).

Given the interest in agency in this dissertation, the focus is specifically on migrant professionals moving from peripheric countries into organizations in the Global North. As clarification, the concept of 'migrant professionals' used throughout this dissertation is used to encompass only migrant professionals from peripheric countries. Other types of migrant professionals are often in little need of inclusion in organizations – such as appointees and expatriates – are excluded from this dissertation.

2.8.3 Chapter summary

This chapter has identified three forms of characterizing minority agency: participative, dis-empowered and micro-resistant. These three forms suggest different ways in which minorities exert agentic capacities. When agency has been the main focus, the understanding of agency has been of the actor either participating in co-creating structures individually (participative), or ready to individually act against them (micro-resistant) even if transformational possibilities are limited (dis-empowered). This dissertation proposes to show that actors (in this case migrant professionals) are in a dynamic *interaction* with organizational structures.

In this interaction, centering on the actor provides a view on how the containing structures, both society and organizations, can be engaged with. The actor has the capability to act without a pre-defined social identity (Tatlı & Özbilgin, 2012) nor is expected to have a disposition towards the structural conditions beyond hostility or submission. Instead, migrant professionals' courses of thought and action, as competent actors, could mobilize multiple identities and dispositions to either consent or dissent (Hallett, 2003). Actors are intimately embedded in structures and have multiple possibilities to engage based on identity and dispositions toward hierarchical power, therefore disputing hierarchical structures of power or identity is always a possibility.

This dissertation will focus on the interaction of migrant professionals as actors and the organizational structures in which they are included. Distinct to the inclusion literature, the engagement of migrant professionals is studied as a *process*. A Bourdieu-inspired theoretical lens will address the interaction between migrant professionals in structures that condition inclusion. Using a Bourdieu-inspired approach is justified in that it locates agency within the social space that tends to subordinate migrants to lower subject positions (Bourdieu, 1980, 2000). To keep the migrant professional experiences as focus of analysis, French Pragmatic sociology (FPS) (Boltanski & Thévenot, 2000) is integrated into the theoretical framework. This novel framework serves to analyze the engagements of migrant professionals with organizational structures as a dynamic process. In this way, it could help capture how the asymmetry of inclusion is driven by migrant professionals' exerting agentic capacity.

3 Organizational inclusion as negotiated conditionality

The previous chapter has discussed how, despite being able to mobilize agency, minorities do not seem to be fully included in organizations. Minorities are defined as either prone to appropriateness (Shore et al., 2011), unable to question the compartmentalizing of their identities (Dobusch et al., 2021), or readily disposed to rule bending and resistance (Zanoni & Janssens, 2007). This chapter proposes an agency-centred approach that locates migrant professionals – as a minority group – within the structures that shape inclusion in organizations (Section 3.1). This chapter draws on the sociology of domination (Boltanski, 2011; Bourdieu, 1980, 2000, 2001;) to develop a theoretical framework to *explore the possibility of understanding inclusion.*

In light of the research question (i.e. How may minorities engage with the terms of their inclusion?) the theoretical framework allows the visualization of the conditionality of inclusion may be both disputed and reproduced (Sections 3.2 and 3.3). The intention is to provide a perspective of how migrant professionals – despite having bargaining capacity – may often become subordinated to the conditions of inclusion constructed by organizations. To that end, the concepts of *symbolic power, misrecognition/recognition* and *restoration* are articulated. The main analytical concepts in the theoretical framework largely draw on the work of Bourdieu (1979, 1991, 2000, 2001) and is refined by bringing insights from French Pragmatic Sociology (FPS) (Boltanski, 2011; Boltanski and Thévenot, 2000). Both authors pay attention to the actor's agentic capacity to negotiate, but interpret this capacity differently. Integrating insights of Bourdieu and FPS can therefore provide an enriched perspective of migrant professionals' engagement with inclusion conditionality.

The proposed theoretical framework is tailored to study how the conditions of inclusion are established, how those 'to-be-included' react to these conditions, and how conditions are re-established. These conditions are called the *terms of inclusion*. In short, this chapter puts forward a theoretical framework to visualize inclusion, considering migrant professionals as critical actors with agentic capacity.

3.1 Agency and conditionality

The focus on the agency of minorities has enjoyed increasing interest in organizational studies (Ghorashi & Ponzoni, 2013; Van Laer & Janssens, 2017;) and sociology (Fleming et al., 2011; Lamont & Fleming, 2005). Agency is understood as the actor's possibility to make a difference.

From an agentic view, social actors are understood as 'knowledgeable agents' capable of critical reflexivity of the conditions surrounding them (Giddens, 1986). Studying the agency of migrant professionals is therefore an attempt to understand those possibilities in the context of specific conditions established by organizations.

One of the most accepted ideas in critical inclusion research is that minorities practice micro-resistance. Micro-resistance refers to an ongoing project of individual emancipation (Zanoni & Janssens, 2007) where actors can question their subjective position and focus on 'previously unreflected relations' (Ghorashi & Ponzoni, 2013: 4). Micro-resistance opens up opportunities to liberate the self, and has the potential to disrupt organizational controls (Alvesson & Willmott, 1992). Micro-resistance construes minority behaviour as antagonistic to the established majority power, presupposing that the interests of the subordinated exist ultimately in opposition to the power holders (often the includers). Micro-resistant agency may then appear as an individualistic and rather 'structureless' perspective. Actors appear as scattered individual projects of emancipation relatively disconnected to the context. The context is broadly characterized as the domain of managerial control – such as hegemonic discourses (Zanoni & Janssens, 2007) – from which minorities try to escape.

Other definitions typify agentic practices as reactions to power – not geared towards emancipation – but as somehow pre-destined to feed into pre-existing 'inequality structures' (Acker, 2006). In this way, agency is embedded into structures of inequality and can inadvertently reproduce these inequalities (Boogaard & Roggeband, 2010; Ortlieb & Sieben, 2013). Then, there is the apparent advancement of minority identities and interests which, from another perspective, seem to contribute to their own subordination. There is therefore a 'rule' of unintended consequences that backlash against agency (Burawoy, 1979; Willis, 1977). Agentic possibilities are then to a great extent determined by structures that minorities are not able to fully discern. Therefore, there is a need for a more meaningful link between agency and structure in the context of organizational inclusion.

These conceptualizations of agency are not sufficiently connected to the *conditionality* of inclusion. While agentic capacity may be strong, such capacity is mediated by forms of conditionality that operate in inclusive organizations (Ortlieb et al., 2021; Tyler, 2019). Broadly defined, conditionality refers to normative principles (Priola et al., 2018) that minority groups need to fulfill in order to be included, and that both 'enable but also restrict an individual's being' (Ortlieb

et al., 2021: 269). Conditionality in this context refers to when actors possibilities are crucially shaped by the conditions they need to navigate. For example, migrants are strongly encouraged to follow hegemonic cultural norms or civic requirements in order to obtain social benefits (Gillberg, 2023; Goodman, 2014). Conditionality is not clearly defined in the diversity and inclusion literature and appears to be only mentioned in abstract ways. Conditionality could appear as a necessary economic value that minorities are expected to fulfill (Zanoni & Janssens, 2007), the requirement of being intelligible (Ghorashi & Ponzoni, 2017; Ortlieb et al., 2021), governable (Mir & Mir, 2005; Vesterberg, 2016), or calculable (Ahonen & Tienari, 2015). These dimensions involve different conditions that tie actors together – that is, the including and those to-be-included.

Given little attention has been given to the relationship between agency and conditionality, there is a need for a closer examination of how inclusion is co-constituted without the pre-conceived definitions of agency – that is, whether inclusion is geared to be resisted or to unintentionally further social reproduction. Defining agency becomes then only meaningful under the conditions which the includers and the to-be-included coalesce. Therefore, in order to better understand agentic possibilities, agency needs to be brought closer to the conditionality at play in inclusive organizations (Ortlieb et al., 2021). In this dissertation, this means establishing a relationship between the agency of migrant professionals and the organizational structures that shape their inclusion.

Given its asymmetrical basis, inclusion needs to be understood as taking place in a context where dominating actors can grant legitimacy to those being included (Bourdieu, 1979). The concept of agency therefore needs to be re-framed, to go beyond the subjective individual experience, and become connected to the organizational structures that shape individuals' possibilities. Agency needs to be understood as located within a social space characterized by actors occupying different social positions (Bourdieu, 1989). Within the different social positions actors occupy, they become meaningfully tied to the conditions organizations pose (Abdelnour et al., 2017; Kallinikos, 2003). Actors are then capable of mobilizing in a 'piecemeal' fashion various segments of themselves; for example, in migrant professionals this may relate to ethnic and national identities and professional resources (Imoagene, 2018; Thondhlana et al., 2016; Van Laer and Janssens, 2017; Webster and Haandrikman, 2020) in reaction to demands posed by organizations (Kallinikos, 2003: 597). Migrants are inclued in organizations not as persons or selves, but mainly

as actors 'tied to the resources, rights and obligations' of their social positions (Abdelnour et al., 2017: 1789). The positions actors occupy are linked to organizations in 'variable and revocable terms' (Abdelnour et al., 2017: 1787). Conditionality in this way appears as hegemonic conditions that both enable inclusion, but which are at the same time malleable.

Agency therefore acquires meaning relative to the relationship between actors' positions and organizational prerogatives. Such prerogatives are constituted by the normative principles that ground the conditionality of inclusion (Priola et al., 2018). Actors, in this case migrant professionals, become entangled by conditionality. At the same time, the conditions of inclusion remain open for bargaining (Rennstam & Sullivan, 2018). Migrant professionals, as newcomers in a pre-established organizational and social context, suggest they occupy a position of disadvantage from which agency is exerted. The conditionality at play in inclusion is revocable while inclusion is deemed as 'impossible' (Dobusch et al., 2021) to attain. Given the above, a better understanding of the processes by which agents possibilities become deflected is required.

The agentic capacity of migrant professionals then becomes located against the conditions of inclusion. Agentic capacity then becomes re-defined, moving from the current focus on individual experiences (e.g. Ghorashi & Ponzoni, 2013) towards a relational perspective of agency (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992) that links agency much more closely to processes of formal organizing practices (Kallinikos, 2003). Therefore, the focus of interest shifts to how agency is mobilized to question the meaning of conditionality.

The conditionality of inclusion does not seem readily perceived as it is located outside of the actor's purview (Tyler, 2019). While some conditions could manifest and be tangible, the 'deep' conditions lie at the post-structural level and are made comprehensible by scholars (Ortlieb et al., 2021; Tyler & Vachhani, 2021). This suggests that the conditions that (inclusive) organizations propose become somewhat fixed and are hard to unsettle. The intention here is to explore the agentic possibilities of migrant professionals as agentic subjects capable of questioning the conditions at play. Therefore, drawing on the work of Bourdieu provides a perspective on organizational inclusion as conditional.

A framework inspired by Bourdieu allows the exploration of power dynamics that constitute conditionality. It provides a mechanism to animate the relational analytical focus that could help disentangle agency and conditionality in the context of organizational inclusion. Therefore, the rest of this chapter brings together the concepts of *symbolic power*, *misrecognition / recognition,* and

restoration to provide a new perspective for understanding inclusion. By taking the subject position of migrant professionals, the goal is to build a theoretical lens to analyze their engagement with conditionality.

3.2 The power of conditionality: Symbolic power, misrecognition / recognition, and restoration

After locating migrant professional agency within conditionality structures, the question then becomes how conditionality is articulated by organizational actors. The conditionality of inclusion, that is the *organized* conditions of admittance (Tyler, 2019), is characterized as a product of power imbalances (Adamson et al., 2021; Dobusch, 2020). Conditionality is based on the tenet that some people, the to-be-included, need to be included into a whole (Schinkel, 2018). In the same way, insofar as inclusion takes place in organizations, inclusion can be understood to be located in an uneven playing field (Emirbayer & Johnson, 2008) where actors occupy unequal positions (Bourdieu, 1989). This conditionality appears as an all-pervading force that affects all aspects of organizational life.

Conditionality entails the recreation of hierarchies in organizations (Priola et al. 2018) where the social positions are likely to be reproduced. This reproduction becomes apparent to the extent that even when organizations define themselves as inclusive, they tend to replicate rather than tackle hierarchies 'in the name of inclusion' (Tyler, 2019: 63; see also Kalev et al., 2006; Zanoni et al., 2010). This imbalance suggests that the occupants of higher power positions – most likely the 'includers' – ultimately set the limits of the 'terms of inclusion' (Ortlieb et al., 2021: 277). Therefore, conditionality most likely reflects the will of those with enough capacity to define the conditions.

A Bourdieusian approach is suitable to explore this concern as it is able to uncover the mechanisms that lead to social reproduction. Insights from Bourdieu, such as concepts of symbolic power and misrecognition, can help understand why conditionality pervades inclusion processes and why, in turn, inclusion processes are likely to reproduce social inequality (Zanoni et al., 2010). Bourdieu develops a relational sociology that aims to bridge the – often separated – objective-subjective as well as agency-structure dualisms (Emirbayer & Johnson, 2008; Tatlı et al., 2015). In this integrated view, actors are reflexive agents yet constrained by historically determined social structures (Bourdieu, 1977). Consequently, Bourdieu's analytical concepts

possess this relational element. Many of his key concepts have been deployed to understand the logic of domination in organizations, such as 'habitus', 'capitals', 'field', 'symbolic violence' to mention some (Tatlı et al., 2015).

While the work of Bourdieu has been widely used in diversity and inclusion in organizational studies (Al Ariss and Syed, 2011; Doshi, 2021; Özbilgin &Tatlı, 2005;), the concepts of symbolic power and misrecognition have surprisingly received considerably less attention. While symbolic power has been used to study migrant workers (Samaluk, 2015), misrecognition appears to be absent in this literature. This is unexpected as misrecognition is a central concept for understanding the reproduction of domination (Burawoy, 2012, 2018). Misrecognition is understood in the context of *symbolic power* (Bourdieu, 1979, 1982, 1990).

3.2.1 Bourdieu on inclusion: Conditional inclusion as an exercise of symbolic power

Symbolic power is the power to impose principles of construction of reality that affect the naturalization of social domination (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Its form *par excellence* is the production of knowledge that passes as value-neutral objective classifications (Bourdieu, 1987). Social domination, rather than being exerted directly by a dominant social group to another, rests on agreeing on the legitimacy of 'objective' classifications. The asymmetrical power relationship between social groups that characterizes inclusion is then constituted by actors' tacit agreement (Bourdieu, 1990). When symbolic power is effective, subjective structures habitualized practices and objective structures coincide 'without leaving room for doubt or criticism' (Weiß, 2010: 43). As an illustration, symbolic power is what gives legitimacy to norms or authority to, for example, doctors' square caps (Bourdieu, 2000). The belief in the authority of the square caps has the effect of naturalizing the social gap that separates doctors from other people.

The conditionality of inclusion therefore resembles an exercise of symbolic power: there appears to be a capacity of some actors to lay out conditions for others – the to-be-included. In turn, this blurs the recognition of the asymmetrical social relation that enables this capacity (Bourdieu, 2000; James, 2015) leading to *misrecognition* (explained in Section 3.2.2 below). Against an unequal distribution of symbolic power (Nohl et al., 2014), migrant professionals strive to make themselves legitimate in a new context. This imbalance reflects that some professionals are already legitimate actors while others – such as migrant professionals – need to demonstrate the legitimacy of their subjectivities (Ahmed, 2012; Dobusch, 2020). Yet, participating in inclusion is to an extent already an acceptance of the conditions at play, shaping interests (Lukes, 2005)

and obscuring the structural factors that subordinate migrant workers (McDowell, 2008; Weiß, 2005, 2006). Symbolic power success relies then on its capacity to reproduce conditionality while going unrealized doing so.

The effects of symbolic power are 'deeply ingrained and insidious' (see Bourdieu & Eagleton, 1992: 111, 112), seemingly paralyzing the capacity of migrants to question the conditions of their inclusion. Social actors that experience the effects of symbolic power are expected to hardly notice them. The exercise of symbolic power is not necessarily overt, but it takes place through everyday 'gentle and imperceptible violence for its victims' (Bourdieu, 2001: 1) and is therefore difficult to grasp. Symbolic power therefore makes it possible for different social actors to reach agreements without them fully noticing them (Bourdieu, 1991). Acceptance of the conditions would not then be a result of a conscious, deliberate act; instead, agreeing to them is itself the effect of symbolic power (Bourdieu, 2000). From the perspective of symbolic power, conditionality ties together organizational actors making it difficult to detect the asymmetries behind inclusion. Upon acceptance to the conditions of inclusion, the unequal social relations become naturalized and reproduced.

Unequal social relations are therefore maintained through the approval that the dominated gives to the dominator and therefore to the domination (Bourdieu, 2001; Holmes, 2013). In the words of Bourdieu: symbolic power is that invisible power which can be 'exercised only with the complicity of those who do not want to know that they are subject to it' (Bourdieu, 1991: 164). The conditionality of inclusion is then imposed in hardly perceptible ways as it passes as value-neutral and, often, said to be working in the best interests of migrants (Bell & Hartmann, 2007; Prasad and Mills, 1997). For conditionality to be reproduced, there is ultimately a need for symbolic power to go *misrecognized*, therefore reproducing the conditions of inclusion.

To grasp the strength of conditionality on migrants, it is necessary to understand the concept of misrecognition. Misrecognition relates to the idea that despite the agentic capacity of actors, symbolic power is exercised with the participation of the 'dominated'. Therefore, the next section explains how misrecognition emerges as a central concept as it works as a 'transmission belt' for reproducing symbolic power.

While misrecognition and recognition are exactly opposed concepts, recognition is explained separately in Section 3.2.4. This provides clarity, as it will be stressed that recognition could open possibilities for negotiating the meaning of conditionality.

3.2.2 Misrecognition and the reproduction of conditionality

Bourdieu's recurrent references to the work of anthropologist Marcel Mauss on gift exchange could be used as a point of departure to illustrate misrecognition. In 'The gift' (Mauss, 1966), exchange is characterized by the obligation to give and the obligation to receive. There is a double bond that is created in the exchange process: the exchange of gifts itself, and the symbolic bond that ties the giver and receiver. The symbolic bond works at the intersubjective level and, for example, could be the tacit obligation of the receiver to then give back for the gift. Bourdieu (1980) reinterpreted this logic of exchange and added a power dimension to it. This 'twofold truth' behind the exchange constitutes the basis for social domination (Bourdieu, 2000): as actors become involved in the participation in the material exchange (through everyday practices), they misrecognize the configuration of the relation between giver and receiver itself and fail to see that this configuration is marked by power asymmetry. In short, the 'dominated' fails to see the exercise of symbolic power that sets up the social relationship.

The conditionality of inclusion, as exposed, rests in asymmetrical social relations. The use of symbolic power (Bourdieu, 1982, 1990, 1992) has been proposed as a suitable concept to interpret how conditionality may be sustained and reproduced. In its elaboration of the workings of symbolic power, Bourdieu equates domination as an 'orchestration' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 13) where the mental and the social become entangled. In this entanglement, domination is exerted when there is a *collective failure to recognize the arbitrariness of power*; that is, when symbolic power is misrecognized.

Misrecognition takes place when people tacitly acknowledge the legitimacy of power or of the hierarchical relations of power in which they are embedded; they fail to see that the hierarchy is, after all, an arbitrary social construction which serves the interests of some groups more than others. It requires a belief 'in the legitimacy of power and the legitimacy of those who wield it' (Bourdieu, 1991: 23). Translating this to the world of organizations, it means misrecognition takes place when there is a full acceptance of the conditionality that inclusive organizations specify, therefore leading to a collective failure to grasp the unequal social relations that condition inclusion. A collective misrecognition of the conditions of inclusion makes possible the reproduction of the social hierarchy that keeps migrants in subordinated social positions (Ponzoni et al., 2017; Zanoni, 2011). Misrecognition then hides the domination of migrants, objectifying the conditionality that shapes their everyday practices (Samaluk, 2015).

When symbolic power is effective, the subjects incorporate the dominant ways of seeing the world. Misrecognition is total, when there is a perfect fit between external imposition of the dominator and the internal impulse of the dominated (Bourdieu, 2001; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992;), a dominator-dominated relationship is then naturalized. When symbolic power goes totally misrecognized, the ways of seeing the world of the dominant are internalized by the dominated causing a perception and a self-evaluation of the dominated from the dominators' categories (Bourdieu, 2000: 170). Migrant professionals and people that move to different contexts – rather inadvertently – learn to enact the dominant norms (Giazitzoglu & Muzio, 2021). For instance, dominant norms of urbanity could be identified as powerful in the shame and awkwardness of peasants when they are suddenly faced with city values. Peasants see themselves as backwards as they appropriate the judgement of modern city dwellers (Bourdieu, 2004). Or, for example, when rural migrants fail in their attempt to imitate urban ways of working (Doshi, 2021). This involves both acceptance of the power of the dominant (dominant norms of urbanity) and the misrecognition of the relation of domination (urban in relation to rural lifestyles). In this case, this leads to the reproduction of a hegemonic lifestyle, the urban lifestyle.

While conditionality could be constructed through symbolic power, misrecognition is a necessary factor for its reproduction. Misrecognition is expressed as the inability of people to see the arbitrariness in the power that is being exerted. As people engage in everyday practices, symbolic power passes through the subjects' cognition and shapes their actions. Examples include people imitating a language (type of pronunciation) or a lifestyle (a way of thinking, speaking, or acting) (Bourdieu, 2001: 2) which confers legitimacy to the imitator. In this way, symbolic power becomes reproduced with the participation of the actor. In organizational inclusion, misrecognizing conditions in which migrants are included implies reproducing those terms.

Bourdieu suggests that a serious questioning of conditionality is situated outside of the reach of people (Bourdieu & Eagleton, 1992) and even outside of the denunciation of well-positioned social actors (Bourdieu, 2000; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992).[1] Instead, because symbolic power is exerted, everyday organizational life is characterized by misrecognition or 'learned ignorance' (Bourdieu, 1980: 102; Everett, 2002; Gherardi, 2012). Therefore, taking the relationship between

[1] As Burawoy (2012: 192) caustically puts it: 'we are all fish in water unable to comprehend the environment in which we swim – except, of course, Bourdieu and his fellow sociologists.'.

symbolic power and misrecognition seriously, suggests that the conditionality of inclusion is insurmountable.

The alleged totalizing vision of symbolic power is however contested (Boltanski, 2011; Burawoy, 2012; Celikates, 2012). Migrants may resist and display strategies that could question their most immediate circumstances including conditionality in organizations. For instance, Doshi (2021) shows how rural migrant workers are highly aware of their rural embodiment and may dispute their social position. Migrants attempt to modify rural embodiment through dress, make-up, speech, and body language to gain a higher status in their relationship with urban customers (2021: 50). Further consideration of agency (Van Laer & Janssens, 2017) could show that migrant professionals, in different forms, may be able to negotiate the conditions of their inclusion.

3.2.3 Agency and recognition: Do migrants professionals misrecognize conditionality?

Misrecognition implies migrants are living in a state of 'learned ignorance', in which their reality is very much shaped and structured by systems of domination (Everett, 2002). It could then be inferred that as conditionality imposes itself there is little room for questioning alternative ways of 'doing' inclusion. The existence of domination literally suggests there are no forms of resistance or dissent that can unsettle conditionality. Put bluntly, if migrants by simply acting in the world contribute to their own domination, then inclusion is defined by a collective misrecognition of the conditions of those to be included.

The question that follows is: how can migrant professionals collectively misrecognize the conditions of inclusion? To respond to this question, a Bourdieusian lens suggests the strength of the 'learned ignorance' of migrant professionals outdoes their capacity to question power; migrant professionals collectively fail to see beyond the conditions they navigate – or they take those conditions for granted (Bourdieu, 1991). Reproduction of those conditions is then possible because they are collectively misrecognized and, by extension, there is an alleged inability to question them.

However, as reviewed in the 'micro-resistant minority' (Section 4.5) stream, agency allows for migrants to resist and develop strategies that aim to re-configure power (Doshi, 2021; Van Laer & Janssens, 2017; Zanoni & Janssen, 2007). From a Bourdieusian perspective, the capacity to unsettle conditions relies on the capacity of those in a subordinated social position to de-

construct symbolic power (Bourdieu & Eagleton, 1992); that is, they need to understand the classification principles (Wacquant & Bourdieu, 1992) that construct conditionality in the first place. Migrant professionals, as bearers of professional skills and competencies, may have the ability to move to higher organizational rungs (Le Grand et al., 2018) suggesting they may occupy a stronger subjective social position. An agentic view of migrant professionals could show how there is space for dissent, in which the incidence of symbolic power could be disputed. This requires extending the scope of misrecognition outside what Bourdieu considers systemic determinism (Everett, 2002) to give room for agentic capacity. This becomes a perspective that sees conditionality as a product of symbolic power, but that is *not* likely to be totally misrecognized.

Total domination is not a feature of organizations (Daudigeous et al., 2021) or organizational inclusion, where migrant professionals emerge as competent actors (Konyali, 2014). Plausibly, the concept of misrecognition may be excessively reliant on traditional and stationary societies, as reported among the Algerian Kabyle and the peasants in rural France (von Holdt, 2012).[2] When the inclusion of migrants is located in the context of post-Fordian organizations, where the domination is exerted in knowledge-centred, participative, and decentralized structures, this requires more a complex and decentred ways of exercising managerial control (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002; Boltanski, 2018; Clegg, 2009; Courpasson, 2000; Daudigeous et al., 2021). Inclusion then takes a highly participative form where migrant professionals are often closely integrated in organizational and decision-making processes (Bendl et al., 2022). As migrant professionals may be highly involved in organizational life, agency is likely to be captured in the reflexive distance from the hegemonic power of dominant groups – expressed in conditionality.

Reactions to symbolic power then downplay the possibility of collective misrecognition. Despite the alleged strong level of penetration of symbolic power, social actors can take distance from conditionality (Fleming & Spicer, 2003; 2005; Rafanell & Gorringe, 2010; Žižek, 1989). More specifically, migrant professionals display autonomous and alternative ways of action to the

[2] Bourdieu's later works are attentive in announcing the existence of ever more complex forms of symbolic power, and point out that domination is characterized by the mobilization of ever more sophisticated technical, rational and ideological resources (see 'Pascalian meditations', 2000).

hegemonic actions in organizations (Essers & Benschop, 2007) constituting an agency from below (Zanoni & Janssens, 2007). Revealing symbolic power as non-totalitarian could be revealed by carefully following different types of reactions by migrants; for example, complaints, criticisms, and disagreements with different degrees of articulation. The conditionality of inclusion is then likely to be questioned from the social position occupied by migrants. Focusing on agency could then provide insights into how conditionality operates.

As noted in the extant literature, inclusion is characterized as a 'fragile process'. For example, inclusion processes entail struggles between silencing and voice (Priola, 2014; Rennstam & Sullivan, 2018) and resistance to organizational stipulations (Gagnon & Collinson, 2017) which imply a questioning of the conditionality by which inclusion rests (Burchiellaro, 2021a). This reflects a fragile space where the agency of migrant professionals can be exerted in ways that relate to these contradictions. Rather than being fully misrecognized, the conditionality of inclusion appears to be disputed. Reactions to conditionality contradict the assumption of a unanimous coalescence of a dominated-dominator relationship (Bourdieu, 2000) around fixed terms. In short, migrant professionals are likely to *recognize* aspects of conditionality; misrecognition is expressed in *partial*, half-way forms.

Reactions to conditionality can be expressed in different forms of resistance, and in attempts by migrant professionals to make sense of power dynamics (Pio & Essers, 2014; Van Laer & Janssens, 2017). Reactions can be conveyed as micro-resistant or as forms of critical reflexivity that show conditionality can be disputed. For example, against the conditional norms making migrant professionals – and other minorities – become a strategic resource for organizations (Swan, 2010; Tyler, 2019) or fit in certain identity frameworks (Ortlieb et al., 2021), migrant professionals may be able to re-imagine power hierarchies (Jiang & Korczynski, 2016). This suggests, to a certain extent, the unequal social relations that sustain conditionality could be *recognized* or partially 'figured out'. For example, in encounters between migrant professionals and managers that allow for an improved power position for migrants and the ability to 'negotiate better work arrangements' (Zanoni & Janssens, 2007: 1392), or when demands for more equal participation by migrants are invoked (Van Laer & Janssens, 2017). Migrant professionals' demands could indirectly lead to re-imagining the social order – identifying the inequality behind conditionality – as conditionality is challenged. Misrecognition is partial as conditionality can be revealed as unequal *terms* established by organizations and society.

Unveiling conditionality could lead to the opening up of spaces of dissent within inclusion processes that symbolic power needs to address. Such spaces manifest in instances of open conflict and disagreements (Boltanski, 2011). Many ways of mobilizing opposition could be used as a means for negotiation, including everyday acts of micro-resistance such as foot dragging, dissimilation, false compliance, pilfering, feigned ignorance, slander, gossip, and pretending to be productive (Scott, 1990; Thomas & Davies, 2005; Ybema & Horvers; 2017). These acts could be extended to involve perceiving and denouncing situations that do not reflect how things should be including more overt forms of criticism people take to explain why a particular course of action is not acceptable (Cloutier et al., 2017). In everyday discussions, criticism indicates that some form of alternative would be preferable, or that an activity or practice in question could have been performed more desirably (Messner, 2008: 69). Therefore, conditional norms can be seen to be under constant scrutiny.

Organizational structures strive to be reproduced against forms of migrant opposition and individual attempts of 'emancipation' (Ghorashi & Ponzoni, 2013; Zanoni & Janssens, 2007) and against more open forms of migrant mobilization (Jiang & Korczynski, 2016). As conditionality becomes partly unveiled, it moves out of the mantle of *doxa* (Bourdieu & Eagleton, 1992) and may be visible for organizational actors. Therefore, when the possibility of recognition threatens conditionality, an institutionalized response aligned with these conditions is expected. In this way, symbolic power restores itself through institutionalized responses. These responses are called *restoration*.

The next sub-section further discusses restoration to present inclusion as negotiated.

3.2.4 Negotiating conditionality: Recognition and restoration

Restoration is a useful analytical concept inspired by French Pragmatic Sociology (FPS) (Boltanski, 2011; Oldenhof et al., 2014; Patriotta et al., 2011; Ramirez, 2013;). Used as a heuristic tool, FPS stresses the actor's perspective and their agentic possibilities, therefore diverging from Bourdieu's alleged determinism (Atkinson, 2020).[3] The concept of restoration is used to account

[3] Bourdieu also seems to suggest that symbolic power recomposes itself. Bourdieu admits that to be imposed, symbolic power needs to respond to demands of the 'dominated'. He claims those who dominate are in a position to make the social space 'function to their advantage but they must contend with the resistance, the

for how – when the terms of inclusion can potentially be disrupted, the symbolic power the high positioned actors have closes the possibility of disruption. A negotiation occurs between the agency of migrant professionals and the institutionalized responses that act to restore conditionality.

FPS is useful against the background of Bourdieu's framework as it allows us to observe cracks in misrecognition in a detailed and situated way. This allows us to explore how conditionality may not be imposed in collusion with ignorant actors, but actors themselves negotiate and renegotiate conditionality (Celikates, 2012). FPS locates the actor as center stage, allowing us to observe power relations from the actor's perspective. Critics of symbolic power point at its premise of explaining virtually all behaviour 'by the internalization of dominant norms' (Boltanski, 2011: 20). The actor is instead conceived as *conscious* of power relations and being able to react to the effects of symbolic power. Actors are then highly autonomous (Boltanski & Thévenot, 1999; Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005) and their reflexive agency is highlighted by looking at their 'critical capacity' of everyday life situations (Boltanski, 2011: 43).[4] In its application here, the FPS perspective is useful because it helps to refine Bourdieu's concept of misrecognition as a driver of social reproduction.[5]

Instead of an existence in learned ignorance, it can be hypothesized that there is an ability to *recognize* domination. On this point, FPS, through the work of Boltanski, opens the possibility to explore in more detail the existence of spaces of dissent and therefore negotiation. In Bourdieu, power negotiations are secondary to the agentic capacity to negotiate; actors are defined by their 'habitus', which is 'embodied history' that shapes their most fundamental dispositions (Bourdieu, 1980). In contrast, Boltanski puts negotiations in the spotlight where the fundamental negotiation set-up is that of individuals posing demands against institutions (Nyberg & De Cock,

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claims, the contention, "political" or otherwise, of the dominated' (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992:102). In this way, the 'arbitrary nature' of symbolic power remains misrecognized.

[4] It proceeds by analyzing the sense of justice expressed in ordinary critiques and locating them in a broader normative model ('orders of worth').

[5] In FPS, the exercise of domination is driven by actors themselves and could be empirically studied by staying close to actors, and detect how in given situations actors could call the social norms that sustain power into question (2010). This involves a rupture from Bourdieu's assumption that actors remain in a 'cave of practice' (Celikates, 2012: 163) misrecognizing symbolic power.

2019; Pfefferman, et al., 2021), where the negotiations are permanent and their outcomes open (Boltanski, 2011; Susen, 2014).[6] This presents an opportunity to explore the specific situations in which migrant professionals could unveil conditionality. That is, FPS allows us to explore in detail episodes where migrants potentially *recognize* the asymmetrical relations that condition their inclusion. Through recognition by migrant professionals, it is then possible to capture *how conditionality is negotiated.*

In situations of recognition where migrant professionals may 'struggle for social change and against structural inequalities' (Van Laer & Janssens, 2017: 213) conditionality may be exposed as 'arbitrary' or 'hypocritical' (Boltanski, 2011: 59). Conditionality can sometimes be questioned in a way that can have disruptive effects. For instance, 'unmasking contradictions' or 'revealing dimensions of reality' could reveal reality as unequal or unfair (Boltanski, 2011: 105). This leads to the exposition of the power asymmetry that structures inclusion, and opens the possibility to negotiate new power arrangements. *Restoration* appears then as an institutionalized response that prevents the revelation of unequal social relations under instances of conflict.

Restoration shows how the agentic possibilities of actors' experience the limits of the social world (Boltanski, 2011; Boltanski & Chiapello, 2018) and organizational settings (Daudigeous et al., 2021; Nyberg and De Cock, 2019; Pfefferman et al., 2021). Restoration takes an institutional function in support of the dominant group by 'saying and confirming what matters' and sorting out 'what is to be respected from what cannot be' (Boltanski, 2011: 75). Therefore, an 'institutional act' is where actors 'invested with a form of *authority* recall the requirement to act in the correct forms' (Boltanski, 2011: 78; see also Patriotta et al., 2011). The need for such responses appears in situations of conflict caused by actors' agentic displays, leading to a process of reparation of conflict (Boltanski, 2011).[7] Restoration could therefore operate to continually reinstate the hegemony of conditionality. For example, in contexts of demands by subordinated actors, institutionalized actors – such as public servants –– could 'transfer responsibility' to those demanding (Nyberg and De Cock, 2019) or judge their demands according to the dominant

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[6] Boltanski's main assumption is that 'the social world is shaped by permanent negotiation of the established norms because of the existence of people's critical capacity' (Susen, 2014: 175).

[7] In words of Boltanski, this reflect institutional plasticity: 'institutions themselves are continually subject to a process of re-institutionalization' (2011: 78).

norms (Pfefferman et al., 2021). In this way, actors' experience is limited to their agentic possibilities.

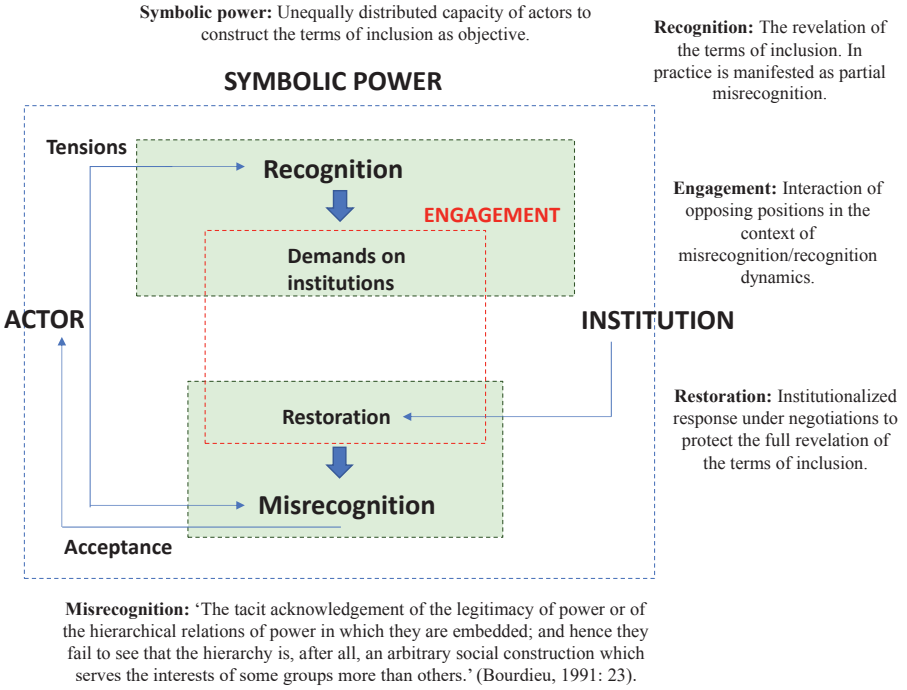
In an example of organizational inclusion, Tyler & Vachhani (2021) suggest how fragile inclusion can be and therefore why restoration is required. When a minority individual did not conform to a conditional norm of inclusion – one that tied inclusion to profitability – conditionality was restored. As an inclusive organization was not able to use a minority employee difference to its advantage (i.e. making profits), this employee was 'constructively dismissed and rendered abject and effectively, cast out' (Tyler & Vachhani, 2021: 258). This example indicates how not conforming to conditionality has consequences in the form of an institutionalized response. Restoration allows for a detailed exploration of how, despite recognition, conditionality is reinstated. Restoration is expressed as a systematic response that organizations put in place when a threshold of acceptability is exceeded.

To summarize, organizational inclusion is characterized by conditionality favoring those included (see Tyler, 2019 & Ortlieb et al., 2021) given the unequal distribution of symbolic power (Bourdieu, 1989). The expectation is that conditionality becomes reproduced because it is misrecognized.[8] Yet conditionality can to an extent be recognized, therefore unmasking some aspects of it that may be revealed as arbitrary or unfair. Recognition involves a variety of forms of resistance that can lead to conflict. In turn, through restoration, conditionality can address demands if they become threatening such as when the explicit asymmetrical relation between the social groups that constitute inclusion is questioned (includers – to-be-included). Therefore, inclusion involves a *dialogic process of engagement* with conditionality.

With all key concepts at hand, inclusion can then be visualized as a process where the conditions of that process are under negotiation.

[8] Following Bourdieu, the includers would be producers of symbolic power and who have the monopoly of legitimacy i.e.,' the power to impose (and even inculcate) instruments of knowledge and expressions of social reality, which are arbitrary but not recognized' as such (Bourdieu, 1979: 80).

Figure 1: Theoretical framework on actor engagement with conditionality



3.3 Applying a theoretical framework to understand the inclusion of migrant professionals

In light of the research question, negotiation is produced by the encounter of migrant professionals whom, from their subject position, may attempt question the terms of their inclusion. The inclusion of migrant professionals, as a negotiated processes, is presented in this chapter in a logic of challenge-and-response (Zartman, 2008).

Inspired by Bourdieu, the negotiations between includers and 'to-be-included' migrant professionals constitute a social space. In this social space, symbolic power is unequally distributed; the includers are in a stronger social position to define the specific terms of inclusion (Hallett, 2003). Negotiation is then structured around terms of inclusion that reflect the symbolic power of the includers.

Chapter 5 will empirically show how the terms of inclusion are made 'objective' through symbolic power (Bourdieu, 1987). In turn, Chapter 6 will show how agency enables migrant professionals to pose 'demands' that allow the terms of inclusion to be recognized. Migrant professionals, identified as bearers of a strong agentic capacity, may be able to pose serious demands that could lead to recognition. Here the concept of 'demands' will be used empirically to encompass the different types of complaints, criticisms and disagreements enacted by migrant professionals as they undergo inclusion. Demands is preferred as it better encompasses the different degrees of articulation that are used to express opposition.

A situated empirical analysis of negotiations can provide more specific insights on the migrant professionals' possibilities and limits to change the terms of their inclusion. The concept *'terms of inclusion'* will be therefore used as an empirical concept to clearly determine what is meant by 'conditions' in inclusion processes (Ortlieb et al., 2021; Tyler, 2019; Zanoni, 2011). Under specific terms of inclusion, the empirical analysis of the dissertation (Chapter 7) unpacks the misrecognition/recognition dynamics where the migrant professional's capacity to negotiate the terms of their inclusion is disentangled.

In the next chapter, the research design explains how the research question will be answered – how migrant professionals negotiate the terms of their inclusion.

4 Research design, methodology and structure of the analysis

In this section, I discuss the design choices to undertake the empirical research (Chapters 5 and 6) in conjunction with the theoretical framework (Chapter 3). In Section 4.1, I explain and justify my ontological position and epistemological approach. I elaborate briefly on the paradigm in which this dissertation is located. Section 4.2 explains the choice of the case study and how the program under study captures a situation of power subordination of a group of migrant professionals. Section 4.3 shows how the empirical data was generated and analysed. I describe the use and purpose of the research techniques and discuss how I combine the use of interviews with other materials (field notes, corporate documents, and audio visual material). I justify and present the coding structure and how the relevant codes and dimensions were constructed according to the theoretical framework along the lines of symbolic power and misrecognition. Drawing on the coding structure, I present the framework for analysis. In Section 4.4, I reflect on my own involvement in knowledge production and how my identity as a migrant professional contributed to the production of knowledge. Further, I explain how my position in the field and my interaction with organizational members allowed me to get 'hints' into the key concepts of the dissertation and narrow down the research focus. Finally, Section 4.5 discusses the ethical considerations of knowledge production while having a critical perspective.

Given the collaborative nature of this work, this section stresses an active voice ('I') where possible, to highlight my specific input.

4.1 Ontological position and epistemological approach

The choice of methods used in this dissertation relies first on the position I occupy in the world and the scientific discipline (Bourdieu, 2003). I situate myself in the critical research tradition in organization studies (Clegg, 2009; Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2018). My premise is that social reality instead of being 'objective', is socially constructed and shaped by social, political, cultural, economic and gender structures, values and meanings (Guba & Lincoln, 1994: 109). I therefore look at the social world from a combined critical, relational and constructivist perspective.

The perspective here is critical insofar it is concerned with exposing the social constraints that limit human potential (Burrell & Morgan, 1979). The focus is on the actor, as an agent capable of reflexive action, but who is embedded in unequal structures. Taking an agentic perspective, the ultimate objective is to show how unequal structures operate and how these are reproduced 'within structures that support the power of some groups and the subordination of others' (Gagnon et al., 2022: 11). Centering on the actor, i.e. the organizational members, provides a lens that accommodates the plasticity of the unequal social structures to recompose themselves and therefore allows me to unveil the social mechanisms at play in the reproduction of unequal social relations. In this way, agency and structure become intimately related.

In the field, the latent possibilities of disrupting power asymmetries and the barriers that may deny these possibilities are stressed (Foley & Valenzuela, 2005; Madison, 2022). Accordingly, I am attentive to moments of rupture that could reveal the existing power relations at play (Bourdieu, 2000). I set this approach in the lived experience of managers and migrant professionals 'doing inclusion' or 'being included' in the context of power asymmetries in an organization. The generation of the empirical material in my dialogue with research participants, therefore, represents constant reflections of the difference between the 'what is' from the 'what could be' (Madison, 2022: 5) within the limits set by organizations and society.

In turn, the ontological approach shapes knowledge production. The empirical material is co-generated in dialogue with the research participants rather than being collected; migrant professional's possibilities to understand and modify their most immediate situation becomes the focus. This is the premise of the research method used here – critical ethnography.

Epistemologically, I rely on social constructionism (Cunliffe, 2008) by producing knowledge through the interaction between myself and others, but also in the interaction between

organizational members. Organizational members construct reality in their own interactions and through the representations of those interactions (Lamont & Swidler, 2014). In my role of researcher, I am located mainly as constructor of the organizational members' constructions, interpretating organizational members own interpretations (Bevir & Rhodes, 2006). Such interpretations are not purely constructed; rather, they are generated against the different forms of materiality at play. They are further mediated by systematic reflexivity (Cunliffe, 2009, 2020); for example, descriptive categories such as race, ethnicity, and gender are both constructed and tangible. By extension, I construct organizational members as facing a double attachment: 'they are situated in an organizational existence both "as it is" and "as it is constructed"' (Boltanski, 2011; Nyberg and De Cock, 2019: 611). In this way I try to articulate the subjective with the objective (Bourdieu, 1987) in alignment with a critical ontological position.

4.2 Case selection: A situation of migrant professional disempowerment

The investigation centres around a program for the inclusion of migrant professionals in the Swedish labor market. The 'Program' (pseudonym) was initiated by a large service company called 'Servall' (pseudonym), with a clear commitment to the inclusion of migrant professionals. The Program is the most notable among several initiatives of Servall which operates alongside another program for unemployed Swedish youth (hereinafter referred to as YP). In partnership with the Swedish Employment Office (EO), the Program offers a 6-month internship to unemployed migrant professionals (with university studies and relevant work experience) with very basic compensation. After the 6-month internship has been completed, Settlers – migrant professionals participating in the Program - have the possibility of being recruited by Servall (Section 5.1.2 provides a more elaborated description of the Program) yet employment in Servall is not guaranteed. Therefore,he Program offers Servall the possibility of capturing the situation of Settlers.

The case is an example of the disempowerment of a group of Settlers that are part of an inclusion program. The case is representative of migrant professionals' negotiation under conditions of subordination that go through multiple experiences involving disempowerment (Van Laer & Janssens, 20179. Disempowerment is a situation that deprives a social group from having 'power, authority, or influence' (Merriam-Websters dictionary). Therefore, I systematically study this particular situation.

In the context of the research question, the case study method stands out from other methods (e.g. survey based research) as it allows me to examine the understandings and deep motivations of actors (Della Porta & Keating, 2008) in a single unit of observation. Using a case study approach is compatible with critical ethnography as it allows me to analyze a unit in-depth while generating situated knowledge.

Within the case study of the Program, an ethnographic lens is used to explore the 'minutiae of experience, the cultural texture of social relations, and the remote structural forces that bear on them' (Yin, 2016: 69). A single case allows me to inductively build on the everyday experiences of actors 'doing inclusion' to identify power relations. By going in-depth into the situation of Settlers will then help elucidate and 'extend out' features of how inclusion is negotiated generally (Burawoy, 1998).

Th**is** case allows me to understand the experience of migrant professionals as a social group characterized for being in **'**labor transition**'** (Nohl et al., 2014). In this transition, many migrant professionals are also 'subjected to employment insecurity and settlement uncertainties associated with unstable jobs, temporary residence, and risks of downward mobility' (Zhan & Zhou, 2017: 1655). Settler**s** in the Program strive to include themselves in the local labor market and organizations**,** and experience employment precarity and occupational downgrading inside organizations (Fernando & Patriotta, 2020; Zanoni, 2019). The precarity is also tangible in the Program in that offers of employment at the end are uncertain, unpredictable, and risky from the point of view of the worker (Kalleberg, 2008). The Program, in 'doing' inclusion through internships for a basic compensation[9] illustrate the plight of migrant professionals undergoing precarity by occupying a subordinated power position.

The Program, by facilitating internships, displays an inclusive organizational practice (Mor-Barak, 2015; Pless & Mak, 2004). Yet, internships also become a classical example of an employment 'grey zone' that could direct skilled professionals into precarity (Armano & Murgia, 2017). Taking an internship illustrates a case of 'hope labor' that suggests r a future opportunity to take part of highly skilled work (Alacovska, 2017; Maury, 2020). Therefore, good performance during an internship is central to avoid the entrapment of remaining underemployed for long

[9] In most cases the monthly compensation was SEK 4,000 (approximately 385 USD), paid by the EO.

period of time (Maury, 2022). In this Program, most Settlers occupied internship positions incommensurate with their professional seniority.

Within this situation, migrant professionals may stand out for their capacity to make themselves intelligible by commanding a transnational professional language and mindset which is to a great extent shared with locals in the workplace (Özkazanç-Pan, 2021). For instance, a clear sense of professionalism of 'what work is about and when it is effective' could be used as means to negotiate inclusion against precarious circumstances (Bengtsson & Mickwitz, 2022; Schinkel & Noordegraaf, 2011: 68). Accordingly, this ability is also translated in the way that migrant professionals are able to 'figure out' the conditions under which they are included in their situation as interns. By focusing on the Program allows me to bound the phenomenon and explore Settlers' agentic capacity within the interlocked constraints given by society, the labor market, and Servall (Busse et al., 2017).

The Program proposes an inclusion that exemplifies the situation of migrant professionals in Sweden, where the professional skills (empowering) intersect with unemployment (Statistics Sweden, 2019), and ethno-cultural and class barriers (depowering, generating complex scenarios open for bargaining (Hunger et al., 2021; Povrzanović Frykman & Öhlander, 2018). Therefore, the Program allows me to explore the Settler's negotiation capacity under a relative subordinate power position, making a theoretically significant case to answer the research question (Wieviorka, 1992).

One possible limitation of the case study method is the effect of over-exposition to the research setting. Especially during the last 18 months of ethnography, familiarity with Servall and the Settlers may have desensitized me to relevant field impressions and leading me to lose the ability to be surprised by new events (Simmel, 1950).

Characteristics of research participants

The group of Settlers consists of migrant professionals (n=19) with tertiary qualifications from their countries of origin. According to their personal accounts, matched with their personal profiles on social media, most Settlers had one postgraduate degree and in a few cases two or more postgraduate degrees. Most Settlers arrived in Sweden within the last 5 years prior to the

fieldwork commencing. All Settlers were born outside of the EU-15[10] and came from countries with a lower average income level compared to Sweden; this reflects the global division of labor affecting migrant workers (Shachar, 2006). There was an overrepresentation of women and nationals from Eastern European and Middle Eastern countries fitting a demographic profile characterized by de-skilling abroad (Bolzani et al., 2021; Nowicka, 2006) where people become comparatively less skilled over time due to the lack of work opportunities. Most Settlers had been living in Sweden for less than 7 years prior to the fieldwork period and arrived mostly as accompanying partners of economic migrants or as refugees.

All but one Manager (n=15) participating in this study was born or was raised in Sweden and three managers did not have a tertiary education. The group of managers consisted of high-ranked managers and middle managers, all of which were directly involved in the Program either in executing the Program or in mentorship functions. Servall's archivist in charge of the archives and an EO manager (the link between the EO and the Program) provided additional perspectives on matters of inclusion (see Table 2).

One clear limitation was that interviews were conducted almost unanimously with 'successful Settlers' or 'on the way to being successful'. This dissertation used these voices to construct, conflict-free, Servall's optimistic discourse on inclusion. All conversations were based on Settlers that had completed the internship successfully or were undergoing the internship – there was limited access to dissonant voices. However, there were four cases registered of Settlers that could not finish the Program and left before the end of their 6-month internship. Access to this information was given through conversations with their mentors; therefore, the cases of those 'non-successful' Settlers could not be considered primary data. The reasons three different mentors gave for Settlers exiting the Program were: 'cultural clashes', [*the position*] 'wasn't her thing'; 'taxing requirements', and 'passivity'. Including dissonant voices could have added more variation to the findings. For instance, by introducing different Settlers' perspectives on structural and organizational barriers towards inclusion.

[10] EU-15 area countries are: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

4.3 Production of empirical material and analysis

4.3.1 Setting-up the field and finding a focus

Grand tour questions and involvement with managers

The empirical material was generated during a multiple-year collaborative project between myself, a research partner, and Servall. The research partner (an organizational scholar) was essential in obtaining access to Servall and building strong relationships with high-ranked and middle managers directly involved with the Program (Cunliffe & Alcadipani, 2016). To facilitate access, an internship agreement was signed by both the Stockholm School of Economics (my host institution) and Servall. Through the internship agreement, I was authorized to use the premises of Servall and have an official email account 'normalizing' my presence.

The research partner's involvement dated back to a previous research project in Servall and paved the way to defining my tasks both as a (new) colleague and researcher. This proved central as it anticipated the research tradition (i.e., critical work) and scope of our work (i.e. that it was not a consulting service) which set the boundaries for my own place in the field. The input of the research partner was also important for the co-production of the empirical material in two ways: (1) in conducting and reporting in situ observations in the field which generated secondary data that was integrated into the empirical analysis; (2) posing critical questions around inclusion in Servall in our tripartite dialogue with managers, hinting the existence of an organizational process not readily perceivable.

During the fieldwork period, for 18 months I acted as intern carrying out support functions for the Program; I openly conducted research alongside administrative activities. As part of the collaborative project, together with the researcher partner, a close relationship was established with the three managers responsible for the Program (Rana, Mattias, and Lars; pseudonyms). There were frequent meetings to discuss the ideas behind the Program (i.e., why it is needed), it's main goals (i.e., what needs to be achieved), and, at times, operational problems (i.e., what can be improved). The conversations with Program managers involved two presentations where the author and the research partner introduced and explained to other Servall employees the context of our involvement, the collaborative nature of the research, and the broad topic of interest; diversity and inclusion, and how to create spaces of reflection on these topics. In addition, our impressions from the field were shared with both managers and Settlers regularly.

This included a presentation of our preliminary findings. During these meetings, we paid particular attention to maintain the the anonymity of research participants and the confidentiality of data, such as by blurring the sex of the participants when rephrasing some quotes. This close exchange with Servall's management helped to build rapport and gain key insights about the managers' ideas behind the Program. The contact with managers was maintained via social media platforms after the end of the fieldwork period.

I first approached the field with an open approach using participant observations. I used this time to introduce myself as part of the Program and – along with my research partner – explained my presence at Servall and the research purpose at the Department of Human Talent (fictitious), where I spent most of the time. The field immersion at first started through 'grand tour' questions (Spradley, 1979), with managers and 'Showcased Settlers' (a name I gave to a group of Settlers featured as role models by upper management and used in the promotion of the Program) that were assigned important roles related to the Program. This involved asking repetitive descriptive questions in a simple language. For instance, questions involving events related to inclusion were asked in different ways to get a sense of the dominant opinions. The grand tour questions allowed participants enough time to think about and for prepare their answers (Spradley, 1979: 62). This allowed me to obtain the general views of both managers and Settlers.

I was actively involved in a close collaboration between responsible managers and Showcased Settlers. The generation of the empirical material was done in dialogue with the responsible managers to whom the research partner and I would talk with periodically – particularly at the beginning. This active dialogue at the outset possibly helped to 'normalize' my presence with managers. In this way, this created a bond which enabled me to gain access to informal gatherings which managers set up and arranged throughout the duration of the fieldwork. As the fieldwork progressed, I was continually invited to activities organized by high-ranked managers such as workshops and 'speed meetings' with candidates to the Program. The events were key opportunities to obtain insights on Servall's working culture and map potential key informants.

Field impressions and identification of an optimistic discourse

The first field impressions and encounters with managers were formative in that they helped me notice what seemed to be a unanimous 'happy talk' about the Program both in conversations and in documents. Yet, this happy talk coexisted with everyday forms of micro-resistance and

criticism by many Settlers, mostly offstage (Goffman, 1956; Scott, 1990). Despite some criticism, the overwhelming opinion among Settlers about the Program was positive. This situation established an empirical mystery (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2007) suggesting a process of organizational domination which centered the research focus broadly on the effects of power and resistance (Bourdieu, 1980; Burawoy, 2012). Two simultaneous processes that I sought to understand then took place: (1) the building of an optimistic discourse on inclusion by management, and against that backdrop (2) the Settlers' construction of meaning about their inclusion both in the Swedish society and Servall.

I was in contact with the everyday work of Showcased Settlers, who turned to be my main informants. Staying close to Showcased Settlers was important for several reasons. First, Showcased Settlers seemed to influence many new Settlers as they were often their mentors. The Showcased Settlers I worked with were aware of the general needs and concerns of other Settlers. Second, Showcased Settlers usually had significant input into the Program. This was useful to access a 'bird's-eye view' of the Program, and to have a reference person that allowed me to contact harder-to-find Settlers through snowballing (Atkinson & Flint, 2001). Third, Showcased Settlers had been part of the Program for a longer period of time, allowing them to reflect more on their own experiences of inclusion. In many cases, this space for reflection allowed Showcased Settlers to take distance from the Program. This distance acquired meaningfulness when they articulated critiques around the labor market, Servall, and the Program.

Given my interest in power dynamics, when opportunities arose, I encouraged Settlers to elaborate on any episodes involving conflict. Stories predominantly entailed agreeability and support for the organization and the Program, but at times they were combined with everyday demands. Demands referred to any mention by Settler's that diverged from the optimistic discourse; this included resistant acts, complaints, criticism, and disagreements. For example, Settlers complaints about slack colleagues or that participants in the Program are not properly compensated. Therefore, the focus on conflict in the interviews and conversations in the field encouraged the emergence of a wide range of demands that Settlers directed to wider societal issues, to Servall, as well as the handling of the Program. However, these demands were not an object of analysis in and of themselves during the fieldwork period. Rather, the demands became salient after analysis of the empirical data, when it was possible to match them with agency-

centered concepts such as micro-resistance (Zanoni & Janssens, 2007). In turn, the existence of everyday demands proved that Settlers tended to take a critical and reflexive distance.

The articulation of my reflections then worked dialectically by contraposing demands with the optimistic discourse. Contraposing these two concepts mutually provided mutual clarification.

4.3.2 Research techniques

Interviewing

Interviewing was the main technique for the generation of the empirical. I conducted 51 interviews with Settlers (n=30) and Managers (n=19) participating in the Program, the responsible person for maintenance of Servall's historical archives (n=1), and an Employment Office Recruitment Manager (n=1) who acted as conduit between EO and Servall. The interviews were both semi-structured and unstructured. The interviews were complemented with the analysis of field notes, corporate documents, workshop presentations, and audiovisual material from Servall.

The analysis of the interview transcripts of Managers and Settlers were treated separately. Local managers held a different power position in the organization, which allowed them to construct the terms of inclusion and look for ways to maintain them. Through their authority managers could integrate the terms of inclusion into the organizational processes associated with the Program, such as through the recruitment and promotion of interns. Particularly relevant to highlight is the voice of managers who had a direct responsibility for the Program and represented it publicly. Therefore, these managers' interviews were taken in particular consideration when elaborating the terms of inclusion. These interviews are therefore part of a different chapter featuring the organizational setting: 'The terms of inclusion: Symbolic power in an inclusive organization' (Chapter 5).

The interviews with Settlers were open and discussed a series of topic of the Settlers *inclusion experiences*: arrival, employment and incorporation in Servall. The interviews tried to capture inclusion experiences in the Settlers' own terms (Skovgaard-Smith and Poulfelt, 2018). With that purpose, I strived to create an atmosphere where Settlers described their experiences as part of the Program in a conversational and colloquial style. The idea behind this approach was to keep their answers and descriptions as 'authentic' as possible allowing me to get to understand their worlds (Lamont, 2000). In a reflexive note, while I never initiated conflicting issues with Settlers

during our conversations, my implicit expectation was often that Settlers – and managers – could acknowledge the existence of clashes as result of inclusion efforts. All the interviewees knew my dual role (intern-researcher) and the interviewer's identities data was anonymized after the interviews and stored in a secure place.

The semi-structured interviews inquired broadly about the journey of Settlers from their country of origin to Sweden and then into Servall and the Program. The semi-structured interviews then explored the Settlers positioning with respect to their journey. In this way, Settlers were situated so that they could take stock of the journey and express conflicting points and recount conflicting episodes – if they existed. Unstructured interviews usually took place as conversations in informal settings to further inquire topics raised during semi-structured interviews. In particular, topics involving disagreement and conflict were elaborated in more detail to gain insights on what some Settlers questioned about the Program.

Participation in the interviews was voluntary and the interviewees were asked to provide their consent for conversations to be audio recorded. As part of this consent process, the interviewees were informed about the general themes of the discussion, that their answers would be kept confidential, and that their answers would only be used for purposes of this research. The timing and duration of the interviews was carefully designed to respect the working routines of the interviewees. For instance, the interview time proposed would never last more than one hour, unless the participant desired to continue beyond that time. In the same way, further interviewing of the same person would be previously agreed with them in order to create a safe space for reflection.

Audio files were professionally transcribed.

Observations and field notes

The field notes were collected as part of participant observations allowing me to characterize the organizational setting, documenting interactions between myself and different organizational members, and interactions between organizational members. The field notes were written in a log diary that was used intensively at the beginning of the fieldwork. Field notes served to register the multiple ways in which managers and Settlers act, providing rich and detailed information, allowing me to observe and understand tensions among organizational members. For example,

how they discuss with each other what is fair or unfair, logical-illogical, in Settler recruitment criteria or promotion.

After the end of each visit to the field, I documented reflections describing the observations from my own perspective. The field notes were converted to .docx format, amounting to about 100 pages of text. The text was coded in different colors representing three different levels of interpretation; i.e. descriptive notes, interpretations of those notes in the moment, and reflections in hindsight. Extracts of field notes are used in Chapters 5 and 6 but, mostly, on my reflections on knowledge production (Section 4.4).

The observations were often registered in 'rush hours' such as during work meetings, workshops and events; however, the note writing took place in the following hours or days, in random locations like public transport and cafes. This avoided the disruption of daily work routines and allowed me some space from the field to process the observations. The field notes kept the identity of research participants anonymized and were stored in a secure place after the fieldwork.

The field material material is summarized below.

Table 2. Overview of field-material used in the study

Field material	Nature and purpose	Duration / amount
Field notes from participant observations in Servall	Focus of the observations was to understand daily interactions between managers and Settlers. This included everyday conversations and group meetings among managers at different levels. They also include two workshops I participated in aimed at mentoring new managers on diversity and inclusion.	18 months About 100 pages of transcribed field notes from everyday observations
Annual Reports	Corporate archives portraying Servall's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 1993–2021, to identify Servall's inclusion approach and how it changed over time, and the value attached to the Program within that strategy.	25 excerpts mentioning diversity and equality in different years since 1993
Consulting report	An analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of the Program conducted by an external consulting firm. The report provided an idea of the strategic value of the Program for Servall.	39 pages
Workshop sessions	Internal presentations on recruitment processes and explanations of the rationale behind the Program were used to investigate how the Program is presented to middle managers.	5 hours of observations and slides covering pedagogical material, 2 information sheets

Field material	Nature and purpose	Duration / amount
Promotional videos	Promotional videos of the Program were used to learn about the internal and external representation of Settlers.	9 videos promoting the Program from the intranet and the open web
Transcripts of interviews	One semi-structured interview with the former Servall CEO and founder of the Program to understand the basis for starting the Program.	1 interview, 1 hour
	Semi-structured interviews with managers responsible for running the Program about their experiences with the Program.	18 interviews, average length 1 hour
	Semi-structured interview with archivist.	1 interview, 74 minutes
	Semi-structured interview with Employment Office manager.	1 interview, 1 hour
Transcripts of interviews	Semi-structured interviews with Settlers to understand their experiences of inclusion.	20 interviews, average length 1 hour
	Unstructured interviews with Showcased Settlers to further elaborate reflections on their experiences of inclusion.	10 interviews, average length 1 hour
Total project	Participant observations; Servall's online, dissemination and archival material; interviews.	18 months of core field research and participant observations; 50 interviews

4.3.3 Analytical process and coding

Time horizon and coding software

The collection of the empirical material and analyses was undertaken in two sequential stages, where one stage informed the next. Following the inductive approach, the most substantial attempts to bridge 'raw empirical material' and theory happened in the later stage. There were two major periods of intense involvement in the field. The first four-month period (November 2017 – February 2018) involved familiarization with the case organization, grand tour questions and preliminary interviews, mostly with managers. The second period of 14 months (February 2018 – March 2019) involved conducting interviews and actively participating in the life of the organization. These two periods were combined with 'zoom out' periods to undertake preliminary analyses and return to social and organizational theories to frame the preliminary findings (Nicolini, 2009). The detachment of the zoom out periods were key to gain clarity by sorting the raw field impressions.

The preliminary analysis conducted during zoom out periods was conducted using NVivo12; this allowed me to keep track of emerging constructs while at a distance from the field. The empirical material increased in a cumulative way from February 2018 onwards. The empirical material was systematically anonymized and put in safe storage.

Analytical approach

The empirical material was analyzed using a power-sensitive approach (Contu & Wilmott, 2003; Madison, 2022); I considered the text of the interviews and the inductive first order categories in view of the power position of the person expressing an opinion. Given the importance of positionality, the analytical process delineated between the construction of the terms of inclusion initiated through the power of managers, and the Settlers experiences navigating those terms.

The separation of Managers and Settlers follows the asymmetrical character of inclusion (Adamson et al., 2021). This split is justified in that high-ranked managers had ample leeway and resources to set up the Program from the outset, and had the decision power to amend the Program over time. For example, managers have the power leverage to construct migrant's employability and could benefit from such constructions (Diedrich & Styhre. 2013; Risberg & Romani, 2021; Samaluk, 2015; Vesterberg, 2016). This power position of managers is also strengthened by (1) being part of Servall for a longer time than Settlers, and (2) having been born and raised in Sweden. The inference is that due to these asymmetries, the experience of Managers differ from that of Settlers.

While the separation between Managers and Settlers is useful for analytical purposes, the analysis itself tried to avoid an includer-included – as in dominator-dominated – situation. It is understood that symbolic power circulates among people (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992); therefore, the empirical material is ultimately intended to convey the relational struggles at play in Servall (Vallas & Cummins, 2014). Therefore, unequal positionality and relationality are articulated together.

Coding process

The Gioia methodology (Gioia et al., 2013; Nag et al., 2007) was used for moving from 'face value' answers and sources into the constructs related to the theoretical framework. The widely used Gioia methodology is suitable because it can inductively help generate novel theoretical insights by giving voice to actors (Gioia et al., 2013) while remaining compatible with a critical

approach (Ortlieb et al., 2021; Romani et al., 2019). To address criticism of the Gioia methodology possibly hindering the generative role of the researcher (Grodal et al., 2021), there was a constant reflection around the tendency to neatly fit empirical material into pre-established concepts i.e. doing essentialist categorization (Tatlı & Özbilgin, 2012). Therefore, I tried to balance between the generative margin to build codes and the possibility of organizing them in a comprehensible and logical way.

Following Gioia et al. (2013) allowed for a clear visual representation of the coding process. Accordingly, the empirical material was structured around first order constructs (interviewee and source-centered), second order constructs (researcher-centered), which led to aggregated dimensions (theory-centered) and made possible a visualization of the coding process ('data structure').

By centering on the experiences of Managers and Settlers separately, the coding process was handled somewhat differently. The following sections distinguish between the constitution of the organization's terms of inclusion and Settlers' experiences.

For the sake of clarity, the term 'codes' is used to refer to the first stages of coding, while 'construct' and 'dimension' refer to the finalized coding that appear in the data structure.

Coding the terms of inclusion

The Gioia methodology allows for the use of multiple 'data sources' besides interviews (see Gioia et al., 2013: 19 and Gioia and Chittipeddi, 1991: 437). The constitution of the terms of inclusion originated from the 'hunch' of a dominant optimistic discourse at Servall (Pink, 2021). The first period of field immersion (November 2017 – February 2018) strongly suggested that Managers would use their power to build inclusion as a win-win situation. The term 'win-win' was constantly repeated by Managers as shown in the preliminary NVivo12 coding. The coding was therefore driven by the field observation of optimism.

High-ranked Managers' voices were used to construct the terms of inclusion, since their views were most likely to reflect the official position of the organization, and the production of official material is monitored by them. In this way, high-ranked Managers represented those mostly benefitting from the distribution of *symbolic power*, and also those possessing more 'world-making' power (Bourdieu, 1991). The Managers considered to be high-ranking used (mostly) occupying decision-making positions with respect of the Program (including the CEO and initiator of the

Program) and were born and raised in Sweden and already working in Servall. Therefore, Managers were able to inscribe power in official material by using a 'superior language' to impose an arbitrary view and express their objective interests (Kamoche et al., 2014). Therefore, the Managers voice and what the official material conveyed were the main sources of the organization's terms of inclusion.

Using the existence of an optimistic discourse among Managers served as basis for an analysis of the 'reality' Servall Managers aimed to construct. The optimistic discourse in Servall seemed to be working as an ideology or 'superstructure' that may conceal the conditions Settlers had to endure (Gill, 2014; Zanoni, 2011; further elaboration on this point can be found in Section 4.4). Optimism, while not the ultimate object of study, allowed me to identify Managers' justifications of the Program's worth. Therefore, following the optimistic discourse, multiple empirical sources (i.e. workshop material, annual and consulting reports, and promotional videos) where analyzed to get a closer understanding of how the optimistic view on inclusion was substantiated (first order constructs). Optimism worked as a sensitizing concept and an entry point to the different sources (Charmaz, 2000), yet the open coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) revealed the existence of more codes. Following the inductive logic, I did a line-by-line coding (Charmaz, 2000) which suggested that optimism related closely to the Manager's public descriptions of the Program and its justification.

The Managers justifications were interpreted as a necessity of the Program to maintain the status quo; along the lines of symbolic power, it appeared the Program did not aspire to address the existing power imbalance in Servall (second order construct) or aim to include Settlers. Finally, the Program's logic is expressed in specific conditions that the Settlers are expected to accept in order to be included (aggregated dimensions) and which, upon acceptance, are likely to secure the reproduction of symbolic power (Bourdieu, 1979). Therefore, it was necessary to identify the specific organizational conditions that Servall Managers posed to Settlers. These conditions are 'operationalized' as four *terms of inclusion*.

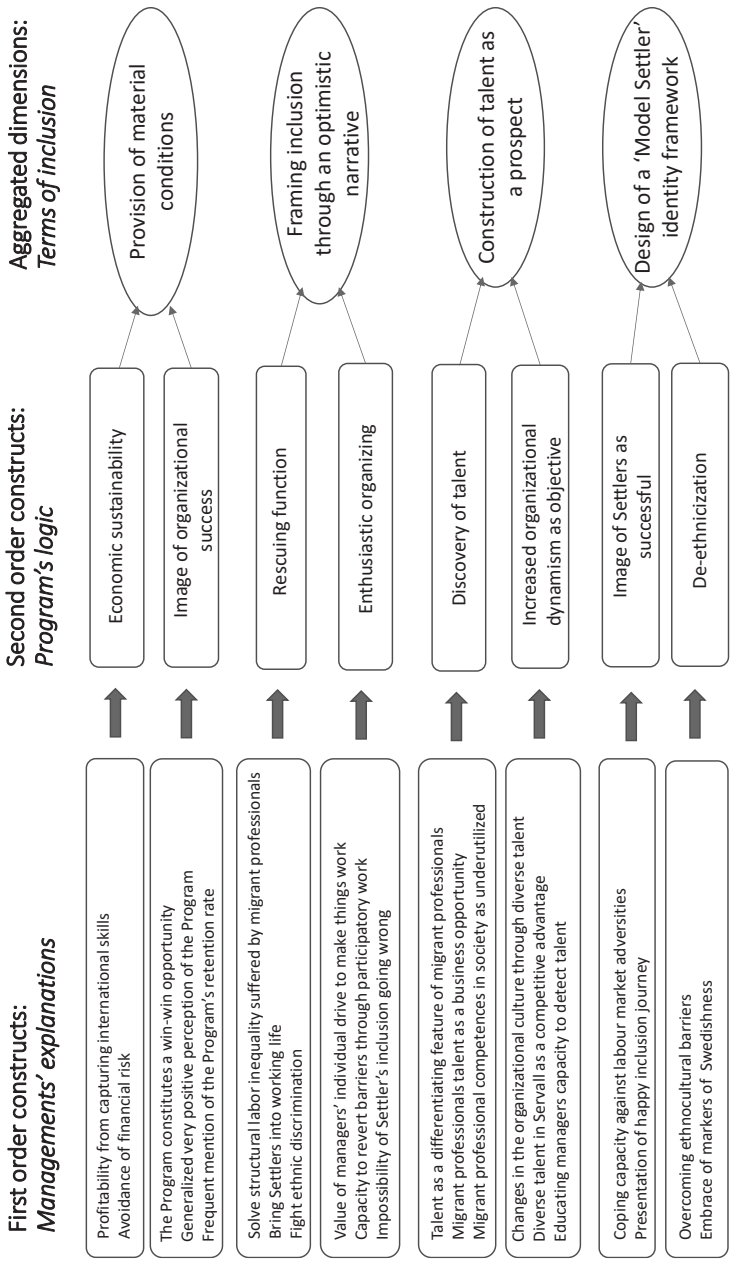
Four terms of inclusion were constructed by combining the voice of Managers with official materials, mostly textual and audio-visual material. These combined sources were used to represent authorized voices in the public representation of the Program for internal (e.g. workshops and intranet videos) and external communications (e.g. Annual Reports and external

promotion videos). These sources conveyed the voice of Managers by showing how they wanted the Program to be perceived.

Four terms of inclusion were constructed under the (abbreviated) names of: 'material conditions', 'optimistic story', 'prospective talent', and the 'model Settler'. 'Optimistic story' drew from the exploration of the optimistic discourse and uses the voices of high-ranked Managers justifications for the Program. 'Material conditions' builds on workshop materials describing the Program with the voice of high-ranked Managers. 'Prospective talent' uses mostly Servall's Annual Reports and consulting report, supported with the voices of local Managers at different organizational levels. 'Model Settler' builds on promotional videos produced by Managers featuring Settlers. The terms together show the dimensions of conditionality operating through the symbolic power of Managers.

The coding of the terms of inclusion can be visualized in the data structure called: 'Managers use of symbolic power' (Figure 2).

Figure 2: **Managers use of symbolic power: First order constructs, second order constructs, and aggregated dimensions**



Coding Settler's experiences in relation to conditionality

The coding of Settler's experiences was based on their everyday demands. The main assumption in the field was that despite inclusion efforts, the structural inequality in the labor market remained unchanged. I had expectations that *misrecognition* of structural inequality could turn into *recognition* (Bourdieu, 1985, 1991). This expectation was behind my decision to focus on Settlers' demands.

Centering on peoples' everyday demands was useful for two reasons. First, they signal a form of micro-resistance or 'infra-politics' (Scott, 1990) that, if taken seriously, could serve to see alternative or desired forms of organizing. The critiques that were particularly considered were those that could question the optimistic discourse. Second, demands by Settlers were important when they indicated a decoupling from the optimistic discourse. This decoupling allowed me to observe the phenomenon from a meta-critical position. The situation of Settlers undergoing experiencing precarity in the labor market (i.e. the reason for the case selection), often became a source for reflection that did not need 'academic validation to produce critical thought' (see Islam, 2015: 246). That allowed me to use everyday demands as an inspiring source to develop critical perspectives directly grounded in the fieldwork.

Settler's experiences were derived from mostly from semi-structured and unstructured interviews. The analysis started with an open coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) that paid attention to many different aspects, most of which were not included in the analysis. Later, the coding paid particular attention to the Settlers everyday demands (complaints, criticisms, disagreements). The first-order constructs tried to make sense of Settlers' firsthand experiences of inclusion under the broad frame of power imbalance at Servall, assuming an uneven distribution of symbolic power (Bourdieu, 1979). At this stage, while I consulted the literature on organizational domination, I purposely suspended my judgement and let the number of codes accumulate (Nag et al., 2007). This first analysis generated around 500 first-order codes in NVivo12 (open coding) and provided a way to familiarize myself with the interview material from a power-sensitive perspective (Madison, 2022). The codes were first analyzed and then reduced into a more manageable number, attending to the everyday demands of Settlers to different elements playing out in their inclusion journey – specifically, society, the labor market, Servall, and the Program. These demands were centered on the Settlers' experiences with their most immediate reality at Servall and the Program. Therefore, this was an attempt to separate

what seemed pertinent for the Settlers 'from that which [wa]sn't' (Strauss & Corbin, 1990: 44). Subsequently, I reduced the number of meaningful first-order constructs to thirteen.

The interpretation of these first-order constructs derived into six second-order constructs as they were turned into more abstract constructs in relation to inclusion. At this stage, the question at hand was if the second-order constructs were capable of resolving the empirical mystery (see Gioia et al., 2013: 20). This then generated an intense iteration between the second-order concepts and the theories at hand. The iterations showed a relationship between everyday demands (complaints, criticisms, disagreements) against the conditionality of inclusion at Servall. The general appreciation of the exercise of power and resistance then moved into more specific sociological theories of power that could stress agency and participation of Settlers in co-creating inclusion – despite Settlers often bring critical. That reorientation focused the analysis on the Settlers demands in a context of conditionality. More specifically, I searched for answers to the question: Given the Program's success, how do Settlers move from demands to apparently embracing the conditions of inclusion?

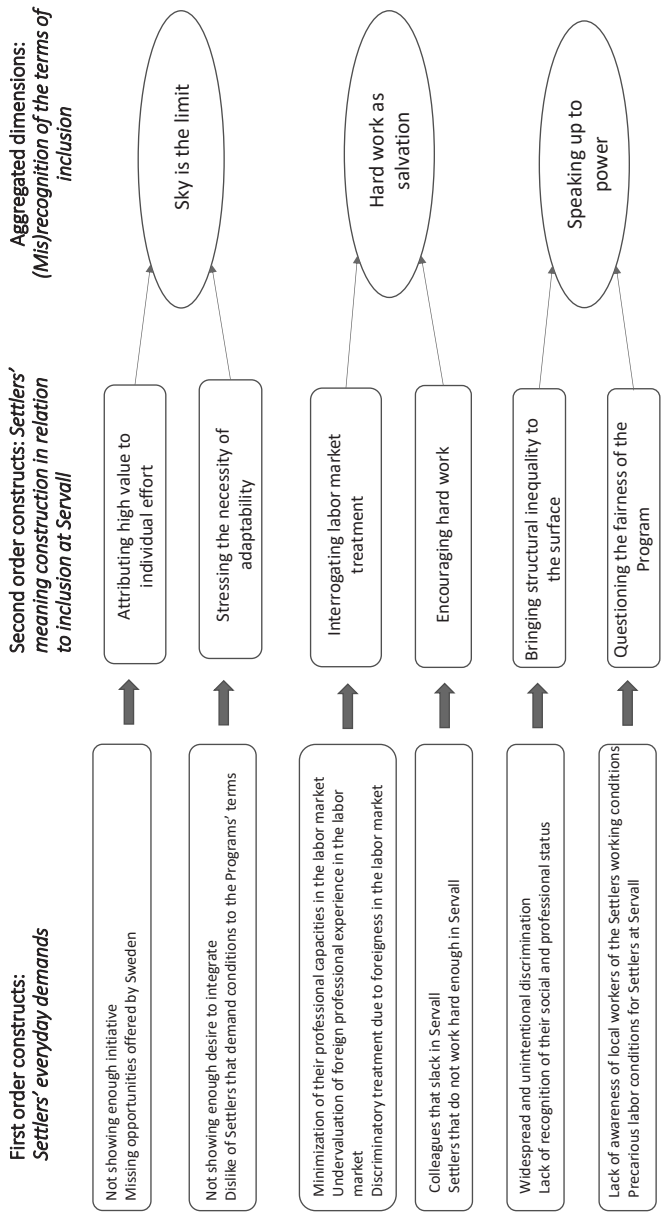
The aggregated dimensions emerged as I tried to make sense of how symbolic power could operate beyond the Settlers 'grasp', moving from the individual to a more sociological approach. This led to a deeper dive into the empirical material using the theoretical framing of Bourdieu. This framing animated the inquiry on whether symbolic power, as exerted by managers in Servall, could go *misrecognized* (Bourdieu, 1985, 1991). Yet, given that misrecognition is not total (Everett, 2002), recognition and conflict come into play. Therefore, an attempt was made to explore how Settlers – considering their critical and reflexive capacities – may engage conditionality at Servall. It was then necessary to use an individual perspective directed to see how Settlers *make sense of their situation in everyday experiences.*

The aggregated dimensions take the perspective of the Settlers to identify three ways in which Settler's share their experiences of integrating in Swedish life, the labor market, and Servall. These aggregated dimensions should be seen as ideal representations of paths, or 'ideal types' of Settler's agency (Weber, 2010). Inevitably having three dimensions reduces the number of possibilities of agency when taking the Settler's perspective. For instance, during fieldwork, Settler's individually would demonstrate multiple forms of agency not reflected in the ideal types. However, using ideal types has the benefit of creating a workable number of dimensions by accentuating common attributes of Settlers (Hendricks & Breckinridge, 1973). To ensure

workability, these aggregated dimensions were constructed against the possibilities given by the terms of inclusion such as the exercise of symbolic power. In turn, this enables comparability (Clegg, 2007), allowing for the construction of 'degrees' of misrecognition. For the sake of clarity, Chapter 6 uses the term 'ideal type' to refer to Gioia's notion of an 'aggregated dimension'.

Following a logic of ideal types, aggregated dimensions were constructed considering the demands (first order constructs) and how 'threatening' to the terms of inclusion these demands may be by considering the distance to power. Groups of Settlers were then clustered together (the Settler's pseudonyms can be found in Chapter 6). This process involved constant (re)arrangements and analytical iterations until the final aggregated dimensions could be accommodated. First and second order constructs, and aggregated dimensions, are visualized in the 'data structure' (see Figure 3: 'Settlers' agency under conditionality').

Figure 3: **Settlers' agency under conditionality: First order constructs, second order constructs, and aggregated dimensions.**



4.3.4 Analysis: Engaging with the terms of inclusion

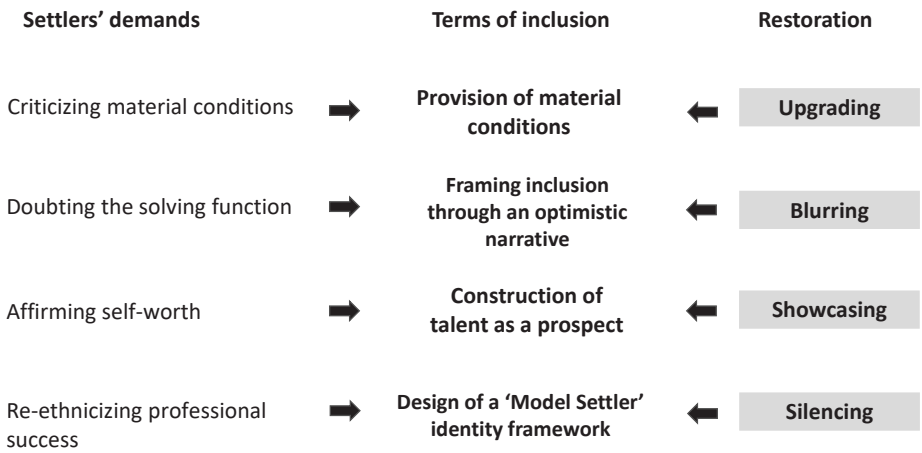
The analysis puts together the aggregated dimension of 'Settlers' agency under conditionality' and the 'terms of inclusion'. The four terms of inclusion are used to organize the analysis and a form of restoration is attached to each.

Using the theoretical framework, different forms of demands were identified. Some of the Settler's demands could escalate into tensions which required an institutionalized response (restoration) That encouraged the identification – wherever possible – of tensions where the Settlers' desired course of action clashed with the logic of the terms of inclusion.

These tensions were analyzed to understand the extent to which a change in the terms of inclusion could be achieved. Instead, restoration showed how conditional norms were maintained in the negotiation of institutionalized actors (Managers) in the face of Settlers demands. Inspired by FPS (Boltanski, 2011), the interaction was established by constructing a dialogical relationship between the logic of action of Settlers against the conditionality posed by Managers.

Instances of tension and restoration (i.e. organizational responses) are built on salient episodes where Showcased Settlers experienced power-sensitive interactions with Servalls' managers (institutionalized actors). Applying an agency perspective, it was possible to identify restoration by taking the perspective of four Settlers (Figure 4). The four Settlers were selected as they were active in Servall's promotion of the Program; they were among the oldest and most 'immersed' into the organizational activities, and were often showcased to demonstrate the success of the Program. These four Settlers moved up in the Servall to undertake middle-managerial tasks, and had more exposure and closer contact with local managers at higher levels in the organization. A longer tenure could lead to accumulated knowledge and a more complex opinion of the Program. Therefore, these four Settlers were kept in observation – through shadowing – to understand their potential to misrecognize the terms of inclusion. Insights obtained by following potentially threatening demands could show the workings of symbolic 'bottom-up' power.

Figure 4: Analysis: Engagement with the terms of inclusion



The construction of conflict and restoration

Instances of conflict and restoration were constructed by using interview data and to a lesser extent participant observations. Conflict and restoration took the form of social interactions that involved diverging perspectives between Settlers demands and manager's will. While participant observations seemed better equipped for analyzing social interactions (Madison, 2022), interviewing could 'encourage an interviewee to evoke a variety of interactional settings, social contexts, and institutional situations' (Lamont & Swidler, 2014: 160). Interviewing was more advantageous than observations for producing episodes of restoration as interviews allowed the researcher to inquire about facts or about imaginary scenarios and hypothetical situations that are not visible in everyday life (Lamont & Swidler, 2014). For example, how Settlers imagined courses of action against the conditions laid out by Servall. Interviews allowed me to explore points further, prompting the interviewee to reflect on interactions. Therefore, the episodes of conflict and restoration were produced by using semi-structured interviews where interviewees themselves reconstructed their past experiences. Instances of conflict and restoration were selected based on their theoretical relevance; specifically, their connection with the exercise of symbolic power and misrecognition.

4.4 Reflections on my involvement in knowledge production

Along the lines of the ontological and epistemological locations, some critical reflections become important in illustrating why and how certain concepts acquire importance. That is, how my position in the world made me 'objectivize my relation to the object' of study (Bourdieu, 2003: 282). Reflections of my own position in Servall played an important role for sensitizing myself with organizational process and helped me form the second-order constructs and aggregated dimensions (Gioia et al., 2013). Being a migrant worker myself allowed me to gain perspective on organizational process beyond face-to-face interaction (Alcadipani et al., 2015). In particular, my personal background as a migrant living in Sweden shaped the production of the empirical material.

I take the example of two episodes in the fieldwork that exemplify my position of researcher and the resulting co-construction of knowledge development. The first episode unexpectedly led me to identify the focal points of analysis: the identification of a key informant. The second episode led me to identify the 'optimistic discourse' in Servall. These episodes related to two characteristics of my own migration background (Latin-American): (1) having a different linguistic background, and (2) having experience seeking employment as a migrant professional.

The serendipity of language limitations

I started the fieldwork in Servall with a limited knowledge of Swedish. In my first weeks at Servall I tried to interact with managers in Swedish, yet it was difficult to understand the detail of every conversation. As I started with my tasks in the team, I would regularly join team meetings; however, I was not always able to grasp what was discussed and would often 'get lost'. This is illustrated in an early field note:

> The discussion is so technical and specific that I don't manage to understand what they are talking about. They speak in general about a 'tester', about communication issues, and colleagues in the Baltic area. *(Field notes, January 22, 2018)*

This created strange feelings. I wanted to participate in the meetings as a colleague as much as possible. However, even if I tried hard to contribute to the discussion, I was not able to do so. I did not feel I was able to articulate any useful ideas. So, during those meetings, I decided to focus on my role of researcher. I would spend most of my time taking notes in the rooms where meetings took place. Writing down, for example, the non-verbal language of participants, who

gets to talk, and who leads the discussions. I would therefore remain in a prolonged silence. On the one hand, I felt awkward for not contributing. On the other, I saw that in each meeting I attended one or two other participants would also remain silent. I therefore thought I could get away with remaining silent because I assumed that silence would not raise any suspicion in the organization.

To my surprise, the Head of the team (Caroline) through email requested me to 'share publicly what am I actually doing there?' and recommended that 'it would be good to share it with other team members'. She thought the team may be uncomfortable with my silence. I did not know how to respond in the moment; the question took me by surprise as I had already spent a few months in the organization and team members knew that I was broadly researching 'diversity and inclusion practices' but needed more explicit information about my involvements. I told her that I will write an email to her further clarifying my study object in the next days. Waiting some days would give time to reflect on my answer.

Until I was asked this question by Caroline, I only had general ideas about the research question. My assumption was that Caroline may want to make everyone in the team feel comfortable and my presence was somewhat disturbing, but it could also be that she herself became suspicious of my presence (Cunliffe & Alcadipani, 2016). Writing this email put significant pressure on me; whatever I put in writting was going to be shared with others in the team and it would define/ change their view on my work. This pushed me to inform them of a more specific research question for my study and, somehow timely, make my role more transparent. This was the moment in which I was forced to define my identity in the field. Crafting this email took me two days as I had to think carefully about what to write as how I decide to communicate my research focus and purpose would shape my future relation with others in the team – and how they might respond. This incident served to narrow my focus of the study, becoming the intermediate point in my study until I reached my final research question. By chance, this constituted an illustration of the co-production of knowledge in the field through social interactions.

This situation also made me realize the importance of Caroline as a key informant. She was assertive and spoke her mind about issues that were controversial – she expressed points of view that would counter the optimistic discourse that seemed official. I felt she was the person with whom I could talk more freely about what was going on. That is, one the few local managers with whom I could explore these perceived tensions – tensions between locals and Settlers,

generated by the Program, and between Settlers – that existed outside of the official image of the organization being inclusive. Caroline, as a key informant, helped me develop my own critical perspective on the empirical material by contributing to the theorization by opening critical perspectives in future interactions (Islam, 2015). For instance, on the role of silence among Servall managers, which seemed a strategy to manage tension but one that could also lead to forms of relativism (Anteby, 2016) around sensitive issues such as ethno-cultural differences.

Language limitations serendipitously helped me to narrow my research topic and find a key informant. This episode exemplifies what is meant by the co-coproduction of knowledge.

Experience seeking employment as a migrant professional

In previous years, I experienced rejection as a job seeker in a foreign country and the emotional toll of trying to adapt to new labor market. This experience resonated with many of the experiences Settlers had to go through in their own lives. In conversations with Settlers, they would talk freely about the vicissitudes of – often unwillingly – moving to Sweden and the issues involved with it, such as career transition, building professional networks from scratch, loss of emotional ties with family and friends in their home countries. Most Settlers would talk quite openly about their vulnerabilities in some past aspects of their lives as they experienced life transitions, but also about their present life in Sweden. Hearing these experiences sparked feelings of compassion and empathy from my part. For instance, the embodied feeling of rejection for being considered 'inadequate' and the doubts of trying to find the root of that rejection. Many Settlers shared reflexively the common thought: is this rejection something inbuilt in society or is there something wrong with me?

During my 18 months at Servall, I felt a sense of desperation from 'to-be-Settlers' (applicants to the Program) hoping for an internship at any price as long as it looked relevant for their professional career. I felt that Settlers experienced some type of emotional vulnerability as a result of employment rejections, and that prompted them to accept an internship contract (often under conditions that were incommensurate with their professional level). The moment when the contract was signed seemed to often coincide with a point of despair in the life narratives of Settlers. Yet, the fact that the program was promoted as successful made applicants believe in the benefits of becoming a Settler, because it would eventually pay-off. Therefore, they decided that it was worth the investment of time and personal resources to do a full-time internship with a basic compensation.

This situation required the strong engagement of Program managers in building an alternative successful career path for Settlers. It seemed like believing in the success of the program was the pre-condition for Settlers to decide to participate. This felt like good practice as it elevated the (often) low self-esteem of migrants (after continuous rejections from employers) and encouraged them to be part of a bright future. The Program helped most of the participant Settlers in gaining 'Swedish' work experience in areas relevant to their professional profile. The involvement of some local managers in running the Program was touching and I felt their commitment with Settlers was sincere in addressing a situation they perceived to be unfair.

Some of the managers showed degrees of critical reflection to the official discourse of optimism. This gave me ambivalent feelings; it was not possible to know clearly what managers believed. Did everyone (Settlers and managers) really believe this situation to be optimistic and to what degree would they believe it? Or, was it me – inspired by the readings of critical organization research – that insisted on finding the 'negative' where there was no such thing? Was I trying to unearth subjugated knowledge from experiences of conflict and 'collective struggles' (Giroux, 1988: 213) of employment-seeking migrants and forgetting the good things Servall was doing for Settlers?

The thought that this optimism was 'sugarcoating' reality conflicted with my observations that managers seemed truly involved in including Settlers. I was myself involved as part of the production of happy stories about Settlers; helping in recruitment tasks (design of speed meeting schedules, giving secondary feedback in interviews) and being part of promotional videos about the Program (participation in filming). During that time, I experienced periods of irritation in observing that the Program helped the migrant professionals, but also needed their despair to show them and their experience with the Program as being successful. Despair was an important element in the construction of stories of success. The optimistic discourse seemed to be projected by managers, who capitalized on the Settler's situation of despair for employment, to build an idealized image of an indestructible Settler. At the same time, it needed to be optimistic, needing an idealized image of Settlers or a 'model Settler'. Managers of the Program would often tell success stories featuring a case of extreme disadvantage combined ending with exaggerated success. I felt that the vulnerability of migrants would be made part of the official discourse *insofar as it connected to a story of success.* Had success been absent, this vulnerability would not be worth exposing publicly. My reflections revolve around the idea that inequality in society (i.e.

structural issues of migrant professionals' unemployment and underemployment) was a *requisite* for the popularity of the Program.

While it was reasonable to project success as an organizational goal, this could also downplay negative emotions. Against my own experience, I sensed that there was more to unpack in the frustrations that many Settlers harbored – and that these were not resolved by getting employment at Servall. I felt many parts of the official story of success reduced the complexity of the personal stories of migrants' struggles. For instance, the emotional toll of continuous employment rejection of those Settlers that came as refugees, or single mothers with children, which contained powerful stories and long-lasting tensions that were not fully resolved. I thought that these tensions deserved to be unpacked in and of themselves and not necessarily be portrayed as a happy story.

Consistent with this optimistic discourse, successful stories were constructed to share publicly the experiences of Settlers currently in the organization (both those doing in the internship and those finished it). There was however a 'selection bias' that excluded the experiences of those that either did not finish the Program and/or those that left after the 6-month internship period. This effectively excluded stories that would have probably added more nuance to the 'happy' inclusion stories. The omission of 'failed' Settlers from Servall also left me as a researcher without the possibility to reach out to these Settlers. In my role as an intern in charge of keeping the statistics up to date, I tried to contact and identify the situation of these Settlers, but it was impossible. These former Settlers disappeared without a trace; nobody kept track of them once they left the organization. These situations encouraged me to include more examples of Settlers' vulnerability that fell outside of the otherwise optimistic discourse.

One of the concluding notes of a meeting between three Program managers and the EO suggests that disappearance of migrant professionals or 'failure' was widely accepted.

> They highlighted that 70% that participated in the internship found a job afterwards. Of which, 70% of these found a job inside Servall, yet that they do not know the whereabouts of those that could not continue in Servall as it was difficult to follow them. *(Field notes, January 17th, 2018)*

This made me realize that there was an optimistic discourse that intertwined despair with success. Against this public representation of Settlers, I wanted to dig deeper into the intricacies of their experiences. The reflections that linked a past personal experience with the field impressions as

I interacted with Settlers and managers, demonstrated another example of co-construction of knowledge. These reflections allowed me to think critically in relation to Servall managers' use of optimism to *frame the terms of inclusion*.

As the dominance of the optimistic discourse was noticeable, it was quite important to observe how this was maintained in Servall. I wondered how that happened: how did the migrant professional capacity to reflect critically and a harmonious optimistic discourse co-exist? In particular, I grew increasingly curious about how the critical voices potentially/eventually embraced an optimistic discourse. This question animated a search for a better visualization of my empirical material by resorting to sociological theories addressing 'ideological' domination (Bourdieu & Boltanski, 2009). This first iteration between the empirical material and the sociological theories led to clarifying the conditions under which inclusion was negotiated.

Eventually, the optimistic discourse worked as an *entry point* into the coding of the empirical material described in Section 4.2.3. Therefore, optimism appeared both as term of inclusion ('optimistic story') and an encompassing narrative that sustained every term of inclusion. Therefore, I make a distinction between optimistic discourse as a pre-analytical conception that emerged in the field, and an 'optimistic story' which is an empirical term (see Chapter 5).

4.5 Ethical considerations of knowledge production

The critical approach for knowledge production requires ethical consideration both before and after the field work. This division is based on my role as a researcher who was expected to co-produce knowledge in the field, through ongoing collaboration with the research partners and organizational members, as well as after the fieldwork was complete in the form of the present dissertation.

During the fieldwork at Servall, participant observations required being closely involved with research participants. During the fieldwork period, the author and the research partner met with managers to inform them of the developments of the research and report on any interim findings. The managers appeared receptive to the themes that emerged and were willing to act on them. This ensured the dissertation's 'ontological authenticity', by helping managers to better understand the unintended consequences of the Program (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Bell et al., 2022). For example, dialogue sessions between the researchers and managers lead to incremental changes in the Program, such as the further incorporation of training session for mentors. The

impressions of our dialogue were often used in Servall's communication; for example, in 'unconscious bias' training. This triggered constant reflection on my responsibility as a researcher in co-creating knowledge that impacted both managers and Settlers' lives.

I realized that I also held a position within the distribution of symbolic power in the organization. Together with the research partner, I was introduced by high-ranked management as a researcher on 'diversity and inclusion' and it was reasonable to think that I held some 'epistemic authority' which is in itself a form of symbolic power (Bourdieu, 1988). The ongoing findings and emerging concepts could be re-inserted as heuristic tools for managers and Settlers to reflect critically about categories of inequality. For instance, the discussion of social class was introduced during managers training. It is likely that inserting critical catergories – such as class – led to the group to attempt to understand others colleagues position in Servall and in Sweden, therefore promoting 'educative authenticity' (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Bell et al., 2022).

Being aware I was contributing to knowledge circulation (Foucault, 1995) made me become more reflective of my assumptions (Cunliffe, 2016). This led me to take a self-critical understanding of my role in translating other people's representations of reality (Spivak, 2008). Taking a critical ontology entailed advocating for others (Madison, 2022) as well as reflecting specific concerns about keeping the authenticity of Settlers' experiences.

The responsibility of having an impact on the life of organizational members was, therefore, a recurrent object of reflection throughout the production of the empirical material. This posed the ethical dilemma of what was a 'truthful account' (Cunliffe & Alcadipani, 2016: 554). This realization entailed a further emphasis on my conviction of letting Settlers in particular talk about the world as they experienced it without pre-conceived ideas (Lamont, 2000). Focusing on the Settlers' perspectives and their own construction of meaning allowed me to see how they take distance from and develop autonomous ideas about inclusion at Servall. Most importantly, it allowed the circulation of a knowledge that reflected their own situation as they themselves described it; for example, by presenting original quotes by Settlers when presenting the preliminary findings publicly. In my role as a researcher, I tried to enable Settlers to engage in their circumstances with knowledge that most connected their own reflections.

Once out of the field, after a long 'zoom out' period (Nicolini, 2009), knowledge production took a different nature. Iterations between empirical material and theory allowed for gaining a broader perspective. Consistent with the ontological tenets of the dissertation, the field

experience was marked by a personal desire to understand how organizations could be more inclusive. This also gave importance to critical voices from both managers and Settlers in Servall, by inviting them to further elaborate on views that could raise frustrations and 'political' views. Some informants were particularly helpful in knowledge production providing half-way theorizations using their own impressions of Servall (Islam, 2015). The production of the dissertation itself aimed to be a collaboration with Servall, by putting into the spotlight the critical voices using an interpretative lens of critical theories –the voice of Settlers who simultaneously navigated barriers to inclusion in Sweden and Servall.

In spring 2023 this dissertation is expected to be circulated to and within Servall. This may impact the organization, as the knowledge produced could provoke areas of reflection for the design of future inclusion practices. In particular, hearing the critical voices of those who 'experience' inclusion may help advance organizational knowledge and provide a new perspective to decision-makers. Therefore, the dissertation could help build more responsible management practices, influencing the inclusion of future Settlers and/or foreign workers.

Table 4: List of interviewees

Pseudonym	Number of interviews	Duration (mnts)	Gender	Position in Servall	Region of upbringing
Patrik	1	42	M	CEO	Northern Europe
Emma	1	44	F	Manager	Northern Europe
Malin	1	20	F	Manager	Northern Europe
Mattias	2	72	M	Manager	Northern Europe
Lars	2	72	M	Manager	Northern Europe
Ulla	1	51	F	Manager	Northern Europe
Kristian	1	36	M	Manager	Northern Europe
Robert	1	36	M	Manager	Northern Europe
Inger	1	53	M	Manager	Northern Europe
Rana	2	99	F	Manager	Northern Europe
Jenny	1	36	F	Manager	Northern Europe
Caroline	2	108	F	Manager	Northern Europe
Özge	1	58	F	Manager	Northern Europe
Anbar	1	51	F	Manager	Northern Europe
John	1	36	M	Manager	Central Europe
Eva	2	49	F	Settler	Eastern Europe
Henriette	5	135	F	Settler	Eastern Europe
Irina	1	48	F	Settler	Eastern Europe
Isabela	2	200	F	Settler	Eastern Europe
Anastasia	1	29	F	Settler	Eastern Europe
Lyuba	1	57	F	Settler	Eastern Europe
Mila	1	91	F	Settler	Eastern Europe
Fahrid	1	40	M	Settler	Middle East
Constantin	1	67	M	Settler	Middle East
Sulta	1	53	F	Settler	Middle East
Ali	1	66	M	Settler	Middle East
Yasmin	1	53	F	Settler	Middle East
Leyla	1	68	F	Settler	Middle East
Aya	1	63	F	Settler	Middle East
Aisha	1	53	F	Settler	Middle East
Ahnaf	1	43	M	Settler	South Asia
Bhuva	1	36	F	Settler	South Asia
Saleha	1	14	F	Settler	South Asia
Ivette	2	147	F	Settler	East Asia
Carmen	4	143	F	Settler	Americas
Hans	1	74	M	Archivist / Historian	Northern Europe
Sonja	1	60	F	Employment office manager	Northern Europe

5 The terms of inclusion: Symbolic power in an inclusive organization

This chapter shows empirically how the terms for the inclusion of migrant professionals are established. The terms of inclusion describe what needs to be accepted in order for inclusion to be possible. This chapter describes how an organization – 'Servall' – constructs migrant professionals' agency while aligning with Servall's organizational goals. Servall is a large service company in Sweden with strong commitments to corporate social responsibility. Servall commitments to inclusion are well-illustrated by the 'Program'. The Program is a pseudonym for a 6-month internship program provided within Servall aimed at the inclusion of migrant professionals who are seeking employment. The targeted migrant professionals participating in the Program – and remain in Servall – are called 'Settlers'.

This chapter is divided into four sections, each of which presents a term of inclusion. The four terms of inclusion identified in this chapter are: material conditions (Section 5.1), optimistic story (Section 5.2), prospective talent (Section 5.3), and model Settler (Section 5.4). Section 5.1 introduces Servall and the Program and describes the Program and the logic of its functioning. Section 5.2 presents the optimistic discourse and analyzes how Settlers' agency is embedded within those terms. Section 5.3 presents the historical context of Servall's inclusion of migrant professionals. This section shows how migrant professionals became an important part of Servall through the Program, and how they were constructed as 'talented'. Section 5.4 demonstrates the role of 'Showcased Settlers' as an exemplary group of Settlers which has a key importance in the constitution of the terms of inclusion. Showcased Settlers work as archetypes for all Settlers by showing how agency could be practiced. Section 5.5 summarizes the four identified terms of inclusion.

By describing the terms of inclusion, this chapter foregrounds the second part of the empirical analysis where Settler's agency is explored (Chapter 6).

5.1 Organizational and program setting: The material conditions

This section focuses on Servall (the case organization) and the Program (the internship program for migrant professionals), their functioning, and the organizational practices connected to them.

5.1.1 Servall: An inclusive organization

Servall is a Swedish-based service provider organization of about 14,000 employees; it operates in a few countries in Northern Europe, and has about 160 satellite offices in Sweden. Servall's corporate values are oriented towards social responsibility and its 'equality, diversity and inclusion' (EDI) area has grown in importance. For example, Servall engages with social problems such as youth unemployment, segregation of ethnic minorities, and child bullying. Servall defines itself as an 'inclusive organization' which 'aspires towards [having] a diverse workforce' (Intranet). Servall EDI work has been awarded several prizes and engages with both public (e.g. political sphere and public agencies, anti-discrimination networks) and private actors (e.g. large businesses) in Sweden. Within these engagements, Servall is considered to be a leading organization when it comes to inclusion.

Servall's EDI area aims to tackle the hierarchy based on ethnicity (i.e. Nordic/non-Nordic), nativeness (Swedish-born/foreign-born), and gender (male/female) that exists within the organization. For example, lower positions tend to be occupied by people born outside of Europe, and therefore ethnic diversity is most noticeable at the lower levels of the organization. In parallel, there are no non-Europeans in highly ranked managerial positions (Servall statistics). In response, Servall has implemented diversity quotas for gender and national/ethnic origin, and provides management training for (middle) managers on (gender and ethnic) bias. Servall's commitment is enshrined in its EDI plan which explicitly aims at providing equal opportunities and at balancing the workforce diversity of native- and foreign-born employees. The commitment to EDI is part of all Managers' key performance indicators. Servall tries to address EDI-related issues both in their own workplace and in society at large.

The origin of the Program fitted well within Servall's broad social responsibility approach.

5.1.2 The Program: attracting international skills

Servall's flagship EDI initiative is the Program. The Program's purpose is to facilitate the labor market's inclusion of migrant professionals. The Program was founded by Servall's CEO in coordination with the Swedish Employment Office (EO); it is mostly operated by a group of

highly ranked managers at Servall. The Program consists of offering 6-month internships to migrant professionals, not compensated by Servall. The target group are (mostly) non-EU migrant professionals experiencing unemployment in the Swedish labor market. Successful applicants ('Settlers') work for 6-months full time at Servall for a basic compensation (about 4.000 SEK/ month, 400 EUR, funded by the EO) to obtain 'relevant working experience' in Sweden. While Servall benefits from Settler's competencies, the organization also has the chance to employ the Settler if assessed positively.

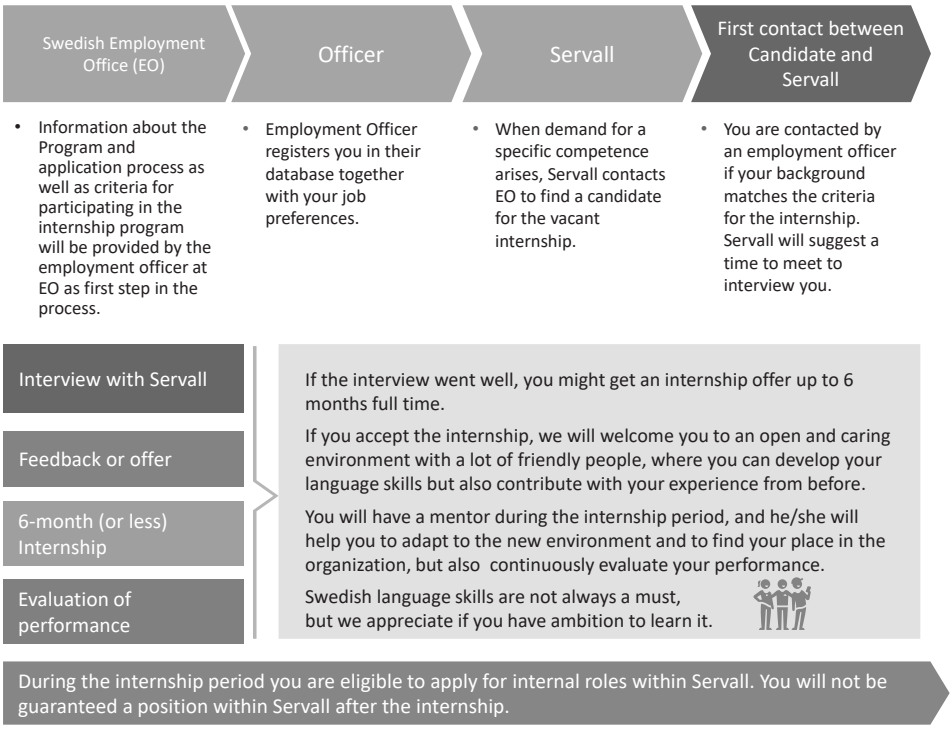
The positive results obtained from the very start has given the Program unprecedented attention and highlighted its potential to expand. An external evaluation of the pilot Program highlighted '[The potential use of the Program by seven other major business actors in Sweden]. The Program initiative was so successful that the model served as basis for a bigger project' (External report, Maj 2016: 3). The Program then moved from having a compassionate character of helping migrants through socially responsible actions, to being firmly centered on being an opportunity to use international skills.

5.1.3 The Program's selection process and mentorship

The standard way of recruiting interns, established by EO and Servall, follows a few systematic steps. The candidates have a first interview (pre-selection) with EO recruitment managers at the EO's premises. The successful candidates then go on to have an interview with Servall recruiters at Servall premises. If successful, upon commencing the program, Settlers are assigned a mentor, usually a more experienced (middle) manager who volunteers to become a mentor. Settlers and mentors typically work closely together, providing Settlers an opportunity to learn new functions and get used to their host department.

The process for selecting candidates to enter the Program as it is presented to potential Settlers is presented in Figure 5 below.

Figure 5: The Program's candidate selection process



Source: Translation and adaptation of Servall material, March 2018

During the 6-month internship, the assigned mentor assesses the Settler's competencies and experience. One key roles of the mentor is to match the Settler's (mentee) experience to a relevant position [*in Servall*]. Mentors' functions involve giving support to Settlers in their everyday working routines as they are incorporated into their respective departments, in order to make Settlers 'employable'. Mentors make an introduction plan, welcome Settlers, and give them practical information on their first day. In addition, Settlers are encouraged to agree with mentors on their expectations of each other to avoid misunderstandings. Moreover, mentors are expected to go through the dress code, social codes, working hours, and contact information in the workplace (Servall material, mentor training workshop, October, 2019).

Many mentors are team managers or work in teams. One of the mentor's tasks is to inform the rest of their team about the Program. They respond to practical questions from Settlers but also remind their teams on the purpose of the Program and on the team's joint responsibility for the

Settlers (Servall material, mentor training workshop, February, 2019). Upon completion of the internship, the mentor writes an evaluation report and may also be a reference person if/when the Settler continues to look for work. (…) 'For arranging and conducting the Settler's competence assessment, the mentor receives 800 SEK [*approximately 80 EUR*] per day of counselling (*anvisningsdag*)' (External report, June 2016: 9).

5.1.4 A profitable Program

The Program provides a means for the inclusion of migrant professionals and is also economically sustainable for Servall. The Program supports and illustrates an inclusive organization, being one that is recruiting migrant professionals with non-readily recognizable work experience. At the same time, the Program is set up in a way that entails no financial risk for Servall. The Program involves a partnership between Servall and the EO; Settlers internship compensation is minimal and is met by the EO with public funds. At the Program level, Servall management calculated a safe return of investment for the program, assuming a 10% 'churn' (turnover of staff) as a rule of thumb. In the words of the Program founder: 'even if the top-line number of staff is coming down, the churn means that you still recruit' (Patrik, CEO). As the 6-month internship period provides no guarantee of employment at Servall, there is no risk to the organization. After testing a Settler's suitability during the 6-month internship, recruiting a Settler (via internal recruitment) is a more secure option than 'open recruitment'. This situation is illustrated in the words of one of the most involved managers in the Program:

> *We take a very low risk as a company. An internship takes 6 months and the EO pays their compensation. If it doesn't work, then we end the internship. So, we don't take risk, we get a resource, and we can end the [internship] whenever we want if it doesn't work. I've had internships that I've finished and hired the person. So, it can go both ways and there's low risk, low pressure. So maybe we wouldn't have dared to take the risk on a candidate if he hadn't gotten this internship opportunity first. (Mattias, manager)*

The Program is most intensively used in two areas. First, in *Public relations* by external promotion (participation in external events such as media communications in newspaper and outlets, social media channels, political events). Second, in *Recruitment* as a recruitment tool of Settlers (external) and for internal recruitment of Settlers currently participating in an internship at Servall (internal). This relies on the strong engagement with local managers, including providing workshops for Servall managers on diversity training and inclusive leadership (Field notes and

intranet). Mentors and Settlers are frequently invited to participate in both public relations and recruitment events.

5.1.5 A tale of success

Servall's success in its work with the employment of migrant professionals has made the Program widely recognized among big corporations in Sweden. The widespread opinion among high-ranked and middle managers, as well as EO staff, is overwhelmingly positive. There seems to be a good fit between the Program and the overall image Servall wants to project as organization. The Program is endorsed as creating what is widely called a 'win-win situation'.

The main indicator of success is perhaps Settlers' retention rate. Out of all Settlers that have been enrolled in the Program, an average of 70–75% are estimated to find employment (within and outside of Servall) after completing their internship, of which 75% find employment inside Servall (Servall statistics, 2016) often in the form of intern agreements in customer support functions. From the high retention rate, it is inferred that the majority of mentors' evaluations are positive. This high retention rate of Settlers at Servall received substantial attention from eight major corporations in Sweden; they held talks with Servall Managers as they wished to replicate the Program in their own workplaces. Moreover, Servall received a national award for its work on EDI thanks to the Program. Therefore, the Program feeds well into the image of Servall as being an inclusive organization, which has become central to Servall's corporate strategy.

As described, the Program establishes the material conditions for inclusion. Settlers are expected to accept these conditions; they receive a basic compensation (about 24.000 SEK for 6 months) and must perform well to receive positive evaluations from their mentors (who receive 800 SEK per counselling day) in order to obtain a position in Servall. The configuration of the Program must be accepted, as a potential trade-off: *a performance evaluation that could lead to employment under certain (temporary) material conditions.*

5.2 Optimistic story: Constructing a narrative on solving structural problems

This section presents the dominant narrative of the Program among key Managers (the highest ranked Managers directly responsible for running the Program) at Servall and EO. The dominant discourse focuses on the *optimistic* narrative of the Program's success. The discourse supports the

necessity to solve migrant professionals' structural barriers in the labor market and bring Settlers into Swedish working life.

5.2.1 From despair to hope

The Program was put together by a Servall's CEO and a group of highly ranked Managers in collaboration with the EO. The group consulted a person in the then acting Minister of Labor's office (in the network of high-ranked Servall managers). The national statistics showed a high level of unemployment especially among migrant professionals: 'there were teachers, doctors that were driving taxis, and we didn't use their full potential in Sweden' (Ulla, manager). On that basis, the generation of an *optimistic narrative on inclusion* became central. This is illustrated in the words of the then Program ambassador:

> *I have this Settler who works in [small sized city in Southern Sweden] satellite office who has been on the [world-wide known outlet] list for the 40 most influential businesswomen in the Arab world. And now she is working in customer service in [small sized city in Southern Sweden]. (…) If you tell the organization, suddenly people [middle managers] will think: 'I want to be a part of this as well. I want to have my own story, you know'. (Lars, Manager)*

Managers running the Program framed the initiative as anti-discriminatory, and acted primarily on that basis (Malin, Manager). The founding rationale of the Program was to address structural discrimination in society associated in the unemployment and underemployment of professionally qualified migrants, as one upper Manager suggested, due to 'foreign competencies [being] unrecognized' or applicants having the 'wrong last name' (Mattias, Manager). The group sought to tackle this imbalance. The main Manager responsible for running the Program pointed out that talent has so far been defined in a narrow way, because 'Swedish employers were not really … looking outside the box' when searching for candidates (Lars, Manager). Therefore, there seemed to be a shared feeling of dealing with employment unfairness among the Managers involved in the Program.

Such a feeling was also shared by EO recruiters involved in the Program. EO recruiters oversaw and ran different aspects of the Program. One of the most important was the pre-screening of candidates – before they moved on to be interviewed by Servall recruiters to become potential Settlers. Typically, the EO would get to see a very large pool of candidates, examine their profiles, and prepare their candidacy. Therefore, the EO recruiters experienced in their everyday work the structural barriers affecting migrant professionals that Servall upper Managers talked about.

The problem of structural discrimination could be approached from the perspective of an employment officer (at EO) who had part of her roots in [*Middle Eastern country*]. Her voice is authoritative to the extent of being familiar with the area of origin of many migrant professionals that passed through the EO offices. After seven years of working at the EO, she felt confident in anticipating which candidates could potentially become Settlers and which ones not. She reflected about this gut feeling in the general recruitment of migrant professionals:

> *I think, it's horrible to say, but Swedish people have much more of a chance to get in, because I think the bosses and the company [any potential Swedish employer] knows, okay, "they know the language, they have gone to these universities, what they are … The kind of person." The other ones [migrants], they have to fit in. The ones that don't fit in, don't move on. And that's how I know [to determine] "okay, I don't think they would give this person an honest chance, or this person is not going to move on". (Sonja, EO manager)*

The structural problem seemed to rest in the lack of validation and recognition of the to-be-Settlers' competencies in the Swedish labor market. This was possibly connected to the Swedish employer's inability to know the value of those competencies, when the candidates (and the competencies) came from unfamiliar countries.

> *I think Servall know that these people have a higher level in education, even if you compare it with Sweden. (…) This may sound strange, but I believe, for example, in [Middle Eastern country], when you're in Third Grade, the level is like Sixth Grade here in Sweden. They have more pressure in education, so these people are not better than Swedish people, but they are somehow higher in their education. (Sonja, EO manager)*

> *I think that the first selection process with [migrant professional candidates] is the most important: getting past and moving on in the selection process. There are many who are looking for a job and you, unfortunately, see structural racism and structural problems: that you have the wrong name or the wrong background (…) If you have your education from a university other than perhaps in Western Europe or the USA it is difficult for you to get in touch with employers, get an interview and so on. (Mattias, Manager)*

The problem seemed to be experienced as *structural* and was recognized by different levels of management. There appeared to be a generalized feeling of unfairness felt by the subjective 'gut feelings' of recruiters to the official national statistics. Yet, structural problems are typically deep and hard to clearly pinpoint. For instance, the necessity to be inclusive against structural discrimination is reflected by Servall CEO's most personal experiences on the rationale for introducing the Program.

Structural discrimination is also observed as the result of people's unconscious bias that then becomes a structural:

> *The most important point of the exercise was to understand our unconscious biases to enable a change. That in itself goes a long way to understanding that it is in all of us, as a pattern or structure in society, not as an individual idea. (Malin, Manager. Cited in external report, 2018)*

The structural problem is referred to by one Manager as an expression of the 'system'.

> *The Program in a way contributes to this kind of process [elimination of barriers for migrant professionals] in that many of these candidates we meet have been in Sweden for a while, have applied for many jobs but they never get an interview because they don't have the language. They experience structural problems: experiencing built-in things in our systems. (Mattias, manager)*

Such structural barriers formed Servall's starting point for their efforts to include. Lars, the Manager most involved in the Program along with the Program founders (Patrik and Emma) is pushing for the Program to be expanded. Lars' drive was recognized by many people worked with him. He was considered to be 'extremely enthusiastic' and a 'local champion' (Patrik, CEO), and 'passionate about the Program' (Rana, Manager).

In the initial stages of program development, the first encounters between candidates and Servall recruiters were organized as job fairs. Candidates would approach the stands and talk personally with Servall's representatives. The first Managers that attended those fairs would share that there was a feeling of 'sadness that they don't have any jobs (…) it was like pity' (Lars, Manager).

Lars recalls being impressed and emotionally captured by those first encounters with candidates, and how that made him believe he needed to move forward with the idea of the Program. Lars' motivation led him to further try to convince a number of Managers to participate in the Program, despite them being resistant at first. Asking Managers to participate was nevertheless difficult as many Managers questioned the idea of the Program. Patrik (CEO) recalled the most common questions being: 'Is this profitable?', 'Should we really engage in this type of activity?', 'How much of my time needs to go to this?', 'What happens if this is a person that doesn't share our values?'.

Putting Managers and candidates together to interact seemed to be a good idea. Lars remembers the first gatherings:

> *(…) when I got the first managers [about ten] they were amazed: everyone took [inaudible] home and started to work with this. So next year, everyone wanted to come. Because there was a talk. (…) they also got struck in their heart when they came there because they would hear stories and many of the managers don't socialize with anyone from another country in the first place. (Lars, Manager).*

Lars was the frontrunner, setting the path for inclusion by trying to remove barriers affecting access to employment. Lars pushed to turn the Servall employment fairs into highly planned intensive speed meeting sessions that maximized the use of Managers time (Servall documents). One highly ranked Manager recollects their first experience of attending the Speed meetings, acknowledging that the candidates had 'a potential that we didn't realize that we needed before' (Ulla, manager). Barriers were progressively being removed by convincing Managers to participate, making the Program widely accepted and providing the opportunity to invite more candidates to become Settlers.

The success of the Program conveyed a persuasive narrative. Lars' experience with the Settlers offered the raw material to build a powerful story.

> *I think the best way to ruin the best ideas actually is to make it mandatory [for Managers to participate]. And the Program was for a while mandatory. (…) So, I think that the storytelling part of it is so essential to... [directed to Managers and potential participants in the Program] because if you believe in something and you can show that this has functioned, you have good story, and I have collected like 10 or 15 stories about people. (Lars, manager)*

The positive message of the Settlers stories constructed a 'fact': the successful inclusion of Settlers in Servall and in the Swedish labor market.[11] The successful stories of some Settlers (see section 5.4 on Model Settlers) were used to frame the Program as a means for doing inclusion the right way.

The role of Managers is therefore in supporting Settlers to contribute to a win-win scenario, that is, when inclusion is attained. The logic of the story is one with a positive end, in which 70–75% of participating Settlers managed to obtain some form of employment. The material conditions

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[11] Candidates were not monitored after they finished their internship with Servall and were not kept in the statistical database.

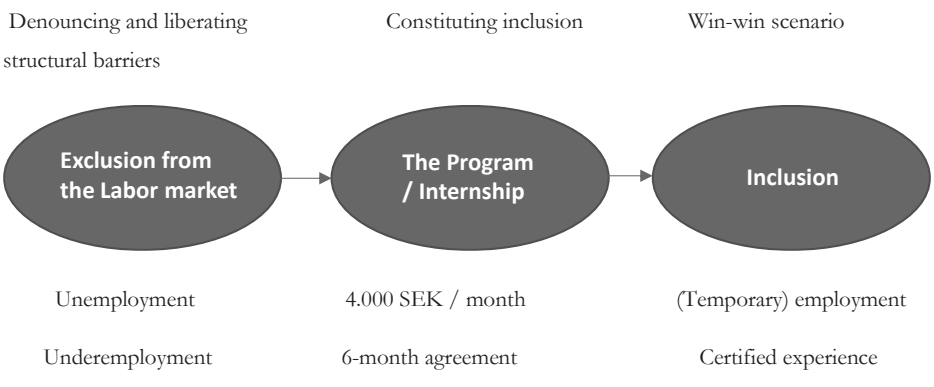
provided by the Program for Settlers are therefore deemed secondary in the big picture of inclusion. For instance, the issue of the stress of the internship being temporary and not-compensated by Servall was discussed by Managers in this study:

> *Inger: I can understand that [the stress produced]. And many of them [Settlers] are doing an excellent job. And after some months, they are delivering as anyone else of us, but they don't get paid for it.*
>
> *Interviewer: Do you see that as problematic?*
>
> *Inger: No, it's... Yes, in one way, if you say that maybe we're using people to get cheap delivery. But on the other hand, they get into the Swedish work environment and have something on their CV. If they can't stay here, we can be references for them to help them out. So, there are two sides of it. (Inger, manager)*

An optimistic thought dominates inclusion in Servall; managers reject the possibility that things go wrong for Settlers since they can always provide them with some needed references in the worst case scenario. This situation is imagined as a win-win scenario.

Servall's view on inclusion rested on the idea that structural barriers (e.g. unemployment, ethnic, racial and cultural discrimination, lack of skill validation in society) could be *solved* as migrant professionals (candidates) join the Program. As inclusion in Servall happens, structural barriers are *being solved*. Therefore, inclusion is framed as a narrative of migrant professionals being successfully rescued from unemployment. In this way, Servall attempts to make intelligible what the structural problem is by setting a pathway out of social exclusion into inclusion (see Figure 6 below).

Figure 6: From social exclusion into inclusion



Ethno-cultural discrimination (Full time internship)

Mentorship

The Program's *optimistic story* proposes an invitation to accept there are structural problems in society around the social exclusion of migrant professionals in the Swedish labor market, and that the problems are being solved by the Program. This entails the invitation to accept a 'rescuing' narrative. In this way, the Program produces a script available for Settlers to make sense of their inclusion journey and the Program's purpose. In the way the Program is designed, Settlers are invited to participate in the solution of these structural problems by later becoming mentors themselves and representing the Program at external events.

5.3 Prospective talent: How the inclusion of migrant professionals became important

[*on Settlers*] Here we speak persons of different ethnic origin. There is already in place a form of selection when one works in Servall. When we talk about integration in other strata of society [*lower strata*] there are significant challenges… [*the inclusion challenges*] happening in Servall are really nothing. (Caroline, manager, Head of area at Servall)

This quote illustrates the imagined place of migrant professionals in Swedish society. Migrant professionals have not generally represented a group of social concern. Being professionals and being educated implied they were unproblematic individuals, did not qualify as welfare recipients, and therefore could be 'left on their own'. Migrant professionals are not associated with sensationalist headlines nor victims of intense identity struggles. For many, migrant professionals are more 'professionals' than 'migrants'. Organizations have for some years taken an active role in the inclusion of migrants, usually understood as 'low-skilled' and 'in need'. This was the case of Servall when the inclusion of migrant groups started to become an important part of their social engagement initiatives.

Servall's focus on migrants started as part of a broader diversity strategy that became noticeable only at the turn of the century. The attention on migrants was part of a group of EDI initiatives

that developed over time.[12] Diversity, as a word with multiple meanings, was used to relate to different social identifies (women, people with disability marginalized groups) and organizational goals. The broad rubric of diversity was used mostly in terms of migrant-related issues. The following sections show how, over time, the inclusion of migrant professionals became progressively a salient part of Servall.

5.3.1 Background: Discovering talent

The Program is to a great extent connected to the then Program founder and Servall's CEO (for many years). The CEO founded different social initiatives among which the Program stood out.

The program (2009 – ongoing) changed its goal over time. During the first main period of operation (2011 – 2016), the Program was connected to Servall's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Department. The original goal was to 'help' foreign-born graduates by giving them opportunities according to their skills and experiences (Servall Annual Report, 2014). In a second period of operation (2016 – 2017), the Program remained 'somewhat forgotten'. In the third period (2017 – ongoing), the Program was reactivated and responsibilities were then assumed by the Human Resources (HR) Department, using the Program as a 'recruitment channel' to validate and retain foreign talent. The program is described as: 'an example of an initiative where labor market inclusion for foreign-born graduates contributes to the organization's talent management' (Servall Annual Report, 2018: 19).

The Program is a part of a larger strategy positioning Servall in society. Servall moved from originally being socially oriented to becoming a capital-oriented organization. After merging with two organizations in the same area, it acquired a hybrid status of being focused on 'lay customers' (socially oriented) and centering on big business (capital-oriented) (Lars, manager). This was illustrated in an assertive profit-oriented focus in the period (2003–2008). A new management team then came onboard, in the context of the Global Financial Crisis (GFC, 2009), with the strategy of linking Servall 'back to its social roots' (Patrik, CEO) – strongly identifying with the

[12] The term 'diversity' in this dissertation is used to refer to 'Equality, diversity and inclusion' (EDI). The official documents analyzed use mainly the word 'diversity' and sometimes interchangeably with inclusion. Most of the time, EDI is used here to mean the official EDI policy at Servall.

local community and working closely to customers. The implementation of this strategy involved the generation of a strong social engagement image. Paraphrasing the then Servall's senior advisor on public and governmental affairs: 'we needed to define a project that can prove that the DNA of Servall as socially-oriented was still in play' (Patrik, CEO).

Servall managers therefore focused on identifying social problems to bring about inclusion. The most salient problem in the context of the GFC was *unemployment*. The specific action to tackle unemployment was to tap into underutilized competencies in the labor market through *inclusion programs*.

5.3.2 The beginnings: Including minorities and underrepresented groups

The first time Servall made explicit EDI related measures was in 1993. These measures related exclusively to gender. In that year, the intention to improve the gender balance was officially referred to for the first time in a small sub-heading called 'equal opportunities'. (Servall Annual Report, 1993). References to gender awareness and gender equality appeared in subsequent years, including the monitoring results of the situation of women. The recruitment strategy aimed to level the gender imbalance.

This focus that equated diversity to gender seemed to change by the end of 1990s, by which time the gender equality goals were 'exceeded' (Servall Annual Report, 1998: 36). This was the first time 'migrants' and 'ethnic minorities' became in scope of 'diversity'. Diversity started to be used in Servall's business areas for first time (Hans, historian and Servall archivist). The definition of diversity was increasingly connected to migrants and ethnic minorities located in under privileged areas. Servall received the: 'Södra [*pseudonym*] Diversity and Integration Award' for promoting cultural and ethnic diversity at its satellite office in the Rosengård section of Malmö [*a low socio-economic area*]' (Servall Annual Report, 2001: 5).

The migrants targeted by Servall appeared to be associated with a situation of vulnerability. They were broadly referred to as a social group living at the margins of society and in need of assistance. The word 'immigrant' was used to refer to people of migration background living in urban areas across Sweden where ethnicity and relative poverty converged. In those areas, migrants were then used to serve customers of various ethnic backgrounds (Servall Annual Report, 2003:18) using 14 different languages (Servall Annual Report, 2002: 52).

Broad diversity initiatives targeting different social groups were increasingly portrayed as beneficial for Servall. For instance, diversity initiatives would be increasingly connected with improved performance and functionality. Therefore, increasing diversity within Servall was depicted as a strategy for finding competencies that met Servall's needs.

> *Servall's goal is to increase diversity in all groups and at all levels to better reflect our customers and meet their needs. In the Stockholm area, for example, advice is currently offered in 24 languages, and the groups recruitment process is designed to find the right applicants and not exclude importance competencies. (Servall Annual Report, 2007: 46)*

> *By considering the diversity of our employees as a potential success factor, we create an environment where everyone can reach their full potential. This gives us a competitive advantage and supports Servalls goal to be a good corporate citizen and an attractive employer. It is important to the organizations' long-term profitability and is therefore strategically critical. (Servall Annual Report, 2009: 41)*

Servall's EDI approach became firmly entrenched in its CSR activities aiming to help vulnerable groups.

5.3.3 From social responsibility to the inclusion of diverse talent

Under new management (2009–2016), there was a great impulse to pursue different dimensions related to EDI policies and initiatives. For example, there was an attempt to diversify the national / ethnic composition of Servall and introduce new Programs related to unemployed and underrepresented groups. In the race for finding diverse talent, it was perceived that the organization had to adapt and 'reflect the reality of a changing society' (Malin and Rana, Managers).

> *Servall began to measure the number of [its] employees in Sweden with a foreign background (i.e. who were born abroad or have two foreign-born parents) in 2014 as a result of the strategic decision to prioritise diversity and gender equality in coming years. Servall believes that greater inclusiveness is critical to our business and that improvements lead to better work environments and better service for customers, while helping us to attract and retain talent. To achieve these changes, the goal is to have 20 per cent of employees with a foreign background, the national average in Sweden. The current figure in Servall is 12 per cent. (Servall Annual Report, 2014: 182)*

In addition, there was an increased acceptance that EDI involved broader organizational changes. The new management boosted the EDI approach it inherited: 'A new [*EDI*] policy adopted has taken us a step closer to the more open-minded attitude we want throughout the

organization and in our day-to-day interactions with customers, communities and other players' (Servall Annual Report, 2008: 36).

The inclusion of new competencies in Servall required ways to recruit and manage international talent. Increasingly, EDI was connected to other issues such as anti-discrimination in the workplace, diversity training, and the development of inclusive leadership skills for Managers. EDI was now designed to scale up to drive changes in the organizational culture.

> *Cultivating differences among employees creates an environment where everyone has an opportunity to maximise their full potential. This is a competitive advantage that supports Servall's goal to be a force for good in society. (Servall Annual Report, 2010: 45)*
>
> *Among the keys to our long-term success are competence and leadership with a composition that meets the demand and diversity in our broad customer base. We still have a lot to do and learn. To succeed, we begin with our leaders — who are responsible for talent management. One example of how we are working actively is how the management team in the [certain] business area is being trained in gender equality. (Servall Annual Report, 2013: 8).*

Servall's EDI approach transitioned from an emphasis on CSR and initiatives of social engagement to one of HR in attracting and managing its *talent*. Therefore, inclusion became increasingly a matter of talent.

5.3.4 Comparing the Program with the Youth Program: Discovering talent

This expansion of EDI at Servall coincided with the GFC and associated social issues such as unemployment. This overlapped with a strong emphasis on competence development and talent management. Servall then developed two projects in collaboration with the EO: first, a Youth Program (Hereinafter, YP) to tackle youth unemployment; second, inspired by the YP, the Program. The YP offered 3-month internships to job seekers between 18–24 years of age. The YP was largely considered a case of 'win-win' for inclusion by targeting unemployed youth (Özge, manager).

The purpose of the YP ' was to provide their first line in their cv' (Emma, manager). Upon completing the YP, the young adults could potentially enlarge their network and move on into other companies.

The YP had positive results from the outset: 'Since the start, YP has resulted in 1500 trainee positions [*in about one year*] with outside companies and 150 within Servall' (Servall Annual Report,

2010: 42). In retrospect, the CEO and one of the initiators, considered YP a 'success'.

YP was both making progress and demanded relatively little input from Servall. However, the successful image of YP sometimes contrasted with the experience of some middle managers that acted as mentors, especially in comparison with the Program.

> *The Program participants already had professional skills unlike young people, who may come directly from high school. (…) we received a lot of good skills, that otherwise we would not acquire in other ways. (Malin, Manager)*

> *My experience with them [YP apprentices] wasn't good, I would say. They were pretty lazy. Now Swedish young people prefer to stay at home. Three months, it isn't a long time so it's really hard to see what they are going for. (…) [Unlike YP] I found out that they [Settlers] were really good, all of them, but you need to give them the right start (…) they were people that they came early in the morning. I really had to tell them: "you need to take a break." And they were, like, just sitting there working. Yes, they were… Huge difference between them and the young people. (Jenny, manager)*

Mentors – like Jenny – were convinced of the importance of the Program. Unlike the participants of the YP, migrant professionals would reportedly bring strong skills and show strong motivation. Candidates interviewed to take part in the Program had 'education and skills but may have been missing the language and the culture' (Anbar, manager). This realization moved the attention from YP towards the Program by highlighting the potential contribution of Settlers skills to Servall. This realization was illustrated when Lars, present in the first pilot versions of the Program, affirms that he and other Servall Managers could see right away that there was a lot of 'talent'. Therefore, after the pilot stage, there was a general conviction 'that this could actually become a way to find a talent pool that not many [*organizations*] have' (Patrik, CEO).

The YP and the Program coexisted; however, the Program gained more traction over time. To get results, the Program would need more time and resources than the YP, but this investment was expected to pay off.

The Program then became fully integrated into Servall's HR Department. Emma, who worked as HR manager both at the EO and Servall, shared that the Program was 'kind of a copy-paste' of YP but directed to a 'very different target group' – skillful migrants. Emma was the person in charge of setting up the Program and had the main responsibility for running the Program as a Manager in EO. Emma affirms that the initial acceptance of the Program among potential

employers (from other major businesses in Sweden) went well because it was profitable and targeted a talented group.

> *'These people [Settlers] are assessed on the fact that you have your education from your home country. But, it has never been tested in a Swedish workplace. But, as an employer, if you can provide that assessment for three weeks, we will pay you [mentors] 20,000 SEK [as the Program was originally planned]. You can have this person... Super skilled. You can have this person at your facility for up to six months. You don't pay anything. On the other hand, you [employer] get paid. You are supervising this person as a professional mentor. It's a win-win. (…) I think that we, within Servall top management, [realized that] is not societal engagement anymore. This is a business-driven human resource tool, and it should be looked upon as a business opportunity. Because, in that sense, we are changing the system [i.e., lack of opportunities for migrant professionals in the Swedish labor market] in a good way. (Emma, Manager).*

Two other HR Managers agreed with Emma's argument on the salience of skills and competencies (talent) and how the original idea of the Program providing 'help' morphed over time.

> *[The Program at some point in time] was no longer just us helping society because we got a lot of competencies that we needed. (Rana, Manager).*

> *[about the Program] We do not have any more a project of social responsibility but an ordinary part of the Human resource recruitment process. (Malin, Manager).*

As migrant professionals are increasingly welcomed into Servall, they turn into Settlers that can reach their full potential. However, the need for the Program to maintain its relevance requires constructing Settlers' talent as not fully acknowledged.

5.3.5 Settlers' talent in need of full acknowledgment

'Giving an opportunity to use their talent' is the main justification which became the underlying mantra of the Program. In order to emphasize the Program's relevance for society, it was key to construct Settler's talent as *a potential*. That is, that Settler's skills and competencies are still underutilized and need to be 'tapped into'. This means Settlers' talent is understood as valuable but *not yet recognized*. This was evidenced by Servall's CEO after finishing the Program's pilot, where 19 of the 20 migrant professionals were recruited by Servall.

> *I felt the Program must be a good thing. It proves my case, that there is talent out there that no one is really recognizing. So, if we continue to attract this talent, we will have this*

> *competitive advantage because everyone is fighting for the blonde Swede, who has years at [two competitors in the same business area]. (Patrik, CEO).*

Through the Program, Servall managers were able to access talent that otherwise could be wasted. Servall forms its identity based on its ability to recognize talent that others are not able to see. Servall claims to be an organization *sui generis* in making unrecognized talent legitimate.

> *'We saw the talent, we recognized talent, and we hire for talent' (Patrik, CEO).*

Migrant professionals – and by extension, Settlers – stand out given that they are talented; however, Settlers' talent is understood as *untapped*. In an attempt to convince other firms of the value of the Program as a 'skill supply', high-ranked managers framed talent with a view on the future. When it came to convincing other organizations to run their own international talent Programs, they described Settler's talent as having an 'giant potential' (Intranet material).

This idea of Settlers talent as having potential gained prominence in Managers' thinking; Settlers were defined publicly by a high-ranked manager as 'people with an enormous pent-up energy' (Newspaper article, 2016). At the same time, middle managers seemed convinced of the existence of a 'pool of talent' to be used and voluntarily registered as mentors increased in numbers (Servall statistics). Settlers' reputation of potential talent diffused across different levels of management at Servall. A widespread idea that resonated among Managers was established through the Program: 'skilled, smart people' were being brought into Servall (Inger, Manager) contributing to the future of Servall. Therefore, the HR-orientation of the Program enabled a construction of Settlers as prospective talent.

By reconstructing the evolution of the Program, this section shows how the Program evolved into a skill-centered 'recruitment channel'. In this context, Settlers became constructed as prospective talent. Especially in promotional activities, Settlers appeared represented as talent that was in need of full acknowledgment in order to achieve inclusion. Following this line, Settlers were invited to see themselves as possessing talents that needed to be acknowledged by Servall.

5.4 'Model Settler' as an intelligibility framework: An ethno-cultural free and professionally successful Settler

As part of the optimism of inclusion that Servall portrays, the use of former Settlers as models of success is a popular practice. This practice is strongly associated to the Program and is distinctive. The use of successful cases in the YP are much more limited (Field notes).

Some Settlers upon receiving a positive assessment from mentors were employed by Servall and some were offered middle management positions. These middle management positions typically included project management positions such as 'specialist', 'resource coordinator', or 'analyst'. Servall high-ranked managers used the experiences of highly successful Settlers to actively promote the Program.

The life stories of this group of Settlers were constantly featured by Servall such as at official events. The *narrative constructed* by high-ranked managers depicts what is referred to here as the 'Model Settler'. The model Settler focuses on the professional success of the Settler and plays down other features that may have obstructed their path to professional success; for example, their cultural, ethnic, or religious identity. In the narrative of the model Settler's, successful Settlers are those who managed to be successful *despite* their ethno-cultural origin. Therefore, the model Settler constitutes an *identity framework* that Servall aspires Settlers to fit within.

5.4.1 Interlocking professional success and Swedishness

The images of successful Settlers were exhibited in Speed meetings and the individual stories of success that populate Servall's intranet (Servall material). One video (Video 1) targeting potential candidates used the personal story of a Settler [*Abbas*]. Abbas appears in a suit, talking in Swedish with a foreign accent as he walks into the entrance of Servall's headquarters. Abbas story is broken into the following the steps:

1. 'I thought I had the right education,
2. Good work experience,
3. Personal… personal… [*forgets the word*] competencies,
4. But it was not like that, or it was not enough,
5. It was so difficult if you just send your cv,
6. No answer,
7. I got an internship at Servall and then I got a position,
8. It feels better. Better self-esteem when one gets a position, even if it is an internship,
9. I think I've got the key to the Swedish labor market.'

Source: Servall material (March, 2016)

Similarly, another Settler [*Ivette*] is featured by Servall communication's department (Video 2). Ivette's job seeking hurdles are stressed against her cosmopolitan background. She appears, speaking in Swedish, describing her journey.

1. 'I have tried to find employment… for a year,
2. And failed,
3. When I moved here, I thought that my international experience would have been the most important when I look for employment,
4. But it was not like that,
5. I was hoping to find something in [*business area of expertise*],
6. Because that was my background in [*capital city in Europe where she lived before*],
7. It means a lot to get an internship here at Servall,
8. Because I like it a lot here,
9. And this is the best way to integrate into Swedish society.'

Source: Servall material (March, 2016)

The most popular video (Video 3) featuring a group of Settlers illustrates how the Program wants Settlers to be seen and illustrates how the model Settler is constructed. The video shows different Settlers sharing their experiences in short phrases. The video is displayed in three parts.

1. Opening (First three phrases spoken in the Settlers mother languages):
   'It doesn't work to survive without hope' [*Middle Eastern language*]
   'I was afraid' [*Eastern European language*]
   'Will I ever be accepted by society?' [*Eastern European language*]

[*Second 20*]

'It is not a *vacation*, it is not a *semester*…' [Mixes Swedish with English Original: 'Det är inte en "vacation", det är inte en semester…']

[*Second 30*]

'I felt alone. I felt that I needed to start my whole life again'
'One has no hope. One needs to find employment. One wants to build a family… and these simple or basic dreams cannot be realized in a war-torn country'
'It was not as easy as we thought to become integrated into Swedish society. '

'I decided: I will move [*to Sweden*] and I will succeed. I thought: "you should know its difficult. I don't have any family there and I will start from zero.'"

'There are in Sweden so many opportunities that do not exist in other countries in the same way'

'One wants to show that one is good, that can do things as good as the others'

[*From minute 1:51 background music changes and increases in intensity*]

'It was so easy to get started, to be integrated. Everyone is so incredibly including that I suddenly felt at home'
'Finally, I have a stable life in Sweden, I would say'
'I have a job and family and I feel good. I don't want anything else'
'It was challenging but it was worth it'

'Nothing of these would have been possible without the Program'

'I have finally fulfilled my dream'

[*From minute 2:20 everyone mentions what their current positions in Servall are after completing the 6-month internship*.]

Source: Servall material (Retrieved in 2019)

The structure of the three stories is similar. They show how migrants progressively overcome barriers when becoming Settlers. The stories emphasize how Settlers find 'the key to the Swedish labor market' and manage to 'integrate into Swedish society' (first and second story). In the group video is where the idea of the model Settler is best illustrated.

In the group video, Settlers first start speaking in their mother languages (Arabic and Eastern European languages). In this introductory stage, the faces of those Settlers speaking their mother languages could not be seen, as they walked in the opposite direction of the camera. There people around the Settlers seem to be joining them but their faces cannot be seen due to the darkness. In [*Second 20*] one Settler starts speaking in a mix of Swedish and English ['It is not a *vacation*; it is not a *semester*…']. Suddenly, the faces of the people around this Settler appear partially visible and they appear to be of non-Swedish origin. Right after the line mixing Swedish and English is finished [Second 30], all Settlers speak exclusively in Swedish. The Settlers' mother languages are used to express their initial situations of hopelessness, fear and uncertainty. The sentences in the mother languages are short and simple. As the video continues the feelings of hopelessness, fear and uncertainty are spoken in Swedish, in longer phrases, including explanations of the reasons behind their feelings, and showing fluency in Swedish. [*From minute 1:51*] The Settlers then use Swedish to express gratitude, describe their current situation as stable, and share their feelings of professional satisfaction. Every featured Settler smiles after sharing their final situation. [*From minute 2:20*] the Settlers laugh, which is captured in slow motion.

The three videos are very revealing on how the model Settler is constructed as the one that manages to make itself professionally *intelligible* in Sweden to attain success. Intelligibility for the 'Swedish labor market' (Video 1), for 'Swedish society' (Video 2) and for having a 'Swedish life' (Video 3). Settlers are encouraged to display compatibility with their context – both with Sweden

and Servall. While speaking Swedish is not essential to be accepted into the Program, wanting to learn Swedish is one of the reasons Settlers may join the Program (External report, May 2016: 5), and it is deemed by high-ranked managers as a decisive factor for success and assessment of Settler's professional worth (Mattias, manager). Therefore, professional success and embracing Swedishness become entangled.

In the stories, an archetype of the model Settler is established: a type of Settler who is capable of becoming successful and make themselves intelligible in Sweden. Model Settlers constitute an object of reference by which Servall strongly signals how all Settlers should be. Through the model Settler, Servall's high-ranked managers create an identity framework of intelligibility for Settlers. Therefore, the model Settler is used by high-ranked managers as a benchmark by which Settlers are expected to articulate their professional selves. Fitting in this framework involves embracing Swedishness and leaving behind their ethno-cultural identity.

5.5 Chapter summary: The four terms of inclusion

The terms of inclusion identified in this chapter describe what needs to be accepted for inclusion to be possible. These are conditions that the Program managers (mostly the CEO and highly-ranked managers) value and which the Settlers are invited to accept in order to be included. There are four terms prospective Settlers are invited to accept.

The first term is provided by the Program's configuration: the material conditions of the Program. Applicants are expected to accept substandard temporary material conditions in exchange for an assessment that could lead to employment either at Servall or elsewhere. The second term relates to the optimistic discourse. Settlers are invited to accept that the Program is solving a structural problem affecting migrant professionals as a group – a group which Settlers are part of. The third term relates to the image of Settlers as prospective talent. Unlike other targeted groups, Settlers are constructed as having skills and competencies that have great potential, seen as talent that is in need of full recognition to be included. The fourth term is the model Settler in that Settlers are invited to fit into an *identity framework* which depicts them as successful *despite* their ethno-cultural origin.

The next section shifts the perspective to Settlers by focusing on how they use agency in the context established by the terms of inclusion.

6 The agency of migrant professionals

This chapter explores Settlers everyday experiences of inclusion and their agentic possibilities in light of the research question. The chapter focuses on how Settlers relate to the terms of inclusion. Three illustrative types of Settlers at Servall (Sections 6.1–6.3) characterize the journey of migrant professionals from unemployment in the Swedish labor market towards their participation in the Program From an agency-centered approach, each type of experience is an analytical construction that represents *ideal types*. In each of the experiences, Settlers both characterize and engage in inclusion. In the three types of experience, Settlers attempt to make sense of their path to inclusion within the boundaries of the terms of inclusion.

The presentation of the empirical material is focused on questioning the terms of inclusion, therefore space is given to how Settlers express what they think about inclusion and every day demands. Each of the three types of experience is presented with a section called 'Settlers' characterizing inclusion' where the Settlers' position on inclusion is made explicit.

As stated in Section 5.1, most Settlers were involved in recruitment and public relations processes. Therefore, most of the empirical material used is based on Settlers directly or indirectly working in these two functional areas of Servall. Some of the recruitment and public relations activities were associated with the Program. For instance, some Settlers considered 'successful' were showcased as part of the promotion of the Program as part of Servall's public relations. Showcased Settlers were current interns and sometimes former interns. To differentiate from 'model Settlers' (and the 'identity framework'), 'Showcased Settlers' are living examples (flesh and bones) of how Servall does inclusion, typically sharing their personal stories of success to broader audiences.

The Settlers that form part of the empirical material are mostly successful having finished the Program and found employment at Servall. The include current Settlers undertaking an internship who have the potential to later gain employment at Servall.

While the interest is on the voice of Settlers as a whole, the voice of Showcased Settlers is put in the spotlight given the continuous contact the author had with them during the fieldwork. They were 'shadowed' in their everyday work and engaged in longer one-on-one conversations with the researcher. Showcased Settlers also stood out for their protracted time in Servall which gave them insightful knowledge of Servall and the Program. Showcased Settlers were also important

for their mentorship role and work as 'transmission belts' of the terms of inclusion. Moreover, the Showcased Settlers' cumulative experience provided them with a 'birds-eye view' of the overall inclusion trajectories of Settlers generally. The three ideal types portray how Settler's navigate the Program configuration and on occasion engage with terms of inclusion – yet not necessarily all four of them.

6.1 Sky is the limit

This ideal type builds on the analysis of the similar experiences of eight Settlers: Leyla, Irina, Fahrid, Constantin, Anastasia, Mila, Henriette, and Ali.

6.1.1 Settlers' characterizing inclusion

Constantin [a new Settler having arrived as refugee from a Middle Eastern country] moved from an isolated refugee camp in the East of Sweden to Stockholm to work in his desired professional area. When I asked Constantin to assess his situation in the labor market, he shared that while there may be difficult circumstances for migrants, society is open and inclusive in Sweden. For instance, when characterizing Swedish employers, he shared:

> *They are open, they are open. They don't… in some countries they think about nationality [for employing foreign workers] and different stuff, you know. In Sweden they are open. They don't care if you are from a different country, different color, they are open and friendly. (Constantin).*

In a conversation about Swedish migration policy, Irina [a Settler who arrived in Sweden from an Eastern European country accompanying her husband] has a practical way of understanding inclusion. She construes inclusion as taking the opportunities offered by a very generous country.

> *I understand why Sweden did it [accepting migrants and refugees], because they need a workforce, so I understand the main reason, but I don't tend to think much on these things. I must think, what are we going to do [*referring to her family*], because I just think of my husband and my daughter because I like it in here, to integrate, but not what we all do to integrate. So I can say this, Swedish people do a lot for those that want to integrate, they [those that want to integrate] integrate really fast. (Irina)*

The debate around inclusion and what it takes to be included is secondary; what matters is the actions required to integrate. Fahrid, a Settler who arrived in Sweden after fleeing conscription in a war torn [Middle Eastern] country, describes how he shows initiative by taking any available opportunity to get to know Swedish colleagues:

> *An opportunity like this [The Program] gives me the chance to meet people [through networking] with my colleagues when I was here, for lunch, for Christmas, for cycling. We went out for a walk outside after the job. (…) So we can integrate. (Fahrid)*

There is a wide acknowledgement that the Program is a great opportunity for 'those that want to integrate' (*Irina*). That is, those that put the right level of effort will eventually be rewarded. So, to be included is to include oneself. Inclusion is both a personal duty and the result of individual effort. Inclusion needs to be earned.

In contrast, exclusion reflects the lack initiative and commitment to adapt. As Irina explained:

> *If you want to study English, all free. If you want to study some course on IT, all free. (…) So, for those people that want to do something, that want to integrate, it's really easy to do that. But I have found out unfortunately that not all people want to do that, not all people want to work hard. (Irina)*

6.1.2 Adapting to the circumstances

Settlers recognized the need to *adjust* through individual efforts and active learning – particularly the language. The host organization has the right to set the conditions of inclusion, by assimilating work dimensions but discarding non-work dimensions such as culture or language. Henriette [*who arrived as accompanying wife from an Eastern European country*] highlighted the different working culture in her country of origin.

"If you decided to work here then you adapt". They [people from her country] think like that. "We are not going to adapt to your culture'. "Don't expect us to just change anything of our ways. But you are welcome to adjust to the [Eastern European country] culture. That's so typical [Eastern European nationality], so [Eastern European nationality].' (…) (Henriette)

This idea is echoed by Mila:

> *A big problem is that – and mostly it is connected with [two Eastern European countries] history – I think a lot of people come to some other country and just because of this whole equality thing, they expect that the country needs to change and adapt to their traditions, to their culture. I don't think that the country that you are going to should adapt to you. (…) I am in a different category, because I really want to be here. (…) So, I am ready to take Swedish culture. It's me who needs to adapt and change. (Mila)*

Henriette describes the working culture in her country of origin, she seems to be embracing it to the extent of making it her own. From there, she suggests what it takes to be included in Servall.

> *I have friends that have been living here for ten years and don't even know a word besides Hej då. [Swedish for Goodbye]. But I have my own expectations towards me and probably due to the fact that I am from [Eastern European country], that everybody expects you to adjust. (…) I interviewed a girl that comes from [another Eastern European country] and I really like her. She has the same… [Eastern European country] mindset. I thought she was a very good candidate not just because she was from Eastern Europe but she was competent in the area we were looking for. And she said: 'Of course, I am planning to live here, I plan to learn the language'. This is just so natural. (Henriette)*

Adaptation is also used strategically to demonstrate one's skills and competencies. For instance, Fahrid said when he 'came to Sweden, I didn't have any contacts, and didn't have any friends. (…)'. While lacking a network could be a disadvantage to integrating into the labor market and in organizations, Fahrid poses it as a circumstance. Yet, by strategically adapting to this circumstance, he was able to demonstrate that he was a valuable worker for Servall.

> *Everything in this country is contacts. If you don't have [contacts], you can't do anything, and for us who came to Sweden, who can't speak English well from the beginning, it is hard to meet people, to connect with people. They [Swedes] are closed. (…) (Fahrid)*

Upon being accepted into the Program, Fahrid said he will then 'go to Stenungsund, Kungsbacka, Kvillebäcken, [locations in the surroundings of Gothenburg, where Servall has satellite offices] everywhere' (Fahrid). He will then begin to increasingly involve himself with his new colleagues. He believed this gave him the necessary exposure to start building a network. 'So you know people, you talk to them, they know you, they know how you work. So, you get contacts.' At that point, he managed to progressively be perceived as a competent person.

> *Then when I had the opportunity to apply somewhere [inside Servall], or get hired as an employee, it was a choice for them: 'Ok, we see that you are working hard, its good. Why don't we stay with him?' [placing himself in the position of the employer], and they asked me if I can work and I say: 'Yeah, why not?'. (Fahrid).*

Fahrid believed his approach led to being offered work. By having a strong drive this Settler could demonstrate his worth and he found ongoing employment in Servall.

Against the backdrop of the terms of inclusion, these Settlers do not refer to any structural problem that needed to be solved from which they were part of; barriers that the Program acknowledged, such as language deficits and lack of professional networks and considered *circumstance*s. Therefore, there is a notion of a necessity of individual adaptation to their new

circumstances. Settlers needed to show talent within the boundaries determined by their circumstances – which they did not consider to be problems. Inclusion is therefore understood as a result of a personal quest. Accordingly, the importance is given to taking the opportunities offered by the Program to include herself/himself.

6.1.3 Seeing beyond the material conditions

These Settlers appeared to defend the Program and Servall, sometimes suggesting the Program needed to be protected against Settlers that do not adjust to the working conditions. This sometimes means reacting negatively towards other colleagues' (often other Settlers') complaints of the Program. It was therefore strongly prescribed in this group to embrace the opportunity offered by the Program and remain loyal to it. Fahrid explained:

> *They [referring to some Settlers] don't get the chance to work in Servall because Servall helps more those that really need help. And then when you come and meet customers, and you say: 'Ok, I've worked in Dubai', 'Ok, I am in an internship here but I have a very good past'. I don't give a shit about your past. [referring to what the customers may think] 'I am here to get a new card. Can you help me or not?' This is customer service: you need to help the customer in the best way. Because they don't give a shit about your education, and your travelling or anything. (…) Some people say: 'I have conditions [i.e. demands]'. Ok, you didn't get employed [in the Swedish labor market]. You didn't get employed yet. You cannot put conditions. (Fahrid)*

Opinions that were not fully positive were frowned upon. The nature of being included is reduced to grasping opportunity. The program fills a labor gap and provides a unique opportunity. Therefore, being given a chance to work in Servall enables feelings of gratefulness. That is, an almost unconditional defense of the Program. Fahrid and Leyla recount their experience of having been in the Program:

> *If I didn't have the chance by Servall, I would be on the street or I would be working in a restaurant or something. (Fahrid). [this complements that he 'does not understand people that complains about Sweden, (field notes)*]

> *I have a lot of good things to share. But bad things [not]... This is the truth, 2019 March, I really don't have anything. (…) As I said, it's not about me saying BS, but I really don't have any negative things that have happened to me during these three years. (…) I have always been supportive and I always be visible for all. And that's why I could never say one single bad thing about Servall. I came from another land and I got the job and I'm developing through three years. (Leyla)*

Other Settlers when reflecting on the Program's basic pay, go back to their individual responsibility in participating in the Program and their ultimate desire of including themselves. They frame the value of undertaking the Program, despite the low payment, as a step towards improvement. This is the case of Ali, a Settler who arrived as refugee from a [*Middle Eastern country*], currently employed in his professional area at Servall.

> *We never talked about salary [during the selection interview] (…) [the compensation by the Program] was not very important for me (…) it was just getting a job and just getting...It's my field and I have some background in that. I can improve myself and come in. That's it. (Ali)*

Working for a basic compensation is therefore both downplayed and is the price Settlers are willing to pay for professional success. Henriette reflected on the decision to accept the Program's pay.

> *[The pay from the Program] was enough to cover food and transport. It was ok. I don't mind that part because I chose to get into the system with those conditions. It was more important to get into the market than to not get into the market, so you have to offer to be able to succeed. You take one step back and two steps forward. (Henriette)*

She finished the conversation with clarifying remarks that emphasized that she always felt included:

> *I was not handled in a different way when coming here regardless of being an intern or… so I was handled the same way, and they [colleagues at Servall] were very welcoming. I felt that I was part of the team from day one. So, it was a matter of paper. On paper, I was an intern but in real life I was a team member. (Henriette)*

Additionally, there was hope for the future. The conditions of the internship turned into an investment that will be reimbursed in the future. Anastasia, a current Settler from an [Eastern European country], was negotiating with her boss a possible upgrade after a temporary contract; she had an optimistic view. She prefered to remain hopeful regardless of the outcome of the negotiations:

> *For me, of course, it's very important, like I want to be employed in the organization, but even if I don't get any job here, I will still be very thankful for this opportunity to work in a big organization. (Anastasia)*

These Settlers acknowledged that the migrant experience could be difficult, but difficulties are a necessarily step towards a better scenario. They proclaimed that enduring the material conditions of the Program was a way to achieve inclusion. Instead, their voice suggested that the Program should not be too open to voices that did not adhere to the Program requirements to accept the material conditions of basic compensation. Accepting the conditions laid out by the Program eventually led these Settlers to be employed in Servall and be included in the organization. With the benefit of hindsight, they defended accepting the Program's compensation scheme.

6.1.4 Nothing is impossible

The defense of the Program is manifested in the closing down of potential negative narratives about the Program and Servall. Settlers invoked an optimistic narrative, yet not the one made by the Program itself of solving a structural problem. Instead, optimism is backed by Settlers' beliefs in *individual* drive which is very different from Servall's 'route to optimism'. While these Settlers express their gratefulness, they make sense that success is primarily an individual endeavor. This was expressed by Leyla when she reflected on her own experiences:

> *I believe if I wanted something with all my heart and did my best, not I just wish, sit on the sofa and think 'I wish I will be this'. That's not enough. I need to put a goal and I need to run after my dream. And nothing is impossible, but you need to run after your dream. (Leyla)*

Individual drive was also behind Henriette's reasoning of how she managed to progress in Servall. Taking as much responsibility as possible explained her path towards securing employment.

> *'[after the completion of the 6-month internship] The complexity of my work didn't change, I learned new things because I had more things to do, but I was contributing the same way as before. (…) It [all] depends on how much responsibility you want to take for things. So, I had the chance to take on the amount of work I wanted to. That was an open discussion (…) a very good discussion with my manager at that time. (Henriette)*

By taking a large amount of responsibility Henriette could then demonstrate to be a worthy and competent employee.

In their characterization of inclusion, these Settlers showed the capacity to adapt was central. These Settlers were grateful for the opportunities provided by the Program. As a result, their criticism was directed to those workers that failed to grab and appreciate these opportunities.

Taken as a whole, these Settlers (ideal type) do not perfectly fit the idea of the model Settler. While for these Settlers, inclusion is an outcome of individual drive, they don't want to be seen as part of a structural problem. These Settlers are mobilized by their own individual drive (they are highly motivated) and they did not engage much in discussing social or workplace barriers. The barriers in the labor market (such as lacking a network) were natural *circumstances* of being in a new country which could be overcome through individual efforts.

6.1.5 Henriette and the idea of talent in Servall

The 'sky is the limit' presents Settlers' voice as driven and willing to adapt. Despite this logic, inclusion also entails instances involving poor fit. One illustrative episode involving Henriette is put in the spotlight.

Henriette has a strong belief in the Program and considers herself to be a person that 'stands for 'things that work'. She emphasizes 'ambition' and 'drive' when describing herself and what is needed to include herself in Sweden and within Servall. Her direct boss considered her to be 'fantastic' and 'passionate', and as 'warm' by a close colleague. Henriette's enthusiasm was reflected in her being the most active and vociferous in work meetings. In our conversations, Henriette would usually appear somewhat upbeat and spoke quickly. Sometimes, following her would require running behind her to as she moved frantically from meeting to meeting [Field notes]. Henriette, participated in the promotion of the Program as a successful case of newfound talent; she represented the Program as an 'ambassador', and appeared frequently as the image of the Program. Finally, she moved upwards to occupy managerial functions related to the Program, and claimed 'I'm the best example that the Program works'. Henriette epitomized the example of both talent and adaptation.

Henriette worked in the same team as Caroline. Caroline, Henriette's boss and team leader – was a straightforward person who was enthusiastic about the Program and seemed interested in inclusion initiatives. She was willing to talk about interactions – including tensions and positive synergies – between team members, among which Henriette took a central role. In a private conversation with Caroline, she would reveal how Henriette was professionally 'hungry'. Yet, while Henriette was considered an asset to the team, her talent did not seem perfectly articulated.

Using a distended tone, Caroline would recall a dialogue between Henriette and a Swedish colleague who deemed Henriette as: 'too intense'. For instance, Caroline remembers reading one

of Henriette's e-mails which she found to be 'unpleasant'. Caroline noted that Henriette 'just shoots', 'cuts the crap' which 'doesn't work with the Swedes'. Caroline remarked that unlike the case of a woman from [a North American country] in Servall that 'used her communication style to build her own personal brand', Henriette's communication style was less filtered. Despite her talent, and the team's appreciation for her work, Henriette looked like she needed to change her ways. This is however described by Caroline as a situation of mutual learning for her team.

In the last conversation with Henriette, when I asked her what she has learned over her time in Servall, after some seconds of reflection, she responded 'to be diplomatic'. She goes on saying that she has learned: 'how to frame things. Here in Sweden you are more diplomatic and you are caring. And that is something you learn with time'. Being diplomatic, in the sense of displaying certain ways of behavior in the workplace, was a necessary complement to her talent. As she progressed in Servall, she struggled to integrate her style in her everyday work. This signaled that talent itself was not enough in itself, but it needed to be conciliated with the appropriate behaviors learned as part of her adaptation.

6.2 Hard work as salvation (from marginalization)

This ideal type builds on the experiences of six Settlers: Aya, Bhuva, Isabela, Yasmin, Carmen, and Ekaterina.

6.2.1 Settlers' characterizing inclusion

This group of Settlers reported going through experiences of discrimination in the labor market and feelings of being undermined. Lyuba, arrived from an [Eastern European country] as accompanying partner. While she held two masters degrees from her home country and had experience in the areas she was applying to, she received negative informal evaluations of her CV at the EO. She managed to learn Swedish in one year and then returned to the EO. In this second encounter with the EO, Lyuba felt her education and professional experience was disdained. Lyuba reconstructed her conversation with an EO worker:

> *[The EO] knows that if I'm interested, I will manage [to get employed]. But I had this feeling when I had this discussion with them… they were, like, 'you can go to the [primary and secondary] schools and talk with people who are sitting at the reception there'. To which this Settler reacted: 'I do not know why a school reception? Why was I only good enough for this job, to go and sit at a school reception? I don't know where it comes from? And then she [EO worker] said, 'That's how they [other job-seeking migrants] got jobs'. (Lyuba)*

Settlers first encounter the Swedish labor market with high qualifications and confidence in the value of their professional experience (mostly gained in their home country). However, this confidence often turned into disappointment when they realized the widespread unfairness in the labor market.

This group of Settlers had a common experience in identifying arbitrary rejection from the labor market. Carmen, another Settler that arrived in Sweden as accompanying wife, tool three years to find employment that reflected her education. While she prepared applications for several jobs, she studied and did menial jobs. Rejections were however constant:

> *When I was sending CVs after I came from [Latin American country] to Sweden (in September 2010), that was the first time that reality hit me. It didn't matter how many CVs I would send and neither what type of job I would apply for – not even Mc Donald's, I don't even remember how many CVs I sent to McDonald's, they never accepted me. That was a big shock, I did not expect it. (Carmen).*

After Carmen got a 6-month internship [*in an organization other than Servall]* she continued applying. She reflects on a conversation with a potential employer:

> *They did not want to offer me the same benefits [as local employees]. Lower salary. They asked for one or two years of experience. I told them that I had 6 months of experience in Sweden and also experience in [a Latin American country]. They told me literally: 'Unfortunately, that does not count. You need at least one year of experience in Sweden. Six months is not enough.' Carmen expressed her frustration as she continuously had similar experiences to the one described. I thought, if these firms do not value this [her experience], then I don't want to be in this type of firm. (Carmen)*

Yasmin, a Settler from a [*Middle Eastern country*] with two master's degrees gained in Sweden and ample international professional experience, submitted around 400 job applications.

> *I had difficulties to find a job in Sweden. I searched for a job around like one year and a half. (…) I was thinking, I have two Masters from Sweden, I have work experience of one year and a half from the United Nations, so I can just easily find a job. But coming back here, receiving all the rejections… I think in total I had two interviews. Two … And then I got to know that this program [the Program] existed in Sweden. (Yasmin)*

Bhuva, a current Settler from [*a South Asian country*] with an MBA and extensive management experience in a multinational based in her homeland, felt confident upon her arrival in Sweden, and that she: 'could get a job immediately, and there would not be any problems'. She was

however confronted with a great number of rejections. She was able to get meetings with employers, but the never a job offer. It was a year and a half that she described as 'one of the most traumatic 18 months of my life'. She highlighted in particular one interview that was the tipping point that made her realize a problem in the labor market. This was a long three-phased interview where she ended up being rejected by what she considered a baseless decision:

> *My problem is that, if you reject me in one go, it's okay. If you take two, three hours of my time and take me through the process, and you reach the stage where I am sure that I'm going to get an offer, and then you tell me that I don't have experience in Sweden, this is extremely disappointing. (Bhuva)*

The feeling of frustration of not being able to get employment that matched their qualifications led some Settlers to apply for low-skilled positions. However, as Carmen described, even then they continued to experience rejection.

> *I applied for a lot of positions, and I've got, I think, only one call. (…) You have a reality when people just ignore your applications and never, never reply to you. (Lyuba)*

Isabela, a Settler from [an Eastern European country] was ready to work in 'whatever' job and spent one year in a flower shop while continuing to submit applications.

> *I was like, 'right, ok, maybe I can try cleaning or something else'. I tried other flower shops as well because I wasn't so happy. And this is when I experienced it… I applied for cleaning jobs: absolutely nobody called me. And, I don't want to exaggerate, but I think it was 100 CVs. (Isabela)*

Along with the mismatch of Settler's competencies, rejection in the labor market was also perceived to manifest due to foreignness. Aya, a Settler from a [Middle Eastern country] that arrived as war refugee, was sent by the Swedish authorities to a little town in Sweden. She was thrilled to fulfill her objective to work in her professional area as she found temporary employment as an intern in an organization. Aya recalls 'there was only one office for Servall, one office for [*another large Swedish organization in the same area as Servall*], and one office for [*another large Swedish organization in the same area as Servall*], it was so little'. When her internship in that organization was drawing to its end, she remembers:

> *My mentor had a difficult time and said they cannot employ non-Swedish people. (…) They cannot trust. He said, 'they cannot trust other persons, only Swedish people'. (…) I felt a big depression. I thought to myself: I have lost my family, I have lost my country, I have lost*

my job. So, for 6 or 7 months I had a big depression. And then I thought I cannot continue in my area. (Aya)

Isabela also received many rejections for jobs for which she was overqualified for and struggled to understand the reason. She tried to understand the rejection and also considered foreignness as the main reason for the rejections. While she did not have those expectations, she suggests not being Swedish as the root of the problem – without mentioning it explicitly:

I experienced it. It's the true, It's how I feel. Unfortunately, I didn't believe it when I came here but I changed my opinion. So yeah, that was my case. (…) I am not Svensson, I am not Jacobsson, and I am not saying this to be mean, but it is obvious… I mean, not even a phone call. Why? (Isabela)

Along those lines, after about a year of rejections which Carmen attributed to the inability to speak Swedish fluently, she reflected:

That is when I realized, the barrier is not the language because I speak Swedish. I practiced 15 months and did my Masters [in Swedish]… there is something else. (Carmen)

These experiences of discrimination (of professional status, of foreignness) are signaled but not further elaborated. They are alluded to but there is no explicit label given to them.

In their characterization of inclusion, these Settlers realize from their first-person experiences the existence of a problem affecting them and, generally, migrant professionals. These Settlers not only experience the problem as individuals but extend it out into society. In this way, these Settlers identify the existence of discrimination in the labor market, aligning with the Program's identification of a structural problem that needs to be solved.

6.2.2 Material conditions are what they are

Once in Servall, these Settlers diminished the importance of Servall's compensation barely being enough to cover basic needs. Bhuva and Yasmin converged in their opinions in that the compensation offered is an insignificant factor in the grand scheme of things. Instead, the chance to work takes central importance.

I spent 18 months without paid employment in Sweden and, frankly, today, the pay is not such a big concern. So, it's not that I'm not able to live in Sweden because of my pay. So, that is not really bothering me. (Bhuva)

> *The monthly payment was like around three to four thousand SEK [around 300 or 400 EUR], so it was almost nothing. But still, I prefer to have the chance to work. (Yasmin)*

Bhuva and Yasmin's partners were fully employed during their period of unemployment; this allowed them to better cope with the job seeking and rejection. However, Isabela and Carmen had to support themselves doing low-skilled jobs before securing employment in Servall. Isabela acknowledges that she and other Settlers experience 'frustration' for being paid so little. However, Isabela still saw this was a 'win-win [*situation*] because it's still good. You get experience.' Ultimately, one 'shouldn't really think about money that much because you're still going to get quite a good salary to survive after the six months, because [*the future compensation*] is going to be higher anyway' (*Isabela*).

When referring to the Program Isabela says: 'they [*Servall*] do give us a lower salary compared to other people, like a Swedish person. (…) but as I said, it's a normal thing. I think every company will do that. It's a fair thing'. For Isabela, the Program giving unequal compensation to migrant workers compared to locals is natural. This reasoning is then extended to all migrant professional workers that may be facing labor market discrimination – as these groups of Settlers claim to have experienced:

> *This [unequal remuneration for the same work] is a global problem, because it is not only Sweden but think about Britain and any other country, if I would go to work in another country. I think we are tending to get paid less compared to their own citizens. I put my head on it, it's everywhere, think about Polish people going in the UK, think about Polish people working here [in Sweden]. And not only construction workers, we are talking in general. So, in that sense it is not really fair but it's a global problem and would be, if [Eastern European country] would have been a better country it would be the same case. (…) it's not Sweden, I repeat that, it's everywhere. Taking the advantage and get less paid. (…) it's a global problem. (…) you get upset about this, sometimes you do. (…) [However] I don't think it will change. (Isabela).*

Isabela was unaware that her salary disadvantage in her department changed after two years. It was not until her manager came to her and told her that her 'salary was really below… So, she gave me a big raise. And then, continuously…' such that now Isabela is 'absolutely happy with her salary'.

These Settlers accept the temporary material conditions (lower pay for the same work) in exchange of having the opportunity to gain work experience in Sweden and maintain

employment. The material conditions at Servall go either unproblematized or become justified with a broader narrative that naturalizes inequality. This justifies the Program's configuration.

6.2.3 Working hard as a path to inclusion

The same Settlers that reported experiencing labor market discrimination also emphasized the need to work hard. They found a 'solution' to labor market discrimination by committing to hard work. Once at Servall, these Settlers worked hard as both conditional (ongoing Settlers) and full members (Showcased Settlers) as a meane to attain inclusion in the workforce. This is made clear as they insisted on constituting themselves as 'naturally' hard workers.

Sulta, an ongoing Settler who arrived in Sweden eight months pregnant after fleeing war in [*Middle Eastern country*] had a strong desire to be back at work.

> *I did not want to remain at home and get welfare money. I wanted to get back into working life as soon as possible. (Sulta)*

Lyuba also demonstrated her commitment to getting back to work:

> *[being excluded from the labor market] was very disappointing because I knew that I'm a hard worker (…) I want to work, and I just cannot sit at home and do nothing. (…) I was everywhere. (Lyuba)*

While the widespread feelings of discrimination were manifested as rejections from in the labor market, all these Settlers sought to reverse those difficulties. They emphasized hard work as being central to overcoming labor market discrimination and put themselves in the path of inclusion. These Settlers demanded the recognition of their competencies. There seemed to be a need to *demonstrate* their competence, professionalism and work ethics, which they would do as part of Servall.

As she reflected on her experience in her department, Isabela detailed how she actively engaged with her departments tasks and was proactive on taking on more responsibility. She was aware she was overworking, which she connected with her (ethno)national origin. She realized that, at some point, she was working too much and that was problematic, to the point that she felt her different work ethic (i.e. of actively taking responsibility) separatd herself from department colleagues.

> *'I'm not saying that people don't care or are not willing to help [in her Department at Servall]. It's still a challenge with a lot of things, tasks related to work that you actually need to go*

> *around yourself, make a lot of phone calls to actually find information. Sometimes it is hard to contact people. Nobody has this proactivity. That's my problem. That's actually always been my problem. (…) Well, mostly how I am, and I know for sure, in [Eastern European country] it's like that. I mean, I don't know if it's laziness [attitude of colleagues at Servall], to be fair. But laziness is definitely also part of it. (Isabela)*

As some Settlers acquire managerial positions, they often critique those they do not perceive to being work as hard as they do. Lyuba – promoted to a manager – showed her disappointment when her intern [*an ongoing Settler*] lost the opportunity to move upwards and take a managerial position. Lyuba identified the core problem on her intern was their inability to work hard – in contrast to how she sees herself. She reconstructed the conversation with her intern:

> *'If you work hard they will employ you [her Settler intern] because they need someone to replace me'. 'They need a person to be here.' And it happened that she broke her hand, and it was not even the right hand, and she was on sick leave and so on, and it was exactly the period when I left. So, we found a consultant to replace me. (…) I expect a lot from myself. And when people are having an interview with me, I usually say that my bad side is that I will expect a lot from other people as well. (Lyuba)*

Lyuba strongly lamented what she considers an important opportunity lost by her intern:

> *I expected a lot from her and I had a lot on and I really needed help. And then she left. Even if she broke her hand but she left when she had an amazing opportunity to get a job. I also put myself in this place that even if I break a leg I would come and continue working. (Lyuba)*

After two years in Servall, Carmen had a burnout episode due to overwork. In her words, it was an experience 'hard to describe'. Carmen acknowledges she had been 'working overtime'. This was her initiative:

> *It is not that someone asked me to do it, it was due to my anxiety for doing a good job and demonstrating that I am good. It was quite normal to me to bring the computer home and work on weekends and do things extra well. It was not that my boss was explicitly asking for it. I wanted to do it… so it turned into a habit. (Carmen)*

Things got worse when she became ill. She had to be home for two weeks; she decided to return to work, while not feeling completely well, and kept going to work for months even though she was feeling constantly sick. She never blamed Servall for this episode. Instead, she referred to her inability to realize that she was so stressed and ignoring what a burn out was. After consulting with a specialist, she concluded this happened because she had a 'very ambitious, high sense of

responsibility and is always wanting to help a lot'. She further explained: 'You like to help and have the initiative, but combined with having difficulty in saying no, I experienced it in a natural way'. Not taking leave in Servall was entirely her decision, following a personal professional commitment.

The impetus to demonstrate hard work fits and reinforces with Servall's constructed image of talent. Working hard appeared to be the path towards inclusion. At least in the case of Isabela, Lyuba and Carmen, that seems to have contributed to their progress in Servall, and in their aspiration towards becoming 'model Settlers'.

6.2.4 Yasmin and Carmen experience boundaries

'Working hard for salvation' shows how Settlers are ready to work their into inclusion. This trajectory however comprises conflictive moments. These is exemplified by two experiences of two hardworking Settlers: Yasmin and Carmen.

Yasmin navigates Servall's norms

Through hard work, Yasmin [*from a Middle Eastern country*] moved from being a Settler into a managerial position, and becoming responsible for new Settlers. Yasmin insisted the need to show professionalism in her new attained position, that included managing diversity issues. The position was an opportunity to prove that Settlers, despite having different ethno-cultural origins, could be hardworking and professional. However, in her new position, difference-related tensions did not take long to emerge.

Yasmin describes how she and other Servall managers handled some Settler's ethno-cultural poor fit. First, Yasmin had an intern from [an *East Asian country*] that would be 'too polite'. Yasmin gave an example of this Settler being in a meeting and giving her place to managers that would 'come 20 minutes late':

> *In her culture, if someone is higher than you, you will give your seat to him or her. (…) 'this is your culture, ok… respect… but this is not the way it works in Sweden. (Yasmin)*

Yasmin, who appears to be secular, recruited a Settler from [*a South Asian country*] as a mentee, partly to give an opportunity to fight societal prejudices against Muslims. She felt she identified with this new Settler as she recalls being asked awkward questions by colleagues in Servall when she started as a Settler herself. Yasmin said she tried to respond to these questions by saying 'yes,

but this is a view that you have, it's the wrong view'. She then felt that she needed to give this new Settler an opportunity to show that even though 'he is a Muslim, it's not going to affect how that person [*the new Settler*] behaves'.

Yasmin's Settler however seemed to be more religious than what seemed acceptable for her. Yasmin recalls trying to tell this Settler:

> *Okay, you know what, we're in Sweden, these things are so fragile in Sweden. I'm not supposed to talk about my [religious] views. You are not supposed to talk about your [religious] views in a way that you impose that on other people.' After that 'It happened once or twice, and the third time I asked my manager to take it to him. (Yasmin)*

Yasmin acknowledged after her manager's intervention '[*the Settler*] became better'. Yasmin concluded that she 'was supposed to act professionally' in this situation, implying that it is better: 'not to protest myself directly when it comes to these questions [*ethno-cultural tensions*].' In her position as mentor, Yasmin preferred not to escalate the situation and preferred to keep these tensions low-key.

The tendency to keep these tensions out of the public eye, seemed confirmed when Yasmin was suddenly booked for a team meeting. Yasmin recalls that she was not informed about the topic to be discussed. She assumed this was a work-related meeting; however, when she joined she asked: 'okay, what's the topic?' and then her (ten person) team described an episode in which a [*religious conservative*] Settler would not accept his boss 'to be a woman who wears short sleeves' after he started in the Program. Yasmin shared her surprise that ' [*the team*] had actually booked the launch room to ask me for advice but they started to tell me their problems like they had a team activity', suggesting the secretive character of the meeting. Yasmin considered that the team (dominated by locals) was unable to affirm the Swedish norm in this episode.

The tensions Yasmin experienced were known by different managers and Settlers in Servall and shared in two other private interviews; however, they were never spoken about openly. While Yasmin wanted to maintain the professional code, she was also expected to bring ethno-cultural issues to the surface in Servall. However, a stronger response to this episode did not take place.

Carmen interrogates treatment in the Swedish labor market

Carmen was a Settler who was employed by Servall and became aShowcased Settler - she developed into a mentor and a became a visible face of the Program, representing the Program

externally. Her role as a Showcased Settler was part of the public relations strategy of Servall. This role enabled her to learn on the multiple critiques and concerns related to the labor market disadvantages of professional migrants. In a high-level political event that Servall representatives attend every year, Carmen was invited to join to represent the Program along with Servall's CEO. At the event, she managed to meet members of the Swedish political elite. Carmen recalls her conversation with Sweden's Minister of Labor during the event:

> *I met the Minister (…) And I posed the problem… [discrimination in the labor market] and he said: 'The problem is the unknown. The less you know the country where a person comes from, the higher the barrier'. Because the barrier is not that high if it is somebody that comes from Australia, England or the US. Maybe it is not the same if it is someone that comes from… (…) These countries [i.e. Australia, England or the US] are something that people know, something that they can relate to. You more or less have an indication but the more distance you have from the country the person comes from, the easier it is to say: 'this person does not have the same level'. (…)I discussed this with this Minister. And I think it made sense. Sweden is a country that has got used to being in the top three in education, quality of life, etc. Obviously, they will feel that they are better [corrects herself]…sorry, very good. And in relation to other countries that they do not know, you have the image that is an emerging country, underdeveloped… the first thing they would think is that, obviously, they will not have the same education level compared to us. The same level of skills. So, it is very easy to choose based on that. (Carmen)*

The Minister tried to define the problem of the unemployment of migrant professionals in Sweden. In this definition the root of the problem comes down to the 'unknown'; the structural problem affecting migrant professionals becomes addressed by diffusing the 'unknown'. In turn, Carmen seems to agree with the Minister's words and makes the effort to see what the problem actually is from the Minister's point of view and the 'Swedish' perspective. By agreeing, Carmen seems to validate structural discrimination as 'it easy to choose based on that'. Therefore, while the structural problem remains undefined, Carmen seems to embrace the narrative that Servall is working on its solution.

6.3 Speaking up to the rules

This ideal type builds on the experiences of three Settlers: Ivette, Eva, and Ahnaf.

6.3.1 Settlers' characterizing inclusion

A smaller group of Settlers described their experiences seeking employment as hard and inclusion as elusive. However, they felt they had enough resources to support themselves to the extent

they did not consider being in a desperate situation while they were seeking employment. They acknowledged having available resources was an important support when dealing with life and career transitions. This prevented anguish when experiencing prolonged rejections from the labor market.

Ivette, arrived in Sweden as an accompanying partner after gaining years of professional experience in her field. She considers herself 'a bit selfish' and shares that she 'grew up with a twenty-four hour live-in nanny'. She spent her life living across continents and has an extensive professional network worldwide.

> *[during her first years in Sweden, she thought] I still have some savings, you know, [in case things went wrong] I can still move back to [large capital city in Europe], I can move to [country in Asia], I can move to other countries where I have worked… where I come from… [and so on]. (Ivette)*

Ahnaf, who also arrived as accompanying partner, highlighted how his arrival had to do with her (Swedish) wife's family as one of her wife's family members experienced a deteriorating health problem. This was an unexpected situation that changed the course of his professional plans.

> *I never thought of moving here [Sweden] because we have a family business in [an Asian country]. So, I thought it wouldn't be that good because I would be struggling with a new country and language. (Ahnaf)*

In the same way, Eva who arrived as accompanying partner from [an Eastern European country] and who speaks four languages fluently in addition to her mother tongue, enjoyed the support of her husband.

> *My husband is employed [foreigner in Sweden] and we don't have any children. We could manage with his salary. (Eva)*

However, these Settlers describe experiencing powerlessness as result of other people's ignorance of their professional status. They express being undervalued, for instance, when their career expectations hit a wall in both the labor market and Servall. Ivette, one Showcased Settler, expressed frustration for not feeling valued in the Swedish labor market by her own professional status:

> *We [her Swedish husband and herself when they moved to Sweden] thought that it shouldn't be that difficult for me to get a job with those advantages of his and also the advantages of me having worked for the two biggest [organizations in the Servall's business area] in the world*

> *in [large capital city in Europe] and [large metropoli in North America]. (…) I was moving here [Sweden] thinking they would definitely want me because how many times in a year would someone like me walk through the door of the organization with the CV I have? (…) I have got so much more international experience, but this doesn't count in this country. (…) to them I am not better than them. (Ivette)*

Ivette found that marginalization and exclusion is a generalized situation in Swedish society. This goes beyond the purely formal aspects, such as qualifications and language skills such as when Settlers get rejected due to lack of Swedish language skills. She suggested there were deeper undercover reasons that lead to the rejection of migrant professionals in the labor market:

> *How much of it is really the language and how much of it is using the language to hide what is really underneath? Which is.. 'you don't look like us.. you are not going to be able to fit into our culture'. Apart from the language so you know, everything else, the thinking, the mindset. It's the mindset. It's not about the language. (Ivette).*

Ivette suggests that discrimination is part of the mindset and the way in which the labor market and society works.

Ahnaf, shares this perception of discrimination which was confirmed by their friends' rejection experiences. After being rejected in many applications Ahnaf shared:

> *[I] applied for a job with my nickname, and I put it as 'Cesar' [in order not to sound Muslim], just not my surnames (…) and I got a response from them. It was a call center kind of thing. I commented that thing with my [Muslim] friend, so they also shared the same thing that I've experienced and some of their friends also had the same feeling. (…) [Swedish people] are very nice, they are probably the best people on earth but (…) If you have a Muslim name that can be a problem.*

To date, this Settler's public profile in a popular professional network still uses his nickname [Cesar] and the 'less Muslim' sounding of his surnames.

While this group of Settlers managed to move on from the 6-month internship in Servall, they regret not having their home country social status recognized. For instance, Ivette found it 'quite hard to integrate'. At the same time, Eva signalled to her parents' professional status to describe why she does not give up in trying to solve the red tape problems she had with EO that prevented her to start working in Servall (Field notes). These feelings of lack of recognition are also reported to be present within Servall. Ahnaf attributes his feelings of exclusion to the fact that his

colleagues in Servall do not know the type of person he really is, and the stereotypes around his ethno-cultural origin.

> *I have the feeling, because they didn't know my background, or they don't know me, they are not my Facebook friends, all of them are Facebook friends [colleagues in Servall]… they don't know what kind of family I belong to, or what kind of status sort to say. [reduces voice tone] So they think: 'Oh, this kind of guy is from [Asian country]', you know… I can't blame them for thinking like that cause it's a poor country, but they tend to, I think, some of the people I try to get along with, I try to be nice to them, but they are really never nice to me. (Ahnaf)*

These Settlers voices suggest that while they are resourceful, they feel they experience discrimination as they are placed in a disadvantaged position due to lack of professional recognition or due to their foreignness. In this way, these Settlers align with Servall's narrative of the existence of forms of discrimination in the labor market. Yet, as negative experiences remain inside Servall, these Settlers voices contradict the capability of Servall to resolve the structural problems affecting migrant professionals.

These Settlers do not seem particularly interested to fit into the image of talent advanced by Servall. For instance, they do raise issues related to their class, ethnic, and religious identity that are not connected to their competencies and skills.

6.3.2 Determining disadvantage

This group of Settlers voiced perceived disadvantage in different ways. For instance, some Settlers believed inclusion is used as an excuse for taking advantage of Settlers' labor.

Eva, tried to evaluate the Program conditions by putting herself in the position of current Settlers. She realized that among Servall employed local workers, there is widespread ignorance about Settlers disadvantage and specifically the basic compensation they receive while working full time. This frustration emerged in an interaction with a local worker, that she remembers vividly.

> *I've noticed that people [local, permanent employees] who work in Servall are not aware at all of how much a Settler is earning. It covers your lunch basically, and you are working eight hours a day. (Eva)*

She recounted an episode that was particularly distressing:

> *We had lunch on the terrace and one of the [local, permanent employed] colleagues said: 'but Settlers, they are getting paid, she saidlike 30,000 SEK or somethin. (…) she said a number that was like a normal salary. She was like, 'but they get internships, and they get a full salary'. And I said, 'they are not getting full salary, they are getting 1000 SEK [a week]'. And she said 'what? you mean a day?' (…) people just assume… (Eva)*

The existence of such ignorance about the different employment conditions experienced by Settlers was confirmed during another informal encounter. When a Settler got employment through internal recruitment after the 6-month period:

> *Somebody [a local, permanent employees] said 'but how come we cannot hire [externally]… How come she has an advantage [the Settler], and the consultant doesn't have an advantage?' It was another colleague who said it, and I said, 'but do you know that a Settler is not earning anything?' And she said, 'what do you mean they're not earning anything?' And I said, 'well they're getting 2,000 or 3.000 SEK from the EO'. And [the local employee] she was completely stunned. So, they don't know, people don't know. People think that [being a] Settler is actually paid. And that's not very comfortable. (Eva)*

These Settlers (*Evelyn, Eva, Ahnaf*) realized that Servall local employees seemed to have been misled about the real situation of Settlers and the feeling of disadvantage. That is, Settlers perceive themselves at a disadvantage that is unknown by organizational members.

Settlers saw the pay disparity as unfair, which was exhibited as frustration:

> *You're dealing with a new environment, you're dealing with a new business culture, you're dealing with new tasks and expectations, you want to fit in, you want to find a permanent job. Because when you're a Settler, you don't have permanent job and you don't get a salary, which is like a small thing to think about [ironical tone]. (Eva)*

Ivette described her experience of disadvantage as similar to Eva's.

> *I thought that the fact that I was doing the same job as the person sitting next to me, who was getting a regular salary while I was getting 4,000 kroner from the EO didn't feel good. It felt a bit demeaning. It felt a bit like you are not… you are not really one of them… although… you are doing the job... you know, you are free labor… you are not being paid the same. That doesn't feel good, of course. (Ivette)*

Being paid less in the Program is defined as result of the local mindset, signaling back to a structural problem that gets reproduced in Servall.

> *'[in Sweden] they feel threatened. If they put you on the same playing field as they do in [Western European capital where she worked]. [Referring to that capital city] That's what people do, they don't just put someone in and go, 'You can be this intern and we will see'… never heard of this anywhere but I understand why they do it here because you will always be inferior, they will always be superior. It's just an unspoken thing. (Ivette)*

In light of this perceived disadvantage, Eva thinks of alternative ways of running the Program. Her critiques address the alleged unfairness of how Settler's labor is compensated:

> *If EO is giving incentives of 12.000 SEK to the mentor who is taking Settlers, how come they cannot pay at least that amount of money to the person who is actually working? That is what I'm a bit confused about.' (…) '[The Program being minimally paid] should be changed because you have people who are actually working eight hours, who have experience. And whereas I understand that their salaries maybe cannot match at the beginning, that of a permanent employee, I think it's shameful that [the allowance] is so low. (Eva)*

These criticisms suggest that the structural problems found in the labor market also play out in Servall in the form of disadvantaged working conditions. These Settlers seem to be aware of a situation of disadvantage and attempt to overcome their perceived powerlessness.

6.3.3 Questioning inclusion

As these Settlers questioned their working conditions, their contractual relation with Servall made visible a possible root cause of the problem. For instance, when they had to bargain for higher compensation as they were taking part of the Program as interns. Ahnaf was told by his (local) wife to ask for more money in a salary negotiation after moving from being a Settler to a middle management position. The salary Ahnaf's wife suggested was higher than the salary Ahnaf was expecting to request.

> *I was expecting a salary of 23.000 SEK and my wife wasn't agreeing with me 'you should ask for more salary when you talk to them', 'for a starter they should give you at least 25.000' (...) Eventually, my head of division gave me 33.000 SEK to start. (Ahnaf).*

Ahnaf realized both a disadvantage and the possibilities of re-negotiating a more advantageous outcome.

Eva reflects on her decisions to remain in the Program and also on the decision of Settlers who decided to remain in Servall. When Eva was promoted, her idea of the working conditions provided by the Program changed. She could see that she was privileged for having enough economic support while being unemployed. She was then fully focused on finding employment

without the hurdles that other less resourceful candidates and ongoing Settlers may be experiencing.

> *I was just thinking about starting and coming into the job market and starting from somewhere. That for me was a priority, so I wasn't thinking so much about that [Compensation] part. But now, when I think back at it, now I have an opinion about it but, at that point it, was just like 'just give me an opportunity'. (Eva)*

Eva's reflections made her question the conditions of the internship contract for Settlers.

> *The salary comes also with responsibility. Now I get the salary [after securing employment] but I also have responsibility that I didn't have as a Settler. So again, I understand fully why an intern or a Settler cannot have the same salary. But I also think that what they are offering is insulting. There has to be something in the middle. (Eva)*

With hindsight, the Settlers still consider the final balance as positive. Ivette, as she pondered the decision to join the Program, shared:

> *It has been a good journey [in Servall]… it was hard due to the pay thing. They weren't really paying me. You feel like you are doing a job when you are not part of them but... then you start getting a proper salary. (Ivette)*

Ivette became a Showcased Settler who represents the Program publicly.

However, the general working conditions for Settlers have not changed. While the compensation differentials are denounced as unfair by some Settlers, changing the conditions provided by the Program in Eva's words 'is very difficult'. Eva describes what she thinks the general situation of ongoing Settlers to:

> *What can they [Settlers] do? they are happy to get something, to get the opportunity to come into the market. And it's a great opportunity, and I think it's a great program. (Eva)*

Eventually, Ahnaf, Eva and Ivette managed to secure permanent employment in their professional areas at Servall. While these Settlers recognized and affirmed the existence of a structural problem in the labor market and discrimination (aligned with Servall's discourse about the Program), they questioned the ability of Servall to solve the structural problem. Therefore, these Settlers partially questioned Servall's optimistic discourse on inclusion. Instead, the conditions offered (interns) by the Program did not seem to be solving the structural problem but reaffirmed the existence of discrimination. In their everyday interactions in Servall they reported experiencing a lack of recognition aswell. To deal with what they perceived to be a

disadvantage in Servall, they tried to overcome their powerlessness by disputing the material conditions.

'Speaking up to the rules' shows Settlers posed demands; often, inclusion does not take the course of action they desired. Following this logic, the unequal contract conditions of the internship contracts were made explicit by Ivette.

6.3.4 Ivette openly bargains the Program's contract

Ivette joined the Program as a probationary intern after a long period of searching for employment and multiple interviews in other organizations in Servall's area. After constant rejections she applied and got accepted into the Program after passing a test in her professional area.

> *When I joined Servall it was tough because of the language, really tough. And because of the lack of Swedish language skills, I also felt like I was beneath them. Even though I know really deep down that I am not because I have got so much more international experience, but it doesn't count in this country. (Ivette)*

Ivette experienced frustration for occupying a subordinate position that she interprets as undeserving, even within Servall. She made this feeling extensible to other migrant professionals in the Swedish labor market. Ivette described how a recently arrived group of migrant professionals might feel as 'frustrated, you feel ashamed. You feel like I [*profession*] and I was a [*highly skilled profession*] back in [*non-European country*] and now I am here doing data entry.' Ivette, seemed to see inclusion as a confrontation which she did not want to lose.

During her first probationary 6-month internship as a Settler, Ivette was not satisfied with the prospect of spending another 6 months in a temporary position. She then decided to confront her boss:

> *In my mind you [head of her team] have already seen me working for six months [internship] so you should just sign me on for a permanent [contract] but permanent with a clause. (…) I was pissed off of course. (Ivette)*

Ivette then posed a claim to her boss and managed to secure a permanent position by asserting herself:

> *So during the six months [of internship], at the third month point I went up to my boss and I said: 'you know, what are the chances of getting a [permanent] full-time job? … You want*

> *to tell me what you think of me, and I am going to tell you what I think of you guys'. And so we had a conversation and I got the job, which yes, I was happy about. (Ivette)*

Defiance and assertiveness was suggested as the way to escape being tied to the Program's contract.

Securing permanent employment in Servall appeared to be a spontaneous episode rather than a result of a carefully planned strategy. In the words of Ivette, it rather obeyed an impulse for asserting what she thought her place was:

> *There was no position open [to apply to]. But I just thought that I was so fucking good that you guys must want me long term. (Ivette)*

Speaking up made led to secure permanent employment and she remained in Servall in her desired area of work.

6.4 Summarizing the three ideal types

This chapter presented three 'ideal types' that depict how Settlers strive to attain inclusion. They show multiple alignments and misalignments with the terms of inclusion. In 'Sky is the limit', Settlers relate inclusion with the necessity to adapt to a new country (Sweden) and a new organization (Servall). They highlight the necessity to stick to the employers demands and show loyalty. Under the blueprint of adaptation, these Settlers strive to demonstrate talent. In turn, they do not identify a structural problem to solve and therefore do not follow Servall's 'route to optimism'. The barriers they experienced in the labor market are considered circumstantial and can be overcome through individual drive.

In 'Hardwork as salvation', Settlers characterize inclusion in society as challenging. They experience discrimination, substantiating the existence of a structural problem. These Settlers align more with Servall's purpose of solving a structural problem that affects Settlers and migrant professionals generally. In parallel, once they are part of the Program, they accept and justify the material conditions. They are focused on constructing themselves as hard workers, as hard work seems to pave the way towards inclusion. Hard work led some Settlers to move to a permanent position at Servall and occupy higher power positions. This allowed Settlers to overtly question the existence of a structural problem.

In 'Speaking up to the rules', Settlers characterize inclusion as discrimination that takes place despite their power positioning such as through their social status, ethnicity, or religion.

Discrimination is experienced as disempowering; yet, they do not push to construct themselves as a potential talent in Servall. They already see themselves as skilled and talented. Neither does this group believe that Servall's Program solves the root cause of the structural problems in society. Instead, disadvantages in the labor market remain within Servall. The material conditions of Settlers is construed as one of these disadvantages within Servall. Against these material conditions, these Settlers disagree and aspire to change them. In one illustrative case, material conditions are suspended as one Settler manages to secure employment by overtly disputing the material conditions at Servall.

7 Engaging with the terms of inclusion

This chapter analyzes the engagement of management and Settlers over the terms of inclusion. Section 7.1 uses the theoretical lens developed in Chapter 4, and Section 7.2 provides an answer to the research question.

To recapitulate, the problem the dissertation addresses that in inclusion processes, the conditions appear to be established by those including. The dissertation has put the spotlight on migrant professionals and argued this is distinctively agentic minority (Chapter 2) which has the potential to take critical and reflexive distance from power (Chapter 3). Chapter 5 showed how the terms to Settlers' inclusion were constructed as conditions that the Program managers (mostly the CEO and highly ranked managers) value and which candiadtes are invited to accept in order to be included in the Program as Settlers. The terms of inclusion were constructed through symbolic power – the 'world making' power of Servall's management (Bourdieu, 1991). In Chapter 6, the different Settler's experiences show how Settlers autonomously characterize inclusion and react to the terms of inclusion.

Section 7.1 focuses on the engagement of management and Settlers around the terms of inclusion. This chapter brings together Chapters 5 and 6 and structures the analysis around the four terms of inclusion – material conditions, optimistic story, prospective talent, and Model Settler – allowing a better understanding of the engagements of Managers and Settlers (see Figure 4 in Chapter 4). The analysis integrates the agentic capabilities of Settlers (Chapter 6) against the conditionality structures in Servall (Chapter 5). This section tries to unveil the multiple power implications of doing inclusion in organizations.

Section 7.1 uses misrecognition and restoration to analyze mutual engagements over the terms of inclusion. Misrecognition in its most extreme situation involves a total acceptance of power as it is laid out by an organization; that is, involving absolute domination of one view of inclusion – that of the most powerful (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Misrecognition emerges when the 'social reality' of the terms of inclusion is denied; for example, by recognizing them as 'factual' and therefore failing to see them as a social construction. The occurrence of misrecognition leads then to the naturalization of asymmetry and reproduces the conditions at hand. The identification of *partial forms of misrecognition* therefore opens a broader perspective of the power relations at play in Servall.

As suggested, inclusion is a fragile process (Rennstam & Sullivan, 2018) and therefore could become questioned (Boltanski et al., 2010). The constructed nature of inclusion could become exposed in instances of conflict when demands are made that may expose them. In turn, these demands can turn into threats to the Program and to Servall, and potentially trigger an institutionalized response of restoration. Restoration attempts to re-establish power hierarchy or the hegemony of the terms of inclusion. Under instances of conflict, power asymmetries may become visible; through restoration the 'cracks' opened by the threats strive to be closed. Restoration is therefore an expression of the terms of inclusion to reinstitute the organizational status quo. An analysis of mutual engagements can then show the extent to which the hegemony of the terms of inclusion can be disputed.

Finally, Section 7.2 responds to the research question by arguing how Settlers engage with the terms in which they are included.

7.1 Engaging with conditionality: Misrecognition and restoration in the inclusion of Settlers

This section draws on the Bourdieu-inspired framework (Chapter 4) using the concepts of 'misrecognition' and 'restoration', to analyze engagements with the terms of inclusion. This section shows: (a) how both misrecognition and partial misrecognition characterizes the engagement with the terms of inclusion, and (b) how institutionalized responses attempt to restore the hegemony of the terms of inclusion. Section 7.1.1 clarifies the use of the concept of misrecognition for the analysis.

Through symbolic power the terms of inclusion become constituted as: the provision of material conditions, the framing of inclusion through an optimistic story, the construction of talent as a prospect, and the design of a 'Model Settler' identity framework (see Figure 2 in Section 4.3.5). Against the terms of inclusion, an agentic lens showed three archetypes of Settlers reactions and close engagements with institutionalized actors. This section is structured around the four terms of inclusion that provide the context of encounters between Settlers demands and restoration through institutionalized responses (Sections 7.1.2–7.1.5).

7.1.1 A theoretical note on misrecognition

Chapter 5 deconstructs the terms of inclusion, recasting them as arbitrary. This arbitrariness obeys to the existence of a structural inequality affecting migrants (Samaluk, 2014; Weiß, 2010).

The focus in this chapter is that the terms of inclusion are established mostly by high-ranked managers who hold a stronger position of power, rather than newcomers and Settlers. Therefore, inclusion in Servall depicts a reproduction of an unequal distribution of symbolic power. Misrecognition appears then as the concept that makes the reproduction of this imbalance possible (Burawoy, 2012).

Misrecognition involves taking the world as what it seems to be; therefore, it misses out on how it is really constituted and the social relations that make it possible. This implies a tacit acknowledgement of the legitimacy of power or of the hierarchical relations of power in which they are embedded. Accordingly, there is a failure to see that hierarchy is an arbitrary social construction that 'serves the interests of some groups more than others' (Bourdieu, 1991: 2). Misrecognition is therefore the acceptance of the hierarchy of social relations, which leads to unequal social relations being perceived as objective.

The terms of inclusion are sustained by their shared acceptance by organizational members and in the shared belief of their objectivity. While shared acceptance reproduces the organizational status quo, this shared acceptability is always open for interrogation. Within an open interrogation of the terms of inclusion, the analysis examines how inclusion is co-constituted by both Settlers and managers. Therefore, misrecognition is used in the sociological sense – as a social phenomenon that emerges from social interactions – and not in the cognitive sense that emphasizes individual perception. This allows me to locate the analysis at the level of social interaction between actors and the social norms (i.e., terms) shaping actors' possibilities.

Bourdieu's definition is simultaneous and expressed as '(mis)recognition' (2001: 2) such that misrecognition is often used in combination with recognition (Bourdieu, 1979, 2000, 2001). Recognition is the exact opposite term of misrecognition. While recognition is explained separately in the theoretical framework (in Chapter 4), for the sake of clarity, *misrecognition, recognition and partial misrecognition are used*. The existence of recognition is implied in *partial* misrecognition.

Misrecognition is therefore used as a tool to reveal Settlers maneuvering under conditional structures.

7.1.2 Engaging with material conditions

The material conditions are provided to participants (Settlers) in the Program; while the remuneration for interns was substandard relative to the Settlers' qualifications, participating in the Program could lead to paid employment. The material conditions were therefore constructed in a way that participating in the Program did not pose a financial risk risk to either Settlers or to Servall as it required Servall to provide no future commitment to Settlers in their contract. The sustainability and reproduction of the Program is based on the absence of financial risk and an unequal compensation scheme. Over the period of the Program, the material conditions in relation to compensation and internship agreements have not changed. Interns (Settlers) have been full time and unpaid from the outset.

Misrecognition: Guardianship and normalization

Guardianship

The Program is a proof of the existence of an 'open' and 'friendly' labor market for migrants in Sweden.. Plausibly, the Program is perceived as part of the broader labor market opportunities that are offered in Sweden. The Program offers a unique opportunity which appears to be highly valued to both the organization and to participants. The opportunity to be part of Servall is appreciated ('I could never comment one single bad thing about Servall', Leyla). Accordingly, the material conditions offered at Servall are perceived very positively. The trade-off of working full time for a basic compensation is accepted given the increased possibility of finding employment. It is a 'welcoming' workplace where Settlers would like to work and excel, and where they feel part of the organization 'from day one' and are 'not treated differently, despite being interns' (Henriette). Such positivity validates the working conditions under the Program.

There is an acknowledgement of the employment possibilities that could be achieved by agreeing to the short-term material conditions. The emphasis on adaptability seems to relate to the acceptance of the material conditions at Servall. There is an emphasis on the necessity to adapt to both the barriers in the labor market (e.g. due to lack of contacts) and the material conditions. The proclivity to expect others to also adapt (the 'expectation to adjust', (Henriette, Mila)), led to some Settlers frowning upon others they perceived to be demanding better material conditions; for example. Settlers that considered the material conditions at Servall to be unfair and 'ask for conditions' (Fahrid). Settlers who did not consider themselves to be adaptive may have had a higher incentive to negotiate the material conditions. However, the emphasis on

adaptation of others secures the continuation of the material conditions as they are set up by Servall.

Misrecognition takes place as the material conditions are defended from possible demands. This limited the possibilities of revising the configuration of the Program and the provision of more commensurate compensation. The lop-sided social relation established by the Program configuration becomes not only legitimized but also safeguarded. This suggests an inter-subjective collusion that has maintained the low compensation for Settlers throughout the years. In this way, the material basis of the Program that contributes crucially to its reproduction are tacitly agreed.

Normalization

The material conditions of the Program for some seem to go entirely unproblematized. In the Settlers' narrative the compensation does not represent a problem (the compensation was 'not really bothering' (Bhuva)). The future possibility of obtaining employment in Sweden blurred perception that this lacked unfairness; Settlers considered the material conditions were worth it given 'the chance to work' (Yasmin). Moreover, the material conditions of the Program were framed in a global context in which being paid less happens everywhere ('it's a normal thing' (Isabela)). The hardship experienced and the dearth of compensation is not defended but rather is downplayed – it is put to one side, while the opportunity to gain employment is highlighted. A hypothetical positive future outcome justifies working full-time for nominal pay and – sometimes – working extra hours under those conditions.

Downplaying the unequal compensation suggests an acknowledgment of the material conditions as fair and, therefore, their normalization. The internship provides Settlers with confidence they may obtain a positive performance evaluation and eventually secure employment. The Program configuration, and compensation scheme, is accepted as normal.

Misrecognition appears as the unequal compensation scheme is normalized. The asymmetrical power relations that are incarnated in the internship agreement become misrecognized. Under 'guardianship', the effects of normalization contribute to the reproduction of the material conditions as they currently are. From the Program perspective, the material conditions offered are likely to be maintained as there is little external (influence outside Servall) incentive to change

them. Therefore, the Program's authority to offer unequal payment gains foothold in the Settler's justification as normal.

Partial misrecognition: Criticizing material conditions

Ambivalence of the Program is also present. While the positivity of the Program is broadly embraced ('It's a great opportunity and a great program' (Eva)), there is also a criticism specifically directed to the material conditions which is considered an underlying disadvantage for Settlers. Dissatisfaction becomes concrete when it comes to making sense of the basic compensation offered ('you are not being paid the same, that doesn't feel good', 'a bit demeaning' (Ivette), 'it's insulting' (Eva)). Dissatisfaction is also a perspective that allows us to observe the asymmetrical relations of power in which Settlers are enmeshed. There is a perception of a not fully justified and unfair situation.

Consequently, there is a struggle to change one's own power position and, sometimes, the material conditions of Settlers as a collective. The asymmetry of this relationship is materialized in the internship contract conditions. The internship contract conditions illustrate the fairness (or lack thereof) in the social relation between the Settlers (equally skilled migrants) and local staff (already in the organization who do not need to get into Servall through an internship). Given the ambivalence with respect to compensation, there is an aspiration of 'a middle way solution' (Eva)). There is an aspiration to reject the Program's configuration when it comes to compensation, in particular where there is a growing unacceptability of the trade-off between basic compensation for future employability. This aspiration of Settlers to change the compensation scheme implies changing the Program configuration. A situation then emerges where there is an attempt to shorten the distance between the desired reality and the actual material conditions at Servall through compromise.

There is a partial misrecognition of the material conditions at play in Servall. The Program is broadly recognized as necessary. However, the legitimacy of the material conditions is interrogated. The social relations that constitute the Program – the contractual relationship between Servall and Settlers – are to a degree questioned. Misrecognition manifests in its entirety and opens the possibility of challenging the material conditions. In turn, this possibility of questioning becomes a serious threat to Servall's arrangement of the material conditions.

Restoration without misrecognition: Upgrading as gatekeeping

Questioning the material conditions represents a power dispute that could threaten the Program configuration itself. The demands are directed to the Program internship agreement, which is the 'objective' contract that ties Settlers with Servall and that forms the Settlers acceptance of a basic compensation. The voluntary decision to participate in the Program through the free-will contractual arrangement makes the internship agreement appear neutral. At the same time, the internship agreement itself secures the continuation of the material conditions and therefore contributes to the status quo. Therefore, questioning the internship agreement could potentially reveal aspects of arbitrariness in the establishment of the relationship between Settlers and Servall. In other words, it could endanger the fragility of the mutual commitment between the Settlers and Servall and, by extension, potentially unmasking the basic compensation as unfair or hypocritical (Boltanski, 2011).

There is a partial misrecognition – elements of the dominant power that subordinates Settlers are unveiled. This partial misrecognition could expose that, given the unfair compensation for Settler's, the Program *is part of* the problem that further subordinates migrant professionals. Therefore, following the course of the demands to power, the unfair work conditions that Settlers experience in the Swedish labor market may be reproduced by Servall.

Partial misrecognition was evident when one Settler, Ivette, voiced her demands for higher pay towards an institutionalized actor representing Servall (her boss and head of Department). A negotiation took place between what she and other Settlers considered to be a partial arbitrariness by Servall. Demands indirectly invoked an alternative balance of power. The mobilization of power through the negotiation of working conditions pushed the limits of the terms under which Settlers were included. The trade-off (i.e. basic compensation for future employment) was then put under strain and a demand for change was posed. The institutionalized response consisted of an earlier evaluation and a promotion to a different contractual relationship offering more advantageous conditions *for the demanding Settler*.

The outcome suggests the neutralization of a potentially wider exposure of the arbitrariness of the material conditions. When demands are advanced, the response was a positive one for the demanding Settler. There was an alternative course of action to the organizational status quo that worked out for Ivette. The material conditions were modified for the demanding individual but *not collectively*. Therefore, while one Settler managed to have her demands met, broadly, this is not threatening for conditionality the conditions remained for other Settlers. Restoration

worked here as a form of containment (Giroux, 1994; Swan, 2010) under confrontation. The (positive) institutionalized response prevented a further questioning of the Program configuration, and therefore protected the permanence of the material conditions. Partial misrecognition reveals the unequal working conditions between migrants and locals but remains innocuous to the organizational status quo.

7.1.3 Engaging with an optimistic story

In Servall's narrative, migrant professionals (Settlers) are rescued from the labor market and brought into Servall. To do so, Servall problematizes the labor market by alluding to a structural problem: migrant professionals face invisible barriers to employment leading to higher rates of unemployment and, specifically, the lack of experience in the Swedish workforce. The optimistic story is based on the construction of the Swedish labor market as having shortcomings that need to be fixed. The Program is legitimized in attempting to solve such problems. In turn, 'solving' masks the actual societal inequality between migrant professionals and locals as it appears to be solved.

Misrecognition: Embracing optimism without an optimistic story

The existence of structural problems was constantly mentioned by the Program management and are reportedly experienced by most Settlers in the Program. Episodes of discrimination are experienced by many Settlers in their quest for being employed (prior to joining the Program) while other Settlers neither mention nor have recollections of such episodes. Even in situations where there was no perceived discrimination, there was an acknowledgement of the existence of barriers such as 'lacking a meaningful network' in Sweden (Konstantin and Fahrid). However, these barriers are interpreted as circumstantial obstacles in an otherwise open labor market. Experiencing such barriers when Settlers transitioned to the Swedish labor market, including taking lower skilled jobs, are construed as necessary stages in the route towards professional advancement (as posed by Henriette: 'You take one step back and two steps ahead'). Therefore, overall, there was a positive outlook about the fairness of the labor market.

Some meaningful aspects of the optimistic story are invoked. For instance, in relation to the Swedish labor market and Servall as workplace, the Swedish labor market was considered as generally 'open and friendly' (Konstantin). This seemed to be a common experience among Settlers where they had the possibility to embrace opportunities that do not exist in their

countries, such as language programs to study 'for free' (Irina). This valuation of the Swedish labor market in such positive terms tones down the existence of structural barriers (affecting migrant professionals like themselves) and questions the 'optimistic story' used to justify the Program. There is a positive opinion of the Program but the 'optimistic story' is not used. Therefore, to a great extent Settlers ignore the solving function that justifies the Program; while general optimism is evident, the rescuing narrative is bypassed.

Misrecognition takes place given the optimistic outlook does not fully question the labor market barriers in-depth. There is not a shared understanding that there is a structural problem to be solved. While the optimistic outlook coincides with the optimistic story, it skips over the systemic inequality affecting migrant professionals in the labor market. The optimistic story is eventually embraced and there is no questioning of the underlying relations of inequality that affect migrant professionals.

Partial misrecognition: Doubting the solving function

Denunciation characterizes Settlers labor market trajectories before starting in the Program. These denunciations are directed to the structural conditions of unemployment, underemployment and precarity experienced by migrant professionals. The denunciations stem from episodes of discrimination that are difficult to make sense and clarify what exactly was 'going on'. Therefore, while denunciations allude to a structural problem (manifesting in different forms of discrimination in the labor market) experienced in first person, the root cause is unknown. There is expressly nothing or no one to point out as responsible ('I am asked to search for school reception job, I don't know where it comes from' (Lyuba), or 'it's not discrimination due to language, there is something else' (Carmen)). There is a broad acknowledgement of a structural problem that needs to be solved, but the problem itself is not understood. Denunciations then remain scattered with negative individual experiences in the labor market that, in general, do not pose any threat to the optimistic story.

Once inside Servall, there remains feelings of discrimination that are connected to the structural problem. Feelings of discrimination start in the labor market but continue throughout Settlers' experiences in Servall ('they are never really nice to me', 'not feeling one of them' (Ahnaf)). As discrimination is experienced, the ability of the Program to fulfill the optimistic rhetoric appears to be failing. There seems to be a mismatch between how some Settlers see themselves as deserving of a position in the labor market (e.g. based on their previous positions, and

professional and social status) and, crucially, also in Servall. Feelings of unfairness emerge as the optimistic story does not seem to solve this mismatch between a story proclaiming success and the dissatisfaction experienced.

The role of the Program as being able to 'solve' a structural problem is then doubted. Settlers denounce what they consider to be an unfair reward for their own labor and migrant professionals' labor in general. The Settler experiences in Servall, to an extent, potentially reflect the structural disadvantage of migrant professionals in the labor market and society ('you will always be inferior; they will always be superior. It's just an unspoken thing.', Ivette). There is a perception of discrimination based on culture and religion even within Servall. This suggests a disbelief in the 'solving' function of the Program and its optimistic narrative. The capacity of the Program to solve structural problems is challenged and therefore its legitimacy based on the optimistic narrative is put in question.

Misrecognition of power imbalances takes place given the optimism of migrant professionals and the desire to participate in the Program. However, the structural inequality the Program claims to be solving becomes suspected. Some Settlers construct themselves as those that live through the optimistic story. However, others identify cracks in the optimistic story, recognizing grey areas such as forms of discrimination that remain inside Servall. Servall's need to prevent the erosion of the optimistic story requires the intervention of legitimized organizational actors.

Restoration and further misrecognition: Blurring the search for a root cause

On occasion, questioning of the power imbalance turned into a 'scaling up' of demands that then tested the optimistic story in a public space. The interrogation of power requires an organizational response. Questioning the optimistic story could reveal the wicked problem of inequality migrant professionals experience, exposing the arbitrariness of the Program in being able to solve this problem – this may highlight the arbitrary construction of the Program and the conditions of inclusion in the organization. As the optimistic story is not fully accepted, the lines of power emerge and are challenged when the Settlers' demands become public.

The interaction between Carmen and the Minister of Labor is a case in point. The organizational response relates back to the optimistic story, as it involved Settlers' allusion of a 'structural problem'. This organizational response becomes apparent in the encounter of one Settler (representing the Settlers demands) with an institutionalized actor endowed with power (the

Minister), when a particularly hard-working Settler, acting as spoke person, voices publicly the demands of all Settlers. The situation creates a discrepancy between the 'reality' of the optimistic story (as posed by Servall) and a potential alternative social order (as advanced by the Settler). This creates a discrepancy between the established social order and an allusion to a different one. The organizational response then proposes what the structural problem of migrant professionals is that Swedish employers 'fear the unknown'.

The 'worldmaking power' of the words (Bourdieu, 1989) of the Minister in the organizational response exposes one side of the problem (Swedish employers fear of the 'unknown') and masks the conflictual root of it (structural inequality affecting migrant professionals). The organizational response imposes the hegemony of the optimistic story: the impossibility of clearly labelling what the problem is eradicates the discrepancy. When this organizational response of the 'unknown' is proposed, this 'makes sense' (Carmen). The problem *(un)definition* at once disarms the Settlers demands for an alternative perspective of the problem and reconciles the discrepancy between Settlers' demands and the optimistic story. The potential dispute over fairness that Settlers could initiate becomes at once de-politicized and agreed upon – it becomes misrecognized. Therefore, misrecognition emerges as the organizational response and leads to acknowledging the legitimacy of power, personified in the words of an institutionalized actor. Blurring a conversation about the root cause of an unequal relationship contributes to the reproduction of the optimistic story. Misrecognition hides the unequal employment opportunities between migrants and locals.

7.1.4 Engaging with the definition of talent

Talent is of central importance for the Program. The Program therefore attempts to redefine talent (skills and competencies) by including Settlers. In this way, the Program becomes attractive in the possibilities it offers. Settlers are represented as talented yet where their full potential has not been fully acknowledged. Settlers are invited to see themselves as possessing a talent that needs to be credited by Servall. Therefore, the Program presents itself as a 'skill-centered recruitment channel' targeting a *prospective* talent – migrant professionals are the bearers of crucial skills that need the Program to be able to demonstrate their talent.

Servall's definition of talent as something that it can unlock seems hardly believed by Settlers at first. Instead, this definition triggers multiple views on talent.

Partial misrecognition: Affirming worth through hard work and social status

Against Servall's idea that prospective talent needs to be unlocked, Settlers strive to affirm their worth. To counter the idea that Settlers are in need of any form of symbolic certification, these affirmations point to the value of Settler's skills and competencies in the present. 'Prospective talent' remains an empty signifier or buzzword that generally invokes a positive image of Settlers but does not have a concrete meaning. This indeterminacy is appropriated by Settlers who signify talent differently and *affirm completeness*.

Some Settlers appropriate talent as hard work, being part of who they are. The construction of talent by Settlers follows the purpose of the Program (Chapter 5: to 'include international talent' that has not been previously tapped into); however, Settlers strive to demonstrate their high commitment to work by defining themselves as professionals with a 'a high sense of responsibility' (Carmen). Settlers see hard work as key for inclusion ('if you work hard, they will employ you' (Lyuba). Bringing a hard-working attitude to Servall is put at the disposal of the Program ('even if I broke a leg, I would come an continue working' (Lyuba)). Hard work deviates from the idea of a need for the validation of talent, as this assumes all the properties needed are in place. There is a tension between the presence of hard work, since it involves continuous effort and active participation, and Servall's representation of Settlers' hard work as needing to be fully acknowledged and therefore *incomplete*.

In parallel, there is an affirmation of talent through social status. Social status markers are a salient identity factor in migrant professionals' arrival in Sweden as well as the way in which their inclusion experience is made sense of; for example, counting with a 'family business overseas while settling down in Sweden (Ahnaf) or 'managing with partners' salary' (Eva). Talent is re-signified and related to Settler's professional accomplishments outside of Sweden. There is an affirmation of the professional value Settlers held outside of Sweden including the ability to speak multiple languages (Eva) or having 'more international experience' than locals (Ivette). The framework of prospective talent is appropriated and connected to social status to affirm worth. There is no need to demonstrate talent, there is already talent in the organization.

Servall proclaims an *ongoing* acknowledgement of Settlers' talent, while at the same time proclaiming their talent (skills and competencies) cannot be fully acknowledged without the Program. Against this background, there is a demand to accept Settlers' completeness. Paradoxically, acknowledging the completeness of Settlers implies that the Program is not

needed. Therefore, there are conflicting views on the meaning of talent. Both hard work and status mobilization signal a clash between an organizational view of future talent with a present affirmation of completeness.

Yet, there is a power imbalance that enables Servall's managers to label Settlers as talent that is in need of validation. While Settlers affirm talent in the 'here and now' (through hard work and status), the idea of prospective talent denies the degree of urgency to address that demand. The power position of high-ranked managers enables them to construct a problem (there being unlocked talent) that they are able to solve through the Program (by *their* unlocking of talent), therefore limiting alternative meanings of talent. However, the affirmation of talent by Settlers differs from the idea of prospective talent that needs to be unlocked. This is manifested in defiance of the need to be legitimized by Servall: 'How many times in a year would someone like me walk through the door of the organization with the CV I have?' (Ivette). This suggests a situation of partial misrecognition: *the social relation that renders an organization as being able to define someone as a talent and others not becomes questioned*. This alludes to the unequal distribution of 'worldmaking power'.

Therefore, there is a need for an answer that closes the possibility of revealing the power imbalance over the definition of legitimate talent.

Restoration and further misrecognition: Showcasing incompleteness

Showcasing the Program is a popular organizational practice that is conducted by Settlers. Settlers become a personification of the Program and act as 'ambassadors'. Consistent with the rhetoric of the Program attracting talent, Showcased Settlers are then expected to portray themselves as prospective talent by highlighting how their competencies were not appreciated until they joined Servall. The Program requires the construction of Settlers as 'needy' to justify its premise.

With that goal, showcasing practices have a pre-established template that describes the Settler's employment trajectory. The template, describing the transition of despair to success, is used systematically and repeatedly in the presentation of the Program to external actors (other organizations, agencies, partners, incoming candidates). The Showcased Settlers experiences prior to joining Servall are depicted as a period where their talents could not be realized due to the 'fear for inability of speaking the language', 'self-esteem issues', 'being overwhelmed' and

'coming from a different culture' (External presentation by Showcased Settlers, January 2018). The Settlers typically finished external presentations with their personal declarations of appreciation to the Program and to Servall. In this way, they constructed life stories showing how Servall allowed them to overcome weaknesses and fear, realizing their talents within the organization, therefore constructing a 'win-win' situation'.

The meaning of (prospective) talent used in the Program construes migrant professionals as *incomplete* and in need of validation. Without validation, Settlers, and *by extension* migrant professionals, become defined as a 'giant untapped pool of talent' (Intranet and CEO). At the level of micro interactions, the effects this definition of talent have are illustrated by Henriette, one of the Showcased Settlers. The lessons learned in interacting with her boss is that of coming to terms of 'not being diplomatic enough'. Restoration, through the practice of representing Settlers as incomplete, activates in a practical sense that leads Settlers to mistakenly recognizing themselves in a particular form of representation and public enunciation that 'something is not for them' (Bourdieu, 2000: 185). Settlers, despite their affirmation of worth, are likely to acquire a sense of incompleteness or 'not being there yet'. In this way, they fulfill Servall's idea of talent that becomes a perpetual mission to be reached but never fully attained.

Incompleteness is sustained by the Showcased Settlers' continual promotion of the Program where they are encouraged to display an incompleteness. This systematic and recurrent self-construction as incomplete, prevents Settlers becoming conscious of this uneven definition of talent: high-ranked managers have that capacity, while Settlers often need to express themselves through an imposed definition of talent. Therefore, restoration masks the power relations that enable the definition of talent by high-ranked managers. Using this organizational practice of showcasing keeps the capacity of defining talent as something that will be realized in the future monopolized and protected from alternative meanings. Misrecognition manifests as limits to Settler's demands for the acceptance of their talent 'here and now'.

Showcasing attempts to mask the unequal capacity to define talent: while Servall attempts to include migrant professionals, it ultimately imposes a definition of talent (in the context of migrant professionals) as something that can only be realized through the Program. In this way, the capacity of defining what talent means remains unevenly distributed. Misrecognition then conceals the unequal worth attributed to the skills of migrants compared to locals.

7.1.5 Engaging with an intelligibility framework: The Model Settler

The Model Settler is what high-ranked managers want individual Settlers to become. The idea of the Model Settler represents Settlers as progressively embracing success in the Swedish workplace, *despite their* ethnic belonging. This representation of success means their ethnic identity progressively disappears and stops being relevant in the workplace. Ethnic inequality is recognized as a 'problem' (Lars): for example, the top managerial positions at Servall are overwhelmingly occupied by Northern Europeans (locals), while people from lower income peripheric countries tend to occupy the lower echelons of Servall (most Settlers belong to this group). This conforms to the ethnic inequality that structures inclusion in Servall. This creates an unequal social relationship: locals and some Settlers (considered successful) are already intelligible while others need to *become* intelligible. This constitutes a hierarchy of intelligibility of locals vs Settlers, as well as intelligibility between Settlers.

Misrecognition: Fitting in the Model Settler framework

Some Settlers make sense of their route to professional success through adaptation. In this adaptability, a representation of the organization as non-discriminatory and fair is dominant: 'they [Swedes] don't care if you are from a different country or have a different color' (Kamile). Therefore, the way towards professional success is understood in terms of fitting in with the workforce, where ethnic and cultural identities are irrelevant dimensions. There is a tacit agreement on the validity of this intelligibility framework (the Model Settler framework).

Emphasis on adaptation suggests a misrecognition of the hierarchy of intelligibility. In this way, the idea of success as an exclusive professional endeavor appears dominant. Following this idea, it is then pragmatic to follow the Model Settler framework, skipping ethno-cultural perspectives that can detract from the professional. Partial misrecognition: Re-ethnicizing professional success

While the Model Settler is based on professional success and de-emphasizing other identities, ethnicity is recasted by other Settlers. Ethnicity and nationality, which on the one hand could be a source of discrimination ('I am not Svensson, I am not Larsson' (Isabela)) is re-signified as a source of strength and construed as a basis for adaptability ('I know for sure in [Eastern European country] is like that' (Isabela, referring to readiness for giving one's best)); for example, when a strong desire to adapt is naturalized as an 'ethnic feature' (Henriette). Therefore, ethnicity and national culture is drawn on to achieve professional success. This shows Settlers embrace

the idea of professional success, while bringing ethnic belonging as an added factor conducive to achieving this success. However, certain ethno-cultural groups may be more prone to adaptability and hard work than others (Irina).

This signals that ethnic belonging does not need to be separated from professional success – rather, they can be mutually articulated. This counter the Model Settler emphasis on the 'professional despite being ethno-cultural'. However, re-ethnicization of professional success works mostly as individual self-motivation and does not reach the public arena. That is, ethnic belonging is used by individual Settlers to prove their adaptability and that they are available to the idea of success given by the Model Settler framework (e.g. Isabela and Henriette). In this way, Settlers partially dispute the Model Settler framework but eventually play by its rules; they recognize the legitimacy of a hierarchy of intelligibility.

Restoration without misrecognition: Silencing deviation

There are episodes in which some Settlers deviate from the idea of the Model Settler. The Model Settler framework encourages the subordination of the ethno-cultural identity to the professional identity, limiting possibilities to reveal ethno-cultural tensions. However, at times, the accommodation of Settlers goes beyond the purely professional identity. These episodes bring to the surface ethnicity and culture as dimensions of Settler's inclusion in Servall. This emerges as a sign of poor fit with the Model Settler framework. The existence of these episodes threatens Servall's idea that Settlers will become Model Settlers and could potentially reveal the existence of a hierarchy of intelligibility. When some situations may raise intelligibility in Servall, these are addressed with tacit silence.

Poor fit with the Model Settler framework becomes most apparent in episodes where ethno-cultural conflict needs to be managed collectively. Yasmin's experience managing a case of an ethno-cultural clash illustrates the limits of the model's fit, and how the possibility of recognizing a hierarchy of intelligibility becomes closed. Silencing becomes a tacit answer by Servall colleagues, trying to keep the ethno-cultural clashes in the shadows as much as possible. Silencing is reaffirmed by Yasmin who said some (ethno-cultural) themes are too 'fragile' in Sweden, and there are things that are 'not supposed to be talked about' such as religious views. This requires an answer that is 'professional'(Yasmin), understood as avoiding getting in-depth into the root of the ethno-cultural clash. This recognises the professional dimension – as represented by the

Model Settler – prevails over other forms of becoming intelligible. Silence is therefore a widespread response to conflicting ways of expressing identity.

Episodes of ethno-cultural disagreements ended with those involved being considered failed cases and removed from public conversations; the episodes were only discussed in private conversations. Silence suggests the extent to which for Settlers to be successful, the Model Settler framework would need to be embraced.

There is partial misrecognition as Yasmin learned eventually that silence is the correct way to conduct herself in Servall and the Swedish workplace. Yasmin's case suggests that the unequal capacity to define ethno-cultural differences is accepted but not believed.

By the time this dissertation was finalized, Yasmin, Henriette and Carmen had moved to another organization, while Ivette is the only Settler that remains in Servall.

Table 5: Settler's engagement with the terms of inclusion

Terms of inclusion	Demand	Restoration	Institutionalized actors involved and response	Outcome of engagement	
				Ivette getting an upgrade	Recognition
Material conditions	Criticizing material conditions: Job upgrade request	Upgrading	Boss upgrading Ivette after her asking for clarifying contractual situation		
Optimistic story	Doubting the solving function: Question on migrant unemployment	Blurring	Minister answer to Carmen in a public event	Carmen believing the words of the institutionalized actor	Further misrecognition after restoration
Prospective talent	Affirming self-worth: Through ethnicized professionalism	Showcasing	Managers frequent showcasing of Settlers as future talent	Henriette accepts her incompleteness	Further misrecognition after restoration
Model Settler	Exposing ethno-cultural conflict	Silencing	Managers and colleagues kept anonymity and made the tension vanish	Yasmin opting for accepting silence and conflict avoidance	Coexistence of recognition and misrecognition

7.1.6 Concluding notes

The analysis suggests the combination of misrecognition and recognition – that is the partial misrecognition – of the arbitrariness of the terms of inclusion. Misrecognition manifests when Settlers actively embrace the conditions proposed by high-ranked managers. Misrecognition takes place as Settlers involve themselves in inclusive practices, acquiring what Bourdieu defined as learned ignorance: a 'practical knowledge that does not know itself' (Bourdieu, 2000: 185) and does not 'contain knowledge of its own principles' (Bourdieu, 1980: 102); for example, by constructing personal optimistic stories that resonate with the optimistic rhetoric of the Program, or when Settlers' endeavors are directed to fit into the Model Settler framework. Yet, misrecognition acquires its more tangible face when Settlers both normalize and actively defend the conditions laid out by Servall through normalization, guardianship, and embracing optimism. Altogether, this signals that Settlers, by mobilizing their agentic capacity, contribute to the reproduction of the terms of inclusion – ultimately, supporting the reproduction of the unequal distribution of symbolic power.

Partial misrecognition emerges as certain demands become threatening to the organizational order. Most notably, these threatening demands are expressed in criticisms of the Program conditions, interrogation of the optimistic rhetoric, affirmations of self-worth, and ethno-cultural vindications. Due to the disrupting possibilities of these demands, restoration shows how symbolic power is exerted through precise institutionalized responses. The repertoire of possibilities of advancing agency are then attempted to be closed by Servall 'setting limits' (Ortlieb et al., 2021: 277) for alternative courses of action. Within this context, institutionalized actors address the possibility of questioning conditionality in their interactions with Carmen and Henriette. Yet, misrecognition is not total as two Settlers do not legitimate the institutional response. One of these Settlers (Yasmin) while not accepting the conditions, comes to terms with them. In Yasmin's case there seems to be a coexistence of recognition and misrecognition that seems to work as a personal struggle (Van Laer & Janssens, 2017). The other Settler (Ivette) manages to successfully negotiate and micro-emancipate herself (Zanoni & Janssens, 2007) from the specific conditions she experienced. When negotiations took place, these two cases (Yasmin and Ivette) signal the unacceptability of the terms of inclusion and demonstrate the terms of inclusion are not unanimously and collectively agreed (as in Bourdieu's '*doxa*').

7.2 How do migrant professionals engage with conditionality?

To reiterate, it has been shown how agency mobilization characterizes migrant professionals (Chapter 6). Further, it has been emphasized that agency often involves recognition which – through individuals' demands – engages with conditionality. Section 7.1 explores how, under recognition (i.e. partial misrecognition), agency manifests in multiple forms of engagement.

This section draws on the findings (Section 7.1) and links them back to the research question: *How may minorities engage with the terms of their inclusion*? The focus on migrant professionals in this case study presents a mixed picture. Some migrant professionals misrecognize the terms of inclusion and therefore demonstrate no engagement. Yet, most migrant professionals recognize arbitrariness or unfairness in the terms of inclusion in the Program (i.e., there is partial misrecognition) which leads to *negotiations*. Within negotiations, there is a possibility to recognize the constructed nature of the terms of inclusion and change them at an individual level.

Migrant professionals who have experienced the Program appear to have a high level of awareness of power asymmetry and their agentic capacity. Most of the time they are able to de-construct the arbitrary aspects of conditionality, breaking away from a state of learned ignorance (Bourdieu, 1980) and negotiating alternative outcomes. When their demands evoke the modification of the normative principles (Priola et al., 2018) they need to fulfill to be included, these principles are re-instated and further negotiated. This suggests that conditionality is not imposed as a form of domination that relies on the blind complicity of migrant professionals. Migrant professionals participate actively in the production of inclusion, yet they take a reflexive distance. Therefore, inclusion is characterized by constant negotiation of the terms of their inclusion.

Change under negotiation happens because the institutional response is not able to restore power in alignment within the terms of inclusion, but instead it follows the migrant professional's desired course of action. The findings showed one case in which recognition, negotiation and changing the logic of an institutional response was possible. This required it to be accompanied by a demand with an overt action by a migrant professional, that reflected an unfair situation; this shows there is a possibility of transforming conditionality in processes of organizational inclusion.

8 Four contributions to inclusion research

Include (v.)

Early 15C., 'to shut (someone or something) in materially, enclose, imprison, confine'; also 'to have (something) as a constituent part'; from the Latin *includere* 'to shut in, enclose, imprison, insert'; from in- 'in' + *claudere* 'to shut'.

This dissertation has shown how migrant professionals – and therefore minorities – negotiate the terms in which they are included. This chapter highlights the contributions of this dissertation in the context of diversity and inclusion research. Based on the insights presented through the empirical and analytical passages, this dissertation suggests novel inputs to organizational inclusion. This chapter is accordingly organized around four contributions.

Section 8.1 argues for a focus on conditionality for understanding inclusion processes. It proposes a re-definition and expansion of inclusion to take conditionality seriously, which reimagines the extant literature on organizational inclusion.

Section 8.2 argues for the recasting of organizational inclusion as a negotiated process. It argues that seeing inclusion as a negotiation can complement the prevalent inclusion-exclusion analytical framework.

Section 8.3 uses the case of migrant professionals to consider minority agentic capacity. This section argues minorities are more empowered under inclusion processes than assumed. It highlights that a closer examination of migrant professionals' inclusion showed an alternative use of agency in relation to the autonomous, dis-empowered, micro-resistance streams of literature.

Finally, Section 8.4 provides reflections on how optimism plays a previously unexplored powerful role in organizational inclusion. It links to the role of optimistic discourse in this dissertation to find an entry point into the empirical material and to define the terms of inclusion. Section 8.4.1. exemplifies how optimism played a role in the case organization ('Servall'). Finally, it suggests taking a serious consideration of optimism as an important dimension for articulating the inclusion process.

8.1 Situating the terms of inclusion in organizational inclusion research

Conditionality is inherent to any social relation involving power. Some fields of research, such as the study of international organizations, regard it as the central mechanism of concern (Gould, 2003). International cooperation includes cooperative and punitive measures and requires recipient states to comply with financial stability, good governance, respect for human rights, democracy, peace, and security. Conditionality has also become an important point of focus in the integration of migrants, where the admittance of migrants is increasingly tied to meeting specific requirements such as integration contracts, classes, tests, and ceremonies (Goodman, 2014). Somewhat surprisingly, conditionality in organizational inclusion research has remained at the periphery.

The central contribution of this dissertation is the specification of conditions under which organizational inclusion takes place; in doing so, it attempts to rejoin the question of what the meaning of inclusion is, or, in other words, what it means to be included (Adamson et al., 2021). Understanding inclusion requires a definition of what the *terms* (or conditions) in which inclusion takes place are. The terms of inclusion describe the normative principles that need to be accepted for inclusion to be possible (Ortlieb et al., 2021; Priola et al., 2018). They involve conditionality – the conditions minority groups are invited to accept in order to be included. This dissertation argues that introducing terms of inclusion changes our current understanding of inclusion in organizations.

The mainstream scholarly work on inclusion emphasizes the minorities' willingness to participate in organizational processes. Inclusion rests on the mutual fit of minorities within an inclusive organizational climate (Mor-Barak, 2015; Shore et al., 2011). Having the right policies and practices are then central to attaining inclusion. Therefore, a number of important studies focus on identifying and measuring such practices (Ely & Thomas, 2001; Pless & Maak, 2004; Bernstein, 2019). In the same way, inclusion can be determined by measuring indicators such as how decision-making is influenced, accessing sensitive work information, and having job security (Pelled et al., 1999). Inclusion is then both about 'feeling included' (Roberson, 2006; Bilimoria et al., 2008; Ferdman, 2014) and 'being included' within organizational processes (Pelled et al., 1999). The right organizational practices should lead to inclusion.

Based on the case of an organization with an exemplary inclusive climate, this dissertation allowed us to observe the conditionality attached to different inclusion enablers. Inclusion is

defined as 'something positive'; the case organization was recognized for widespread well-intentioned organizational practices by high-ranked managers that intimately involved migrant professionals. Those organizational practices on the one side were an example of how to do inclusion in through majority-minority co-participation (Mor-Barak, 2015). However, a more power-sensitive reading suggests the terms of those inclusive practices were configured and reproduced by those in power. The Bourdieusian concept of symbolic power, as a 'worldmaking power' (Bourdieu, 1991) of high-ranked managers, enabled us to see how conditionality is made possible *through* inclusive practices; for example, internship facilitation, program promotion, inclusive recruitment, and diversity workshops. Instead, following Bourdieu, it is shown how within practices, the asymmetrical relation between managers and migrant professionals became to an extent 'objectivized'. Therefore, inclusive organizational practices can be equated to doing inclusion 'right' only within the logic of organizational performance. Emphasizing inclusion as a product of organizational practice could make it appear powerless, while simultaneously demarcating its conditionality.

Conditionality also invokes a situated reading of inclusion. Inclusion is conditional upon accommodation of the dominant norms (Ortlieb et al., 2021: 269); however, this accommodation varies depending on the minority group and organizational setting. Therefore, it complicates the 'mainstream' existential security that the antecedents and outcomes of inclusion could be determined (Shore et al., 2011), where security means the possibility to pinpoint when minorities feel or are included (Bilimoria et al., 2008; Ferdman, 2014; Pelled et al., 1999; Roberson, 2006). Grasping this feeling of being included (as a self-perceived category) or being included (by participating in organization life) can contribute to our understanding yet doed not determine whether there is inclusion or not. There is no universal formula for inclusion that can be measured by a set of indicators.

By situating the analysis under a specific set of terms of inclusion, it was shown how organizational power could play a central role in shaping inclusion; most notably, in structuring the power balance through conditioning. Conditionality then counteracts the assumption of an even playfield for all actors, where attaining inclusion relies on the individual capacity to include oneself (Ferdman, 2017). The 'mainstream' view overlooks that this ground for inclusion takes place under unequal pillars (Bourdieu, 1985, 1989). Inclusion can hardly be judged as one-size-fits-all approach; it requires minority capacity to enable participation or universal 'inclusive

environments' (Shore et al., 2018). Instead, a situated analysis demonstrates an inclusive organization is perhaps an illusion.

Likewise, the introduction of the terms of inclusion to 'operationalize' conditionality suggests alternative ways to observe processes of inclusion. The prevalent way of defining inclusion has been an inclusion-exclusion binary (Bendl et al., 2022; Dobusch, 2014; Goodin, 1996; Ortlieb & Sieben, 2014; Ponzoni et al., 2017). These two sides are (apparently) impossible to reconcile due to minority identities not fitting in with hegemonic norms. Lack of fit is both the cause and consequence of exclusion. This appears as an irreversible product of a majority-minority interaction. Inclusion then remains an aspiration for building a space free of domination, where there are no requirements for minorities to adopt the majority's script (Dobusch et al., 2021). In this includive space, agency is exerted through the unrestrained expression of identity.

The idea of inclusion is then closely linked to the possibility of accommodating different identities. 'Full inclusion' appears as the dissolution of the differences (see Tyler, 2019) that separate people. Therefore, inclusion is determined by feelings of both proximity and remoteness in the majority-minority relations. Minority individuals and groups strive to make themselves fully intelligible (De Souza & Parker, 2020; Tyler & Vachhani, 2020), making inclusion mainly a relation of intelligibility that becomes possible when the subject position becomes fully accepted. Yet, this (im)possibility of inclusion (Dobusch et al., 2021) is expressly mediated by conditionality.

Conditionality is recognized as the social force behind inclusion processes that reproduce some identities as subordinated (see Zanoni & Janssens, 2011: 122; also Ortlieb, 2021). A critical reading of inclusion acknowledges that conditionality underlies the logic of 'mainstream' inclusion as well, arguing that inclusion 'remains conditional upon (. . .) adding something deemed to be of value (. . .)' which 'arguably, means simply replicating rather than tackling hierarchies of recognition in the name of "inclusion"' (Tyler, 2019: 63, in Dobusch et al., 2021). There is a broad agreement that inclusion involves conditionality, where conditions are announced as general forms of identity regulation (Alvesson & Wilmott, 2002; Essers & Benschop, 2007; Ortlieb et al., 2021; Yu, 2019) or established as extra-organizational contexts that shape inclusion (Priola et al., 2018). Conditionality is somehow invoked but never made explicit as the factor that makes inclusion asymmetrical (for an exception see: Tyler, 2019). Therefore, this dissertation advances knowledge by unpacking conditionality in *itself,* and

identifies specific terms operating at the organizational level. It does so, showing that conditionality not only operates as part of majority-minority engagements, but it crucially involves institutionalized actors that enforce it.

This dissertation proposes to promote conditionality as the analytical locus of organizational inclusion. It argues that re-thinking conditionality as the mediator between inclusion and exclusion could better explain how exclusion takes place. This re-imagines inclusion outside of the inclusion-exclusion binary logic, where inclusion is a relatively free engagement with explicit conditional norms.

Situating the terms of inclusion can allow us to construct a common ground from which to compare inclusion experiences. Methodologically, this can facilitate a better way of capturing inclusion and, overall, theory-building associated with inclusion. Therefore, it could show, in the specificity of each organization, what the desired courses of action of 'those including' are and the boundaries (Ortlieb et al., 2021) that should not be crossed. A focus on conditionality could help settle the difficult to determine line between inclusion and exclusion.

8.2 Inclusion as a negotiated process

In this dissertation, conditionality results from the ways in which majorities construct minorities which ultimately establishes the 'strings attached' to inclusion (Ortlieb et al., 2021). In using an agency lens to look out how migrant professionals experience inclusion, it is shown (Chapter 6) that there is a margin for action by minorities. The theoretical framework allowed the observation of how minorities can negotiate power. At times, minorities can threaten hegemonic power; therefore, the conditions in which minorities are expected to fit are not static. Conditionality relies not only on dominant norms such as white heteronormativity or the legacy of national traditions (Burchiellaro, 2021b; Priola et al. 2014, 2018), conditionality also shows plasticity. Through institutional responses, hegemony (e.g. identity frameworks can be re-established as meaning is negotiated.

This dissertation has advanced that dynamics of misrecognition and recognition of power play an important role in negotiations. Inclusion research argues that minorities negotiate power (Zanoni & Janssens, 2007; Pio & Essers, 2014). In this dissertation, I show that power asymmetries to be negotiated first need to be recognized as such. The findings demonstrate a mixed picture where recognition and misrecognition coexist under inclusion processes. Doing

this has tried to integrate the fragmented character of the inclusion literature, which either takes for granted that minorities recognize constitutive aspects of power asymmetries (Van Laer & Janssens, 2013; Pio & Essers, 2014), or suggests that this possibility is denied (Ponzoni et al., 2017; Dobusch et al., 2021). A focus on the co-occurrence of misrecognition and recognition can inform further studies on different inclusion routes within the same minority group.

Bringing together misrecognition/recognition suggests that exclusion could be shaped by the inability – from a subordinate position – to determine the conditions of domination in the workplace. It has been shown, in line with the 'micro-resistance minority' stream, that power often becomes recognized as such. This suggests that inclusion processes involve partial 'breaks' – realizing power asymmetries - among those 'being included' in everyday organizational life; this supports prior studies that show inclusion is fragile (Bendl, 2009; Rennstam & Sullivan, 2018). In Rennstam and Sullivan (2018), fragility refers to the latent possibility of minorities crossing the boundary line from inclusion to exclusion in everyday interactions. In this dissertation, inclusion is fragile because of the permanent negotiations and re-negotiations that typify inclusion processes.

Negotiation transcends the idea that it involves only creating alternatives to dominant notions of 'otherness' (Pio & Essers, 2014: 258). That is, that negotiating power is limited to identity negotiation. As it has been demonstrated, negotiations can invoke the principles of construction (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992) of power in organizations. The suggestion here is to pay closer attention to everyday disputes over the hegemonic conditions at play (Boltanski, 2011). Framing inclusion as a negotiated process could help better grasping the roots of domination that structure social relations (Burawoy, 2012). For instance, it is accepted that there is an economic logic of profitability conditioning inclusion and pervading organizational practices (Carrillo Arciniega, 2021; Zanoni, 2011). Yet, inclusion research does not currently unpack how this logic could be negotiated by minorities themselves. Against an economic logic, there are instances in which minorities could direct themselves to the core of power. For instance, Ivette's negotiation represented that case when she directed her demands to the engine of capitalism: unequal payment. This episode went beyond identity negotiation and exposed the fragility of inclusion itself.

Focusing on negotiations locates the analytical focus on power disputes around terms of inclusion constituted by organizations. In this way, it differs from and yet complements the often

psychologizing inclusion-exclusion analytical framework (Burchiellaro, 2021a, 2021b; Dobusch et al., 2020), and from approaches centered on including the individual (Shore et al., 2011; Mor Barak, 2015). In this dissertation, an epistemological shift is proposed by recasting inclusion as firmly entrenched in the study of negotiations of the conditions of inclusion.

Negotiation of the conditions of inclusion reorients the discussion of inclusion, de-emphasizing the identity fit and putting the spotlight on social process of dispute and negotiation (Boltanski, 2011; Bourdieu, 1980). Therefore, the possibility of inclusion lies less on the acceptance of difference (i.e. through the possibility of intelligibility) and more on the ability to autonomously mobilize agency against structural conditions.

8.3 How subordinate is the agentic capacity of minorities?

Using critical ethnography, this dissertation is based on an immersion into an exemplary inclusive organization which offers internships for migrant professionals in partnership with government. This group of migrant professionals, while formal having the necessary skills and qualifications, had experienced or were experiencing periods of job precarity. Relying on an agency-centered perspective, allowed us to observe how migrant professionals, while engaging in everyday organizational life, also exerted a reflexive distance from the organizational rhetoric that often turned into demands. With migrant professionals' engagement with the terms of inclusion in the spotlight, the dissertation has centered the analysis in the spaces of dissent. Therefore, to a large extent, the agentic perspective manifests in the migrant professional's capacity to dispute power. This section focuses on the power mobilization of minority professionals ('Settlers') to revisit the minority agency portrayal in the inclusion literature.

8.3.1 Re-articulating the willingness to participate in the inclusive organization

The literature emphasizes the necessity to create the best organizational climate to make inclusion a competitive advantage (Mor-Barak, 2015; Pless & Maak, 2004). Minority agency is then modelled in the idea that diversity is an important asset (Ferdman, 2017). The right organizational climate can enable the use of an untapped potential in the workforce which organizations may take advantage of. With that objective, organizations put forward an inclusive framework that makes available the right balance of 'belongingness and uniqueness' (Shore et al., 2011: 1265). A win-win relation between minority individuals and the organization drives progress towards inclusion. Minorities are expected to act in ways they are directed to in the

inclusive organization. The findings attempt to link participation with recognition and misrecognition.

The organization studied appears to be an inclusive organization, where many of the inclusive practices described in the literature were evident. Moreover, since Settlers could eventually become 'successful cases' in gaining employment within Servall, therefore the outcome appears to be successful from the perspective of the organization; that is, the outcomes reinforce the perception the organizational climate is inclusive (Mor-Barak, 2015) and that 'inclusion works'. This interpretation that inclusion works, which is praised by the organization, reassures their continuation with their inclusion practices. From this perspective, those 'to-be-included' need to follow the conditions designed by organizations; there is an implicit need to participate along the lines of the inclusive configuration of organizations.

However, what could be perceived as participation contained numerous grey areas. Taking a critical angle (Adamson et al., 2021; Zanoni et al., 2010), participation may overlook power relations. Participation takes place in a context where minorities keep a critical distance from power (Fleming & Spicer, 2003; Rafanell & Gorringe, 2010) as they are 'reflexive, knowledgeable agents' (Van Laer & Janssens, 2017: 199). As the analysis shows, recognition and posing demands appear as part of inclusion processes as well. This suggests that participation is not as frictionless as the organization's views may suggest (Shore et al., 2011). When inclusive organizations are configured around the maxim of 'equal opportunity for members of socially marginalized groups to participate and contribute' (Shore et al., 2018: 177), this is built from a particular power position and tends to become objectivized (Morillas & Romani, 2022). The emphasis on building the right inclusive models distracts from the realization that any model is inherently the imposition of terms for those who are to-be-included. The findings show how such attempts to steer agency are met with demands that could unsettle the principles of the inclusive organization. Construing minorities as able to dispute power offers then an invitation to consider spaces of dissent into the functionalist logic of 'mainstream' inclusion research.

Misrecognition also relates to a willingness to participate. The findings suggests that mutual adaptation could be read as an 'effect' of misrecognition since it shows how Settlers embrace the terms of inclusion through 'normalization', 'guardianship' and 'optimism'; that is, sticking to the organizational prerogatives in the closest possible way. Here, misrecognition brings back the double-bond that structures relations of domination (Mauss, 1966; Bourdieu, 1980; Gherardi,

2012). Settlers who embrace inclusion most intensively – for example, by involving themselves in inclusive practices – may further legitimize the asymmetrical relations of power. The reading from 'mainstream' and 'critical' perspectives is however different. Whenever the 'mainstream' scholarship suggests successful inclusion in one organization, it is likely that the 'critical' scholarship will find an imposition of power in that same organization. Full participation appears then as an illusion that organizations translate into successful inclusion. There is no such thing as full participation but rather an assimilation through learned ignorance (Bourdieu, 1980).

The findings complicate the idea that inclusion is about participation under the right organizational climate (Mor-Barak, 2015; Nishii, 2013). The realization is to remain skeptical and further investigate what is really meant by inclusion (Roberson, 2006), and what is expected by those involved in allegedly inclusive environments. A critical perspective would most likely assert that inclusive practices are a necessary but yet not sufficient requirement for inclusion.

8.3.2 The possibility of resistance and emancipation

Part of inclusion research has focused on the ability of minorities to micro-resist and micro-emancipate (Ghorashi & Ponzoni, 2013; Van Laer and Janssens, 2017; Zanoni & Janssens, 2007). Micro-resistance involves minorities being able to undergo 'partial, temporal movements breaking away from diverse forms of oppression' (Alvesson & Wilmott, 1992: 147). Zanoni and Janssens (2007: 1395) demonstrate through identity re-appropriation and re-positioning, minorities can be 'compliant in one context and emancipatory in another'. Micro-resistance engenders forms of micro-emancipation, that is making a space for the individual's way of life.

Micro-emancipation is an individual's effort to resist power, which entails 'temporarily and partially defiance of specific forms of power and creating a space for self-determination and self-definition' (Van Laer & Janssens, 2017: 2001). Taking this perspective, mobilizing power is confined to an individual project and, therefore, does not pose a serious threat for organizational status quo. To that extent, the minorities agentic capacity is relatively dissociated from the hegemonic power of the organization. The relationship is one of control (Alvesson and Willmott, 2002): the latter exerts a control that minorities constantly strive to circumvent.

Ivette's episode appears as both a case of micro-resistance and one of micro-emancipation. She mobilizes power, negotiates and manages to break away from her subordinate position, making a space for her individual self. However, it has been shown that in this process she redirects an

institutional response and, therefore, temporarily *changes a term of inclusion*. The concepts of micro-resistance and micro-emancipation are however not fully able to capture this social relation as they are firmly rooted in the idea of the individual self (Zanoni & Janssens, 2007; Van Laer & Janssens, 2017). This dissertation opens the possibility to relink with the 'classical' understanding of resistance and emancipation. That is, the possibility of reading organizational inclusion under the framework of resistance and emancipation as a project of organizational change.

Against micro-resistance appears the possibility of 'resistance' advanced by Contu (2008). Contu's (2008) criticism of micro-resistance lies in that it shies away from the responsibility that comes with the disruption of power. The idea of micro-resistance keeps the individual in a comfortable zone of exerting opposition from a subordinate position. Considered in terms of organizational inclusion, this could lead us to believe the only way to disrupt power comes from a low scale type of opposition, therefore reifying the subordinate position of minorities – or in other words, confounding minorities possibilities within limits (Bourdieu, 2000). This idea is captured in this passage on micro-resistance: 'we receive a payment in the form of the illusion that we are still having the thing (resistance). However, we do not have to bear the cost that is associated with having the thing itself' (Contu, 2008: 374). The result of an act is risky because the outcome is unknown.

In the context of this dissertation, the consequences of acts of resistance could involve restoration. Yet, if (full) resistance is possible this could lead to emancipation beyond the individual self. Emancipation relates to both the individual and the social context, therefore entailing a change in the relationship between people and institutions (Boltanski, 2011).[13] Emancipation has been used here as the uncovering of constructed asymmetrical relationships (Bourdieu, 1991) that constitute the terms of inclusion. Using a sociological approach, emancipation could work as a concept that allows us to see the 'impact' of resistance in modifying the terms of inclusion.

Generally, looking at minority power mobilization while only carrying the particle 'micro-' in mind, prevents us from observing a tentative repertoire of minority resistance. Therefore, the

[13] Under emancipation, institutions are emptied of the 'different forms of the over-determination they invoke in order to justify their existence and mask the violence they contain' (Boltanski, 2011: 157).

suggestion is to consider the incorporation of resistance and emancipation as valid analytical concepts. Resistance could serve as a standard against which to read demands by incorporating the latent possibility of disrupting conditionality. Moving from micro-resistance to resistance is relevant because it can potentially move beyond the realm of infra- or micro- power (Scott, 1990) and expand the scope from which to look at agentic possibilities. The contention is that minorities should be studied as a group able to negotiate the roots of the power that aims to dominate them.

As for a more empirical use of resistance and emancipation, particular minority groups that appear to have a 'less subordinated' position could used be a case in point. For migrant professionals as shown, but also other minority groups that bear more material and symbolic resources or who are better able to make themselves intelligible in organizational contexts.

8.4 The role of optimistic discourses in inclusion

[On diversity and inclusion in organizations] there are persistent signs that is a Herculean task requiring much more than managerial enthusiasm, optimism, and good intentions. Managing diversity at the workplace presents as many dilemmas as triumphs, and is constantly fraught with innumerable tensions, conflicts, and contradictions. (Prasad & Mills, 1997: 5)

One of the learnings from this dissertation is identifying the role of optimism that populates organizational life and, in particular, inclusive organizations (Dobusch et al., 2021). The construction of the terms of inclusion reveal how optimism plays a central role in the organizational efforts to include. This dissertation shows how optimism acts as an entry point into the empirical material (methodological reflections) and pervaded the construction of all terms of inclusion, and in particular one called the 'optimistic story' (Chapter 5).

Optimism is a very important component of inclusive organizations and in migrant professionals' aspirations. For instance, optimism played an important role in Settlers experiencing precarity in the job market and being able to find work (Alacovska, 2017; Maury, 2020). Typically, critical organizational research tends to be suspicious of the role of optimism (Gill, 2014). Servall inclusion work showed how optimism acquired a function akin to a managerial ideology of inclusion (Morillas & Romani, 2022). Optimism was not analyzed in its ideological effects *per se* but it was construed as a factor structuring conditionality. However, further analysis of optimism uncovered that only a fraction of the studies have commented on how inclusion processes involve optimistic discourses. Optimism has been brought to the fore

in its role in stories that misleadingly use conflict-free narratives to 'lure' minorities (Kersten, 2000; Ahmed, 2007, 2010; Swan 2010). Such optimistic discourses that accompany organizational efforts to include have been referred to in different ways. For instance, as celebratory diversity (Lubienski, 2003), happy talk (Bell & Hartmann, 2007), and happy inclusion stories (Dobusch et al., 2021; Prasad & Mills, 1997). Despite the acknowledgement of its importance, the inclusion literature treats optimism in passing and deems it to be rhetorical gestures by organizations (Tyler & Vacchani, 2021). Displaying optimism is integrated in many works that mention their relevance (Rennstam & Sullivan, 2018), but remains understudied.

While optimism is referred to as misleading forms of doing inclusion, optimistic discourses have powerful effects in defining organizational objectives. Optimism is manifested as aspirational discourses where the to-be-included are constructed in alignment with managerial goals (Swan, 2010). An example from this dissertation is the construction of the 'Model Settler'. In literature on 'inclusive organizations', criticism to optimism is highlighted only to demonstrate how there can be backlash to good intentions. For instance, how well-intentioned discourses of diversity and inclusion exclude certain subjectivities while including others (Dobusch, 2014; Priola et al., 2018). The role of an optimistic discourse for constituting conditionality suggests how they are central for sustaining power asymmetries. Therefore, this dissertation shows how these discourses matter *in and of themselves*.

Optimism is therefore not just expressed as a celebration (Lubienski, 2003) or a luring device (Kersten, 2000) – it is affirmed through restoration. The 'optimistic story' shows how Servall may create its own forms of inequality within, while denouncing inequality outside. Denunciation of structural inequality in society could justify inequality within Servall under its 'rescuing function', committing to solve structural discrimination while obscuring its existence. The optimistic story could be seen as working *in tandem* with restoration, therefore becoming difficult to disrupt and even to question; for example, the case of Carmen confronting the conflict-free optimistic story of Servall. This is echoed in the critiques to diversity discourses in the literature. Diversity appears as 'a commitment to institutionalize an idea that an organization is committed to a cause, but not a commitment to enacting any significant changes in the organizational logic or structure' (Thomas, 2018: 145). The structural problem at hand (inequality, discrimination, exclusion) is constructed insofar as is functional for organizational objectives.

This dissertation goes beyond the affirmation that inclusive organizations construct optimistic discourses 'free of conflict and contradiction' (Dobusch et al., 2021; Prasad and Mills, 1997). Optimistic discourses do not just act as sugar-coating (Swan, 2010) but, as it was shown, they enable mechanisms that defend the terms of inclusion. They work cooperatively with restoration by assisting institutionalized responses that limit the possibilities of changing the organizational status quo. Therefore, optimistic discourses empower institutionalized actors such as managers in their everyday functions.

Methodologically, this has power implication suggesting further exploration of optimistic discourses considering them *ex ante* a central part of inclusion. Inclusion and diversity are now well-established in organizations to the extent that their mention often appears as a source of legitimation for organizations (Leong, 2021; Oswick & Noon, 2014; Rhodes, 2021). By focusing on the actors reflective and critical capacities (Boltanski, 2011; Boltanski & Thévenot, 1999, 2000), it is possible to see cracks in optimistic discourses. By exposing and taking demands seriously, this dissertation moves the contradictions inherent to optimistic discourses from the periphery to centre-stage. In this way, it used optimistic discourses as a herald that proclaims inclusion as free of conflict (Swan, 2010), but as capable of enforcing conditionality through organizational practices.

8.4.1 The strength of the 'optimistic story': Optimism shaping agency

The terms of inclusion, demonstrated by the framing of inclusion through an 'optimistic story', shows clearly the manifestation of optimism. The optimistic story portrays a necessary and desirable destiny for Servall's inclusion efforts in relation to the Program (Chapter 5). As an effect of symbolic power, the optimistic story provides a lens for the to-be-included to make sense of the 'reality' of their pathway to inclusion (Gill, 2014). The optimistic discourse is reproduced by Showcased Settlers within the organization in their involvement in promoting the Program externally. The Showcased Settlers actively convey optimism inside the organization, epitomizing themselves as the image of the 'rescued' and reproducing the 'rescuing' narrative. Discourse and organizational practices work together shaping agency in harmony with organizational objectives.

The optimistic story is able to externalize the problem of discrimination as one being of societal discrimination; unequal compensation is legitimized inside Servall in that the experience will eventually 'pay-off' for Settlers. This optimism does not only work as a top-down imposition

from managers, or by Settlers being carried along through an optimistic discourse; optimism occurs through co-participation (Burawoy, 1979) and implicit collusion (Bourdieu, 2000). The optimistic story enables Settlers to work on *co-creating* the terms of their inclusion as they become progressively involved in promoting Servall's inclusion work. Settlers direct themselves towards the construction of the 'happy inclusion story' (Dobusch et al., 2021; Prasad & Mills, 1997). The agentic capacity of the to-be-included reproduces an optimistic discourse beyond the optimistic story.

This dissertation must stress that such recurring optimism has implications for doing inclusion. Optimism can work to contain conflict by orienting agency into certain courses of thought and action. Inclusion research should take seriously the role optimism in inclusion being attentive; for example, where managers construct a narrative where the future appears to be inevitably positive. This has been achieved in this dissertation by attempting to understand how optimism became objectivized (Bourdieu, 1980). Inclusion research could benefit from a closer observation on how optimistic discourses simultaneously construct conditions when they construct 'happiness'.

9 Conclusions

This chapter concludes the dissertation by briefly summarizing its contributions to inclusion and diversity research broadly. It then engages with underexplored dimensions and future research opportunities. Finally, it discusses some practical implications.

This dissertation puts forward the argument that organizational inclusion involves conditionality. The theoretical framework has been used to re-think inclusion as a process that involves the negotiation of conditionality. With this novel approach, the dissertation invites scholars and practitioners to theorize inclusion differently. It suggests that we understand social norms not as given, but under tension and in constant dispute by reflexive actors. Locating and deconstructing such tensions could open up the ideological and material edifice that sustains organizational inclusion.

The dissertation shows that, when organizations attempt to include minorities, they exert domination by establishing the terms of inclusion. However, these terms are frequently negotiated. By centering on agency, this dissertation looked at how migrant professionals display forms of awareness, strategic navigation, and opposition that were translated into demands. In most cases migrant professionals could in part identify the terms of inclusion and pose demands; however, these demands were met with responses aligned with the organizational status quo. In one case, the term of inclusion for an individual was challenged and changed.

This dissertation purposely used the case of a relatively resourceful and powerful minority group – migrant professionals – to re-interpret the inclusion process. Focusing on migrant professionals' agentic capacity enabled this dissertation to identify how terms of inclusion are constructed, how they are imposed on migrant professionals, and how they are challenged. This dissertation provides a way of seeing inclusion as a negotiated conditionality, presenting an alternative to the prevalent inclusion-exclusion binary perspective.

In this way, this dissertation helps provide a deeper understanding of how migrant professionals' agentic capacity can sometimes challenge hegemonic norms in ways not previously identified. A point was made about the salience of peripheric migrant professionals, a minority that increasingly populates organizations in the context of a global economy. This opens the

possibility to search for forms of resistance among other social groups and in different organizational contexts.

The dissertation shows how the conditions of inclusion can be disputed and power imbalances temporary suspended. Yet, it takes more than the resistance capacity of the individual to change the conditions of inclusion. These findings invitate future research on the possibility of the collective re-negotiation of conditionality. The possibility of change is therefore a dimension that could be further explored. Coming to the end of this work, it appears that some aspects are underexplored. I try to address them here. The possibility of change (Section 9.1) and the location of field (Section 9.2) are the first themes I would like to touch upon. The emphasis on the professional identity of migrants (Section 9.3), and absent voices (Section 9.4) follow. The practical implications of this study conclude this dissertation (Section 9.5).

9.1 Collective agency and changing the terms of inclusion

This dissertation has explored how negotiations could open possibilities for changing the terms of inclusion. The possibilities of changing have however been confined to individual agency and the idea of breaking from power temporarily (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002; Zanoni & Janssens, 2007; Contu, 2008; Van Laer & Janssens, 2017). The dissertation has illustrated a range of possibilities for the individual. It was shown that the terms of inclusion could be changed in a way that positively impact *the Settlers themselves*. French Pragmatic Sociology has helped to see how in individual's actions of resistance and micro-emancipation allow us to visualize the forms of domination at play. However, the dissertation does not address how individual actors can *collectively* disrupt the agreed terms of inclusion.

Transformation of conditions involves the need for the occurrence of collective agency (Jiang & Korczynski, 2016); the terms of inclusion to be durably changed require the involvement of Settlers collectively. The possibility of change appeared different in relation to what was being negotiated. For example, as suggested by Settlers demands, material conditions appeared as more openly negotiable collectively compared to the other three conditions (optimistic story, prospective talent and the Model Settler). However, a full-scale transformation of the material conditions through collective agency remained unexplored in this dissertation.

Based on the fieldwork experience, there were two limitations to exploring collective agency in relation to material conditions. These limitations relate to time and space. In relation to time, the

6-month full-time feature of the internship Program may have had a discouraging effect in engaging with collective action. The Program was set up for Settlers to either remain or leave the organization after 6 months, with the period framed as an evaluation of the individual's performance. The duration of the Program may have left Settlers little opportunity to critically reflect on the Program set-up. Settlers who spent a longer time in Servall appeared to be the most critical – once they secured a more permanent position. For instance, Eva in hindsight reflected that during the 6-month period 'I wasn't thinking so much about it'.

In another example, Henriette strived to create a space to enable communication between Settlers that secured a position and the new incoming Settlers (within the 6-month internship). Yet, this collective effort was dedicated to solving practical questions to increase the new Settlers' chances to be hired. Overall, the 6-month internship configuration seemed to work as a temporal form of control (Maury, 2022) that prevented efforts to think or act collectively and question the terms of inclusion.

The spatiality of Servall was also a limitation for exploring inter-Settler communication. In my role of colleague-researcher, I did not have access to those spaces of inter-Settler communication, other than those that involved technical work-related aspects. It could be supposed that recognition could have been influenced by informal channels of communication between Settlers backstage (Goffman, 1956). Access to such spaces could have been possible with a deeper immersion into Settler's physical places of socialization (canteen, coffee routines) and possibly extra-organizational activities (time outside Servall), which the ethnography included only to a limited extent. More socialization with Settlers would have been needed to further peruse the spaces of inter-Settler communication.

On the other side, agency mobilization in relation to the optimistic story, prospective talent, and the Model Settler became an exercise of individual critical reflection. For collective agency to have transformational capacity requires collective spaces of reflexivity and critique (Vince & Reynolds, 2009; Cunliffe, 2020) which could foster recognition of power asymmetries. For collective agency to occur requires political awareness and 'cognitive liberation of migrant workers' (Jiang & Korczynski, 2016: 815). This could be understood as a collective form of emancipation that transcends the individual's scope for change. Further studies could explore this possibility by paying attention to time and spatial matters that this dissertation was unable to address.

9.2 The field: The underexplored incidence of the macro-level logic

One of the limitations of focusing on agency is restraining the possibility of engaging with more macro-level explanations. This is one important aspect this dissertation could have explored. A Bourdieusian perspective locates inclusion dynamics as embedded in a social space with unequal distribution of symbolic power (Bourdieu, 1985, 1989), affecting in particular migrants (Samaluk, 2016). The conditions of domination are a product of a macro-level context, of the *logic of the field*.

The limits of a field are very difficult to determine; it hinges on what is actually at stake and 'admits of no *a priori* answer' (Wacquant & Bourdieu, 1992: 100). The field could refer to the area of diversity and inclusion and the multiple actors at play (Özbilgin & Tatlı, 2011), or organizations as structures of power (Emirbayer & Johnson, 2008). In order to observe embedded agency, this dissertation used the concept of terms of inclusion, highlighting the conditionality that subordinates migrants within an organization. By making this choice, the more macro-level analysis of the field was circumvented.

Regardless of the defined limits, the logic of the field one that reproduces inequality. Structural inequality refers to the logic that subordinates migrants in society and this is also observed at Servall. Structural inequality is constituted, for example, by unequal working conditions, employment opportunities, worth of international skills, and acceptability of ethno-cultural differences that divide migrants and locals. The terms of inclusion involved Servall signaling the existence of inequality yet avoiding fully recognising inequality; for example, by constructing a fractional vision of the problem of migrant professionals that Servall aims to resolve. Through the terms of inclusion, some of the elements of inequality are made visible (e.g. denouncing unemployment and discrimination) while the underlying logic behind its reproduction continues operating. Therefore, the explanation of inequality (produced by the field) affecting migrants is hidden while it appears to be addressed by Servall.

The dissertation has however construed structural inequality as an unequal distribution of symbolic power. High-ranked managers and institutionalized actors are better positioned and able to impose the conditions of inclusion and protect them. Further, symbolic power is unequally distributed among Settlers. Some Settlers are better positioned to 'figure out' domination and dispute the terms of inclusion. For instance, inequality gets reproduced when Settlers with a 'sense of place' (Bourdieu, 2000), marked by a higher social status, manage to

dispute the terms of inclusion and remain in the organization. This is exemplified in the case of Ivette. At the other extreme, Settlers that are perceived as ethno-culturally incompatible with the social norms, and therefore perceived as a poor fit, are likely to disappear without leaving a trace. The clearest example were the Settlers that did not complete the 6-month Program (addressed in Section 9.4 as absent voices). This suggests a macro-level logic, where a hierarchy of privilege operates outside but also plays out inside Servall.

Those Settlers with a privileged social background appeared to have greater leverage to negotiate (Webster & Haandrikman, 2020; Weiß, 2005). The case of the Settlers who 'speak up to power' suggest that a privileged position based on social status, money, and other resources useful for migrants, including a command of Swedish, gave them a more powerful position. Ivette's privileged social background appeared to shape her negotiation capacity despite the barriers evident. The way in which she reacted to power seems rooted in a practical sense (Bourdieu, 1980) in which she seems to have naturalized her right to upgrade her position. This is well expressed in the way Ivette abruptly justified her negotiation position: 'I just thought that I was so fucking good that you guys must want me long term'.

On the other hand, Settlers who moved to Sweden for humanitarian reasons and then joined the program had a different situation. Previous experiences of despair, unemployment and underemployment seemed important to make sense of their situation in the Swedish labor market. They reflected on having the 'wrong name', and the lack of recognition of their qualifications and skills; their social, cultural and economic capital was not valid in Sweden (Bourdieu, 1986). As they tended to be in a more vulnerable position, they often responded with feelings of gratefulness for taking part of the Program. In terms of Bourdieu, they were ultimately those most likely to play by the rules of the game.

A more macro level of analysis could have illuminated the relationship between social background (e.g. primarily socialization, cultivation, and economic position in country of origin) and the possibility of speaking up. The possibility of macro-level analysis was considered during the fieldwork period. For instance, basic biographical information was collected from each participant to explore this idea. However, a full analysis of habitus and capitals would have required a more thorough investigation, which was beyond the scope of this dissertation. It therefore remains an open question in which specific ways migrant professionals social backgrounds shape their positions in a context.

In this dissertation, the restoration process in Servall tried to clarify how something similar to the logic of the field operates. Restoration appears as a straightforward mechanism that dynamically imposes inequality. By focusing on how institutionalized actors reinstitute inequality in their interaction with Settlers, the more micro and organizational level of analysis has been prioritized. Future research on inclusion requires a clear specification of what the field is and how its logic reproduces inequality.

9.3 Professionalism as an intersected identity

In this dissertation, professionalism has been stressed as a salient identity behind migrants' agency. The emphasis on professional identity is responsible for choosing the name 'migrant professionals' instead of, for example, 'highly skilled migrants'. Professionalism made sense as a dimension for power leverage and intelligibility in a knowledge-intensive organization such as Servall. Yet, other social identities also intersected, playing a very important role; for example, class, ethno-cultural origin, and religion. Professionalism intersected with other identities in ways that could both advance and disempower agency.

A full intersectional approach (Acker, 2006; Holvino, 2010) was not suitable to respond the research question. However, intersectionality inevitably emerged as part of the empirical analysis. The intersection between professionalism and other identities shaped agency in forms that may reinforce as well as disempower agentic capacity. Two illustrations were provided from ethno-cultural origin and religion. For some Settlers, ethno-cultural and national origin played an important role in their construction of their professional identity as 'agentic'. Growing up in Eastern European societies was pegged with glorification of hard work and resilience that backed professionalism. Such narratives worked as narratives of the self but also guided attitudes and expectations toward others. One Settler (Lyuba) that acted as a mentor expected high resilience for the Settler she was mentoring, in a way that resonated with her own understanding of professionalism. Understanding professionalism through an ethnic logic served as a way for locating individuals in a new organizational context.

Instead, religion played a disempowering role for some Settlers. Being associated with the Islamic faith marked a barrier that was difficult to overcome. Religion played out as a complex mechanism that was not easily solved for Ahnaf and Yasmin, despite their professional success. Religious faith and practices appeared as strongly differentiated from the dominant idea of professionalism. For Settlers, extolling their professional selves, implied the necessity to hide any

religious affiliations. The complex intertwinement between professionalism and religion should be explored by new inclusion research studies. In particular, in organizations dominated by secular 'progressivism' that may show comforting and self-congratulatory approaches to inclusion (Morillas & Romani, 2022). Religion proved a very sensitive dimension that remains hard to accommodate under current diversity and inclusion discourses.

9.4 Absent voices: Ruthless conditionality

This dissertation had very limited access to the voice of those Settlers that started the Program but did not continue in Servall. Following Servall's official communication, these 'failing' Settlers made up the 25–30% of all participants in the Program. It was possible to know a little about these Settlers as they were spoken of by other Settlers I interacted with. Including the absent voices could have added a much richer understanding of power negotiations and its limits.

The absent voices suggest that the terms of inclusion could only reach so far, and did not extend to those who did not fit within the social norms of the organization. Those that compose the absent voices in the Program were talked about by managers as people who: were 'strange', 'experienced cultural clashes', were 'very religious', were 'passive', or for whom the internship position 'wasn't their thing' or 'lack some thinking'. Most of these voices had to be reconstructed from other Settlers, who were in Servall during the fieldwork period. One Settler and her mentor (Aisha and Özge) located in an office in a migrant dominated neighborhood shared the case of Amir and Gibran. Özge acknowledged her total understanding of why Amir left: 'there is not much money and he needed a full time salary'. Gibran started in the Program but could not complete the Program because he 'had to find a job' (Özge). In a conversation with Aisha, she revealed that Gibran experienced some unspecified 'taxing requirements' and that he had to start working as truck driver [*lastbilsförare*]. I tried to contact Gibran but never succeeded.

In one of the first interviews, there was a chance to have a 14-minute conversation with Saleha. Saleha was Lyuba's mentee, who Lyuba described as having 'to leave because she broke her hand'. Saleha's described her journey of moving from [*South Asian country*] as an international Masters student to Sweden with family support. She shared that she could not find professional employment after completing her Masters. She then described how she could not be helped to find a professional position by the EO because she did not have a working permit. She then got employment in a store, allowing her to get a working permit. Since she received a working permit, EO responded 'we dont help people on work visas'. Saleha worked in fast food restaurants for

6 years. In this period, she needed to pay taxes to stay in the country, therefore becoming bound to her employers. Getting permanent residence and staying Sweden became her priority, so she did not look for 'professional jobs'. She shared that she came from a developing country, to which I responded 'me too'. To which she confessed:

> *Still, you will not understand. Women have problems in my country, we don't have freedom or respect. For me the most important thing is freedom. (…) Sweden gave me security. (…). I am having the best life one could ever have. I just need a job. (Saleha)*

Saleha however seemed highly aware that passing the Program's assessment was unlikely: 'I have one month left and I feel this opportunity is over'.

A full development of the voices of Amir, Gibran and Saleha could have illuminated the conditionality that affects migrant professionals. The negotiation capacity of these Settlers could not be studied, as their experiences in most cases had to be inferred. The absent voices could have problematized some baseline assumptions of this dissertation in relation to agentic capacity. Some migrant professionals experience insurmountable conditions that hardly puts them in a situation of openly disputing conditionality. These three 'failing' cases provide examples of how forms of conditionality, not covered in the terms of inclusion, can affect some migrant professionals – especially those that are seen as more 'migrants' than 'professionals' (Section 9.3). These forgotten Settlers disappeared from statistical records and do not make up any happy inclusion stories. Their absence and invisibility illustrate the effects of systemic inequality.

Further research is needed on the absent voices and invisibility in inclusion research. Despite their laudable efforts, inclusive organizations can hardly address the invisible inequality (Chrispal et al., 2021; Dobusch, 2017) that conditions the lives of many migrant. Hearing the absent voices of those negotiating yet 'failing' inclusion, often shows a broader and harsher reality.

9.5 Practical implications

Several practical implications can be distilled from this dissertation. Organizations such as Servall could provide spaces for reflexivity as part of their inclusion work. Inclusion could be part of a narrative of successful professional insertion and a key part of diverse team work. Servall represents an exemplary organization in that sense: it provided specific spaces for managerial learning and increased awareness. However, inclusion is also characterized by everyday struggles. Such struggles could be contextualized on the conditions to-be-included minorities experience

not only outside but inside the organization. Allowing to voice these struggles could help organizational learning. For example, by sharing stories of Settlers not only as 'models' but also to expose the multiple difficulties of cultural and professional incorporation in the workplace such as by identifying cases of friction between mentors and mentees. Such cases could reveal the norms that rule the workplace and that become challenged as organizations diversify their employee composition. Spaces of critical reflection for frictions could also make the workplace more inclusive and develop a more pluralistic view of inclusion.

At the program level, this dissertation suggests more equitable conditions from the outset. The global mobility of skilled workers and the 'openness to difference' need to be harmonized with equality. A balance in inclusive organizations is necessary between maintaining a low financial risk and securing ethical work conditions. In the case of the Program, more equitable compensation schemes could be attempted for migrant professionals. This could be achieved by creating professional insertion options for Settlers within the Program more commensurate with skills and prior experience. Designing such schemes could help prevent the reproduction of inequality at the societal level, therefore, get closer to a more collective and truly meritocratic win-win situation.

More broadly, this dissertation asserts that the study of conditionality shows that inclusion is not about altruism. Benevolent political discourses that talk about the inclusion of migrants in optimistic terms obscure the terms by which integration is supposed to happen. These terms are not only the easily identifiable 'objective' requirements of citizenship that political actors discuss publically, often discussed as the contractual relationship between the receiving society and the other, the newcomer, the migrant. This dissertation invites others to unearth the mechanisms by which these requirements are constructed and often collectively taken for granted. The societal debates on inclusion should be on de-constructing the arbitrariness of the conditions of inclusion, and therefore making sure that they are permanently open for negotiation and transformation.

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