UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND WORK SCIENCE

Master thesis in Sociology, 30 higher education credits

Emotional labour and racialised subordination in the service sector: A study of migrants' server experiences in Sweden's catering industry

Antonio Pozueco-Naranjo

Supervisor: Gabriella Elgenius

Spring 2020

ABSTRACT

This dissertation explores the implications of ethnic penalties and of emotional labour on the ethnic segmentation of Sweden's labour market. Taking the catering industry as a critical case, this study examines foreign-born migrants' experiences of recruiting processes, employment terms and conditions, and practices associated with emotional labour. Using a grounded theory methodology, the abductive coding approach reveals an overarching framework that intertwines institutional discrimination and emotional labour, with experiences resonating through theoretical concepts such as *ethnic penalties*, *racialisation*, *symbolic violence*, *emotional labour*, and *interpellation*. The findings suggest that foreign-born migrant servers experience *dual labour subordination*. First, they experience institutional discrimination through hiring practices that label them as suitable for low-wage, low-skilled, and labour-intensive jobs. Second, as servers, they experience emotional labour as a form of symbolic violence, raising boundaries between them and Swedish natives. Therefore, emotional labour in "migrant jobs" reinforces experiences of racialised subordination and the process whereby foreign-born migrants are moved to the periphery of the Swedish labour market.

Keywords: migration; institutional discrimination; ethnic penalties; emotional labour; racialisation; symbolic violence; service sector; restaurants; sociology of work.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Sweden is one of the North Atlantic societies where migrants account for a higher share of the population: in 2019, 19.56 per cent of the inhabitants were foreign-born migrants and 13.51 were descendants of migrant parents, meaning that either one or both parents were born abroad (Schierup & Ålund, 2011; Statistiska centralbyrån [SCB], 2020a). Once famous for its "exceptionalist" welfare model and its inclusive policies over migration, asylum, and multiculturalism, in recent decades Sweden has caught up with neoliberal globalisation and related processes of aggravated segregation, racialised exclusion, and labour market discrimination; these transformations have intensified in the context of Europe's so-called "migration crisis" post-2015 (Dahlstedt & Neergaard, 2019; Schierup & Ålund, 2011).

By 2018 foreign-born migrants had come to comprise 19.04 per cent of those employed in Sweden (SCB, 2020b). However, many jobs, especially highly skilled occupations, do not seem as accessible for this group as for natives. The corporatist

model that has been in place since the 1970s, whereby employers and trade unions come together to negotiate employment conditions, has not served to challenge migrants' disadvantageous position. In the 1990s, with the neoliberal turn in Swedish politics, integration policy merged with business-friendly measures, but this approach did not help to circumvent precarisation, social polarisation, unemployment, and exclusion. Official records indicate employment and wage gaps between people of Swedish backgrounds, i.e. born in Sweden with one or both parents born in Sweden, and individuals with so-called "foreign" background, i.e. born outside Sweden or born in Sweden with both parents born elsewhere; in addition to ethnic and racialised segmentation of the labour market, with the existence of "occupational ghettos" (Dahlstedt & Neergaard, 2019). After the 2008 labour migration reform, which empowered employers over labour migration policy, migrant workers have become concentrated in a few high-skilled sectors, especially among Information and Communications Technologies, as well as in low-skilled and vulnerable employment, such as those jobs often offered by the catering industry (Dahlstedt & Neergaard, 2019; Flam, 2011; Frödin & Kjellberg, 2018; Schierup & Ålund, 2011).

The catering industry, which includes restaurants and catering operations, has become for many migrants a point of entry to the labour market. Official statistics show that in 2018 foreign-born migrants constituted 36.79 per cent of the catering workforce[1], up from 29.49 in 2014 (SCB, 2020c). Also, in 2018 "server"[2] was the third most popular occupation among foreign-born migrants, after "assistant nurse," and "cleaner" or "domestic worker"[3] (SCB, 2020d). Catering is also the most preferred business among entrepreneurs with a foreign background, overtaking the self-employed with Swedish background within the sector (Frödin & Kjellberg, 2018; Urban, 2013). However, the catering industry frequently seems to offer restrictive career prospects for those with foreign backgrounds (Flam, 2011; Urban, 2013). Additionally, those who work as severs may also be directly exposed to everyday subordinating and exclusionary practices. Due to their interactions with customers, servers are required to perform *emotional labour*, managing their own feelings according to the expectations and demands of their workplaces (Hochschild, 2012). The practices associated with emotional labour may be presenting migrant workers as submissive or turning them into token ethnics; hence, these may be contributing to the reproduction and naturalisation of inequalities across the labour market (Chong, 2009; Flam & Beauzamy, 2011).

PURPOSE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The objective of this study is to investigate foreign-born migrants' experiences of institutional practices and emotional labour, as well as their implications relating

---

[1] It includes the following professional groups from the 2012 Swedish Standard Classification of Occupations: "Restaurant managers," "Cooks and cold-buffet managers," "Waiters and bartenders," and "Fast-food workers, food preparation assistants."

[2] "Waiters and bartenders" and "Fast-food workers, food preparation assistants."

[3] They correspond to the professional categories "Personal care workers in health services" ("assistant nurse") and "Cleaners and helpers" ("cleaner" and "domestic worker").

to the reproduction of inequalities within the Swedish labour market and its ethnic segmentation. To achieve this aim, the research examines institutional practices as experienced by migrants, particularly criteria for hiring and employment terms and conditions, with specific reference to service in the catering industry. Moreover, this study looks into practices related to emotional labour as carried out by servers.

In Sweden the catering industry employs large numbers of foreign-born migrants as servers (in 2018 they represented 37.95 per cent of this occupation workforce [SCB, 2020e]), who very often deal with precarious working conditions. Due to the interactive nature of the job, servers engage with the public and their emotional interactions are frequently commodified. For instance, responding to rules and conventions, servers smile at customers to produce comfort and satisfaction, which may then return to the work organisation as surplus. The strong presence of foreign-born migrant labour, the extensive work precarity and the commodification of servers' emotions constitute the catering industry as a critical case for understanding the allocation of foreign-born migrants in the periphery of the Swedish labour market. The main research question and sub-questions are formulated as follows:

- How do foreign-born migrants experience institutional practices in the Swedish labour market and develop emotional labour, and with what implications for the reproduction of inequalities within the workforce?
  - How are hiring practices and working conditions experienced by migrants in the catering industry?
  - How do migrant servers perform emotional labour according to expectations and demands of the workplace?

By answering these questions this study aims to fill a gap in previous research, developing an overarching framework for understanding the phenomena of institutional discrimination and emotional labour, with support from empirical evidence collected using a grounded theory methodology. Thus, this inquiry focuses on: migrants' experiences of *institutional practices*, here defined as the actions taken and reproduced by organisations in relation to their workforce; and *emotional labour*, as the interactive activity through which employees, controlled by their organisations, produce an emotional state in clients (Hochschild, 2012). The research builds on previous studies about the experiences of *foreign-born migrants* or "international migrants," i.e. individuals who have changed their country of usual residence due to different reasons and hold various legal statuses (United Nations, 2020).

This dissertation is structured as follows: first, relevant previous research is reviewed; second, various theoretical concepts are explored with the help of critical race theory and labour process theory, framing the developing grounded theory; third, the process of the grounded theory method is outlined, including ethical considerations and methodological challenges. Finally, the results of the study are examined and conceptualised, concluding with answering the research questions and discussing possible directions for future research.

PREVIOUS RESEARCH

The latest relevant research can be grouped into two main categories: research about discriminatory institutional practices against migrants in labour markets, and that about emotional labour in the service industry.

Discrimination against migrants in labour markets: institutional practices

Several scholars have pointed out that differences in human capital cannot explain the disparities between migrants and natives in labour markets, turning towards discrimination as a possible explanation. After analysing the Swedish labour market, Rydgren (2004) claims the existence of three mechanisms of exclusion that discriminate against migrants more often than open racism and xenophobia: "institutional discrimination," "statistical discrimination," and "network effects." *Institutional discrimination* combines public policies with organisational rules and informal customs, both hindering the access of migrants to labour markets and preventing stable work and life conditions. To Flam (2011), the main effect of institutional discrimination is a segmented labour market in which migrants tend to hold low-wage and low-status jobs across different economic sectors, particularly agriculture, heavy industry, and the service sector.

As the agentic form of institutional discrimination, *statistical discrimination* happens when authorities within organisations make use of stereotypes and prejudices towards certain groups to guide their decisions on hiring; thus, in allocating individuals to the available jobs, "belonging" to a supposed homogeneous group prevails over one's skills as a criterion (Flam, 2011; Neergaard, 2009; Rydgren, 2004). Statistical discrimination usually focuses on one salient characteristic, often ethnicity and nationality, and can provide migrants with jobs associated with so-called "positive" traits, usually, menial, repetitive, and low-paid work, which natives rarely wish to do. This form of "positive discrimination" also operates when migrant employers help co-nationals and other migrants to access jobs (Flam, 2011; Frödin & Kjellberg, 2018; Urban, 2013). Although Rydgren (2004) refers to these *network effects* as a distinct mechanism of exclusion, migrant employers may not just hire individuals who are part of their ethnic networks, but simultaneously conceive them as suitable in relation to their ethnicity. In the words of Dahlstedt and Neergaard (2019, p. 130), "employability is ethno-culturally and racially coded," and, therefore, affected by *racialisation* processes. Through the lens of critical race theory, Mulinari and Neergaard (2017) argue the existence of "exclusionary racism" and "exploitative racism." If the former refers to processes of construction of "the other" as a culturally deviant individual, then excluding and, often, criminalising them, exploitative racism fosters "subordinated inclusion," producing a usable labour force by institutional and discursive practices that racialise individuals with particular characteristics (or lack thereof). Jobs are given a "race-typing," "nation-typing," or "migrant-typing" character, and the ethnic segmentation of the labour market intensifies (Flam, 2011; Neergaard, 2009; Rydgren, 2004).

Frequently operating as a periphery segment of the labour market, the Swedish catering industry hosts a large share of employees with migrant backgrounds and many cases of *unfree labour*, understood as one not being "free to sell his or her labour" and thus vulnerable to precarious working conditions

below the legal minimum (Frödin & Kjellberg, 2018; Neergaard, 2015, p. 155). Among unfree labour, Neergaard (2015) has identified: racialised citizens and permanent residence holders, affected by informalisation processes, which build on "symbolic subordination;" temporary work-permit holders, working below the conditions established by collective agreements; and undocumented migrants, with long shifts, extremely low wages or none, and without any legal guarantee. Symbolic subordination seems to impact, however, on all three groups, through racialisation processes that condemn many migrants to dead-end jobs in the catering industry (Neergaard, 2009; Urban, 2013). As a tool of discipline and control, this form of subordination operates as *symbolic violence*, strengthening the boundaries between nationals and migrants (Flam & Beauzamy, 2011). However, as a tool for all, symbolic violence is also executed by the general public, with actions ranging from "glaring" and "staring," that make migrants feel unwelcome and afraid, to "averted gazes," that render them invisible. Thus, as a key feature of the restaurant business, it becomes relevant to explore the significance of *emotional labour*.

The emotional proletariat in the service industry: emotional labour

Macdonald and Sirianni (1996, as cited in Macdonald & Merrill, 2009, p. 115) coined the term "emotional proletariat" to refer to service workers who perform interactive jobs with no power over the "feeling rules" that regulate their emotional labour, and are therefore subordinated to their organisations. Since Hochschild (2012) brought to life the term "emotional labour" in 1983, many scholars have studied associated practices and their implications. In particular, within the framework of gendered organisational theory, Hall (1993) investigated how restaurant servers perform emotional labour by using their bodies, emotions, and personalities to "create a pleasant dining experience" (p. 457). Hall dissected routinised interactions and found three "good service" scripts: "friendliness," "deference," and "flirting." These scripts, built on gender stereotypes and service ideals, create a gendered image of an obedient servant. Thus, through emotional labour, restaurants and servers construct and maintain gender.

By describing a process of *dual interpellation*, McDowell, Batnitzky, and Dyer (2007) have also explored the effects of emotional labour on identity building and on the reproduction of social hierarchies of gender, race, and class. Through their case study of a hotel in Greater London, these scholars brought to light how employers and managers measure suitability for a job and structure their organisation by making use of a set of gender, national, and ethnic stereotypes on corporeal, cognitive, and emotional attributions. However, besides this, they observed that the exchange of emotional and embodied labour takes place within the context of "consumers' sovereignty," which involves a power shift from the service provider to the customer (see Fineman, 2010, pp. 28–30). Thus, a dual interpellation occurs: employees "do gender" and "do ethnicity" by conforming to employers' and managers' expectations, on one side, and customers', on the other; in consequence, they reinforce their social location.

In a similar vein, but with a macro-level approach, Chong (2009) argued that emotional labour naturalises intersecting systems of race, gender, and class. Through the lenses of intersectionality and critical race theory, Chong analysed Canada's labour market, explaining that institutional racism, within the context

of neoliberal restructuring, sends racialised people to low-paid and low-status jobs. Organisations shape individuals' performance and identity in terms of gender, race, and class, and these are then sold, consumed, and, therefore, generate surplus value. Thus, Chong exposed the institutional dimension of oppression that shapes emotional labour and, thereafter, strengthens social inequalities.

Drawing upon previous research, the current study aims to bring together institutional discrimination and emotional labour under a single theoretical framework, as McDowell, Batnitzky, and Dyer (2007) and Chong (2009) have attempted. However, in contrast to McDowell, Batnitzky, and Dyer, this study will extend the analytical framework from a focus on the practices of single organisations to include also the theoretical perspectives of Chong and new empirical evidence about racialisation in Sweden's labour market. This approach will be explored in the theoretical framework below.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study applies a grounded theory (GT) methodology to construct an overarching theoretical framework. However, adopting a constructivist GT perspective, I recognise that data is never theory free; therefore, taking an abductive approach, previous theories are allowed to contribute towards theoretical sensitivity (Alvesson & Skölberg, 2018; Charmaz, 2006). In this section the following key concepts are introduced: first, in relation to institutional practices, the concepts of *ethnic penalty*, *racialisation*, and *symbolic violence* will be elucidated through critical race theory (CRT) and institutional discrimination, helping to clarify the experiences and materialisation of discriminations against migrants within labour markets; and, second, the concepts of *emotional labour* and *interpellation*, useful to understand the emotional dimension of service work, notions of control, and subordination in work organisations, are elaborated upon with help of a theory of emotion and labour process theory (LPT). The section will conclude on the relevance of these concepts and how GT will assist in connecting them.

Ethnic penalties

Differences in human capital are insufficient to explain the disadvantageous position of migrants and minorities among the workforce (Flam, 2011; Rydgren, 2004). Thus, the concept of *ethnic penalty* has emerged, to refer to "all the sources of disadvantage that might lead an ethnic group to fare less well in the labour market than do similarly qualified Whites," after considering personal characteristics (Heath & Cheung, 2006, p. 19). As a key element of ethnic penalty, *institutional discrimination* points to the role played by legislation, organisational rules, and hiring practices that reward specific groups with employment and higher working standards, e.g. white males, at the expense of others, like racialised migrants, producing discriminatory outcomes (Flam, 2011; Rydgren, 2004).

Racialisation

CRT understands "race" as a "social construction," an invented category resulting from social relations, where the dominant group moulds races and racialises subaltern groups (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). Thus, Miles and Brown (2003) speak of *racialisation* as a process that attributes meaning to specific biological features of humans, somatic and non-visible, real and imagined, assigning individuals to a category of persons that reproduces itself, and articulating racialised political and economic relations between differentiated social communities. In consequence, economic, political, social, and ideological levels of societies, including everyday life, are structured according to racial categories, producing "racial regimes" (Mulinari & Neergaard, 2017) and "migrant regimes" (Neergaard, 2009). Without neglecting capitalist logics and processes of informalisation, CRT serves to reveal the discrimination of institutions such as the labour market, and how these institutions reinforce "economic apartheid," and racism and race as "organising principles" of work (Chong, 2009; Galabuzi, 2004).

Symbolic violence

CRT also refers to the "ordinariness" of racism: the everyday life of most people of colour in a society that does not acknowledge discrimination (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). Borrowing the concept from feminist research, Flam and Beauzamy (2011) speak about *symbolic violence*, compounds of everyday "intimidating," "humiliating," and "incapacitating" practices, non-physical harmful, but causing feelings of "fear," "inferiority," and "reserve." Symbolic violence has the effect of real and symbolic status downgrading; thus, its victims are frequently aware and wounded. Expressed verbally or bodily by individuals and institutions, symbolic violence is as a tool to discipline, control, and subordinate, functioning in terms of access to the labour market as well as in the labour process as a whole.

Emotional labour

While under Fordism labour power has the form of physical labour, in the service society, where interactive work prevails, the creation of surplus value entails the production of a relationship between the seller and the consumer. Worker's identity is manufactured through physical (e.g. a "nice look") and behavioural (e.g. "being servile") means, and consumed by customers (Chong, 2009; Warhurst et al., 2009). Then, *emotional labour* arises as "the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display," which is then "sold for a wage and therefore has exchange value" (Hochschild, 2012, p. 23). Taking as point of departure a theory of emotion that conceives feelings as both biological and socially constructed, Hochschild (2012) argues that emotions are subjected to the "feeling rules" of the contexts where they are exchanged. Feeling rules are social guidelines, often latent, that direct how individuals want to feel and should feel (Hochschild, 1979). These rules materialise in terms of "rights" and "duties," which convey the extent, the direction, and the duration of a feeling. As prescriptive, their realisation carries out an act of social control.

Interpellation

LPT explains how capital, by having full control of the labour process, pursues its primary objective of maximising the production of surplus value (Warhurst et al., 2009). Under Fordism, the labour process was overseen directly by employers and managers. In the service society, less apparent forms of surveillance and control have been adopted, and the presence of consumers has influenced the forms of control (Chong, 2009). Williams (2006) observes a process of *interpellation*, through which workers in the service industry have to conform to employers' imaginations of quality service and also to customers' expectations. However, the discourses of "customer-oriented" service and of "consumers' sovereignty," which afford customers a sense of relational superiority over workers, to Korczynski (2009) are just an "enchanting myth," fed by employers as a way to make employees comply with company's interests. Thus, Chong (2009) indicates that control moves from physical monitoring to psychological control, creating corporate values and standardised scripts, and making employees identify with clients and customer-related norms, appropriating workers' feelings and bodies (Warhurst et al., 2009).

Connecting theoretical traditions

The concentration and perpetuation of migrants in temporary, low-paid, low-skilled, labour-intensive, and low-status jobs are partially explained by race- and migrant-typing posts, i.e. work as a subject of processes of racialisation. While occupations seem neutral and natural, inequalities are reproduced. Connecting different theoretical concepts related to institutional discrimination, labour process and emotions helps to visualise a wider phenomenon that these traditions cannot explain separately. Thus, bridging together LPT and institutional discrimination enables us to demonstrate experiences of *ethnic penalties* and their far-reaching implications, in terms of control within organisations. Moreover, incorporating *emotional labour* reveals a form of disciplining and subjugation in the labour process. Finally, through the conceptual tools provided by CRT, *symbolic violence* can be linked to institutional discrimination and emotional labour, and *interpellation* and emotional labour can be seen as co-contributors of processes of *racialisation*. Rather than looking to these theories to interpret the findings of this study, the GT approach contributes to their theoretical and empirical enrichment, and also to exploring the strength of their links and materialising them through a whole new theoretical framework.

METHOD AND MATERIALS

This section addresses the rationale for employing a qualitative research design, the stages of the GT process, and a discussion on ethical considerations, methodological challenges, and research trustworthiness.

Rationale for research design

Examining institutional practices and emotional labour as experienced by foreign-born migrants can help explain their situation in the Swedish labour market. A qualitative design allows researchers to access through face-to-face interactions to

individuals' thoughts, feelings, and perceptions, and, thus, to the meanings that individuals ascribe to social phenomena (Alvesson & Skölberg, 2018; Charmaz, 2006). A quantitative methodology, with more restrictive questions, would interpose with individuals' intricate experience. Moreover, the exploratory approach of a qualitative design facilitates eluding, to some extent, preconceived notions and worldviews that tear down precious data (Marshall & Rossman, 2016).

A grounded theory methodology

GT allows the construction of theories rooted in data, providing a systematic set of principles and practices for collecting and analysing qualitative data. Recent approaches to GT provide an increasingly flexible method, permitting constant revision of the selection criteria and the reconstruction of preliminary concepts throughout the research process (Charmaz, 2006). From initial sampling to data analysis, the stages of the current GT process are discussed below.

Initial sampling

The unit of analysis of this study is the experiences of foreign-born migrants relating to institutional practices in the Swedish labour market and emotional labour. These have worked as servers in Sweden's catering industry, including within the term "server" the following roles: waiter/waitress, head server, bartender, barista, fast-food counter server, and catering server. Employing a purposeful sampling strategy permits the selection of cases that are central to the purpose of the research (Patton, 1990). Thus, participants were recruited through public postings published on Facebook, specifically on twenty-eight networking groups aimed at migrant communities in Sweden and jobseekers. The announcement asked for former or current migrant servers that wanted to participate voluntarily in a research about foreign-born migrants' server experiences. The text was written in English and Spanish, limiting by necessity the participation to those who spoke the same languages as I do. For those who responded to the call, the themes of the study were disclosed, expressing my interest in their experiences as jobseekers, how they had entered the catering industry, their working conditions, and their interactions with customers. Fourteen individuals were recruited, then joined by four more through snowballing. Two additional persons were later added for saturation. In all, twenty individuals formed the initial sample, who were then interviewed.

Data collection

Twenty semi-structured interviews were conducted. Based around prefigured open-ended questions and spontaneous follow-ups, semi-structured interviews give participants more space to control their narratives (Charmaz, 2006; Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The interview guide was organised around the following themes: moving to Sweden and reasons to migrate; work experience and education; entering employment; reflecting on the nature of the job(s), duties, working conditions, and interactions with customers; and reflecting on employment implications and prospects.

Participants' demographics were collected, including gender, age, country of birth, location of workplace, years in Sweden, years as a server in Sweden, main position(s), and current work status as a server. The interviews were conducted

between February and March 2020, thirteen of them in person in the city of Gothenburg, and the remaining seven online through conferencing software on Skype and Facebook. The majority of in-person interviews were held in cafes, although one was in a university space and another at the participant's home. Of those interviews held online, three were audio-calls and four were video-chats. The length varied between 30 and 60 minutes. Fourteen interviews were conducted in English and six in Spanish. The interviews were audio-taped and, thereafter, transcribed, removing identifying information. Where quotes are included in the findings below, I have paraphrased statements in order to improve their legibility and translated into English those comments that were originally in Spanish.

Intensity and theoretical sampling

Five cases that were information-rich were selected following an intensity sampling strategy. This selection was only possible after doing exploratory work that allowed me to determine the variation of the cases, choosing those that manifested "intensely," but not extremely, the researched phenomena (Patton, 1990); thus, I chose those cases where the participants built more elaborate narratives around the themes indicated above (see below about methodological challenges). As Glaser (1998, as cited in Charmaz, 2006) asserts, a small sample does not represent a problem because GT intends to elaborate conceptual categories.

Following preliminary analysis of the transcripts, coding of data, and the first attempts to outline theory through memo-writing, theoretical sampling was conducted on analytic grounds. The purpose was to elaborate and enhance the initial incomplete categories by bringing more data, thus saturating the emerging theory (Charmaz, 2006). Three cases were thus added to the initial sample (see Table 1 for demographics of the cases selected through both sampling strategies). By incorporating the new data and comparing it with the existing data, links between categories could be strengthened. Later, these were sorted and integrated within a model that served as the basis for the final theory.

Table 1. Participants' demographics

Gender	Age	Country of birth	Place of activity	Years in Sweden	Years as server (in Sweden)	Main position(s)	Ongoing server
Male	27	Bulgaria	Malmö	6.5	3	Bartender; waiter	No
Female	28	Dominican Republic	Gothenburg	4.5	4	Waitress; head server; catering server	Yes
Male	35	USA	Gothenburg	2.5	2.5	Bartender	Yes
Female	30	Hungary	Gothenburg	2	2	Waitress; head server	Yes
Male	32	Syria	Stockholm	5.5	2	Waiter	No
Female	31	Greece	Gothenburg	3	3	Waitress; catering server	Yes
Female	26	Mexico	Gothenburg	1	1 month	Waitress	Yes
Male	20	Palestine	Kalmar/ itinerating	8	6	Fast-food counter server; waiter	Yes

Data analysis

The analysis of the transcripts started with two-stage coding to extract the analytic significance of the data. First, through initial coding, every segment of data was marked with a label that compressed into a few words the meaning of each piece of text. Some of the initial codes were "in vivo" codes, as they consisted of terms frequently used by the participants, e.g. "easy job," "hard work," "no choice," or "good service." Later, through focused coding, some of the initial codes were discarded, as they were not useful for theory-building; others were retained and tested against data. Repeatedly comparing data with data, and data with codes, the most relevant initial codes were sorted, synthesised, reworded, and integrated into focused codes. These were clustered in memos, which allowed me to organise the material, and theoretical categories and subcategories to emerge. As a result of memo-writing, two different phenomena became visible: first, an experience of subordination within the labour market; and, second, an experience of subordination via work practices. However, some of these categories needed to be refined and strengthened. Thus, at this stage, theoretical sampling took place.

After subjecting the codes to new comparisons, the categories acquired new properties. Continuing the previous clustering, various diagrams were made, making visible the links between categories and their hierarchy. Integrating the two referred experiences of subordination, a core category emerged: "dual labour subordination." The main diagram and the additional charts presented below (see figures 1–8) served as model to build upon the final theory. Nevertheless, the building of theory is grounded on abductive reasoning, which involved theoretical sampling as well as framing the research through the concepts that have been identified above.

Ethical considerations, methodological challenges, and trustworthiness

In collecting the data, several ethical considerations were taken into account. First, participants were informed about the purpose of the study and asked for their consent to be recorded. Second, the interviews were conducted anonymously and confidentially, to protect participants' identities. To avoid any possible identification of the interviewees, revealing information such as proper nouns was eliminated from all the transcriptions. Third, the recordings were saved key-locked in a digital device and will be destroyed after the conclusion of the research. Fourth, because interviews require close interactions between the participants and the researcher (Marshall & Rossman, 2016), to generate a comforting climate, participants were given the opportunity to choose the setting.

Like the participants of this study, I am a labour migrant with experience as a server in Sweden's catering sector. This circumstance engaged me in the theme of the study and provided insights that helped me to elaborate the interview guide. Regarding my shared social identity with the participants (see Marshall & Rossman, 2016), to avoid assumption of tacit knowledge, I did not disclose my professional background either beforehand or during the interviews, unless they asked or already knew. However, on some occasions, when the interviews ended, I tried to express empathy by revealing my experience.

Regarding methodological challenges, issues about the quality of the materials arose during the collection of data, particularly, regarding experiences

of emotional labour. Some participants did not provide rich narratives, which could be due to a number of reasons: low trust; the social distance of the setting, particularly, of those interviews that took place online; participants' lack of fluency in English; or their inability to articulate thoughts (see Marshall & Rossman, 2016). In view of Charmaz's (2006) emphasis on the gathering of rich data, more interviews were therefore conducted.

Finally, the trustworthiness of this study is argued according to criteria of soundness drawn by Marshall and Rossman (2016). First, an explicit description of the research design and methods have been detailed to enhance confirmability, including ethical considerations and methodological challenges. Second, regarding the transferability of the study, qualitative findings, even in GT (see Charmaz, 2006), do not aim for generalizability, because the world is in continuous transformation. However, by making explicit descriptions of the theoretical framework, and by triangulating data through various perspectives of different informants, this study aims to increase its utility for those researchers who wish to investigate similar themes. Third, to improve dependability, I aimed to reassess the interpretation of the findings and increase the understanding of the studied phenomena by abductive reasoning, incorporating prior theories and concepts. And, last, regarding credibility, anonymised raw data has been saved and quotations accompany the presentation of the empirical findings, so readers can see the grounds of the inferences that have been made.
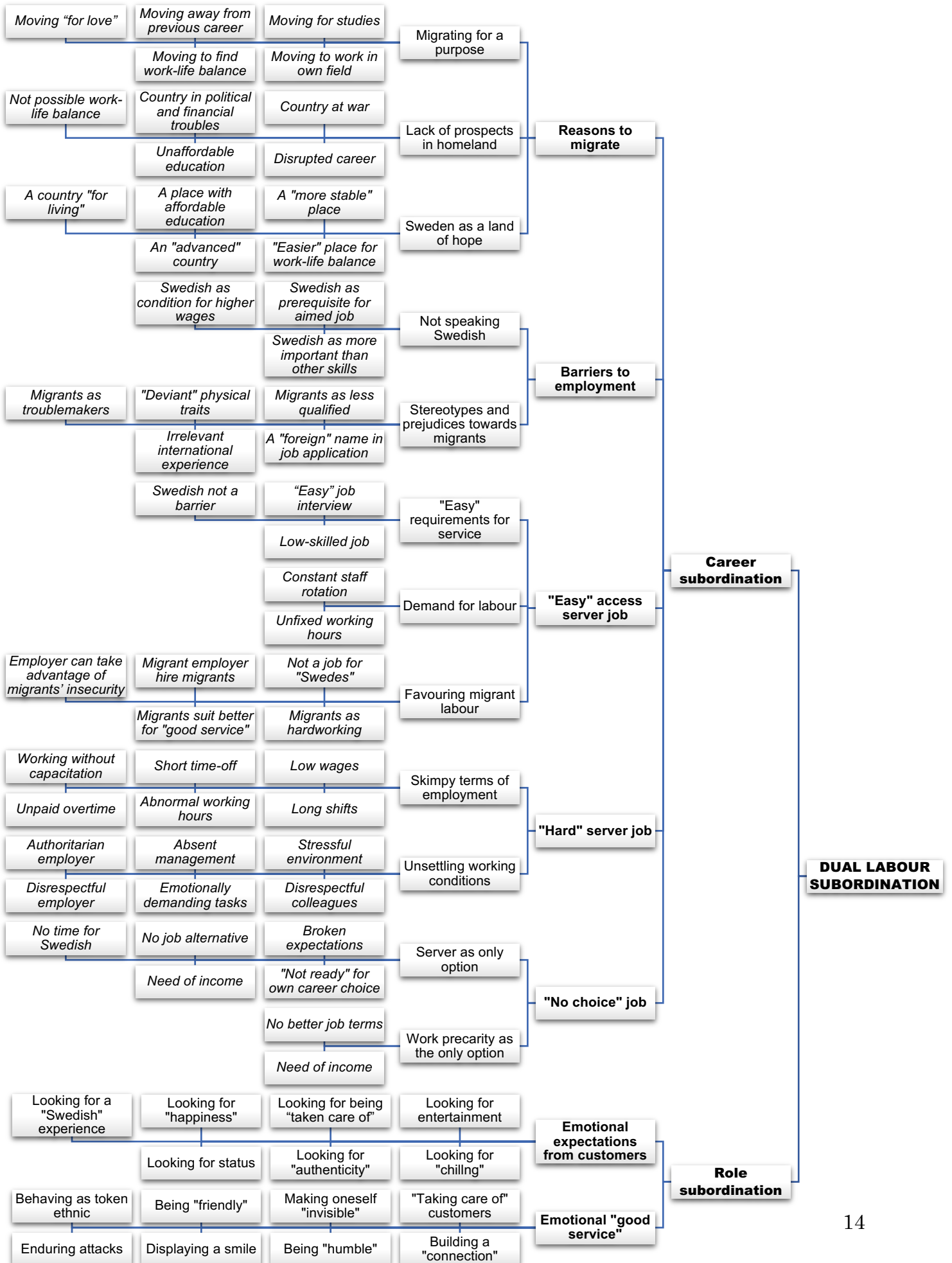
EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

The findings presented in this section are the result from the analysis of data and of codes generated by applying a GT methodology. Below, Figure 1 illustrates how some of the initial codes unfold into seven theoretically-focused codes: *reasons to migrate, barriers to employment, "easy" access to server job, "hard" server job, "no choice" job, emotional expectations from customers*, and *emotional "good service"*. Subsequently, these focused codes provided the basis for the development of two main categories, *career subordination* and *role subordination*, which were collapsed into a core category, *dual labour subordination*. The following sections will examine how career and role subordination are experienced by foreign-born migrant labourers, before turning towards an integrated theoretical perspective.

Experiencing career subordination

The participants left their homes and countries of residence in search of new prospects. After arriving in Sweden, they faced a range of situations and challenges beyond their control, experiencing submission in terms of work precarity and inaccessibility to their pursued professional paths. In the collected data it is possible to identify a process of subordination that begins with participants' aspirations and ends with their expressions of disappointment and resignation. As illustrated by Figure 1, GT provided five focused codes that function as cofounders of the category of *career subordination*. Each of the initial coding and sub-focused codes will now be explained in further detail.

Figure 1. Coding diagram I

Moving "for love" — Moving away from previous career — Moving for studies — Migrating for a purpose

Moving to find work-life balance — Moving to work in own field

Not possible work-life balance — Country in political and financial troubles — Country at war — Lack of prospects in homeland

Unaffordable education — Disrupted career

A country "for living" — A place with affordable education — A "more stable" place — Sweden as a land of hope

An "advanced" country — "Easier" place for work-life balance

Swedish as condition for higher wages — Swedish as prerequisite for aimed job — Not speaking Swedish

Swedish as more important than other skills

Migrants as troublemakers — "Deviant" physical traits — Migrants as less qualified — Stereotypes and prejudices towards migrants

Irrelevant international experience — A "foreign" name in job application

Reasons to migrate

Barriers to employment

Swedish not a barrier — "Easy" job interview — "Easy" requirements for service

Low-skilled job

Constant staff rotation — Demand for labour

Unfixed working hours

Employer can take advantage of migrants' insecurity — Migrant employer hire migrants — Not a job for "Swedes" — Favouring migrant labour

Migrants suit better for "good service" — Migrants as hardworking

"Easy" access server job

Working without capacitation — Short time-off — Low wages — Skimpy terms of employment

Unpaid overtime — Abnormal working hours — Long shifts

Authoritarian employer — Absent management — Stressful environment — Unsettling working conditions

Disrespectful employer — Emotionally demanding tasks — Disrespectful colleagues

"Hard" server job

No time for Swedish — No job alternative — Broken expectations — Server as only option

Need of income — "Not ready" for own career choice

No better job terms — Work precarity as the only option

Need of income

"No choice" job

Career subordination

Looking for a "Swedish" experience — Looking for "happiness" — Looking for being "taken care of" — Looking for entertainment — Emotional expectations from customers

Looking for status — Looking for "authenticity" — Looking for "chilling"

Behaving as token ethnic — Being "friendly" — Making oneself "invisible" — "Taking care of" customers — Emotional "good service"

Enduring attacks — Displaying a smile — Being "humble" — Building a "connection"

Role subordination

DUAL LABOUR SUBORDINATION

14

Reasons to migrate

The focused code *reasons to migrate* integrates the main motives that the participants had to make Sweden their country of destination. These are not exclusive and can be grouped into three sub-focused codes, as indicated in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Coding diagram II

Migrating for a purpose refers to moving with the intention of achieving one or several specific goals. Some of the participants migrated to study a major and/or work in fields where they had developed some experience. Others aspired to start a career, either for being at the beginning of their adult life, or because they were "getting away" from a former occupation. Migration could involve other motivations apart from professional ones: an American male was looking for a work-family balance, phrased as "if I have kids, I want to be there for them." Also, a Mexican female decided to move "*for love,*" following a partner who had been relocated to Sweden.

The purpose of migrating was often associated with a *lack of prospects in* (migrants') *homeland.* Some of the participants alluded to political and financial issues where they used to live, phrased by one as his country "not going in a good direction." Among these problems were the inability to cover the high cost of education or to have a work-life balance. An American male, with a career in hospitality and catering, described his difficulty to access a job that provided sufficient financial resources and was compatible with family life. But the most extreme case of lack of prospects is among those who saw their career and life interrupted by war. These individuals were forced to migrate, phrased by one as "it was like we must come here."

In combination with these reasons, their destination country could be a motive to migrate in itself, turning to *Sweden as a land of hope.* Some of the respondents viewed Sweden as a "more stable" or "little easier" place in comparison to where they were coming from. A Dominican female described Sweden as a "*country for living,*" an "*advanced country*" in terms of equality and

one that offered work-life balance. However, as will be elaborated in the upcoming sections, many of these intentions and expectations clashed with reality.

Barriers to employment

When trying to enter the Swedish labour market and fulfil their ambitions, multiple challenges arose for the participants. Among the obstacles, *barriers to employment* can be extracted from the collected data as a focused code, which unfolds into two sub-focused codes illustrated in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Coding diagram III
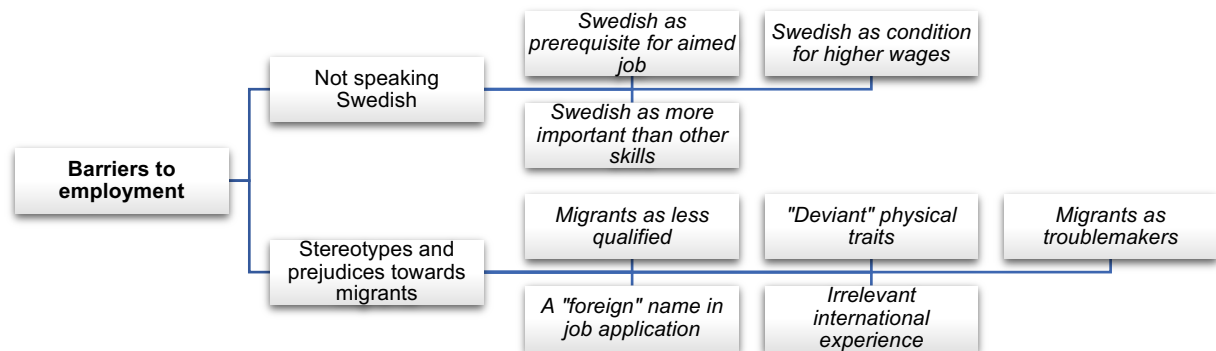
Not speaking (fluent) *Swedish* was named as the fundamental obstacle to getting through the labour market, as participants encountered Swedish proficiency as one of the main requirements for entering jobs within their target field, phrased by one as "if you want to stay and work here [Sweden], you need Swedish." At their first jobs, many of them communicated in English, at least until they had developed a level of Swedish suitable for the role (which is very often not enough to access their targeted jobs). But lack of Swedish fluency also remained a barrier for those who had already entered their target field:

> "(…) I started to search for another place; and then I wrote my CV and my motivation letter in English, and I let them know I speak Swedish with my customers, but they should know I'm not perfect. And either I didn't get answer, or I got very weird answers. There was a chain who searched for servers, (…) and I put my application in, and they said there was no open position. And I checked on LinkedIn, and they still had 15 open positions. (…) It's hard to get along without fluent Swedish."
>
> Female, 30, from Hungary

A vocational server working in a hotel restaurant, this Hungarian female experienced her job application not being considered after her level of Swedish was recognised, despite being this sufficient to perform her current position of head server. Moreover, Swedish proficiency seemed to be prioritised over other skills, and thus, some of the participants felt "*discriminated*" against or undervalued ("*am I less worth because I do not speak Swedish?*"). Not speaking fluently could also produce a wage penalty ("I do not think you are going to get paid that much").

Many of the participants also described employers' *stereotypes and prejudices towards migrants* as hampering their career ambitions. Having a so-called "foreign" name or "deviant" physical traits, or being subject to preconceptions about migrants, were identified as barriers to employment across

the labour market. A Syrian male expressed that Swedish employers may perceive Arab migrants as troublemakers and violent: "maybe they [Swedes] are afraid, they think we are killers, or that we will break the law." Others added that migrants were seen as untrustworthy or potential criminals. A Bulgarian male attributed his "luck" regarding job opportunities to "removing" his ethnic identity, by having a neutral accent and speaking Swedish, "so they [Swedes] just see me as a foreigner but not as Bulgarian." Also, some felt that native Swedish speakers were preferred even over migrants who were confident with their level of Swedish. The Hungarian female quoted above believed that employers may be hiding "xenophobic" attitudes using language as an excuse. However, foreign-born migrants could take advantage of their status to access low-paid jobs, so their condition became "a benefit and a trap":

> "About being a migrant, I guess that's positive in some respects and negative in others. It's easy to get a [server] job, because they know you have to work hard, because you don't have a secure place in society. But then again, I don't think you are going to get paid that much, based on the fact you're not fully integrated in the society (…); so, I guess it's a benefit and a trap."
>
> Male, 35, from the United States

As this respondent highlights, conceptions of migrants as hardworking may help to overturn the abovementioned barriers to employment. However, foreign-born migrants can be restricted to certain jobs and end up exposed to precarity. For most of the participants, server was an example of such "easy" occupations.

"Easy" access server job

The catering industry has become for foreign-born migrants a point of entry to the Swedish labour market. "It is not easy to find what you want," so in order to work, the participants had turned to the *"easy" access server job*. As shown in Figure 4, this focused code emerged from three sub-focused codes, that will now be developed.

Figure 4. Coding diagram IV
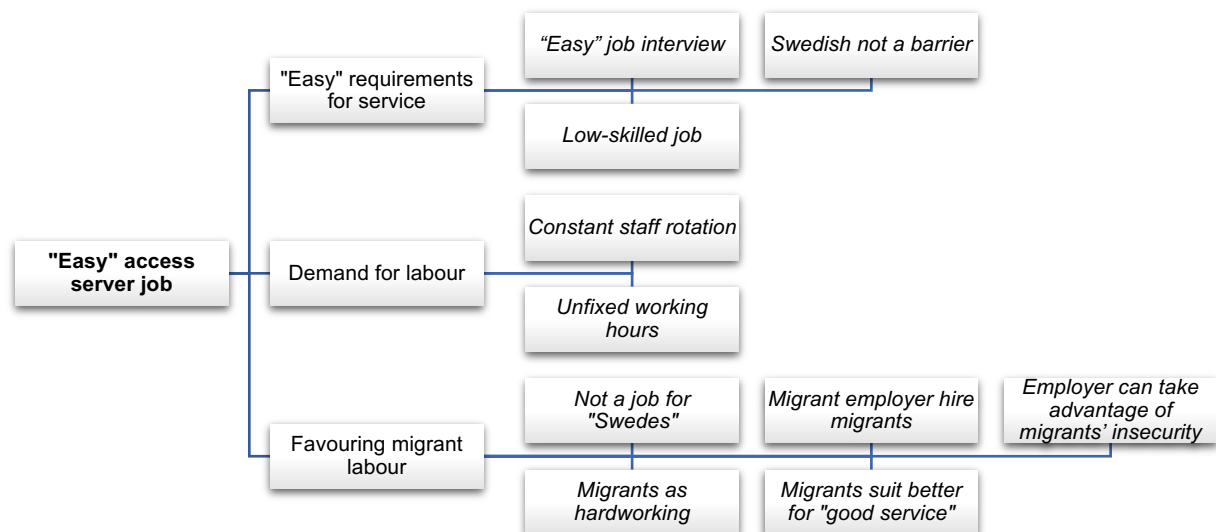
Regarding the *"easy" requirements for service*, many respondents mentioned that service did not demand high-skilled labour and that job interviews were "easy" to pass, phrased by one, quoting the employer, as "just come and start from tomorrow." Moreover, lacking Swedish fluency seemed not to be a barrier, especially for those who worked in a more international environment, such as restaurants in hotels.

The catering industry also offered the "easiest" access to the workforce due to a permanent *demand for labour*. As a Dominican female expressed, restaurants give the "*chance*" to new employees because "*people come and go a lot, work and get tired, and many do not work there the rest of their lives.*" Moreover, apart from turnover of staff, the accessibility of service jobs was based on employers' struggle to find workers. As some of the participants expressed, employers were not able to provide a secure position but did provide flexible working hours.

Also, restaurants may be particularly *favouring migrant labour*. Some of the participants spoke about native Swedes considering server an "ugly job," and employers looking for migrants because they were open to working "hard." Nationality and ethnicity also facilitated being hired by co-nationals or other migrants in the sector, phrased by a Syrian male as "Arabs will hire Arabs." In line with this, a Greek female spoke about her brief job interview with a co-national employer: "(…) he just asked me if I had worked with that [service]. I said: 'Yes, I have worked in Greece.' He asked no more." Participants who worked in a "co-ethnic" restaurant, that is a restaurant with a cuisine associated with their country of origin, referred to being seen as suitable. As a Mexican female pointed out, Mexican staff make a Mexican restaurant look *"authentic."* Furthermore, specific nationalities are more appreciated in service. An American male spoke about his nationality as an "advantage" to working in this field, as "lot of people know we [Americans] have high standard service." Similarly, a Greek participant asserted that it was well-known Greeks "pay so much attention to customers."

However, the easy access to service jobs for foreign-born migrants may also be grounded in employers' intention to take advantage of their vulnerable situation, including their "not having a secure place in society," being in need of financial resources, and/or unaware of their rights. In contrast, natives Swedes would only be open to doing "*what is fair.*" Some of the participants reported co-national or co-ethnic employers as more favourable towards them; they could "control" them better as they were more aware of their desperation ("they know we have to work; we have families, we have a lot of things in our homelands"), they offered lower wages, or denied them a contract. Thus, this easy access to the labour market did not necessarily translate into advantageous working conditions.

"Hard" server job

Resigned to work as server, many of the participants saw themselves in a fragile workplace. The focused code *"hard" server job* arose from different elements, illustrated by Figure 5 and developed below.

Figure 5. Coding diagram V
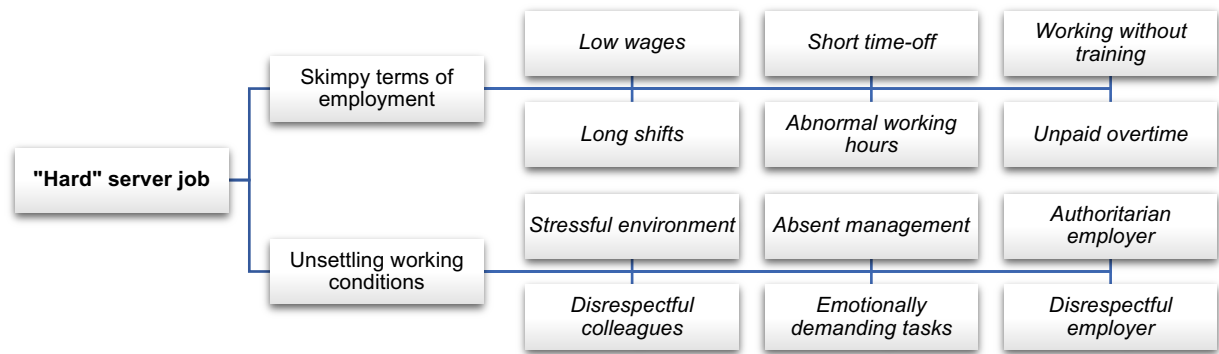
Most of the participants described service as a "hard" job, defining "hard" in slightly different ways. Some of them spoke about *skimpy terms of employment*, talking about "too low" wages ("he [employer] does not want to pay"), long shifts (a "16-hour job," "12 to 13 hours, every day"), unpaid overtime, abnormal working hours ("*no weekends*"), or working without instructing on safety standards and/or work dynamics. A Mexican waitress described her experience as being "*sent to the war without a gun.*" Extremely poor employment terms offered by co-ethnics led a former Syrian waiter to classify service as "no work":

> "In most of Arabic and Turkish restaurants, most of them pizzerias, you'll work for 12 hours. If you say you'll work for 8, they won't hire you, directly. If you say you want to earn a little bit more, they'll kick you out, directly, because there are a lot of immigrants who need to work, they have to work (…). They take advantage of people; they know our situation. (…) I wouldn't recommend anyone to work in an Arabic or Turkish restaurant. Don't do that! It's no work."
>
> <div align="right">Male, 32, from Syria</div>

However, more commonly, participants referred to being a server as a hard job because of the *unsettling working conditions*. Workplaces were often described as "stressful," and the job as "exhausting" or like "wrestling," phrased by a Mexican waitress as "*I almost throw the dishes at them* [customers] *because I have to run the other way.*" Stress then originates in an extremely fast-paced environment, with the continuous presence of customers ("no table would go empty"), and a need to be "active" throughout very long shifts; besides workplaces being increasingly understaffed ("*they* [employers] *cut staff and throw us into the ring*"), servers working with unskilled and/or unsupportive colleagues, and led by unhelpful employers who slipped away from service and problems ("*they* [employers] *do nothing, they leave things to cool down by themselves*").

Nevertheless, unsettling working conditions were not only rooted in physical work. Some of the respondents felt "*humiliated*" by other members of staff, or "*brushed aside*" by colleagues who shared a single nationality. More frequently, they refer to service as emotionally "*draining*" for dealing with "dismissive" customers who treat servers "like robots" or "like shit;" on top of the need to be "always happy, smiley, and pretending that everything is fine" (emotional labour is discussed below). Participants also commented on abusive employers, who put profits before people, treating employees as "*just one more*

number." They pressured servers through customers' critiques and micromanagement, and/or requested their submission:

> "(…) they were very much going for power structures, so, if they tell you to do something, you had to do it, like absolutely, without a question. There were certain moments I tried to argue for something, not in an aggressive way, more being constructive, but they kind of brushed me off, like 'you know nothing' or 'don't tell me what to do'."
>
> <div align="right">Male, 27, from Bulgaria</div>

As this participant expressed, by endorsing hierarchical schemes to impose their decisions, abusive employers undervalued their employees. Authoritarianism also manifested when employers dictated orders by "screaming" or insulting employees ("you, motherfucker," "you, animal"), who responded without question, phrased by a Syrian male as "we stood, and we said yes." Sometimes, disrespect turned into discrimination or racism, including an ethnic division of labour through which blonde and blue-eyed Swedes were located at the front of the restaurant because they were seen as a "better face" for the company while migrant servers were preferred behind the bar. Racism also manifested in the assigning of less responsibilities to migrants, taking their comments as less valid than those raised by co-ethnic Swedes ("I am going to talk to my people," a respondent quoted his employer), or using insults such as "camel" or "*wog*" [translated from Swedish: "blatte"] to refer to workers of migrant background. However, despite these circumstances, most of the participants saw no alternative to accepting a precarious server job, as is explored in the upcoming section.

"No choice" job

Participants' experiences indicated that organisational barriers could obligate foreign-born migrants to shelve their initial goals and commit to a server job that most did not want, and/or give in to precarious work. Expressions of disappointment and resignation merge into the focused code *"no choice" job* (see Figure 6), which is discussed below.

Figure 6. Coding diagram VI
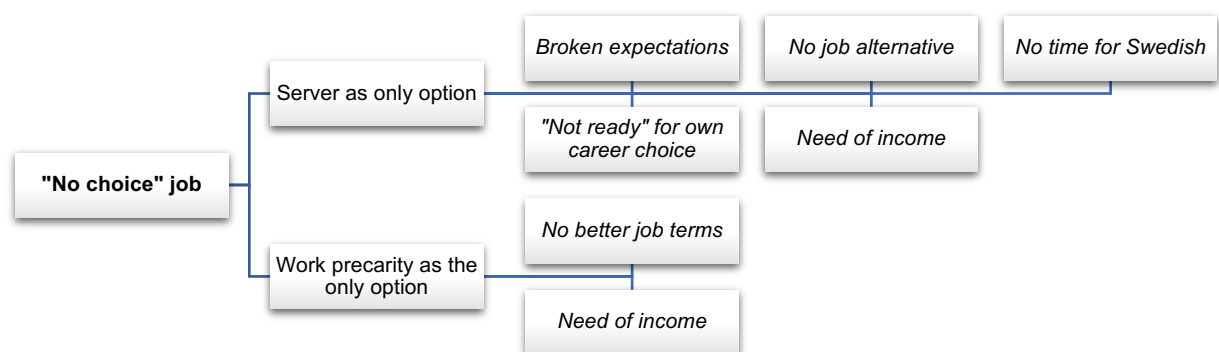
Regarding *server as only option*, many participants expressed their discontent in terms of broken expectations. A Syrian male, who intended to continue his previous career, phrased his defeat as "unfortunately, it does not go like what I want." Similarly, an American participant affirmed: "I moved to Europe thinking that I would get away from restaurants, but that did not work." Others, instead,

expressed frustration at not having alternatives, like a Dominican female, who phrased this as *"I feel I have to do that* [service] *because there is no other option, they do not give you a chance elsewhere."* However, for some, working as a server was a matter of "not being ready" for their target job, as they continued their education and retained their aspirations (although, some expressed their struggle to quit the catering industry after finishing their university studies). Furthermore, many frequently alluded to their resignation to work as servers as a matter of financial necessity: due to visa restrictions and a long period living on savings, an American male had to take the first job available ("I needed the money"); others needed some income while studying; another required resources to fund her own business; and a Syrian participant had a family who relied on his earnings:

> "My future is no problem, but for my family in Syria, for my father, for my mother, the most important thing is the money, because if I don't send anything to them, they won't eat. It's hard for them… It's not just hard, it's shit in Syria! So, I have to work, I have to sacrifice something… That's my future, we're sacrificing our future."
>
> Male, 32, from Syria

This participant expressed the urgency of income to support his family, the price for which was a career of his choice. Also, as service was an occupation that many described as accessible for those with lower Swedish fluency, this turned into a trap whereby it was difficult to overcome the linguistic barrier set up by other jobs: a Greek server recognised how her job, in combination with her university studies, had hindered her chances to learn Swedish; and another admitted dropping her Swedish lessons when she became a full time employee at a restaurant.

The participants did not only have to settle for a job most did not want, but also to accept what came with this: *work precarity as the only option*. Some of the participants had to agree to precarious terms of employment, acknowledged during the job interview or encountered during their first shift. A Dominican participant recognised how after her first day at work she thought she would *"never go back,"* however, she felt forced to change her mind (*"let's give it another chance"*). The need for income forced participants to endure precarity, phrased by one as "the restaurant was controlling us, and we wanted the money, so we could not go against;" or by another, who had to support his family, as "I thought it is not good, but I had to do it."

The experiences of the participants suggest that foreign-born migrants deal with organisational barriers that hamper their initial career aspirations. The participants found it difficult to continue their previous careers, having to put these on hold or abandon them, to progress in terms of job mobility, and to start new professional paths, including those who had graduated in Sweden. When the obstacles could not be overcome, they ended up holding an undesired, but accessible job: server, although, for undergraduate students, this unwanted job functioned as financial resource while they retained their aspirations for the future. Facing precarious working conditions and lacking job alternatives, foreign-born migrants reveal experiences of career subordination. However, subordination may not end here, and may be strengthened through the practice of serving and its associated emotional labour, as will be explored in the following section.

Experiencing role subordination

As servers, the participants were involved in a series of practices that emerged from their interactions with customers. These practices were rarely enforced by employers through explicit mandates, but, more often, servers responded to customers' expectations by turning to implicit rules and conventions associated with service. Based on their experiences, emotional activities associated with service seemed to reinforce a subordinated position of foreign-born migrant worker. As shown in Figure 1, the category of *role subordination* arises from two focused codes, which will be now dissected.

Emotional expectations from customers

Apart from demands for food and drinks, the data indicated that the respondents encountered other type of claims from customers, as illustrated in Figure 7.

Figure 7. Coding diagram VII
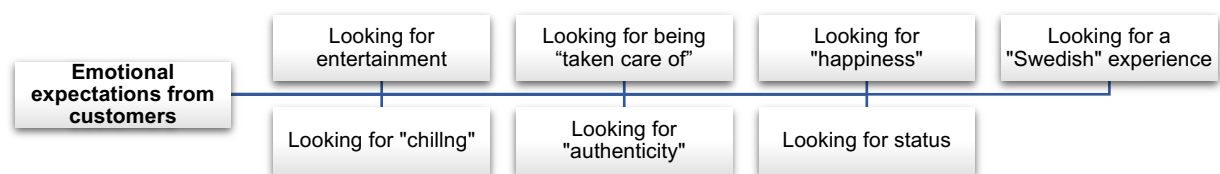
Participants referred to *emotional expectations from customers* by talking about clients seeking "experiences." These involved "entertainment," a "chill atmosphere," "socialisation" (in bars), and/or *"authenticity"* (in so-called "ethnic" restaurants). Customers would not just go after authentic Mexican food, but also want to *"feel they have travelled to Mexico."* Thus, the search for experiences included emotional territories. As some of the participants expressed, customers wanted to "feel good" and *"lift their mood,"* and sought a "good service" that brought "happiness." Also, for high-end restaurants in particular, those who attended may be seeking status, phrased by a Bulgarian server as "everyone goes there [restaurant] to look fancy, like 'look at me, I am having drinks here'."

These expectations reflected the emotional demands on servers. Participants could identify customers who looked for "caring," "friendly," or "happy" servers, as well as those who requested a "slave," phrased by a Palestinian server as "they want everything from you, they think you are their slave." In contrast, sometimes, to make customers' wishes come true, servers are asked to restrict their presence and remain "invisible." An American bartender spoke about customers who enforced his invisibility by being "dismissive" and treating him like a "robot." This search for "invisible" servers, identified by several participants ("they do not look at me," "they do not even see me," "they do not recognise me as a person"), can be seen as a way for customers to experience status by devaluing servers. Alternatively, status can be pursued by customers calling on servers to endure disrespect, phrased by a Bulgarian server working for a high-end restaurant as "the general attitude was 'I can be as rude as I want to be, but you have to serve me'." But disrespect does not seem to be only a characteristic of high-end restaurants: an American bartender affirmed that customers "just say

whatever the hell they want," as he had heard a customer approached a colleague with the phrase "I want you to suck my dick."

Customers can also pursue experiences in terms of ethnicity. For those seeking authenticity in so-called "ethnic" restaurants, the nationality of the server appeared to be relevant, as they expected someone who was co-ethnic to the restaurant cuisine to "*feel*" genuineness. Customers may also aim for a co-ethnic service experience, requesting unjustifiably a Swedish-speaking server ("even though they spoke English, they said they did not want me as a waitress"), or expressing their service preferences in less explicit ways:

> "I notice that when me and the other guy [a blond blue-eyed server] are not busy, if I'm the first one who makes eye-contact with new customers, they kind of shift their eyes to the other guy."
>
> Male, 27, from Bulgaria

As this participant revealed, customers may dismiss migrant servers and enforce invisibility selectively. Nevertheless, servers responded to customers' expectations by providing a "good service" through emotional practices, as the next section explores.

Emotional "good service"

One of the roles of servers was responding to customers' expectations and making sure their guests were having the experiences they are looking for. Respondents often referred to the emotional component of providing a "good service;" thus, they spoke about emotional labour. Some of their associated practices, illustrated in Figure 8, have been collapsed into the focused code *emotional "good service"*, which will now be elaborated.

Figure 8. Coding diagram VIII
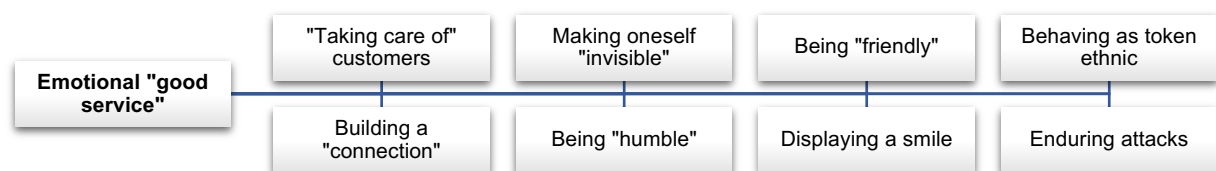
Respondents tried to "take care" of customers by building a "connection," "*reading*" their needs and, then, "gaining their trust." Customers' attitudes, gazes and gestures, and/or a first verbal interaction, allowed servers to understand the requested type of service and create a personal "experience," such as a "getaway" to Mexico or a "happy" time that was "*worth the money*." Servers may then want to make themselves invisible ("go around in the place like a ghost"), be formal, "friendly," or "humble." One respondent recognised that by being humble, meaning "deferential," he could make customers feel more satisfied ("they appreciate it more"). Displaying happiness through a "beautiful smile" seems to be a mandatory duty shared by most of the interviewees, phrased by one as "*put a smile on so that your service goes well*." But a smile is not always a genuine gesture:

> "They [customers] want a good service. You can't go to them, serve the food and your face looks sad. You have to be happy and bring them happiness. You can't be whoever you are. If you're in a bad mood, you can't show it in the service, you have to smile. You have to fake your smile."
>
> Male, 20, from Palestine

As this Palestinian male acknowledged, servers needed to manipulate their own emotions to live up to customers' expectations of good service. Like him, others spoke about customers not have any consideration towards servers' feelings, phrased by one as "*you can have the worst day of your life, and when you open the door to customers, you have to be happy.*" Thus, servers may have to become "actors on a stage," put on a "happy mask," or, as one participant put it, "*you have to go* [to work]*, put on an apron and put on a smile.*" Also, servers may have to prepare to be durable to attacks from "rude" and aggressive customers ("I have to suck it up").

In so-called "ethnic" restaurants, servers may be required to perform in a certain way, phrased by one of the participants as "*a theatricality of how servers have to behave and how customers have to feel.*" As exposed above, servers become a sign of authenticity of the identity of the restaurant:

> "*(...) everyone expects Mexicans to be very happy, very smiling, outgoing, funny, that we like spicy food... I like spicy food, and I'm very outgoing, very smiling, but there're days that maybe I don't feel that way, and I have to, because people expect it from me, people expect me to be the Mexican stereotype.*" [translated from Spanish]
>
> Female, 26, from Mexico

As this participant working for a Mexican restaurant revealed, servers in so-called "ethnic" restaurants may be requested to behave as enthusiastic token ethnics, sometimes not recognising or feeling as such; moreover, some of these ethnic expressions may not be genuine at all, labelled by another server as "*the bullshit and all the things.*" Also, a Dominican server working for a Mexican restaurant admitted having to pretend to be from Mexico to please her customers.

These findings indicate experiences of subordination among foreign-born migrants due to their work roles and practices associated with emotional labour. By trying to respond to emotional demands and expectations from customers, participants conform, to varying degrees, to other people's fantasies, often displaying unreal emotions, presenting as deferential or as token ethnics, and submitting to invisibility. Some of these emotional activities may be shared among all those who work as servers, foreign born or native. However, in contrast to native Swedes, foreign-born migrants also deal with experiences of career subordination, as seen above. Therefore, it is possible to speak about experiences of *dual labour subordination*. In the section below, these findings are discussed and integrated with existing concepts and theories.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This study aimed to explain the situation of foreign-born migrants in the Swedish labour market by looking into a critical case, the catering industry, exploring

individuals' experiences in relation to two different logics: on the one hand, institutional practices, particularly, recruitment processes, and employment terms and conditions; and, on the other hand, customs associated with emotional labour. The findings presented above suggest that, to different extents, foreign-born migrants experience a *dual labour subordination*: first, in relation to their depreciation within the labour market, and, second, following their work practice as emotional labourers. These results are now analysed and interpreted in relation to the theoretical framework of the study.

Beginning with career trajectories of foreign-born migrants, participants' testimonies revealed experiences of *ethnic penalty*. Participants ended up filling occupations they did not aim to (at least, not on a permanent basis), and/or working under precarious conditions (to varying degrees). The ethnic penalties they experienced seemed to operate through mechanisms of *institutional discrimination*, particularly through job requirements, as Flam (2011) and Rydgren (2004) have observed. Most of the participants maintained that demand for Swedish proficiency hindered their chances to succeed in their pursued careers. This language prerequisite seemed unreasonable to some, who thought they were capable of doing the job they aspired to despite their level of Swedish, thus feeling discriminated against with this unjustified demand. Swedish was seen as barrier even for individuals who already possessed experience in Sweden within the target occupation. This is in line with the works of Flam (2011) and Rydgren (2004), who have identified a propensity of employers to assume migrants' lack of skills. Moreover, lacking Swedish proficiency was not only seen for foreign-born migrants as a justification for being excluded from their professional fields, but they also considered it to have affected their income, fostering a wage penalty.

Those interviewed also alluded to feelings of being discriminated against by work organisations at an entry point and/or within workplaces, due to phenotypical traits ("non-white," "non-blond-blue-eyed"), having a so-called "foreign" name, and prejudices against migrants, generally or towards specific groups. They referred to being seen as unreliable, troublemaking and/or criminal. One of the participants argued that successful job access relied on "removing" their ethnic identity. Nevertheless, as Flam (2011) and Neergaard (2009) noted, respondents observed how employers associated positive traits with migrants, seeing them as more able to deal with large workloads. But rather than experiencing so-called "positive" discrimination, foreign-born migrants felt pushed to labour-intensive and low-wage jobs. Therefore, in line with CRT, the institutional discrimination experienced by individuals seem to strengthen *differential racialisation*, so employers could take advantage of migrant employees, constructing individuals, consciously or unconsciously, as unskilled, hard-working, and cheap labour; subsequently, foreign-born migrants could configure a subaltern group that could satisfy the demands of the peripheral segment of the labour market (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017; Miles & Brown, 2003), to which large parts of the catering industry belong (Frödin & Kjellberg, 2018; Urban, 2013).

Respondents have described being a server as an "easy" job in terms of accessibility: it does not require hard skills, restaurants frequently have job openings due to adverse working conditions, it is a job often rejected by native Swedes, and is a suitable occupation for individuals coming from a culture of high-

quality service or who are co-ethnic to the restaurant cuisine. The filling of vacancies by foreign-born migrants may enforce a *migrant-typing* character of food service and racialising processes, so foreign-born migrants could experience being seen as appropriate for low-skilled, low-status, precarious, and so-called "ethnic" jobs (Flam, 2011). Furthermore, migrant and co-national employers may play a key role in these racialising processes. As observed in previous research (Flam, 2011; Frödin & Kjellberg, 2018; Rydgren, 2004; Urban, 2013), some of the participants claimed to be favoured in terms of job accessibility for having a migrant and/or co-national boss. However, they perceived that this often turned into a trap, with participants ending up in low-paid or extremely demanding posts, and experiencing *symbolic violence*, by having their identities essentialised and being treated as token ethnics, especially those who worked in so-called "ethnic" restaurants.

As identified by Neergaard (2015), restaurants are perceived as hostile environments towards racialised migrants, in terms of advancing *unfree labour*. Participants reported, to varying degrees, experiences of unfree labour, due to precarious terms of employment, such as low wages, and extremely intensive physical and emotional labour. As a physical job, service is described as "wrestling," particularly for its long shifts and the lack of staff; regarding emotional labour, service is seen as "draining," because it involves facing customers who dismiss servers or always having to display a smile. Above all, the agentic dimension of work precarity is emphasised, indicating, occasionally, unsupportive and disrespectful colleagues, and, generally, abusive employers. The latter either slip away from their responsibilities, or, on the contrary, manifest disrespectfully or in an authoritarian manner, pressuring staff and, sometimes, being racist. Despite these terms and conditions, some of the participants admitted their conscious acceptance of precarity due to their financial needs.

Greater than precarious work, what unites the experiences of foreign-born migrants as racialised unfree labour is their lack of job alternatives. As manifested in their stories, participants abandoned their target careers or put them on hold, with working as a server and/or for a specific restaurant as their main if not only option to earn an income. Some also recognised that working as a server had limited their opportunities to improve their Swedish and, therefore, gain human capital that could potentially increase their chances in other sectors or organisations. As Urban (2013) noted, some of their narratives seemed to portray server as a "dead-end" job. Rather than unfree labour, it may be possible to speak about experiences of "unfreeing" labour, stressing the unempowering and un-emancipating character of service.

In terms of lack of career prospects and of resignation to precarious work, Neergaard (2009) has spoken about "subordinated inclusion" and "racialised subordination" of migrants in Sweden's labour market. In line with his research, respondents highlighted experiences of how institutional discrimination fostered the *racialisation* of precarious jobs in the service industry and of those who held them. However, the *racialised subordination* process may not stop with allocating foreign-born migrants to peripheral jobs. As their testimonies revealed, emotional labour, as a key component of food service, could turn into an expression of symbolic violence and, in consequence, into a tool for control and subordination.

When attending restaurants, customers can look for joy, status and/or authenticity. According to participants, clients are in search of emotional experiences. To answer customers' wishes, servers operate as creators of these experiences, thus giving rise to *emotional labour*. Participants spoke about making customers "feel good" by providing "care," friendliness and smiles, but also by presenting themselves as token ethnics, resigning to be dismissed for not speaking Swedish or not being "Swedish looking," and remaining "invisible." These demands that servers experienced are in line with what was identified by Hall (1993). As in her study, where servers "did gender" through work, it is possible to distinguish a *migrant-typing* dimension of food service. Thus, emotional labour may turn into a form of *symbolic violence*, as it involves practices similar to those observed by Flam and Beauzamy (2011).

Based on participants' experiences, it can be surmised that customers can direct the emotional tasks of servers to those which conform to so-called "good service." However, although the findings seem to indicate that food service is characterised by emotional regimes where employers are absent, this may in fact perpetuate the enchanting myth of consumers' sovereignty (Korczynski, 2009). Responding to customers' demands may also imply satisfying employers' expectations, in terms of surplus grounded in emotional labour. As McDowell, Batnitzky, and Dyer (2007) have pointed out, a *dual interpellation* may occur, and the customer-oriented discourse could be acting as a tool for employers to control the labour process (Chong, 2009; Korczynski, 2009; Warhurst et al., 2009; Williams, 2006). Thus, as with institutional discrimination experienced by foreign-born migrants, emotional labour can also strengthen racialised subordination processes.

In line with the theoretical assumptions of Chong (2009), the experiences of foreign-born migrants across the labour market and as emotional labourers suggest experiences of *dual labour subordination*. By filling peripheral segments of the labour market and through subordinating practices of emotional labour, foreign-born migrants may be subject to a process of *racialisation*. Thus, these findings contribute to expanding the meaning given by Neergaard (2009) and Mulinari and Neergaard (2017) to *racialised subordination* processes.

CONCLUSIONS

Over the last two decades the composition of Sweden's population has changed considerably. Foreign-born migrants have come to make up a larger share of the total inhabitants and, consequently, a greater proportion of foreign-born workers are now part of the labour force. Polarisation in terms of national backgrounds has increasingly affected the labour market, reinforcing its segmentation into two poles. By looking at foreign-born migrants' experiences of institutional practices and emotional labour, this study has suggested an explanation for the reproduction of inequalities within the Swedish labour market and its ethnic segmentation.

The testimonies of foreign-born migrants who participated in this research resemble experiences of institutional discrimination: hiring practices may label individuals as suitable for low-skilled, low-status, low-wage and labour-intensive jobs, pushing them into occupations with precarious working conditions, such as

server. Experiences of these practices could reduce migrants' opportunities to pursue their target careers. Migrant-typing jobs may reinforce processes of racialisation and the ethnic segmentation of the labour market. However, processes of racialised subordination may not end with foreign-born migrants filling job vacancies. The experiences of those working as servers indicate that emotional labour emerges as a form of symbolic violence: required behaviours and attitudes such as being deferential or remaining invisible can strengthen the boundaries between Swedish natives and foreign-born migrants. In consequence, a phenomenon of dual labour subordination may be experienced and, therefore, racialised subordination may operate at two different levels, within the labour market and through emotional labour practices.

One limitation of this study is that it does not allow distinguishing between nationalities in how they may be affected by these processes of racialised subordination. However, the cases studied here affirm that foreign-born migrants from various parts of the world are experiencing these phenomena, although to different extents. Furthermore, these processes do not just have consequences for the location of foreign-born migrants within the Swedish labour market, but also have implications on a microlevel. Some of the interviewees referred to changes in their behaviours and attitudes, stressing how their experiences as servers had an impact on their identity, producing a clash between the identity they had to "submit to" and "sell" at work and the one they held outside work premises. Furthermore, the data suggests that foreign-born migrants attempt to resist subordination, particularly by persisting in their target careers and/or managing emotional labour. Regarding the first aspect, one of the participants eventually succeeded in leaving catering for another sector. Others have managed to improve, to some extent, their working conditions, have been able to combine service with jobs in other fields, or are hoping to multiply their options after concluding their undergraduate education. Regarding coping with emotional labour, participants referred to seeking the support of colleagues, or to having managed to separate their roles from their personal lives by becoming "actors on stage." These outcomes of labour subordination establish a possible agenda for further research. Also, the difficulties to gather information-rich data regarding emotional labour practices through interviews poses the necessity to incorporate in further research other methods of data collection such as ethnography.

In conclusion, by applying a grounded theory methodology and taking an abductive approach, this study has contributed to bringing together research traditions in institutional discrimination and emotional labour, developing a theory of dual labour subordination, which allows us to expand the meaning of racialised subordination. This overarching frame enables a better understanding of the mechanisms and processes experienced by foreign-born migrants that contribute to the reproduction of inequalities within the Swedish labour market and its ethnic segmentation.

REFERENCES

Alvesson, M., & Skölberg, K. (2018). *Reflexive methodology: New vistas for qualitative research* (3rd ed.). SAGE.

Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis*. SAGE.

Chong, P. (2009). Servitude with a smile: An anti-oppression analysis of emotional labour. *Global Labour University Working Paper, 7*.

Dahlstedt, M., & Neergaard, A. (2019). Crisis of solidarity? Changing welfare and migration regimes in Sweden. *Critical Sociology, 45*(1), 121–135.

Delgado, R., & Stefancic, J. (2017). *Critical race theory: An introduction* (3rd ed.). New York University Press.

Fineman, S. (2010). Emotion in organizations – A critical turn. In B. Sieben & Å. Wettergren (Eds.), *Emotionalizing organizations and organizing emotions* (pp. 23-41). Palgrave Macmillan.

Flam, H. (2011). On institutional and agentic discrimination: Migrants and national labour markets. In G. Delanty, R. Wodak, & P. Jones (Eds.), *Identity, belonging and migration* (2nd ed., pp. 173-197). Liverpool University Press.

Flam, H., & Beauzamy, B. (2011). Symbolic violence. In G. Delanty, R. Wodak, & P. Jones (Eds.), *Identity, belonging and migration* (2nd ed., pp. 221-240). Liverpool University Press.

Frödin, O., & Kjellberg, A. (2018). Labor migration from third countries to Swedish low-wage jobs. *Nordic Journal of Working Life Studies, 8*(1), 65–85.

Galabuzi, G.-E. (2004). Racializing the division of labour: Neoliberal restructuring and the economic segregation of Canada's racialized groups. In J. Stanford & L. F. Vosko (Eds.), *Challenging the market: The struggle to regulate work and income* (pp. 175-204). McGill-Queen's University Press.

Hall, E. J. (1993). Smiling, deferring, and flirting: Doing gender by giving "good service". *Work and Occupations*, *20*(4), 452–471.

Heath, A., & Cheung, S. Y. (2006). Ethnic penalties in the labour market: Employers and discrimination. *Department for Work and Pensions Research Report, 341*.

Hochschild, A. R. (1979). Emotion work, feeling rules, and social structure. *American Journal of Sociology*, *85*(3), 551–575.

Hochschild, A. R. (2012). *The managed heart: Commercialization of human feeling* (3rd ed.). University of California Press.

Korczynski, M. (2009). Understanding the contradictory lived experience of service work: The customer-oriented bureaucracy. In C. L. Macdonald & M. Korczynski (Eds.), *Service work: Critical perspectives* (pp. 73-90). Routledge.

Macdonald, C. L., & Merrill, D. (2009). Intersectionality in the emotional proletariat: A new lens on employment discrimination in service work. In C. L. Macdonald & M. Korczynski (Eds.), *Service work: Critical perspectives* (pp. 113-133). Routledge.

Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. B. (2016). *Designing qualitative research* (6th ed.). SAGE.

McDowell, L., Batnitzky, A., & Dyer, S. (2007). Division, segmentation, and interpellation: The embodied labors of migrant workers in a greater London hotel. *Economic Geography*, *83*(1), 1–25.

Miles, R., & Brown, M. (2003). *Racism* (2nd ed.). Routledge.

Mulinari, D., & Neergaard, A. (2017). Theorising racism: Exploring the Swedish racial regime. *Nordic Journal of Migration Research*, *7*(2), 88–96.

Neergaard, A. (2009). Racialisation in the labour market: In search of a theoretical understanding. In A. Neergaard (Ed.), *European perspectives on exclusion and subordination: The political economy of migration* (pp. 201-221). Shaker.

Neergaard, A. (2015). Migration, racialization, and forms of unfree labour: The dilemma of trade union solidarity. In C.-U. Schierup, R. Munck, B. Likic-Brboric, & A. Neergaard (Eds.), *Migration, precarity, and global governance: Challenges and opportunities for labour* (pp. 139-159). Oxford University Press.

Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods* (2nd ed.). SAGE.

Rydgren, J. (2004). Mechanisms of exclusion: Ethnic discrimination in the Swedish labour market. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *30*(4), 697–716.

Schierup, C.-U., & Ålund, A. (2011). The end of Swedish exceptionalism? Citizenship, neoliberalism and the politics of exclusion. *Race & Class, 53*(1), 45–64.

Statistiska centralbyrån. (2020a). *Number of persons by region, unit variable, foreign/Swedish background and year*. Retrieved April 23, 2020, from http://www.statistikdatabasen.scb.se/sq/86756

Statistiska centralbyrån. (2020b). *Employees (the Swedish Occupational Register) 16-64 years by unit variable, region of birth and year*. Retrieved April 23, 2020, from http://www.statistikdatabasen.scb.se/sq/86758

Statistiska centralbyrån. (2020c). *Employees (the Swedish Occupational Register) 16-64 years by occupation (SSYK 2012), unit variable, region of birth and year*. Retrieved April 23, 2020, from http://www.statistikdatabasen.scb.se/sq/86765

Statistiska centralbyrån. (2020d). *Employees (the Swedish Occupational Register) 16-64 years by occupation (SSYK 2012), region of birth and year*. Retrieved April 23, 2020, from http://www.statistikdatabasen.scb.se/sq/86774

Statistiska centralbyrån. (2020e). *Employees (the Swedish Occupational Register) 16-64 years by occupation (SSYK 2012), region of birth and year*. Retrieved July 19, 2020, from http://www.statistikdatabasen.scb.se/sq/90887

United Nations. (2020). *Definitions*. Refugees and Migrants. Retrieved July 19, 2020, from https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/definitions

Urban, S. (2013). Restaurant work experience as stepping stone to the rest of labour market: Entry to and exit from the restaurant sector among young people of immigrant backgrounds in Sweden. *Nordic Journal of Migration Research, 3*(2), 100–109.

Warhurst, C., Thompson, P., & Nickson, D. (2009). Labor process theory: Putting the materialism back into the meaning of service work. In C. L. Macdonald & M. Korczynski (Eds.), *Service work: Critical perspectives* (pp. 91-112). Routledge.

Williams, C. L. (2006). *Inside toyland: Working, shopping, and social inequality*. University of California Press.