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Four studies on the determinants of life chances for young Swedes with an immigrant background

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PO Box 117
221 00 Lund
+46 46-222 00 00



Aspirations, Capital and Identity

Four studies on the determinants of life chances for young Swedes with an immigrant background

GÖKHAN KAYA

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES | DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY, LUND UNIVERSITY 2018



Aspirations, Capital and Identity

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young Swedes with an immigrant background

Gökhan Kaya



LUND
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DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

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Title and subtitle Aspirations, Capital and Identity: Four studies on the determinants of life chances for young Swedes with an immigrant background		
<p>Abstract</p> <p>The dissertation examines the determinants of life chances among young people with immigrant background in Sweden. The dissertation includes four research papers, each examining a specific research question on a determinant of life chances. The studies are based on datasets from two surveys: the Social Capital and Labour Market Integration survey, and a longitudinal study of ten schools in Malmö.</p> <p>Study I examines aspired pathways, asking whether young people want to continue directly to university from secondary education or if they mix in other plans. The results show that young people with an immigrant background aspire less to experimentation and prefer direct transition. The results have two facets: Young people with immigrant origin are determined to be successful. On the other hand, opting for less experimentation may deprive them of an opportunity to explore their self and life outside university, which may be an important source for informal resources.</p> <p>Study II investigates access to social capital among mixed-union children, and its distribution across trans-national and social sources. The results diverge from previous studies that argue that social integration of children of mixed unions lies between that of the children of immigrants and children of two Swedish-born parents, or are similar to children of Swedish-born parents. The results suggest that social capital depends on the migration background of the foreign-born parent, which influences whether children from mixed unions have greater or lesser access to social capital, and whether this access is through few or many sources.</p> <p>Study III examines involvement in diverse cultural activities, so-called omnivorousness. It is often argued that omnivores are tolerant of, and inclusive to, the stigmatised other. The idea is tested by examining if individuals involved in diverse forms of cultural activities bridge disconnected ethnic groups. The results are not in line with this hypothesis, suggesting that previous studies are far too ready to associate progressive "positive" attributes with omnivores, and do not fully capture what people actually do in their social relations.</p> <p>Study IV examines if young people who view themselves as <i>invandrare</i> ("immigrant") are additionally disadvantaged compared to other young people of immigrant origin. The results show a greater association with depression and unemployment risk among people with explicit immigrant identity. Yet, people of immigrant origin with no explicit identity have even greater disadvantage. Thus, an explicit sense of self, even a stigmatised one, protects people from falling into the most disadvantaged positions.</p> <p>Taken together, the four studies provide new insights on the life chances of young Swedes with an immigrant background, and they underscore the fact that social integration has to be understood as a complex process.</p> <p>Key words aspirations, immigrants, identity, social capital, young people</p>		
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To Isilay,

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List of Papers

- I. Kaya, G. & Barmark, M. Traditional versus Experimental Pathways to a University: Educational Aspirations among Young Swedes with and without an Immigration Background (Revised and Resubmitted to *Journal of Youth Studies*).
- II. Kaya, G., Edling, C. & Rydgren, J. The Social Capital of Children from Mixed Unions (Under review *Social Science Research*).
- III. Kaya, G. Cultural Omnivores: a Bridge or a Wall between Ethnically Different Worlds? Evidence from Young People in Sweden (Manuscript).
- IV. Kaya, G. Immigrant Identity, Social Exclusion and Subjective Well-Being: An Explorative Study of Young People in Sweden (Under review *Social Indicators Research*).

Introduction

Aim and Contributions

The early twenties is a period of utmost importance in the lives of young people. It is a time when they confront a series of major changes: leaving the family nest, standing on their own feet, and making serious decisions about school and work. Amidst such profound changes, it becomes hard to perceive the near future, making this a period full of uncertainties. For young people with immigrant background, this time is still more insecure because of the additional difficulties they face in education, employment, and everyday life. They may find themselves in undesirable situations, such as job applications being refused because of their background rather than being evaluated for their actual skills, ideas, and personalities. To be able to resist and overcome these added difficulties, young people with immigrant background need additional resources. Accessing these resources and viewing themselves as respected members of society makes it possible for them to attain better life chances.

In this dissertation, I will examine the determinants of the life chances of young people with immigrant backgrounds. Our understanding of the determinants of life chances¹ is dominated by studies on human capital formation which refer to lists of skills and credentials, e.g. years of education, cognitive skills and work experience. In fact, human capital is a vital determinant of better life chances and the development of skills and credentials is a valuable asset in a knowledge society. Skills and credentials cover a broad terrain, from making the best decisions, to nourishing babies during pregnancy, to improving the quality of public debate. Studies have highlighted the differences in the educational

¹ The term “life chance” (*Lebenschancen* in German) is an old and most important concept in sociology. Max Weber (1978, p. 302) coined the term, defining it as the “shared typical probability of procuring goods, gaining a position in life, and finding inner satisfaction”. However, the use of the concept is not always clear. Previous studies have used it in reference to a variety of outcomes including educational achievement (Ritzman & Tomaskovic-Devey, 1991), labour market outcomes such as employment, income, and social assistance (Hermansen, 2017; Massey, Gross, & Eggers, 1991), and being able to take vacation abroad at least once a year (Anikin, Lezhnina, Mareeva, & Tikhonova, 2017). This broad spectrum is useful to understand if people with similar backgrounds are generally able to gain access to valuable or scarce outcomes (Breen, 2009; Giddens, 1973).

qualifications and employment status of young people with and without immigrant background (Alba, Sloan, & Sperling, 2011; Heath, Rethon, & Kilpi, 2008; Hermansen, 2017; van Tubergen, 2006). However, focusing merely on educational and employment credentials predominantly sheds light on formal processes: what is on paper, such as a degree, certificates and skills. In reality, informal relations – who you know or what you know – are no less important in finding a decent job or getting a degree from a prestigious university. Studying life chances primarily in terms of human capital formation also pays little attention to an individual's subjective views on self and his or her place in society, and limits our understanding of how young people view their chances of reaching a respected and advantaged position.

The general contribution of this dissertation is to study the determinants of life chances which research on human capital formation has neglected. To do so, I examine other key forms of capital. First, I study social capital, which refers to resources (e.g. influence, assistance, and information) that individuals may access through their networks (Bourdieu, 1986; N. Lin, 2002; Portes, 2000). Accessing resourceful people in their networks is more likely to advantage people in fulfilling their desired life chances. Second, I examine participation in diverse cultural activities, or cultural omnivorousness. This is a form of cultural capital because a small segment of society, whose members are more influential and in higher socioeconomic positions, is over-represented in activities considered highbrow, e.g. visiting art galleries (Warde, Wright, & Gayo-Cal, 2007). Cultural capital enhances people's knowhow about effectively navigating social life (e.g. becoming familiar with manners and habits, and problem-solving) on the journey to access better life chances. In addition, involvement in diverse cultural activities makes people active participants in cultural life who feel at home in various contexts and develop new social ties. Both social and cultural capital improves life chances when skills, certifications and work experience are not by themselves sufficient to get by in society. When people apply for vacant positions, "who you know" and "tricks from insiders" may advantage some candidates over those who lack similar resources. While I do not argue that social and cultural capital can open all the doors to better life chances for young people with immigrant background, they can potentially make a significant difference.

A subjective understanding of life chances is formed by aspirations and identity. Aspiration refers to plans, i.e. where a person wants to see herself in the future, and how she envisages the possibility that future might materialise (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990; Dumais, 2002). Studying aspirations gives us insights on how individuals view their potential success in society, which may or may not reflect their actual success. Identities refer here to an individual's affiliation with ethnic and racial categories (e.g. immigrant, Muslim, Swedish, Kurdish). Individuals often tend to affiliate with categories where they find a sense of worth and respect

(Tajfel, 2010). The stronger the affiliation with a specific category, the more likely that individuals within that category share a similar outlook toward life. As identity is salient, people often relate their chances of reaching advantaged positions with “us versus them” thinking – finding a decent job is easier for “them” than for “us”; “they” are successful because of “their” discipline or work ethic, etc. Identity may also emerge from or in reaction to an individual’s actual or perceived life chances, e.g. unequal treatment in the labour market, negative stereotypes, or living in immigrant-dense neighbourhoods (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001; Yancey, Ericksen, & Juliani, 1976). Aspirations and identity determine an individual’s own understanding of life chances in both direct and indirect ways. Studying aspirations and identity provides a richer understanding of an individual’s view of the possibility of becoming an equal and respected member of society.

Research Questions

This dissertation makes a specific contribution on each of the determinants of life chances for young people with immigrant background. In each of four studies, I examine one research question related to the research problems around each determinant of life chances, namely aspirations, capital and identity.

The research questions are as follows:

1. To what extent do young people with immigrant background aspire to continue to university? Do they aspire to continue to university directly or along with other plans e.g. traveling and work?
2. To what extent do young people with mixed union parents access social capital?
3. Do people who pursue a variety of cultural activities (cultural omnivores) bridge ethnically disconnected (i.e. “immigrant” versus Swedish) networks?
4. Are young people who define themselves with the stigmatising label *invandrare* (immigrant) additionally disadvantaged relative to others of immigrant origin, i.e. who hold either an explicit ethnic/national identity or immigrants who have no explicit identity?

Because the determinants of life chances for young people with immigrant background depend on the conditions they encounter in the host country, I will begin by providing the study context and then return to the research questions in greater depth.

The Swedish Context

This study focuses on young people of immigrant origin living in Sweden. Accordingly, I will briefly contextualise what “being an immigrant” means in Sweden along three macro-level parameters: demographics, migration politics and social representation in everyday life in media and politics.

Many Swedes emigrated to the United States before and during the twentieth century, while at the end of the century immigrants moved to Sweden from different corners of the world. Finns, Greeks, Yugoslavians and Turks came to fulfil labour demand, mostly at the lower rungs of the labour market. This was followed by a rise in family reunification which led to an increase in the immigrant population. Later still, some groups, predominantly Iranians, Kurds and Chileans, left their home countries due to unrest, such as ethnic conflict, regime change and military coups, and settled in Sweden. After the 1990s, they were joined by people escaping ethnic conflict and wars in the Balkan countries. Most recently, there has been an influx of Syrians due to war in their home country. As a result of these immigration trends, Sweden’s foreign-born population has reached 18 percent of the total population, and children with at least one parent born abroad constitute 12 percent of the population (SCB, 2015). That means one in three people in Sweden have an immigrant background, representing origins from over 135 different countries (SCB, 2015). The majority of these – 74 percent – are below thirty years of age. Immigrants as a social category comprise an extremely diverse group that displays significant variation across urban-rural origins, migration trajectory, social classes, ethnicities and religions.

Rather than a comprehensive account, I will provide snapshots of key migration policies. During the 1970s, the Swedish government implemented an ambitious series of policies following the principles of “equality, freedom of choice and partnership” (Borevi, 2014; Government Bill, 1975/76:26.). People of immigrant origin were considered as workers who benefited from equal rights in order to maintain full employment and economic growth (Sainsbury, 2006). They voted in local elections, were entitled to mother-tongue lessons in public schools, and received state support to form ethnic organisations. In the 1980s a series of proposals, government bills and public debates began to focus on the integration of immigrants as individuals rather than as collective actors, with the intent of avoiding segregation (Borevi, 2013). In the 1990s, after the fall of Soviet socialism, major economic crises facilitated neoliberal policies which prioritised market interests over the welfare regime (Jessop, 1993; Schierup, Hansen, & Castles, 2006). Studies in Sweden report that increasing ethnic segmentation in the labour market, part-time work and job flexibility increased economic inequalities (Behtoui, Boréus, Neergaard, & Yazdanpanah, 2017; Schierup et al., 2006; Slavnic & Urban, 2008).

Between 1996 and 2016, governments introduced new restrictions including financial support requirements for family unification (Bech, Borevi, & Mouritsen, 2017). During the same period, European countries applied so-called civic integration policies including introductory courses in the history and culture of the receiving country. While one of its Nordic neighbours, Denmark, became a flagship of such civic policies, Sweden itself did not introduce them as a full package (Bech et al., 2017). However, in 2008, the Centre Alliance government introduced a new law which abolished labour market tests and left decisions about immigration to individual employers. As a result, new immigrants who arrived after the law came into force are overrepresented in already immigrant-dense occupations such as the hotel and restaurant businesses, rather than filling shortages of skilled workers such as doctors and nurses (Emilsson, Magnusson, Törngren, & Bevelander, 2014). Last but not least, nearly 163,000 asylum seekers arrived in Sweden in 2015. Like other EU countries, Sweden implemented strict border controls and faced major challenges in managing the immigration process. In his review essay, Sandberg (2017) states that Sweden was faced with unanticipated consequences from this influx: an upsurge in undocumented immigrants, entrenchment of migration policies that gave more power to employers, shortage of skilled workers and reductions in international development assistance budgets in order to finance the management of newly-arrived migrants. Relatively speaking, migration policies in Sweden provide more social and cultural rights to immigrants than those in the rest of Europe. At the same time, Sweden experiences major policy challenges, ambiguities and controversies in integrating immigrants into mainstream society, along with managing budgets and responding to the country's demographic and economic needs in the future.

When it comes to social representation, “immigrants” are often a cognitively distinct category in Sweden. For the media and social services alike, people of immigrant origin, particularly from non-Western countries, are more likely to be subject to negative stereotypes. For example, the *invandrare* label is often used to connote the inferior, less developed and non-modern (Bredström, 2003; Herz & Johansson, 2012; Torres, 2006). Such people are subject to stigma in the most mundane ways. For example, they are often believed to dress badly, speak loudly in public transportation, and to be unpunctual. In highly formal environments, as in the juridical, immigrants are less likely to have their voices heard (Elsrud, Lalander, & Staaf, 2017). Studies report that people of non-Western origin are often perceived as the least favourable potential partners for unions (Törngren, 2011) and as neighbours (Aldén, Hammarstedt, & Neuman, 2015).

The “immigrant” versus “Swedish” distinction occurs in parallel with segregation, particularly residential segregation. Over the decades, residential areas in large metropolitan areas, particularly, have changed from mixed to immigrant-dense

neighbourhoods. In a study of population registers, Edling (2015) finds 38 metropolitan areas with an average immigrant population of 73 percent. In the same areas, almost half of people (45 percent) do not have jobs, and 25 percent of young people are not in education, employment or training. Other research shows that living in migrant-dense neighbourhoods is often associated with a higher risk of poverty (E. Andersson & Malmberg, 2018; Gustafsson, Katz, & Österberg, 2017) and health risks (Chaix, Rosvall, & Merlo, 2007). Studies show that residential segregation is not only an unanticipated consequence of ambitious housing programmes in the 1960s–1970s, the influx of socioeconomically disadvantaged immigrants has led to the avoidance of the areas by the majority (Bråmås, 2006) and caused better-off residents to move to other neighbourhoods (Aldén et al., 2015). Segregation exacerbates social exclusion by separating and maintaining the distance between people with different ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds, and is one of the major reasons for the categorical distinction between “immigrant” and “Swedish” in people’s minds.

Previous Studies

In this section, I provide a brief overview of earlier studies on the determinants of life chances and key evidence from the Swedish context.

Studies repeatedly report an educational achievement gap between children of immigrants and Swedish-born parents. In the national examinations conducted in the ninth grade, mathematics results show particularly large differences between Swedish-born children and those who were born abroad (Lundahl & Lindblad, 2018). OECD (2016) statistics also show large gaps in reading ability, science and mathematics, with differences of around 10 percentage points between second-generation immigrants and natives, and almost 20 percentage points between first-generation immigrant children and native-born children. While their educational achievement lags, immigrant children have higher educational aspirations. In their nationwide study, Jonsson and Rudolphi (2011) show that students of immigrant origin choose academic programmes more often than native-born children, even though they fail more often. Behtoui (2017) argues that parents’ higher expectations of success for their children is one of the key factors pushing students of immigrant origin to aim high in education. In her study on educational attainment, Urban (2012) finds that immigrant children achieve higher than expected given parental socioeconomic background and that children of lower-income yet higher-educated parents continue to university to avoid perceived discrimination in the labour market. While previous studies have documented differences in educational outcomes between young people with and without immigrant background, there is a need for research to learn more about what makes people aim high even when they achieve less.

Studies also demonstrate that social capital improves the life chances of young people of immigrant origin. In their studies of Iranian and Yugoslavian immigrants in Sweden, Hällsten, Edling, and Rydgren (2016) show that two forms of social capital (having few unemployed friend and access to an occupational network) explain the 60–70 percentage point difference in unemployment risk between natives and immigrants. In his study of young people graduated from vocational secondary school and university, Behtoui (2008) shows that accessing greater social capital increase wages. Other studies find that social capital correlates with lower rates of depression among young people (Miething, Rostila, & Rydgren, 2017). However, while most studies make important contributions on the *effects* of social capital, less is known about *access* to social capital.

Many studies of the role of identity on life chances examine ethnic identities specifically. The idea that the stronger the identification of ethnic background the lesser the chance of success in society has persisted over time. Studies in Sweden specifically suggest that ethnic identity is not in itself an obstacle to educational attainment and employment (Nekby & Rödin, 2010; Nekby, Rödin, & Özcan, 2009). Virta, Sam, and Westin (2004) find the highest levels of adaptation among adolescents of Turkish origin in Norway and Sweden occur amongst those who affiliate themselves with Turkish identity. Ethnic identity protects against depression, particularly when it enables people to access greater social capital (Miething et al., 2017). While previous studies examine the salience of ethnic identity to the degree of social psychological adjustment to the host society, existing research often views immigrant identity as the explicit ethnic and racial identities of people of immigrant origin. To the best of my knowledge, there are no studies that examine the extent to which people with immigrant identity access social opportunities or reflect on their own place in society in a way that is similar to, or differs from, other people of immigrant origin.

Research Papers

In this section, I introduce four empirical studies that focus on the determinants of life chances. In this dissertation, I study young people aged between 18 and 23.

The first study examines aspirations among young people of immigrant origin at the end of upper secondary education (aged 17–18 years). Because young people begin to diverge into different paths at this stage, it is important to study their aspirations to examine where they hope to see themselves in the near future and how they improvise means of reaching their desired destinations. The second and third studies study social capital and cultural capital. These forms of capital empower young people to cope with difficulties that might arise as they navigate

different domains of life, particularly higher education and work. The final study is on identity, and examines how young people view themselves and their place in society.

The four research papers that constitute this dissertation use two separate survey datasets. The first dataset, used in study I, comes from a longitudinal study of ten schools in Malmö. The second dataset, used in studies II-IV, comes from a cohort panel survey of social capital and labour market integration of 19 and 23 years old Swedes with and without an immigrant background. Both datasets are discussed in more detail in the methods section.

Study I: Traditional versus Experimental Pathways to University: Educational Aspirations among Young Swedes with and without an Immigrant Background

In study I, I examine two types of educational aspirations among final-year upper-secondary school students: i) the aspiration to continue to university directly (traditional pathways); and ii) the aspiration to continue to university along with other plans, including travelling and work (experimental pathways).

I expected to find differences in aspirations among young people with and without migration background due to three reasons. First, second-generation immigrants are more likely to aspire to experimental pathways than first-generation immigrants as they are more exposed to the host country-specific culture than the latter. Second, people of immigrant origin have higher aspirations mostly due to their background: immigrant parents and their children often view higher education as a means of achieving social mobility (Kao & Tienda, 1998, 2005). Third, young people of immigrant origin may be determined to enter university to reduce the likelihood of unequal treatment in the labour market (Goyette & Xie, 1999; Sue & Okazaki, 1990).

I found that it is much more common among youth with immigrant background to plan for traditional pathways compared to those of Swedish origin who often tend to take experimental paths to university. Intriguingly, the results show that young people of immigrant origin who were born in Sweden (second-generation immigrants) are more similar to first-generation immigrants than to Swedes in this matter. This difference persists when controlling for factors related to school performance and parental socioeconomic background. The fact that first- and second-generation immigrants differ only slightly with respect to their planned educational pathways indicates that time spent in Sweden is of less importance. If we accept the results, albeit tentatively, we see that exposure to Swedish culture does not add much to explaining the differences found between groups.

The results suggest that immigrant optimism and adverse conditions combine to push young people of immigrant origin to plan to attend university directly and rapidly after completing secondary school. This is due to their desire for success,

combined with adverse conditions which may strengthen the belief that directly continuing to university will counteract the discrimination they expect in the labour market (Goyette & Xie, 1999; Kao & Tienda, 1998). This may deprive them of an opportunity to explore the self and life outside university during the formative period of life.

Study II: Accessing Social Capital among Children of Mixed Union Parents

Mixed unions have been seen as a “litmus test” for integration (Alba & Nee, 2003), an engine of social change (Kalmijn, 1998) and an incubator of new lifestyles (Collet, 2012). Many studies argue that children of mixed unions are viewed as similar to the children of native-born parents with respect to the social aspect of integration (Kalmijn, 2015, 2010; Rodríguez-García, 2015). Social capital is the key indicator of social integration. While studies have tended to compare the social capital of children of native-born parents to that of children of immigrant parents (Behtoui, 2017; Nannestad, Svendsen, & Svendsen, 2008; van Tubergen & Volker, 2014), we lack similar studies of mixed-union children. Such studies are important because they allow us to examine if a mixed-union background makes people more advantaged or not.

The study explores the distribution of social capital across geographical and social sources. This is rarely done, but is crucial for explaining where social capital comes from. This insight is useful, particularly for children of mixed unions as they often bridge between ethnically segregated parties. In this study, I examine two sources of social capital: close and strong social ties (e.g. family/kinship), and distant and weak social ties (e.g. acquaintances) (Granovetter, 1973). I also examine access to ties within and beyond national borders (Rodríguez-García, 2015; Vertovec, 1999). This leads to two research questions. How do children of mixed unions access social capital compared to children of native-born parents and children of two foreign-born parents? To what extent do children of mixed unions access social capital in terms of social sources on one hand, and trans-national on the other?

Study II shows that the social capital of children of mixed unions does not fit a general pattern. Children from Yugoslavian-Swedish unions access similar social capital to children of two Swedish-born parents, whereas children from Iranian-Swedish unions access greater social capital. As children of mixed unions do not access social capital uniformly, the results imply that a mixed-union background is not necessarily an (dis)advantage for social capital. These results contrast with studies arguing that mixed unions are a litmus test for social integration (Alba & Nee, 2003). If that had been the case, this study would have shown that mixed-union children access social capital similar to the children of two Swedish-born children.

Instead, the migration background of foreign-born parents influences whether mixed-union children have greater or less access to social capital and whether this is through few or multiple sources. As such, children from Yugoslavian-Swedish unions are more likely to suffer exclusion from family-based social capital whereas the same source of social capital puts Iranian-Swedish children ahead of children of Swedish-born parents. These results are in line with studies (Collet, 2012) that highlight the importance of “thicker description” of mixedness (here referring to the mixed-union context) on life chances.

Study III: Cultural Omnivores: A Bridge or a Wall between Ethnically Different Worlds? Evidence from Young People in Sweden

Cultural omnivores are people who are involved in both lowbrow and highbrow cultural activities (Peterson & Kern, 1996). Previous studies have argued that omnivores have many positive characteristics: they are more tolerant of ethnically and racially different people (Bryson, 1996), and are more cooperative and integrative (van Eijck & Lievens, 2008). Bryson (1996) argues that cultural omnivorousness is a form of multicultural capital which makes interaction between ethnically and racially different people possible. Following these arguments, I expect that omnivores are more likely to be part of networks connecting people who belong to different groups.

On the other hand, studies have also argued that there are limitations to the idea that omnivores are open, suggesting instead that they can be rather exclusive. For instance, omnivores are disproportionately represented in activities pursued by the middle class (Warde & Gayo-Cal, 2009; Warde et al., 2007), while some are loyal to typical products that cultural organisations, such as film societies or restaurant chains, provide, rather than blending them or inventing new ones (Goldberg et al., 2016). Based on this debate, I investigate ethnic network diversity among cultural omnivores by asking whether cultural omnivorousness bridges between people with ethnically different origins (network brokerage), or if, in fact, they are more likely to be part of closed relations among ethnically similar people (network closure).

My research reveals the limitations of the multicultural capital hypothesis. Many studies support their argument based on attitudes towards ethnically and racially different groups, such as tolerance, worldliness and openmindedness (Bryson, 1996; Chan, 2013; van Eijck, 2001). While these attitudes are useful as indicators of cognitive processes (e.g. beliefs and emotions), they are inadequate to capture the structural aspect of social integration. Indeed, the results of my study do not show a strong association between omnivorousness and ethnic brokerage.

One result, however, is an exception to this general finding. Young Swedes with higher-educated parents, who are involved in both highbrow and lowbrow

activities, are more likely to be brokers between ethnic categories. There are two possible explanations for this finding. First, the results show that young Swedes' social networks are more homogenous than those of immigrants (Mollenhorst, Edling, & Rydgren, 2014). When young people are surrounded by ethnically similar others, contact with ethnically different people becomes a source of novelty. In other words, involvement in different cultural opportunities (cultural omnivorousness) helps native-born Swedes encounter ethnically different people who bring novelty to their cultural repertoire. Young people of immigrant origin, on the other hand, are already exposed to diverse ethnic groups in their networks, and so do not experience them as a source of novelty. Second, these young people, particularly those born in Sweden, may be more advantaged regarding involvement in culturally diverse activities. Studies suggest that they have "dual references" and can access the culture of both their parents' country of origin, and their own country of residence (Carter, 2006; Feliciano & Lanuza, 2016; Kao & Tienda, 1998), which may provide them with sufficient novelty. Thus, this result may simply be a by-product of the asymmetrical opportunities accessed by young Swedes with and without immigrant background.

Study IV: Exploring Subjective Well-being and Social Exclusion among People with Immigrant Identity in Sweden

As mentioned above, *invandrare* is often used in a stigmatising way. Following Link and Phelan (2001), I view stigma as a cognitive process (i.e. negative stereotypes attached to certain labels) that co-occurs with social exclusion (that is, separation, discrimination, and status loss).

The following research question guides my investigation: Are young people who define themselves by the stigmatising label *invandrare* additionally disadvantaged relative to others of immigrant origin, i.e. who hold explicit ethnic/national identities, as well as immigrants who have no explicit identity? I explore this question through two sets of social indicators on disadvantage, namely subjective well-being and social exclusion, including access to social capital.

The study yields two results. On one hand, it finds that people with immigrant identity experience greater disadvantages (e.g. higher risk of depression and unemployment) than those with explicit ethnic/national identities, who comprise 75 percent of those of immigrant origin. On the other hand, having *any* identity prevents people with an immigrant identity from falling into the most disadvantaged position. Indeed, those without an explicit sense of self, i.e., having no explicit identity, have the lowest subjective well-being and access the least amount of social capital.

This suggests that stigmatisation and self-identification work in tandem to create (dis)advantage. When people of immigrant background consider themselves as

immigrants, stigmatisation may harm their efforts to become equal members of society. But having any identity at all reduces the negative consequences of stigmatisation. Compared to people with no explicit identity, people with immigrant identity maintain self-confidence and access a certain amount of social capital, which is above that accessed by native-born Swedes. As a result, people with immigrant identity show signs of resisting adverse conditions, suggesting that stigmatisation and its negative consequences fails to create a vicious circle, in which stigma harm the sense of self-worth, in turn making it impossible to address the damage caused.

Aspirations, Capital and Identity

I have introduced the key research elements, research questions, context, aims and contributions of this study. In this chapter, I discuss the three concepts that make up the theoretical core of my analyses of the determinants of life-chances, namely aspirations, capital and identity. This discussion is intended to provide general background rather than forming a comprehensive literature review.

Aspirations

Aspirations are subjective determinants of life chances and refer, at their simplest, to plans (Morgan, 1998; Portes, Vickstrom, Haller, & Aparicio, 2013). However, aspirations do not necessarily entail a deliberate or detailed analysis of the future. When people plan their future, they tend to improvise and to figure out how best to navigate institutions such as school and the workplace (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990; Dumais, 2002). Studying aspirations gives us an understanding of an individual's view of her future opportunities or constraints: what is possible and what is impossible; which doors are closed, which are not. When young people reflect on their life chances, they project or imagine their future selves. This projection of the future self is an important aspect of human agency (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998; Frye, 2012; Hitlin & Johnson, 2015). Being an active agent improves the ability of young people to respond to and develop strategies against barriers and present conditions. This is particularly important for young people of immigrant origin who often perceive or experience adverse conditions such as discrimination, negative stereotypes, status loss and exclusion or marginalisation in the labour market.

Studies on educational aspirations date back to the 1960s. The status attainment model, or Wisconsin model (Sewell, Haller, & Portes, 1969), was the first systematic theory on educational aspiration. It states that young people who aim high are more likely to succeed than those with lower educational aspirations. According to this theory, aspirations do not simply derive from inner qualities (e.g. ambitious, focus, sharpness), but emerge from social context. The aspirations of parents, teachers, and peers determine one's educational aspirations. In this theory, educational aspirations are a causal mechanism in school success.

On the other hand, studies also challenge the implicit assumptions of the status attainment theory, i.e. that students are free agents and schools are meritocratic systems (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990; Kerckhoff, 1976). Kerckhoff (1976) proposes that education shapes opportunities by classifying, ranking and allocating students to different tracks. This allocation process shapes the opportunities and constraints behind success or failure in school. In contrast to the status attainment model, Kerckhoff (1976) suggests that aspirations do not play a key role in school success.

Previous research in ethnic and migration studies also downplays the role of aspirations as a causal mechanism of school success. While there are some studies in the literature that do not support this result (Teney, Devleeshouwer, & Hanquinet, 2013), many show a paradoxical relationship between aspirations and achievement, finding that young people with immigrant origin tend to have higher educational aspirations than native-born children (Kao & Tienda, 2005; Raleigh & Kao, 2010; Salikutluk, 2013; Strand & Winston, 2008; Suárez-Orozco, Rhodes, & Milburn, 2009). Jonsson and Rudolphi (2011) come to a similar conclusion in the Swedish context, analysing population registers. The literature thus suggest that educational aspirations require special attention, and that low and high educational aspirations are not merely accounted for by school success. For this reason, I particularly focus on educational aspirations in study I.

However, I realise that studies on educational aspirations often share similar assumptions on how young people navigate education. During the 1980s, studies on educational aspirations implicitly or explicitly followed Mare's educational transition model, which suggests that young people progress in education in a linear, step-by-step process (Mare, 1980). That is, young people are assumed to follow a traditional pathway along a direct line between upper-secondary education and university (Milesi, 2010). Since the 1990s, however, studies of actual pathways (transitions) have shown that the path to a university degree can be much less linear than assumed, and suggest that Mare's model needs updating. For instance, young people often delay entry to university, shift between school programmes, or re-enter education after a certain age (Milesi, 2010; Rindfuss, Swicegood, & Rosenfeld, 1987; Shanahan, 2000). So far, studies on educational aspirations have not used these insights on educational transitions to examine aspirations beyond the traditional pathway. We know very little about how young people who share the aspiration of a university education differ in how they picture their near future, the extent to which they see themselves as taking a "traditional" (direct) pathway to university, and the extent to which they intend to do other things before or in parallel with their university studies.

In doing so, I argue that contextual factors, e.g. institutions and widely-shared meanings, have an impact on aspirations. Across different countries, these

contextual factors lead to strikingly different experiences during the transition from adolescence to adulthood (Billari & Wilson, 2001; Buchmann & Kriesi, 2011). Young people access a variety of opportunities that are provided by institutions across countries (Buchmann & Kriesi, 2011). At the same time, what is accepted as a norm about progression through the educational system in one country is not the same as in another country. In the United States, for example, early entry and completion of university are rewarded in the labour market (see Elman and O’Rand (2007)). In Germany, educational systems classify students into tracks at an earlier age than many other European countries: these shape where they end up in later years. In Italy, young people usually live longer periods of time with their parents to sustain the financial investment in higher education.

When considering contextual factors, experimentation appear to be more prevalent in Nordic countries than other Western countries such as Italy, Germany and the United States (see Cook and Furstenberg (2002)). In Sweden, the state sponsors generous student loans and housing benefits for low-income groups that enable young people who have not yet entered the labour market to become financially independent and less reliant on the family. Many young Swedes, therefore, leave the family nest in their early twenties or before, which is “earliest-early” in Europe (Billari, 2004). At the same time, there is no strict age limit for university education in Sweden. As such, it is common for young people to take some time off from education to travel abroad before, as well as during, their university career (Frändberg & Vilhelmson, 2011). Young people are also encouraged to explore individual plans. Changing study programmes during university is very common, as well as studying and working at the same time.

In study I, I distinguish between two major pathways: the traditional and the experimental. As stated above, the former refers to a direct transition from upper secondary school to university, whilst the latter refers to a path where higher education is combined with, or preceded by, other things, such as work and travel. Study I thus looks at aspired educational pathways, rather than the actual route or transition from one level of education to another. I examine the research question: to what extent do people with and without immigrant background differ in their aspired pathways? To study this question, I discuss three possible explanations: i) exposure to a country-specific culture; ii) immigrant optimism; and iii) adverse conditions.

Given that the degree of exposure to the culture of experimentation determines to what extent young people plan a traditional or an experimental path to university, we would expect to find a difference between first and second-generation immigrants in this respect. Those who have lived their whole lives in Sweden should, if the argument holds, be more inclined to an experimental path than those who have spent part of their childhood in their parents’ country of origin.

Alternatively, studies suggest that immigrant parents and their children – whether born in Sweden or abroad – share positive attitudes toward education (Kao & Tienda, 1998, 2005). This may be because immigrants are selective groups: those who move to another country may have higher expectations about their life chances (immigrant optimism) and view tertiary education as a vehicle for upward social mobility (Heath et al., 2008). To do well in school is also an important cultural component in some immigrant groups, such as Chinese and Mexican immigrants in the United States (Hardway & Fuligni, 2006). Based on this hypothesis, I expect that young people of immigrant origin have strong timing norms, i.e. they may expect to get an educational degree without any delays. Some have already lost school time because of immigration, and are less tolerant of additional delays in their education. In other words, they are more likely to rush into entering and exiting university.

Studies also examine the role of adverse conditions on aspirations. One theoretical version of adverse conditions is oppositional culture theory which finds that in the United States young people may have low or high educational aspirations depending on ethnic and racial history (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986; Mickelson, 1990). For example, “voluntary minorities” (e.g. Asians) have higher educational aspirations than whites, whereas “involuntary minorities” (e.g. African Americans) have lower aspirations than the white majority. According to the oppositional culture theory this is because they have oppositional views on studying in white schools and succeeding (that is, also in opposition to dominant culture). The perspective argues that ethnic and racial status per se is sufficient explanation for low versus high aspirations.

This argument has sparked substantial debate in the literature. In the United States, some studies have rejected the oppositional culture theory (Downey, Ainsworth, & Qian, 2009). Outside the United States, studies do not support the theory’s classification of immigrants as voluntary versus involuntary (e.g. immigrants from former colonies in the Netherlands versus labour immigrants) (see (van Tubergen & van Gaans, 2016)). In my opinion, this classification leads to a narrow view of aspirations. For example, some refugees who move to Sweden and other Western countries do not fit this picture. For refugees, the necessity of escaping conflicts is mixed with expectations of better life chances in the new country. For this reason, the oppositional culture theory has limited applicability in the Swedish context.

If oppositional culture theory is not a useful perspective, then how do we look at the role of adverse conditions on aspirations? Studies suggest that young people opt to stay longer in school when they anticipate adverse conditions in the future (Brinbaum & Cebolla-Boado, 2007; Goyette & Xie, 1999; Sue & Okazaki, 1990). This is often because the cost of facing unequal treatment in the labour market is higher than that of spending more time in education. Many studies argue that

discrimination is the major adverse factor in the labour market. On the other hand, people view their life chances differently if they perceive or experience unequal treatment in the labour market (Teney et al., 2013). Some may aim high to counterbalance stereotypical images, e.g. the idea that immigrants are more disadvantaged and less educated. Others may feel anxious about their educational credentials or see their parents and relatives experience status loss, i.e. not being able to obtain equal credentials to the education earned in the home country. Status loss among parents, depriving them of economic and social returns from education, may lead some young people to prioritise higher education. Still others may give up expectations from education and instead prioritise economic returns, e.g. through self-employment. Thus, multiple mechanisms may operate in the link between adverse conditions and aspirations.

Forms of Capital

In this section, I will discuss two forms of non-economic capital: social and cultural. First, however, I will briefly introduce the term “capital”.

I follow Pierre Bourdieu’s definition of capital (1986). In his own terms, capital refers to “accumulated labour (in its materialized form or its ‘incorporated,’ embodied form) which, when appropriated on a private, i.e., exclusive, basis by agents or groups of agents, enables them to appropriate social energy in the form of reified or living labour” (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 46). This definition retains some elements of Marx’s view of capital while others disappear. It follows Marx’s basic view that capital is a scarce and valuable resource that only people in advantaged positions can access more of. However, political economic analysis of capital accumulation, as such the antagonistic relation between labour and capitalists, disappears (Calhoun, 1993). This divergence from Marx may arise from the influence of human capital theory developed by Shultz and Becker in the 1960s. According to this theory, skills, qualifications, and experiences gathered through education, training, and work enable individuals to add more to their life than purchasing power. Human capital also empowers workers to negotiate with their bosses for their labour, and to influence the organisation and management of the work process. The influence of human capital theory is profound in Coleman’s definition of capital. Coleman (1988) argues that social capital helps a market to function by easing the flow of information and assistance. In the following section, I will examine two forms of capital: accessing resources through social networks (social capital), and involvement in diverse cultural activities (cultural capital).

Accessing Resources through Social Networks

I use social capital to mean resources (e.g. assistance, information, and influence) in social networks (Bourdieu, 1986; N. Lin, 2002; Portes, 2000). Alternative definitions also cover generalised trust, active social life (Putnam, 2007) and social control in small communities (Coleman, 1988). Why then do I not use these alternative definitions?

In study II, I use Nan Lin's theory of social capital, which is a combination of social resource theory, and network theory. Although I draw upon this theory, I do not argue that it is the only or the best form of social capital theory. Certainly, some alternative views suffer from logical problems. For example, some studies have defined social capital as a property of large units (e.g. governments, regions). Robert Putnam (2007) defines social capital as the civic properties of nations and regions. This definition suffers from circular thinking (see Portes, 2000). In this definition, social capital is both a cause and an effect, e.g. civic cities have civic organisations and it is hard to distinguish what creates social capital and how social capital affects an outcome. Other alternative definitions do not capture a broader view of social structure. In his definition Coleman (1988) focuses on strong ties, i.e. people are part of immediate social circles (e.g. teachers-parents-students). This narrows our view of the social structure. Granovetter (1973) introduces the idea that weak ties open up novel insights and influences beyond immediate social circles. Likewise, later studies find that brokering between cohesive units that otherwise lack connecting ties (known as structural holes) is a form of social capital (Burt, 2009). Following Granovetter, Nan Lin provides a broader view of social structure by studying social capital that can be generated as resources from both strong and weak ties in the social network. In study II, this definition of social capital allows me to examine the extent to which individuals generate resources (information, assistances, influence) from a variety of sources including family and kin (strong ties) and acquaintances (weak ties).

Lin's social capital theory is based on three propositions: i) strength of position; ii) strength of resources; and iii) strength of ties. The first proposition relates to an individual's and their family's position in the socioeconomic hierarchy. Figure 1, below, depicts the use of social capital in a hierarchical social structure. E refers to the socioeconomic position of the ego. C and D refer to the alter, i.e. the ego's social ties, including acquaintances and family members. C* and D* are the destinations that young people can reach with the help of their contacts, C and D. According to his first proposition, the individual's initial position determines access to social capital. People in higher socioeconomic positions access greater social capital than those in lower socioeconomic positions. Not all people are lucky enough to be born with parents who are already embedded in a rich network

of connections (e.g. the children of professors, medical specialists or financial managers).

According to his second proposition, the resources at the top are scarce, less reachable, and more influential for life chances than those at lower positions (N. Lin, 1999). Through C and D, the ego can reach new socioeconomic positions, C* and D* respectively. N. Lin (2002) uses a pyramid analogy to describe the unequal distribution of social resources (see Figure 1). In this figure, C is more influential on the life chances of ego than D, being located at a higher socioeconomic position. With the help of C, the ego can reach position C*, which is less than or equal to the actual position of C. For illustrative purposes, I give only one example of where C* could be located; for instance, C* could be located near C.

The strength of the tie in Lin's third proposition comes from two ideas in social network theory. The first is homophily, the idea that birds of a feather flock together. In the figure below, if E moves up in the pyramid, she or he is more likely to find similar others in her/his social circle. Due to homophily, if E moves up substantially, he or she is more likely to connect with C. The second idea is Granovetter (1973) strength of weak ties theory. According to this, resources are more likely to be novel and influential when they are generated outside immediate social circles. In other words, a weak tie is in fact stronger as it allows one to move upwards in the pyramid.

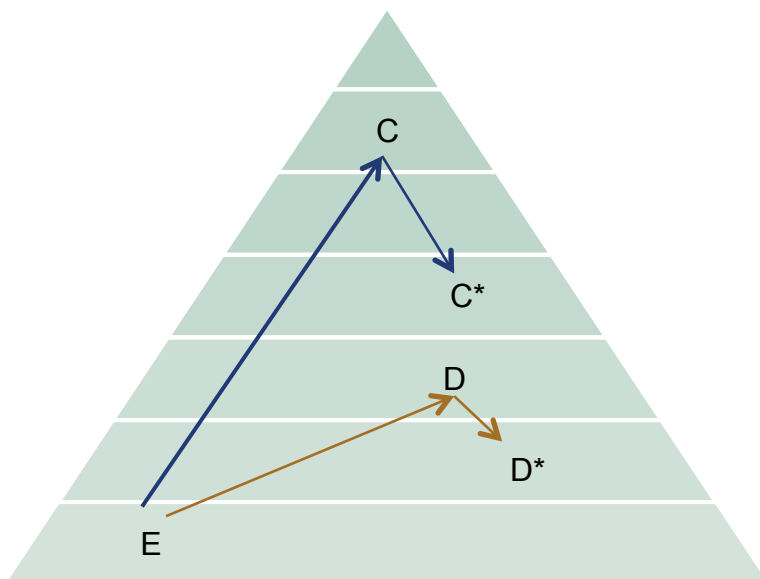


Figure 1 The Use of Social Resources in a Hierarchical Social Structure

Source: N. Lin, Ensel, and Vaughn (1981, p. p.396)

Note: E= State of the Ego, C, D=Status of the contact, C*, D* =Status of the destination

Lin's nuanced perspective is a significant contribution to social capital theory. In addition to its theoretical complexity, this approach also uses and measures social capital in precise terms. Social capital has three dimensions, namely sources (who provide the resources), the receiver (who benefits from social capital), and resources (assistance, information, influence) (see similar usage in (Garip, 2008; N. Lin, 2002; Portes, 2000)). In my research, I have used a similar approach by referring to sources (family, kin, acquaintances, transnational ties, ties in Sweden), receivers (children of mixed unions, two foreign-born parents and native-born parents) and resources (influences, assistances and information from different positions in the socioeconomic hierarchy).

Lin's theory distinguishes between access to and return from social capital.² To examine the influence of social capital, we need to know first where it comes from, that is, how people develop social capital. Accessing social capital does not guarantee that it will have a positive impact on life chances. To explore the return of social capital, it is necessary to examine how it is mobilised, that is, how contacts and the resources they provide are used. Smith (2008) examines this in a study of African Americans in the United States. She finds that African Americans in poor neighbourhoods could access other African Americans in middle-class positions. However, to avoid risking their own reputation at work the middle-class contacts would refuse to provide the help requested. As Smith's research shows, caution is needed when interpreting research on access to social capital.

Both expressive action – sharing emotions, sense of worth, and feeling valued – and instrumental action are part of Lin's theory. However, the empirical analysis conducted by Lin and his followers mostly focuses on instrumental action. The theory is applied to a lesser extent to expressive action. I often find that Lin's social capital is used more in the status attainment process than social psychological processes such as identity, stereotypes, and affective relations. This is often because Lin emphasises that individuals invest in their relations to expect returns. His theory assumes purposive action and downplays the origin of tie formation beyond individual intentions or goals.

In fact, accessing social capital may also be beyond an individual's instrumental goals. In his study among mothers of children at the same childcare centres in the United States, Small (2009) shows that new ties emerge as organisations (here, childcare centres) play the role of a broker. Mothers primarily go to childcare centres to get services for their children, and an unintended consequence of this purposive act is the formation of connections to new people (Small, 2009).

² The two processes are similar to potentiality in Bourdieu's definition of social capital. Bourdieu (1986, p. 51) defines social capital as "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition".

Similarly, social capital may emerge through mundane activities such as smoking and chatting during breaks at work. Larger structures also shape access to social capital. Wilson (2012) influential study argues that deindustrialisation, and positive discrimination have encouraged middle-class African Americans to leave inner cities. The working-class African Americans who remain become increasingly isolated.

Other forms of social capital include brokerage and closure, which I examine in study III. These relate to structural positions that create advantages. Brokerage bridges disjoint networks that have competing views or contradictory norms (Burt, 2001; Stovel & Shaw, 2012). As Stovel and Shaw (2012, p. 140) write, “without such acts of brokerage, we would all live much narrower and in many respects, more impoverished lives”. In closed networks, or closure, advantage comes from established trust and cooperation among actors (Burt, 2001). While brokerage is the most open form of network and encourages diverse and unusual ideas, closure maintains the status quo, and reinforces current beliefs and norms. If a person displays a belief or behaviour that does not align well with those held within a closed network, she or he is more likely to face sanction (Burt, 2005). These contrasts between the two forms of social capital are complementary.

Empirical studies of social capital often highlight that it enables people to be more advantaged and to achieve their desires. When people interact with resourceful people at higher socioeconomic positions, social capital is expected to have positive returns. We can list various examples of social capital’s positive effects, from reducing the symptoms of depression (Bassett & Moore, 2013) to decreasing the risk of unemployment (Hällsten et al., 2016) and doing well in school (Stanton-Salazar, 1997). Social capital is a valuable asset particularly for those who need more in life, such as members of lower income groups, residents of disadvantaged areas and victims of stigmatisation. This makes social capital an essential resource for young people of immigrant origin who need additional resources to cope with difficulties in the labour market and everyday life.

To study social capital as a determinant of life chances, we also need to consider its downsides. Portes (2014) lists conditions when it becomes a disadvantage. High social capital may restrict freedom, exclude outsiders and endorse harmful norms. According to the ethnic enclave hypothesis, working in ethnic minority businesses promotes togetherness and mutual benefits between co-ethnic employees and employers, but these tightly-knit ethnic relations are not necessarily win-win situations (Sanders & Nee, 1987; Waldinger, 1993). Employers gain more income in return for their human capital in ethnic enclaves than similar employers in the mainstream labour market where rights and job security are more regulated. For ethnic minority employees, on the other hand, income return in exchange for human capital in enclave businesses is lower than

for people in similar jobs in the mainstream labour market (Sanders & Nee, 1987). Another example is of remittances. Studies also find that migration networks can exert social pressure to send remittances to the homeland (Chort, Gubert, & Senne, 2012; Lindley, 2009). Social capital may prevent people from accessing better life chances.

In study II, I study access to social capital as a necessary step to understand how it influences life chances. Particularly, I study the social capital of children of mixed-union parents. “Mixed union” refers to marriages or partnerships in which one parent is born in a foreign country and the other in Sweden. One viewpoint is that children of mixed unions are similar to children of native-born parents when it comes to social integration. Studies often view mixed-union children as advantaged, accessing more opportunities than children from two foreign-born parents, as they typically do not participate in strong ethnic affiliations (Alba, 1990). In his study in the Netherlands, Kalmijn (2010) argues that children of mixed unions are accepted as members of the ethnic majority because their parents live in less segregated neighbourhoods and have more contacts with the majority. This argument implies that children of mixed unions access social capital like children of native-born parents. Another argument is that mixed-union parents and their children may be subject to stigmatisation due to physical appearance, foreign-sounding names, or general prejudice leading to rejection, exclusion, and disapproval (Kalmijn, 2015; Rodríguez-García, 2015; Song, 2009). Stigma creates difficulties for mixed-union children in joining ethnically homogenous networks where endogamy may be a norm. A second viewpoint is that the social integration of children of mixed unions is somewhere between that of the children of immigrant parents and the children of native-born parents. Following this insight, we might expect mixed-union children to access less social capital than children with native-born parents but more than children of two foreign-born parents.

In my view, these two expectations are complementary. That is, mixed-union children access greater opportunities to form new ties because of their fluency in the native language, familiarity with host country education, and exposure to a diverse culture at home, compared to children of two foreign-born parents. At the same time, they may not feel like full members of society particularly when a parent comes from a background that is subjected to negative stereotypes. Studies provide a general explanation of social integration and often focus on social networks with the ethnic majority. In study II, I offer a more comprehensive view of social capital, examining multiple sources, including strong social ties (e.g. family/kinship) distant and weak social ties (e.g. acquaintances) (Granovetter, 1973) as well as ties within and beyond national borders (Rodríguez-García, 2015; Vertovec, 1999). Multiple sources of social capital particularly reflect the mixed-union context. As mixed unions cut across affiliations, such as ethnic background,

country of origin, and religion, children from these unions may be part of multiple social circles.

Involvement in Diverse Cultural Activities

In this section, I examine involvement in diverse forms of cultural activity at the individual level. I begin with a brief overview of key studies in the literature.

Before the 1990s, a distinction between lowbrow and highbrow culture dominated cultural sociology. Lowbrow refers to hedonic engagement – seeking pleasure or fun – while highbrow refers to aesthetic appreciation (van Eijck, 2001). Contemporary examples of lowbrow culture may include, for example, Netflix binge-watching, and reading popular crime series, while highbrow culture may mean an interest in certain art movements, or listening to classical music from a specific era. What is lowbrow versus highbrow is not, however, self-evident, but is “legitimised” by people in influential positions (Bourdieu, 1984). After the 1990s, the thesis of cultural omnivorousness gained prominence. This argues that omnivores replace cultural snobs (i.e. those who restrict their activities to highbrow activities) over time (Peterson & Kern, 1996). A quick look at citation reports from the Web of Science (2017), the number of studies on this subject has risen thirteen-fold over the last decade.

In his study of classical music organisations in Boston, Dimaggio (1987) examines the emergence of the highbrow-lowbrow distinction over time. He finds that it was fuzzy before the nineteenth century and emerged at the turn of the twentieth century when the so-called Boston Brahmins (an urban elite) established organisations to differentiate “art” from “entertainment”. In her comparative study on the upper middle classes in France and the United States, Lamont (1992) suggests that taste (cultural preference) is more autonomous in France than the United States due to the former’s centralised education system, intellectual subculture, and ethnic homogeneity. According to Lamont (1992), the middle class in the United States do not use “taste” to draw a clear line between classes, instead they define cultural distinctions through moral signals such as honesty and work ethic. Finally, Peterson and Kern (1996) argue that highbrows are not snobs, but are eclectic. They argue that omnivorousness rose after the 1980s as a result of educational expansion, increasing ethnic/racial tolerance, geographical mobility, and a flourishing market in art production.

How does involvement in diverse forms of cultural activity matter for the life chances of young people of immigrant origin? Involvement in highbrow activities is a form of cultural capital because a small segment of society consisting of those in higher socioeconomic and influential positions are overrepresented in highbrow culture, which makes it a scarce and prestigious resource. Most studies which

compare cultural omnivores and cultural snobs have found that the omnivores actually attend theatre, opera and museums more than cultural snobs (Lopez-Gonzalez, Aravena, & Hummer, 2005; López-Sintas & Katz-Gerro, 2005). As cultural omnivores are more involved in highbrow culture, omnivorousness can be considered a form of cultural capital (Warde et al., 2007).³ Previous studies suggest that involvement in highbrow activities has a direct influence on life chances. Studies report that it is often positively associated with school achievement, educational attainment and partner selection (DiMaggio, 1982; DiMaggio and Mohr, 1985). As omnivorousness is a form of cultural capital, we can argue that it may have similar influences on life chances as involvement in highbrow activities.

In addition to its direct influences, cultural capital has more indirect yet no less important influences on life chances. Cultural capital empowers people to cope with barriers; it acts as an aura consisting of certain signals and manners that may provide an advantage in informal situations. In her studies of ethnic minorities in the United States, Rivera (2015) finds that the interviews and CV screening processes have a positive bias towards candidates who give certain signals (such as “knowledgeable”, “resourceful”, “worldly”). Cultural capital empowers people of immigrant origin during periods of insecurity⁴ such as whilst seeking employment, entering new social circles and starting a new job. Participating in cultural activities enriches “know-how” about cultural codes, i.e. what is “normal”, what is “valued”, “what helps people get ahead”. At the same time, participating in diverse cultural activities including low and highbrow cultural activities enhances a sense of belonging. Active involvement in cultural life makes people feel more at home. Last but not least, involvement in cultural activities can expand the chances of forming new ties. Shared interests or focuses bring people together (Feld, 1981; Lizardo, 2006).

In study III, I investigate the associations between ethnic diversity in social networks and cultural diversity at an individual level (cultural omnivorousness). Previous studies have attached great value to omnivores as progressive agents in society, claiming that they opt for environmentally-friendly products, are liberal

³ While omnivorousness is one form of cultural capital, in study III, I did not examine all aspects of cultural capital. In addition to involvement in highbrow culture, there exist other aspects of cultural capital, namely embodied (or incorporated) and institutionalised (Bourdieu, 1984; Michele Lamont & Lareau, 1988; Lareau & Weininger, 2003). The former relates to practices (attitudes, preferences and behaviours) acquired through socialisation, such as growing up in an environment full of books. The latter relates to resources, such as degrees and diplomas. Because all aspects of cultural capital are not discussed in study III, I do not use the term in the study.

⁴ When I highlight the role of cultural capital during an uncertain period of life, I take inspiration from the argument of culture as a toolkit (Swidler, 1986). Broadly speaking, culture (e.g. habits, skills, strategies) determines actions during an uncertain period of time. Individuals use culture in creative ways, such as inventing new strategies to overcome difficulties.

on immigrants' rights, and strengthen institutions and development (Chan, 2013; Chan & Goldthorpe, 2007). Studies often assume "omnivores" are a group of people with distinct identity or traits, such as being skilled in interactions with outside groups (Bryson, 1996; van Eijck & Lievens, 2008). For this reason, Bryson (1996) suggests that omnivorousness is a form of multicultural capital. If cultural omnivorousness is multicultural capital, we expect that omnivores are more likely to be part of network brokerage, connecting people who are otherwise disconnected. Although studies often highlight the links between "openness" and omnivorousness, others argue that omnivores also exclude outsiders. They find that omnivores are represented disproportionately in middle-class activities (Warde & Gayo-Cal, 2009; Warde et al., 2007). In study III, I examine whether omnivores bridge ethnically dissimilar groups (network brokerage) or build walls enclosing ethnically similar people (network closure).⁵

There is another way of thinking about the association between brokerage/closure and omnivorousness. According to Stovel and Shaw (2012), brokerage is more influential on behaviours and preferences when actors belong to different categories (e.g. different ethnic origins). This is because disconnected parties tend to have greater biases against out-groups and greater cohesive relations with in-group members (Stovel & Shaw, 2012). For this reason, individuals who participate in cross-ethnic brokerage are more likely to be involved in cultural activities. In contrast, closed networks within the same category reinforce the contrast between insiders and outsiders. A closed network within the same category flattens variety in cultural consumption and crystallises similar behaviours (Fuhse, 2012). This strengthens a sense of belonging among members. In contrast to brokerage *between* categories, closure *within* categories reflects exclusivity of cultural activities. In other words, it is expected that brokerage and closure are associated with omnivorousness in a different way: the former expands the cultural repertoire, the latter narrows it down.

Identity

Identity is arguably one of the most complex concepts in sociology. Its popularity as an object of study accelerated after a sequence of historic events in the last decades of the twentieth century such as the Chernobyl disaster, the fall of the

⁵ It is not always clear if omnivorousness refers to involvement in diverse activities, or a greater volume of activities. To avoid this, I follow the insight of Warde and Gayo-Cal (2009); Warde et al. (2007) omnivorousness is not characterised as singular and integrated cultural consumption. Rather, it has two components: volume (breadth of cultural involvement) and composition (involvement in both highbrow or legitimate and lowbrow culture).

Berlin Wall and dissolution of state socialism. With these historic changes happening alongside economic crises, new theories on identity emerged among critics of modernity. Some sociologists highlight identity as increasingly individualised instead of relating to social class. Giddens (1991), for example, emphasises that increased lifestyle options help people explore unique approaches to self-actualisation (e.g. reading self-help guides and going to a variety of therapies). Key thinkers like Bauman (2000) argue that maintaining a durable sense of self is increasingly impossible in the fluidity of modernity. Jenkins (2004) argues that critiques of modernity emphasise differences more than similarities in sense of self. Amidst this increasing interest, identity turns out to be a nebulous concept that can bear a variety of meanings, including groupness, self-understanding, political interests and more (see Brubaker and Cooper (2000)).

At the micro level, identity is a soft concept in social psychology. It may encompass roles and relations (employee/employer, mother/father), categories (ethnic and racial categories) and personal idiosyncrasies (football fan, operagoer) (Owens, Robinson, & Smith-Lovin, 2010; Thoits & Virshup, 1997). For practitioners in politics and the media, the concept trips off the tongue and is frequently used in a reified way. It becomes a nametag carried on the chest from cradle to grave: “immigrant”, “Muslim”, and many others. If identity is such a difficult and complex concept, why study it?

In study IV, I use social identity theory as a generic explanation for different types of self-identification including ethnic categories and stigmatised labels. This helps to provide a simple explanation for inter-group process. Identity refers to being a member of categories. Known as minimal group paradigms, this theory has emerged from lab experiments. Tajfel (2010) randomly distributed artificial “red” and “blue” tags amongst participants. These were sufficient to influence individuals’ behaviours against people from different categories. This points towards “accentuation effects” – people tend to exaggerate the similarity of objects within a category and the differences between objects in different categories (Abrams and Hogg, 2004; Hogg, 2006). This simple idea is often used to explain phenomena like ethnic conflict, discrimination and group favouritism.

In social identity theory,⁶ category membership shapes how people view who is in and who is out. Through one’s categorical membership one strives to be a part of the collective and identify with a positive self, e.g. honour, dignity, pride and even

⁶ While I use social identity theory as a generic process, it is limited in examining the role of social structure, or the position an individual occupies in the socioeconomic hierarchy and social networks. Identity theory (also known as structural or sociological identity theory) studies the salience of roles regarding the changing characteristics of social networks (Burke & Stets, 1999). In recent decades, researchers have begun to combine identity theory and social identity theory to study the role of category and social network contexts on individual behaviour (see for example McFarland and Pals (2005)).

superiority (Tajfel, 2010). According to social identity theory, self-identification goes back and forth between twin processes: what “we” think about “them”, and what “they” think about “us” (Hogg, 2006; Jenkins, 2004; Tajfel, 2010). Identity is therefore a dynamic process involving two opposing paths.

In study IV, I view identity as an intermediate factor, one influenced by social structure and that influences subjective outcomes like attitudes, beliefs and desires. Identity is a subjective understanding of life chances. As social identity theory puts it, identity gives a certain outlook towards life based on us/them distinctions. It is also important to ask to what extent life chances manifest in identity saliences, i.e. the relative strength of certain categories in the self.

Earlier studies have suggested that identity becomes more or less salient depending on differing life chances. For example, Waters (1994) suggests that ethnic identity is a “choice” in which some ethnic and racial groups have more identity possibilities, whereas for others it has limited possibilities or is not even an option. If we apply the perspective in Swedish context, for example, children from a British-Swedish union living in Sweden may opt to maintain British identity. People may have positive attitudes towards the British for their sense of humour or attractive accent based on their favourite BBC dramas. For those children where one parent comes, for instance, from a Middle Eastern country, the options may be more limited.

Likewise, Portes and Rumbaut (2001) argue that ethnic identity is “made in” a certain country (in their study context, they argue it is made in the United States). They suggest that ethnic identity is a reactive identity. That is, when people confront adverse conditions, their ethnicity is a defence strategy which helps them to build solidarity with co-ethnics (see Portes and Rumbaut (2001)). As these studies suggest, identity is not simply a cause or a push factor for life chances; rather, it may emerge from, or in reaction to, unequal life chances. Taken together, these studies show that identity may determine life chances in different ways, including through indirect and co-occurring ways (for example, a feedback loop).

In study IV, I use insights from the studies discussed above to compare and contrast different identity types: no (explicit) identity, ethnic identity and immigrant identity. The study is particularly focused on immigrant identity. In many European countries, the label immigrant denotes “the other”. Previous studies have examined the social construction process, that is, how negative attributes are constructed in official documents, speeches, and dialogue in media, politics and the public sector. As such, “immigrant” often refers to a threat to society: violent and living in poor socioeconomic conditions (see, for example, (Finney & Simpson, 2009; Gruner, 2010; Korteweg & Yurdakul, 2009). Sweden is no exception. In Swedish, the term *invandrare* (immigrant) is often used to mean “non-Swedish” in everyday life. It has negative connotations, suggesting someone

who is loud, lazy, less modern and prone to crime (Bredström, 2003; Herz & Johansson, 2012; Torres, 2006). Looking at this general stigma, I examine the following research question: are people with immigrant identity (self-identifying as “immigrant”) additionally disadvantaged compared to other people of immigrant origin with different identities?

To examine the consequences of stigmatisation, I follow the insights of Link and Phelan (2001) on stigma to help focus on certain properties of social structure where social identity theory has limitations. Their broader perspective opens up questions beyond the social construction of immigrant identity. Stigma is more than a cognitive process. To understand immigrant identity, they focus on the use of stigmatising labels to identify oneself, e.g. immigrant, Muslim, Kurd, and more. Link and Phelan (2001) list four dimensions of stigma: labelling, separation, status loss, and discrimination. The dimensions are not the cause or effect of each other, rather they co-occur. When a greater number of dimensions occur at the same time, people suffer from stigma to a greater degree. That is, if people with certain identities live also a separate and unequal life, in addition to experiencing rejections when applying for jobs, they suffer from greater stigma than people with the same identity who exhibit fewer dimensions of stigma. This insight allows us to compare people with an explicitly “immigrant” identity compared to those of immigrant origin who share the same ethnic identity but not the explicit sense of self. All may suffer from stigma, yet some suffer more. Using certain social indicators, like social capital, unemployment, and subjective well-being, I explore if people with immigrant identity are more disadvantaged than those without. In other words, the question is whether internalising the “immigrant” label leads to more stigma.

Research Design

Sampling and Survey Methodology

The studies in this thesis are based on two data sources. Both datasets use a survey methodology, which has been the major data collection technique in quantitative sociology over the decades. It focuses on both internal validity – to hit the target of what we measure – and external validity – the ability to generalise the results.

Survey of Ten Upper Secondary Schools in Malmö⁷

The dataset for study I comes from the second wave of a longitudinal survey in ten upper secondary schools in Malmö. Students were interviewed between 2011 and 2013. Strategic sampling was used to select the sample. Since the total number of schools was relatively small and since the schools differ considerably in terms of the programmes they offer, as well as the size and social composition of the student body, a strategic sampling method was considered to be the best way to obtain a representative sample. Looking at the representation of students relative to the general population in Malmö, I checked that students of immigrant origin in natural and social science programmes in upper secondary education in Malmö for the educational year 2013–2014 are, respectively, 54 percent and 37 percent (Skolverket., 2017). In the sample, the proportions are 57 percent and 40 percent respectively. This shows a possible bias which, however, is not large enough to cause serious problems in the models.

The total number of students registered at the selected schools (1,169) constituted 32 percent of the total number of students registered at all secondary schools in Malmö that year (3,647). Of the students still registered at one of the selected schools, 708 pupils participated in the second survey. In order to make the categories more distinct in study I, I focus on students of either non-Western or Swedish origin (i.e. respondents who are themselves born in these countries or have parents who are). We thus excluded 23 respondents of Western European and North American origin. The reason for this is that this is a small group of countries

⁷ The project “An educational dilemma: school achievement and multicultural incorporation” (2010–2013) was funded by the Swedish Research Council and organised by Mats Trondman.

and several of them (especially the other Nordic countries) resemble Sweden with regard to the culture of experimentation. For example, in the United Kingdom, the “gap year phenomenon” leads to young people often taking a year off from their studies to focus on their personal development (King, 2011). We also expect this category of immigrants to experience less unequal treatment in the labour market (“adverse conditions”) and that the migrant optimism hypothesis does not apply to them to the same extent as other immigrant groups. This brings the sample size down to 685 students. The majority of students with a migration background remaining in the sample are born in, or have parents who are born in, the Middle Eastern countries (e.g. Iraq, Lebanon, Turkey), the Balkan countries (Bosnia, Kosovo and Serbia), east or southeast Asia (e.g. Vietnam) and South American countries (e.g. Chile).

Social Capital and Labour Market Integration⁸

This dataset was used for studies II, III and IV. The sample is based on three different groups of Swedes, all born in 1990:

- a) All individuals with at least one parent born in Iran;
- b) Fifty percent of all individuals with at least one parent born in former Yugoslavia; and
- c) A simple random sample of 2,500 individuals with two Swedish-born parents.

Young Swedes with parents from Iran and Yugoslavia are mostly long-term residents in Sweden. Those in the former group mostly came to the country during the 1970s and 1980s, before and during the Islamic Revolution in Iran. This group is more likely to comprise middle-class and secular individuals who lived in urban areas in Iran. Yugoslavians, on the other hand, arrived in two waves of migration. The first group came to Sweden as labour migrants during the 1960s and 1970s, and are mostly from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. The second wave comprises refugees who fled traumatic experiences in the Balkan wars during the 1990s. Finally, the third part of the sample, comprising young people with two Swedish-born parents, is essential to compare and contrast their life chances with those of people with immigrant backgrounds.

These three groups were surveyed and interviewed over the telephone by Statistics Sweden twice; once in 2009 when the respondents were 19 years old, and then in

⁸ The *Social Capital and Labour Market Integration* survey is managed by Christofer Edling and Jens Rydgren. The first wave was funded by a grant to Edling by the Swedish Council for Working Life and Social Research (FAS 2007-0806). The second wave was funded by a grant to Rydgren from the European Research Council (ERC 263422). Both waves were approved by the regional ethical review board in Stockholm.

2013 when the respondents were 23. A survey sample of 5,695 individuals was selected for interview by telephone between October and December 2009. The response rate was 51.6 percent in the first wave (Total: 2,943; n=632 for Iranians, 928 for Yugoslavians, 1,382 for Swedes) and 38.5 per cent in the second wave (Total: 2,244; n=501 for Iranians, 675 for Yugoslavians, 1,068 for Swedes). A non-response analysis was done for the first sample and reveals that immigrant background; low education level (individuals' own and parents'), low grades and living in large cities were associated with a lower response rate. The most common reason for non-response, at 37.6 percent, was because respondents were not at home. Only 8.1 percent refused to participate. Response rates in Sweden have dropped in recent years mainly due to the growing popularity of prepaid mobile phones, which makes the initial contact more difficult.

As the sample is designed for a theory-driven data analysis, the database includes questions which are often not available in general social surveys. The same survey is unique in studying social networks and social capital. Few national surveys exist for studying both social networks/social capital and questions about behaviours, attitudes of individual actors and their connections (e.g. friends, acquaintances). Surveys like the *General Social Survey* in the United States, the *Survey of the Social Networks of the Dutch*, and the *Swedish Social Capital and Labour Market Integration* survey provide instruments for measuring social networks and social capital. In addition, the same survey data is calibrated with population registers. The corresponding samples from population registers provide the most reliable information about the sociodemographic background of individuals. By using reliable sociodemographic information, current survey data allow us to analyse questions relevant to the scope of this dissertation.

These advantages have opened an opportunity to study rare cases. For example, study II examines a blind spot in the literature: the social capital of mixed-union children. When I compared the size and gender composition of mixed unions for specific age groups in the sample with population registers, I found the percentage of mixed unions in the sample and the population matches perfectly.

Like other cohort studies, the data design does not include an objective of making generalisations beyond the cohort. This may narrow interpretations across the studies. For example, study IV found that young people who explicitly identify as immigrants suffer from stigma and experience higher rates of depression and unemployment than most young people of immigrant origin. The results may underestimate the harmful effect of stigma on the general population. When young people get older and enter the labour market, they may have first-hand experience of adverse conditions. For instance, young people may feel more "immigrant" when they face stigmatisation and discrimination in the labour market (see study IV). Many young people with immigrant backgrounds may find themselves in

situations which suggest to them that Sweden is not their home or that they are different, or even the other.

Similar situations can also be found studying different immigrant groups. Regarding the extreme diversity of so-called “immigrants” in Sweden. In practice, it is hard to collect data on social networks and social capital for all immigrant groups, nor do I think it is necessary. My interpretation is limited to certain immigrant groups because the sample focuses on two specific groups in Sweden. Both of these have long experiences in Sweden and generally come from different social backgrounds: Iranians are generally from the middle class, while former Yugoslavians are often represented in working-class occupations. This contrast may help us to grasp some degree of diversity among people of immigrant origin in Sweden, but may not reflect the experiences of recently arrived immigrants such as Syrians and Somalis. Nevertheless, lack of data does not prevent us from suggesting certain implications about people with different immigrant origins (see discussion in study IV).

Name Generator and Position Generator Methodology

Name Generator Methodology

I make use of the name generator methodology for study III. The general purpose of the methodology is to examine personal (or egocentric) networks. In using this instrument, the focal actor (ego) is asked the following question in order to create a list of friends (alters): *Who are the five persons whom you meet and hang around with most often in your leisure time?* The answers are anonymised, i.e. we ask for only the first names or nicknames of friends. Follow-up questions elicit more information on alters’ attributes, including sociodemographic background (age, gender, country of origin), and characteristics. One question elicits the existence of a relationship between alters: “do they know each other?” with yes and no answers permitted. A follow-up question asks, “how well do they know each other?” with three response categories: not so well, fairly well, very well. If individuals answer “no” to the first question or “not-so-well” on the second question, they are coded as an open triad, indicating brokerage. If individuals answer, “yes” on the first question and “fairly well” or “very well” on the second question, they are coded as a closed triad, indicating closure. Regarding ethnic diversity, I focus on the most open network (cross-ethnic brokerage), and the most closed (closure within ethnically similar groups). More details are provided in study III.

The name generator methodology is used to describe personal network structures. By using the methodology, I got a chance to classify triads allowing us to understand varying ways of social interaction at the micro level. As mentioned

above, studying brokerage and closure are two ends of this spectrum. One represents the most open network characteristic and the other the most closed network characteristic. The name generator is flexible enough to go deeper in friendship networks. In study III, rather than focusing only on network structures, I reclassify two network structures by using ethnic backgrounds of actors. While it is a computationally demanding task, it gives us the chance to grasp the asymmetry in social relations. As demonstrated in Table 2 in study III, young people with immigrant origin are part of ethnically heterogeneous networks while networks of young people with native-born parents are much more homogenous. And only 15 percent of young people aged 23 are part of cross-ethnic brokerage. These findings allow us to understand the diversity of young people's personal networks.

Also, in study IV, name generator methodology helps us to explore social aspects of identity. Young people explore, define and develop their sense of self as they interact with others. The name generator allows me to identify not only who the friends are, but also the employment status of friends. In other words, the name generator helps me to go deeper into social exclusion rather than relying only on the individual's own unemployment. At a micro level, an unemployed friend may negatively influence an individual's own chance to succeed in the labour market, or it may lessen the psychological suffering from the stigma of "unemployed" to know that one is not alone. Although I did not identify lists of mechanisms about unemployed friends, I use the name generator to grasp social exclusion among identity types. This information matters particularly in the early twenties when young people begin to explore job opportunities and who they are.

Position Generator Methodology

N. Lin and Dumin (1986) devised the position generator methodology to measure social capital. This methodology is used in the *Swedish Social Capital and Labour Market Integration* survey and asks if a respondent knows people from a list of forty different occupations representing the full range of socioeconomic occupational statuses according to the Swedish SEI-code (SCB, 2015). The position generator is increasingly popular in the social capital literature (Hällsten, Edling, & Rydgren, 2015; N. Lin & Erickson, 2008; van Tubergen, 2014). In study II, I use this instrument to examine the social capital of the children of mixed-union parents. In study IV, I also use social capital as one of the indicators to measure advantage.

The position generator has several advantages. It is a simple and concrete instrument that precisely measures the three dimensions of social capital: sources (family, kin, acquaintances, transnational ties, ties in Sweden), and receivers (young people from mixed unions, immigrant parents and Swedish-born parents) and resources (influences, assistance and information from different occupational

positions in the socioeconomic hierarchy). The position generator is also content-free. One can use it to investigate the role of social capital in general for a variety of research questions, e.g. finding a job, school performance and maintaining health and a good diet.⁹ The instrument is also practical, and has a high response rate, efficiency (it does not take much time to collect data) and is unbiased to strong ties (Verhaeghe & Li, 2015). These properties are particularly desirable for researchers who aim to apply social capital theory to different outcomes.

The position generator has limitations, as well. The instrument concerns universal claims, that is, one that works well across the world. This hides specific contexts. For example, it is limited when it comes to gender dynamics in the labour market. Few studies go further on gendered social capital via the position generator methodology. For example, Erickson (2003) measures social capital separately for men and women in her research in Canada. In Sweden, as in many other industrialised countries, occupations are not gender-neutral. Some are female-dominated, some are male-dominated, others are neutral (Hultin, 2003). In this dissertation, I find a similar pattern with the occupations used in the position generator methodology: the gender composition of occupations is grouped across class (these results are available upon request).¹⁰ The nature of gender and sex segregation in a labour market may vary depending on the country context. To go

⁹ The content-free nature of the position generator has pros and cons. As mentioned, it enables the position generator to be used for general purposes. Its alternatives, such as the resource generator, capture specifics of different domains (Van Der Gaag & Snijders, 2005). Accordingly, social capital in one domain does not have similar meanings and practice in another domain. In many cases, the resource generator is a reasonable option. In the labour market, for instance, social capital may operate quickly. Giving job referrals does not take much time. In the health domain, sources and receivers may interact on a regular basis (e.g. frequent telephone calls, monitoring health reports). In education, relations may be more authoritative. If one needs quick and dirty tips for their children's education, a teacher or academic may give rule-like suggestions, offering a list of dos and don'ts. However, this does not eliminate the value of the position generator. In their study comparing different measures of social capital – resource generator, position generator and name generator – Van Der Gaag, Snijders, and Flap (2008) find that the first and second are correlated, but the second and third are not. In other words, measuring social capital with resource generator and position generator provide similar results.

¹⁰ This limitation of the position generator can open up further research questions. We know less about the role of this macro-process (sex segregation in the labour market) on generating social capital, and its return to life chances for women and men across different age groups. In Lin's social capital theory, homophily operates across socioeconomic dimensions. It may also occur across gender lines. For example, a man or woman may interact more with other women or men who work in occupations with different sex compositions. The variety of social interactions between the gender of the receiver and sex segregation of the sources may provide information, norms or beliefs about the labour market that reinforce gender inequality. As such, young women may receive biased or distorted information about possible choices, such as the school programmes one may or should choose, or which occupation is the "best" option. Further discussion is beyond the scope of this text, however I suggest that further research on this topic can greatly expand our understanding of access, mobilisation, and return of social capital.

deeper into the specific domains in a certain country, one can use the resource generator as an alternative measure.

It is common practice to use occupational prestige scores to measure social capital. This may be hard to interpret. To measure something, we need a simple measure which can tell us concrete stories. I prefer to use the number of occupations (or network size) for several reasons.¹¹ Studies find that the number of occupations provides more reliable results than the prestige scores (Verhaeghe & Li, 2015). Although the prestige score shows diversity and hierarchy in the labour market, it does not take account of social stratification. Class-based social capital¹² classifies occupations with similar class positions. To do so, I survey the number of occupations in the top position to find out influential and powerful resources (Bourdieu, 1986). Using class-based measures and network size makes interpretation easier than using prestige scores.

Modelling

Throughout this dissertation, I used nonlinear regression models like poisson, multinomial and logistic regressions. Each model is part of a unified approach, a generalised linear model (GLM), first introduced by Nelder and Wedderburn (1972).

GLM is used for exponential family distributions, i.e. an outcome variable can be transformable by taking its exponents. I describe the formal structure of GLM by using a binary response variable.

The general formula for regression equations is:

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4.$$

The mean of expected value of the response is:

$$E(y) = \beta_1 1 + \beta_2 x_2 + \beta_3 x_3 + \dots + \beta_k x_k, \eta = \beta_1 1 + \beta_2 x_2 + \beta_3 x_3 + \dots + \beta_k x_k.$$

This represents the linear combinations of explanatory variables. When we create a binary model by using ordinary least square estimation, the fitted values can yield values below zero and above 1, which violates the expected range of values for binary outcomes.

¹¹ As with cultural capital, I have created two measures: the quality and quantity aspects of capital. Both are count measures (number of occupations). The quantity aspect refers to the number of occupations one can access in general (aka extensity). Quality refers to the number of occupations at the top of the labour market (aka reachability).

¹² I have adapted class-based social capital measure from Verhaeghe and Li (2015); Verhaeghe, Li, and Van de Putte (2013).

In the standard linear model $E(y) = \eta$; in GLM, we use link functions $g(\cdot)$ between η and $E(y)$, that is $g(E(y)) = \eta$. For the standard linear model, the link function is identity function $g(y) = y$. When the response variables is binary $E(y) = P(y = 1)$, $E(y) = g^{-1}(\eta)$. By using link functions, the model transforms fitted values into the linear form. In this case, the link function is logit ($g(x) = \log x/(1 - x)$).

To estimate the response variable, we plug the values inverse of the logit and get:

$$E(y) = P(y = 1) = \frac{e^\eta}{1 + e^\eta}.$$

If we do one more operation, we get the logistic function:

$$\frac{e^{\beta_1 + \beta_2 x_2 + \beta_3 x_3 + \dots + \beta_k x_k}}{1 + e^{\beta_1 + \beta_2 x_2 + \beta_3 x_3 + \dots + \beta_k x_k}}.$$

As the shape of function is an S-shaped curve, it helps to get the fitted values between 0 and 1.

By using maximum likelihood estimation, GLM does not need to meet strong assumption of ordinary least square estimates (OLS). OLS assumptions come from Gauss-Markov theory: i) linear relationship between outcome variable and each explanatory variable; ii) residuals are independent and normally distributed with mean zero and constant variance; and iii) lack of correlation between variables and disturbances. If these assumptions are met, OLS produces unbiased and efficient estimates.

In social science, these assumptions are often difficult to satisfy. The violation of normality of error (ii) is not a problem because for a larger sample size it approximates to normal distribution (according to the central limit theorem). The real problem lies in the linearity assumption (i). For limited dependent variables, e.g. truncated, count, highly skewed distributions, it is difficult to meet the criteria. Furthermore, OLS is a descriptive method. It is nothing more than drawing a line on a scatter plot. One can draw this line minimising the square error, such as using different distance measures. When it comes to the assumptions, they are not always scientifically desirable. For example, one can get an unbiased estimate for a regression coefficient, yet the same estimate may be unreliable if it is not consistent.

Maximum likelihood estimation (MLE) has certain attractive asymptotic properties.¹³ For example, when the distribution of dependent variables is wrong

¹³ MLE is based on theory of inferences. The term “likelihood function” is a relative measure of uncertainty. That is, each model has a certain likelihood function, and there is no one true model. Rather, estimates in a certain model specification may be preferable depending on fitness and parsimony. The estimates in MLE are the “highest relative likelihood having generated the data we observed”.

or unknown, some MLE may still provide robust inferences. As the estimates are consistent, they are concentrated around certain values, making them more reliable. MLE does not need a certain sampling plan, making it possible to combine datasets, collected at different times and by different researchers (King, 1998). Estimates are asymptotically normal, which makes them useful for hypothesis testing. By using likelihood ratio, Wald test and precision methods in MLE, one can assess how good the estimate is (Gill, 2000; King, 1998).

I have experimented with different modelling techniques throughout this dissertation. Some have worked, others failed. One failure, in particular, was instrumental in helping me to move forward in the research process. In study III, I used latent class models to find the omnivore-univore distinction by using eight polychromatic dependent variables. In the application, problems arose in selecting the number of clusters. To choose the number of clusters, the rule of thumb is to select the cluster for which both the Akaike information criterion (AIC) and the Bayesian information criterion (BIC) are smaller.

It is important to know where this rule of thumb comes from. AIC and BIC are information criteria which penalise different likelihood estimations.

$$AIC = G^2 - 2df \quad [1]$$

$$BIC = G^2 - df * [\ln N] \quad [2]$$

where the likelihood ratio chi-square test, G^2 , is given by

$$G^2 = 2 \sum_{ijkl} F_{ijkl} \cdot \ln \left(\frac{F_{ijkl}}{f_{ijkl}} \right) \quad [3]$$

The selection criteria do not have the same target models (Burnham & Anderson, 2004). Two information criteria may suffer from different types of misclassification errors for using different penalty functions. AIC is more likely to choose unnecessarily complex models even when the model is simple. In other words, AIC may overfit when the model gets a little more complex. When the model is complex, BIC tends to choose overly simplistic models. This is why BIC may underfit (see the simulation study in (T. H. Lin & Dayton, 1997)). When I compared AIC and BIC for non-nested models, AIC and BIC did not show a clear pattern. As Table 1 suggests, the AIC decreases steadily, and BIC goes up and down.

Table 1 Goodness of fit statistics for the selection of the model for the latent class analysis in study III

Number of clusters	AIC	BIC	Chi-Square
1	19585.104	19641.49	1478.036
2	18995.810	19181.88	1239.173
3	18805.116	19120.88	504.7238
4	18734.604	19180.06	435.5311

I then had two options: either to work further on modelling (e.g. choosing different information criteria which may perform better for the properties of the model, or calculating misclassification ratios (e.g. (Chan & Goldthorpe, 2007)), or simply to try something new. I realised that some applications of latent class analysis (LCA) aim to find omnivorousness as a singular category, and I too was doing this. Instead, I moved towards a simpler and more theory-driven index construction for omnivorousness, for quality (composition) and quantity (volume) (see Warde & Gayo-Cal, 2009; Warde et al., 2007). The process was educational and enabled me to re-examine my assumptions.

In study I, I have also benefited from qualitative comparative analysis (QCA).¹⁴ At the outset, I did not have a particular idea about experimentations. This came later when thinking over configurations.¹⁵ After reading Ragin's (2008) work, I created configurations, like truth tables, in QCA. For three conditions, there are 2^3 configurations¹⁶ which are intersections of sets from variables. When creating configurations, I began thinking about refining the concept of aspirations based on the context. That is, young people do not only aspire to reach university directly, some also have multiple plans that may be due to experimentation in the early twenties. Before reaching these stages, I conducted several preliminary analyses omitted from the final paper, including more QCA.¹⁷ QCA helped me to refine the concept from context and generate new questions.

¹⁴ The approach was developed by Charles Ragin and is often used in comparative-historical studies and political sociology. Most studies focus on small-*n*. The number of studies using large-*n* has increased in the past decade (Longest & Thoits, 2012; Stephen, 2014).

¹⁵ The use of methods like GLM often dictates certain ways of thinking, with independent individuals and variables. If one wants to examine dependences among cases, a two-way interaction is often used. QCA allows us to study complex configurations and intersections of cases.

¹⁶ The configurations are crisp sets (exist or not exist) rather than fuzzy cases with degrees of membership (continuous measure).

¹⁷ A truth table is simply a list of configurations (logical combinations of causal conditions) and associated outcomes (Ragin, 2008). The idea of a truth table is based on "equifinality", i.e. the combination of causes that can create the same outcome. Using Boolean minimisation as a numeric technique, QCA (two versions: crisp set and fuzzy set theory) eliminate certain configurations to get causal recipes, including the most parsimonious, intermediate and more complex solutions.

Conclusion

The underlying assumption of this dissertation is that in comparison to their peers with native-born parents, most young people of immigrant origin in Sweden strive against adverse conditions to a greater or lesser degree.

The results of study I show that young people of immigrant origin often have higher educational aspirations even when educational performance lags behind that of natives. This is in line with previous studies (Goldsmith, 2004; Jonsson & Rudolphi, 2011; Kao & Tienda, 2005; Salikutluk, 2016). These young people aim high in education and wish to enter professional occupations (e.g. doctor, engineer), suggesting that they are determined to succeed, contribute to society, and become competent in the key skills needed in the knowledge economy. However, as some studies point out, psychological problems arise when high aspirations are not accompanied by high educational achievement (Miething et al., 2017): distress, frustration and status anxiety (Reynolds & Baird, 2010). The study also shows that young people of immigrant origin forgo experimentation while aiming high and have no tolerance for delaying their entry to university. On the one hand this could turn out to be a strategic move to get a head start in adult life, but on the other hand this may deprive them of some of the joys and freedoms of being young. While some young people may end up drifting and feeling lost, for most experimentation is one of the key ways to cultivate skills and self-exploration at this age (Arnett, 2000, 2006).

In Sweden, employment opportunities for people with only compulsory education or less are among the lowest in the OECD (alongside with Norway and Switzerland) (OECD., 2016). Competition is also high among highly-educated people during periods of unemployment. Many unemployed young people have to take up jobs requiring lower levels of education compared to their actual qualifications (Åberg, 2001). Studies suggest that informal methods of finding a job – knowing influential people in the immediate social circle or acquaintances – play no less a role than formal methods of finding a job, e.g. submitting a curriculum vitae (Behtoui, 2008; Ekström, 2001; Korpi, 2001; Okeke, 2001). In addition to knowing influential people, the extent to which people engage in informal relations matter. As such, mutual interests, e.g. running marathons or travelling, may create emotional ties, which in turn stimulate a positive evaluation of a job application (Rivera, 2015). It may not be the person with the highest

degree at the lowest possible age who gets the job, but the person who has been volunteering in a refugee camp or running marathons – not because these experiences are relevant for the work in question, but because they send signals about the personality that align with societal ideals about independence, creativity and self-exploration. Thus, young people with “only” an academic degree may be disadvantaged in the informal aspects of the recruitment process.

At the same time, most young people of immigrant origin access social capital at least as much as young people with Swedish-born parents. Study II suggests that children of two immigrant parents, whether of Yugoslavian or Iranian background, access greater social capital than children of Swedish-born parents even when they come from the same socioeconomic background. This is counterintuitive; indeed, most studies claim the opposite (e.g. (Li, Savage, & Warde, 2008)), however, I am not the first to make this claim (see (A. Andersson, Edling, & Rydgren, 2017; Verhaeghe, Van der Bracht, & Van de Putte, 2015)). The social capital of young people with two immigrant parents is higher than that of young people with Swedish-born parents because they can access ethnically homogenous social capital. Young people with two immigrant parents access more in-family, kin-based social capital as well as greater social capital through transnational ties. Therefore, as young people of immigrant origin are determined to succeed and are not deficient in social capital, both study I and study IV contradict stereotypical beliefs that young people of immigrant origin are, for example, “unwilling to integrate” and “necessarily disadvantaged”.

However, study II also suggests that generating social capital is not always a smooth process. Children of Yugoslavian-Swedish unions access a similar volume of social capital as young people with two Swedish-born parents but the lowest family-based social capital. Children of mixed unions suffer from loss of ethnic capital, possibly due to sanctions applied by family members and extended kin networks (see Cheng and Powell (2007)). Mixed-union children may be no longer seen to be like “them” and risk exclusion from family gatherings or the support of extended family networks. Family networks are crucial to provide emotional support and share experiences on how to cope with problems. The same group compensates for exclusion from family-based ties by accessing greater resources via transnational ties. As the example of mixed unions suggests, the dynamics around generating social capital via different sources can vary.

Study IV suggests that having an identity, even a stigmatised one, prevents people from falling into the most disadvantaged positions. The study finds that the most disadvantaged group in terms of social capital comprises those who do not have an explicit sense of self. The results support previous research which show that viewing oneself as part of an in-group of stigmatised others does not necessarily make people passive victims unless they view themselves through the lens of

negative stereotypes (Crocker, Major, & Steele, 1998; Major & O'Brien, 2005; Verkuyten, 2004). Study IV indicates that young people with immigrant identity do not internalise all the negative attributes linked with the label, despite the negative image of *invandrare* in Sweden. In fact, young people with immigrant identity maintain a certain level of self-confidence and access social capital no less than native-born children. In other words, people who view themselves as immigrants are neither isolated nor helpless. However, these results only depict “average” people with immigrant identity. Because the study is exploratory and based on quantitative evidence, it cannot provide evidence on how young people with immigrant identity give meaning to “immigrant” and respond to “being an immigrant” in Sweden. Some may subscribe to an immigrant identity to express opposition to the negative attributes ascribed to them, and seek to replace them with positive ones (e.g. creative, warm); others may view “being an immigrant” as a temporary status that will disappear when they move to favourable conditions. In general terms, however, it is clear that the immigrant identity does not prevent people from resisting adverse conditions including discrimination, status loss, labour market exclusion and marginalisation.

Indeed, having an explicit identity, even as part of the stigmatised other, protects people’s sense of worth and empowers them to cope with potential problems. Nevertheless, this does not sufficiently prevent young people with immigrant identity from experiencing certain disadvantages. They remain at high risk of unemployment, twice that of their native-born counterparts. This disadvantage is mostly created by stigma, along with parental socio economic disadvantage. Among young people of similar socioeconomic background, those with immigrant identity have lower subjective well-being (around 75 percent) than those of immigrant origin. While the current study does not make causal claims, the results support previous studies on the negative consequences of stigma on subjective well-being (Kamberi et al., 2015; Verkuyten, 2008). “Being an immigrant” takes a toll on health (e.g. greater risk of depression) among people who explicitly view themselves as “immigrants” compared to others of immigrant origin.

Three of the four studies in the dissertation cover young people with parents born in former Yugoslavia and Iran. Studying these two groups already shows the diversity of people of immigrant origin. Iranians are often represented in the middle class, Yugoslavians in the working class. Like other groups, e.g. Turkish, these two groups began to arrive in Sweden at least three decades ago but for different reasons and at slightly different times. Compared to recent immigrants, having lived a longer period in Sweden may have helped Iranians and Yugoslavians to develop or adapt strategies against stigma and discrimination. As the studies are based on certain immigrant groups with distinct immigration histories, the results are not generalisable to all immigrants in Sweden.

Nevertheless, by studying the determinants of life chances among earlier groups of immigrants, it is possible to gain some understanding of the factors that affect the life chances of newly arrived refugees and economic migrants. Those who moved to Sweden from Eastern European countries find fewer employment chances even when they have the same levels of education as natives. The situation is even worse for those of non-Western origin as they often find themselves in a marginal position in the labour market (Bevelander & Irastorza, 2014). This is partly because a sizeable share of the non-Western immigrant population is less educated than Swedes. For example, 39 percent of Syrians have primary education or less. Hence, they either end up working in low-skilled, low-paid jobs, or remain unemployed. This is why human capital formation is crucial for this group (see more in the recent review Sandberg (2017)). To survive economically, meet basic needs, and feel respected within society, these groups need state support to improve their education and working skills.

This is because human capital formation is an essential yet insufficient solution. As argued in this dissertation, accessing greater social and cultural capital helps immigrants cope with the negative image of being an immigrant, which co-occurs with unequal treatment such as exclusion and rejection in the labour market. As many immigrants of non-Western origin are in marginal positions in the labour market, they are also less likely to generate sufficient social capital in Sweden, which is a scarce resource that is mostly accessed by people in higher socioeconomic positions (Bourdieu, 1986; N. Lin, 2002; Portes, 2000). As a result, transnational ties and ethnic networks become crucial in giving support and assistance. The same groups are more likely to suffer from the stigma of being immigrants, particularly those with visible markers such as skin colour or religious symbols. Additionally, many leave behind home countries where human tragedies continue, like Syria. Generally speaking, the refugees who feel marginalised at home and in the destination country are the ones who experience the most stress (Berry, 1997, 2005; Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind, & Vedder, 2001; Rumbaut, 1994). To cope with this stress and reduce stigma, having an explicit and salient identity helps them to maintain self-esteem and feel part of social circles. Therefore, newly-arrived immigrants, particularly those of non-Western origin, are less likely to break the vicious cycle of disadvantage. From the labour market perspective, limited human capital is the core of this problem, but it is not the whole solution. In addition, the greater risk of suffering from stigma and limited social capital makes it more difficult to overcome disadvantages.

The findings of study II and study III both underline the limitations of one-size-fits-all approaches in social integration. Conventional assimilation focuses on social integration as a one-way street: convergence into the native-born over time, or melting down into a similarity (Alba & Foner, 2015; Gordon, 1964; Park, 1928). Social integration is a complex issue.

As mentioned above, study II does not support the idea that mixed unions presuppose social integration. I have examined social integration as a multidirectional process rather than a unilinear process. Being part of multiple social circles allows us to understand access to social capital among young people of immigrant origin. Some children from mixed unions may end up more advantaged than native-born children while others are deprived of the same resources. Young people from mixed unions access social capital differently, depending on the country of origin of the foreign-born parent. The migration background of the foreign-born parent influences whether children from mixed unions have greater or lesser access to social capital, and whether this access is through few or many sources. Fitting all mixed-union children into the same model may hide who accesses greater or lesser resources. Thus, “thicker descriptions” of the mixed union context are required. It is because mixed unions are formed within a constellation of ethnic, religious and language differences that makes them difficult to express as a homogenous category (see similar emphasis in (Collet, 2015; Rodríguez-García, 2006). As Tolstoy writes, “All happy families are alike; each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way.” All mixed unions are alike as ethnically dissimilar parties overcome potential barriers, such as family/kinship pressure, and each mixed union experiences mixedness in its own way.

Likewise, study III shows the limitations of another sweeping generalisation about cultural omnivores. It does not support the hypothesis that omnivorousness is a form of cultural capital. Arriving at a different result from prior research underscores the complexity of social integration. Some sociologists completely discard the role of attitudes, and suggest we prioritise actions and behaviours (Jerolmack & Khan, 2014). I partly agree with the idea. I think attitudes capture the social cognition process, i.e. what one believes about ethnic hierarchies. I also agree with focusing on an action frame – what do people actually do? What are the motives behind those actions? The term “tolerance”, for example, is problematic in the sense that it is neither a neutral nor an equal term. The majority often tolerates “the other” or “outsiders”. One may be tolerant and simultaneously exclude people from other ethnic backgrounds. An example comes from ethnically mixed schools in London. Reay et al. (2007) and her colleagues have examined why some middle-class parents send their children to ethnically mixed schools and found that parents are instrumental in cultivating cosmopolitanism among their offspring while enjoying the privileges of being white. In other words, one may be “tolerant”, yet maintain and legitimise exclusive relations.

These four studies also open up new avenues for research which may further enrich our understanding of how people of immigrant origin “get by” within host societies. More research is needed to keep track of educational aspirations over time. As young people of immigrant origin have higher educational aspirations,

our first question is: are aspirations stable over time? High aspirations may decline when young people have first-hand experience of adverse conditions, such as rejection of job applications due to a foreign-sounding name, accent, or dress style. The lowering of educational aspirations due to such reasons is termed “lost talent” (Hanson, 1994). Some studies in Sweden reported that young people of immigrant origin end up at lower positions in the labour market than they would had they not been of immigrant origin (e.g. Westin (2003)). While studies describe processes like school dropout, less is known on who the potential “lost talents” among young people of immigrant origin are. For this reason, keeping track of educational aspirations with longitudinal studies allows us to ask a second question: when young people experience sharp decline from high to low aspirations, what happens to their subjective well-being? In these situations, I would expect feelings of frustration and deprivation, and even a decrease in well-being.

One could go further and link these questions to certain “hot topics”. As such, a third question might be: do young people find themselves marginalised due to the sharp decline in aspirations? An extreme manifestation of this is described by Gambetta and Hertog (2016) who found that engineers in Middle Eastern countries, who did well in mathematics and science, are more represented in terror organisations. One of the reasons is that these engineers feel more deprivation: they do not reach the status that they believe they can reach. More questions and speculations are possible about keeping track of aspirations over time, and the consequences of their sharp decline. Further research is needed to answer these questions.

Study IV on immigrant identity opens up another set of questions for future research. The survey design has its limits in digging down to processes of self-identification and stigmatisation. Previous studies using survey methods often examine self-identification through an exhaustive list of social categories which gives less room for people to define themselves. In using survey methods in study IV, I deliberately moved towards the other direction, using a non-response analysis which allowed me to investigate a less-studied research subject: people with no explicit identity. Study IV shows that such people are at the greatest risk of depression and access the lowest social capital among people of immigrant origin. The results help us ask further questions: Under which conditions do people not identify themselves with existing social categories? Do people with no explicit sense of self suffer exclusion from both in-group members (people of immigrant origin) and out-group members (the ethnic majority)? Do they experience confusion about their sense of self, which may occur due to developmental processes during late adolescence? Once again, future research may pick up one of these questions for further investigation.

The results of this dissertation have implications for policy. Study IV suggests that using a single label “immigrant” for an extremely diverse group with negative attributes is a social problem. When people internalise the stigmatising label “immigrant” as a part of self, their well-being and sense of worth are harmed, which makes them more disadvantaged than other people of immigrant origin. While the same group of people shows signs of resistance against adverse conditions, the results show that the extent to which people are classified and ranked as fuzzy categories, like immigrant versus Swede, makes life more difficult for Swedes of immigrant origin. Radical right-wing parties in Western countries often racialise such people through frames such as “immigrants harm our values”, or “immigrants are less willing to integrate”. Arguing against these frames by using the word “immigrant”, intentionally or unintentionally as a homogenous and unchanging social category, legitimises the credibility of their arguments. To struggle against anti-immigrant sentiments, deliberate strategies are needed to restore the image of immigrants, and employ sensitive language and communication in everyday life, including at school, in the labour market and in media.

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Aspirations, Capital and Identity

This dissertation examines the determinants of life chances through sociological analysis. It studies aspirations or plans, i.e. where an individual wishes to see herself in the future, and how she envisages the possibility that future might materialise. This sheds insights on how individuals view their potential success in society, which may or may not reflect their actual lived success. The resources that emerge from an individual's social networks (social capital) and involvement in diverse cultural activities (cultural capital) can improve life chances when skills, certifications and work experience by themselves are insufficient to get by in society. Last but not least, identity is crucial to life chances in how it reflects an individual's view of the self in terms of various categories (people like "them" and "us"). As with aspirations, studying identity enriches our understanding of an individual's view of the possibility of becoming an equal and respected member of society.

The dissertation comprises four original research papers comparing these determinants for young people with and without an immigrant background in Sweden. Rather than studying "immigrants" as a singular and fixed social attribute, it examines identity groups, mixed unions and certain ethnic categories: Iranians, Yugoslavians and native-born Swedes. Drawing on rich empirical materials, it sheds insights on the complexities of social integration in Sweden. It finds that young people with immigrant background are part of multiple social circles (e.g. transnational ties, ethnic minority groups and natives) rather than simply becoming part of or similar to natives over time. This multidirectional view of social integration allows us to examine the distribution of occupational networks through social and geographical ties and to assess which groups are more advantaged than others. It shows us that young people with an immigrant background are not entirely "disadvantaged", in contrast to the stereotypical view common in media and politics. Even people with explicitly *invandrare* ("immigrant") identity are able to resist adverse conditions because of their ability to maintain self-confidence and access a certain amount of social capital.



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