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Second generation Afro-Swedes – Various factors behind Structural Racism in the Swedish labor market

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Abstract

This qualitative study aims to reach further understanding of how social workers at the Swedish Public Employment Service perceive structural racism in the Swedish labor market for second-generation Afro-Swedes. The study is conducted in Sweden. The first part of the research focused on the main reasons second-generation Afro-Swedes risk social exclusion from the Swedish labor market, while the second part focused on discriminatory employment and the third part covered strategies to tackle structural racism and to improve social inclusion of second-generation Afro-Swedes. The Theoretical framework of social exclusion was used to analyse the study findings. Through semi-structured interviews, four social workers expressed their views of various factors of structural racism second-generation afro-swedes experience in the Swedish labor market. The result shows that second-generation Afro-Swedes experiencing structural racism in the Swedish labor market are likely to experience social exclusion in the Swedish community. It was shown that factors such as cultural incompetency, discriminatory employment and education play significant roles in structural racism and social exclusion.

Chapter 1- Introduction

1.1 Introduction

African immigrants have been migrating to Sweden since the 17th century. Today in Sweden, we have a community of over 205,800 Africans who are recognized as Afro-Swedes (Statista, 2022). Eighty percent of Afro-Swedes are first or second-generation Africans (Statista, 2022). According to the definition by the European Commission (n.d.), a second-generation immigrant refers to a person residing in a country that at least one of their parents once entered as a migrant. A large proportion of Afro-Swedes have parents who are from the horn of Africa (Somalia, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Kenya), (Statista, 2022). Over the past decades, the horn of Africa has been characterized by authoritarian rule, poor education, famines, and terrorism resulting in a high number of refugees (United Nations, 2011). The economic and educational challenges faced in the country of origin may affect the immigrants' and their descendants' employment opportunities (Hällsten & Szulkin, 2009).

In 2017 Sweden made amendments to the Anti-Discrimination Act in order to make employers and educational institutions responsible for taking active measures to prevent discrimination within their organizations (Discrimination Act, 2015). Nevertheless, the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination has expressed concerns and has made recommendations regarding racial discrimination against minorities in Sweden (United Nation, 2018). The committee is concerned about reports regarding racial profiling, economic segregation, and difficulty accessing education and employment in Sweden (United Nation, 2018).

The focus of this thesis was to gain further understanding of how social workers at the Swedish Public Employment Service perceive structural racism in the Swedish labor market for second-generation afro-swedes. The study is carried out by analyzing the interviews of professionals working in the Swedish Public Employment Agency. The challenges discussed focused on employability. The concept of employability refers to

the ability to gain and maintain preliminary employment and obtain new employment if required. (McQuaid & Lindsay, 2005).

The purpose of this research thesis is to explore and provide awareness about possible employability challenges second-generation Afro-Swedes face in their job search process. During our literature review, the authors found out there is a scarce amount of previous research regarding second-generation afro-swedes. The purpose of this thesis is to build on previous research by applying a theoretical framework.

1.2 Relevance to Social work

Social work addresses individuals on all levels, from the micro-level such as working with the individual and to the macro-level for instance in policymaking (Healy, 2021). Integration, employment and social inclusion of people, especially vulnerable ethnical minority groups, are key subjects to the social work practice (Healy, 2021). This research study is relevant to social work practice because social work deals with issues such as challenges of inclusion and exclusion of ethnical minorities within the wider society (Healy, 2021). The profession of social worker plays a key role in maintaining the well-being of society and the individual. Highlighting social issues such as structural racism and social exclusion of minorities are key areas of social work practice. Exploring and understanding the structural and personal elements behind unemployment and social exclusion helps the social worker to perceive the individual as part of a larger whole. Social workers can provide a more comprehensive and far-reaching intervention through having a deeper understanding of the societal and environmental components that have led to the client's current life situation (Healy, 2021).

1.3 Aim and Research Questions

Aim

The aim of this study was to gain further understanding of how social workers at the Swedish Public Employment Service perceive structural racism in the Swedish labor market for second-generation afro-swedes.

Research Questions

1. How do social workers at the Swedish Public Employment Service perceive structural racism in the Swedish labor market for second-generation afro-swedes?

Sub-questions

1. How do the social workers at the Swedish Public Employment Service perceive the reasons for structural racism for second-generation afro-swedes in the Swedish labor market?
2. What strategies do the social workers at the Public Employment Service believe can be implemented to improve the employment possibilities for second-generation Afro-swedes?

1.4 Essay Disposition

The authors have divided this study into seven (7) chapters. Chapter 1 includes the introduction, where the problem is presented, relevance to social work, aim and research question, essay disposition and the list of explanations of the concepts. Chapter 2 presents the process of information retrieval and four earlier research concerning our study aim. Chapter 3 presents the theory; The theoretical framework of social exclusion theory was used as a guide throughout the study. Chapter 4 discusses the research design, data collection, selection of the informants, sampling method and data analyzing, and transcription used in the study. Additionally, the credibility of the study concerning reliability, validity, generalization, and study limitations are discussed in chapter 4. study.

Chapter 5 presents ethical considerations and chapter 6 in turn, presents the results and analysis. The final chapter 7 includes a summary of the result in relation to aim and discussion about theory, earlier research, methodology and finally suggestions for further research. The essay ends with a list of references and two appendices used during the study. The authors collaborated closely throughout the study and participated equally in the conduct of the study.

1.5 Explanations of the concepts

In this section the authors are defining and describing key concepts and terms discussed in our study. This will help the reader to have a good understanding of the aim and content of this study.

1.5.1 Employability

Employability in this context refers to an individual's perceived ability to gain and maintain employment throughout their career (Römgens et al., 2019). Individually perceived ability may include having a set of skills, understanding, knowledge, and personal attributes which will make a person to secure occupation and to be satisfied and successful (Römgens et al., 2019). Individual employability depends on their knowledge; what you know, skills; what you do with what you know, and attitude; how to approach things. In simple terms, employability involves the marketability of an individual's skills (Römgens et al., 2019). Hence, employability does not only depend on organizational and institutional policies only as a result of labor market competitiveness but is also dependent on the effort individuals put in such as constant updates in existing skills and knowledge (Römgens et al., 2019).

1.5.2 Structural Racism

Racism is prejudice and discrimination by an individual or institution against a person or people based on their perceived cultural or ethnic group identity, typically one that is a minority or marginalized (Bartoli, 2013). Racism can be conscious such as hate speech or racial violence or unintentional such as microaggression and unconscious biases. Racism is not only prejudices held by individuals, but rather discriminating practices embedded in the cultural and societal norms-system as well as in the economic system.

The definition of racism is constantly gaining new dimensions and perspectives which help to understand racism as a phenomenon and its prevalence in society (Bartoli, 2013). Structural racism is often invisible and can be challenging to identify it. Nevertheless, it profoundly affects the lives and opportunities of ethnic minorities in every branch of society. Structural racism highlights the role of the structures. It is a form of racism that is widely and thoroughly embedded in systems, institutional practices, laws, policies, and entrenched norms. It consists of established beliefs and attitudes that produce, allow, and cultivate widespread unjust treatment of people of colour. Structural racism and discrimination refer to macro-level conditions such as institutional policies, environmental injustice and housing policies that limit resources, opportunities, power and well-being of minority ethnic communities (Bartoli, 2013).

1.5.3 Discrimination

Discrimination is deleterious and induces inequality. Discrimination occurs when a person is unable to fully enjoy their human and legal rights because of a gratuitous distinction made in law, policy, or treatment (United Nation, 2018). Race discrimination in employability occurs when employees are treated unequally based on their external characteristics, such as physical features attributed to their ethnical background (Bartoli, 2013). The term ethnicity refers to a particular ethnic group of people with shared culture, history, tradition, language etc. According to the definition by Sweden's Discrimination Act (2015), discrimination is when a person is treated disfavouredly or when a person's dignity is violated. Discrimination can occur directly or indirectly. The discrimination must be based on one of the seven grounds of discrimination which are sex, transgender identity, ethnicity, religion or belief, disability, sexual orientation, or age (Discrimination Act, 2015). In this thesis we are focusing on discrimination based on ethnicity. The grounds of discrimination often intersect, meaning that a person may be exposed to multiple forms of discrimination simultaneously (Bartoli, 2013). For instance, a dark-skinned woman may experience discrimination connected to her gender and skin colour at the same time. Continued discrimination causes individual and minority communities' collective pain and social harm (Bartoli, 2013). Harming someone's right to exist and act simply because of who they are strikes at the very heart of being human. Social workers comprehend that because of ethnic difference, a person's life experience may include discrimination and marginalization. Social workers identify this social issue and strive to promote equality at every level of social work practice (Healy, 2021).

Chapter 2 - Earlier Research

2.1 Information Retrieval

In this section the process of information retrieval and literature data search is explained. This study is mainly based on qualitative interviews collected from four licensed social work professionals. Additionally, relevant data sources were utilized for this study to provide a deeper understanding of the situation for second-generation Afro Swedes in the Swedish labor market. To provide background information as comprehensive as possible, various databases were searched for relevant journals, articles, and textbooks. Search terms, such as afro-Swedes, employability, structural racism and social exclusion were used in various formations to ensure a view on this topic from different standpoints and theoretical perspectives. In this study, only scientific articles and publications were used as data sources. Search programmes and scientific databases such as Google Scholar and Science Direct allowed the authors to effectively narrow down our search and provided us more accurate search results. Additionally, University of Gävle's online library and physical textbooks were utilized for literature search. There is a large repertory of literature covering the first generation immigrants and integration of immigrants into the labor market, structural racism and social exclusion but there were limited databases concerning second generation immigrants and their survival in the Swedish labor market. Some background information about Swedish Public Employment Service is presented in this study to provide essential knowledge about itself and its operational models.

2.2 Swedish Labor Market

The Swedish labor market is stable. After the financial crisis of 2010, employment in Sweden has recovered quickly and has been expanding at a strong pace (Denitza et al., 2017). Employment growth defines the relative strength of the economic recovery and buoyant labor supply (Denitza et al., 2017). In 2016 the overall employment rate in Sweden was 81.2% and the Unemployment rate was 6.9% (Denitza et al., 2017). Nevertheless, in the Swedish labor market, individuals with migrant backgrounds and low education are relatively facing a high unemployment rate (Denitza et al., 2017). This challenge is likely to remain in the foreseeable future, especially with the arrival of a large number of migrants in Sweden (Denitza et al., 2017). Sweden has one of the highest proportions of migrants in the overall population in the European countries (Denitza et

al., 2017). The rise of unemployment in the Swedish labor market is particularly connected to specific groups (Denitza et al., 2017). For instance, the unemployment rate among non-EU-born was 41.7%, in contrast, the Sweden-born young people's unemployment rate was 20.6% in the same year during 2016 (Denitza et al., 2017). In general, the youth unemployment rate in Sweden has been at 18.9% in 2016, while the adult unemployment is 2.5 % lower compared to the youth unemployment rate (Denitza et al., 2017). These statistics are relevant to our thesis in understanding the employment situation Second generation Afro-Swedes might face integrating into the Swedish job market. The competitiveness in employability gives less opportunity for second-generation afro-swedes in the Swedish labor market compared to other social groups (Denitza et al., 2017).

2.3 Earlier Research

Internationally discriminatory employment has been studied through various field experiments. There is a vast knowledge through previous literature reviews regarding first-generation immigrants' economic integration. However, there are only a few corresponding studies concerning second-generation immigrants' employability challenges (Behrenz et al., 2007). In Sweden, two large-scale field studies have been carried out by Carlsson (2010) and Rooth & Ekberg (2003), both focusing on applicants with a Middle Eastern background. The results of these studies are in line with international studies; First and second-generation immigrants are less likely to get a job interview compared to natives (Carlsson, 2010). Additionally, a study conducted by Rooth and Ekberg (2003), found that particularly second-generation immigrants with non-European ethnic backgrounds had lower probability of being employed and lower earnings. Surprisingly, even though second-generation immigrants were born and have obtained all their qualifications in Sweden, as opposed to first-generation immigrants, the results suggest that first- and second-generation immigrants are equally unlikely to receive an invitation to a job interview (Carlsson, 2010). According to Andersson & Hammarstedt (2011), there is a certain amount of intergenerational transmittance between the parental and the descendant generation. Although second-generation immigrants have a better starting point than their parents, in terms of economic and social capital and integration, their success in employability is not matching with native Swedes (Behrenz et al., 2007). Regardless of their educational level, second-generation immigrants with African ancestry are over-represented in low-skilled occupations and under-represented

in high-skilled occupations (Wolgast et al., 2018). In Sweden, unemployment rates, both for men (16.9%) and women (20.9%) are higher for second-generation African immigrants compared to other ethnic minorities (Wolgast et al., 2018). For example, the corresponding figures for Finnish second-generation immigrants are 8.7% and 10.2% (Wolgast et al., 2018).

Another more recent International Field Experiment study by Quillian et al., (2019) suggests that Sweden is one of the worst countries for trying to get a job interview if one is perceived to be an immigrant from outside Europe. The study measuring Discrimination in hiring involved nine European countries and 97 field experiments produced consistent research findings corresponding to previous studies; there is a severe ethnic penalty that is affecting the employability of nonwhite job applicants. According to study results In high-discrimination countries, white native job applicants receive nearly twice the amount of call-backs compared to nonwhites. Out of the nine participants countries, France had the highest discrimination rates, followed by Sweden (Quillian et al., 2019). The study highlighted significant discrimination problems against nonwhite natives in all nine European countries involved in the study. The other countries examined were Great Britain, Canada, Belgium, the Netherlands, Norway, the United States, and Germany, with the last showing the lowest level of discrimination.

Chapter 3 – Theoretical Framework

3.1 Social Exclusion Theory

The authors applied social exclusion theory to the study to explain the professional perspective on the employability challenges Afro-Swedes face. The term social exclusion originated in France in the 1970s as a result of the rise in awareness of unprotected individuals lacking social and economic insurance (Taket et al., 2009). Social exclusion is a complex and multidimensional process. It has its grounds in various degrees, such as ethnicity, disability, race, age, sex, migration status, religion, place of residence, and socioeconomic status (Taket et al., 2009). Social exclusion has its roots in structural processes within the society creating systematic inequalities and barriers to socially disadvantaged people by disempowering and oppressing the minority groups in society (Munck, 2013). Social exclusion involves the lack or denial of rights, resources, and services- needed for participation in society. Social exclusion leads to the inability to participate in relationships and normal activities which are otherwise open to the majority of people in society in social, economic, cultural, or political arenas (Taket et al., 2009).

According to Pierson (2009), the theoretical framework of social exclusion consists of multi-dimensional processes driven by unequal power relationships. Social exclusion is often explained through four main dimensions which are interacting across societal dimensions (Pierson, 2009). One being the economical dimension which includes access to social rights such as social security, adequate standard of living and health services. Another force that drives the process of social exclusion material deprivation that is the inability to afford basic resources. The third dimension is limited social participation which is seen as societal visible and invisible barriers hindering person's involvement in communal and societal activities. The fourth aspect is the cultural dimension, which is seen as a persons limited normative integration (Taket et al., 2009). The theoretical framework of social exclusion can be applied to different levels such as micro-, mezz-, and macrolevel (Pierson, 2009).

In April 2017, the European Commission established the European Pillar of Social Rights. Recently the European Union Commission set out 20 key principles and rights under the Pillar of Social right to bring a supportive and renewed process for a better living and for greater working conditions (European Commission, 2017). The key principle is structured under three categories: assessment of the labor market and fair working conditions, and social protection and inclusion (EU, 2017). Everyone regardless of their cultural background has the right to quality and inclusive education, equal opportunities and access to the labor market (EU, 2017). This principle will give them the skills to be able to fully participate in the society and labor market. The principle of equal opportunities covers the right to equal opportunities regarding employment, education, social protection, and access to goods and services that are available to the public, regardless of race or ethnicity, religion or belief gender, origin, age, or sexual orientation, or disability (EU, 2017).

Several dimensions of social exclusion could affect Afro-Swedes in different areas, such as income, employment and labor market, goods, and services. (Taket et al., 2009). The harmful effect of social exclusion critically depends on people's ability and opportunities which are unequally distributed among different social groups. Social exclusion is not only determined by a financial situation but rather by the individuals' feelings in terms of their connection and fit into the society (Taket et al., 2009). Individuals belonging to the wider society depend on their capacity to act but also on an individual's actual performance (Taket et al., 2009). The theoretical framework of social exclusion helps to understand Afro-Swede's belongingness to society in various forms, from an economic, social, and democratic view as well as its result and consequences. Afro-Swedes are a minority in Swedish society and are faced with experiences of dislocation, discrimination, and powerlessness in a structured economic system (Pierson, 2010). The theory will help to describe their challenges concerning exclusion in the Swedish labor market. Therefore, the concept of social exclusion will help to analyse the perceptions of the professional working with the Swedish employment agency on possible challenges in employability second-generation Afro-Swedes face.

Chapter 4 -Methodology

4.1 Research Design

This study was based on the perspective of social workers working with unemployed Afro-Swedes in the Swedish Public Employment Service. The authors chose a qualitative method to conduct this study and to explore employability challenges second generation afro-swedes face in the Swedish labor market. The qualitative method provided the authors good insight about the professionals working in the Swedish Public Employment Service. More also, this method was chosen since it is applicable to studying occupational roles and practices concerning human experiences (Rubin & Babbie, 2011). The philosophical approach used was flexible design approach. This allowed the authors to be flexible in terms of work structure and study process. The flexible design approach helped the author to adapt to changing circumstances and to modify data for instance, data sampling methods. The authors found this approach to be suitable for this qualitative study (Robson, 2014).

4.2 Data Collection

The authors decided to explore this subject from the professionals' perceptions. According to ethical guidelines, it was important to consider the risk factors concerning interviewing second-generation afro-swedes themselves. The author used a snowballing sampling method to get interview participants for our study (Frankfort-Nachmias et al., 2015). By using this technique, the authors were able to get four social workers working in the Swedish public employment service, two in Gävle and two in Malmö. The authors started the sampling by sending emails to several potential social workers working in the Swedish Public Employment office. Following the method of snowball sampling, the authors listed the exact criteria as search criteria, such as extensive work experience with second generation afro Swedes and basic knowledge about antiracist work (Frankfort-Nachmias et al., 2015). After each interview, the authors asked the interviewee to recommend to us the next participant who would be able to participate in our study. This allowed the author to comprehensively bring together social work professionals for the interviews. This technique gave the authors the ability to start a sample with a few

relevant participants and then expand through good referrals. The authors found this method suitable and trustworthy and time-saving.

4.2.1 Selection of the informants

The authors decided to focus on two Swedish cities, Malmö and Gävle and two professionals each in these locations. The authors choose two different locations because of their differences in terms of population. Malmö is located in the southern part of Sweden and has a population of 135,000 residents with a foreign background (Malmö Stad, 2021). The city of Malmö was chosen because of its vast population of immigrants and proportionately young growing population (Malmö Stad, 2021). Roughly half of Malmö residents are under the age of 35 which falls into our thesis target group (Malmö Stad, 2021). The professionals working in the multicultural settings of Malmö provided us valuable insight for our thesis. Gävle city, in turn, is located in the northern part of Sweden and also home to a number of immigrants. The authors are using The Swedish Public Employment Service in which unemployed individuals register and are assigned a case officer to assist them during the time of their unemployment (Arbetsförmedlingen, 2020). Due to the scarce timeframe, the authors decided to use two case officers from each city, making it a total of four case officers. This choice is to ensure our study validity and keep up with our timeframe (Frankfort-Nachmias et al., 2015). After having an affirmative response, the authors sent participants a consent form and the interviews were conducted.

4.2.2 Sampling and Data Collection

Having a sufficient description in the collection of data and analysis process is paramount in every study as it adds credibility and value to the study (Grinnell & Unrau, 2018). The data was collected by using semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions. The authors developed an interview guide to outline the interview process and to have a clear structure. A naturally flowing interview helped to build trust with our interviewees (Grinnell & Unrau, 2018) A semi-structured interview is a combination of structured and unstructured interview methods; Some of the interview questions are predetermined while the others are not planned (Rubin & Babbie, 2011). The authors used a semi-structured interview as it provided the best elements of both structured and unstructured interviews.

According to Grinnell & Unrau (2018), Semi-structured method provided the authors detailed and rich data while encouraging two-way communication with the interviewee. Using open-ended questions is a critical data collection method in qualitative research (Rubin & Babbie, 2011). The authors chose to use this specific method to provide comprehensive and insightful data. (Rubin & Babbie, 2011).

The authors set out the interview by asking warm-up questions and saved broader questions for the end of the interview. The authors had four main questions and followed up if necessary. As suggested by Grinnell & Unrau (2018) each of the interview questions is designed to provide answers to the main research questions. The participants were interviewed by Skype video call. We reserved 60 minutes for each interview session. The entire study was conducted in English, and the authors had ensured that all participants speak and understand English. The interviews were recorded by using mechanical recording, that is, in this case, the telephone (Grinnell & Unrau, 2018). The authors used two phones and took notes as well. Consent and approval were asked from all the participants before starting the interview. The records were used later in the transcription phase (Grinnell & Unrau, 2018).

4.3 Data analyzing and transcription

To analyze the data, the authors used the thematic analysis method. The authors found thematic analysis a good approach to researching social workers' views, opinions, experiences, knowledge, or values from a set of qualitative data. Thematic analysis method is typically useful for a set of texts, such as a series of interviews or focus-group transcripts (Grinnell & Unrau, 2018). The authors closely examined patterns of meaning in a data set to identify similar themes – topics, and ideas that come up repeatedly. After the recurring data patterns were identified and codified, the authors sought themes from the codes. The generated themes were later reviewed and defined. The authors found differences and similarities in the participant's answers. The data was read repeatedly by the author to ensure the accuracy of the findings. Furthermore, the authors classified the findings into different units that were considered meaningful and relevant concerning the research aim and questions. During the process of classification, coding, and making themes, the authors constantly referred to the research question and previous research so that themes could be in line with them. There was information that was relevant for the study which the authors found and kept as a reference in case it would be needed later.

The authors used the same thematic analysis model separately to analyse the data for accuracy.

4.4 Credibility of the Study

4.4.1 Reliability

Reliability relates to the trustworthiness and consistency of research findings (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). The study has high reliability when the results are reproducible by other researchers and at other times (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). In this study, the reliability will be strengthened because we are two researchers conducting the study. The authors' choose to interview participants from two different locations and the information gotten during the transcription of data helped in the reliability of the study. However, the participants' answers were based on their perceptions and views on the current situation which can be a limitation of the study. Because perceptions and views can be inconsistent from time to time. For instance, if the same participants are to be interviewed a year from now their perceptions and views answering the same questions may have changed because of individual experiences in life. The consistency of the study was ensured by both authors involved in conducting the interviews, transcription, and analysis of the findings (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015).

4.4.2 Validity

Validity refers to how accurately a method measures what it is intended to measure (Rubin & Babbie, 2010.). The authors used investigator triangulation, meaning we are two investigators analysing the data to enhance the validity and credibility of our study. As suggested by Grinnell (2018) the authors kept questions simple and short, used simple language, used simple language, and only asked questions that the participants are capable to answer.

The triangulation method is applied to this qualitative study by the authors' analysing dependability of different kinds of data sources within a similar type of method (Patton, 2015). Triangulation in the qualitative study helps the authors to compare the dependability of information that has been sourced from different times through a similar type of method (Patton, 2015). For instance, the author can compare information from previous studies with the ongoing study information. Triangulation can be a combination

of theories, methods, or observers in a study, to reduce fundamental biases arising from the use of a single observation of a single method over an outcome (Patton, 2015). Triangulation in a qualitative study is an effort to help explain and explore human complex behaviour by means of a diversity of methods to give a more balanced explanation to readers. It increases and enables validation in study research (Patton, 2015). Within, this study, the authors have interviewed four different social workers with the same professional background from different locations. Triangulation provides the opportunity for the authors to compare and review the dependability of the result and to understand the differences during data analysis. Additionally, it eliminates bias during the interpretation of data (Grinnell et al 2018). Triangulation in this study has provided the authors with better insight through the use of a variety of datasets to explain different aspects of a phenomenon of interest (Grinnell et al 2018).

4.4.3 Generalization

Generalization is commonly seen as the feature connected to quantitative study. In qualitative study the generalizability of the research is primarily measured by transferability (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). Transferability in qualitative study refers to the degree to which the study results can be transferred to other contexts or generalized (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). Generalization as a process includes acts of reasoning such as drawing broad conclusions and observations based on the data findings. Unlike quantitative research, the goal of most qualitative studies is not to generalize but rather to bring forth a diverse, contextualized perceptions of human experience through the case studies and interviews (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). In this sense, the authors' aim is to expand and generalize theories and provide more qualitative data about second-generation afro-swedes and how social workers perceive structural racism in the Swedish labor market for second-generation afro-swedes.

Although, the number of participants in the study was relatively small, but as the name suggests. In qualitative research, the importance is quality rather than quantity. The authors found that the four participants were able to provide us with comprehensive data and perception and were able to answer our research questions. Structural racism and inequality are unfortunately a universal phenomenon. Since the participants had similar perceptions of the topic discussed, the authors were able to recognize consistent patterns from the data and generalize findings between the participants. However, because every

individual's perception and experience are unique, in this case, the perceptions provided by the interviewed participants cannot be fully generalized.

4.4.4 Limitation of the study

The authors found few limitations in our study. All the participants mentioned that the topic was sensitive and requested that they have access to the interview questions beforehand. Additionally, some participants made examples that also affected our feelings and mood during the discussion, so the authors had to work hard to ensure the neutral and impartial analyzing of the results.

The participants asked to see the questions in advance and that can be seen as a study limitation concerning natural and spontaneous discussion. Therefore, the author fears that the answers gotten from the participant were premeditated. Another limitation recognized was generalization. Since there are big social-economic differences between first and second-generation afro swedes, the study cannot be applied to the whole population of second-generation of Afro-Swedes. Additionally, because of our same sampling size, the study is not fully generalizable. This study is conducted by two undergraduates which comes with limitations and challenges. Nevertheless, we ensure the credibility of this study by following the guidelines of ethical research (Grinnell et al 2018). Our schedule is tight and that is why we have decided to keep our sample size reasonably small as usual in the qualitative study. However, a broader sample size could be an advantage and provide more diverse perceptions (Grinnell et al 2018). Another significant limitation recognized was the authors' lack of Swedish language skills; not getting the previous research material because of the language barrier, excluded the author from using Swedish books and scientific Journals. Moreover, finding English speaking participants was another challenge brought by limited Swedish language skills. All parties speak English but only one of the researchers is a native English speaker. The authors ensured that the interviewees understood the questions correctly and could answer them easily in English, however, some participants experienced difficulties in expressing themselves proficiently, since English was not their first language. Language has some level of connection when it comes to the individual expressing their emotion. Therefore, it is difficult to express our emotions in a different language especially if one does understand

it speaking and hearing (Nico, 2017). For this reason, the author fears important pieces of information could be missing during the interview.

Chapter 5 - Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations are a critical part of the research study. The researcher has a responsibility to follow the ethical guidelines needed to conduct a research study and to put them in mind throughout the study (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2015). To avoid an ethical dilemma, the authors decided to interview professionals in Swedish Public Employment Services instead of second-generation immigrants. First and second-generation immigrants are considered part of a vulnerable group, therefore, ethical aspects should be considered and included in the thesis (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). A researcher must protect every research participant and the people to whom we present our findings to.

The first step is informed consent. In adherence to one of the ethical guidelines, the author informed the participants about the study beforehand including the purpose and the use of the research study (Grinnell & Unrau, 2018). This is a critical concept in every study research. At the start, we informed the participants about the purpose, method, and possible risks associated with the research study. They were all informed that the research conducted was for educational purposes at the University of Gävle, Sweden. The participants were also informed that participation was voluntary and it was possible to withdraw at any time (Grinnell & Unrau, 2018). The authors assured the participants' anonymity and confidentiality, meaning their personal information would not be disclosed and that gathered data would be destroyed after the study (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015).

The awareness provided by the authors helped during the interview because it was noted that participants were open and were able to give critical comments based on their opinions. Before the interview, informed consent was sent by email to the participants and was signed and sent back before they take part in the research study. Informed consent is beneficial to both the authors and participants (Grinnell & Unrau, 2014). The benefit of informed consent before an interview is that it helped not to cause misunderstanding during interview time which could affect the research study's credibility. The format of

the consent form was English. It contains the aim of the study, the purpose of the study, and their rights as the participants. A sample of the consent form is in the appendix. Additionally, the participants got the interview question before the day of the interview. During the day of the interview, the author asked for permission to record and notes were taken. The collected recordings or data were carefully kept and stored. The supervisor and the author are the only ones that share the collected data. The authors used APA as a guide to reference the work or sources used in the study appropriately. The authors were careful not to ask questions that will bring confusion during the interview (Robson, 2007). During interview translations, ethical consideration was observed during the process (Robson, 2007). There was a careful reflection of words to ensure that the participants' intent was well translated. Both researchers of this study participated in data analysis to reduce biases.

Chapter 6 - Result & Analysis

6.1 Result and Analysis

In the section of results and analyses the authors have discussed important factors concerning structural racism afro-swedes experience in the Swedish labor market. Through interviewing different social workers from The Swedish Public Employment Service who work hands-on with second-generation afro-swedes, the authors were able to bring up insightful views to answer the research questions. In analyzing these results, the authors discovered patterns and themes which led to the formation of five different themes. Every theme has different sub themes related to the findings. In theme one, the authors analyzed social workers' views related to cultural challenges. The views that emerged during the interviews were cultural incompetence, biculturalism, and name discrimination. In the following theme 2, another significant perception that was emphasized by all the participants was discriminative employment. Under this section the views brought up by the participants were microaggression, prejudice and bias. Theme 3 in turn, comprises the participants' perceptions on educational factors such as linguistic skills and school achievement with respect to structural racism. The theme 4 discusses limited access to employment as a result of the participants constantly mentioning that as

one of the central manifestations of structural racism in the Swedish labor market. Finally, Theme 5 covers participants views on how to improve the employment possibilities for second generation Afro-swedes and preventive measures to avert social exclusion among second generation afro-swedes.

6.2 The Participants

Social worker 1: Has a master's degree in social work with 6 years of working experience in the Swedish public employment service in Gävle in labor market and support department

Social worker 2: Has a bachelor's degree in social work, 3 years work experience, social worker in the Swedish public employment service in Gävle working in labor market and support department

Social worker 3: Bachelor of Social work, 10 years of experience, few years experience with anti-racism work with different NGOs, working in the Swedish public employment service in Malmö

Social worker 4: Bachelor of Social work, newly graduated, in the Swedish public employment service in Malmö, 5 years of practical social work experience in youth and community work

The theoretical perspective of social exclusion was used to analyze and discuss the perceptions of the participants regarding structural racism second generation afro-swedes experience. The social exclusion theory provided the authors a clearer view on the ways second-generation Afro-swedes faces structural racism in the Swedish labor market and how the issue can be tackled.

6.3 Theme: Cultural Challenges

When asked about the most prevalent causes of structural racism in employability, cultural challenges were one of the main consistent responses that emerged during the interviews. Using thematic analysis, theme 1 is divided into three sub-themes that represent the main findings. This section introduces the participants' perceptions on cultural challenges as one of the factors regarding structural racism in the Swedish labor

market. The topics covered in this section are Cultural incompetency, Biculturalism and Name discrimination.

6.3.1 Cultural Incompetency

Majority of the participants mentions cultural incompetency as one of the main reasons second generation afro-swedes experience structural racism in the Swedish labor market. The fear of the unknown and the lack of cultural knowledge and norms were the main topics discussed among all the social workers. Within the concept of social exclusion theory, the, fear of foreigner and strangers, also known as xenophobia, is one of the factors causing cultural discrimination and drives the process of social exclusion of cultural minorities (Taket et al., 2009). Cultural incompetency refers to stereotypical or negative perception of certain cultures and fails to acknowledge diversity within different cultures (Healy, 2021). Culture is defined as a way of how people are expected to act in a social context. Culture is learned from one's social environment and affects individuals' behavior, beliefs and values throughout one's lifespan (Bisin et, al., 2012). When people see the world from the same perspective with each other, it facilitates their social harmony and improves their communication (Minkov, 2011). As seen from previous studies, being culturally incompetence employer can result in racism, loss of corporate clients and losing good workforce (Carllson, 2010)._All the respondents agreed upon the notion that the lack of Swedish cultural norms within the second-generation afro-Swedes can be a risk factor of being socially excluded. In this regard social worker 2 explains,

“In most cases, employers prefer employees who have good knowledge of Swedish culture and work culture. Therefore, it can be challenging for second-generation afro-swedes to gain solid working experience compared to native swedes”

This statement is in line with social exclusion theory stating that characteristics that are often linked to group identity, for instance, ethnicity, race, or culture, are drivers of the multidimensional cycle of social exclusion (Taket et al., 2009). In the light of social exclusion, the authors were able to see the link between culturally incompetent employers and structural racism. As the participants mentioned, not having cultural knowledge can negatively affect second-generation afro-swedes employment possibilities in the Swedish labor market. As stated in the previous research section and also by the participants, Swedish employees tend to show a preference for native swedes over foreign candidates.

Explained through the lense of social exclusion theory, this can be seen as cultural discrimination deriving from lack of cultural competency (Taket et al., 2009).

6.3.2 Biculturalism

Another point that participants brought up repeatedly as one of the challenges, was second generation afro swedes being raised between two different cultures. In Sweden, cultural integration is critical both for residence and in Swedish labor (Arbetsförmedlingen, 2020). On the other hand, culture can also be seen as a socially excluding factor that distinguishes one group of people from another (Bisin et, al., 2012). The respondents also brought up the fact that families play a central role in children's socialization and therefore contribute to their future successes or failures in adulthood. As stated by social exclusion theory, cultural group membership is increasingly becoming a reason for exclusion (Taket et al., 2009). Parents invest time and other resources and use everyday practices in order to transfer cultural capital to the next generation. Second-generation Afro-Swedes therefore find it difficult to have full knowledge of both the parents' culture and Swedish cultural norms (Hällsten & Szulkin, 2009). In addition to this, social worker 2 mentioned that Afro-Swedes born in Sweden find it challenging to learn Swedish cultural norms because of their parents having a great influence on them when it comes to the cultural habits and norms. Another participant added,

“Some second-generation afro-swedes have a stronger connection to their parent culture than Swedish culture and to some extent that can affect their social networking in the workplace and wider in the Swedish labor market”.

This notion reinforces the concept of cultural deprivation which is simultaneously both a cause and the result of social exclusion theory (Pierson, 2009). Cultural deprivation mentioned by the participants increases the cultural and class gap and increases societal cohesion. Social exclusion theory explains how sometimes exclusion can be voluntary, which occurs when an individual chooses to withdraw themself from a certain group, community, or wider society (Taket et al., 2009). As stated by most of the participants, cultural differences can hinder group participation in the workplace.

6.3.3 Name Discrimination

The majority of the participants mention that a lot of immigrants, including second-generation afro-swedes have changed their African native name to a Swedish name to avoid name discrimination in the Swedish labor market during job application. This is in accordance with the previous Swedish study by Carlsson (2010) revealing that job applicants with Swedish sounding names are 50 percent more likely to get call-back for an interview than people with foreign names. Social worker 2 describes that,

“During job applications, employers may see African sounding names as foreign names of immigrants who have not fully integrated into Swedish society. They see them as a liability in terms of resource and time consumption. Most employers do not want to invest in training their employees.”

That notion can be seen associated with the interrelation of stigmatized culture and social exclusion. Stigma is a mark of disgrace usually disclosing negative attitudes and stereotypes to its bearer (Pierson, 2009). According to social exclusion theory, cultural differences can lead to discrimination and decreased social participation (Pierson, 2009). Cultural exclusion is one aspect of social exclusion and involves practices that establish the superiority of one cultural group over others identity (Díez-Nicolás & Lopez, 2018). Cultural exclusion strives to exclude other cultures from full and equal participation in society, often resulting in members of minority cultures giving up the practices that are basic to their cultural identity (Díez-Nicolás & Lopez, 2018).

Names can carry strong cultural and religious and ethnic connotations and reveal an individual’s affiliation to a specific culture. A stigmatized religion or culture creates a social stigma for names related to specific ethnic groups or cultures (Khosravi, 2012). For instance, for Muslims names and veils are the two most noticeable signs of their stigmatized religion and identity (Khosravi, 2012). On a similar note, participant 1 mentions that,

” Employers still feel uncomfortable having employees with foreign cultural background or religion in their workplace. “

This statement is aligned with the previous research highlighting cultural and ethnic discrimination in the labor market. According to social exclusion theory, when dominant cultural power attempts to reduce or assimilate the divergent cultures, the affected cultures become part of a socially excluded population (Taket et al., 2009). Overall, the responses given by participants provided us with a deeper understanding of the connection between socio-cultural factors and social exclusion as part of structural racism in the Swedish labor market (Pierson, 2009).

6.4 Theme: Discrimination

Structural racism appears to be constantly transformed in today's constantly changing society (Bartoli, 2013). Racism does not manifest merely in a single form and therefore it is important to recognize its various types which will be discussed in this section. During the interviews that were conducted, the topic of discrimination had been repeated multiple times by all participants. One of the interview questions was about how discrimination is manifested in the Swedish labor market. The examples brought up by participants were microaggression, bias and prejudice.

6.4.1 Microaggression

Discrimination in the labor market is one of the main phenomena of structural racism (Bartoli, 2013). All participants had personal experience of racism in the employability process concerning second generation afro-swedes. Participant 2 highlighted that discrimination occurs at every level of employment. Afro-swedes experience challenges right away in the job search phase and as well as during the employment (Quillian et al., 2019).

For many people who are white, the workplace is the first time and place that they interact closely with people of color (Quillian et al., 2019). Despite good intentions, ignorance can lead to uncomfortable and offensive situations. The experience of subtle discrimination also known as microaggression, often has a similar deleterious effect on individuals as obvious discrimination (Torino et al., 2019). Microaggression can be detrimental to employees inflicting a negative impact on their work-related stress, job satisfaction and work performance. (Torino et al., 2019). Racial microaggressions are

defined as verbal or behavioral conduct that conveys hostility toward members of various racial groups (Torino et al., 2019). Social worker 1 mentions that,

“When I help second generation afro-swedes in job search I get weird and irrelevant inquiries from employees regarding my applicants. I don’t get similar questions when it comes to white native Swedes. Questions are often related to applicants’ skills. I feel like there is a lot of doubt. Their skills and ability to fulfill the task are often questioned.

“

All the respondents agreed upon the notion that microaggression, including continuous nasty experiences and encounters in the workplace, as well as being rejected has a negative impact on second generation afro-swedes and is strongly related to structural racism.

6.4.2 Bias and Prejudice

Related to discrimination, another point that the respondents brought up was bias and prejudice. Throughout the interviews, bias and prejudice were central topics that were discussed among all the participants. In that notion Participant 3 elaborates,

“Unfortunately, most (white) Swedish employers tend to prefer applicants who have a similar ethnic background as themselves. Maybe that is because the employers feel like it is easier to understand and relate to native swedes compared to afro-swedes.”

When talking about structural racism, it is important to emphasize that the people who maintain these structures are ordinary people (Torino et al., 2019). As participant 4 mentions, second generation Afro-Swedes encounter bias and prejudice both in the educational and in the employment system. People who work as gatekeepers such as managers and recruiters, may have prejudices or biases toward people with African ancestry and these biases become apparent when they select candidates to be interviewed (Torino et al., 2019). As seen from previous studies such as field study by Carlsson (2010), racially biased job candidate selection excludes many qualified candidates and is an adverse example of a stereotype-based discrimination.

Discrimination is a concept intimately related to social exclusion (Pierson, 2009). Discrimination can be seen as behavioral consequence of bias and prejudice, which has

which has a detrimental economic and social impact people who are stigmatized (Pierson, 2009). Also prejudice and bias should be understood as part of the phases leading to social exclusion. Prejudices and bias are negative attitudes toward groups and individuals based on their membership to a specific ethnic group or culture or belonging to a specific geographical area (Dominelli, 2002). These socially constructed notions about certain ethnic groups and cultures only result in discrimination and in the long run, in structural inequalities such as structural racism and social exclusion (Díez-Nicolás & Lopez, 2018). During the interviews, all the participants mentioned several incidents where workplace discrimination led to them wanting to change a workplace. This is an example of how social exclusion can also occur within a group or community (Pierson, 2009). All participants had a consensus as to how the discrimination can significantly cause the second-generation afro Swedes to experience structural racism as they try to navigate the Swedish labor market.

6.5 Theme: Education

Throughout the interviews that were conducted, there was a common consensus amongst the participants that education and specifically low school performance, is one of the major factors connected to structural racism and social exclusion as well. The examples brought up by the participants were second generation afro-swedes linguistic skills and school achievement.

6.5.1 Linguistic Skills

Swedish language skill is often a work requirement in the Swedish labor market (Arbetsförmedlingen, 2020). Second-generation Afro-Swedes born in Sweden should have a good level of Swedish language proficiency and competency. However, the studies reveal that there is still a shortcoming when it comes to Swedish language skills compared to native Swedes (Lennart et al., 2005). Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that second generation Afro-Swedes level of the Swedish language varies widely, and it is influenced by many socio-economic factors. In general, when we communicate, we attach meaning to messages, we construct, transmit and interpret others' messages which we receive (Segalowitz & Norman, 2011). The problem with a misunderstanding in

communication in most cases results from intercultural communication (Segalowitz & Norman, 2011). Social worker 4 further explains,

“Some second-generation Afro-Swedes sometimes find it difficult to be social at the workplace due to lack of good Swedish language and communication skills and can sometimes lead to social withdrawal and even discrimination at the workplace.”

In the Swedish labor market, but also internationally speaking, proficiency and good communication skills are great assets for creating valuable working relationships (Arbetsförmedlingen, 2020). Oral language is a fundamental skill and a necessity for success in a social and educational environment (Arbetsförmedlingen, 2020). Respondent 3 mentions the important fact that we often forget second-generation Afro-Swedes and immigrants being generally bilingual or multilingual. That can result in struggling to perfect multiple languages while growing up as a kid and as an adult. Social worker 1 further explained that,

“There was a case of a second-generation Afro-Swede who applied for a job and decided to make a phone call for more enquiry. They told the applicant that they want to employ native Swedish even though the applicant spoke Swedish fluently.”

Participants notions and experiences helped the authors to see the connection between accent discrimination and structural racism and its role in contributing to structural racism in the labor market. Language as a factor in social exclusion arises in the context of accent discrimination enabled by the global inequality (Schmaus, 2020). Accent discrimination in the labor market refers to unjustified discrimination against employees who speak the local language with an accent (Schmaus, 2020). Multilingualism is often seen as a positive thing and as great skill often depending on the language. For example, the accent of the French language is often considered beautiful, while, for example, the Arabic language is viewed more negatively (Schmaus, 2020). As seen from the example provided by the participants, an employee's accent is sometimes associated with his or her national origin and culture. Employment decisions based on accent can lead to discriminatory employment (Schmaus, 2020). Furthermore, this can be seen in relation to the theory of social exclusion. As social exclusion theory states, cultural discrimination is affecting ethnic minorities and their possibilities to successfully navigate in society

(Pierson, 2009). Additionally, the authors noticed that the participants' perceptions are in accordance with the previous studies concerning the interrelation between linguistic skills and social exclusion. For instance, the adult skills survey conducted Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2016) found that adults with high proficiency in literacy and linguistic skills have higher rates of social participation in the community and political activities compared to those with low literacy proficiency.

6.5.2 School Achievements

Another point which was widely discussed during the interviews was school achievements as one of the components related to structural racism. All the participants agreed upon the fact that apart from structural racism, poor school achievements can be a major hindrance regarding career success and social inclusion.

“As social worker 1 states: “Given that immigrant families have, on average, more limited resources than native families, one can expect that children of immigrants will be disadvantaged at all levels in the educational system “

This statement is in accordance with the European study stating that across Europe, immigrants and children of immigrants have lower achievements in terms of grades than their majority peers (Raabe, 2019). Regardless of being second generation immigrant or native Swedish, parents influence their descendants' educational results, educational careers and, in the long-term, labor market careers (Hällsten & Szulkin, 2009). However, as social worker 3 states, children of immigrants are not a homogeneous group, and there are clear differences in school performance, depending on the parents' educational, cultural, and economic resources, but also their understanding of how the educational system works.

According to social exclusion theory, access to social resources, such as good education, are crucial for social inclusion (Pierson, 2009). Linguistic skills such as writing, and communications skills are one of the central learning objectives in the education system (OECD, 2016). Social exclusion in education can severely hazard access to societal resources and services, which can have detrimental effects and in the long run, limit possibilities for socioeconomic achievement (Pierson, 2009). If protective measures such

as supportive family and stable community do not remedy the situation, the individual can end up risking being socially excluded (Pierson, 2009). This applies in particular to vulnerable groups, such as children of immigrants, since they are at a higher risk to face various forms of social exclusion (Raabe, 2019). All participants agreed that education plays a major role in the structural inequalities faced by second-generation Afro-Swedes. According to the result it was evident that access to good-quality education provides individuals with opportunities to learn and to building capacity to participate in social, economic, and cultural life. Another participant added that,

” Sweden’s welfare policies grants everyone an equal access to qualitative education but because of the cultural differences and other challenges faced by ethnic minorities in general, not everyone is able to benefit from it equivalently.”

This notion helped us to reveal the multidimensional substance of structural racism and its effect to second-generation afro-swedes. With help of social exclusion theory, the authors were able to see in more detail the effects of education and school achievement in the context of structural racism. Even where there are no formal barriers to education, the Eurocentric educational curricula, school policies and the overall school environment, including interactions among students, teachers and parents can subtly exclude students with foreign background and reinforce the elements of structural racism (Hällsten & Szulkin, 2009).

6.6 Theme: Limited access to job market

The majority of the social workers stressed that regardless of ethnic background, for the long-term unemployed and the low-skilled individuals, a low-paying job is commonly the first and easiest option to get employed. According to the perceptions of the participants, limited access to high-skilled jobs can lead to scarce working experience and social participation. This is in accordance with research by Wolgast (2018), which shows that regardless of their educational level, second-generation Afro-Swedes are over-represented in low-skilled occupations and under-represented in high-skilled occupations. According to International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO, 2012), occupation can be divided into four skill level categories depending on characteristic task

performed and types of skills required on that level. Occupation at Skill Level 1 typically includes simple and manual tasks such as cleaning, storing, and carrying when Skill Levels 3 and 4 are classified as high-skilled jobs and require a higher level of academic education (ISCO,2012.) Almost all social workers mention that second generation Afro-Swedes commonly fall into Skill Level 1 and 2 categories. Additionally, Social worker 1 mentions that the low-skilled jobs are offered also to those Afro-Swedes who have high education. Social worker 4 further explained,

“Second-generation Afro-Swedes experience bias and prejudice at work by limiting them in the type of job they are to do in an organization. For instance, employers prefer to employ second-generation Afro-Swedes doing low-skill jobs in most institutions in Sweden. Most of the time Afro-Swedes are hired as part-time workers to fill in the gap when needed even if they qualify to be permanent staff.”

Having a job is commonly seen as a marker of social and economic inclusion. Yet not all jobs provide adequate pay to maintain an adequate standard of living. Exclusionary employment is paid work that has so few material and monetary benefits that people remain in poverty even when in employment (Bailey,2017). Related to social exclusion theory, people in exclusionary employment have a greater risk of ending up socially excluded in terms of health and well-being, social relations, and safe housing (Bailey, 2017). Low-skilled jobs often have low pay. Low income prevents individuals from taking part in cultural, social, or sporting activities in the community. As stated by most of the participants, unemployment and low pay often stem from structural inequalities. Additionally, lack of social networks deprives people of important opportunities and a share in community life (Bailey, 2017).

As revealed by previous studies, for low-skilled individuals, a sudden dismissal can be a hard hit that is hard to bounce back from financially. Additionally, according to scarring effects theory, early experiences of unemployment lowers wages and employment opportunities in later years, especially among the low-skilled and in the long run, can lead to decreased social network and social participation (Bailey,2017). All the participants agreed that Afro-Swedes accessing mainly low-paid jobs is strongly related to structural

racism. The manifestation of structural racism risks second generation Afro-Swedes to be end up in poverty which in turn, drives the process of social exclusion.

As the social exclusion theory explains, limited access to the job market and denied opportunities can lead to social marginalization (Pierson, 2009). As mentioned by the participants, being denied job opportunities because of structural racism and discrimination can have long-term consequences. The theory helped the authors to connect the dots between denied job opportunities, social marginalization, and structural racism

6.7 Theme: Strategies to tackle structural racism

One of the interview questions was *what strategies do social work professionals use to ensure the constant and effectiveness in the process of employment of second-generation Afro-swedes?* The participant brought up multiple ways and examples to improve second-generation afro-swedes employability possibilities and decrease social exclusion. Racial discrimination in the workplace is illegal under the Discrimination Act (2015), so tackling it is both a legal and ethical necessity in Sweden. The main solutions discussed by participants were employability inclusion through programs and education and additionally creating awareness in the community and at the workplace level.

6.7.1 The Diversity Education Training at Workplace Level

The participant brought up multiple ways and examples to improve second-generation afro-swedes inclusion in the work place. The main solutions discussed by the participants were awareness in the community employability integration through programs, education and additionally creating and at the workplace level and diversity Education and Training at the workplace. All the participants mention creating awareness as one of the fundamental solutions to tackle structural racism afro-swedes experience in the Swedish labour market. Interactions with people who as seen through social exclusion theory, discriminative institutional practices drive the process of ethnic minorities in the labor market and wider in the society (Taket et al., 2009). The racial discrimination in the

workplace is illegal under the Discrimination Act (2015) so tackling it is both a legal and ethical necessity in Sweden. As commonly known, the first step in solving a problem is to recognize that it does exist. As participant 3 states,

“Raising awareness about structural inequalities in the Swedish labor market helps employers to make better decisions by understanding things from multiple perspectives. The Swedish employers should have a basic knowledge of the cause and effects of structural racism second-generation afro-swedes experience in the Swedish labour market.”

Participants 2 and 3 discussed the following to improve the employment possibilities for second-generation afro-swedes. All the participants emphasized the notion that employers should take better responsibility to create a safe work environment for everyone including workers from ethnic minorities. On the same note, Participant 1 points out that Second-generation afro-swedes should feel comfortable and safe to share their experience of discrimination and express their views like everyone else without fear of belittling or microaggression. As participant 1 states,

” The employer must ensure that all employees are skilled to identify and prevent discrimination and as well act properly in cases of discrimination.”

Within the context of social exclusion, reverencing uniqueness and promoting inclusion are necessary to create feelings of belongingness, especially when talking about individuals belonging to minority groups (Taket et al., 2009). In accordance with participants' views, effective solutions can bring both the employer and the employees together to work toward a common goal and eradicate social exclusion at work. Participant perceptions were connected to social exclusion theory states that, social exclusion at institutions can be reduced through ensuring a safe anti-racist work environment (Taket et al., 2009). On a similar note, participants 3 mentions that,

“Many jobs state to have zero discrimination policy, its content and implementation in practice may be unclear to many. Training is successful when the employee can identify concrete measures to prevent discrimination. “

Social worker 1 explains that complaints should be taken seriously and handled openly in the workplace. According to previous studies, diversity in every organization can be effective if measures to prevent discrimination that are handled openly can improve employees workplace wellbeing (Ben, Kelly & Paradies, 2020). In many cases, racist situations are not just a problem between two people but generally reflect the culture of the workplace as a whole. Participant 2 further mentioned that support for the diversity of people in a group brings belongingness and uniqueness. For instance, afro-Swedes who are unique and developed networks will have a sense of belongingness and report a high level of career optimism in the future. As social exclusion theory explains, belongingness is the feeling of security and sense of acceptance. Employees who have sense of belongingness and inclusion can bring their authentic self to work which improves their work performance (Ben et al., 2020). With the help of the social exclusion theory, the authors were able to gain a better insight into the connection between diversity training at the workplace and structural racism and how diversity training can promote employment possibilities for the second-generation afro-swedes in the Swedish labor market.

6.7.2 Promoting Social Inclusion at the community level

All the respondents agreed upon the need for economic and social empowerment as one of the central ways to tackle structural racism at the community and societal levels.

Different levels of society must successfully address societal inequality faced by certain ethnic and cultural groups. The solutions discussed by the participants were raising awareness, Employment Support and Empowering communities.

Among all the participants creating awareness and diversity training were seen as the primary solution to tackle the issue of structural racism and social exclusion at the municipality level. The participants mentioned that to prevent political polarization, the municipality in Sweden should arrange occasions for more of a culture of dialogue, openness, and solidarity. As the social exclusion theory explains public awareness is crucial to promote support and incite self-mobilization in individual and community level. As participant 3 mentions, local communes should take specific actions to promote and raise awareness about these initiatives and sensitize people about the benefits of interactions and diversity. Additionally, participant 4 states that,

“Raising political awareness is important as policy makers are key actors in the policy process of decreasing societal inequalities and promoting social exclusion.”

Participants from both municipalities, in Gälve and Malmö, mentioned that municipality commune programs are adapted to local needs to achieve a greater impact in the community and society. Other perceptions highly discussed among all the participants were employment support and local support groups on the community level. Participants from Malmö gave an example of the Malmö commune participation and partnering with local organizations and NGOs to improve the social integration of second-generation Afro-Swedes and other vulnerable groups. All the participants highlight that the Swedish Employment Service supports employment by providing subsidies to long-term unemployed people. Participant 1 mentioned that second-generation Afro-Swedes and other minority groups have benefited from it. The long term aim of the provided help is to get acquainted with the Swedish working environment and build a social network that could help them into the Swedish labour market. Additionally Participant 3 mentions,

“That Swedish public employment services provide assistance with an employment training program to strengthen career skills and makes it easier to find a job”.

Socially excluded individuals who have been marginalized as a result of previous negative experiences in the Swedish labor market can be integrated into the workforce through programs directly targeted to different minority groups. The Swedish public employment service provides a short vocationally oriented training program. The program is available for everyone regardless of gender and ethnicity (Arbetsförmedlingen, 2020). Participant 4's views were that these programs offered by the municipalities and the Swedish public employment service have integrated more marginalized groups than the natives swedes. The perceptions and solution provided by the participants are by social exclusion theory stating that ensuring access to employment and the tools to participate in social life are fundamental sectors to hinder structural inequalities and to promote social inclusion.

When analyzing the collected data, the authors drew greater attention to the link between community empowerment and structural racism. In the light of social exclusion theory empowering communities, and individuals by giving them a platform, voice, and allowing them to openly express their views, issues, and opinions is fundamental (Pierson, 2009).

Empowerment refers to the process by which people and communities gain control over the challenges, factors and decisions that shape their lives (Taket et al.,2009). Community empowerment refers to the process of enabling communities to increase control over their lives (Taket et al.,2009).

All the participants mention that community Empowerment is best promoted when it is implemented by closely collaborating with local leadership in underserved communities to provide essential solutions. On a similar note, a participant from Malmö adds,

“Several communities -local labor market partnerships have begun to appoint individuals who act to ‘bridge’ in the community. Such partnerships help to navigate complex social challenges. This concept has been applied particularly in underserved communities in Malmö”

This statement highlights the importance of the working individual and at the grassroots level to improve the economic and social participation of the community. Social exclusion theory helped the authors relate to the concept of community empowerment. As the theory explains, community empowerment promotes strong relationships with the community by developing a deep understanding of community issues and by implementing creative strategies to encourage social participation (Taket et al.,2009).

Chapter 7 – Discussion

7.1 Summary of the Results in Relation to the Aim

To summarize the findings concerning our research questions, it was found that structural racism is still prevalent in the Swedish labor market. This study was based on the views of the professionals working with second-generation afro-swedes experiencing on the various forms of structural racism in the Swedish labor market. The aim of this study was to gain further understanding of how social worker at the Swedish Public Employment Service perceive structural racism in the Swedish labor market for second-generation afro-swedes. The participants mentioned cultural incompetency, discriminatory employment and education, and limited access to the job market as factors driving structural racism and social exclusion. The perceptions provided by the participants gave

the authors more practical examples of how structural racism can manifest in the employability process. Part of the research questions focused on what kind of strategies can be implemented to improve the employment possibilities for second-generation Afro-swedes which helped to the authors to see the challenges in a solution-oriented way. These four main perceptions provided by the participants have been analysed through the theoretical framework of social exclusion theory.

The issue of cultural incompetency was discussed in the first theme. All the participants described lack of cultural knowledge as the backbone that leads to misunderstanding of cultural values and norms. The participants brought up that cultural incompetency among the employers hinders second-generation afro-swedes possibilities in the Swedish labor market and drives the process of social exclusion and racism. In addition, interviewed participants emphasized that the fear of the unknown could sometimes lead to employers having a negative perception of certain cultures leading and lead to discriminative treatment. Other points discussed in this section were the challenges brought by biculturalism and bilingualism. The results show that second-generation afro swedes being raised between two different cultures could limit their social and cultural participation. The last view discussed in this section of cultural incompetence was name discrimination. As repeatedly mentioned in the interviews, Second-generation afro-swedes who have an African native name experience discrimination in the Swedish labor market during job applications. The authors describe how culture, and the multidimensionality can affect second-generation afro-swedes in individual and societal level.

The second theme recognized was structural racism as a reason why second-generation afro-swedes experience discriminatory employment. The authors noticed that there is an overlapping in the different reasons concerning structural racism and inequalities. All the interviewed participants agreed that discriminatory employment is one of the central problem in the Swedish labor market and main drivers of social exclusion. Thought various examples, the author gained clearer view on how discriminatory behaviour manifests in the Swedish labor market. Macroaggression and bias and prejudice were discussed under this section of discrimination as well by all participants. The result shows the effects of structural racism and how can decrease second generation afro-swedes employment possibilities. As stated by the participants, structural racism manifests by second-generation afro-swedes experiencing macroaggression whereby they receive

negative verbal or non-verbal messages at their workplace leading to marginalization and social exclusion. Bias and prejudice were also mentioned as negative attitudes commonly experienced by second-generation afro swedes at the workplace because of harmful stereotypes. The results show that discrimination can take many forms and can often be difficult to identify.

In the third theme, the participants stated education and school achievements as a major components related to structural inequalities and racism. The participants' statements gave us a clearer view of the interdependency between education, structural racism, and social exclusion. According to interviews, poor school achievements are commonly directly linked to their social connectedness and their success in the labor market. However, there was a positive side of the view that second-generation afro-swedes tend to work hard in developing their working potential to give them more opportunities in the Swedish labor market. It was discussed further that linguistic skills are often limitation and the manifestation of inequalities racism in the society. All interviewed participants emphasized the importance of having good Swedish language skills in the Swedish labor market. The participant mention that Second generation afro-swedes are bilingual or multilingual which can result in them having an accent in the way they speak the Swedish language. Because of this, they risk rejection in the workplace and job applications in form of structural racism. The authors found that notion essential and important to consider in job search process concerning bilingual people.

In theme four, the author discussed findings concerning the limited access to the job market. The main point discussed by participant was second-generation afro-swedes accessing merely low-paying jobs and its connection structural racism in the Swedish labor market. According to participants, exclusion was common within the high-skill job in the Swedish labor market. This notion helped the authors to understand why second-generation afro-swedes are overrepresented in low-paid jobs and underrepresented in high-profile jobs. The participants pointed out how second-generation afro-swedes have limitations in the Swedish labor market irrespective of their educational or skill development. The participants discussed that low-paying jobs are mostly connected to the type of job second-generation afro-swedes apply to. As stated by the participants, socially disconnected second-generation afro-swedes are at risk of unemployment and poverty and have greater risk of ending up socially excluded in terms of health and well-being,

social relations, and safe housing. Additionally, unemployment, and low pay of the stem from structural inequalities. Therefore, the authors agree that on the importance of granting everyone non-discriminative access to a job equivalent to education. Structural inequalities should be addressed by tackling economic and structural discrimination.

The last theme discussed was the strategies to tackle structural racism and to improve the employment possibilities of second-generation afro-swedes in the Swedish labor market. The solutions discussed by the participants were raising awareness, Employment Support and Empowering communities. From the participants years of experience, economic and social empowerment were said to be one of the central ways to tackle structural racism in community and in the societal level. From our findings, lack of cultural diversity and inclusion reduces the chance of second-generation afro-swedes sense of belongingness. When discussing solutions, the participants mentioned education training and the workplace as a critical tool to help maintain cultural diversity in the Swedish labor market. From the results the authors noticed that different forms and levels of structural racism and social exclusion affecting second-generation afro-swedes are interconnected. Therefore, the authors agree with the perception that different levels of society must successfully address societal inequalities faced by certain ethnic and cultural groups.

7.2 Theory Discussion

The collected data was analyzed based on Social Exclusion theory with focus on employment and structural racism. The theory of Social Exclusion used for this study to explore how structural racism manifests in employability of second-generation afro Swedes. We applied social exclusion theory both to identify the problem and to find solutions for structural racism in job search. According to social exclusion theory, unemployment is one of the most significant risk factors for social exclusion. This is in accordance with participants statements saying that second generation afro-swedes are being partly socially excluded, because of different factors, such as language proficiency, cultural differences and discriminatory unemployment. The interviews helped us to have a more insightful perception of how structural processes in the society and generational social exclusion creates inequality and barriers and how it hinders second generation afro-swedes from integrating in the Swedish labor market. Employer bias and prejudice threaten to exclude second generation Afro Swedes from the labor market and wider

society. The theory helped us to recognize how different sectors in society and social norms are overlap and drive the process of structural racism and social marginalization. The theory revealed the interdependency of social inclusion, success in the labor market and discrimination and provided us with better insight on the scale and harmful effects of the problem. The social workers interviewed brought new valuable perspectives on how social exclusion appears in the job search as well as in the workplace.

7.3 Earlier Research Discussion

The earlier research chapter is divided into four sections. At first, general information is stated regarding various international field studies about discrimination in the labor market. The authors mention that there is a vast knowledge of the previous literature reviews regarding first-generation immigrants' employability and economic integration but only a few corresponding studies concerning second-generation immigrants. Next, we presented three central Swedish field studies related to discrimination in the labor market which are Rooth & Ekberg (2007), a field study by Carlsson (2010) and Andersson & Hammarstedt (2011) To get the most comprehensive picture possible, the authors aimed to collect data from different decades. The earlier research studies were from 2003 and the most recent from 2020. The authors recognized that all the presented studies were in accordance with our results and analysis. All research focuses on structural racism in the Swedish labor market. A field study conducted by Rooth and Ekberg (2003) found that particularly second-generation immigrants with non-European ethnic backgrounds had a lower probability to get employed and lower earnings. As seen throughout our study results cultural background has a deleterious effect on second-generation afro-swedes employment possibilities. Another field study by Andersson & Hammarstedt (2011), states that there is a certain amount of intergenerational transmittance between the parental and the descendant generation. Despite of second-generation immigrants having a better starting point than their parents, in terms of economic and social capital, their social integration and their success in employability is not matching with native Swedes (Behrenz et al., 2007). This is in accordance with our participants notions saying that in some cases, parents culture and social capital can sometimes have degenerative affect in terms of social and economic integration. The more know Swedish field study by

Carlsson (2010), in turn concluded that a letter from an applicant with a foreign-sounding name is less likely to result in an interview than an identical letter from an applicant with a Swedish sounding name. Participant cited many examples of how culture and the names associated with it complicate the job search of second-generation afro-swedes and lead in discriminatory employment. Participants notions, however, made the author reflect how sometimes it is not a matter of outright racism but rather of fear of the unknown and cultural incompetency. The fourth study mentioned in the previous studies was, more recent International Field Experiments study by Quillian, Heath and al. (2019). According to study results including 97 European countries, the study suggests that Sweden is one of the worst countries for trying to get a job interview if you're perceived to be an immigrant from outside Europe. Our own research was based on interviews with private individuals, so the research results are not directly comparable. The study by Quillian, Heath and al. (2019) is international while our qualitative study is conducted on a small scale locally in Sweden. However, both studies had many similarities in the reference to first- and second-generation inferior success in the Swedish labor market.

7.4 Methodology Discussion

The methods of the study and the research questions were carefully planned and written down for clarity purposes. It was interesting for both authors to choose two different cities for the study. Having participants from two different cities provided the authors more diverse perceptions that answer the aim of the study. The author decided to use the snowball sampling method to reduce the struggle of finding the participants because contacting the social workers working at Swedish Public Employment Service was quite challenging and slow process. Fortunately for us, we found a social worker working in the Gävle office as a case officer in the Swedish Public Employment Service and he agreed to proceed with the interviews. The participants provided us with contact information of their colleagues who they think would be appropriate for our study. In this way, we were able to gather all the participants both in Gävle and Malmö. We got the required number of participants to interview through phone calls. All the contacted participants were interested in being part of the thesis and answering the research question. The interview was conducted on zoom for all the participants. All our participants were social workers and case officers in the Swedish public employment service. All the participants said the research aim and question were quite sensitive to

discuss. Nevertheless, the participants' answers met our expectations regarding our research questions and the study aim. The interviews were conducted by both authors; while interviewing the participant, one asked the interview question, and another took notes. All the participants gave consent to the recording of the interviews and signed the consent letter before the interview. The authors focused more on in-depth interview to get more comprehend answers and views. The authors remained unbiased throughout all the interviews. The data was usually transcript immediately after the interview to reduce uncertainty to achieve a more detailed analysis. The process of thematic analysis was conducted after transcription. These steps are believed to increase the credibility of our study.

7.5 Suggestion for further research

There has been much research done concerning first-generation immigrants and afro-swedes, but there is very limited amount of studies carried out concerning second generation afro-swedes and structural inequalities they face in the Swedish labor market. Therefore, the authors would suggest further research regarding merely second-generation afro-swedes. The study is only based on the perceptions of four social workers who has years of experience working with different disadvantages social groups, such as afro swedes. The authors saw from the findings that the data gotten from the participants were on-sided as the perceptions were based merely on their experience. The research questions the authors would like to explore more for the future are how structural racism affects second generation afro-swedes mental health and how strong is the correlation between biculturalism and social exclusion. It would also be interesting to produce a quantitative study on the subject so that the results can be analyzed in the light of statistics. Although the perspectives provided by the participants were very insightful and interesting, the author's initial idea was to interview the second-generation afro-swedes themselves. However, this was not possible due to the ethical guidelines set by the University of Gävle. Therefore, suggestion for the future study is to carry qualitative or quantitative research solely based on the perceptions and experiences of the second-generation afro-swedes concerning structural inequalities in the labor market and wider in the Swedish society.

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APPENDICES

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

The researcher should retain one copy of the consent form signed by both themselves and the participant. The participant should also be given a copy of the consent form as a record of what they have signed up to.

Even if a person has signed a consent form consent should still be re-established at the point of doing the interview.

TITLE: VARIOUS FACTORS BEHIND STRUCTURAL RACISM IN THE SWEDISH LABOR MARKET

Consent to take part in research

- I voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.
- I understand that even if I agree to participate now, I can withdraw at any time or refuse to answer^[1]any question without any consequences of any kind.
- I understand that I can withdraw permission to use data from my interview within two weeks after the interview, in which case the material will be deleted.
- I have had the purpose and nature of the study explained to me in writing and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.

- I understand that I will not benefit directly from participating in this research.
- I agree to my interview being audio-recorded.
- I understand that all information I provide for this study will be treated confidentially.

- I understand that in any report on the results of this research my identity will remain anonymous. This will be done by changing my name and disguising any details of my interview which may reveal my identity or the identity of people I speak about.
- I understand that disguised extracts from my interview may be quoted in dissertation, conference presentation.

- I understand that signed consent forms, original audio recordings and transcript of my interview will be retained with the research until June 2022 when exam board confirms the results of our thesis
- I understand that under freedom of information legalization I am entitled to access the information I have provided at any time
- I understand that I am free to contact any of the people involved in the research to seek further clarification and information. Names, degrees, affiliations, and contact details of researchers (and academic supervisors when relevant).

Signature of research participant

Name and Signature of participant

Date

I believe the participant is giving informed consent to participate in this study

Moses Akhigbemen

Name and Signature of researcher

Date

Kirsi Mutshipule

Name and Signature of researchers

Date

Contact Information :

Kirsimutshipule@gmail.com

moses4eva2002@yahoo.com

Research Questions

2. How does social worker at the Swedish Public Employment Service perceive structural racism in the Swedish labor market for second-generation afro-swedes?

Sub-questions

3. How does the social workers at the Swedish Public Employment Service perceive the reasons to structural racism for second-generation afro-swedes in the Swedish labor market?
4. What strategies does the social workers at the Public Employment Service believe can be implemented to improve the employment possibilities for second generation Afro-swedes?

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- Based on professional experience, what are the reasons behind second-generation afro-swedes not getting a job that matches their educational skill in the jobs market?
- What strategies do social work professionals use to ensure the constant and effectiveness in the process of employment of second-generation Afro-swedes?
- As a social worker how we can intervene discrimination in employability? Solutions?

Structural Racism and Discrimination

- What are the most prevalent causes of discrimination in employability?
- How discrimination manifest in the Swedish labor market?
- How do cultural differences (language, accent, religion, society norms, etc.) affect employability?
- What Advice would you suggest to employees improve second generation afro-swedes employability opportunities?