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**Intended Inclusions, Unintended Exclusions: Newly Arrived Children in the Swedish
Education System**

A qualitative expert interview study conducted in Lund, Sweden

SIMV07 Master's (Two Years) Thesis in Global Studies

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Abstract

The proposed study aimed to understand the conditions central to the inclusion and exclusion of the newly arrived children in the Swedish education system by investigating the relevant procedures and actual practices. By employing an inductive qualitative approach, the data were collected from official documents and expert interviews with the responsible actors in the field i.e. government servants, educators and NGO representatives via a fieldwork conducted in Lund, a student town in southern Sweden. Using theory grounded on the collected data, it was found that the organizational conditions i.e. procedures, language education, financial resources, and children's conditions i.e. age differentials, living circumstances and legal status have intended including and unintended excluding effects for the newly arrived children in the school system. Due to the paradoxical nature of these concepts, it is argued that there always exists a tension between states of inclusion and exclusion.

Keywords: Swedish education system, newly arrived children, education, inclusion, exclusion

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1. Introduction

1.1 Research Problem and Question

To include something/someone one must first recognize the exclusion of the object/person. Similarly, declaring an area as “inside” firstly necessitates the definition of the “outside”. The “core” can only exist with the creation of the “periphery”. At the periphery of the nation states in today’s world are the international migrants, asylum seekers or refugees who are often portrayed as challenges to the receiving countries but also are the subjects of the discourses surrounding their “necessary integration” into the host societies. The structure and gravity of these policies depend on the political, social, and economic dynamics of the different countries yet they must employ a common goal: the provision of the fundamental human rights of the newcomers. This obligation applies to the ratifying countries of the human rights conventions conditioned by the United Nations¹. Among these rights, education remains crucial since it is at the intersection of the debates around universal human rights, especially rights of the child, and the interests of the nation states. The educational opportunities of the newcomer children and the youth in the host countries can often be limited and, in most cases, their existing knowledge and skills are neither found adequate nor valued (Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001).

While “the right to education” must be ensured for all children regardless of their legal status, i.e. citizen, refugee, asylum seeker, undocumented; the implementation of it is highly divergent among countries. This variation became most visible after the recent refugee influx from Syria that reached its peak point in 2015 when millions of people having to flee from their countries were depicted as a cause of “crisis”, especially for Europe. The responsibility towards the people in need of immediate protection and social services was not shared fairly among the European states while some rebuilt their borders with walls and some promoted the “Refugees Welcome” movements.

¹ The 1951 Refugee Convention. <http://www.unhcr.org/3b66c2aa10>. Retrieved on 07.07.2018

As one of the countries that had the “welcoming” attitude, Sweden accepted a significant number of asylum applications, which made it the top country in Europe with per capita². What striking in these statistics is that almost half of the total asylum applicants in 2015 were children and this percentage remained considerable despite the overall decrease in asylum applications in the following years.³ Further, nearly half of these children were unaccompanied meaning that they arrived in Sweden without an accompanying parent or legal guardian. With these, asylum seeker and refugee children constitute the biggest group of the newly arrived children in Sweden in the recent years. Accepting more newly arrived children in the school system necessitates hiring more specialized teachers as well as having enough classroom spaces. Moreover, this process requires certain regulations and clear guidelines both for the policymakers and responsible actors in the field.

Following this further, the proposed research aimed at investigating the essential educational procedures and practices for the newly arrived children in Sweden. For this purpose, the data was collected from government documents and semi-structured expert interviews with a variety of administrators, educators, and NGO representatives through a fieldwork conducted in Lund, a student town in Southern Sweden. During this process, the following research question was tried to be answered:

- *What conditions are central to the inclusion and exclusion of the newly arrived children in the Swedish education system?*

As a result, the analysis of the data showed that the newly arrived children’s inclusion and exclusion in the Swedish education system were affected by the organizational conditions i.e. procedures, language education, financial resources as well the conditions of their own i.e. age differentials, living circumstances and legal status. It is argued that these conditions produce including and excluding effects both in the short and long-term for the children newly arrived in Sweden.

² <https://www.loc.gov/law/help/refugee-law/sweden.php> Retrieved on 07.07.2018.

³ <https://www.migrationsverket.se/English/About-the-Migration-Agency/Facts-and-statistics-/Statistics.html> Retrieved on 07.07.2018.

Moreover, this special group of children's high dependency on the state services i.e. education, housing, healthcare, etc. suggests that the already existing organizational procedures and practices for the newcomers must be adapted with regards to the dramatic increase in such needs. Including to that, children's own circumstances e.g. legal status or whether being unaccompanied or not, determine the extent of their accessibility to the services provided by the state that has a responsibility to ensure their rights as children among which education remains crucial. Yet, it is questionable whether having access to schooling means newly arrived children have the same educational opportunities and outcomes with the non-newly arrived children who have different legal and cultural belongingness to Sweden through citizenship and language ties.

This way of questioning inevitably leads to a broader discussion of whether being included in the school system through legal procedures guarantees the same level of inclusion for all the children. As stated previously, the talk of "inclusion" unavoidably points to the existence of "exclusion". In the case of the newly arrived children in host countries, the prevalent discourses revolve around their reception in the school systems yet one must question whether the including procedures result in unintentional exclusions.

1.2 Limitations

Throughout the data collection and writing process of this research, the author is aware that it is problematic to use certain categorizations such as "newly arrived", "refugee", "migrant", "asylum seeker" for children whose voices are missing in this study. This practice inevitably underestimates their individual differences, backgrounds, and agencies. Further, the approach to associate the migrant children with traumatic histories and vulnerabilities depoliticizes the obligations of the states to offer social services by rather showing them as a "favor". Yet, the term "newly arrived" will be mainly used in this research since the official documents obtained from government agencies as well as the experts interviewed in this study prevalently referred to the term "nyanlända" translated as "newly arrived" in English.

Moreover, this study does not intend to propose a policy suggestion on which education method schools should implement. Although it employs conceptual approaches from various disciplines

such as education, psychology, and child rights, the main aim is to bring a sociological point of view on the issues regarding inclusion and exclusion when it comes to the barriers that exist due to one being “the other” within or out of a system. Thus, the researcher is aware of possible mismatch of the terms or arguments between different fields of disciplines regarding the education of newly arrived children.

Further, the phenomenon this study aims to investigate is limited by its temporality effect since the procedures and practices for the education of the newly arrived children in Lund was highly influenced by the recent influx of asylum seekers. The fact that this impact might not persist in the following years due to the arrival of fewer children may serve as a limitation to the conclusions inferred from this study.

Lastly, since the author of this study is a non-Swedish speaker, the language factor stands as a limitation to this qualitative research conducted in a Swedish context.

1.3 Disposition

Following the introduction section, the second chapter constitutes the background section that to provide the reader with the definitions used in this study as well as important information about the newly arrived children in Sweden. The last section of this chapter will give an overview of the Swedish education system while the next chapter after background will provide the theoretical construction of the inclusion and exclusion concepts, the notion of inclusion in education, and the overview of the previous studies using these theoretical concepts in the educational settings for the newly arrived children. The fourth chapter will construct the methodological considerations of this study including to ethical concerns and limitations. The findings of the data collection will be presented in Chapter 5, and the discussion of the results will take place in the following chapter. The last chapter will provide the conclusion and summary of the research process and findings.

2. Background

2.1 Definitions

Throughout the paper, different definitions will be used to refer to the group of children as the focus of this study. Among these descriptions, the term “newly arrived” will be the most common one as it serves as a comprehensive concept covering asylum seekers and refugees whether unaccompanied or not, Roma children without a permanent residence permit as well as children who moved to Sweden mainly with their families on a voluntary basis. According to the Swedish Law, newly arrived children (nyanlända elever in Swedish) is used for minors during the first 4 years of their stay in Sweden. In addition to this term, “students” or “pupils” will be used to refer to the same group since the data obtained from official documents or the experts have occasionally preferred these usages of the term instead. To have a clearer understanding, the term “asylum seeker” will refer to a person in need of international protection yet whose refugee status has not been determined whereas the term “refugee” will be assigned to an individual whose asylum application has been accepted⁴. The “undocumented” or “paperless” (papperslös in Swedish context) terms will refer to the situation where one’s residency in a country is unauthorized. Lastly, “unaccompanied minors” will refer to the newcomers under the age of 18 who arrived at Sweden without an accompanying parent or legal guardian to apply for asylum.

2.2 Newly Arrived Children in Sweden

In comparison with other immigration countries, Sweden has been successful in welcoming refugees⁵ or other migrant groups, i.e. labor migrants and their families over the last decades. During the so-called “refugee crisis”, the number of asylum applications in Sweden reached its peak point in 2015 with 162.877, almost doubling the number of applications received in 2014⁶.

⁴ <https://www.unrefugees.org/refugee-facts/what-is-a-refugee/> Retrieved on 06.07.2018

⁵ <http://www.oecd.org/sweden/Sweden-in-a-strong-position-to-integrate-refugees-but-support-for-the-low-skilled-needs-to-be-strengthened.htm> Retrieved on 07.07.2018

⁶ <https://www.migrationsverket.se/English/About-the-Migration-Agency/Facts-and-statistics-/Statistics.html>
Retrieved on 13.08.2018

Between 2015 and 2017, applicants coming from Syria constituted the largest group of people in need of protection, while other major groups of applicants came from Afghanistan, Iraq, Eritrea, and Somalia⁷. In 2015, approximately %43 of the asylum applicants in Sweden were children nearly half of whom were unaccompanied⁸. Due to the increasingly stricter border control policy of Sweden⁹ after 2015, the asylum applications have dramatically diminished, yet the percentage of children applicants remained significant each following year. Following this further, a considerable number of children newly arrived in Sweden in the recent years are the asylum seeker and refugee children coming from war-torn countries and thus in need of protection. The background of the remaining newly arrived children in Sweden shows diversity in terms of country background and language among whom the Roma children constitute as other vulnerable groups of the newcomers (Harris, et.al, 2017).

As one of the signatory states of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), Sweden recognizes the right of all the children to receive education services based on equal opportunity. Further, the Swedish Parliament voted in favor of the Government's proposal for incorporating the UNCRC into the Swedish Education Act in March 2018 and the new changes are to be enforced on January 1st in 2020¹⁰. Even now the attainment of the equal rights of all children in education is strongly emphasized in the Education Act and declared as one of the fundamental tasks of the National Agency for Education¹¹. Therefore, the Swedish state has the obligation to provide education for the newly arrived children regardless of their legal status in the country. In order to understand the reception of the newly arrived children in the Swedish education system, it is essential to clarify the central authorities and regulations of the Swedish school system. The following section will serve to this purpose by describing the formal schooling structure in Sweden.

⁷ <https://www.migrationsverket.se/English/About-the-Migration-Agency/Statistics.html> Retrieved on 13.08.2018

⁸ <https://www.migrationsverket.se/English/About-the-Migration-Agency/Statistics.html> Retrieved on 13.08.2018

⁹ <https://www.migrationsverket.se/English/About-the-Migration-Agency/Migration-to-Sweden/History.html>
Retrieved on 08.07.2018

¹⁰ <https://www.riksdagen.se/en/news/2018/jun/18/un-convention-on-the-rights-of-the-child-to-become-law-in-sweden/> Retrieved on 13.08.2018

¹¹ www.skolverket.se Retrieved on 06.06.2018

2.3 The Swedish School System

The Swedish school system is separated into compulsory and non-compulsory education. Compulsory schools consist of the preschool (förskola), regular primary schools (grundskola), Sami school, special school, and schools for children with special needs. Non-compulsory education is provided in upper secondary school (gymnasieskola) and it also includes adult education and Swedish for Immigrants (SFI). As the pre-school education recently became mandatory, children have to attend the comprehensive school (preschool and primary school) for 10 years, starting at the year they turn six¹². After finishing the ninth grade in compulsory education, the next step is the optional 3 years of education at upper secondary school which is a prerequisite for university-level studies. All children are entitled to have the “freedom of school choice”¹³.

The Swedish National Agency for Education (Skolverket in Swedish) serves as the central administrative authority for the public and pre-schools, and adult education in Sweden¹⁴. The curricula, goals, and guidelines for the education system are set by the Parliament (Riksdag) and the Government through the Education Act (Skollagen)¹⁵. It is then the duty of the National Agency for Education to follow up and determine whether these goals are met¹⁶.

As another important educational authority, the Swedish Schools Inspectorate (Skolinspektionen), is responsible for “supervision and quality assurance” in the school system with a purpose of ensuring “the equal right of all children to a good education and knowledge in a secure environment”¹⁷. It is the government agency that routinely checks whether the local authorities are abiding by the rules and regulations. Although the parliament and the government have the control over the schools via these institutions and the Education Act, the municipalities have a significant authority in the planning and allocation of the resources since the

¹² <http://www.omsvenskaskolan.se/engelska/det-haer-aer-den-svenska-skolan/> Retrieved on 14.08.2018

¹³ <http://www.omsvenskaskolan.se/engelska/det-haer-aer-den-svenska-skolan/> Retrieved on 07.06.2018

¹⁴ <https://www.skolverket.se> Retrieved on 07.06.2018

¹⁵ http://www.riksdagen.se/sv/dokument-lagar/dokument/svensk-forfattningssamling/skollag-2010800_sfs-2010-800 Retrieved on 07.06.2018

¹⁶ www.skolverket.se Retrieved on 07.06.2018

¹⁷ www.skolinspektionen.se Retrieved on 07.06.2018

decentralization reforms conducted in the early 1990s¹⁸. The main purpose of the transfer of power from the state to the local authorities was to adopt the school system to the “local economic and demographic conditions, and thereby increase efficiency and accountability” (Ahlin & Mörk, 2008, p.4). Thus, the organization of the school activities and distribution of the financial resources may differ depending on the municipality while ensuring the equal rights of all children in education. This decentralized structure also influences the educational plan for the newly arrived children as municipalities are free on whether opening preparation classes or directly integrating the children in regular classes.

¹⁸ www.skolverket.se Retrieved on 07.06.2018

3. Review of Theory and Previous Research

3.1 Theoretical Review: Inclusion and Exclusion

The concepts of inclusion and exclusion have been widely used in public policymaking in the last decades (Mascareño & Carvajal, 2016). It is argued that the common usage of the inclusion/exclusion distinction in social policy agenda shows that it presents a “readily understandable and broadly applicable strategic and political criterion: people fall within or outside specific social criteria, above or below certain limits which express difference” (*ibid*, p.128). Yet, the terms inclusion and exclusion do not have concrete theoretical definitions in the literature (Farzin, 2006; Seifer, 2013 in Terhart & Dewitz, 2017) as there exist various approaches to these concepts which have a long tradition in the field of sociology (Mascareño & Carvajal, 2016). Further, there is not a constant condition of being included or excluded as “individuals move in a transitional space which can rarely be identified with permanent states” (*ibid*, p.139).

Accordingly, the inclusion and exclusion distinction employs a certain degree of paradox within it which has initially been pointed out by Georg Simmel on his essays “The Stranger” and “Secrecy” (Simmel & Wolff, 1950; Mascareño & Carvajal, 2016). According to Simmel, the stranger is the “potential wanderer” who

is fixed within a particular spatial group, or within a group whose boundaries are similar to spatial boundaries. But his position in this group is determined, essentially, by the fact that he has not belonged to it from the beginning, that he imports qualities into it, which do not and cannot stem from the group itself [...] His position as a full-fledged member involves both being outside it and confronting it. (Simmel & Wolff, 1950, p.402).

Further, the stranger is “neither in nor out, or may be both at the same time” (Mascareño & Carvajal, 2016, p.129). In “Secrecy”, Simmel proposes that those who are included know that they are included, and “the rest are excluded” (Mascareño & Carvajal, 2016, p.129). This knowledge of being included is the “inner property of the group”, which “involves a strong sense of difference (expectation) among persons” (*ibid*, p.129). The group identity and its boundaries

are developed through this secret inclusion. For inclusive groups e.g. nations and religions, the secret is “including everybody who is not explicitly included” (Simmel & Wolff, 1950, p.369).

Within certain political, religious, and status limits, everybody is considered immediately as “belonging” so long as he satisfies certain external conditions, which are usually not a matter of his will, but are given with his existence itself. All people, for instance, who are born within the territory of a given state, are members, unless particular circumstances make exceptions them, of the (often very complex) civic society. The member of a given social class is included, as a matter of course, in the social conventions and forms of connection of this class, unless he becomes a voluntary or involuntary outsider. (Simmel & Wolff, 1950, p.368).

In political terms, the states include its members by initially excluding members of the other states until they become formal citizens. With that, “[the state] excludes them in inclusion” (Mascareño & Carvajal, 2016, p.129). Similarly, religions include others by accepting them through “tolerance” which shows that the other is someone “who is nevertheless excluded as an equal” (p.129).

Following this further, the sociological meaning of inclusion in Talcott Parsons’s understanding is more explicit as it refers to “[t]he processes by which previously excluded groups attain full citizenship or membership in the societal community” (Parsons, 1965, p.1015).

In view of the pluralistic structure of modern societies, it is quite possible for persons or other units which are in some respects ‘outsiders’ to be included with ‘locals’ in other respects [...] inclusion is specifically because of the pluralistic structure of modern societies, not an either-or matter, but one of many partial components of membership and of ‘acceptance’ (Parsons, 2007, p. 73-74).

In this view, inclusion is related to acquiring full citizenship which Parsons (1965) viewed as an issue of “acceptance” that is “the capacity and opportunity for full participation without informal discrimination” (p. 1026). While full citizenship is the “ideal”, exclusions are implied through the “real citizenship” (Mascareño & Carvajal, 2016, p.130). Thus, for Parsons, membership and acceptance are multifaceted terms and “there are always exclusions to be overcome” since inclusion is eventually the “cumulative and incremental outcome” (*ibid*, p.130). Following further from these approaches, it can be argued that inclusion and exclusion are coexistent concepts as there could be no such states as “full inclusion” or “full exclusion” (*ibid*).

As a contemporary systemic sociological perspective, Niklas Luhmann's system-theoretical approach has been highly referred in the inclusion and exclusion debates in social sciences (Terhart & Dewitz, 2017). Accordingly, Luhmann (1995) proposes a difference between social system and environment as in the following:

Everything that happens belongs to a *system* (or to many systems) and *always at the same time* to the *environment of other systems*. Every determinacy presupposes carrying out a reduction, and every observation, description, and conceptualization of determinacy requires giving a system reference in which something is determined as an aspect of either the system or its environment. Every change in a system is a change in the environment of other systems; every increase in complexity in one place increases the complexity of the environment for all other systems. (p. 177).

Further, Luhmann (1995) argues that the difference between a system and its environment is not an “ontological one” as “[i]t does not cut all of reality into two parts: here system, there environment. Its either/or is not an absolute, it pertains only in relation to the system, though objectively.” (p.178). Moreover, each system is autopoietic (self-regulating) and thus they are jointly exclusive (Luhmann, 1995). With that, “social systems are only inclusive in their own logic” and could be related to exclusions in other systems (Terhart & Dewitz, 2017, p.292). For instance, prisoners are relevant to the judiciary system, yet they are most likely excluded from the system of politics since they do not possess the right to vote. (*ibid*, p.292).

Furthermore, inclusion can be defined as “being addressed by a system” (Luhmann, 2012 in Hilt, 2016, p.587) and meeting its requirements for participation (Hilt, 2016). As inclusion is the marked side of the distinction, exclusion then refers to the “unmarked” situation and “a side effect or ‘logical shadow’ of inclusion” when the requirements of the system are determined (Hilt, 2016, p.587). Since it is not possible for everyone to comply with the conditions of the system, inclusions will consistently be followed by exclusions (Luhmann, 2002 & Venneslan, 2013 in Hilt, 2016). While systems have different conditions, the definition of inclusion and exclusion cannot be generalized (Hilt, 2016) and thus shall be analyzed in context (Jønhill, 2012 in Hilt, 2016).

In addition to these perspectives, Goodin (1996)'s understanding of exclusion is set on margins and boundaries and the central meaning of exclusion is "keeping out" (p.347). The "keeping out" is described with regards to the boundaries that limit "'inside' from 'out'." (ibid, p.347). With that, an inclusive practice only has a meaning in the context of "something or another simultaneously being 'excluded'" (ibid, p.349). To put it simply, "for every 'inside', there is something which is 'outside'." (ibid, p.349). According to Goodin, the position according to this division is of importance for people since

[i]t matters hugely whether, as migrants, they are allowed in or kept out of the country; whether, as workers, they are allowed in or kept out of the labour market; whether, as residents, they are allowed in or kept out of the social safety net. (Goodin, 1996, p.348).

Even though it is essential to be on the "right side of the line" in all these matters,

[...] the point remains that couching the argument in terms of 'inclusion of the excluded' constitutes an argument for pushing them 'just over' the line. They remain borderline. [...] Being borderline, even if on the right side of the line, carries clear costs, even where seemingly it should not matter. (Goodin, 1996, p.348).

Accordingly, such inclusion of the previously excluded is "bare inclusion" and it indicates only "getting over the line" with no implications of "getting all the way to the centre" (Goodin, 1996, p.359). The civil rights movement for African-Americans can be argued as an example by the following:

[mid-century writers demanding 'full citizenship' for American blacks] would standardly say that civil rights and voting rights, important though they were, were not enough; for blacks to enjoy 'full citizenship', they would say, those rights had to be supplemented by other measures to bring blacks into the economic and social mainstream of American life (Parsons, 1965: 720-1). Full inclusion, thus construed, amounts just to inclusion across the full set of civil, political, economic and social spheres. (Goodin, 1996, p.359).

With that, the granting of civil rights to African-Americans is seen as a bare inclusion which only implies that it leads to their inclusion which is still not a full inclusion.

From the perspectives of different scholars put forward above, the main conclusion that can be drawn is that inclusion and exclusion are coexistent terms indicating that for every inclusion, there exists an exclusion. Similarly, if inclusion is defined as inside, it also points to those who are outside. Apart from that, inclusion in a certain system means meeting its requirements, yet

those included in certain systems might not be found relevant to the others and thus become excluded.

As systems composed of “various educational options within national territories” (Müller 1987, p.16 in Smehaugen, 2001, p.32), educational organizations may be defined as “inclusive and progressive” vs. “exclusive and segmented” (Smehaugen, 2001, p.32). Thus, the issues of inclusion and exclusion are relevant concepts in educational settings as well which will be put forward in the following section.

3.2 Inclusion in Education

Apart from the theoretical perspectives, the terms inclusion and exclusion started to gain significant reputation in public policy-making processes of international organizations in the 1990s (Mascareño & Carvajal, 2016, p.128). Among these, International Labor Organization (ILO), the United Nations (UN), commissions of the European Union (EU) have included these concepts in their “social agendas” (*ibid*, p.128).

Inclusion in education has also been defined as a civic purpose of the global politics thanks to the Salamanca Statement¹⁹ adopted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 1994 which proclaims that:

1. Every child has a fundamental right to education and must be given the opportunity to achieve and maintain an acceptable level of learning.
2. Every child has unique characteristics, interests, abilities and learning needs.
3. Education systems should be designed and educational programs implemented to take into account the wide diversity of these characteristics and needs.
4. Those with special educational needs must have access to regular schools which should accommodate them within a child centered pedagogy capable of meeting these needs.
5. Regular schools with this inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitude, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society, and achieving education for all; moreover, they provide an effective education to the majority of

¹⁹ Salamanca Statement. http://www.unesco.org/education/pdf/SALAMA_E.PDF. Retrieved on 29.07.2018

children and improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire education system.

Moreover, the United Nations Education for All movement essentializes “inclusive education” as its fundamental plan of action (Erten & Savage, 2012). With this, the goal is to design an education system that takes into consideration the diversity among learners, offers equality of opportunities and reduces exclusion²⁰. It is argued that the notion of inclusive education has employed a variety of connotations around the world since Salamanca (Miles & Singal, 2009). Hence, there is not a general agreement on the operationalization of inclusion for research purposes (Allan & Slee, 2008). Following this further, it is put forward that the investigation and identification of inclusions within the school settings has been methodologically challenging for the area of inclusive education (Nind et al., 2004 in Hilt, 2017). Yet, the theoretical construction on inclusion and exclusion is about creating means to detect exclusions rather than reaching a conclusive description of inclusion (Slee, 2004 in Hilt, 2017). Following this, the next section will provide the relevant research conducted in educational settings for the newly arrived children from the inclusion and exclusion perspective.

3.3 Research on Inclusion and Exclusion Dynamics in Schools for the Newly Arrived Children

Due to its multifaceted structure, the rights, opportunities, and dynamics within the school environment of the newly arrived children in immigration countries have captured the attention of researchers from diverse fields e.g. education, psychology, sociology and law. It is important to note that the previous research on the migration and education literature predominantly uses the terms “immigrant” or “migrant” terms to address the newcomer children. Thus, the review of such broad literature in this paper may occasionally follow the same definitions.

Regarding the education of immigrant children in the receiving countries, Adams and Kirova (2013) put forward that schools serve as the settings where the immigrant children have their

²⁰ UNESCO. 2000. The Dakar Framework for Action. Education for All: Meeting our Collective Commitments. Paris: UNESCO.

initial encounters with the culture of the host society, “which leads to school becoming a central part of life for the children” (p.2). Further, Corson (1999) argued that schools play a significant role in transmitting the prevalent rhetoric of the host culture by providing a space for children to observe everyday actions and acquire new methods of doing such things. Yet, the cultural capital of the child who is equipped with a different set of cultural norms may not be equally valued in the new school setting (Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001). In addition, Adams and Kirova (2013) state that the children’s type of relationship with the new cultural setting and the way their identities shape is heavily affected by their experiences with the school system and the previous circumstances that their families and themselves had gone through prior to the start at the new school. Thus, the previous findings support the view that the school environment plays a central role on the socialization and acculturation of the immigrant child (*ibid*). Nonetheless, this condition inevitably applies to the newly arrived child, regardless of their temporary or permanent residence situation in the country, that the educational environments will be the significant determinant on their socialization and adaptation to the new society. Thus, the study of inclusion and exclusion within the newcomers’ school settings is highly relevant to the previous findings that migration and education researchers put forward.

Previous research on inclusive/exclusive dynamics within the reception of the newly arrived children in education systems has been conducted in various immigration states, e.g. Germany, Norway, and Sweden (Terhart & Dewitz, 2016; Hilt, 2016; Folke, 2015). These studies have often employed different methodologies focusing on different aspects of the educational responses i.e. the classroom setting, the teacher’s didactical skills for the newcomers who do not know the local language, observations from the school environment, and interviews with students and the teachers (Terhart & Dewitz, 2016; Hilt, 2016; Folke, 2015). Although these studies follow methodological approaches different from the proposed research, they share a common ground for theorizing the inclusion and exclusion distinction existing in the education systems for the children newly arrived in the above-mentioned countries. Yet, as mentioned previously, the inclusion and exclusion concepts do not have concrete definitions in the literature (Farzin, 2006; Seifer, 2013 in Terhart & Dewitz, 2017). Therefore, what is important in research on the inclusion and exclusion is about creating means to detect exclusions rather than reaching a final description of inclusion (Slee, 2004 in Hilt, 2017).

With that, it has been found that previous studies on inclusion and exclusion within the educational settings for the newly arrived children employed varying approaches on these concepts and mainly took into consideration the school and classroom settings. Further, the focus in these studies has been on the pedagogical practices and the experiences of the children themselves. Following this, the proposed study contributes to the literature by offering a wide approach which includes organizational procedures and practices as well as children's own conditions.

4. Methodology

The proposed study constitutes a qualitative research as it employed an inductive approach by constructing grounded theory from the extended data obtained from expert interviews and official documents. In brief, the concepts of inclusion and exclusion as a theoretical approach were decided to be employed following the analysis of the main findings i.e. organizational conditions and children's conditions that determine the educational opportunities and outcomes of the newly arrived children in Sweden.

4.1 Research Design and Procedures

The grounded theory method proposed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) offers structured yet adaptable instructions for the collection and analysis of the qualitative data for constructing the theoretical perspectives grounded up from the data obtained from the study. Regarding this, Glaser and Strauss argue that constructing grounded theory is “a way of arriving at theory suited to its supposed uses [...] by logical deduction from a priori assumptions.” (1967, p.3). Further, in Charmaz (2006)’s words:

Grounded theorists start with data. We [grounded theorists] construct these data through our observations, interactions, and materials that we gather about the topic or setting. We study empirical events and experiences and pursue our hunches and potential analytic ideas about them. Most qualitative methods allow researchers to follow up on interesting data in whatever way they devise. Grounded theory methods have the additional advantage of containing explicit guidelines that show us how we may proceed. (Charmaz, 2006, p.3).

By this approach, the theory grounded up from the data “can usually not be completely refuted by more data or replaced by another theory” since it is “too intimately linked to data” and “destined to last despite its inevitable modification and reformulation” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p.4).

Due to the ongoing changes regarding the rules and regulations for the newly arrived children in the Swedish education system, an inductive approach described as such above was found best

fitted to start investigating the educational practices and procedures. With that purpose, the data collection constituted the first step of this study. Even though the target group of this study is “children”, certain limitations i.e. possible language barriers and ethical considerations of interviewing with minors discouraged the researcher to reach out to the newly arrived children. This decision was taken on the following account by Kostenius (2007):

[C]hildren are disadvantaged by factors of age, social status and powerlessness (Morrow & Richards, 1996). They are also taught to respect and obey adults (Eder & Fingerson, 2002) and the vulnerability of children raises the need of protection by adults (Morrow & Richards, 1996), which increases children’s helplessness and promotes them to less power. This might become a problem when children are being asked to participate in a research project making free participation and autonomy difficult to convey. (Kostenius, 2007, p.28).

Taking into the above ethical risks and the flexibility thanks to the grounded theory method employed in this study, semi-structured expert interviews were chosen as the data collection method in addition to the information obtained from official documents. The criteria to determine what constitutes an expert was put forward by Meuser and Nagel as in the following:

[A] person is considered an expert if she or he possesses an “institutionalized authority to construct reality” (Hitzler, Honer and Maeder, 1994). Expert knowledge is characterized by the chance “to become hegemonic in a certain organizational and functional context within a field of practice” and, thus, “to be influential in structuring the conditions of action for other actors [...] in a relevant way” (Bogner and Menz, 2002b, p. 46, our translation, cf. also Liebold and Trinczek, 2002, p. 36). (Meuser & Nagel, 2009, p. 19).

Further, Bogner et al. (2009) propose that expert interviews provide the researcher with “an effective means of quickly obtaining results and, indeed, of quickly obtaining good results” (p.2). Following this, the selection of the experts relied on the different aspects of the research aim as actors involved were government servants i.e. municipality, school administration, teachers and investigators, and respondents within the non-governmental sector. With this strategy, it was aimed to obtain information about the administrative procedures from government actors as well as the inputs of the respondents in the non-governmental sector who were viewed to have a more direct insight to the daily life dynamics of the children.

The sampling procedure of the experts was a combination of the purposive and snowball sampling methods (Lavrakas, 2008) as some of the experts were strategically selected

beforehand and others were recommended through these experts. The interviews were designed as semi-structured meaning that the researcher initially prepared an interview guide composed of important topics and questions identified based on the expertise of the respondent but was free to make changes during the interviews (Bernard, 1988). As experts interviewed in this study had different occupations, the interview guides included different questions about common topics based on their area of expertise. For the experts in administrative positions, the questions mainly aimed at obtaining information about the procedures, whereas the experts who had an experience of directly working with the newly arrived children were asked about not only about the procedures but also the actual practices including their criticisms. Overall, the common themes that were initially planned to discuss with all the experts were decided as follows:

- The education right of the undocumented and Roma children
- Duration in the preparation classes
- Age and country background of the children
- Free choice of school
- Views on integration

Yet, due to the flexibility of the research design that relied on inductive approach and semi-structured interviews, the information obtained from the experts went beyond these topics which made it possible to ground the theoretical concepts based on the findings. Following this further, the main findings that were drawn from the data i.e. organizational conditions and children's conditions determined the theoretical approach of this study i.e. inclusion and exclusion.

4.2 Data Collection

The data used in the analysis was obtained from a range of official documents and regulations including to semi-structured interviews with 9 experts in different roles as responsible actors in the field.

As the initial step, the extended data was gathered from the websites of the authorities within the government, the National Agency for Education²¹, the Swedish Migration Agency²² and the Swedish Schools Inspectorate²³. The documents that were in Swedish were translated using Internet-based programs and later double-checked with Swedish speaking persons within the social network of the researcher to avoid false interpretation of the data due to language barriers. However, in most cases, it was possible to access the summaries of the regulations were provided in English from various official websites.

As the next step following the desktop research, semi-structured interviews with 9 experts were conducted. All experts were initially contacted through e-mail and provided information about the research purpose and interview procedures. Among these, 8 interviews took place face to face in settings chosen by the interviewees and were recorded after their consent. The remaining one interview took place as a phone call. All voice recordings were transcribed, and notes were taken during the phone interview. All interviews were conducted in English.

The very first interview was conducted with a representative at LundaVälkomsten, the reception center where the newly arrived children have their screening tests and initial education between 1 to 3 weeks before enrolling in regular schools²⁴. As it was the first interview with a responsible actor in the field, the questions were mainly aimed at receiving information about the procedures and practices of the education system offered to the newcomers in Lund and overall in Sweden. Further, information of the schools with preparation classes in the city was obtained, which made it possible to contact teachers and school principal for the upcoming interviews thanks to the snowball sampling procedure that was partly employed in this research.

The following interviews were made with two investigators working at the Swedish Schools Inspectorate, a government agency which is “responsible for supervision and quality assurance in regard to preschools (primarily the municipal preschools), compulsory schools, upper secondary

²¹ Swedish National Agency for Education, <https://www.skolverket.se/>. Retrieved on 02.05.2018

²² Swedish Migration Agency, <https://www.migrationsverket.se/>. Retrieved on 02.05.2018

²³ Swedish Schools Inspectorate, <https://www.skolinspektionen.se/>. Retrieved on 02.05.2018

²⁴ <https://www.lund.se/utbildning--forskola/sarskola-och-resurscentrum/lunds-skolors-resurscentrum/lundavalkomsten/> Retrieved on 07.08.2018.

schools and the various forms of adult education.”²⁵ In relevance to the focus of this research, the interviewees who will be referred as Investigator 1 and Investigator 2 took part in publishing reports on “how the newly arrived children are received in the Swedish education system”²⁶ in 2009, 2014 and 2017.

The interviews with educators i.e. 2 teachers and one school principal took place in two primary schools (named as School 1 and School 2) in Lund that had preparation classes according to the information provided by the municipality. Both schools were known with their high concentration of students with a foreign background. 2 of the 3 interviews were conducted in School 1 with the assistant principal of the school and a teacher in Swedish as a second language (svenska som andra språk) who will be referred as Teacher S in the rest of the paper. In School 2, Teacher M who also was a teacher in Swedish as a second language was interviewed while the attempts to do an interview with the principal of the school were not successful. Since both teachers were working with the newly arrived children in the preparation classes, it was possible to obtain information regarding the classroom dynamics and their more or less direct insight to the lives of the children.

Last but not the least the remaining 3 interviews were conducted with experts working in non-governmental organizations. The first interview was made with Respondent E, who is a board member at a child rights organization in Lund. Apart from her expertise as an NGO representative, she accommodated an unaccompanied boy (who will be referred as Ali) from Afghanistan which made it possible to learn about the real-life practices of unaccompanied children. The remaining 2 interviews were made with the project leaders of an initiative that aims to arrange foster families and provide temporary accommodation to the unaccompanied youth who are no longer able to stay in the accommodation centers provided by the municipality due to being over 18 or determined to be above it because of the age assessment tests. These respondents will be referred as Project Leader S and Project Leader Y.

²⁵ <https://www.skolinspektionen.se/en/About-Skolinspektionen/About-the-Swedish-Schools-Inspectorate/> Retrieved on 07.08.2018.

²⁶ <https://www.skolinspektionen.se/sv/Beslut-och-rapporter/Publikationer/Granskningsrapport/Kvalitetsgranskning/skolhuvudmans-mottagande-av-nyanlanda-elever/> Retrieved on 07.08.2018.

4.2 Analysis of Data

The data analysis process essentialized answering to the research question “*what conditions are central to the inclusion and exclusion of the newly arrived children in the Swedish education system?*”.

For this purpose, the interview transcripts of the recorded interviews were coded into particularized themes that appeared throughout the interviews with the experts. Due to the multifaceted constitution of the educational procedures and practices for the newly arrived children, a wide range of issues was raised by the respondents. Initially, these findings were categorized under organizational, cultural and psychological facets as in the following:

Organizational Facet: Language Education, Screening Tests, Resources, Right to Education, Legal Situation, Regulation

Psychological Facet: Age, Attendance & School Success, Family & Class Background, Living Situation

Cultural Facet: Language and Country Background

During the later course of the analysis of data, it was inferred that a high degree of interpenetration among these codes existed for instance “right to education” and “screening tests” were found highly related to the “regulation” aspect and thus a need to combine them had risen. On the other hand, as part of the cultural facet, it was found that the information received about the language and country background of the children turned out to be limited and thus was excluded from the findings. Further, it was realized that using such a major category named as “psychological facet” was out of the scope of this study since as the interviews could not provide sufficient grounds to make claims about their psychology since children themselves were not personally interviewed. Yet, the views of the experts who had a direct insight to the daily lives of the children helped to have a rough interpretation of their feelings and perceptions, which were decided to be presented under the “children’s conditions”. After all these considerations, the

findings were determined to be analyzed under the theme “organizational conditions” and “children’s conditions” as follows:

Organizational Conditions: Procedures, Language Education and Financial resources

Children’s Conditions: Age Differentials, Living Circumstances and Legal Status

To describe these codes in brief, “procedures” refer to the regulations and the variety of the educational practices in Lund. The “language education” is given as the emphasis on teaching Swedish to the newly arrived children whose consequences were found worthwhile to analyze as a separate code. As the last node of the organizational conditions, “financial resources” relates to the state funding for the education and social services. Among children’s conditions, “age differentials” refer to the difference between younger and older children’s conditions found in this study, whereas the “living circumstances” will be based on whether children live with their parents or at state-sponsored accommodation centers. Lastly, the “legal status” specifies the different conditions that asylum seeker, refugee and undocumented children come across.

The reason these nodes are called “conditions” is that they are all results of the processes that the children do not have a direct control on yet are being affected by them. For instance, the legal status e.g. undocumented, asylum seeker, etc. is not actively determined by the children yet it implies a certain degree of effect in their educational opportunities and outcomes. Similarly, the node “financial resources” is attained through the procedures as in state funding for schools and housing for the newly arrived children and thus creates “conditions” for the children. Lastly, the reason to include two distinct but interrelated categories as “organizational conditions” and “children’s conditions” is that it was found that these conditions were either consequences of the organizational procedures and or factors depending on the children’s own differentials.

4.3 Ethical Considerations

To comply with the code of ethics provided by the American Sociological Association (ASA)²⁷, all interviewees were informed about the purpose of the study and their consent was taken regarding the interview recording procedures. To protect the interviewees' anonymity the names of the experts were changed with their titles e.g. teacher S, investigator 1, etc. despite they all gave consent to the researcher to include their information in the study. The motivation behind this decision was to fully ensure their confidentiality and not to cause any potential risk for their work positions due to their personal views included in this study. As stated previously, children were not interviewed in this study to avoid the risk of violating the ethical considerations regarding interviewing children given the time and resource availability of this research.

4.4 Limitations

This study is essentially limited due to the lack of the voices of the children who are the focus of the analysis. Another significant limitation is the language barrier between the researcher who is a non-Swedish speaker and the research context that takes place in Sweden even though both the researcher and the experts interviewed in this study are proficient in English.

Categorizing children as newly arrived, unaccompanied, asylum seeker, etc. further eliminates their agency and individual differences. Apart from that, conclusions about the children's feelings and interpretations were drawn from the opinions of the experts which stands as another major limitation to the discussion of the findings. Moreover, due to time and resource limitations, it was not possible to reach out to more schools with preparation classes in the city. Despite various attempts, it was not possible to conduct interviews with the teachers and school principals at the high schools in Lund that have preparation classes. Thus, the information regarding older children in high school level is limited to what the NGO representative and project leaders put forward and does not extend to the view of their teachers. Additionally, due to time and resource limitations, it was not possible to interview with the parents or guardians who would provide an extended view of the procedures and actual practices. Lastly, the findings of this study were obtained from the educational settings in Lund which constitutes as a unique city

²⁷ http://www.asanet.org/sites/default/files/asa_code_of_ethics-june2018.pdf Retrieved on 07.08.2018

in Sweden with its extensive academic environment and not a long history of hosting refugee or asylum seeker children in the school system. Thus, the conclusions inferred from this study are limited and one can question their generalizability to the educational structure countrywide.

5. Results

This section will provide the results of the analyses conducted based on the information received from the expert interviews as well as the procedural information obtained through desktop research. As mentioned previously, the below findings are the recurrent themes appeared throughout the interviews and claimed to constitute the essential dynamics of the lives of the newly arrived children in Sweden. Accordingly, these dynamics are found to be based on two distinct but interrelated categories i.e. *organizational conditions* and *children's conditions* to better understand the including and excluding effects of these factors in different settings. With this purpose, the following chapter will provide the *procedures, language education, and financial resources* within the organizational conditions and children's conditions i.e. *age differentials, living circumstances and legal status* will constitute the latter chapter of the analysis section.

5.1 Organizational Conditions

During the data collection and desktop research of this study, it was found that the conditions that are set by the migration authorities, as well as the municipal and parliamentary power structures, were crucial to what opportunities and rights the newly arrived children have access to in their educational environments in Sweden. Among these conditions, the procedures which are determined by the municipalities rather than the higher state authorities, the focus on the language education i.e. Swedish and availability of the financial resources have been found as central determinants on the organization of the education for the newcomer children in Lund. Overall, the organizational conditions investigated in this study aim at helping the reader to better understand what procedures are designed for the education of the newly arrived children, and the goal and the essential determinants of these procedures which are found as the focus on

Swedish education and financial resources. With this purpose, each essential dynamic will be proposed separately in the following subsections.

5.1.1 Procedures

The organizational procedures described in this section focus on the extent of the rights and opportunities the newly arrived children have in the school settings. Accordingly, the initial part of this section will provide the background information on the reception of the newly arrived children in Lund with a specific focus on the organization of the preparation classes while the experts' opinions regarding how these procedures are applied in practice will follow afterward.

The reception of the education for the newly arrived children in Lund is organized by the municipality at a special center called LundaVälkomsten²⁸ since 2015²⁹. As a collaboration of Child and School Administration³⁰, Education Administration³¹ and Social Services³² within the municipality, LundaVälkomsten was “motivated by the need for ‘one way in’ for all newly arrived children from 1-18 years”³³. Due to stipulations in the law in 2016 about the mandatory screening tests³⁴, all children newly arrived in Lund have their language, numerical and literacy knowledge mapped at this center, get lessons in Swedish as a second language and Math between 1-3 weeks in addition to a health check-up with a school nurse³⁵. Yet it was stated that the reception of the children is not regulated in the law, so the organizational procedures may show a

²⁸ LundaVälkomsten. <https://www.lund.se/utbildning--forskola/sarskola-och-resurscentrum/lunds-skolors-resurscentrum/lundavalkomsten/> Retrieved on 07.07.2018

²⁹ Interview with LundaVälkomsten.

³⁰ Barn- och skolförvaltningen. Child and School Administration is responsible for preschool, primary and child care in the municipality of Lund. [https://www.lund.se/kommun--politik/kommunens-organisation/forvaltningar-och-namder/barn--och-skolforvaltningen/](https://www.lund.se/kommun--politik/kommunens-organisation/forvaltningar-och-namnder/barn--och-skolforvaltningen/) Retrieved on 07.07.2018

³¹ Utbildningsförvaltningen. <https://www.lund.se/kommun--politik/kommunens-organisation/forvaltningar-och-namnder/utbildningsforvaltningen/> Retrieved on 07.07.2018

³² Socialförvaltningen. Social Services supports children / young people and their parents, adults with addiction problems or mental disabilities, people in need of support or labor market / rehabilitation, as well as reception and support for refugees.

<https://www.lund.se/kommun--politik/kommunens-organisation/forvaltningar-och-namder/socialforvaltningen/> Retrieved on 07.07.2018

³³ Interview with LundaVälkomsten

³⁴ Lag (2015:246).

³⁵ LundaVälkomsten. <https://www.lund.se/utbildning--forskola/sarskola-och-resurscentrum/lunds-skolors-resurscentrum/lundavalkomsten/> Retrieved on 07.07.2018

difference between municipalities³⁶. After this initial instruction and screening, students can either be placed in a preparation class or integrated directly into a regular class if they speak Swedish³⁷. In some cases, the students are encouraged to take part in regular classes in subjects which they have previous knowledge of and do not need the language skills such as math, cooking, handcraft, music, and physical education³⁸ while their remaining education is given in the preparation classes. The duration in these classes may vary between 6-18 months, depending on factors such as the age of the pupils, the school background the student has and how quickly the pupil learns Swedish. According to the law, the students should not be staying in these classes for longer than 2 years³⁹. It is stated by the municipality that the aim of the preparation classes is to enable the students to learn the basics of the Swedish language as quickly and efficiently as possible in connection with the different subjects in the curriculum⁴⁰. Apart from preparation classes, the newly arrived students receive tuition in their mother tongue as mandated by law, which is stated to be one or two hours⁴¹ per week depending on the need and numbers of students speaking the same language⁴². Further, the newly arrived children have access to support in their mother tongue (studiehandledning) during the classes from assistants who speak their language⁴³. As part of the equality of rights for all children in Sweden, freedom of school choice also applies to the newly arrived children.⁴⁴

In elementary school level, it was found that out of the 48 schools run by the municipality of Lund⁴⁵, 7 of them have preparation classes for the newly arrived pupils⁴⁶. In high school level, 2 schools have preparation classes⁴⁷ out of 5 upper secondary schools belonging to the municipality⁴⁸.

³⁶ Interview with LundaValkomsten

³⁷ <https://www.lund.se/utbildning--forskola/nyanlanda-barn-och-elever/> Retrieved on 07.07.2018

³⁸ Interview with teachers

³⁹ Lag (2015:246).

⁴⁰ <https://www.lund.se/utbildning--forskola/nyanlanda-barn-och-elever/> Retrieved on 13.08.2018

⁴¹ Interview with teachers

⁴² <https://www.lund.se/utbildning--forskola/modersmal/> Retrieved on 13.08.2018

⁴³ <https://www.skolverket.se/regler-och-ansvar/aktuella-regeländringar/lagändring-2018-08-01-studiehandledning-pa-modersmal-for-nyanlanda-elever> 07.08.2018

⁴⁴ Interview with LundaValkomsten.

⁴⁵ <https://www.lund.se/utbildning--forskola/grundskola/grundskolor/> Retrieved on 12.08.2018

⁴⁶ Interview with LundaValkomsten

⁴⁷ Interview with LundaValkomsten

⁴⁸ <https://www.lund.se/utbildning--forskola/gymnasieskola/gymnasieskolor/> Retrieved on 12.06.2018

According to the report⁴⁹ as well as the interview with the Swedish School Inspectorate representatives, children in the preparatory classes feel excluded, especially if they are placed in schools which are only composed of the newly arrived children. Moreover, it is found that they also feel “they are not normal or integrated part of the schools' educational as well as the social ecosystem.” and ask questions such as “when is the real school starting?”⁵⁰.

With regards to this, respondent E described the preparation class in high school level that Ali attended as “they put them all in one part of the school, so they are, you go down to the basement sort of, that's where they are. they are like, almost like separated from.” Referring to the same school, project leader S⁵¹ stated that this classroom was mainly composed of children from the same country or language background and put forward the following:

I don't think that they have any resources, or the teachers have any time to have projects to integrate more Swedish students with these students, so they are not integrated at all in [this] school. Like they are just with each other. So they don't get integrated at all, I wouldn't say that... why they don't have it [preparation classes] in the 2 other schools [] in Lund. They [other schools] don't have any of these classes. Maybe they could integrate them more if they are like separated from each other, different schools had different amount of the youths. Then like this, the classes are big, and they always meet each other and also when you try to integrate them through NGOs, everyone is calling the unaccompanied youths, they don't call the Swedish youths because it's difficult. Like, I remember, when I was Swedish, like when I was younger, I wouldn't go to this kind of things because you don't have time, you want to be with your own friends.

According to the project leaders, it can be argued that the classroom composition in terms of the language and country background plays an important for the integration of the newly arrived youth with the local children. By being isolated in one or few classrooms, the pupils are less exposed to the local language instead they tend to interact with their friends with the same language background, which is argued to be a negative factor for their integration. Regarding this, project leader Y referred to the some of the unaccompanied youth they work with who took the preparation classes at schools outside Lund and started the regular courses earlier by saying:

⁴⁹ Swedish Schools Inspectorate Report.

⁵⁰ Interview with the Swedish Schools Inspectorate.

⁵¹ Project leader S and Y work with unaccompanied youth over 18 to provide accommodation and find families to host them.

[W]e know there is a big difference between the youths. We have [students] who went to preparation classes outside of Lund, like in the smaller, like suburbs. They are much more integrated and they speak better Swedish and because they were forced into the normal classes very early. But the others that go to the high school, it's not the same. They are more with each other often that they have only the same speaking type of people in their class and a lot of them are boys. They need to meet girls as well and integrate them that way.

From above it can be said that learning the Swedish language is seen as essential for the integration of the newly arrived youth. However, the resources and the way the classes are organized is found problematic for integration by the respondents who have an insight into the daily lives of the newly arrived children.

As mentioned earlier, the Education Act, adopted by the Swedish Parliament, constitutes the essential guidelines and regulations for the preschools and schools in Sweden.⁵² Yet, due to the decentralized structure of the Swedish education system, there is a variety within the ways municipalities implement procedures when it comes to the educational integration of the newly arrived children⁵³. These varying degrees of methods between municipalities were emphasized throughout the interviews especially regarding their different preferences over direct vs indirect integration since preparation classes are not mandatory.

On the other hand, based on the investigations of the Swedish Schools Inspectorate regarding how different municipalities meet the needs of the newly arrived children, it was found that one of the important determinants was their political attitudes towards accepting the newcomers⁵⁴. According to this, the municipalities who did a “good job” integrating the new pupils, e.g. Södertälje⁵⁵ and Halmstad⁵⁶, have “a long experience about greeting many newly arrived children” and essentialize the view that “all children should be welcomed to school” on their

⁵²

https://www.skolverket.se/sitevision/proxy/publikationer/svid12_5dfee44715d35a5cd4a2899/55935574/wtpub/ws/skolklok/wpubext/trycksak/Blob/pdf2492.pdf?k=2492 Retrieved on 11.07.2018.

⁵³ Interview with Swedish Schools Inspectorate

⁵⁴ Interview with the Swedish Schools Inspectorate

⁵⁵ A town outside of Stockholm city known with its high concentration of foreign born population.

⁵⁶ A town in Western Sweden within the province of Halland.

regulations. Another factor that was found in the report⁵⁷ is related to the level of importance they attach to the education of the newcomers. In investigator 2's words:

One of the good things that we saw municipalities or schools that did this well were in municipalities where the idea of that 'this [education of the newly arrived children] was an important thing' and that 'everyone should work according to a plan' and that plan was implemented, that was one of the main reasons for successful work. So it has to go from the top politician to all the way down to the teacher at the classroom.

In this regard, a good practice example is given as the municipality of Halmstad, where there are special teams of teachers who are responsible for giving training to the teachers of the newly arrived children⁵⁸, which was found successful according to the investigations. From above, it can be argued that the variety of regulations affects children's educational opportunities as their "destiny" depends on what type of structure the municipality follows with regards to their resources or "political view".

5.1.2 Language Education

One of the significant findings that can be drawn from the interviews is the emphasis on Swedish language education in the preparation classes. When mentioned, all interviewees pointed to the fact that Swedish education is seen as essential in the early stages of the educational integration of the newly arrived children. If the children already show proficiency in Swedish, they can continue in regular classes⁵⁹ otherwise the newly arrived pupils are not able to continue to the regular classes unless they are competent in Swedish⁶⁰. As the preparatory classes are composed of children from different ages and educational backgrounds⁶¹, prioritizing Swedish may restrain the children receiving the education pedagogically designed for their age. Respondent E's⁶² personal experience at the school meeting she attended for Ali can be given as a relevant example to this issue as it can be seen in the following:

⁵⁷ Swedish Schools Inspectorate Report (in Swedish).

⁵⁸ Interview with the Swedish Schools Inspectorate

⁵⁹ Interview with LundaValkomsten.

⁶⁰ Interview with the teachers.

⁶¹ Interviews with the teachers and school principal

⁶² Respondent E: NGO representative who accommodated a 19 year old boy (Ali) from Afghanistan.

When I went to the school meeting they gave me the state plan for somebody who is 10,11, and 12 because that's what they thought it was his [Ali's] level in Swedish and I said how can you have this? This is what a 10, 11, 12 year old should learn but here you have somebody who is 19...[B]ut he is much older than this. He is another person than a 12 year old even though his Swedish is on that level, it doesn't mean that it is his all personality.

Referring to Ali's previous knowledge and life experiences before coming to Sweden, respondent E pointed to the fact that his "previous knowledge and skills" was not found valuable by the school administration yet based on his inadequate level of Swedish, he was treated as a person who is less capable of what he normally can perform:

He was somewhere, something happened to him during that time when he should have been in school, he was learning how to sew dresses and painting walls and serving coffee and then making this kinds of balcony veilings, he showed me all of these. And so you don't have a 10 year old sitting here so how can you give me a tenet like this?

Further, the participant noted that this situation caused Ali not to receive any grades for the time he was present at school, and it inevitably led him to become frustrated and not to want to go to school. The following negative interaction Ali had because of speaking his mother tongue in the classroom instead of Swedish can be given as an "exclusionary" practice of lacking the local language skills which caused him not to receive any grades and decrease his motivation to go to school.

[H]e was speaking Dari [in the classroom], he was very frustrated because he was not moving ahead and he was just getting to translate for everybody else who came in, new ones came all the time every day. The class wasn't fixed but it was new students coming in and he was just helping them and the teachers were sort of expecting that... I think what happened [] was certain incident that happened that spoiled everything for him and that was he was speaking Dari and the teacher said you are not allowed to speak Dari in the classroom, we speak Swedish here bla bla and he just stood up, he stood up so violently that his chair just fell and he was angry at her and said you don't tell me things like that and he was screaming at the teacher and she was very frightened. After that everything just closed down and they were like punishing him. They weren't talking to him about it and they were just not giving him any grades.

This personal story of Ali that respondent E put forward can be analyzed through two lines of thought. Firstly, it shows that lack of Swedish skills and thus using mother tongue can inevitably be an exclusionary factor for the newly arrived children even within a relatively small environment like a classroom. Secondly, prioritizing the Swedish knowledge as an assessment

method regardless of age and background may ignore the already existing capabilities of the children, as it can be seen in the above example.

5.1.3 Financial Resources

Resources are an important part of the organizational process which makes it possible to provide the newly arrived children enough classroom and accommodation spaces as well as specially trained staff i.e. teachers and legal guardians. Interview results supported this view as it was found that the funding by the state through municipalities and their distribution play a significant role on the organization of education for the newcomer children in Sweden. Since Lund has few schools with preparation classes⁶³, it can be argued that the resources are clustered in certain schools which may be argued to prevent opening new preparation classes in other schools in the city. As investigators from the Swedish Schools Inspectorate put forward, the existence of few school options often results in children traveling from far districts to attend the schools they are registered. This situation may unintentionally eliminate the children's free choice of school right, instead, it becomes mandatory to go to certain schools advised by the authorities within the municipality⁶⁴. As both teachers stated, in many cases, when children complete their education in the preparation classes, some of them continue in other schools closer to their district. Further, it was found that the lack of flexibility choosing schools created "in-between" situations for some as they must go back and forth between two different schools; one with the preparation class and the other officially assigned to them to continue to the regular classes. It can be argued that the frequent change of school environment may cause disruptions in children's adaptation to the school dynamics. As also pointed out by Teacher S in the following dialogue:

Interviewer: Do you think it's better if they just keep staying for example if they can stay in the same school?

Teacher S: It is better, it is better because we see the communication works much better between us and the rest of the teachers at the school and the whole school. And it's easier for the kids to get into one organization so to speak and to get to know about the students and the teachers, the librarian or the school nurse and everybody in one place instead of being...We have students that will be transferred to another school [] which is in the middle of the city and they are here at 2

⁶³ Interview with the Swedish Schools Inspectorate.

⁶⁴ Interview with the Swedish Schools Inspectorate.

in the morning before lunch on Wednesday and Friday, we have 2 students like that. And then, they are at the other school, then the rest of the time they are here. So they are moving back and forth, half day they have to break the schedule and come here instead. And that doesn't really work for them but they need to do, because they don't have any other school closer to them that they can go to.

In addition to having difficulties regarding adaptation to the school environment, in some cases, the documentation of the knowledge that children possess does not get transferred to the new school thus causing interruptions in the quality of education appropriate to the children's level.⁶⁵

Apart from state funding for educational expenses, it was found that the way the resources have been channeled to the social services play a deterministic role on the lives of the children who arrived in Sweden unaccompanied and thus being accommodated at state-sponsored dormitories or foster families⁶⁶. The fact that the reductions in the social workers' salaries and their replacement with less qualified employees were pointed out by the respondent E who stated the following:

The first people who had bachelor's degree at least and who were interested in migrant issues they worked at these centers [social services] they might also be social workers and so on. And then as this problem became more of a, you know, marginalized [] they had lower salaries and so these people left and then we have young people who don't have a university degree, who they employed instead because they had lower salary. So the quality of their life goes down because you have people who don't know so much earlier. ...it also became more unprofessional because they were just talking to them [the children] from their own point of view not knowing about the Swedish system in that way. How you should because it is a social worker's kind of job you are doing, somebody who needs care kind of, who works there, who lives there. During this time it became worse and worse.

Further, the interviewee added that the political atmosphere in Sweden due to the upcoming elections in September 2018⁶⁷ also affected the distribution of funding for the social services provided to unaccompanied children⁶⁸ as follows:

Interviewer: [asked right after the above answer] So that was after 2015?

Respondent E: Yeah and then also for example they noticed in the budget there must have been budget for 2016 or 2017 that 96 million kronor were overdrawn on the account and this was because of this habitat for the unaccompanied minors. So that was in the news and of course we

⁶⁵ Interview with the Swedish Schools Inspectorate.

⁶⁶ Interviews with NGO representative and project leaders.

⁶⁷ <http://www.riksdagen.se/en/the-election-2018/> Retrieved on 05.08.2018

⁶⁸ Interview with respondent E.

have an election in the fall, so all the parties started to say we should do pull down, you know, we should diminish and saving money less people working so close them [the centers] down.

In relation to this cutdown in the budget, the unaccompanied children living in these centers started to have limited access to the services they were provided previously which is said to have caused frustrations for them:

*So they used to have a card the summer card which you can travel on the trains all over Skåne, and go to the beach and so on. They [the administrators at the social services] said “no you can only have one card, so you have to sign and borrow it for the day, then you can go by the beach. Because you can't have a personal card, cause it's too expensive”. So it was all these sort of trying to save and do something about those 96 millions. I mean I am a political scientist I understand this connection but for Ali and his friends they were “so oh now they are taking away something”. So it became this institutionalized how they are just like “oh I can't have my TV game anymore, I can't do this, I can't do that.” They were just arguing with people who work there all the time and that's what I saw and said “I hope you can come and stay with us instead because you are getting too drown into this, this is just a minor thing. It's not your life you know, get out of that.” It is easy for me to say of course because I was asking him to step out of that kind of roam** that he was used to.*

In this regard, it is important to note that this frustration of the children towards the policy change in terms of the services they are supposed to get should not be underestimated by just seeing it as an emotional reaction. As the interviewee also noted, such changes in the policy have a direct effect on the daily lives of the children, a daily life that is, in most cases, exceptional from the “ordinary” lives. The “they are taking away something” response is not only about losing a property or opportunity, it is also about the possibility that the children might perceive it as an “excluding” act of the Swedish state and/or becoming “institutionalized” in the interviewee’s words. Thus, the above incident serves as a relevant example to the discussion of unintended exclusions through intended inclusions. Although the intention is to provide services for the inclusion of the newcomer children in the Swedish society, such changes in the practice of it due to various reasons may rather be perceived as the exact opposite by the children.

5.2 Children's Conditions

5.2.1 Age Differentials

Age plays a crucial role on second language acquisition, which puts younger children in a more advantageous situation compared to adults or adolescents as they could learn additional languages faster (Lenneberg, 1984). Based on the interviews and the organizational procedures for the placement of the children in preparation classes, it is found that these classrooms are often composed of children with varying ages both in compulsory and upper secondary schools on the contrary to the regular teaching structures where children are instructed with their peers in same ages. Thus, all the educators interviewed in this study were able to make inferences regarding the relationship between age and the children's pace of language learning which is argued to be the essential way for integration in their views. Further, the duration in the preparation classes is stated to be shorter for the younger children due to their fast language learning capabilities. The age differential is found to be important in the later stages when children upgrade to the regular classes, as can be seen in the following:

Interviewer: So once they are out of the preparation class, is it easier for them [the newly arrived children in general] to integrate with the Swedish children?

Teacher S: Far from easy, but it takes time and once they are out there they realize that it's hard from the beginning but it's for their best. I think really, depending on the age. As I mentioned before, if they are younger, I think they are integrated much better and they don't think a lot about it in that way. But the older they are, the more worried they are, what kind of grades they are gonna get if they are gonna come into high school, what kind of education they are gonna get in after Grundskolan, elementary school so it depends and what kind of goals they have.

To move up to the regular classes, age is found to be an essential determinant for the newly arrived children. While younger children are stated to be in advantage of spending less time in the preparation classes, the situation of the older children seems to be much more complicated. As a teacher of a preparation class that is composed of children from 10 to 16 years old, Teacher S argued that the older children in preparation classes are in a greater need of support in their mother tongue compared to the younger children "to develop much faster" because "it is harder for them to sit in a classroom where they don't understand".

Apart from its effect on language skills, age is an important determinant of the children's access to the services provided by the state, especially in the case of the asylum-seeking unaccompanied minors who are essentially depended on the state assistance since they mainly stay in dormitories belonging to the social services. For the asylum-seeking children who do not have documents to prove their age and identity, the National Board of Forensic Medicine (Rättsmedicinalverket)⁶⁹ may conduct age assessment tests if the Migration Agency finds their age unclear.⁷⁰ These examinations are done by taking X-rays of wisdom teeth, and MRI scans of knee joints which are then analyzed by dentists and radiologists. The sharp increase in the recent years in the number of children whose ages were found to be older than 18 has caused debates regarding the tests' reliability⁷¹. Further, the age examinations are argued to have created various challenges for the children. There have been cases of children whose age decisions were changed back and forth, which causes disruptions on their access to the services provided by the state⁷². In the case of the asylum-seeking children whose ages are inaccurately assessed as older than 18, there can be situations where their rights for financial support, accommodation, school, having a custodian, and medical services are at stake while they are actually minors who essentially need and have the right for those services. Thus, their situation has been highly controversial, yet it was decided children whose ages were examined to be older are able to continue the education they started⁷³. According to the interview with project leaders, children who appealed against the age decision by stating that they were not minors are also exempted from the social services of the municipality until they receive their decision including to the youth who reached the age of 18.

⁶⁹ <https://www.rmv.se/berord/medicinsk-aldersbedomning/for-dig-som-asylsokande/> Retrieved on 07.08.2018

⁷⁰ <https://www.migrationsverket.se/English/Private-individuals/Protection-and-asylum-in-Sweden/Children-seeking-asylum/Without-parents/Application-for-asylum/Age-assessment.html> Retrieved on 07.08.2018

⁷¹ <https://www.thelocal.se/20171204/impact-of-swedens-asylum-age-assessment-tests-revealed>
Retrieved on 07.08.2018

⁷² "When a child reaches the age of 18 or is age-old, and still has not received a residence permit, the responsibility is transferred from the municipality to the Swedish Migration Agency. This means that the youth are offered to stay at any of the Migration Agency's accommodation, which may be anywhere in Sweden. However, for unaccompanied refugees who have been staying for a longer period in a municipality, the responsibility to offer them accommodation was transferred to the Migration Board. When this reality was discovered, a great opinion arose to allow young people to stay in their hometowns, based on the view that it is not fair that if young people who have been living for two years in their place of residence have to move away from schooling and social establishment simply because of an unfortunate distribution of responsibility between different authorities. In Lund, civil society's opinion has been primarily driven by Save the Children, who invited other associations to gatherings and manifestations." <https://www.lundauppropet.se/single-post/2018/02/06/60-tal-ungdomar-i-akut-behov-av-boende> Retrieved on 07.08.2018

⁷³ <https://www.lund.se/utbildning--forskola/nyanlanda-barn-och-elever/nyanlanda-i-gymnasiealdern/> Retrieved on 08.08.2018

On January 25, 2018, the city council of Lund, decided that unaccompanied youth aged 18 or older will have permission to stay in the city to complete their education but their housing solutions have to be handled by civil society organizations⁷⁴. With that, there have been various organizational attempts to overcome this problem and the project leaders interviewed in this study are leading one of those initiatives as stated previously. From what they put forward, the process of finding alternative accommodation solutions for youth older than 18 has been a challenge since it is hard to find host families despite the financial support provided by the municipality.

Above all, it can be interpreted that age is a crucial determinant for children's adaptation to a new country and learn the language as well as their access to state services based on their obligations to ensure children's rights. In the case of undocumented children, the age factor is even more critical since the opportunities they are offered is mainly through their rights as children but not as being solely asylum seekers.

5.2.2 Living Circumstances

In this section, "living circumstances" will refer to the situations whether the children live at accommodation centers or foster families arranged by the social services or live with their own families. According to the statistics, unaccompanied minors constitute 9 percent of the total amount of asylum seeking applications in Sweden⁷⁵ which makes the country the top receiver of unaccompanied minors in EU⁷⁶. Based on the interviews with participants who have an insight into the daily lives of the children, their living environment plays an important role on their social adaptation, especially on the school attendance.

Accordingly, the lack or existence of family support is stated to be a crucial dynamic in their motivation to go to school. Although they have legal guardians (godman in Swedish), it is given

⁷⁴ <https://www.lundauppropet.se/single-post/2018/02/06/60-tal-ungdomar-i-akut-behov-av-boende> Retrieved on 07.08.2018

⁷⁵ <https://www.migrationsverket.se/English/About-the-Migration-Agency/Statistics.html> Retrieved on 09.08.2018

⁷⁶ https://www.kmk-pad.org/fileadmin/Dateien/download/VERANSTALTUNGEN/PAD-Fachtagung_Integration/Workshop-Beitraege/3_Plenum_Bunar_Bonn.pdf Retrieved on 09.08.2018

that “they [the guardians] are not responsible for the students as a parent would be” as they may be assigned to 10-15 children which was argued to be over the ideal number of children each guardian is able to take care of.⁷⁷ Regarding this, Teacher S referred to the situation of the children living at social services as follows:

It is a huge difference when it comes to integration, when it comes to accepting. You know when you are here with a family, you still have your support from your family. But if you are alone and if you are a teenager, you think there is a lot of unfairness, there is a lot of, you know, everything is much harder. They don't have this stability, they don't have the responsibility. They don't feel that responsible since they are living at collective homes, you know, only for refugees. Most of the time, they are staying with maybe 20 other students or kids, teenagers from different countries. They have this staff working there, they are trying to wake them up in the morning but they don't always come to school because they don't feel for it or they can't sleep at night or whatever it could be. Whereas, students living with their families, it is a little bit different because they have their parents there and it is a whole other thing...So it is a huge difference there. So the attendance varies a lot.

Further, it is stated that the family support does not necessarily have to be the children's actual parents or relatives while children living in foster families may still get the support which does not seem to exist in the dormitory settings, as it can be inferred from the following statement by Teacher S:

Some of them are placed in families, once they have been placed in foster family we see better results directly, or most of the time we see that. Because, Swedish families, they help them with the homework, better integration, the language. The support they get is whole another type of support, it's like their family but not like the real family. So it works much much better than the students living in the houses. So we see huge difference there.

From above, the living circumstances in terms of the factor of whether staying with a family or not affects the children's success and motivation at school as well as their language skills. As schools play a significant role on the socialization and identity construction of the newcomer children (Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001), high absentees in the school and thus not receiving the education they need, may have critical implications for the children in the long term.

⁷⁷ Interview with Teacher S.

5.2.3 Legal Status

As stated before, the term newly arrived refers to a heterogeneous group of children in terms of country background, whether accompanied or unaccompanied and legal status, e.g. documented, undocumented, asylum seeker, refugee, etc. The inclusion of all the children regardless of their legal status or nationality in the school system is through the “right to education for all” that is mandated by the Swedish Education Act.

Based on the statistical information provided by the Swedish Migration Agency⁷⁸ and interviews, the nationality of the children plays an important role on their asylum decisions, as asylum-seeking children from coming Syria have more chance of being granted refuge in Sweden than the children from Afghanistan⁷⁹. Further, the waiting times for obtaining a decision for asylum has been reported be highly long as more than a quarter of all applicants from 2015 and 2016 are still on the process of the Swedish Migration Agency⁸⁰. For children, the long waiting processes have been “difficult” and “painful” as reported by the Ombudsman for Children in Sweden (BO)⁸¹ due to the inadequate support they have received⁸². In more details, children in the waiting process stated that they felt insecure during the asylum interviews as they viewed that the questions were difficult to understand and not designed for children. Further, they reported unsafe living “environments and disruption which impacted their schooling”⁸³. Additionally, the age examination processes of children without documents were found to be conducted in

⁷⁸ <https://www.migrationsverket.se/English/About-the-Migration-Agency/Statistics.html> Retrieved on 06.08.2018

⁷⁹ According to the statistics provided by the Swedish Migration Agency, in 2017, while 91 percent of all asylum applications from Syrian citizens were accepted, this percentage for Afghan citizens remained as 37. In 2016, the percentages were given as 91 for Syrian citizens and 28 for Afghan citizens. In 2015, the percentages were 90 and 35 for Syrian and Afghan citizens, respectively.

⁸⁰ The Local is an English-language digital news publisher with a local edition in Sweden.
<https://www.thelocal.se/20180628/thousands-of-asylum-seekers-from-2015-still-waiting-for-decision-from-sweden>
Retrieved on 06.08.2018

⁸¹ The Ombudsman for Children in Sweden is a government agency tasked with representing children regarding their rights and interests on the basis of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).
<https://www.barnombudsmannen.se/om-webbplatsen/english/> Retrieved on 06.08.2018.

⁸² <https://www.thelocal.se/20170324/support-provided-to-refugee-children-during-asylum-process-in-sweden-inadequate-report> Retrieved on 06.08.2018.

⁸³ <https://www.thelocal.se/20170324/support-provided-to-refugee-children-during-asylum-process-in-sweden-inadequate-report> Retrieved on 06.08.2018.

“discretionary basis in a subjective manner without access to all of the facts” and thus have crucial implications on the lives of the children in terms of the state services they have the right to access⁸⁴. In the case of the children who received deportation decisions, it is found out that thousands of them disappear in the Swedish asylum process⁸⁵, and currently there are no national guidelines on how they should be treated⁸⁶.

Similar to the rest of Sweden, the asylum-seeking children from Syria and Afghanistan constitute a major part of the group of newly arrived children living in Lund⁸⁷. Further, there are also children without documents or permission to stay in Sweden including Roma children who reside in Sweden on tourist visas⁸⁸. According to the interview with LundaVälkomsten, undocumented children and Roma children are not obliged to go to school since they have not been granted permanent or temporary decision to stay in Sweden. Yet, the municipality of Lund offered them schools without the need for official registration and prepared a special plan for school principals on how to take care of them⁸⁹. Regarding this, it was emphasized throughout all the interviews that they were all welcomed in the Swedish education system like all other children in Sweden. However, it was also found out that the children without permits to stay in Sweden might just drop out or show low attendance rates⁹⁰. The following dialogue with Teacher S helped to understand some of the challenges these children may face in the school environment:

Interviewer: Actually I'd like to ask about the children that are either paperless or don't have a permission to stay here. What are the possible problems they are facing? Are there differences, I mean in the classroom environment at school?

Teacher S: First of all, they have troubles with, if they are here alone without their families, they miss their families to begin with. Second of all, they have been through things that are traumatic and they have troubles sleeping at night. So they have huge problems, they are not coming to

⁸⁴ <https://www.thelocal.se/20170324/support-provided-to-refugee-children-during-asylum-process-in-sweden-inadequate-report> Retrieved on 06.08.2018.

⁸⁵ <https://www.barnombudsmannen.se/globalassets/dokument-for-nedladdning/english/publications/children-who-disappear-in-sweden.pdf> Retrieved on 07.08.2018.

⁸⁶ <https://www.thelocal.se/20180319/thousands-of-children-disappear-in-swedish-asylum-process> Retrieved on 06.08.2018.

⁸⁷ Interview with LundaVälkomsten.

⁸⁸ Interview with LundaVälkomsten.

⁸⁹ Interview with LundaVälkomsten.

⁹⁰ Interview with teachers.

school and when they are here, they are tired, they cannot really focus, they have troubles like remembering things.

Interviewer: Do you also have Roma children? They are also in a quiet vulnerable situation.

Teacher S: I have one family, yeah their 3 kids going, one girl going some grade, one fifth grade, and one much much younger but I am not really sure but we have one family. They have been living in Norway before since they are moving around, and we see that they are not coming to school regularly. It's a problem there as well.

The situation in the other school where Teacher M works is no different, as it can be seen in the following dialogue:

Interviewer: I am also wondering about that some children have permission to stay in Sweden or they have documents but some children also don't. In the scenario if you have undocumented children that the municipality tells you that you should take them but do you?

Teacher M: Yes we take them and we teach them but it can be so that tomorrow they don't come to school. So it's a very strange situation. They are often more in the preparation class because it's the first year in Sweden but I know that it's often when I meet the [other] teachers and ask "so where is your student?" and they say "no, he didn't come today, we don't know where he is."

Further, when Teacher M was asked whether undocumented children can take the national exams that are important to be accepted into high schools after compulsory school, it was hard to obtain a specific answer since she was not sure whether they can take them. Teacher S replied to the same question by stating that children in her school are motivated to take the tests and further added that “it is better for them to do it to see how it works, how it is, instead of excluding them just because we think that they are not going to manage”. From these it can be said that the schools fulfill their obligation to include the children regardless of their legal status, yet as stated earlier in this section, thousands of children who are on the waiting processes for a long time or who have not been granted permits to stay in the country may just disappear and/or drop out from the school systems despite their education rights. In addition to that, as previously argued in the “age differentials” section, the medical age assessment tests create further challenges for the undocumented children as their access to certain state services get either removed or interrupted.

Above all, although children are welcomed in the education systems regardless of their background, there exist various factors and challenges that affect their opportunities and

participation in the school system which create situational inclusions and exclusions. It can be argued that they are initially included in the school systems, but not fully included since there are different levels and opportunities of inclusion and exclusion. The inclusions and exclusions themselves are differential and situational. While one can meet all the legal requirements for inclusion, it is still possible to be situationally or temporarily excluded. Overall one of the criteria for inclusion is to be addressed by a system (Luhmann, 2012 in Hilt, 2016, p.587). Yet systems have different requirements and children themselves have a variety of conditions which affect the levels of inclusions and exclusions they face in the education systems.

6. Discussion: Intended Inclusions, Unintended Exclusions

Are inclusion and exclusion solely the consequences of certain state policies? Can the system fix exclusions? Can the system be responsible for inclusion? Is inclusion something achievable? Is exclusion something avoidable?

What is called as “system” here is not only the organization of education in Lund but also the broader structure that relies on the authorities of the Swedish Parliament and Government as well as the supranational agencies whose regulations Sweden must comply with e.g. European Union and United Nations. Bearing the above questions in mind, this section will provide the interpretation and discussion of the results obtained from the analysis.

As put forward previously, inclusion and exclusion are mutually existent situations. Yet the division between these concepts cannot be imagined as one straight and clear line since inclusions involve situational exclusions and exclusions may, in some cases, happen to be within the inclusions. The position of the migrants in the receiving countries serves as a relevant example to this discussion. The categorizations used within the state policies e.g. migrant, newly arrived, refugee, asylum seeker, undocumented, etc. draw the initial differentiation between two groups of people; ones within and ones outside. The levels and possibilities of inclusion and exclusion vary among these groups as well, since several legal qualifications such as having a certain citizenship, asylum or residence permit might affect one’s accessibility to the services provided by the state. When it comes to the children who have moved to another country whether voluntarily or forced, the education environments become one of essential the determinants on their socialization and adaptation to the host society (Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001). Thus, the accessibility to schooling plays a major role on the lives of the children, and even when access is ensured, there still exist various factors in their inclusion and exclusion in the education systems. As Hilt (2017) put forward, “educational exclusions do not come in the form of non-access, but as internal differentiations within the educational system” (p.586). Following this further, the factors found in this study i.e. the procedures, financial resources, language education, living circumstances, age differentials, and legal status will be claimed to

have including and excluding effects in the short and long-term for the children newly arrived in Sweden. It is important to note that these factors are highly interrelated to each other as one may involve the other, e.g. resources are part of the organizational process which also affects the living circumstances. Yet these determinants employ varying degrees of inclusion and exclusion effects and thus each need specific attention to be paid.

The Organizational Conditions

The organizational process that refers to the regulations provided by the state and the municipality in this case, creates the initial differentiation. The criteria for a newly arrived child to have the exact same opportunities with a non-newly arrived child in the same educational setting is not definite since during the first 4 years the tag “newly arrived” will be used to refer to the newcomer child regardless of speaking Swedish or not. The main requirement of the system is advancing in the Swedish language to be able to upgrade to the regular classes from the preparation classes. Yet it is arguable whether children who advance in Swedish are fully included later in the system as the lack of language skills might not be the only cause of exclusion. The answer that this study tried to find is that there exist many other factors such as the legal situation and living circumstances for the inclusion of children who achieved to speak Swedish. Thus, it can be argued that although the language proficiency is the essential way to inclusion, it is no guarantee that this inclusion will last long term. Regarding this, it is important to look at the long and short-term effects of these factors as well.

Procedures

The organizational process that officially includes children in the education system, could be argued as having a temporary inclusion effect for some. In detail, the children are addressed by the system due to their status of being “newly arrived” and for most of them, their initial inclusion in schools takes place through the recognition of their “right to education”. This itself implies that they are initially excluded before being included. As inclusion needs preparation, preparation becomes an exclusion. When it comes to the long-term effects, the official recognition of the children’s right to participate at school initially through the preparation classes

might not guarantee their inclusion to the regular classes. As stated previously, some children's situation, especially of those who do not have permits to reside in the country, is quite malleable as they "come and go" and even their teachers do not know where they are. Further, while education is mandatory in Sweden for children between 6 and 16, municipalities are not obliged to offer school services to children who do not have residence permits in Sweden. Therefore, schooling becomes an option for those without permits which may further increase their invisibility or exclusion. So, it can be argued that these children are neither totally in the system nor totally out of it. They can make appearances or disappearances for an indefinite period which they can't have a control on it. Thus, even if they get included in the system, there is not an official implication if they get excluded by not participating in it.

Language

As stated previously, the preparation for inclusion is undertaken by official regulations, which in this case, the municipality of Lund that is responsible for the organization of education for the newly arrived children. The logic of this preparation through introductory classes is to ensure that children learn the local language to be able to participate in the regular classes with other children. As found in this study, the focus on language instruction produces effects which could result in the unintended exclusion of the children from the rest of the school. The practice of physically separating children from the rest of the school in different classrooms itself can be viewed as an exclusionary practice. As stated in the previous section, children in preparation classes feel excluded and "not part of the school's educational and social ecosystem"⁹¹. In this case, language stands as one of the most apparent distinctions between the newly arrived child and others, which inevitably delays his/her regular education in ordinary classes. The duration in preparation classes is mandated by law not to be longer than 2 years, which shows the system itself recognizes that it is no advantage for the children to receive their education in these separate classes for a long time. Apart from the physical separation of the newly arrived children from the rest of the school, the lack of Swedish skills creates inclusion and exclusion effects within the preparation class environment as well. The more the children speak or understand Swedish in the classroom, the more included they are. The less they speak, as it can be seen in

⁹¹ Interview with the Swedish Schools Inspectorate.

the case of Ali who got punished due to speaking his own mother tongue in the classroom, the less inclusionary the environment becomes since the focus on the Swedish language creates exclusion effects in such cases. In the short-term, proof of proficiency in Swedish leads to inclusion through regular classes, yet one can argue whether being able to speak Swedish would surely eliminate further exclusions. As the important dynamics found in this study interfere with each other, the legal statuses or living circumstances may complicate their situation. Although they are welcomed to the school system regardless of their legal status, some children themselves might lack motivation or option to prioritize their education among other challenges they must go through. Such situations might cause their exclusion from the school system, which may cause further exclusions due to lacking school degree e.g. exclusion from the labor market and facing social disrepute for being “uneducated”.

Financial Resources

As an important part of the organizational process, financial resources and their distribution affect various dynamics regarding the inclusion and exclusion of the newly arrived children. It can be argued that certain protocols exist for channeling the state funding to education and social services with the intention to facilitate inclusion of the children. Yet as it was found in this study, funding plays an important role on the organization of education and accommodation services. Regarding its effect on the school system, it is found that one of the reasons that Lund has a few preparation classes is the clustering of financial resources at certain schools. The problem with having few preparation classes is that it unintentionally eliminates newly arrived children's free school choice which normally constitutes as a right for all children in Sweden. The situation of the children who are assigned to regular classes at schools close to where they live but must participate in the preparation classes at a different school is criticized by the educators due to the disruption it causes in the children's education⁹². In addition to that, it was stated by the project leaders that it would be better for the children if different schools had a different number of students for their integration with Swedish children. Thus, one can see that there exists an intentional inclusion through resources provided to the newly arrived children in the school system, yet the allocation of them might cause unintended exclusions such as grouping the newly

⁹² Interviews with the teachers.

arrived children in certain schools and separating them from the other children not only within the same school but also in the same city.

Apart from the school organization, financial resources are found to have effects on the living circumstances of the children, especially for those who live with foster families or at the dormitories that belong to the social services. The mentioned decrease in the budget for dormitories where unaccompanied minors live is the decision of the state and the reasons for it might be more complicated than what the interviewees in this study argued. However, the consequences of such changes in the allocation of resources affect the children's living circumstances and their perceptions of how they are being treated by the system to a certain extent. As it was stated previously and will be discussed later in this chapter, the living circumstances overall play a major role on the children's motivation to go to school especially for the unaccompanied children. Thus, it can be argued that changes that are taken at the organizational level due to a variety of reasons have direct effects on the lives of this group of children that are in a greater need of state assistance compared to other children.

Overall, the existence of the financial resources specifically spent on the services for children's education and accommodation shows that the system has intentional inclusions by recognizing the needs of the children and providing resources to overcome those necessities. Yet, the unintentional exclusions appear when the allocation of it causes the grouping of children in certain schools due to having to participate in the preparation classes. Further, it eliminates the children's freedom of school choice, which is stated as a right for all the children in Sweden.

Children's Conditions

Apart from the including and excluding effects of the organizational conditions, it is found in this study that age, legal status and living circumstances of the children play an important role on their inclusion/exclusion in educational and social settings. Like the other dynamics discussed so far, these factors do interfere with each other in many ways e.g. age affects what rights people have which determine their living circumstances. Overall, these dynamics have varying levels of including and excluding effects which will be argued separately in the following sections.

Age

Age is an essential determinant on the extent of the rights that newcomers will have after crossing the borders since “the rights of children [...] extend well beyond the human rights of adults” (Pinson & Candappa, 2010, p.2). Thus, most of the newly arrived children’s access to certain state services e.g. free health care, accommodation, education, financial support are granted to them through their status of being minors. That can be considered as an including effect of the age factor, yet, for those whose ages were assessed incorrectly by the authorities, age may lead to interruptions on their rights mentioned above. These disruptions may further cause their exclusions from certain settings, for instance, they will not be able to stay in the accommodation centers provided by the social services which may result in further problems on their school attendance.

On the other hand, age affects the capability to learn a new language and thus puts younger children in a more advantageous position compared to adults. As the essential criteria to move up to the regular classes is language proficiency, the age factor may cause older children to stay longer in the preparation classes. Although the law stipulates that the maximum duration in the preparation classes is 2 years, it can be argued that older children are more likely to stay in these classes throughout this period. Further, late second language acquisition might cause older children to show less performance at school compared to what they can achieve if they studied in their own languages. Whereas earlier second language acquisition in the case of younger children might be for their advantage as bilingualism has positive cognitive effects (Baumgart & Billick, 2017) which is argued to have positive correlation with academic achievement (Rohde & Thompson, 2007). School success and language proficiency could be viewed as important factors to be included in a new society, as speaking the local language will no doubt affect social inclusion and academic achievement may increase the chances in the job market which is another mean of inclusion. Overall it is proposed that age creates including effects based on the extent of children’s rights through the provision of a wide range of social services that aim for their inclusion.

Living Circumstances

Living circumstances have important effects on school attendance especially for the unaccompanied children who are placed in dormitories organized by the municipality. Due to various organizational reasons, guardians might be responsible for big groups of children and as argued before, they might lack the relevant training to meet the needs of such a distinct group. On the other hand, it is found that family support makes a significant difference for the children if they arrived in Sweden with their parents/relatives or were placed in foster families. Children with families are argued to have more motivation to go to school while children staying in dormitories are more likely to suffer from sleep deprivation, stress and missing their families which all may have a negative effect on their school attendance. Further, the organizational decisions e.g. decrease in budget and changes in the profile of the staff may directly influence whether unaccompanied children feel welcome or not and this kind of feelings inevitably affect their psychological well-being. Children may perceive such circumstances in their living environment as if they are not wanted by the organization, or even by the state. This situation can be considered as an unintended exclusion caused by organizational processes that affect a highly essential part of their living conditions. Intended inclusions take place through providing accommodation and legal guardians to meet the unaccompanied children's crucial needs, yet excluding effects arise when children cannot find the support a family would have given them or when they have negative perceptions of how they are being treated by the state. As it was supported by the findings of this study, these living circumstances influence the children's motivation to attend the school which also determine their academic performance. The less time spent in school might cause their further exclusion from the society due to the decreased opportunity to learn the language. These effects are unintentional consequences of the whole system and they might occur regardless of the organizational processes since the life circumstances of the unaccompanied children are based on multifaceted dynamics that are composed of not only the accommodation conditions but also about their psychological adaptation to living in such challenging settings.

Legal Status

Finally, legal status undoubtedly determines the extent of the rights that newcomers gain access in a new country. As Bhabha (2011) argues, children's extreme dependency on the state due to its provision of rights, protection, and services has caused them to become among the most vulnerable inhabitants in the world. When it comes to the newly arrived children in Sweden, their rights, regardless of their legal status, are supposed to be no different from the rest of the children in the country. Yet it was found in this study that although the procedures aim at their inclusion in the school system through granting them equal rights, there exist conditions related to their legal status that create inevitable excluding effects for the children. These conditions became most remarkable for the children who lack the necessary permits to reside in the country and thus were not mandated to go to school. The low attendance or high drop-out rates among the undocumented children could be argued to be partly a result of their fear of deportation. Although schools provide an option not to register them, this fear and lack of implications on low attendance rates may be argued as an unintended exclusion of these children from the school system. The effect of the legal status in the school system could be viewed as a short-term condition, yet one can question whether these children could ever be included in the society by not participating in the school system and therefore being likely to lack proficiency in Swedish.

Overall, it is also argued that these conditions are distinct yet interrelated factors that are found central to the inclusion and exclusion of the newly arrived children in the Swedish education system. As every "inside" necessitates the existence of the "outside", it can be inferred that there is always a tension between inclusion and exclusion and there is not a perfect system where one could be fully included. Even so, full inclusion would imply the existence of those who are then in the state of full exclusion. The situation of the newly arrived child in the school system is no different than this conclusion, as the state policies intend to include them in the school system through the provision of certain services yet conditions such as language, age, and legal status would play a role on the unintended exclusions of the children from the school system. Further, inclusion in the school system might not guarantee the children's inclusion in other systems of the society. On the other hand, including the previously excluded members of a system inevitably needs preparation. During this process, the need for preparation creates exclusion. By

a similar logic, the newly arrived children who do not possess language skills are intended to be included yet their previously excluding situation causes them to receive preparation before being included in the school system. Thus, it can be argued that the system initially excludes them while preparing them for inclusion.

With these conclusions drawn from the findings, this study aimed to bring a sociological point of view on the issues regarding inclusion and exclusion when it comes to the barriers that exist due to one being “the other” within or out of a system.

7. Conclusion

This sociological study contributes to the understanding of the complexity of the conditions central to the inclusion and exclusion of the newly arrived children in the Swedish education system. As the world's most vulnerable citizens (Bhabha, 2011), children are heavily dependent on the states due to their needs of protection, rights, and services. When it comes to the children on the move, this dependency becomes more significant as the opportunities and rights of these children in the new countries solely depend on the procedures of the host state towards immigrants and asylum seekers. At this point, one can question whether every state that has ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child fulfills its obligation to ensure the right to education of the newcomer children regardless of his/her legal status in the country. Considering the recent discourses as "refugee and migrant crisis" attributed to the forced displacement of increasing number of people due to the Syrian civil war that started in 2011, such debates are even more crucial in today's world. Although the reaction of the most European states was to see the influx of the people forcibly displaced as a cause of "crisis" and thus building walls on their borders, several countries eased their border policies for the people in need of protection. Among these countries, Sweden accepted the highest number of asylum applications per capita in Europe and nearly half of these applicants were children with a significant percentage of the unaccompanied minors. As a ratifying of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Sweden has an obligation to ensure the right to education of the newly arrived children. On the other hand, due to having a long history of immigration, the integration of the migrants into the Swedish society is a prevalent discourse in the country. Thus, the increased number of newcomer children have also become an issue of integrating them through language education offered in the formal school system. Yet it is questionable whether the acceptance in the school system would mean that the newly arrived children have the same educational opportunities and outcomes with the local children who possess the culture and language of the country. Further, the idea of seeing these children as subjects to be included in the school system also means that they are viewed as outsiders to the Swedish school system and thus need preparation before being included.

Considering these, the study aimed to understand the conditions central to the inclusion and exclusion of the newly arrived children in the Swedish education system. By employing an inductive approach, experts who possessed knowledge of the educational procedures and practices for the newly arrived children were interviewed. In addition to the interviews, relevant information was obtained from official documents. Through a grounded theory method, the collected data was coded through recurrent themes and nodes in the interviews. Consequently, the central conditions to the inclusion and exclusion of the newly arrived children in the Swedish education system were found as the organizational conditions that consist of procedures, language education, financial resources and children's conditions i.e. age differentials, living circumstances, and legal status. It is argued that these conditions produce including and excluding effects both in the short and long-term for the children newly arrived in Sweden. While the availability of the procedures shows that the system intends to include the children, unintended exclusions are found to arise at different levels in the short and long term. Due to the paradoxical nature of these concepts, it is argued that there always exists a tension between states of inclusion and exclusion and there is not a perfect system where one could be fully included. Even one can do so, the possibility of full inclusion then would imply the existence of those who are in the state of full exclusion.

Overall, the proposed research serves as an interdisciplinary study within the fields of psychology, sociology, education and child rights. Further, it is significant in its focus on Lund, a student town in southern Sweden with its favored academic environment with the university and well-known high schools in the region. Yet, no other study regarding the procedures for the education of the newly arrived children in such a distinct city has been conducted up until this date. Most attention in this field in Sweden has often been paid to the larger cities such as Malmö and Stockholm with high percentages of foreign-born residents. Since the organization of education differs in each city due to the decentralization reform in Sweden, the current research contributes to the literature by its focus on procedures and practices in a setting that has not been investigated before.

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