



LUND UNIVERSITY

Not a Real Job? Teenage Labor and Low-Wage Service Work in Sweden

Kallos, Anna

2025

Document Version:

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

[Link to publication](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

Kallos, A. (2025). *Not a Real Job? Teenage Labor and Low-Wage Service Work in Sweden*. [Doctoral Thesis (compilation), Department of Sociology]. Lund University.

Total number of authors:

1

General rights

Unless other specific re-use rights are stated the following general rights apply:

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal

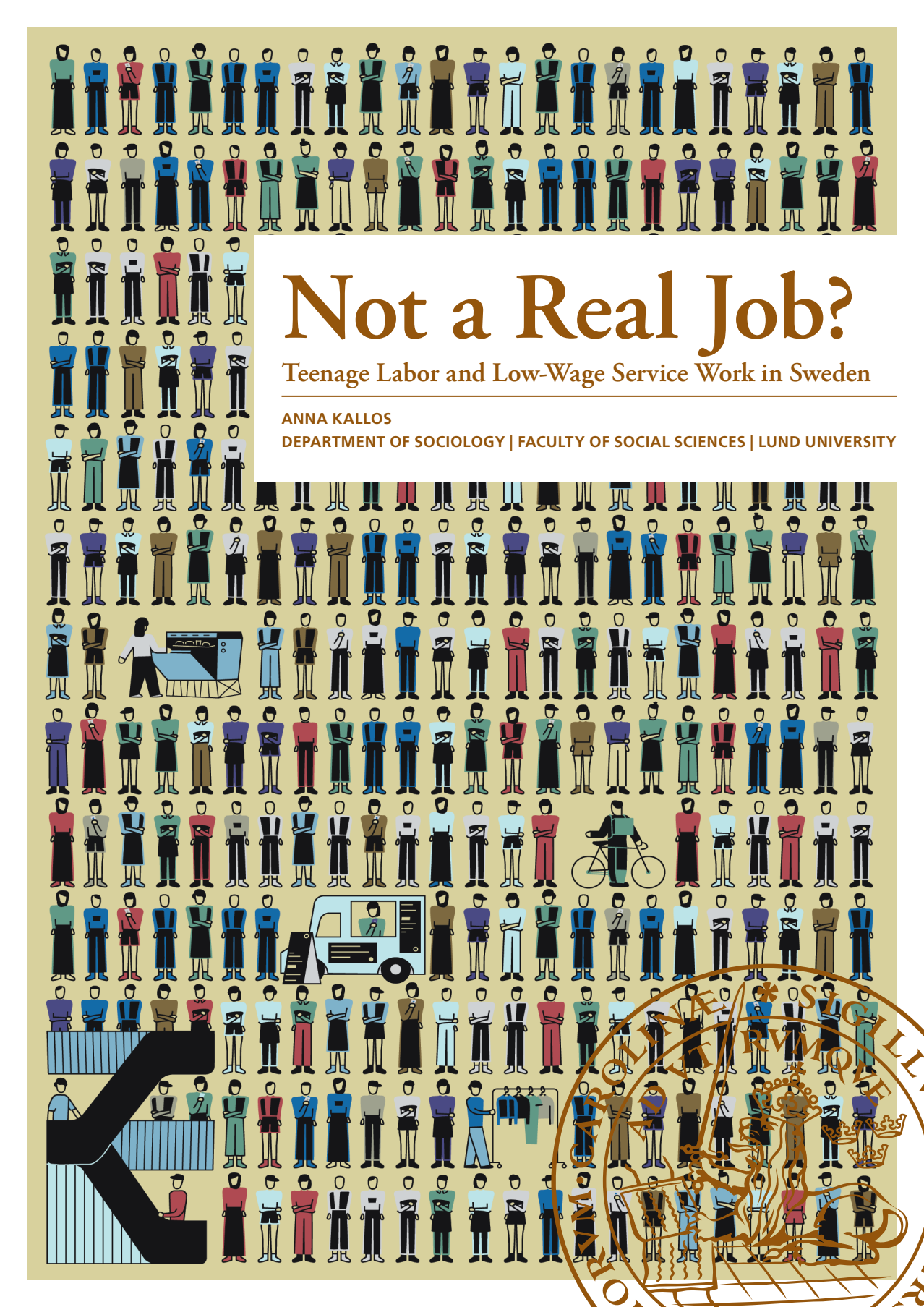
Read more about Creative commons licenses: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/>

Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

LUND UNIVERSITY

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



Not a Real Job?

Teenage Labor and Low-Wage Service Work in Sweden

ANNA KALLOS

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY | FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES | LUND UNIVERSITY

Not a Real Job?

Not a Real Job?

Teenage Labor and Low-Wage Service Work in Sweden

Anna Kallos



LUND
UNIVERSITY

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

Doctoral dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) at the Faculty of Social Sciences at Lund University to be publicly defended on 19th September 2025 at 13.15 in Socialhögskolans Hörsal, Allhelgona kyrkogata 8, Lund

Faculty opponent

Janine Leschke, Copenhagen Business School

Organization: LUND UNIVERSITY

Document name: Doctoral dissertation

Date of issue 19 September 2025

Author: Anna Kallos

Title and subtitle: Not a Real Job? Teenage Labor and Low-Wage Service Work in Sweden

Abstract: Teenage students constitute an important source of flexible, low-cost labor in interactive service sectors. However, existing empirical research has primarily treated their labor as transitional, focusing on its impact on future educational or labor market outcomes. There remains a lack of knowledge about how these young workers experience and make sense of their early employment, particularly within the Nordic context.

This thesis examines teenage students as a labor force in Sweden, at the intersection of low-wage, interactive service work reliant on young, flexible labor, and the different meanings these workers themselves attribute to their jobs. Using a mixed methods approach, the study analyzes data from the Swedish Labor Force Survey (2005-2019) and qualitative interviews with teenage students in paid work (N = 40). Adopting a theoretical perspective grounded in Marxian thought and intersectional feminism, the study investigates questions of exploitation, social differentiation, and subjectivity, focusing on how these issues are shaped by structural and cultural dynamics within the labor market.

The thesis consists of three sole-authored, peer-reviewed articles and an integrative part. **Article I** analyzes survey data to examine trends in the labor force participation of teenage students in Sweden and their worker profiles. It reveals their growing presence in sectors such as hospitality and retail, and demonstrates the heterogeneous nature of this workforce. **Article II** shows how the labor-intensive, low-unionized service sector creates specific conditions for exploitation. Drawing on interview data, it examines how teenage workers understand and legitimize unpaid labor, identifying three meaning-making rationales that normalize exploitative practices as part of their working lives. Finally, **Article III** probes deeper into how teenagers construct the meaning of their part-time jobs, focusing on shared narratives that articulate their motivations for working. It examines how these narratives both reflect and obscure social inequalities, showing how classed, racialized, and neighborhood-based differences shape young people's self-understandings as workers.

In synthesizing its findings, the thesis makes several contributions. First, it situates teenage labor within the broader context of Sweden's low-wage, non-standard service industries. Drawing on multiple data sources, the study offers rich empirical insights into both the development of teenagers' labor force participation and the challenges they face in their working conditions and daily lives. Second, it highlights the heterogeneous composition of this group and the diverse reasons adolescents take on part-time jobs during school, advancing a nuanced understanding of the unevenly distributed opportunities and risks linked to early employment. Finally, the thesis underscores the importance of cultural and discursive meanings of work. Teenagers often frame their first jobs as steps toward cultivating a self valued in the labor market. For the youngest workers, this ethical attachment to work is expressed in future-oriented, abstract terms that are often disconnected from the realities of service work. These narratives, the thesis argues, enable young people to downplay financial dependence and legitimize exploitative conditions. In conclusion, the study positions teenage labor as a meaningful site for both the production of youth subjectivities and the reproduction of social inequalities.

Key words: labor; low-wage jobs; non-standard work; subjectivity; Sweden; teenage workers; youth

Language: English

Number of pages: 101

ISSN and key title: 1102-4712

ISBN: 978-91-8104-598-7 (print)

ISBN: 978-91-8104-599-4 (electronic)

I, the undersigned, being the copyright owner of the abstract of the above-mentioned dissertation, hereby grant to all reference sources permission to publish and disseminate the abstract of the above-mentioned dissertation.

Signature



Date 2025-08-05

Not a Real Job?

Teenage Labor and Low-Wage Service Work in Sweden

Anna Kallos



LUND
UNIVERSITY

Cover art by Kalle Söderberg
Copyright pp 1-101 Anna Kallos

Article 1 © Nordic Journal of Working Life Studies
Article 2 © Anna Kallos (Manuscript under review)
Article 3 © SAGE

Faculty of Social Sciences
Department of Sociology

ISBN 978-91-8104-598-7 (print)
ISBN 978-91-8104-599-4 (electronic)
ISSN 1102-4712

Printed in Sweden by Media-Tryck, Lund University
Lund 2025



Media-Tryck is a Nordic Swan Ecolabel
certified provider of printed material.
Read more about our environmental
work at www.mediatryck.lu.se

MADE IN SWEDEN 

Table of contents

Acknowledgements	9
List of articles	11
Chapter 1. Introduction	13
Chapter 2. Context and research overview	19
Setting the scene: low-wage, non-standard work in Sweden	19
Youth and student labor in transition	24
Teenage students in paid work	26
Precarious workers?	30
Chapter 3. Theoretical perspectives.....	35
Valorization and exploitation in low-wage interactive services.....	36
Producing difference: intersectional approaches.....	40
Self-realization and dissociation: the contemporary work ethic	43
Chapter 4. Methods and materials.....	51
Survey data.....	52
Data	52
Analysis	53
Limitations.....	54
Interviews.....	55
Recruiting participants.....	55
Introducing the participants.....	56
Interviewing, coding, and analysis	58
Ethical questions	60
Chapter 5. Summary of findings.....	63
Article I	63
Article II	65
Article III.....	66
Chapter 6. Concluding discussion.....	69
Results and contributions	69

Implications and directions for future research	72
References	77
Appendix 1. Information for principals	93
Appendix 2. Information for participants	95
Appendix 3. Interview guide.....	97
Original version in Swedish	97
English translation.....	98
Articles I–III.....	101

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I thank all research participants for sharing their time and experiences; without their generosity, this thesis would not exist.

I am grateful to my supervisors, Åsa Lundqvist and Anna Ilsøe, for their support and encouragement. Åsa has been with me from the start, and I consider myself incredibly fortunate to have had the best main supervisor one could wish for. I hardly know how to express my gratitude. Thank you for everything! Anna joined the project a year in and contributed invaluable expertise, generously shared her networks, and helped me navigate the strange world of peer reviews. I also thank Mimmi Barmark, who supervised me during my first year and provided much-needed guidance and reassurance.

Daniel Karlsson—my kindred spirit in Marxian theory and most trusted sounding board. I cannot imagine what these years would have been like without you; surely neither as intellectually inspiring nor nearly as fun.

Sara Eldén supervised my master's thesis, encouraged me to apply to the PhD program, was my discussant at the midterm seminar, and has since offered tremendously helpful feedback on several article drafts. Sara, thank you for sharing your sharp intellect so generously and for being such a great friend.

The first article of this thesis would not have been possible without Nikos Tsardakas Renhuldt, who patiently taught me coding and data analysis. I could not have asked for a more brilliant teacher. Articles II and III were much improved by Colm Flaherty's keen feedback. Colm, you are a superb reader, which (almost) redeems your questionable taste in sociological theory.

I am grateful to Lena Näre and Chris Swader for their encouraging comments during my final seminar. Their detailed and constructive feedback greatly improved this thesis. I also thank Bertil Rolandsson for his valuable input at my midterm seminar, as well as for thoughtful feedback within the SWAP research group and at conferences over the years.

The PhD collective at the Department of Sociology in Lund has been the most supportive group of colleagues one could hope for. I salute you all! Linn Alenius Wallin, Freja Morris, and Staffan Edling have been there from the beginning, and I am deeply grateful for our friendship. Special thanks to Tove Gustavsson, an exceptional sociologist who also served as my ever-available online therapist.

To my other colleagues at the department, thank you! Many of you have helped me grow as a researcher, teacher, and writer. Special thanks to Carl-Göran Heidegren, Erik Hannerz, Shai Mulinari, Alison Gerber, David Wästerfors, and Lila Lee-Morrison. Tobias Olofsson deserves special mention for reading my drafts, organizing co-writing sessions, and providing the best snacks.

Maria Persdotter, thank you for making the future feel exciting and for creating such meaningful research projects. Rasmus Ahlstrand, Maja Sager, Andrea Iossa, and Paula Mulinari, our meetings made the final stressful months of this thesis much more fun. I look forward to continuing our discussions!

I am grateful for my two-month stay at the Department of Sociology at the University of Bologna. Warm thanks to all the PhD students and postdocs who made me feel at home, and to Federico Chicchi for kindly hosting my visit.

To my colleagues and comrades at the Department of Economic History in Stockholm, Thea Holmlund, Pontus Blüme, Therese Christoffersson, and Li Eriksdotter Andersson: thank you for reading groups and conferences over the years, and for visiting me in Bologna (along with Gustav Ingman), which made my stay all the more memorable. I look forward to our continued collaboration through the Fruängen School of Post-Operaist Theory!

On the subject of post-operaist theory, I want to acknowledge the many political reading circles I have participated in over the years, which have profoundly shaped my thinking. Many people deserve mention, but special appreciation goes to Anna Öрман and Ana Gilmet Lejtregger for being outstanding reading partners and cherished friends. I also thank Kalle Söderberg, the entrepreneur of the multitude, who created the cover art for this book.

I want to express my heartfelt thanks to my supportive and loving family and friends—especially my mother, who is always there for me; my father, whom I miss every day; and Frank, for frequent distractions.

Finally, I want to thank Martín Cornell—for inspiring me to use theories that spark joy, for being the (sole) dependable parent to our child, and for our endless conversations.

Malmö, July 2025

Anna

List of articles

The following articles are included in the thesis and are referred to in the text by their Roman numerals.

Article I

Kallos, A (2024) The Studentification of Low-Wage Service Work: Who Participates? Trends and Variations in Part-Time Work among Young Student-Workers. *Nordic Journal of Working Life Studies*, 15(2): 31–53. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18291/njwls.148051>

Article II

Kallos, A (Submitted manuscript) Making Sense of Exploitation: Teenage Workers' Experiences of Unpaid Labour in Low-Wage Service Jobs. (Resubmitted with minor revisions to *Work, Employment and Society*, 2025-06-24).

Article III

Kallos, A (2025) Beyond the Narratives of Experience and Money: The Formation of Teenage Students as Labor in Sweden. *Critical Sociology*, 00(0): 1–16. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/08969205251346899>

Chapter 1. Introduction

Teenage students often occupy some of the most precarious positions in the service sector. They tend to be poorly paid, frequently employed on a casual basis, and are among the least likely to be unionized. Yet, within the Nordic context, little is known about these young employees and how they perceive the meaning of their work.

This thesis is about how teenage students are formed as labor within low-wage service sectors. In many Global North countries, these sectors—characterized by contractual differentiation and fragmented workforces (Alberti et al., 2018; Cant, 2020)—rely on teenagers not only as a source of cheap, flexible labor (Howieson et al., 2012a; Huddleston, 2011; Sukarieh and Tannock, 2015), but also for their youthful attributes, such as appearance and soft skills, which are increasingly valorized (Besen-Cassino, 2014; Farrugia, 2018; McDowell, 2009). Furthermore, school-aged students remain a primary focus of ongoing educational policy interventions aimed at shaping young people into workers (Gerrard, 2014). From this perspective, teenage workers provide both an illustrative and significant case for theorizing the evolving relationship between youth and labor in contemporary service economies.

Working part-time during the school year has often been described as a distinctly American phenomenon (Besen-Cassino, 2018). Indeed, much of our understanding of teenage labor derives from research conducted in the United States and other Anglo-Saxon countries (Neyt et al., 2019; Patton and Smith, 2009). In these contexts, the emergence of a teenage workforce has been portrayed as closely tied to the growth of a low-wage, low-skill service economy (Sukarieh and Tannock, 2015). Given the precarious nature of this work (Kalleberg, 2011), several studies have emphasized the heightened risks these young workers face, including exploitation and sexual harassment (Cohen, 2013; Fineran and Gruber, 2009; Grant-Smith and McDonald, 2015; Hobbs et al., 2016, 2017). However, most teenagers do not take on such jobs out of economic necessity. Many are so-called de-commodified workers who are not financially dependent on their wages (Williams and Connell, 2010) and instead view paid work as a valuable opportunity for socialization and self-branding (Besen-Cassino, 2014).

This study, however, focuses on teenage workers in the context of Sweden. While it has long been common in Sweden—and across the Nordic countries—for school-

aged youth to take on seasonal summer jobs, particularly in care work (Eurostat, 2024; Wadensjö, 2018), available data indicate that teenagers are a permanent part of the labor force year-round. According to Statistics Sweden (2018a, 2021), 65 percent of upper secondary students have held paid jobs, and around 25 percent work weekly throughout the entire year. Students in academic and vocational programs work at similar rates, and this trend holds across most regions in Sweden. As paid work has become a common experience for a majority of teenagers in Sweden, I argue that it is essential to analyze both its heterogeneity and its wider societal implications.

How can we make sense of the development of a teenage workforce within a labor market as comparatively well-organized as Sweden's? The Nordic labor markets are renowned for high levels of unionization, broad coverage of collective agreements, and strong employment protections (Andersen et al., 2014; Dølvik et al., 2015). At first glance, this context seems markedly different from the U.S. labor market, which underpins much of the existing research on adolescent workers. However, even in Sweden, private service sectors such as retail and hospitality have long had a higher incidence of non-standard employment, particularly among young people, women, and migrants (Berglund et al., 2021). These groups may experience heightened precarity in their working conditions and struggle to obtain enough hours to earn a living wage (Ilsøe, 2016; Rasmussen et al., 2019). Moreover, declining union density in these sectors, alongside the expansion and liberalization of temporary contracts, has led scholars to argue that the Swedish labor market is becoming increasingly segmented (Berglund et al., 2023; Rasmussen et al., 2019).

Currently, we know very little about teenage workers in low-wage, non-standard service sectors in the Nordic context, nor do we have much knowledge about their employment conditions and work experiences. This thesis addresses this gap by examining the development of the teenage workforce in Sweden and exploring how these young workers understand their jobs. I use multiple data sources to analyze teenagers' subjective experiences in relation to both the context of the Swedish labor market and broader structural changes in the economy. Using data from the Swedish Labor Force Survey (2005–2019), the study examines general trends and variations in teenage students' paid work at a macro level. Additionally, I draw on in-depth interviews with teenage students engaged in waged work (N = 40) to explore their motivations for and experiences of employment, as expressed in their own accounts. The thesis consists of three sole-authored, peer-reviewed articles and this integrative part ('kappa'). While the articles provide the primary empirical analysis, the integrative part offers a broader background and theoretical context, drawing connections between the findings of the individual articles to arrive at overarching conclusions.

Young people's school-to-work transitions have long been a central concern within the sociology of youth and work, both in Sweden and internationally. Research on teenagers' labor during school has largely been situated within this broader

paradigm. A key focus of this literature has been to assess whether part-time employment during school affects future outcomes, such as academic achievement or labor market entry, and it has primarily relied on quantitative methods (Neyt et al., 2019). Studies on teenage labor in the Nordic countries have generally shared this focus (Ballo et al., 2022; Hensvik et al., 2023; Müller, 2021; Wang et al., 2006). My research, however, does not aim to examine transitions or the long-term effects of early work experiences, but seeks instead to deepen our understanding of teenagers as laboring subjects in low-wage service industries and how they make sense of these jobs. To do this, I approach employment as something that holds broader significance in society beyond its strictly economic dimensions—namely, as a collective ethical obligation that shapes our everyday lives and self-understandings (Farrugia, 2022; Weeks, 2011). By analyzing how differently situated teenagers understand themselves as workers, the thesis contributes to an emerging body of scholarship that explores how paid work shapes youth subjectivities (Besen-Cassino, 2014; Farrugia, 2022; Lamberg, 2022).

To pursue this research, I focus on how teenagers engage with culturally widespread discourses and social imaginaries surrounding waged work. I situate my analysis within scholarship that posits economic productivity as an ethical imperative in the formation of the young self, promising self-realization and fulfillment through labor (Farrugia, 2022; Lamberg, 2022; Weeks, 2011). I examine how such work-related discourses and ideals shape the meanings teenage workers attach to their jobs, with particular attention to how these are negotiated in often ambivalent and contradictory ways. At the same time, I recognize that youth labor in low-wage services is both shaped by and reflective of longstanding social inequalities that are gendered, classed, and racialized (Coffey et al., 2021; Cohen, 2013; McDowell, 2012; Raby et al., 2018; Woodman, 2012). Building on this, I draw on intersectional feminist theory to explore how embodied social differences shape teenagers' understandings of work and the working self.

Furthermore, I connect these issues to the concrete position of teenage workers in the labor market, focusing on how sector-specific mechanisms of exploitation shape the conditions under which their work takes place. In particular, I examine various forms of flexible staffing strategies and the imposition of unpaid labor time, theorizing these practices as methods of extracting additional surplus value in labor-intensive sectors (Alfonsson, 2020; Cole et al., 2024; Marx, 1990). I am especially interested in the tension between these exploitative conditions and the work-related discourses and imaginaries that teenagers engage with and negotiate. In analyzing the meaning-making processes surrounding their work experiences, this thesis builds on a longstanding tradition of research into the formation of worker subjectivities and the production of consent in the workplace (Burawoy, 1979; Lordon, 2014; Read, 2024; Trappmann et al., 2024; Weeks, 2011). Alongside this, I explore how gendered, classed, and racialized inequalities are (re)produced

through participation in paid work, again engaging with intersectional feminist theory (de los Reyes, 2017; Ferguson, 2016).

In analyzing questions of labor, subjectivity, and social differentiation, I enter into a theoretical dialogue with Marxian theory and intersectional feminism. Guided by this framework, the overarching aim of this thesis is to contribute to the understanding of teenage students as a labor force in Sweden, at the intersection of low-wage, interactive service work reliant on young, flexible labor, and the different meanings these workers themselves ascribe to their jobs. Using a mixed methods approach that combines survey data and interviews, I address the following research questions:

1. What characterizes the patterns and experiences of teenage students as labor in low-wage, non-standard services in Sweden? (Articles I and II)
2. How do intersecting social differences rooted in class, gender, racialization, migrancy, neighborhood and age structure teenagers' work in low-wage services? (Articles I and III)
3. What different meanings do teenagers attribute to paid work, and how do these perceptions relate to the contemporary work ethic and dominant discourses surrounding waged work? (Articles II and III)

Through these questions, I examine the labor market position, heterogeneous composition, and subjectivities of teenage student-workers, focusing on how employers' labor-use practices and dominant discourses shape these dimensions. Rather than mapping neatly onto each article, the questions are addressed through a synthesis of their findings. This is especially important to note for the second research question, as not all variables are addressed in each of the specific articles used to answer it. Article I analyzes the Labor Force Survey data to explore the employment rates and worker profiles of school students engaged in paid work. It contributes to understanding teenage student-workers as a heterogeneous labor force within Sweden's low-wage, non-standard service sectors, while also providing a contextual foundation for the qualitative analyses that follow. Article II draws on the interviews with upper secondary students to examine how the participants make sense of and legitimize exploitative working conditions, such as wage theft. It advances theorization of the age-based normalization of unpaid labor within low-wage services and deepens our understanding of how the youngest employees perceive themselves as workers. Finally, Article III, also based on the interviews, explores how teenagers mobilize normative narratives of working to 'gain experience' and 'earn extra money' in response to cultural imperatives to construct a self that holds value for employers. Adopting an intersectional lens, the article sheds light on the ideological and practical role of low-wage service work in shaping subjectivities within a heterogeneous teenage labor force.

In synthesizing these findings, my research makes several contributions. First, it situates the patterns and experiences of teenage employment within the Swedish labor market, a context that has remained largely unexplored in existing research. Using a mixed methods approach, I provide rich empirical data on the recent growth of teenagers' participation in sectors such as hospitality and retail, while also illuminating the challenges they face in their working conditions. I demonstrate that highly exploitative practices are widespread, yet often go unrecognized or remain unarticulated by the young workers themselves. In doing so, the study highlights the representational challenges surrounding this segment of the workforce, which plays a crucial role in low-wage, interactive services but remains difficult to organize (Ilsøe, 2016; Kjellberg, 2025a). Precarity and low unionization have long been identified as key issues for low-wage, non-standard service workers in Sweden more broadly (Alfonsson, 2020; Carlén and de los Reyes, 2024; de los Reyes and Holmlund, 2024). By foregrounding teenage student-workers' experiences, this study adds a distinct lens through which to reconsider these issues.

Second, this thesis contributes by unpacking the broad category of 'teenage workers' in labor market research. By opening up this category, it highlights two dimensions that are often obscured in existing scholarship. First, the findings problematize dominant imaginaries of de-commodified, middle-class youth taking on unskilled service jobs for socializing or leisure purposes (Besen-Cassino, 2014). Drawing on both statistical data and interviews, I demonstrate the heterogeneity within this group, both in terms of social background and work patterns, as well as the diverse reasons school-aged youth take on part-time jobs. For some students, this employment provides essential income to support their families. Second, the thesis offers a differentiated understanding of the opportunities and risks associated with employment during school, showing how these are unevenly distributed along lines of class, racialization, and migrancy. While transitions research has often focused on the long-term effects of early employment, this study contributes new knowledge about how paid work shapes teenage life in the present, structuring it in unequal ways.

Finally, the study underscores the importance of attending to the broader cultural and discursive meanings of work when analyzing early employment experiences. I show that teenagers often approach their first jobs as a crucial step in cultivating an active, entrepreneurial subjectivity. Working during school can be understood as a response to the ethical imperative of developing oneself as a valuable subject in the labor market. However, the analysis reveals that this process is neither straightforward nor uncritical; it is marked by ambivalence and contradiction, shaped by prevailing ideas of what a 'teenage job' should involve and by the students' perceptions of their own youthfulness. I argue that for very young students, the work ethic is often articulated in abstract, future-oriented terms, disconnected from the realities of the service jobs they actually perform. As the title of this dissertation suggests, this frequently leads them to view their current jobs as

something other than ‘real’ work. The thesis contributes by detailing what this future-oriented attachment to work makes possible in the present—particularly how it enables the downplaying of financial necessity and the normalization of exploitative conditions.

The remainder of this dissertation is structured as follows. Chapter 2 sets the thesis within its broader context. I begin by situating teenage student-workers within the context of a changing Swedish labor market, followed by a review of research at the intersection of youth and labor studies that has shaped the broader academic literature on adolescent employment. Chapter 3 elaborates the analytical framework, drawing on Marxian scholarship and intersectional feminism to theorize exploitation in low-wage service work, social differentiation, and the contemporary work ethic. Chapter 4 outlines the study’s multiple data sources and methods, and offers methodological and ethical reflections. Chapter 5 summarizes the three articles and their key findings. Finally, Chapter 6 integrates the results to address the research questions, and concludes with a discussion of the study’s contributions and implications for future research.

Chapter 2. Context and research overview

In this chapter, I begin by situating my research subject—teenage student-workers—within the context of a changing Swedish labor market. This includes an overview of how adolescent workers' hours and wages are regulated through legislation and collective agreements. I then trace developments in non-standard employment, low-wage work, and declining unionization rates, all of which form the backdrop to the recent rise in teenage employment. Shifting to a broader perspective, I examine the research traditions that shape the study of teenage employment at the intersection of youth and labor studies. I first review literature on youth employment, showing how transitions into the labor market have emerged as a central concern, often with a focus on young people deemed 'at risk'. I then narrow the focus to studies specifically addressing teenage workers, which remains largely situated within the transitions research paradigm. Finally, I turn to scholarship that conceptualizes youth as a distinct segment of the precarious workforce, paying particular attention to how teenage and student workers are positioned within this field. Throughout the chapter, I identify the contributions this thesis makes to existing scholarship—both in the Swedish context and within the sociology of work concerned with youth labor and precarity.

Setting the scene: low-wage, non-standard work in Sweden

Although upper secondary education in Sweden is not compulsory, approximately 98 percent of young people continue to this level, which typically includes students between the ages of 16 and 19. The working hours of minors (individuals under the age of 18) are regulated by the Swedish Work Environment Authority (2023), which prohibits them from working between midnight and 5 a.m. The regulations otherwise distinguish between three age groups: younger children (under 13 years), older children, and youth. The youth category includes those who have completed compulsory schooling, from the calendar year in which they turn 16 until they reach the age of 18. This group is most relevant to the present study, although it also

includes some older children who begin upper secondary education before turning 16. According to the regulations, youth may work up to eight hours per day and a maximum of 40 hours per week, while older children are limited to seven hours per day and 35 hours per week. Once individuals turn 18, which most do before completing upper secondary school, these restrictions no longer apply, regardless of their educational status.

In the Swedish labor market model, wages are negotiated and determined by unions and employer organizations through collective agreements, without direct government involvement. As a result, Sweden does not have statutory minimum wage levels. However, many collective agreements negotiated by unions within LO—the confederation of blue-collar trade unions in Sweden—do specify minimum wages (Hällberg and Kjellström, 2020). In some of these agreements, youth wages are differentiated from adult ones. The definition of youth varies depending on the specific collective agreement (Hällberg and Kjellström, 2020). Looking at the two most significant sectors employing teenagers during the school year—hotels and restaurants, and retail (Article I)—both collective agreements stipulate lower youth wage rates, starting from under the ages of 20 and 18, respectively. In both cases, employees under 18 earn approximately 34 percent less per hour than their older counterparts (HRF and Visita, 2025; Svensk Handel and Handelsanställdas Förbund, 2023).

It is worth noting that although there are regulations governing minors' working hours and minimum wages set through collective agreements, these are not always upheld in practice. Many of the teenagers I interviewed reported not receiving the correct wage—or, in some cases, not being paid at all. This was a recurring experience, and it forms the focus of Article II. Although many of their workplaces were formally covered by collective agreements, there was often no union presence to monitor or enforce compliance. As I go on to elaborate, this reflects a broader trend of declining unionization rates among young people and in sectors such as hospitality. Likewise, several participants described having worked night shifts and served alcohol as minors, despite such practices being prohibited under regulations issued by the Swedish Work Environment Authority (2023). Thus, a clear gap emerged between the law—and the collective agreements—in the books and in practice.

Over the past two decades, there have been no major changes in the regulation of working hours and wages for young people, whether through legislation or collective agreements—although overall wage levels have generally seen annual increases (Alfonsson et al., 2024). These limited changes cannot explain the recent rise in year-round employment of teenage students in Sweden (Article I). In what follows, I examine several shifts that have facilitated the employment of teenage students as a source of cheap, flexible labor in the service sector. These include changes to the regulation of temporary employment, the promotion and subsidization of low-wage work, declining unionization rates among young workers

in private services, and broader transformations in the cultural and ideological meaning of paid labor in Sweden.

In the post-war era of Fordism, the ‘Swedish model’ of labor market and welfare policy was developed under predominantly Social Democratic rule.¹ This model is typically associated with a comprehensive welfare state, centralized collective bargaining regulating wages and working conditions, and active labor market policies aimed at increasing the skill levels of the unemployed (Davidsson, 2018; Esping-Andersen, 1990). Sweden has also been characterized by high union density and a relatively compressed wage structure (Dølvik et al., 2015). However, numerous scholars argue that this model has undergone neoliberal restructuring in recent decades, reflecting Sweden’s shift toward a flexible growth model (Alfonsson, 2020; Belfrage and Kallifatides, 2018; Davidsson, 2018; Skyrman et al., 2023). The economic recession of the early 1990s is widely seen as a turning point, marking a broader departure from several core features of the Swedish model (Alfonsson, 2022; Davidsson, 2018; Holmlund and Storrie, 2002). Unemployment rose sharply—from relatively low levels before the crisis to 11 percent in 1993 (Davidsson, 2018). This employment decline primarily affected permanent, full-time jobs, while temporary employment increased during the same period, especially among young people and women (Holmlund and Storrie, 2002). These trends have proven enduring. Unemployment rates have since remained above pre-crisis levels (Davidsson, 2018), and temporary employment in Sweden now exceeds levels in other Nordic countries (Berglund et al., 2021; Rasmussen et al., 2019).

The recession also prompted ideational and regulatory changes. Most notably, the persistently high unemployment levels were invoked to justify the expansion of flexible forms of employment (Alfonsson, 2022; Carlén and de los Reyes, 2021; Davidsson, 2018). These arguments proved effective. Fixed-term employment was gradually deregulated through a series of reforms, the most significant of which came in 2007 with the introduction of a new category of temporary contract—General Temporary Employment (see Davidsson, 2018, for an overview of these policy changes). Consequently, temporary workers have experienced a loosening in employment protection, bringing it in line with nations such as the United Kingdom and Ireland (Berglund et al., 2017). Today, approximately 16 percent of all workers in Sweden are employed on fixed-term contracts (Berglund et al., 2021). This form of employment is more strongly associated with precariousness than other types of non-standard contracts (Berglund et al., 2022; Rasmussen et al., 2019) and is particularly prevalent in sectors such as retail and hospitality (Berglund et al., 2023; Carlén and de los Reyes, 2024; Larsen and Ilsøe, 2021). Among the groups most at

¹ The Social Democratic Party was continuously in office from 1936 to 1976, and again from 1982 to 1991, after a period of center-right coalition governments.

risk of holding temporary contracts are young people aged 15 to 17 and students (Berglund et al., 2021).

Davidsson (2018) argues that many of the labor market reforms introduced during the 1990s and beyond were designed to expand the supply of low-wage labor and encourage the creation of low-skill jobs. Alfonsson et al. (2024) also highlight the changes to unemployment insurance, along with a range of subsidies—such as the reduction of value added tax on restaurant services from 24 to 12 percent, and payroll tax cuts for employers hiring youth aged 19 to 25—as examples of reforms implemented by the liberal-conservative government (2006–2014) to promote job growth in low-wage sectors. The extent to which these reforms have actually led to growth in low-wage employment remains contested. While some researchers observe signs of labor market polarization in Sweden (Heyman, 2016; Åberg, 2015, 2016), others report weaker trends (Aderson and Gustafsson, 2015) or reject such claims altogether (Alfonsson et al., 2024; Oesch and Piccitto, 2019). Even if the overall number of low-paid workers has not increased, Alfonsson et al. (2024: 1108) demonstrate a shift in the composition of this segment over time. By 2019, young people, service workers, temporary employees, and individuals with only primary education were more likely to be in low-paid positions than in 2005.

Several measures were also introduced to encourage people to accept low-wage, non-standard jobs (Alfonsson et al., 2024; Davidsson, 2018). Reflecting a broader shift from welfare to workfare seen across many countries in the Global North, Sweden implemented a series of reforms that marked a move toward ‘activating’ labor market policies designed to incentivize employment (Peralta Prieto, 2006; Karlsson, 2019). These tendencies were particularly prominent under the liberal-conservative government in the 2000s, which promoted what was referred to as ‘the new workfare approach’²—the idea that working should always be more financially rewarding than receiving social benefits or insurance. Tax reductions on labor were introduced to widen the gap between the incomes of employed and unemployed individuals, under the assumption that this would increase incentives to accept lower-wage jobs (Alfonsson et al., 2024). In addition, public campaigns portrayed recipients of social insurance as ‘outsiders’ and emphasized the need to address so-called ‘welfare traps’ (Altermark, 2020; Davidsson, 2016). Researchers have shown that this workfare discourse—where citizens are expected to earn their social rights through waged work—has contributed to the stigmatization of unemployment and social insurance recipients, often associated with racialized portrayals of ‘undeserving, unemployed immigrants’ (Dahlstedt and Vesterberg, 2017; Davidsson, 2016).

Internationally, Sweden stands out for its high levels of union density, but unionization rates have steadily declined since the 1990s—from 81 percent of the

² In Swedish, ‘Den nya arbetslinjen’.

workforce in 1990 to 69 percent in 2024. During the pandemic, rates rose slightly, reaching 70 percent in 2021, but declined again during the inflationary years (Kjellberg, 2025b). Once again, 2007 marked a key turning point: the liberal-conservative government introduced differentiated fees in the voluntary unemployment insurance system, which is administered by the unions. This led to sharply increased fees in sectors with high unemployment, prompting many members to leave (Davidsson, 2018; Prytz and Berglund, 2023). The decline was most pronounced in private service sectors, where employees face the highest risks of unemployment. For instance, in 2024, only 26 percent of workers in the hospitality sector were union members (Kjellberg, 2025b).

The decline in unionization has been especially significant among young people, migrants, and temporary employees (Kjellberg, 2025a). Prytz and Berglund (2023) argue that the rise in temporary and young workers in sectors such as hotels and restaurants accounted for much of the drop in union membership following 2007. Today, certain labor unions—such as the Hotel and Restaurant Workers’ Union³ and the Commercial Employees’ Union⁴—primarily organize a smaller subset of core workers with full-time, open-ended contracts, and therefore fail to reach the employees most affected by precarious working conditions (Kjellberg, 2025b).

The changes and reforms outlined above have had far-reaching effects. The expansion and deregulation of non-standard employment—particularly temporary contracts—have led several researchers to identify increasing segmentation or dualization in the Swedish labor market (e.g., Berglund et al., 2021; Davidsson, 2018; Rasmussen et al., 2019). These shifts—alongside the changing composition of the low-wage workforce and declining union density—have disproportionately affected young workers and students in the private service sector or, in some cases, been shaped by their growing participation in the labor force. It is against this backdrop that I situate the labor market conditions facing teenage student-workers, marked by features not typically associated with the Swedish model: insecure contracts, low pay, and weak union representation. The thesis thus contributes to scholarship on recent developments in the Swedish labor market by foregrounding a category of workers who are simultaneously at the forefront of these transformations yet often remain invisible Swedish research.

To sum up, teenage workers are overrepresented in jobs characterized as unstable, insecure, and precarious (Alfonsson et al., 2024). This pattern is not unique to Sweden. In fact, as we shall see, the relationship between youth and work has been described as increasingly fraught across many countries in the Global North. In the next section, I turn to literature in youth and labor studies to explore how this contested relationship between young people and employment has been theorized.

³ In Swedish, Hotell- och Restaurangfacket, HRF.

⁴ In Swedish, Handelsanställdas förbund.

Youth and student labor in transition

Youth has been described as a ‘notoriously fuzzy’ concept (Sukarieh and Tannock, 2015). Although defined by a certain age range, it is not a biologically fixed category; its meaning varies across social, political, and cultural contexts and has evolved over time. In research, youth is typically defined in relation to adulthood, although the boundaries between these stages tend to be blurry (France and Threadgold, 2016). As traditional markers of adulthood—such as full-time employment, independent living, and homeownership—have become increasingly difficult to attain (Bessant et al., 2017; Silva, 2015), the definitions of youth have expanded (O’Reilly et al., 2019). This is particularly evident in research on youth employment, where the proliferation of precarious work has made it more challenging for young people to secure full-time, permanent contracts (Bessant et al., 2017). Consequently, some studies on youth and precarity extend the age range up to 35 years (e.g., Trappmann et al., 2024). As Sukarieh and Tannock (2015: 5) observe, ‘youth has expanded vertically, to encompass a growing range of ages, as well as horizontally, in terms of the proportion of the population from different class, race, ethnic, national, and religious identities now associated with this life stage’. This conceptual overstretch does not imply that youth, as an empirical category, has become insignificant; substantial evidence shows that young workers face distinct disadvantages in the labor market compared to older cohorts (Bessant et al., 2017; O’Reilly et al., 2019). However, it is important to recognize that the category often encompasses a broad and heterogeneous group, within which different subgroups may encounter specific and varied challenges (Canny, 2002).

Existing theories on the relationship between youth and work typically engage with several core issues, offering varying interpretations of their causes and possible solutions. In Europe, these challenges include limited employment opportunities, often confined to low-wage, non-standard, and precarious jobs (Bessant et al., 2017; Grotti et al., 2019) and high rates of underemployment and unemployment (Bessant et al., 2017; O’Reilly et al., 2019). These trends have contributed to rising numbers of *poorly integrated new entrants*—‘young people who, although qualified, experience persistent difficulties in accessing stable employment. They are caught in a series of short-term, insecure, and poorly paid jobs that frequently do not correspond well to their qualifications’ (O’Reilly et al., 2019: 5; see also McGuinness et al., 2019; Scarpetta et al., 2010)—as well as to a growing group of *youth left behind*, commonly referred to as NEET (not in employment, education, or training). The latter group is particularly vulnerable, with substantial evidence indicating that this status has lasting scarring effects on lifetime earnings and career trajectories (Zuccotti and O’Reilly, 2019). These challenges make the youth–work relationship a highly contested field, closely tied to efforts by ‘national governments and other political actors to produce and govern a useful labor force through

interventions into youth' (Farrugia, 2022: 4; see also Means, 2017; Sukarieh and Tannock, 2015).

The challenges outlined above have led researchers to describe young people's entry into the labor market as increasingly problematic, non-linear, and complex (e.g., Furlong and Cartmel, 2007; Pohl and Walther, 2007; Shildrick and MacDonald, 2007). As a result, transitions from education to work have become a key focus in youth research, shaping one of the field's most influential paradigms (Farrugia, 2021; Sukarieh and Tannock, 2015). This body of research examines the increasingly prolonged and insecure pathways from school to work and higher education, emphasizing how structural inequalities and labor market conditions shape young people's trajectories (MacDonald, 2011). Given the severe scarring effects of prolonged youth unemployment, improving conditions for young people is a central concern within the field, with much research aimed at informing relevant policies (e.g., O'Reilly et al., 2019).

The Nordic countries, including Sweden, are often described as having relatively smooth school-to-work transitions compared to other European nations. Researchers highlight policies that support transitions, such as broad access to higher education, employment in a large public sector, and public childcare that facilitates women's labor market participation (Pohl and Walther, 2007; Walther, 2006). However, this is not to suggest that Nordic youth face no challenges. As noted, Sweden has high rates of temporary employment among young people, and persistent barriers remain for certain groups—such as early school leavers, youth with disabilities, and migrants—which continue to be significant concerns (Berglund et al., 2021; Plenty et al., 2018; Wadensjö, 2015). Accordingly, transitions into the labor market remain a central focus of youth research in both Sweden and the broader Nordic context (e.g., Albæk et al., 2015; Lorentzen et al., 2019; Olofsson and Wikström, 2018; Plenty et al., 2018).

Student labor presents an interesting case within this paradigm. While research has shown that precarious work during youth can lead to cycles of continued precarious employment (Shildrick and MacDonald, 2007), findings by Nielsen et al. (2019) suggest a more nuanced picture. In their study of young Danish employees, they found that although students often hold precarious jobs during their education, this does not appear to negatively affect their future entry into the labor market. In fact, student employment is frequently portrayed as a potential asset for future outcomes. This is especially evident in analyses of the Nordic countries, where student employment rates are comparatively high by European standards. As a result, some researchers highlight the 'student job culture' in the Nordics as a key success factor in facilitating smooth school-to-work transitions (Hadjivassiliou et al., 2019; Joensen and Mattana, 2022; Madsen et al., 2013). Other researchers have given a less bright picture, as is shown in the next section.

As indicated above, research on youth transitions has been highly influential, playing a foundational role in establishing the sociology of youth as a distinct field (Farrugia, 2021). However, it has also sparked considerable debate and attracted substantial criticism (Schildrick and MacDonald, 2007; Wyn et al., 2017). Roberts (2011) contends that transition research often relies on dualistic classifications—framing transitions as either ‘successful’ or ‘problematic’—and focuses primarily on youth at risk of social exclusion, thereby overlooking more ‘ordinary’ experiences. This dominant focus may help explain why the rise in student employment has been described as a largely overlooked phenomenon (Doogan, 2009; Howieson et al., 2012a). Student employment is an ‘ordinary experience’ (Price et al., 2011), typically examined through its impact on future labor market outcomes rather than the dynamics and logics of the workplaces where students are concentrated. Farrugia (2021: 372) argues that this emphasis on access to future employment tends to obscure how young people—such as students—are shaped as workers within the contemporary service economy, as ‘subjects that are produced, valorized and devalorized as part of the formation of labor forces within transnational movements of capital and labor’. In this light, theorizing teenage students as laboring subjects within low-wage services constitutes a central contribution of this thesis.

As previous research on teenage employment remains deeply characterized by a focus on transitions, I next turn to this body of literature.

Teenage students in paid work

The literature reviewed above highlights youth unemployment as a central issue shaping theoretical developments within youth studies, with Sukarieh and Tannock (2015: 55) describing it as a ‘specter’ haunting both scholarly discourse and labor market policy. While high youth unemployment rates are indeed pressing concerns, there is an additional dimension to the story: certain groups of young people, particularly students, have increasingly joined the workforce over recent decades (Doogan, 2009; Sukarieh and Tannock, 2015). Price et al. (2011: 2) describe this as ‘a significant shift from a predominantly full-time youth workforce to a part-time one, driven principally by an increasing participation in schooling’ in Global North countries. In this context, paid work has become a majority experience for young people in education (Price et al., 2011).

Although student part-time work during education is more common in the Nordic countries than in many other European nations (Hadjivassiliou et al., 2019; Madsen et al., 2013), the teenage workforce in this context remains under-researched, although a handful of studies can be mentioned. In Sweden, researchers such as Hensvik et al. (2023) and Müller (2021) have focused on vocational students,

identifying positive associations between early labor market entry and the social contacts developed through school-year employment (see also Wang et al., 2006). Similarly, in Norway, Ballo et al. (2022) find that teenage work experience is linked to a lower risk of future labor market exclusion. In Finland, Kouvonen and Lintonen (2002) have examined the relationship between adolescent employment during school and risks of heavy drinking. Ethnographic studies have also contributed important insights. In Sweden, Samuelsson (2008, 2011) explores children's work, problematizing their invisibility in labor market research and highlighting the diverse meanings work holds for children by centering their perspectives. Likewise, Fredriksen (1999) investigates children's labor in the Danish retail sector, emphasizing the underrepresentation of young people's own accounts in existing research. Both authors note that youth and employers often describe these jobs as something other than 'real work', raising critical questions about how adolescent labor is perceived and valued.

Internationally, research on the teenage workforce is more prevalent, particularly in the US, UK, and Australia, where combining work with schooling is widespread (Neyt et al., 2019; Patton and Smith, 2009). The reasons why adolescents enter the workforce remain a subject of debate. Some studies emphasize material needs as a driving force for working, especially in single-parent households (Hodgson and Spours, 2001; McCoy and Smyth, 2007; Raby et al., 2018), and others have found negative correlations between parental transfer payments and the number of hours worked (Dustmann et al., 2009; cf. Kalenkoski and Pablonia, 2010). However, other studies suggest that most teenagers do not work out of financial necessity. Rather, these researchers argue that employment is a general trend among adolescents (Hobbs et al., 2007; Howieson et al., 2012a; Price et al., 2011). Commonly cited motivations include earning extra money, gaining financial independence, acquiring work experience, and building self-confidence (Hobbs et al., 2007; Neyt et al., 2019; Patton and Smith, 2009; Raby et al., 2018).

Regardless of their reasons for working, few teenagers envision pursuing the same types of jobs they hold during school as part of their future careers (Rauscher et al., 2012). These dynamics contribute to the perception of teenagers as something other than 'real workers'—not engaged in work out of necessity or viewing their jobs as a core part of their identity, as is often assumed for adults (Price and Grant-Smith, 2018; Samuelsson, 2011). Employers have frequently drawn on such stereotypes to justify lower wages for this group (Sukarieh and Tannock, 2015; Yates, 2017). Teenagers themselves may inadvertently reinforce these views, as studies show they are often reluctant to define their employment as 'real work' (Besen-Cassino, 2018; Samuelsson, 2011). These notions—rooted in broader social imaginaries and sometimes echoed by young workers—tend to homogenize school students as a uniform group of workers, a perspective problematized in Articles I and III.

Underpinning the largest body of research, the youth transitions paradigm focuses on the educational and career outcomes of combining part-time work with full-time

education. Within this framework, teenagers are primarily seen either as students or as future members of the labor force, rather than as workers in the present. Their current employment is largely treated as a variable that influences future outcomes. The field has been characterized as sharply divided between researchers who view waged work as either valuable or detrimental (McCoy and Smyth, 2007; Patton and Smith, 2009). Some studies highlight positive effects, including personal development, skill enhancement, self-empowerment, and favorable associations with future labor market outcomes (Hensvik et al., 2023; Hobbs et al., 2007; Leonard, 2003; McKechnie et al., 2010, 2014; Simpson et al., 2018). Others conclude that working while studying endangers academic success, as there is indeed substantial empirical evidence for an association with poor educational achievement, truancy, and dropout (Marsh and Kleitman, 2005; McCoy and Smyth, 2007; Singh et al., 2007). A research review supports this view, mainly finding negative relationships between paid work during school and educational attainment (Neyt et al., 2019). However, ample research suggests so-called threshold effects, whereby potentially positive or negative outcomes are determined by the number of hours worked (Dumont et al., 2009; Monahan et al., 2011; Nagengast et al., 2014; Staff and Mortimer, 2007; Staff et al., 2020). The threshold value that defines intensive work varies between studies: Neyt et al. (2019) find definitions ranging from working more than 8 to 25 hours per week in their literature review.

As Rauscher et al. (2012) note, much research on teenage employment assumes that most adolescent jobs are similar in nature—low-waged, low-skilled, and routine. This assumption has led researchers to overlook the fact that ‘youth may have different work experiences and thus, be differently affected by those experiences’ (Rauscher et al., 2012: 561). As a result, there has been a focus on the number of hours worked as the primary measure for assessing how teenage employment impacts students. In response, several scholars have examined the quality of adolescent employment as a predictor of later outcomes (see Rauscher et al., 2012, for a review). While this marks a shift away from the question of whether work is beneficial for school students, it often introduces a similar one: what kinds of jobs are considered valuable for teenagers? This, too, reflects the prevailing emphasis on employment as a component of youth trajectories into the labor market. For example, Staff and Mortimer (2024) use job quality during adolescence as a predictor of whether individuals will occupy similar roles as they transition into the adult labor force and pursue their career paths.

The heterogeneity among young student-workers is mainly framed as an endogeneity issue that may introduce bias into statistical models. As Neyt et al. (2019: 899) summarize, ‘Students who decide to combine study and work differ from those that do not combine these to activities in more than just their work status’. These pre-existing differences between working and non-working students may also affect educational outcomes. There is an ongoing debate over whether student workers represent a positive selection of the overall population or whether

students with lower motivation and poorer grades are overrepresented among those who work while attending school (Neyt et al., 2019). To establish causality, there is thus a need to control for differences among teenagers, including demographics, motivation, and ability. Findings suggest that work patterns are related to factors such as class background, gender, ethnicity, and previous academic performance (e.g., Bachman et al., 2013; Howieson et al., 2012b; Staff and Mortimer, 2007; Staff et al., 2020). Consistently, intensive work has been linked to more disadvantaged class positions. As Staff and Mortimer (2007: 1188) conclude, ‘More advantaged youth, as gauged by their socioeconomic backgrounds and educational promise, limit their hours of work during high school; their less-advantaged counterparts tend to pursue more intensive work patterns’. This notion has been confirmed both by quantitative and qualitative studies (Raby et al., 2018; Staff et al., 2020).

Compared to the extensive focus on how employment affects educational attainment and long-term labor market trajectories, relatively little attention has been paid to the content and context of teenagers’ work, although there are notable exceptions. Besen-Cassino (2014), for instance, investigates the shifting meanings of part-time employment among suburban youth, showing how work can resemble a form of consumption, enabling self-branding and personal development. Sheppard et al. (2019) explore how adolescent workers interpret, negotiate, and resist gendered discourses in their labor market participation, revealing that such discourses shape the experience and significance of early employment in often contradictory ways (see also Besen-Cassino, 2018). Woodman (2012), on the other hand, examines how the rise in precarious teenage employment affects broader aspects of life, particularly social relationships. He shows that irregular work schedules often hinder young people’s ability to spend time with close friends, though the consequences are uneven—those with more resources are better able to manage their time and maintain social connections.

Even research on teenage students as laboring subjects and as a source of low-wage, non-standard labor remains comparatively limited. Tannock’s (2001) study of teenagers working in fast food chains and large grocery stores reveals how employers often frame these jobs as opportunities for adolescents to socialize and have fun—an image that aligns with how young people themselves perceive part-time work during school. However, teenagers may also face specific risks as newcomers to the labor market and due to their young age. Scholars have drawn attention to risks such as economic exploitation (Hobbs et al., 2016; 2017), workplace injuries (Grant-Smith and McDonald, 2015), and the precarious nature of these jobs (Cohen, 2013; Raby et al., 2018). Researchers have also documented widespread sexual harassment, particularly among teenage girls (Besen-Cassino, 2018; Cohen, 2013; Fineran and Gruber, 2009; Sheppard et al., 2019). At the same time, other studies characterize these early work experiences as social, enjoyable, empowering, and valuable preparation for adult life (Besen-Cassino, 2014; Hobbs

et al., 2007). Consequently, researchers such as Besen-Cassino (2014) have described teenage employment as marked by a blend of exploitation and fun.

To summarize, teenage employment has primarily been studied as a variable influencing future outcomes, such as educational attainment or labor market trajectories. My thesis builds on a small but growing body of research that explores the meanings and experiences of such work. It contributes to this literature by theorizing how the exploitative conditions of low-wage service jobs—conditions widely acknowledged in previous research—are legitimized and normalized among this category of workers (Article II). Furthermore, while earlier studies have highlighted the gendered dimensions of adolescent work, my research adds an intersectional perspective, emphasizing how social differences rooted in class and racialization shape early work experiences (Articles I and III).

Precarious workers?

As I have shown above, the rise in employment among teenage students reflects broader labor market trends, such as the growth of private service sectors and the proliferation of non-standard work (Doogan, 2009; Yates, 2017). As Sukarieh and Tannock (2015: 38) explain, the ‘worldwide growth in part-time, teenage student employment has been driven primarily by the rise of a low-wage, low-skill service economy’ that relies on a seven-day, round-the-clock schedule (see also Huddleston, 2011). These labor market shifts have impacted young workers more broadly, sparking a growing body of research on youth and precarious work (Bessant et al., 2017; MacDonald, 2016). MacDonald (2016) notes that this scholarship raises several critical questions: Is precarious work a stepping-stone into the labor market, or a trap? Does precarity define a social generation of youth, or does it reflect other social divisions, such as class? Is precarious work imposed on young people, or is it sought after as a lifestyle choice, for example, by middle-class students? Moreover, do all youth engaged in precarious work experience precarity (Antonucci, 2018)?

The abovementioned questions are related to how we define precarity. The concept (and its many related morphological forms) has been described as overstretched and ambiguous, denoting several social phenomena pertaining to labor market insecurity (Alberti et al., 2018). Betti (2018) suggests that the difficulties in reaching a shared definition of precarity have to do with the fact that the concept has highly political connotations and is related to social movements. Although Bourdieu (1963) is often credited with the term *précarité* from his research on Algerian casual workers, the term can be traced back to its roots in classical Marxist theory (Jonna and Foster, 2016). In writings by Engels (1993), Marx (1990), and Morris (1915), the concept emerges as integrally related to the critique of capitalism and the impoverishment

of the working class. Most notably, precarity has been associated with the industrial reserve army of labor, thus linking it closely to the theory of capital accumulation (Jonna and Foster, 2016). In the 1970s, the concept gained greater prominence ‘through its adoption by leftist movements in continental Europe, as a means of rallying (often) young workers excluded from stable jobs’ (Alberti et al., 2018: 448). Its political relevance endured, most notably during the early 2000s with the European precarity movement. In its modern definition, the term has thus been developed and shaped by its usage in youth movements. Reflecting this connection in his discussion of the precariat as a social class, Standing (2011: 66) asserts that ‘youth make up the core’. However, as Neilson and Rossiter (2008) observe, the expansion of academic literature on precarity has coincided with its decline as a political concept within social movements.

Most definitions of precarity and precarious work share common elements and emphasize uncertainties related to hours, pay, possibilities to plan ahead, and access to social benefits and statutory entitlements (e.g., Kalleberg and Vallas, 2017; Vosko, 2010). This is often contrasted with the stable and secure conditions associated with full-time, open-ended contracts, leading precarity to be portrayed as a ‘deviation’ or ‘exception’ (Rubery et al., 2018; Vosko, 2010). Betti (2018) describes how the academic use of the term emerged in the polarized debates during the 1990s, when economists promoted labor market flexibility to increase employment growth. To counter this, many sociologists emphasized the close connection between job flexibility and precarity. The definitions of the concept can be understood in the context of this debate, where precarity was considered ‘the drawback’ of flexibility (Kubisa and Mendonca, 2019).

Thus, precarity is usually defined in negative terms, which implies dichotomizations. First, precarity is understood against the idea of Fordism, thereby framing it as a novel condition that has appeared during recent decades. Feminist and intersectional scholars have criticized this view as being Global North-centric and partial, excluding the perspectives of oppressed groups (Betti, 2018; Fuller and Vosko, 2008; Neilson and Rossiter, 2008; Vosko, 2010). Historically, precarity instead appears as the norm for the many, whereas Fordism was a limited exception (Neilson and Rossiter, 2008). Secondly, precarity is defined against notions of ‘core workers’ on standard employment contracts, which portrays it as a condition limited to ‘peripheral’ groups in the labor market. This distinction fails to capture the dynamic of precarization as a process affecting the labor market more generally, rather than just segments of marginalized workers (Alberti et al., 2018; Lorey, 2015).

The dichotomous view underpinning many conceptualizations of precarious work has shaped research on student-workers. Since their experiences do not fully align with established definitions, they are often treated as a negative case to refine conceptual clarity. Some studies have used their experiences to distinguish precarious work from precarity (Antonucci, 2018) or to differentiate their

circumstances from other workers or youth segments, finding that insecure working conditions do not impact students in the same way (Nielsen et al., 2019; Standing, 2011). These distinctions become even more pronounced when examining teenage students who live at home. Therefore, Campbell and Price (2016) use school students as a ‘theory-relevant’ example to emphasize the importance of distinguishing between different meanings of precarious work.

The research on teenage students and precarious work is complicated by the tendency of teenagers to normalize or distance themselves from their employment conditions, even in cases of legal violations (Besen-Cassino, 2018; Cohen, 2013; Raby et al., 2018). This reflects a broader trend among youth, as studies suggest that young people frequently accept and normalize their working conditions (Karolak and Mrozowski, 2017; Mrozowski and Trappmann, 2021). Trappmann et al. (2024) identify several legitimizing frames through which young people come to accept precarious work, with variations depending on institutional contexts. Among these, the framing of precarity as ‘the price of escaping organizational alienation and pursuing meaningful work’ is highlighted as particularly significant (Trappmann et al., 2024: 1014). This finding resonates with Armano and Murgia’s (2013) research on highly-skilled young workers in Italy, which shows how passion for one’s occupation often serves to justify precarious working conditions, producing a tension between self-identification and self-exploitation. Another common frame identified by Trappmann et al. (2024) involves legitimizing precarity as temporary—something to be endured while seeking more stable employment. Similarly, Morgan et al. (2013), in their interviews with young people pursuing careers in creative fields, observed a tendency among participants to accept employment insecurity as a defining feature of youth employment. They also reflect on whether this acceptance may stem from prior experiences of insecurity in teenage jobs in retail and hospitality, which ‘may have habituated them to relations that operate in creative fields, where work is scarce and the power of gatekeepers is often arbitrarily exercised’ (Morgan et al., 2013: 410).

Morgan et al.’s (2013) findings caution against distinctly separating the experiences of school students from those of other worker categories, while also illustrating how a longitudinal perspective can blur otherwise dualistic views (see also Campbell and Price, 2016). Nevertheless, teenage students occupy a paradoxical position in labor market research: while they hold some of the most precarious jobs, they fit awkwardly within the conceptual frameworks used to describe precarious workers. This conceptual misfit may be yet another of the reasons why several researchers have pointed to an ‘invisibility’ of young students in labor market research, despite their substantial presence in sectors otherwise characterized by precarious employment conditions (Doogan, 2009; Howieson et al., 2012a; Smith and Patton, 2013).

In relation to previous studies on teenagers and precarious work, this thesis shifts the focus from asking whether school students are precarious workers (Campbell

and Price, 2016; Nielsen et al., 2019) to exploring their position as laboring subjects. This approach not only advances discussions on teenagers' role in contemporary labor forces but also extends the analysis to broader debates on exploitation and labor use in low-wage, non-standard service sectors. The next chapter introduces the theoretical perspectives that inform this research.

Chapter 3. Theoretical perspectives

As noted in the literature review above, the position of teenage student-workers in the labor market does not fit easily within many conventional conceptual frameworks in youth and labor market research. These include the assumed separation of school and work into distinct life phases (Wyn et al., 2017), as well as dominant definitions of precarious work and workers. Moreover, despite being employed, teenage students often do not perceive themselves as ‘real workers’. In response to these tensions, I draw on recent theorization of emerging and hybrid laboring subjects—figures who embody a co-existence of characteristics that resist binary classification (Armano and Murgia, 2017; Murgia and Pulignano, 2021; Murgia et al., 2020; Piro et al., 2023). From this perspective, hybridization is understood as a process that captures the fragmented nature of contemporary labor, in which the Fordist ideal of ‘typical’ employment—stable, socially protected, full-time work—has become increasingly atypical for many (Murgia and Pulignano, 2021).

Although hybridity is not a central concept in my analysis, I am inspired by these approaches for their development of novel analytical frameworks that address the complexities of contemporary labor. In particular, I draw on the idea of a subject-oriented approach, that moves beyond essentialist understandings of social categories by focusing on how work is lived and experienced by individuals (Armano et al., 2022). As Murgia et al. (2020: 5) describe, this approach involves ‘systematically taking into account reciprocal impacts between subjects and social structures, integrating micro- and macro-level analysis to understand how individuals are shaped by social norms and institutions, while also recognizing their capacity to influence and reshape these structures’.

Examining teenage student-workers through this lens means attending both to the specificity of their position in the labor market and to their subjective experiences—while also analyzing how these are shaped by intersecting processes of racialization and gendered differentiation. Moreover, this approach foregrounds the tensions and contradictions that define their experiences and, in many ways, structure their role within the labor market. While this perspective is most explicitly developed in Article II, it informs the analytical orientation of the overall project. To pursue this research, this chapter outlines a theoretical framework grounded primarily in

Marxian perspectives and intersectional feminism, used to analyze the labor, heterogeneous social composition, and subjectivities of teenage student-workers.

Valorization and exploitation in low-wage interactive services

What defines teenage students' position in the labor market? As workers, they are very young, enrolled in full-time education during weekdays, lack formal qualifications for skilled labor, and are generally disconnected from unions. As previously noted, their growing presence in the labor force is closely linked to the expansion of consumer services such as hospitality and retail (Huddleston, 2011; Sukarieh and Tannock, 2015), and, in the Swedish context, to a lesser extent, low-status care work (Statistics Sweden, 2021). These jobs share several defining features. First, they are concentrated in low-wage industries where young people constitute a key source of cheap labor (Campbell and Price, 2016; Howieson et al., 2012a), with employers leveraging both age-based wage differentials and high student turnover to keep wages down (Williams and Connell, 2010; Yates, 2017). Second, the work is non-standard, with teenagers often filling undesirable evening and weekend shifts (Canny, 2002; Huddleston, 2011; Sukarieh and Tannock, 2015). Third, these jobs are labor-intensive, generating surplus primarily through staffing strategies; in this context, young workers are valued for their 'flexibility' (Canny, 2002). Finally, these roles are interactive, involving direct engagement with customers and clients, which shapes the power dynamics of the work. As Williams and Connell (2010: 351) observe, 'Unlike manufacturing jobs, employees in service jobs are accountable to two different "masters": their employers and managers, on the one hand, and their clients and customers on the other'.

Within the theoretical tradition of autonomist Marxism, authors have highlighted how contemporary economies in the Global North are characterized by insecure employment conditions, fragmented labor forces, and a growing emphasis on workers' personal investments and the pursuit of self-realization through work (Adkins, 2005; Hardt and Negri, 2005; Gill and Pratt, 2008; Weeks, 2011).⁵ These shifts are tied to the increasing economic significance of service, knowledge, and

⁵ Autonomist Marxist thinkers have characterized these labor markets as post-Fordist (e.g., Hardt and Negri, 2005; Gill and Pratt, 2008; Weeks, 2011). While the prefix *post-* implies a rupture or radical transformation, several scholars have underscored the continuities within capitalist development (Mezzadra and Neilson, 2013; Neilson and Rossiter, 2008). In light of these continuities, I have chosen to avoid the label post-Fordist. Nevertheless, I contend that many of the concepts developed within this broader framework remain useful for analyzing key shifts in the composition of labor—particularly in understanding how teenage students have come to form a central flexible workforce within interactive, low-wage service sectors.

creative industries, where the production of sensations, symbols, relationships, and embodied experiences constitutes the immaterial product of labor (Lazzarato, 1996). Interactive services—such as retail and hospitality—exemplify this form of labor (Dowling, 2007; Farrugia et al., 2018). From this perspective, teenage students are not only concentrated in but also integral to sectors that exemplify key trends in the evolving nature of contemporary labor.

The nature of interactive service work has been analyzed in terms of its emotional (Hochschild, 2003), aesthetic (Warhurst and Nickson, 2009; Williams and Connell, 2010), and affective character. The latter refers to the mobilization and performance of subjectivities, desires, and social relationships as integral components of labor (Farrugia et al., 2023; Gill and Pratt, 2008; Lazzarato, 1996). Affective labor collapses the boundary between work and leisure, drawing on workers' entire embodied subjectivities and social lives to generate value. This phenomenon has been most extensively theorized in studies of the creative industries, often seen as paradigmatic due to their reliance on workers' communicative and creative capacities (e.g., Gill and Pratt, 2008; Karlsson, 2024; McRobbie, 2016). However, as Read (2024: 82) observes, the tendency toward subjective alignment with work applies equally to low-wage service labor: 'A factory worker's mood or attitude was irrelevant to the task, but the same cannot be said of a call center worker or even an employee in a fast-food restaurant'.

The prominence of emotional, aesthetic, and affective labor in contemporary service economies has been described as a 'feminization of work' (Hardt and Negri, 2005). This highlights not only the shift toward increased part-time employment traditionally associated with women's careers but also the large-scale entry of women into the workforce. However, as Farrugia (2022: 37) argues, 'young people have also shifted into an increasingly significant position within the post-Fordist labor force, although this is not well documented or extensively theorized'. This observation encompasses both the widespread participation of young people in certain sectors—where student employment has become a normative experience—and how youthfulness, as an immaterial quality, is actively produced and valorized through labor.

Farrugia (2018: 516) describes youthfulness as being 'produced as the affective capacity for playful enjoyment, cutting-edge taste-making, savvy consumption, and desirable embodiment', prevalent in sectors like retail and hospitality. In these industries, embodied performances and customer interactions imbue value onto products or the experiences themselves. For instance, bar work demonstrates how young employees create atmospheres of ease and pleasure marketed to clients, a process often reliant on fostering social relationships among co-workers (Farrugia et al., 2018, 2023). However, this form of affective labor is deeply embodied, as structures of class, gender, and racialization position some young people as more

‘appropriate’ employees than others (McDowell, 2012). In low-wage interactive services, McDowell (2009: 63) identifies the ‘idealized white, slim, young, unwrinkled, typically heterosexualized body’ as the archetypal laboring figure (see also Besen-Cassino, 2018). The valorization of youthful embodiment thus reinforces inequalities (McDowell, 2020; Williams and Connell, 2010) and profoundly shapes labor processes. For instance, Coffey et al. (2018) highlight the gendered work required to maintain an inviting bar atmosphere while addressing the intersecting risks of sexual harassment faced by young women.

The production of youthfulness tends to blur the boundaries between work, consumption, and leisure (Farrugia, 2018). Williams and Connell (2010: 351) explore this dynamic in their discussion of why class-privileged workers are willing to take upscale retail jobs, despite their low wages and precarious nature. They describe the typical high-end retail employee as a hybrid ‘worker-consumer’ who identifies with and derives pleasure from their association with particular brands. Similarly, Besen-Cassino (2014) examines teenagers working in suburban coffee chains, finding that they identify with the brands they sell and view these low-paid jobs as vital to their social lives. Thus, these dynamics legitimize poor working conditions and low wages by intertwining labor with consumption and leisure (Besen-Cassino, 2014; Farrugia et al., 2018). Williams and Connell (2010: 365) summarize: ‘In a masterful sleight of hand, the retail industry has transformed bad jobs into fun pastimes, enabling this large employment sector to escape social criticism and reform’.

Focusing on the valorization of youthfulness within low-wage interactive service work provides a useful lens for analyzing how teenagers contribute to these sectors beyond serving as a source of cheap, non-standard labor. I use this perspective to frame broader developments in teenage employment and to reflect on why certain groups of school students—such as young girls—tend to be overrepresented in this trend (Chapter 6). However, my research extends this scholarship by examining teenage workers in low-status jobs with which they do not identify—unlike the suburban youth in Besen-Cassino’s (2014) study, who engaged with their roles through branded differentiation. In this context, I contribute with an analysis of the varied meanings teenagers attribute to paid work during school (Article III), and how they legitimize exploitative working conditions (Article II), beyond a setting in which such jobs are framed as enjoyable or recreational.

In addition, I argue that discussions of teenage labor must be grounded not only in the valorization of youthfulness, but also in the mechanisms of exploitation embedded in low-status interactive service work. Marx (1990) defines exploitation as a temporal relation: the ratio between paid and unpaid labor time inherent in the wage relation, through which capitalists extract surplus value. The rate of surplus value is thus determined by the degree of exploitation, and Marx maintains that

capitalists continually seek to increase this rate to gain a competitive advantage and maximize profit. This can be achieved in absolute terms by extending the working day, or in relative terms by increasing productivity through technological innovation. However, in interactive services—where the product is inseparable from the labor involved—the scope for technological substitution is limited (Cole, 2024). In these labor-intensive sectors, increasing profit tends instead to rely on adjusting labor use and wages to raise the rate of exploitation. For instance, employers in hospitality and retail often use flexible staffing practices, such as fixed-term or zero-hour contracts, to minimize labor costs (Alfonsson, 2020; Carlén and de los Reyes, 2024; Huddleston, 2011). Although such arrangements involve hiring workers on a casual basis, these workers are typically expected to remain constantly available (Alfonsson, 2020; de los Reyes and Holmlund, 2024; Williams and Connell, 2010). In this context, teenage students become particularly attractive to employers as a source of cheap and flexible labor.

However, there are other means of extracting additional surplus value in labor-intensive services. Cole et al. (2024) highlight how wage theft has become a systematic and widespread phenomenon in the hospitality sector, yet it is often framed as a labor market violation rather than as a mode of exploitation. As Marx (1990: 352) notes in his discussion of the working day, capital continually seeks to extract additional surplus labor and employs tactics such as ‘small thefts from the workers’ meal-times and recreation times’, as well as ‘snatchings’ and ‘petty pilferings of minutes’. Any increase in unpaid labor time, Marx argues, results in greater profit for the capitalist. Wage theft, therefore, should not be seen as a moral failure or the isolated wrongdoing of individual managers, but as a structural feature of surplus value extraction. As Marx (1990: 367) writes, the nature of capitalist production inherently strives ‘towards the appropriation of labor throughout the whole of the 24 hours in the day’. Building on this insight, Cole et al. (2024) conceptualize wage theft as a mechanism for extracting unpaid labor time—one that is incentivized by the logic of capitalism itself. Based on their research in the hospitality industry, they develop a typology of wage theft that captures the legal, quasi-legal, and illegal practices employers use to secure unpaid labor time (Cole et al., 2024: 117). However, such exploitation often goes unnoticed. Several studies have shown that wage theft is both normalized and exacerbated by the absence of union representation and by workers’ tolerance of underpayment (Campbell et al., 2019; Clibborn, 2021; Cole et al., 2024; Farrugia et al., 2020)—dynamics that reflect the conditions faced by teenagers working in low-status, interactive service jobs.

In Article II, I examine how wage theft and the coercive scheduling of additional shifts—understood as mechanisms for extracting unpaid labor time (Cole et al., 2024)—become ambiguously accepted features of teenagers’ working lives. This analysis deepens our understanding of teenage students’ position in the labor market

and connects these insights to broader debates on capital accumulation and labor-use practices in low-wage, non-standard service sectors. However, such sectors rely on fragmented labor and heterogeneous workforces (Mezzadra and Neilson, 2013), which I turn to next.

Producing difference: intersectional approaches

In examining the heterogeneous social composition of teenage students as labor, I build on the theoretical notion that practices producing social differences are constitutive to capital accumulation, as they enable multiple forms of exploitation (Bhattacharyya, 2018; Robinson, 2000). As Mezzadra (2018: 68) observes, this perspective challenges the ontological primacy of class in Marxian analysis: ‘Factors such as gender and race *originally* divide the field of class, and they do so by introducing crucial differentials of power and devices of hierarchization’. In other words, capital maximizes profits not by approaching labor as abstract and homogenous, but precisely through the differentiation and stratification of the workforce (Bhattacharyya, 2018; Robinson, 2000).

In addition to Mezzadra’s examples highlighting gender and race, the social category of age is particularly relevant to my study. As noted, teenagers are attractive to employers due to their relatively low cost compared to older workers—a phenomenon often referred to as the ‘youth wage discount’ (Campbell and Price, 2016; Yates, 2017). Employers have also actively drawn on stereotypes about very young workers to justify lower wages for this group. Several scholars have identified various ‘deficit discourses’ that depict teenagers as lacking discipline, occupying only temporary stop-gap jobs, or not genuinely ‘needing’ the income they earn (Price and Grant-Smith, 2018; Sukarieh and Tannock, 2015; Tannock, 2001). Age thus functions as a key axis of differentiation, producing a context in which teenage workers are seen as undeserving of fair pay and decent working conditions, based on prevailing assumptions about this group (Yates, 2017).

These mechanisms of differentiation further homogenize and essentialize teenage workers by portraying them as a distinct group within the labor force. This conflation collapses the diverse labor experiences of teenagers into a single category, one that is laden with imaginaries and stereotypes often grounded in the perspective of middle-class students as the normative standard (Tannock, 2001). This notion is therefore worth problematizing, as it not only serves the purpose of exploitation but also obscures the heterogeneity within the teenage workforce. Furthermore, as Sukarieh and Tannock (2015: 25) argue, it influences our theoretical perspectives as researchers:

Something happens when we start thinking of a minimum wage worker in his or her 20s as a youth or emerging adult, rather than, for example, a member of the working class. In highlighting youth as a relevant social category, one's analytic lens tends to focus more narrowly on issues of formal and informal education, training, learning and the individualized acquisition of skills and competencies.

The broad concept of 'teenage students' thus warrants closer examination, not only to illuminate the diversity of their experiences but also to promote a deeper understanding of their formation as labor (Article III).

Unpacking the category of teenage students serves as a central theme across two of the articles in the thesis (Article I, III; cf. Orth, 2024; Tapia and Alberti, 2018), informed by intersectional feminist theory. While the term intersectionality is credited to Crenshaw (1989), its academic emergence reflects the joint efforts by Black feminist scholarship in developing a theory explaining the compounding effects of gender, class, and race inequalities (Mulinari and Neergaard, 2017). My study engages with frameworks that integrate intersectional studies and working life research, placing exploitation and the (re)production of labor at the center of the analysis (de los Reyes, 2017; Ferguson, 2016; Mulinari and Selberg, 2013). In the quantitative analysis of Article I, I explore the range of social divisions within the category of teenage student-workers. This resembles an intra-categorical approach, focusing on subgroups within the same category, that has previously been used to uncover underlying complexities in groups not traditionally seen as vulnerable (McCall, 2005; Tapia and Alberti, 2018). I examine how the availability of teenage students as labor reflects gendered, racialized, and class-based structures, and how participation in paid work during school may exacerbate inequalities rooted in these dimensions (Fuller and Vosko, 2007).

While statistical data can reveal broader trends in inequalities among teenage student-workers, they cannot capture how these inequalities are lived and experienced (Besen-Cassino, 2019). Article III further unpacks the broad concept of teenage workers, using in-depth interviews to explore the various meanings of paid work and its role in shaping youth subjectivities. I draw on theories that conceptualize classed, racialized, and gendered inequalities as ongoing relational and affective processes of social positioning—understood as *struggles against classification* (Skeggs, 1997; Tyler, 2015). These perspectives build on Skeggs' (1997) seminal analysis of young working-class women's efforts to attain respectability and worth by actively disidentifying with their class positions. Subsequent research by Shildrick and MacDonald (2013) has shown how participants living in poverty often deny their own situation and express contempt for 'the undeserving poor'—a response interpreted as part of a broader struggle against the shame and stigma attached to marginalized class positions. Krivonos (2018) further discusses how racialized and classed hierarchies shape efforts to construct alternative values of respectability, demonstrating how young migrant

workers dissociate from others in similar positions to present themselves as deserving and respectable workers.

Using these perspectives as an interpretative framework, I analyze how the participants make sense of their work through shared narratives that often draw on dominant conceptions of teenage labor and employ a grammar of enterprise to articulate the value of their efforts (Carbajo and Kelly, 2023). These accounts contribute to and reinforce a homogenized image of teenage workers, with middle-class students implicitly positioned as the norm. In Article III, I examine how these shared narratives not only coexist with pronounced social divisions but are also mobilized to navigate, negotiate, or obscure such differences—differences shaped by the stigmatization and racialization of poverty and unemployment (Shildrick and MacDonald, 2013; Tyler, 2015; Weeks, 2011). By approaching teenagers' mobilization of these narratives as declassificatory struggles, I emphasize the importance of an intersectional perspective in understanding how age-specific imaginaries of work shape classed and racialized subjectivities among youth.

Furthermore, my focus is on how social inequalities rooted in class, racialization, migrancy, and neighborhood are (re)produced through participation in paid work, with particular attention to dynamics of exploitation (Bhattacharyya, 2018; de los Reyes, 2017; Ferguson, 2016). This perspective is especially relevant in contexts where invasive staffing strategies extend the wage-labor relationship beyond the workplace, colonizing broader aspects of life (de los Reyes and Holmlund, 2024), and do so in highly uneven and stratified ways (Article III; Woodman, 2012). Prior research has shown that working-class students tend to work longer hours, due to financial pressures at home compared to their middle-class peers, often to the detriment of their schooling (Staff and Mortimer, 2007; Staff et al., 2020; see also Article I). However, employers further shape these conditions by assigning last-minute shifts to teenagers who occupy social positions that limit their ability to refuse. De los Reyes (2017) argues that the critical potential of intersectionality lies not only in its ability to expose how capitalist exploitation relies on social difference, but also in its capacity to interrogate the contexts in which such differences are obscured and rendered unquestioned. Regarding the latter, de los Reyes (2017: 14) mentions norms, values, and attitudes that construct some people as different or deviant, and that often remain unrecognized in workplaces. In my contribution, I show how the shared narratives teenagers use to make sense of their jobs constitute one such context that effectively conceals both social inequalities and exploitation (Article II, III). These narratives are also central to understanding how teenagers' subjectivities as workers are formed, which is the focus of the following section.

Self-realization and dissociation: the contemporary work ethic

As highlighted throughout this thesis, the meaning-making and subjective experiences of teenage employment are ambivalent and often contradictory. I take up Mezzadra and Neilson's (2013: 84) call to emphasize and theorize 'the tense and contradictory experiences of subjectivity' of emerging laboring figures. To address this, I build on discussions of the contemporary work ethic (Farrugia, 2022; Gerrard, 2014; Weeks, 2011) to outline the imperatives and discursive frameworks through which teenage students understand their working selves and employment experiences. This notion, developed by Weeks (2011: 8), investigates what she terms the 'subjectivation function' of work—the idea that work produces not only goods and services but also social and political subjects (see also Mezzadra, 2018; Read, 2011).

Weeks (2011: 8) defines capitalism as a 'work society' not only to underscore the central, naturalized, and depoliticized role of work in society, but also to highlight its numerous extra-economic functions: 'The wage relation generates not just income and capital, but disciplined individuals, governable subjects, worthy citizens, and responsible family members'. Work thus emerges as a key site for the production of a range of subjectivities. The concept of the work ethic captures this expanded role of work—as both an individual moral practice and collective ethical obligation—by reflecting the promises and imperatives that structure how labor forces are formed. This perspective enables a critical examination of our identification with and commitment to work, as well as how world-building practices are directed into and constrained by capitalist labor relations (see also Fisher, 2009).

The work ethic reflects the social organization of labor within specific historical contexts, and Weeks (2011) traces its evolution through three key shifts. She begins with Weber's (2005) classic account of the Protestant ethic, followed by the Fordist era, when employment became closely linked to upward mobility and access to consumer goods. In the final shift, Weeks characterizes the contemporary, post-Fordist work ethic as one centered on self-expression, emotional fulfillment, and the pursuit of meaning—an orientation that increasingly blurs the boundary between labor and other parts of life. As Weeks (2011: 75) argues, the post-Fordist ethical imperative to achieve self-realization through work represents an intensification of earlier forms: 'With each reconstitution of the work ethic, more is expected of work'. However, this approach risks committing what Read (2024: 83) identifies as the fundamental error of periodization—conceiving history as a series of self-contained epochs:

Sometimes, one works just to pay the bills, and the fear of not being able to do so is what drives one to work; at other times, one is motivated by the possibilities of consumption. All of this is topped off by the desire to do the work that one loves. These different affective orientations define less three separate epochs in the history of capital than different affective orientations one might adopt over the course of the working day.

With this caution in mind, I use the concept of the work ethic not primarily as a framework for tracing historical developments—nor do I adopt the term ‘post-Fordist’—but rather as an analytical lens to explore how teenagers make sense of their experiences in low-wage service jobs in relation to the promises and demands of the work society. Here, I build on recent research that has employed the work ethic to examine the formation of youth as workers. Scholars such as Farrugia (2019, 2022) and Lamberg (2022) demonstrate how young people negotiate the work ethic in ways that shape classed and gendered subjectivities. By contributing an intersectional approach, I add complexity to this emerging field by demonstrating how processes of racialization and neighborhood-based differentiation shape understandings of the working self (Article III). Moreover, I emphasize the ambivalence and contradictions embedded in these negotiations, acknowledging that ‘the same individual might experience their work as something both hated and loved’ (Read, 2024: 83).

In many respects, the contemporary work ethic resembles what Foucault (1988) terms ‘technologies of the self’—mechanisms through which subjectivities are shaped within the parameters of available discourses. Farrugia (2022: 44) explains that as a technology of the self, ‘the work ethic mandates the cultivation of the self in line with an ethical commitment to being productive, and producing a self that offers value to employers and to the labor force’. Foucault (2008: 225) describes this as an entrepreneurial self, where ‘the worker himself appears as a sort of enterprise’ (see also Bröckling, 2016; Rose, 1999). Building on these insights, autonomist Marxists have explored the relationship between the production of subjectivity and capitalist valorization, arguing that it transforms labor into an investment in the self as human capital (Lazzarato, 2009; see also Hardt and Negri, 2005; Virno, 2004), compelling workers to become flexible and constantly adaptable to shifting labor market demands (Leonardi and Chertkovskaya, 2017). This dynamic couples the ideal of self-realization through work with a radical responsabilization of the workforce (Fleming, 2017); relating to the self as a business entails becoming ‘active, embracing risks, capably managing difficulties, and concealing injuries’ (Scharff, 2016: 108). These theories have been influential in examining how ambivalent subjectivities are produced in the context of labor market insecurity (Armano et al., 2022), particularly in the creative sectors, where a strong sense of passion for and identification with one’s job often serves to legitimize precarious working conditions (Armano and Murgia, 2013; Karlsson,

2024; Lorey, 2009; Murgia and Pulignano, 2021; Scharff, 2016). My thesis contributes to this literature by examining the formation of subjectivities among the youngest workers, moving beyond contexts where passion for one's job serves as the primary frame for legitimizing precarity.

Researchers have noted that young people are often specifically targeted by the demand to cultivate an enterprising self in line with employer expectations and market values (Carbajo and Kelly, 2023; Farrugia, 2022). In my articles, the idea of paid work during school as an investment in future employability is central to understanding why teenagers participate in the labor market (Article III) and how they make sense of experiences of exploitation (Article II). However, I also complicate this picture by highlighting how additional discourses further shape their understanding of the working self (see below). A crucial context for this analysis is educational and labor market policies that emphasize personal responsibility for employability (e.g., Brunila et al., 2020; Fejes, 2010; Garsten and Jacobsson, 2004; Åström Rudberg, 2023). For instance, Sweden's national curriculum for upper secondary school states that all education 'should contribute to ensuring that all students develop knowledge and attitudes that promote entrepreneurship, business ventures, and innovative thinking, thereby enhancing their opportunities for future work, either through entrepreneurship or employment' (Swedish National Agency for Education, 2011). In this context, the notion of enterprising functions as a grammar or discursive repertoire for youth, 'pivotal in forging collective understandings, vocabularies, and obligations for individualized processes of self-formation' (Carbajo and Kelly, 2023: 69).

According to Weeks (2011: 73), the contemporary work ethic is deeply entwined with notions of professionalism, where even those 'in low-waged service-sector jobs under post-Fordism are asked to approach their work professionally as if it were a "career"'. This perspective, however, contrasts sharply with how the teenagers in this study view their jobs, which none of them see as offering a long-term career. Instead, these jobs are generally described as 'just a student job' (Article II), pursued primarily to 'gain experience and some extra money' (Article III). As previously noted, this mirrors discourses prevalent in the hospitality and retail industries, where employers have invested heavily in framing such positions as ideal for young people without any 'real' financial needs (Sukarieh and Tannock, 2015; Tannock, 2001). Such dominant discourses shape how individuals perceive their occupational roles (Williams and Connell, 2010); young employees may come to see themselves as something other than 'real workers' and their jobs as distinct from 'real jobs'. Besen-Cassino (2018: 100) examines the implications of such narratives in her interviews with teenage girls working in service and retail, who repeatedly described their jobs as not being real:

Everyday problems on the job arise in these retail and service jobs for many teenagers, but many of them said that it is not the same as it would be in a 'real'

workplace. From sexual harassment to bullying to working conditions, many problems arose for young women I interviewed. However, many echoed the same sentiment, saying, 'It's not my *real* job'. The fact that these jobs were for part-time employment during school years often resulted in underreporting of work-related problems. However, even though the lived experience or personal definitions of the job differ, these jobs are still real jobs, and these definitions result in the normalization of problems in the workplace.

If the grammar of enterprise offers teenagers one framework for understanding themselves as workers—positioning early work experiences as essential individual investments in future employability—the notion of having 'just a student job' instead constructs them as a category of non-workers, engaging in jobs that are not considered 'real'. These conflicting discourses are reflected in a recurring tension in the interviews with working teenagers: framing work as an expression of a passionate and dynamic self, while distancing themselves from their jobs and work experiences. As such, it may appear that the grammar of enterprise fosters a sense of identification with work, while the notion of having 'just a student job' promotes dissociation. However, this is not entirely the case; both narratives offer distinct opportunities for recognition and disengagement (Article II, III). What I aim to emphasize instead, are the tensions that shape how teenage employment is understood and made meaningful. In doing so, this thesis makes a key theoretical contribution by mapping the discursive terrain through which the youngest workers make sense of their employment conditions and working selves.

To analyze these tensions, I draw on Read's (2024: 18) discussion of how the ethical imperatives of work—its imaginaries and ideologies—both reflect and diverge from material relations and conditions:

The ideology of work is at once a direct reflection of material conditions, as a material imperative that is transformed into an ethical ideal, and a distortion, as the ideal of a well-rewarded work ethic that increasingly deviates from a reality of increasingly demanding but poorly compensated jobs.

In a heterodox reading of Marx's (1990) distinction between concrete and abstract labor, Read (2024) reinterprets this conceptual pair to illuminate the contradictory relationship between identification and distancing, ethical ideals and alienation. Concrete labor corresponds to the qualitative aspects of work, producing particular use values, whereas abstract labor pertains to the general, interchangeable conditions of labor that form the basis of exchange values (Marx, 1990). Read (2024: 36) reconceptualizes each of these dimensions not only as distinct forms of labor, but also as ethical frameworks and bases for recognition—while simultaneously foregrounding their inherent negativity and potential for alienation. In this sense, abstract labor represents an ethic of general productivity, where individuals are deemed worthy of respect not because they provide a valued service

or produce something necessary, but simply because they have a job. At the same time, this mechanism can render the production process alienating, undermining subjectivity as it transcends particular relationships and needs. Similarly, concrete labor ‘appears both an ethic and an identity (that is, a place in the social order) and a limitation and reduction of one’s abilities to the skills demanded by that place’ (Read, 2024: 54). These two dimensions of labor—abstract and concrete—form a dynamic contradiction with multiple effects. They do not follow a simple logic where identification in one area leads to alienation in another; rather, they present a framework in which identification and dissociation must be understood in relation to specific situations.

Approaching the dynamics of identification and dissociation with work through the conceptual pair of abstract and concrete labor offers a way to analyze the hybridity of such conditions. For teenagers, in my reading, the work ethic imposes an imperative to be passionate, entrepreneurial, and productive in an abstract and future-oriented sense. This stands in contrast to the concrete material realities of their low-wage service jobs, where experiences of precarious working conditions are often downplayed and ambiguously distanced (Article II). Yet these aspects are deeply interconnected; the ethical rewards of labor are pursued through jobs that teenagers simultaneously dissociate from. Moreover, this dynamic is inseparable from the scripts teenagers employ to make sense of their experiences—enterprising discourses and dominant narratives surrounding student jobs (Article II)—that are mobilized in ways shaped by classed and racialized differences (Article III). Introducing the conceptual pair of abstract and concrete into the analysis of the work ethic thus allows me to examine the ambivalent and contradictory meanings teenagers attribute to work, while connecting these perceptions to dominant narratives about student labor.

I am interested in what this abstract, future-oriented relationship to work does and enables in the present. In Article III, I examine how the narratives teenagers mobilize can obscure social differences, while Article II instead focuses on how such accounts may legitimize and conceal exploitation. Here, I draw on theories of aspirational labor (Allen et al., 2013; Duffy, 2017) and hope labor (Kuehn and Corrigan, 2013), which describe work undertaken with the expectation of future rewards, despite being poorly compensated and precarious in the present. The unpaid intern is perhaps the most emblematic figure of this labor form, performing non-remunerated tasks in the hope of visibility and future opportunities (Allen et al., 2013). Such labor operates, as Kuehn and Corrigan (2013: 12) note, ‘because it is largely not experienced as exploitation or alienation’—a dynamic that resonates with how teenagers normalize and justify instances of unpaid labor in their jobs (Article II). However, whereas the intern performs hope labor in pursuit of advancement within a particular industry, this does not apply to the teenagers in this study. Rather, the hope attached to their labor remains abstract and disconnected

from the low-status service jobs they occupy. Nevertheless, this attachment produces a distinct economic logic, in which wages may be partially or symbolically replaced by the promise of future rewards—even if those rewards remain entirely imaginary (Leonardi and Chertkovskaya, 2017; Maury, 2020).

According to Berlant (2011), such promises and fantasies about the future are rarely individual; rather, they reflect normative social discourses. As I have argued, the idea of ‘becoming a worker’ while still in school—and the promises associated with what part-time work might enable—can be understood as shaped by dominant imaginaries surrounding work (Article III; Weeks, 2011). Relating to one’s job in this way constitutes an affective attachment to a desired state or fantasy, which Berlant (2011) defines as optimistic: a hopeful, idealized projection of future change that renders present conditions more bearable. However, Berlant (2011: 2) also contends that optimism can be cruel—particularly when the object of desire becomes an obstacle to one’s flourishing:

Optimism is cruel when the object/scene that ignites a sense of possibility actually makes it impossible to attain the expansive transformation for which a person or a people risks striving; and, doubly, it is cruel insofar as the very pleasures of being inside a relation have become sustaining regardless of the content of the relation, such that a person or a world finds itself bound to a situation of profound threat that is, at the same time, profoundly confirming.

In the concluding chapter of this thesis (Chapter 6), I draw on both senses of cruel optimism to reflect on how teenagers’ abstract, future-oriented attachments to their low-wage service jobs shape their present experiences, while also employing the concept to critically examine and politicize the role of work in young people’s lives today (Weeks, 2011).

In summary, this chapter has introduced the theoretical framework of my thesis, offering conceptual tools to analyze teenage student-workers through a subject-oriented approach. To begin, I examined Marxian literature that situates young people at the forefront of the changing composition of contemporary labor forces. I contribute to this body of work by grounding the analysis in the concrete realities of low-status service work, with particular attention to the mechanisms of exploitation operating in these industries. Next, I engaged with intersectional feminism to explore the mechanisms of differentiation that position teenagers as a distinct category within the labor force, linking this to questions of exploitation. Recognizing the heterogeneous nature of the teenage workforce, I further argued for unpacking the category of teenage student-workers to deepen understanding of how social inequalities are both produced and reproduced through early paid work experiences. Finally, to analyze the subjectivities of teenage workers, I outlined recent discussions on youth and the contemporary work ethic, connecting these to

the conceptual distinction between abstract and concrete labor in order to theorize the ambivalent and contradictory meanings teenagers attribute to their work.

Chapter 4. Methods and materials

In what follows, I outline my methodological approach and the empirical material, including both survey data and qualitative interviews. Article I draws on the Swedish Labor Force Survey, the most comprehensive source of data on employment and working hours in Sweden. Articles II and III draw on semi-structured interviews with teenage student-workers, offering nuanced accounts of how they make sense of their diverse work experiences. Together, the research project adopts a mixed methods approach, primarily working with the two types of data in parallel. Engaging with both data sets concurrently has generated new insights and raised important questions, especially when inconsistencies emerged in the material. As Teddlie and Tashakkori (2010: 13–14) observe, although mixed methods research grew out of triangulation literature, ‘there is a growing awareness that an equally important result of combining information from different sources is divergence or dissimilarity’. I address some of the divergences in the discussion of the limitations of the survey data in this chapter and explore them further in the conclusion of the thesis (Chapter 6).

The focus of this study is teenage student-workers—also referred to simply as teenage workers—which I have operationalized as upper secondary school students (15 to 20 years of age) who are engaged in paid work while in full-time education. In Sweden, young people aged 15 to 20 can attend upper secondary school, though students typically begin at age 16 and complete their studies three years later, at 19. It is worth noting that the terminology is not entirely consistent across the articles. In Article I, for instance, I use the term young student-workers to denote the same group. However, when presenting my qualitative findings at conferences and seminars, I found this term often led to the assumption that I was discussing older students—even when their ages were specified. To consistently clarify the age group in focus and emphasize their youth, I adopted the term teenage workers, which is used throughout Articles II and III as well as in the integrative part of the dissertation.

My definition excludes teenagers whose work experience is limited to seasonal employment during vacations. While Sweden has a long-standing tradition of school students taking summer jobs in sectors such as care (Eurostat, 2024; Wadensjö, 2018), the pattern of working during the academic year is a more recent development (Article I). Since my primary interest lies in understanding this shift—specifically how teenage students have come to form a segment of the regular labor

force in certain sectors—I chose to focus on those employed during the school semesters.

The remainder of the chapter is structured as follows. The first section covers the quantitative part of the study, where I describe the origin and structure of the data, outline the statistical analysis, and discuss the limitations of this approach. The second section focuses on the qualitative interviews, detailing the recruitment of participants, the composition of the sample, and the analysis of the material. The chapter concludes with a discussion of ethical considerations.

Survey data

Data

In Article I, I approach teenagers' labor market participation statistically, using survey data linked with information from official registries. The core of the data comes from the Swedish Labor Force Survey for 2005–2019, supplied by Statistics Sweden. I chose this survey over alternatives, such as the register of gross pay based on administrative sources (Statistics Sweden, 2021), because the Labor Force Survey includes questions on working hours, enabling a detailed analysis of work patterns. The survey builds on a stratified random sample of approximately 20,000 respondents (aged 15–75 years) every quarter, which is representative of the Swedish adult population. The Labor Force Survey applies a limited rotational panel approach: individual participants are interviewed every third month over two years, and they are thus observed for eight 'waves'. My sample consists of individuals in upper secondary education (15 to 20 years of age). Students on summer holidays have been excluded to avoid measuring seasonal employment.

The Labor Force Survey contains information on work, studies, and desire to work. However, the data lack certain demographic background variables of importance. For this reason, the records have been linked with register data from STATIV, an integrated longitudinal database created for integration studies, also provided by Statistics Sweden. Register data are usually compiled for administrative purposes and consist of population data at low levels of aggregation. As Mellander (2017) points out, such data are a fundamentally Nordic phenomenon and provide several advantages. For example, since every citizen in Sweden can be traced across multiple registries through their personal identification numbers, it is possible to enrich already collected data by matching techniques. In my study, the Labor Force Survey data are matched with records from STATIV, where the latter supplies information on, among other things, educational attainment, family background (parental employment, education, and migration), and household characteristics

(family type and household income). Additionally, a variable that measures the type of educational program has been sourced from the Swedish Register of Education.

Central to my study is measuring teenage employment and working hours. I operationalize these concepts using two variables from the Labor Force Survey. The variable *employment status* distinguishes between those in employment and those who are not and is used to measure employment rates over time. The outcome of the regression models is the variable *the number of hours (actually) worked per week*. This is a continuous measure of the self-reported number of hours worked in the main occupation and any secondary employment.

Analysis

In Article I, I explore the trends in employment rates and the worker profiles of teenage students. The first research question asks *how employment rates among school students have developed between the years 2006 and 2019* and is answered through an analysis of descriptive statistics based on Labor Force Survey data. Two subsequent research questions explore worker profiles and examine *how being involved in part-time work during the school year varies for differently situated students in terms of gender, age, class, migration background, and education, and how work patterns, in terms of the number of hours worked, vary for differently situated students*. These are jointly answered by conducting a zero-inflated negative binomial regression model on a pooled subsample of the Labor Force Survey for the years 2015–2018, where I control for time trends and geographical context by adding years and local labor market units as fixed effects. This is a mixture regression model with two components fitted simultaneously: a logistic part and a negative binomial model. The chosen approach makes it possible to capture the full richness of the data: it models the variation in working hours among working students, and differences *between* workers and non-workers. Overall, the model selection process has been guided by the outline proposed by Perumean-Chaney et al. (2013) (cf. Fávero et al., 2021).

Regression modeling is about establishing robust associations between variables while controlling for potentially confounding factors. This method has several implications. First, it means exploring general trends rather than particular phenomena, and furthermore not being able to examine causality. For example, we can see links between engaging in paid work and factors such as gender, grades, and class background—but these variables are broad categories, simplifications of complex social realities, and comprehensible only in relation to theory and the wider research field. Secondly, finding robust associations and controlling for confounders posits the challenge of omitting important variables. Simultaneously, there is the challenge of overfitting the model and presenting noise. To avoid the latter, I have opted for a selected number of controls that have support from previous research (Aneshensel, 2012). To check for robustness, I have tried different versions of fixed

effects to control for contextual dependency: local labor markets, municipalities, and municipality groupings. Moreover, the model has been compared to several alternatives, such as Bayesian and random effects versions.

Limitations

The Labor Force Survey is designed to be generalizable to the total working population in Sweden aged 15 to 74. However, two interlinked data limitations must be addressed. First, while most reported employment figures may underrepresent the scope of teenage students' waged work, as they often fail to capture the informal labor market, the Labor Force Survey is also known to underestimate non-standard workers more generally (Larsen and Ilsøe, 2021). Second, nonresponse rates have increased over the past decade, particularly among 15 to 24-year-olds. In this cohort, nonresponse rates rose from 15–20 percent in the early 2000s to almost 60 percent in 2020 (Statistics Sweden, 2024). An analysis by Statistics Sweden (2018b) highlights a significant relative bias in variables related to young people, including students. While some biases can be addressed through weighting the data, as was done in Article I for descriptive statistics, these weights do not apply to regression models, which would inflate the number of observations. Nevertheless, Statistics Sweden asserts that general estimates of level and change remain usable, despite the rising nonresponse rates (Statistics Sweden, 2018b).

The findings in Article I should be interpreted with these limitations in mind. For instance, the employment rates presented are noticeably lower than those derived from the register of gross pay based on administrative sources, even with the application of survey weights. As a result, I caution against interpreting the figures as absolute numbers; they are better understood as reflecting general trends. Moreover, while the statistical analysis in Article I indicates that students from the Global South are less likely to work, and that men in this group tend to work at a lower intensity, the qualitative data suggest a different pattern. In my qualitative sample, these students often have the most intensive work schedules, which aligns with findings from other qualitative studies on school students with a migration background in Sweden (Lindblad, 2016). Although the two data sources are not directly comparable, and the inconsistencies may stem from specificities in my qualitative sample, it is worth considering whether they also reflect issues with the quality of the survey data. Youth with a migration background are among the most underrepresented groups in the Labor Force Survey (Statistics Sweden, 2024). To resolve these issues, I have aimed to be as transparent and critical as possible, both in presenting and discussing the results in Article I.

Despite these limitations, I believe the figures offer valuable context for the overall study. As previously noted, few large-scale surveys are available to track participation rates and work patterns over time among specific populations. The data limitations and inconsistencies also raise broader questions about its overall

suitability for analyzing my research topic, which is an important issue to consider. Comparing official labor market statistics with qualitative findings is essential when examining emerging segments of the labor market, as it prompts critical discussions about whether large-scale surveys can accurately capture the evolving world of work (Murgia et al., 2020). I return to this point in the concluding discussion (Chapter 6).

Interviews

Recruiting participants

Articles II and III draw on qualitative interviews conducted in 2020. Since I aimed to explore the heterogeneity among teenage student-workers, it was important to ensure a varied sample in relation to class, migration background, and gender. My ambition was to recruit participants by presenting the research project at schools, since this would enable me to access many students at once. Moreover, I could actively use the fact that schools and educational programs have different student populations. I set up two broad selection criteria to guide the process of choosing and approaching schools. First, I aimed to present the project for students in academic programs and vocational programs, since the latter mainly attract teenagers from working-class backgrounds and have skewed gender distributions (Forsberg, 2018; Swedish National Agency for Education, 2023). Moreover, students may have different work experiences depending on their chosen educational path, since the vocational programs have closer ties to the labor market through, for example, workplace training. Secondly, considering the segregated character of the Swedish upper secondary school system (Forsberg, 2018; Swedish National Agency for Education, 2023), I looked for schools with diverse student populations regarding migration background, using official statistics provided by the National Agency for Education.

My first round of recruitment started in the spring of 2020, which coincided with the Covid-19 pandemic. All upper secondary schools in Sweden closed and converted to online teaching during the spring term, which forced me to consider alternative ways to find participants. First, I tried to access digital classrooms and present the project online. However, teachers and principals were generally reluctant to invite me. Those who responded when I contacted them told me that they were too busy and that the situation was chaotic at the moment. Two teachers allowed me to circulate a digital flier and present my project on Zoom, but these efforts did not generate any participants. Contacts with some major workplaces employing school students were also unsuccessful. Finally, I posted an advertisement on the Department of Sociology's website, encouraging friends and

colleagues to share online. One participant was recruited as a result of this approach, which later led to four more interviews through snowball sampling. These five participants were all girls who attended a renowned school, and all but one came from middle-class backgrounds.

I conducted a second recruitment round in the fall of 2020. For a few months, the schools opened again due to a lower spread of the virus. Consequently, I could resume my initial recruitment strategy. I emailed sociology teachers and guidance counselors who worked at schools that roughly matched my selection criteria. I chose these two professional groups because I presumed that they could be interested in contributing to the study. Overall, this was a successful strategy and the interest in helping me was greater than I had expected. In particular, the guidance counselors turned out to be important gatekeepers. Many were enthusiastic about the study and helped me access several classes in the same school. When I received positive responses, I contacted the principals to get formal consent before visiting the schools (Appendix 1).

I visited six upper secondary schools located in three different cities in Sweden. Including the school that the first five interviewees attended, students from seven schools are represented in the sample. Four of these offer academic programs, two are vocational schools, and one school offers both types of programs. The schools differ considerably in terms of their student population. For example, the proportion of students with a migration background⁶ ranged from 14 to 85 percent between the schools. Similarly, the proportion of students whose parents had attended higher education ranged from 23 to 90 percent. I presented my research project to 20 school classes and distributed written information about the project (Appendix 2). I told the students I looked for interviewees with experience of doing paid work (formally or informally) while in school. After the presentation, I distributed a contact form for students interested in participating. Once again, the response was overwhelming, with over 100 students signing up. However, nearly half did not respond when I later followed up by text message or email. I chose to contact each student only once to avoid pressuring anyone into participating.

Introducing the participants

The qualitative data consists of 40 in-depth, semi-structured interviews with school students between 15 and 20 years old who have experience doing paid work while in full-time education. The conversations lasted between one and two hours. Table 1 presents some characteristics of the sample.

⁶ The term—called ‘foreign background’ [‘utländsk bakgrund’ in Swedish] in official statistics—is defined by the National Agency for Education as either the student in question or both parents being born outside of Sweden.

Table 1. Characteristics of the participants

Sample characteristics	N = 40
Gender	
<i>Men</i>	14
<i>Women</i>	26
Type of educational program	
<i>Higher education preparatory</i>	28
<i>Vocational education and training</i>	12
Class background*	
<i>Working class</i>	22
<i>Middle class</i>	18
Migration background	
<i>Student or both parents born in Africa, Asia, or South America</i>	13
<i>Student or at least one parent born in Sweden</i>	27
Working hours	
<i>Marginal (<15 hours per week)</i>	23
<i>Intensive (≥15 hours per week)</i>	17

* Based on parents' educational attainment and occupational status

Some comments can be made regarding the sample. First, the gender balance is uneven, with 14 young men and 26 young women. This was not intentional, as I aimed for equal representation, but fewer men in academic programs were interested in participating. However, the numbers do reflect a broader trend where more young women tend to work than their male counterparts (Article I; Statistics Sweden, 2021). Secondly, the students born, or have parents born, in countries outside of Europe, all had origins in North Africa or Southwest Asia. Three of these students had migrated to Sweden by themselves as children. Finally, a substantial number of the participants (17) work intensively – here defined as 15 hours or more per week. Among this group, there are a few students who work as much as 40 hours per week, thereby managing full-time jobs while in school. In my sample, intensive work was more prevalent among students with a migration background and those from working-class families, though these categories also overlap.

The interviewees work across a range of sectors, largely reflecting current trends in student employment both in Sweden and internationally (Beblavý and Fabo, 2015; Statistics Sweden, 2021). The most common jobs are in private services, such as restaurants and cafés, where participants work (or have worked) as waitstaff, and in retail. Other roles represented in the sample include cleaners, manual laborers (e.g., in factories, construction, and car repair), healthcare workers (retirement homes and home care), babysitters, sports coaches, referees, and platform workers. Many participants had already held several jobs despite their relatively short careers, with some working multiple jobs while attending school full-time. Interestingly, all participants had some experience in the service sector, even though this was not an initial selection criterion. Most participants reported similar experiences of low-wage, fixed-term service work, which I examine more closely in Article II. This is noteworthy given that many teenagers lost their jobs in these sectors due to

pandemic-related restrictions (Statistics Sweden, 2021). In the interviews, several described losing shifts when the restaurants, cafés, and bars where they worked were affected by these limitations. However, many also noted being called back on short notice once restrictions were lifted, highlighting how this group is used as a supply of flexible workers.

Interviewing, coding, and analysis

The interviews were conducted during 2020, and the pandemic also affected this process. The initial idea was to let the participants suggest a place for the meeting, and the first interviews mainly took place in various cafés. However, most interviews were conducted just as a second spike of Covid-19 infections occurred in Sweden, and increasingly strict restrictions were implemented to curb the spread of the virus. This meant that many interviews had to be conducted online. In comparison to the face-to-face interviews, I do not believe that the online setting affected the conversations in any noteworthy way. There were a few cases where technical issues temporarily interrupted the interviews. Most often, however, the participants seemed well accustomed to the format, probably due to the previous semester of online teaching.

The semi-structured interviews followed a guide with open-ended questions about seven different themes (Appendix 3). The main focus was on the teenagers' work situations. This theme included questions exploring the motivations for working, work experiences, employment conditions, and their general thoughts on waged work during school. Other themes included the participants' backgrounds, economic situations, schools, leisure time, work-school-life balance, and aspirations for the future. The questions in the interview guide were generally treated as suggestions and were not followed in a strict sense. Occasionally, I needed to be flexible and adapt the questions to better fit the participant's situation. For instance, the interview guide was designed with the expectation that participants lived with their families, which did not apply to some, particularly those who had arrived in Sweden as unaccompanied minors. Similarly, it assumed that participants held just one job, whereas several were balancing multiple jobs. However, such issues were generally managed by some alterations of the questions and did not affect the conversations meaningfully. Overall, the interviews flowed well, although some participants—particularly a few of the teenage men—required more frequent prompting to engage in conversation.

After recording the conversations, I transcribed all interviews verbatim and pseudonymized the documents by removing the names of people and workplaces. I then read through the transcripts, taking some initial, open-ended, and primarily descriptive codes. At this stage, I aimed to minimize theoretical engagement, as I wanted to avoid a strongly theory-led reading of the material and remain as open and curious as possible. The ideas for the two qualitative articles were both sparked

by data-driven observations I made during this process. The first was that the teenagers often described rather precarious working conditions in a light-hearted manner, downplaying the seriousness of these experiences. The second was the strikingly similar language they used to explain their motivations for working, despite significant differences in their life circumstances and the role of paid work in their everyday lives. Articles II and III both emerged from attempts to make sense of these observations, which initially struck me as puzzling. To do so, I engaged in more focused rounds of coding, in abductive dialogue with theory and previous research (Tavory and Timmermans, 2014).

Article II arose from my attempts to understand how teenagers made sense of their precarious working conditions. Drawing on the strategy of analytical bracketing—which involves capturing different dimensions of the material, focusing both on *what* is being said and *how* meaning is constructed (Gubrium and Holstein, 1997; Rennstam and Wästerfors, 2018)—I conducted a second round of coding that concentrated on *what* precarious working conditions looked like and *how* the teenagers talked about them. Examples of ‘what’ codes included experiences such as not receiving the correct salary and being pressured to take on additional shifts. Engaging with existing literature on working conditions in low-status service jobs, I identified these as forms of exploitation aimed at extracting unpaid labor time. The article’s core aim emerged more distinctly from this understanding: to examine how teenagers make sense of and legitimize their experiences of such exploitation. I used the ‘how’ codes to categorize different ways of speaking about and accounting for such working conditions, including justifications or explanatory statements. These codes typically consisted of short phrases drawn directly from the data, such as ‘It’s just a part-time job’ or ‘I’m doing it for the experience, not the money’. These phrases were analyzed and sorted into three broad themes that reflected the different rationales participants employed to make sense of their experiences.

In Article III, I examined more closely the shared language teenagers used to describe their motivations for working—where nearly all stated they worked to ‘gain experience’ and ‘earn some extra money’—despite notable differences in work patterns and levels of financial dependency. Given the widespread use of these phrases across the sample, I understood them as expressions of dominant narratives that participants drew on to make sense of their experiences in low-status service jobs. However, my analysis was not narratological in a strict sense; rather, it was informed by thematic analysis, focusing on the notions of ‘gaining experience’ and ‘earning extra money’ as recurring patterns in the material, which I coded and used to construct an analytical narrative (Braun and Clarke, 2006). This analysis revealed that these themes not only cut across the social differences among participants, but also served as a form of shared language that could obscure those very differences. To remain attentive to these dynamics, I compiled summaries of each interview, outlining the teenagers’ life circumstances and the role of paid work within them. Comparing these summaries with the coded data helped to identify broader patterns

related to social inequalities—particularly valuable given that many participants were reluctant to address such issues explicitly.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge that while gendered dimensions of participants' work experiences were evident in the overall material, they are not a primary focus in the two qualitative articles. Previous research shows that workplace harassment by clients or customers is more frequently reported by teenage girls than boys, often shaped by the intersection of age and gender (Besen-Cassino, 2018; Cohen, 2013; Sheppard et al., 2019). These findings are reflected in my material, where several female participants working in hospitality recounted experiences of gendered and sexual harassment. However, these issues ultimately fell outside the scope of the two articles discussed above. Nevertheless, given the presence of such accounts—and particularly in light of gender emerging as a significant theme in the quantitative Article I—this remains an important area for further exploration based on this material. However, both quantitative and qualitative findings are integrated in the concluding Chapter 6 to reflect on the gendered dimensions of teenage labor, specifically in relation to the second research question.

Ethical questions

The overall project has been approved by the Swedish Ethical Review Authority (Dnr 2020-00666). This is a prerequisite for accessing secondary data from Statistics Sweden, as well as registry data, due to the inclusion of sensitive personal information. The sensitive nature of the microdata meant that it could not be shared with other researchers during the peer review process, as is otherwise standard practice. Instead, the data could only be accessed and processed via Statistics Sweden's secure online platform. This restriction required that data processing and analysis be conducted with particular ethical care, as there was no way for other researchers to independently verify my conclusions. To mitigate this risk, I have made my code openly available and described the robustness checks as transparently as possible in Article I, in order to enhance the reliability of the findings.

The qualitative interviews were conducted in accordance with the guidelines set out by the Swedish Research Council (2017; see also 2024), following the principles of information, consent, confidentiality, and use. Many of the participants expressed fears about being identified during the interviews. This was especially the case for those working in smaller businesses. When they conveyed critical opinions about their jobs or told me stories that could potentially harm their employers' reputations, they often added, 'And this is anonymous, right?' For these reasons, being careful of the participants' integrity has been especially important. I have chosen not to specify any geographical locations since this has little significance for the analysis.

When using direct quotes, I have avoided unique details that may risk exposing the person concerned.

Mason (2002) and Eldén (2020) encourage researchers to actively engage in ethical questions and dilemmas throughout the research process. A practical challenge in this study has been ensuring that informed consent was thoroughly understood. I formally introduced the research project and the purpose of the interviews on several occasions, both orally and in writing. Nevertheless, when recruiting participants, I sometimes received questions such as, ‘I don’t understand; how are you going to use these conversations?’ and ‘How can this be research?’ Some of these inquiries were related to my appearance, with many asking how I could publish research since I was ‘so young’ and ‘didn’t look like a researcher’. These questions often came from vocational program students who had limited exposure to higher education and appeared to associate ‘research’ with natural sciences, laboratories, and white coats. When needed, I took extra time to explain and discuss the broader nature of social science research in the classrooms during participant recruitment. I often shared a few newspaper headlines based on social science research relevant to their experiences—for example, ‘Young people in Sweden experience anxiety from the pressure to achieve high grades’—and described how such findings could be derived from interviews. I then explained that I aimed to draw insights into the work experiences of teenagers in Sweden, and discussed how their interviews could contribute to such findings in the future.

At the beginning of each interview, I reiterated the purpose of the research, explained the principles of confidentiality and data use, and obtained consent to begin recording. Despite these precautions, a few participants still expressed confusion afterward, asking, ‘I still don’t quite understand how you plan to use this and how this relates to research’. The concept of qualitative research appeared unfamiliar to them, with many struggling to grasp how a deeply personal interview could be transformed into research findings. In such cases, I took extra time to explain the research process, particularly the steps of coding and identifying themes. I also encouraged participants to contact me with any further questions and reassured them that they retained the right to withdraw from the study, even after completing the interview.

Another ethical concern related to representation. Several of my participants who lived in socio-economically marginalized neighborhoods compared themselves to, and expressed harsh judgements about, non-working youth in these areas—often portraying them as lazy or criminal in ways that echoed dominant discourses surrounding these neighborhoods and the people who inhabit them (de los Reyes, 2016). The challenge was how to analyze and present these statements without feeding into racialized stereotypes. Reflecting on migrant youth expressing racist views about other migrants, Krivonos (2019: 54) notes that being ethical in such situations ‘meant remaining committed to understanding people’s conceptions of themselves, and not representing them in ways that would reproduce negative

stereotypes'. In line with this approach, I have sought to understand what these statements reveal about teenagers' self-conceptions as workers, closely analyzing instances in the material where such discourses were mobilized. This led me to interpret the invocation of racialized stereotypes of unemployed or criminal youth as a strategy for countering imposed classifications and territorial stigmatization (Article III).

Relatedly, another dilemma has been how to do justice to the participants' narratives when discussing their jobs. As mentioned, Article II addresses the tendency among most teenagers to downplay experiences of exploitative working conditions. My interest here lay in the various rationales participants invoked to legitimize exploitation, and how these were shaped by broader discourses and social imaginaries surrounding teenage labor. At the same time, it was crucial to avoid portraying participants as cultural dupes—that is, as people who uncritically adopt and internalize subjugating discourses. I was guided in this by Gill's (2007) notion of critical respect, an orientation to qualitative research that entails attentive, respectful listening without letting go of the need to question and interrogate. As Gill (2007: 77) puts it, the analytical task is 'to contextualize these stories, to situate them, to look at their patterns and variability, to examine their silences and exclusions, and, above all, to locate them in a wider context'. In Article II, I treat the act of relating participants' statements to broader discourses as a way of situating them within such a wider context. At the same time, I have aimed to scrutinize and foreground the many nuances, emotions, in-betweens, and contradictions embedded in these expressions.

Finally, I have frequently reflected on my positionality as a researcher—being a white university employee—and questioned how this may have affected the material and its validity. This concern was most pressing when discussing financial issues with participants who had experienced strain at home, particularly those with a migration background. For example, one participant felt compelled to clarify that I should not view her parents as 'lazy immigrants' after explaining that she worked to support her family. Others strongly denied working for financial reasons, even when it became evident that they used their earnings to contribute to the household budget. To what extent did such responses reflect a desire not to be judged by me in the interview setting? Unfortunately, there is no definitive answer to that question. During the conversations, I sought to reduce the risk of sounding stigmatizing when asking about financial matters by emphasizing that these were standard questions posed to all participants. Even so, discussing these issues remained challenging, and the narratives were often contradictory, as analyzed in Article III. Since qualitative data cannot be separated from the context in which it is generated, being transparent about these concerns—and how I attempted to address them—is one way of producing more trustworthy findings.

Chapter 5. Summary of findings

This section presents Articles I to III separately, describing their research questions, analyses, and main conclusions. The findings are then brought together and discussed in relation to the overarching research questions in the concluding Chapter 6.

Article I

The Studentification of Low-Wage Service Work: Who Participates? Trends and Variations in Part-Time Work among Young Student-Workers.

In Article I, I analyze data from the Swedish Labor Force Survey (2006–2019) with linked records from population-based registries, to examine employment rates and worker profiles of school students aged 15 to 20 who engage in part-time work. The analysis situates teenage employment within broader sectoral and regulatory changes in the Swedish labor market. Furthermore, it critically examines the social composition and work patterns of teenage student-workers through an intersectional lens, addressing social differences such as gender, class, and migration background. The article contributes to understanding teenage student-workers as a heterogeneous figure of labor within Sweden's low-wage, non-standard service sectors, and provides a contextual foundation for the qualitative analyses in Articles II and III.

The first research question examines how employment rates among teenage students evolved during the studied period, characterized by the liberalization of temporary contracts and reduced employment protection for non-standard workers in Sweden. The findings reveal a notable increase in teenage students' employment rates, although the Labor Force Survey likely underestimates the figures. This rise is primarily driven by growing participation in the service sector, particularly hospitality and retail. Building on existing research that identifies youth as a key labor source in interactive consumer services (Besen-Cassino, 2014; Cant, 2020; Yates, 2017), I argue that teenage students constitute an emerging segment of the flexible, low-wage workforce. However, the findings highlight a gendered dimension to this trend: while employment rates have risen for teenagers overall, the increase is significantly more pronounced among girls. Given previous studies emphasizing the risks of sexual harassment faced by teenage girls in these

industries, and in light of my results, I propose further research on the working conditions and experiences of this group.

The second empirical section of the article examines differences within the teenage workforce, addressing how participation in paid work during the school year varies among students based on gender, age, class, migration background, and education. The analysis engages with intersectional perspectives on working life, acknowledging part-time work as a multidimensional phenomenon with patterns, risks, and rewards that can differ significantly. Previous research suggests that the impact of waged work during school depends on the number of hours worked: a few hours per week may yield positive effects, but exceeding a certain threshold increasingly risks negative consequences, particularly jeopardizing academic success (Neyt et al., 2019). Building on these insights, an additional research question investigates how work patterns—specifically the number of hours worked—vary for differently situated school students.

To address these questions, a zero-inflated negative binomial regression model is applied to uncover intersecting patterns of social divisions associated with young students' participation in paid work, using a pooled subsample of survey data. The model consists of two components, each addressing a specific research question. The first component examines differences between workers and non-workers in upper secondary school. A key finding is that gender and prior educational attainment are strongly correlated with employment: girls are more than twice as likely to engage in paid work, and the likelihood increases with higher grades from compulsory school. The second component analyzes variations in work patterns among differently situated student-workers. The findings reveal that students with parents who have higher education and income levels are predicted to work fewer hours per week. This suggests that the risks and rewards of waged work are unevenly distributed. Girls and high-achieving students are more likely to work a limited number of hours, which may have positive outcomes. In contrast, intensive work—associated with potential harm such as poor academic performance and school dropout—is more prevalent among students from disadvantaged class backgrounds. These patterns indicate that paid work among teenage students can reinforce or exacerbate class-based inequalities. The results highlight the necessity of examining teenage work through an intersectional lens.

Finally, the regression model indicates that teenage students with migration backgrounds from the Global South are less likely to work during school, with boys in this group also less likely to engage in high-intensity work. While this aligns with prior research on employment disadvantages (Brandén et al., 2016), it contrasts with qualitative studies that report high work levels in this group (Article III; Lindblad, 2016). Given the challenges in capturing employment figures for young people with migration backgrounds in official data, my regression results should be interpreted cautiously.

Article II

Making Sense of Exploitation: Teenage Workers' Experiences of Unpaid Labor in Low-Wage Service Jobs

Article II draws on the qualitative interviews with teenage workers (N = 40) to examine how exploitative working conditions in low-wage service jobs are perceived and legitimized. I engage with a growing body of research showing that the extraction of unpaid labor is both prevalent and systematic in sectors such as hospitality and retail (e.g., Campbell et al., 2016; Cole et al., 2024; Milkman et al., 2012), and that such practices are often accepted and normalized by workers (Campbell et al., 2019; Clibborn, 2021). The article focuses on wage theft and the coercive scheduling of additional shifts—both recurrent themes in the interviews—which I interpret as employer strategies for intensifying the extraction of unpaid labor time. I ask: how do teenage workers make sense of these experiences? In addressing this question, the article makes a twofold contribution. First, it advances theorization of how unpaid labor in labor-intensive, low-wage services becomes normalized as part of broader processes of capital accumulation (Cole et al., 2024; Maury, 2020). Second, it adds to a wider scholarship on young people's acceptance of precarious working conditions—a field that has often drawn on studies of older youth cohorts, particularly within creative or highly skilled sectors.

Theoretically, I use a subject-oriented approach (Armano et al., 2022; Murgia and Pulignano, 2021), meaning that I analyze how teenage workers' subjectivities—their ways of perceiving, understanding, and relating to themselves and to work—are shaped in relation to experiences of exploitation. I argue that this is a valuable lens for understanding how practices such as wage theft and the coercive scheduling of additional shifts come to be legitimized; that is, seen as inevitable, unchallengeable, or even as something other than exploitation. Specifically, I identify three rationales, understood as broader sets of ideas embedded in various discourses that shape how participants relate to themselves and their work, which teenagers draw on to make sense of and legitimize exploitation.

The first rationale positioned experiences of exploitation as secondary to a broader objective: using part-time work during school as a means of gaining experience. Many teenagers emphasized that violations related to pay and working hours were less important than benefits such as enhancing their CVs or gaining a competitive edge in the labor market. This reasoning drew on enterprising discourses that framed school-time employment as a form of self-investment and a matter of individual responsibility. Low-wage service work was thus perceived as a kind of hope labor, where present-day underpayment was tolerated in exchange for anticipated future opportunities. This perspective enabled participants to distance themselves from, and ultimately legitimize, their experiences of unpaid labor.

Other participants downplayed the significance of unpaid labor by emphasizing the temporary nature of their jobs—a pattern also observed in previous research on youth and precarious work (Trappmann et al., 2024). In this second rationale, however, I argue that such reasoning extends beyond the transitional role of student employment to assumptions about the jobs themselves. These positions were often described as something other than ‘real work’, where accurate pay and proper conditions were not expected. This echoes employer discourses that portray such jobs as temporary stopgaps rather than legitimate employment. By invoking similar narratives, participants constructed an understanding of themselves as not quite ‘real workers’, which in turn helped legitimize exploitative practices.

Finally, some participants explicitly criticized their working conditions, describing wage theft and coercive extra shifts as forms of youth exploitation. This third rationale framed teenage workers as vulnerable, enabling a collective and structural understanding of their position in the labor market. At the same time, this vulnerability was also perceived as a personal failing. All participants who invoked this line of reasoning expressed some degree of individual guilt for having allowed labor violations to occur. This produced an ambivalent account of exploitation—one that supported collective critique while also placing part of the blame on themselves. As I argue in the article, it shaped an understanding of the working self as both *exploited* and *exploitable*.

In conclusion, although analytically distinct, the three rationales often overlapped in practice, with participants engaging with them in complex and sometimes contradictory ways. Together, I argue, they form a discursive terrain that shapes understandings of the working self and helps explain how unpaid labor became ambivalently accepted aspects of these jobs. This analysis deepens our understanding of how the extraction of unpaid labor becomes systemic in low-wage service sectors (Cole et al., 2024), and why such exploitation often goes unrecognized in everyday life (Maury, 2020). While these rationales are specific to teenage students, similar dynamics have been observed in other parts of the service sector, raising important questions about how early labor experiences may shape expectations of work. I therefore call for further research into the long-term consequences of teenage employment, particularly its role in normalizing exploitative conditions.

Article III

Beyond the Narratives of Experience and Money: The Formation of Teenage Students as Labor in Sweden

Article III, also based on the qualitative interviews, further explores the diverse meanings teenage students attribute to paid work and how these relate to the shaping

of youth subjectivities. The article's starting point stemmed from the empirical observation that nearly all participants, regardless of their life circumstances, stated that they worked to 'gain experience' and 'earn some extra money'. This rhetoric was remarkably consistent across otherwise diverse interviews. I interpret these phrases as reflecting dominant and normative narratives through which participants oriented themselves and ascribed meaning to their experiences in low-status services jobs. The guiding research question is therefore: what do the narratives of experience and extra money reveal about the formation of teenage students as workers?

To answer this question, I depart from Weeks' (2011) conceptualization of the contemporary work ethic, combined with an intersectional approach. According to Weeks, capitalist societies are characterized by a work ethic that frames paid work as essential to achieving personal fulfilment and self-realization. This ethic operates as a cultural imperative, urging individuals to shape a self that is valuable within the labor market. In the article, I examine how narratives around working during school to 'gain experience' and 'earn extra money' are articulated in response to this normative demand. However, I explore how embodied inequalities shape different expressions of this ethic, analyzing how racialization, migrancy, and neighborhood context further shape understandings of the working self. In doing so, the article contributes to theorizing the ideological and practical role of paid work in shaping youth subjectivities while providing insight into how differently situated teenagers come to form an available low-wage service labor force.

The first empirical section examines the widespread idea of engaging in paid work during school to 'gain experience', which participants generally understood as an investment in future employability and a way to get ahead of their peers. The analysis reveals how this engagement with the work ethic took different forms. For middle-class participants, becoming a worker while still in school was closely linked to demonstrating desirable character traits via their CVs; work experiences were used to cultivate a passionate and driven self-image. Paid employment was valued primarily in abstract, future-oriented terms—as evidence of early initiative and activity. Among racialized teenagers from socio-economically marginalized neighborhoods, similar narratives of employability and self-development were shaped by different conditions: paid work also served as a means of distancing themselves from stigmatizing representations of unemployed and criminal youth in their neighborhoods. In this sense, becoming a worker was interpreted as part of a declassificatory struggle for worth and respectability (Krivonos, 2018).

The second empirical section analyzes how wages were framed as 'just some extra money'. Since most teenagers emphasized work as a means of gaining experience, they tended to tone down financial motives; becoming an employable subject partly depended on distancing oneself from the material rewards of work. This reflects the ethics of the work society, where individuals are expected not only to work but to become workers, while poverty and unemployment are stigmatized as personal

failings (Tyler, 2015; Weeks, 2011). In this context, I show that the rhetoric of earning ‘just some extra money’ functioned as a form of stigma management for young people experiencing financial strain at home. These participants often downplayed the importance of their wages, despite contributing significantly to the household budget. Yet in mobilizing this narrative, they also obscured financial inequalities that shaped their relationship to work.

Throughout the analysis, I show how the narratives of working to ‘gain experience’ and ‘earn some extra money’ construct an ideal of the employable subject, while obscuring the unequal resources required to attain it. Realizing this ideal demands careful balance and support, as paid work could not be allowed to jeopardize academic success. Yet the conditions necessary to sustain that balance were often undermined. Differences rooted in class, racialization, and migrancy shaped participants’ varying levels of dependence on their jobs, with both material and symbolic motivations prompting some to take on intensive work schedules. This dynamic was further exacerbated by exploitative practices, such as employers requesting extra shifts at short notice, rendering some teenagers especially susceptible to exploitation as flexible labor. This caused work to colonize everyday life in multiple ways, reducing time for sleep, socializing, and family.

In summary, this article shows how, for these youngest workers, the work ethic is future-oriented and abstract, centered less on the nature of specific jobs and more on the perceived value of ‘gaining experience’. Early employment becomes a way of crafting a self-image as active and entrepreneurial, with earnings framed as secondary—‘just something extra’. While many teenagers share this orientation, their ability to embody the ideal of the employable self is shaped by social inequalities. Throughout the article, I emphasize the need for an intersectional perspective—one that accounts for how class, racialization, migrancy, and neighborhood context shape teenagers’ understandings of the working self.

Chapter 6. Concluding discussion

In this doctoral thesis, I have examined the development of teenage students as a low-paid, flexible service labor force in Sweden, offering insights into their work experiences, heterogeneous social composition, and subjectivities as workers. Now I return to the research questions in light of the findings presented in the articles, highlighting the study's empirical and theoretical contributions that cut across them. I conclude by reflecting on the implications of these findings for policy and practice, and by suggesting directions for future research.

Results and contributions

The first research question addressed the patterns and experiences of teenage students as labor in the Swedish context. I have shown a clear rise in participation rates among this group, particularly in the hospitality and retail sectors (Article I). I situated this trend within broader shifts in the Swedish labor market, including the liberalization of temporary contracts and activating labor market policies. As discussed in Chapter 2, these reforms were often framed as strategies to reduce unemployment, especially among youth—though their effectiveness remains contested. My findings add another dimension to this picture by showing how these developments can be understood in relation to a studentification of non-standard, interactive service work (Article I). In this way, the thesis contributes to recent research on the changing composition of Sweden's low-wage workforce (Alfonsson et al., 2024).

Another pattern I have identified is the extraction of unpaid labor time, often through wage theft and coercive scheduling of extra shifts. In Article II, these employer practices served as a point of departure rather than a primary finding, but they warrant attention as a recurring feature of teenage students' working conditions. International research has shown that such practices are common in low-unionized sectors and are often enabled by workers' tacit acceptance. In the Swedish context, my findings revealed that these forms of exploitation were not only widespread but also frequently normalized by teenage students themselves. These experiences reflect a labor market context in which young workers were effectively left to fend for themselves: with weak or absent legal enforcement and union representation, violations could spread and become routine. This presents serious challenges for

trade unions, as I will discuss below. More broadly, these findings lend evidence to research that highlights unpaid labor as a key driver of precarization (Maury, 2020).

The second research question examined how intersecting social differences—rooted in class, gender, racialization, migrancy, neighborhood and age—structure teenagers' work in low-wage service sectors. My analysis demonstrated that the rise in teenage employment was partially driven by an increase in girls' participation—gendered patterns that intensified over time (Article I). I further established that girls and students with higher grades were significantly more likely to be employed during the school year compared to their peers. Feminist scholarship has linked such patterns to gendered discourses and entrepreneurial ideals that position young, middle-class women as competitive, self-managing subjects (Ringrose, 2007; Sheppard et al., 2019), which I suggested as one possible explanation in Article I. However, my qualitative findings offered little support for this interpretation. Both girls and boys engaged with similar employability discourses, presenting paid work as a strategic investment in their imagined competitive futures (Articles II and III). This raises the possibility that the overrepresentation of girls reflects not gendered dispositions, but labor market preferences for certain bodies in interactive service work (Besen-Cassino, 2018; McDowell, 2020). Scholars have argued that hiring practices in these sectors often hinges on physical appearance and social presentation (Gatta, 2011; Williams and Connell, 2010). Although this study did not directly examine hiring practices, I argue that future research in the Swedish context should explore how such dynamics might reinforce not only gendered but also classed and racialized inequalities among teenagers and youth more broadly.

My findings also showed that around one-third of all students worked at an intensity that may be harmful—a pattern more common among disadvantaged youth (Article I). The interviews deepened this picture, illustrating how class, racialization, migrancy, and neighborhood-based differences shaped incentives to enter the workforce at a young age (Article III). For some, paid work became essential: materially, to support their families; socially, to distance themselves from what they described as 'the bad crowd'; and symbolically, to assert themselves as hardworking and responsible in contrast to racialized stereotypes of poverty or criminality. Where such drivers of intensive work converged, work often encroached on study time, sleep, and social life. These findings complicate assumptions about de-commodified, middle-class student workers and show how social inequalities were actively reproduced through paid labor—shaping not only future outcomes but also teenagers' everyday lives. Moreover, the results highlighted the active role of employers in shaping these dynamics: invasive labor-use strategies intersected with some young people's heightened dependency on their jobs, increasing their vulnerability to exploitation (Articles II and III). As the Nordic debate on teenage labor remains limited, this study offers important insights by highlighting that the uneven distribution of risks and rewards can only be understood by acknowledging the heterogeneity within this workforce. It also underscores the need to consider not

only the quantity of work but its qualitative dimensions—particularly mechanisms of exploitation—in order to meaningfully assess the implications of early employment.

The third and final research question addressed the symbolic dimensions of paid work, exploring the meanings teenagers attribute to it and how these relate to the contemporary work ethic and dominant discourses surrounding employment. My findings demonstrated teenagers' commitment to waged work and their future roles as workers. Early work experiences enabled them to present themselves as active, productive, and passionate individuals—traits framed as inherent to their personalities (Articles II and III). Part-time jobs during school were not just a means of earning money, but also a key aspect of developing self-understandings as workers. The thesis thus underscores the strong cultural meaning of work in Sweden, viewed through the lenses of teenagers entering their first jobs.

However, the ways in which this meaning was articulated varied. Becoming a worker was frequently seen as a pathway to respectability, worth, and social belonging, within a context where unemployment and poverty are stigmatized and intertwined with racialized stereotypes (Article III). This highlights waged work as a powerful site for shaping youth subjectivities (Farrugia, 2022), while also emphasizing the need for an intersectional approach to understanding these dynamics. At the same time, I explored the tension between the ideal of work as a means of cultivating a passionate, active self and the highly exploitative conditions of teenagers' low-waged service jobs. Entrepreneurial discourses provided a dominant language for making sense of this tension, framing work as an investment in themselves and their futures. Yet teenagers engaged with this discourse ambivalently, also invoking employer-promoted notions of what 'teenage jobs' should entail, and vulnerability discourses related to their age to navigate experiences of exploitation. By mapping this discursive terrain (Article II), I contribute to a growing body of research that theorizes how new generations of workers and emerging figures of labor navigate the precarity of contemporary working life (Karlsson, 2024; Maury, 2020; Murgia and Pulignano, 2021; Trappmann et al., 2024).

Building on these findings, I argue that for the youngest workers, the ethical commitment to work is articulated in abstract, future-oriented terms. The specific content of their jobs mattered less than the act of having a job, which enabled them to cultivate and project a self-image of productivity. This distancing from the concrete realities of their labor—both in terms of exploitative conditions and the economic needs that drove some to seek work (Articles II and III)—allowed them to frame their jobs as either employment experience or temporary stopgaps, rather than 'real work'. In this way, work became a form of aspirational labor, invested with hope of shaping themselves as subjects of value in the labor market. A key contribution of this thesis, therefore, is to the literature on hope, aspirations, and fantasies in contemporary capitalism (Allen et al., 2013; Berlant, 2011; Kuehn and

Corrigan, 2013; Leonardi and Chertkovskaya, 2017), and their role in sustaining precarious labor markets. For teenagers, the rewards of labor are not located in the present but deferred into the future: abstract and disconnected from their current jobs. Understanding these promises, I argue, is essential to grasping how differently situated teenagers are made available as a flexible, low-cost labor force.

The concept of aspirations is central to research on teenagers' school-to-work transitions and educational outcomes (e.g., Berrington et al., 2016; Engzell, 2019; Nygård, 2021). While aspirations are future-oriented, I argue that it is equally important to examine what they do and enable in the present. In dialogue with Berlant (2011), I understand teenage workers' aspirations as expressions of cultural and collective affects that generate an optimistic attachment to work (see also Read, 2024; Weeks, 2011). Yet this attachment can take on cruel dimensions in several interconnected ways. First, the bind to fantasies becomes cruel when something desired ultimately blocks the satisfactions it promises and hinders flourishing. Many teenagers take on part-time jobs hoping to gain value in the labor market, only to find that the intensity of their work undermines their academic achievements and well-being (Article III). Second, this future-oriented attachment becomes cruel when it ties them to exploitative conditions in the present, such as unpaid labor (Article II). Finally, cruelty resides in the language of these aspirations and hopes, which obscures both structural inequalities and exploitative conditions that may render such ideals inaccessible (Articles II and III). By understanding aspirations not only as drivers of future outcomes but also as collective affective orientations that shape present attachments, this study offers a critical account of the often-unspoken challenges facing working teenagers.

Implications and directions for future research

In relation to these results, I want to discuss some of their broader implications. First, I want to make some concrete policy recommendations for teenage workers in the Swedish context. Currently, regulations on young people's working hours are based on age, with restrictions ending at 18. These also distinguish between minors who have and have not completed compulsory schooling (Swedish Work Environment Authority, 2023). However, given this study's findings on the intensive work patterns of many teenagers (Articles I and III)—which ample research links to poor academic performance and school dropout—I recommend that the regulations take into account both age and school enrollment, regardless of whether or not the level of education is formally compulsory. This would extend protection to upper secondary students over the age of 18, as most graduate at 19. It would also acknowledge that, although not mandatory, the vast majority participate in upper secondary education, and that it is crucial for future labor market outcomes. Such changes could help prevent, for instance, 18-year-olds from working night

shifts while in school—something a few participants described in interviews. However, as noted in Chapter 2, even the current regulations for minors are not always enforced in practice. Considering such enforcement gaps, unions play a crucial role in securing workers' rights (cf. Calleman, 2025). The findings thus carry further implications for trade unions in Sweden, which I turn to next.

As discussed in Article II, teenagers often navigated the labor market alone, with exploitative conditions normalized in part by the absence of union involvement. Many participants had never heard of unions, while others believed they were only relevant for full-time or long-term employees. Given the steady rise in teenage employment and frequent reports of labor violations (Articles I and II), it is vital to consider how unions can better reach and support these young workers. Organizing them presents clear challenges, including high turnover rates and their transitory status in the labor market. However, there are initiatives to build upon. Several unions have a tradition of visiting vocational programs in upper secondary schools to provide information. I encourage unions to expand these attempts, recognizing that working teenagers are enrolled in various educational programs, including higher education preparatory tracks. Moreover, LO, the confederation of blue-collar trade unions in Sweden, has campaigned for young seasonal employees and offers a free advisory service (LO, 2025). Drawing on my findings, these efforts should be broadened to address the growing presence of teenagers as a distinct segment of the regular workforce year-round. While these initiatives may not immediately boost union membership among teenagers, they can improve awareness and foster social connections. Such experiences matter; research shows that early contact with unions is a key predictor of future membership, including among students (Vandaele, 2019).

Another barrier to organizing teenage workers is their perception of unions as distant actors primarily representing other groups of employees (Article II). This partly reflects their employment in sectors where the social norm of union membership is weak (Chapter 2) but also stems from a self-image of not being 'real workers'—i.e., full-time, permanent, and older employees. As discussed in Article II, these perceptions were shaped in part by how employers framed teenagers' roles and status in the workplace. However, as Vandaele (2019) notes, unions do not always make active efforts to recruit young students; even in unionized workplaces, representatives may not ask them to join (see also Calmfors et al., 2021; Oliver, 2010; Pyman et al., 2009). When teenagers see themselves as outside the category of 'real workers', such union inaction can reinforce that view. I therefore urge unions to recognize these dynamics, avoid reinforcing teenage students' sense of exclusion, and actively construct alternative narratives to better reach and represent this group of workers.

The findings also raise methodological considerations. The interviews revealed that some working-class youth with migration backgrounds worked long hours alongside school, often due to their parents' exclusion from the labor market (Article

III). Although based on a small qualitative sample, these findings contrast with my quantitative results, which showed that students from the Global South, especially boys, were less likely to work during school and tended not to do so intensively (Article I). This discrepancy points to potential blind spots in the Labor Force Survey, particularly given high non-response rates among youth with migration backgrounds. While public debate and research often highlight this group's employment barriers, my qualitative findings suggest that some work at intensities that could compromise their education and well-being (see also Lindblad, 2016). This is not to suggest that these patterns are mutually exclusive: many might struggle to access employment, while those who do work may put in longer hours than their peers. However, the Labor Force Survey could be limited in capturing the latter, leading to underrepresentation. To improve accuracy, alternatives such as registry data or targeted surveys in schools and workplaces should be explored. Further mixed-methods research could also help document these young people's experiences and assess the limits of official labor market statistics.

Lastly, I want to offer some directions for future research. To advance the analysis of work as a common experience among Swedish adolescents, I suggest examining how employment shapes the temporal structure of their daily lives, particularly in relation to friendships, family, and leisure (Woodman, 2012). My findings indicated that even middle-class students working relatively few hours often prioritized school and jobs over social time. These effects were more pronounced among disadvantaged youth, who depended financially on their income and were thus especially vulnerable to exploitation as flexible labor (Article III). While preliminary, these findings point to the need for further investigation into how paid labor influences youth time use and its role in reproducing social inequalities. I therefore encourage engagement with emerging scholarship rooted in social reproduction theory that explores how precarious work affects opportunities for leisure and social relationships (de los Reyes and Holmlund, 2024; Mulinari, 2024; see also Philipson Isaac, 2024). Although this literature addresses the unequal dispossession of time through racialized and gendered divisions of labor, it has yet to fully consider how these dynamics intersect with age. Teenagers' participation in precarious youth labor markets could provide a valuable vantage point for such analysis.

Furthermore, my findings showed that employers actively shaped not only exploitative working conditions for teenagers but also young workers' self-perceptions. I have also raised the question of whether hiring practices in low-wage, interactive service sectors reinforce gendered and racialized hierarchies among adolescents. Future research should examine employers' influence on teenage labor more closely—both in how they present these jobs and in the characteristics they seek when hiring. To this end, ethnographic studies would offer valuable insights into everyday interactions between managers and young employees, revealing how worker subjectivities are formed in practice. Such approaches could also clarify how

teenage workers' experiences align with or differ from those of other non-standard service employees. As discussed in Article II, the normalization of exploitative conditions in these sectors extends beyond youth, with notable parallels to other groups of workers. Ethnographic engagement could therefore deepen our understanding of how work-related values and subjectivities are shaped and transmitted, situating teenage labor within broader dynamics of low-wage service employment.

To conclude, this study has illuminated the patterns, conditions, and meanings of low-wage service work within a highly heterogeneous teenage labor force in Sweden. Since the data were collected, these issues have attracted some media attention. An article published in the daily newspaper *Sydsvenskan* featured parents describing how their adolescent children were treated as 'less than human' in their hospitality jobs, citing instances of unpaid labor and last-minute shift cancellations. A union representative interviewed in the piece characterized such practices as systemic (Thuresson, 2024). In contrast, an opinion piece published in *Dagens Nyheter*—another major national newspaper—was signed by several large-scale employers and advocated expanding part-time work opportunities for school-aged youth in socio-economically marginalized areas. It proposed introducing a new type of employment contract for children still in compulsory school, arguing that early work experience would help them build social networks and improve future career prospects (Cetin et al., 2025). These opposing perspectives highlight that teenage labor remains a pressing and contested issue. In light of this, I hope this thesis provides meaningful evidence to inform ongoing debates about employment and its broader implications for adolescents, while emphasizing the need for continued attention and research.

References

- Adermon A and Gustavsson M (2015) Job Polarization and Task-Biased Technological Change: Evidence from Sweden, 1975-2005. *The Scandinavian Journal of Economics* 117(3): 878–917.
- Adkins L (2005) The new economy, property and personhood. *Theory, Culture and Society* 22: 111–130.
- Albæk K, Asplund R, Barth E, et al. (2015) *Youth Unemployment and Inactivity : A Comparison of School-to-Work Transitions and Labour Market Outcomes in Four Nordic Countries*. Copenhagen: Nordic Council of Ministers.
- Alberti G, Bessa I, Hardy K, et al. (2018) In, Against and Beyond Precarity: Work in Insecure Times. *Work, Employment and Society* 32(3): 447–457.
- Alfonsson J (2020) *Alienation Och Arbete : Unga Behovsanställdas Villkor i Den Flexibla Kapitalismen*. Lund: Arkiv förlag.
- Alfonsson J (2022) *Det Otrygga Arbetslivet i Sverige : Dess Framväxt Och Konsekvenser*. Lund: Studentlitteratur.
- Alfonsson J, Berglund T and Vulkan P (2024) Have low-paid jobs increased in the Swedish labor market? Defining low pay in the context of the Nordic model. *Economic and Industrial Democracy* 45(4): 1090–1111.
- Allen K, Quinn J, Hollingworth S, et al. (2013) Becoming employable students and ‘ideal’ creative workers: exclusion and inequality in higher education work placements. *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 34(3): 431–452.
- Altermark N (2020) *Avslagsmaskinen: byråkrati och avhumanisering i svensk sjukförsäkring*. Stockholm: Verbal förlag.
- Andersen SK, Dølvik JE and Ibsen CL (2014) *Nordic labour market models in open markets*. Report 132. European Trade Union Institute.
- Aneshensel CS (2012) *Theory-Based Data Analysis for the Social Sciences*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE.
- Antonucci L (2018) Not all experiences of precarious work lead to precarity: the case study of young people at university and their welfare mixes. *Journal of Youth Studies* 21(7): 888–904.
- Armano E and Murgia A (2013) The precariousnesses of young knowledge workers: a subject-oriented approach. *Global Discourse* 3(3–4): 486–501.
- Armano E and Murgia A (2017) Hybrid areas of work in Italy. Hypotheses to interpret the transformations of precariousness and subjectivity. In: Armano E, Bove A, and Murgia A (eds) *Mapping Precariousness, Labour Insecurity and Uncertain Livelihoods: Subjectivities and Resistance*. Abingdon: Routledge.

- Armano E, Morini C and Murgia A (2022) Conceptualizing Precariousness: A Subject-oriented Approach. In: Choonara J, Murgia A, and Carmo RM (eds) *Faces of Precarity: Critical Perspectives on Work, Subjectivities and Struggles*. Bristol: Bristol University Press.
- Bachman JG, Staff J, O'Malley PM, et al. (2013) Adolescent work intensity, school performance, and substance use: Links vary by race/ethnicity and socioeconomic status. *Developmental Psychology* 49(11): 2125–2134.
- Ballo JG, Heglum MA, Nilsen W, et al. (2022) Can Adolescent Work Experience Protect Vulnerable Youth? A Population Wide Longitudinal Study of Young Adults Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET). *Journal of Education and Work* 35(5): 502–520.
- Beblavý M and Fabo B (2015) *Students in Work and Their Impact on the Labour Market*. CEPS Working document No. 410.
- Belfrage C and Kallifatides M (2018) Financialisation and the New Swedish Model. *Cambridge Journal of Economics* 42(4): 875–899.
- Berglund T, Håkansson K, Isidorsson T, et al. (2017) Temporary Employment and the Future Labor Market Status. *Nordic Journal of Working Life Studies* 7(2): 27–48.
- Berglund T, Hedenus A, Håkansson K, et al. (2021) Chapter 3 Non-standard work in Sweden. In: Ilseø A and Larsen TP (eds) *Non-Standard Work in the Nordics: Troubled Waters under the Still Surface*. Copenhagen: The Nordic Council of Ministers.
- Berglund T, Håkansson K and Isidorsson T (2022) Occupational change on the dualised Swedish labour market. *Economic and Industrial Democracy* 43(2): 918–942.
- Berglund T, Nielsen RA, Reichenberg O, et al. (2023) Temporary Contracts, Employment Trajectories and Dualisation: A Comparison of Norway and Sweden. *Work, Employment and Society* 37(2): 505–524.
- Berlant LG (2011) *Cruel Optimism*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Berrington A, Roberts S and Tammes P (2016) Educational aspirations among UK Young Teenagers: Exploring the role of gender, class and ethnicity. *British Educational Research Journal* 42(5): 729–755.
- Besen-Cassino Y (2014) *Consuming Work: Youth Labor in America*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Besen-Cassino Y (2018) *The Cost of Being a Girl: Working Teens and the Origins of the Gender Wage Gap*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Besen-Cassino Y (2019) Considering Inequalities: Experiences in Part-Time Youth Work. In: Diaz MF and Shepard B (eds) *Narrating Practice with Children and Adolescents*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Bessant J, Farthing R and Watts R (2017) *The Precarious Generation : A Political Economy of Young People*. Milton: Taylor and Francis.
- Betti E (2018) Historicizing Precarious Work: Forty Years of Research in the Social Sciences and Humanities. *International Review of Social History* 63(2): 273–319.
- Bhattacharyya G (2018) *Rethinking Racial Capitalism : Questions of Reproduction and Survival*. London: Rowman & Littlefield International, Ltd.

- Bourdieu P (1963) *Travail et Travailleurs En Algérie*. Paris: Mouton & Co.
- Brandén M, Hällsten M and Szulkin R (2021) *The intergenerational transmission of disadvantage: Education and labor market gaps between children of natives and children of immigrants*. Department of Sociology Working Paper Series No. 27. Stockholm.
- Braun V and Clarke V (2006) Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3(2): 77–101.
- Brunila K, Mertanen K and Mononen Batista-Costa S (2020) Economic Worries—Therapeutic Solutions? Entrepreneurial and Therapeutic Governing of Transitions of Young People. In: Brunila K and Lundahl L (eds) *Youth on the Move: Tendencies and Tensions in Youth Policies and Practices*. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press.
- Burawoy M (1979) *Manufacturing Consent : Changes in the Labor Process under Monopoly Capitalism*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Bröckling U (2016) *The Entrepreneurial Self: Fabricating a New Type of Subject*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Calleman C (2025) SAC Syndikalisternas fackliga kamp för migrantarbetare i Arbetsdomstolen. *Arbetsmarknad & Arbetsliv* 31(1): 6–27.
- Campbell I and Price R (2016) Precarious work and precarious workers: Towards an improved conceptualisation. *Economic and Labour Relations Review* 27(3): 314–332.
- Campbell I, Boese M, and Joo-Cheong Tham (2016) Inhospitable workplaces? International students and paid work in food services. *Australian Journal of Social Issues* 51(3): 279–298.
- Campbell I, Tranfaglia MA, Joo-Cheong Tham, et al. (2019) Precarious work and the reluctance to complain: Italian temporary migrant workers in Australia. *Labour & Industry: A Journal of the Social and Economic Relations of Work* 01/01/2019 (ed.) 29(1): 98–117.
- Canny A (2002) Flexible Labour? The Growth of Student Employment in the UK. *Journal of Education and Work* 15(3): 277–301.
- Cant C (2020) *"We Are a Service Class": A Workers' Inquiry into the Class Composition of Service Commodity Production during the Unreal Interregnum*. Doctoral thesis, University of West London.
- Carbajo D and Kelly P (2023) COVID-19, young people and the futures of work: Rethinking global grammars of enterprise. *Sociological Review* 71(1): 65–84.
- Carlén S and de los Reyes P (2021) Ojämlighet och polarisering i detaljhandeln 1990–2015. In: Boréus K, Neergaard A, and Sohl L (eds) *Ojämlika Arbetsplatser : Hierarkier, Diskriminering Och Strategier För Jämlikhet*. Lund: Nordic academic press.
- Carlén S and de los Reyes P (2024) Precarious employment in Swedish retail 1990–2019: An intersectional analysis of patterns and consequences. *Economic and Industrial Democracy* 00(0): 1–26.
- Calmfors L, Nederberg J and Persson C (2021) *Vad finns det för anledning att vara med i facket?* Stockholm: Fores.

- Cetin E, Berg C, Götblad C, et al. (2025) Nytt slags ungdomsjobb ska hjälpa fler ur utanförskap. *Dagens Nyheter* 16 March. <https://www.dn.se/debatt/nytt-slags-ungdomsjobb-ska-hjalpa-fler-ur-utanforskap/> (Accessed: 2025-07-25).
- Clibborn S (2021) Multiple frames of reference: Why international student workers in Australia tolerate underpayment. *Economic & Industrial Democracy* 42(2): 336–354.
- Coffey J, Farrugia D, Adkins L, et al. (2018) Gender, Sexuality, and Risk in the Practice of Affective Labour for Young Women in Bar Work. *Journal of Drug Issues* 23(4): 728–743.
- Cohen MG (2013) Teenage Work: Its Precarious and Gendered Nature. *Interventions Économiques pour une Alternative Sociale* 47. Association d'Economie Politique.
- Cole M (2024) Services Are the Future of Work. In: MacLeavy J and Pitts FH (eds) *The Handbook for the Future of Work*. London: Routledge.
- Cole M, Stuart M, Hardy K, et al. (2024) Wage Theft and the Struggle over the Working Day in Hospitality Work: A Typology of Unpaid Labour Time. *Work, Employment and Society* 38(1): 103–121.
- Crenshaw K (1989) Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics. *University of Chicago Legal Forum* 1989: 139–168.
- Dahlstedt M and Vesterberg V (2017) Citizens in the Making: The Inclusion of Racialized Subjects in Labour Market Projects in Sweden. *Scandinavian Political Studies* 40(2): 228–246.
- Davidsson JB (2018) Dualising the Swedish model: insiders and outsiders and labour market policy reform in Sweden: an overview. In: Theodoropoulou S (ed.) *Labour Market Policies in the Era of Pervasive Austerity*. Bristol: Policy press.
- Davidsson T (2016) Utanförskapelsen. En diskursanalys av hur begreppet utanförskap artikulerades i den svenska riksdagsdebatten 2003–2006. *Socialvetenskaplig tidskrift* 17(2): 149–169.
- de los Reyes P (2016) Husby, våldet och talandets villkor. In: de los Reyes P and Hörnqvist M (eds) *Bortom Kravallerna. Konflikt, Tillhörighet Och Representation i Husby*. Stockholm: Stockholmia.
- de los Reyes P (2017) Working life inequalities: do we need intersectionality? *Society, health and vulnerability* 8: 14–18.
- de los Reyes P and Holmlund T (2023) Söndrade kroppar, invasiv bemanning och prekära anställningar. Intersektionella perspektiv på försörjning, lönearbete och social reproduktion. *Tidskrift för genusvetenskap* 44(1–2): 169–191.
- Doogan K (2009) *New Capitalism? : The Transformation of Work*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Dowling E (2007) Producing the Dining Experience: Measure, Subjectivity and the Affective Worker. *Ephemera: Theory & Politics in Organization* 7(1): 117–132.
- Duffy BE (2017) *(Not) Getting Paid to Do What You Love: Gender, Social Media, and Aspirational Work*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Dumont M, Leclerc D and McKinnon S (2009) Consequences of Part-Time Work on the Academic and Psychosocial Adaptation of Adolescents. *Canadian Journal of School Psychology* 24(1): 58–75.

- Dustmann C, Micklewright J and van Soest A (2009) In-school labour supply, parental transfers, and wages. *Empirical Economics* 37(1): 201–218.
- Dølvik JE, Fløtten T, Hippe JM, et al. (2015) *The Nordic Model towards 2030. A New Chapter?* Oslo: Fafo.
- Eldén S (2020) *Forskningsetik : Vägval i Samhällsvetenskapliga Studier*. Lund: Studentlitteratur.
- Engels F (1993) *The Condition of the Working Class in England*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Engzell P (2019) Aspiration Squeeze: The Struggle of Children to Positively Selected Immigrants. *Sociology of Education* 92(1): 83–103.
- Eurostat (2024). Participation of young people in education and the labour market. https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Participation_of_young_people_in_education_and_the_labour_market (Accessed: 2025-07-25).
- Esping-Andersen G (1990) *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Farrugia D (2018) Youthfulness and immaterial labour in the new economy. *Sociological Review* 66(3): 511–526.
- Farrugia D (2019) Class and the post-Fordist work ethic: Subjects of passion and subjects of achievement in the work society. *Sociological Review* 67(5): 1086–1101.
- Farrugia D (2021) Youth, work and global capitalism: new directions. *Journal of Youth Studies* 24(3): 372–387.
- Farrugia D (2022) *Youth, Work and the Post-Fordist Self*. Bristol: Bristol University Press.
- Farrugia D, Threadgold S and Coffey J (2018) Young subjectivities and affective labour in the service economy. *Journal of Youth Studies* 21(3): 272–287.
- Farrugia D, Coffey J, Threadgold S, et al. (2020) *Young Hospitality Workers in their Own Words: Working Conditions, Labouring Practices and Experiences of Hospitality Labour*. Report prepared by the Newcastle Youth Studies Network, University of Newcastle.
- Farrugia D, Coffey J and Threadgold S (2023) Hospitality work and the sociality of affective labour. *The Sociological Review* 71(1): 47–64.
- Fávero LP, Souza R de F, Belfiore P, et al. (2021) Count Data Regression Analysis: Concepts, Overdispersion Detection, Zero-Inflation Identification, and Applications with R. *Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation* 26(13): 1–22.
- Fejes A (2010) Discourses on Employability: Constituting the Responsible Citizen. *Studies in Continuing Education* 32(2): 89–102.
- Ferguson S (2016) Intersectionality and Social-Reproduction Feminisms. *Historical Materialism* 24(2): 38–60.
- Fineran S and Gruber JE (2009) Youth at work: Adolescent employment and sexual harassment. *Child Abuse & Neglect* 33(8): 550–559.
- Fisher M (2009) *Capitalist Realism: Is There No Alternative?* Winchester: O Books.
- Fleming P (2017) The Human Capital Hoax: Work, Debt and Insecurity in the Era of Uberization. *Organization Studies* 38(5): 691–709.

- Forsberg H (2018) School competition and social stratification in the deregulated upper secondary school market in Stockholm. *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 39(6): 891–907.
- Foucault M (1988) Technologies of the Self. In: *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault*. London: Tavistock.
- Foucault M (2008) *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1978-1979*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- France A and Threadgold S (2016) Youth and political economy: towards a Bourdieusian approach. *Journal of Youth Studies* 19(5): 612–628.
- Frederiksen L (1999) Child and youth employment in Denmark: comments on children's work from their own perspective. *Childhood* 6(1): 101.
- Fuller S and Vosko LF (2008) Temporary Employment and Social Inequality in Canada: Exploring Intersections of Gender, Race and Immigration Status. *Social Indicators Research* 88(1): 31–50.
- Furlong A and Cartmel F (2007) *Young People and Social Change: New Perspectives*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Garsten C and Jacobsson K (2004) *Learning to Be Employable : New Agendas on Work, Responsibility and Learning in a Globalizing World*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Gatta M (2011) In the Blink of an Eye: American High-End Small Retail Businesses and the Public Workforce System. In: Grugulis I and Bozkurt Ö (eds) *Retail Work*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Gerrard J (2014) All that is solid melts into work: self-work, the 'learning ethic' and the work ethic. *The Sociological Review* 62: 862–879.
- Gill R (2007) Critical respect: The difficulties and dilemmas of agency and 'choice' for feminism: A reply to duits and van Zoonen. *European Journal of Women's Studies* 14(1): 69–80.
- Gill R and Pratt A (2008) In the Social Factory?: Immaterial Labour, Precariousness and Cultural Work. *Theory, Culture & Society* 25(7–8): 1–30.
- Grant-Smith D and McDonald P (2015) The practical potential of self-advocacy for improving safety outcomes for school-aged workers. *Journal of Youth Studies* 18(10): 1257–1273.
- Grotti R, Russell H and O'Reilly J (2019) Where do young people work? In: O'Reilly J, Leschke J, Ortlieb R, et al. (eds) *Youth Labor in Transition. Inequalities, Mobility, and Policies in Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Gubrium JF and Holstein JA (1997) *The New Language of Qualitative Method*. New York, N.Y. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hadjivassiliou K, Tassinari A, Eichhorst W, et al. (2019) How does the performance of school-to-work transition vary in the European Union? In: O'Reilly J, Leschke J, Ortlieb R, et al. (eds) *Youth Labor in Transition. Inequalities, Mobility, and Policies in Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hardt M and Negri A (2005) *Multitude : War and Democracy in the Age of Empire*. London: Penguin books.

- Hensvik L, Müller D and Skans ON (2023) Connecting the Young: High School Graduates' Matching to First Jobs in Booms and Great Recessions. *The Economic Journal* 133(652): 1466–1509.
- Heyman F (2016) Job polarization, job tasks and the role of firms. *Economics Letters* 145: 246–251.
- Hobbs S, Stack N, McKechnie J, et al. (2007) Talking about Work: School Students' Views on their Paid Employment. *Children & Society* 21(2): 123–135.
- Hobbs S, McKechnie J and Simpson A (2016) The Risks Faced by Adolescent Workers in the United Kingdom. *YOUNG* 24(1): 53–65.
- Hobbs S, McKechnie J and Simpson A (2017) The economic exploitation of child workers in the United Kingdom. *Childhood - A Global Journal of Child Research* 24(1): 36–50.
- Hochschild AR (2003) *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling*. Berkeley, California: University of California Press.
- Hodgson A and Spours K (2001) Part-time Work and Full-time Education in the UK: The Emergence of a Curriculum and Policy Issue. *Journal of Education and Work* 14(3): 373–88.
- Holmlund B and Storrie D (2002) Temporary Work in Turbulent Times: The Swedish Experience. *The Economic Journal* 112(480): 245–269.
- Howieson C, McKechnie J and Semple S (2012a) Working pupils: challenges and potential. *Journal of Education and Work* 25(4): 423–442.
- Howieson C, McKechnie J, Hobbs S, et al. (2012b) New Perspectives on School Students' Part-time Work. *Sociology* 46(2): 322–338.
- HRF and Visita (2025) *Gröna riksavtalet: kollektivavtal för hotell- och restaurangbranschen*. Stockholm: HRF & Visita.
- Huddleston P (2011) 'It's Alright for Saturdays, but Not Forever': The Employment of Part-Time Student Staff in the Retail Sector. In: Grugulis I and Bozkurt Ö (eds) *Retail Work*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Hällberg P and Kjellström C (2020) *Kollektivavtalen Och de Lägsta Lönerna. En Rapport Om Hur Kollektivavtalen Påverkar de Lägsta Lönerna På Arbetsmarknaden*. Stockholm: Medlingsinstitutet.
- Ilsøe A (2016) From living wage to living hours – the Nordic version of the working poor. *Labour & Industry* 26(1): 40–57.
- Joensen JS and Mattana E (2022) Studying and Working: Your Student Job Affects Your Future Labor Market Outcomes. *Samfundøkonomen* (3): 19–37.
- Jonna RJ and Foster JB (2016) Marx's Theory of Working-Class Precariousness - And Its Relevance Today. *Alternate Routes* 27: 21–45.
- Kalenkoski CM and Pabilonia SW (2010) Parental transfers, student achievement, and the labor supply of college students. *Journal of Population Economics* 23(2): 469–496.
- Kalleberg AL (2011) *Good Jobs, Bad Jobs : The Rise of Polarized and Precarious Employment Systems in the United States, 1970s-2000s*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

- Kalleberg AL and Vallas SP (2017) Probing Precarious Work: Theory, Research, and Politics. In: Kalleberg AL and Vallas SP (eds) *Precarious Work*. Bingley, U.K.: Emerald Publishing Limited.
- Karlsson D (2019) Att skapa en arbetssökande: Jobbcoaching, immateriellt arbete och den individualiserade arbetslösheten. *Sociologisk Forskning* 56(2): 125–147.
- Karlsson D (2024) *At Least I Have This Freedom: Subjectivity and Self-Precarization among Digital Freelancers in the Swedish Cultural Industries*. Doctoral thesis, Lund University.
- Karolak M and Mrozowicki A (2017) Between Normalisation and Resistance. Life Strategies of Young Precarious Workers. *Warsaw Forum of Economic Sociology* 8(15): 7–32.
- Kjellberg A (2025a) Changes in union density in the Nordic countries. *Nordic Economic Policy Review* 2025(1): 123–149.
- Kjellberg A (2025b) *Den svenska modellen 2025 – Medlemmar, förtroendevalda och organisationsgrad*. Stockholm: Arena Idé.
- Kouvonen A and Lintonen T (2002) Adolescent part-time work and heavy drinking in Finland. *Addiction* 97(3): 311–318.
- Krivos D (2018) Claims to whiteness: Young unemployed Russian-speakers’ declassificatory struggles in Finland. *The Sociological Review* 66(6): 1145–1160.
- Krivos D (2019) *Migrations On the Edge of Whiteness : Young Russian-Speaking Migrants in Helsinki, Finland*. Doctoral thesis, University of Helsinki.
- Kubisa J and Mendonca P (2019) Introduction. In: Isidorsson T and Kubisa J (eds) *Job Quality in an Era of Flexibility*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.
- Kuehn K and Corrigan TF (2013) Hope Labor: The Role of Employment Prospects in Online Social Production. *The Political Economy of Communication* 1(1): 9–25.
- Lamberg E (2022) Learning the post-Fordist feeling rules: Young women’s work orientations and negotiations of the work ethic. *Sociological Review* 70(5): 935–950.
- Larsen TP and Ilsøe A (2021) Chapter 1 Comparative perspectives on non-standard work in the Nordics: definitions and overall trends. In: *Non-Standard Work in the Nordics: Troubled Waters under the Still Surface*. TemaNord report, The Nordic Future of Work. Copenhagen: The Nordic Council of Ministers.
- Lazzarato M (1996) Immaterial labour. In: Virno P and Hardt M (eds) *Radical Thought in Italy: A Potential Politics*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Lazzarato M (2009) Neoliberalism in Action: Inequality, Insecurity and the Reconstitution of the Social. *Theory, Culture & Society* 26(6): 109–133.
- Leonard M (2003) Children’s attitudes to parents’, teachers’ and employers’ perceptions of term-time employment. *Children & Society* 17(5): 349–360.
- Leonardi E and Chertkovskaya E (2017) Work as promise for the subject of employability: Unpaid work as a new form of exploitation. *Sociologia del Lavoro* (145): 112–130.
- Lindblad M (2016) *”De Förstod Aldrig Min Historia”: Unga Vuxna Med Migrationsbakgrund Om Skolmisslyckande Och Övergångar Mellan Skola Och Arbete*. Doctoral thesis, Umeå University.

- LO (2025) *Koll på jobbet!* <https://www.lo.se/nyheter/koll-pa-jobbet> (Accessed: 2025-07-25).
- Lordon F (2014) *Willing Slaves of Capital : Spinoza and Marx on Desire*. London: Verso.
- Lorentzen T, Bäckman O, Ilmakunnas I, et al. (2019) Pathways to Adulthood : Sequences in the School-to-Work Transition in Finland, Norway and Sweden. *Social Indicators Research* 141(3): 1285–1305.
- Lorey I (2009) Governmentality and Self-Precarization: On the Normalization of Cultural Producers. In: Raunig G and Ray G (eds) *Art and Contemporary Critical Practice: Reinventing Institutional Critique*,. London: MayFly.
- Lorey I (2015) *State of Insecurity: Government of the Precarious*. Brooklyn, NY: Verso.
- MacDonald R (2011) Youth transitions, unemployment and underemployment: Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose? *Journal of Sociology* 47(4): 427–444.
- MacDonald R (2016) Precarious work: the growing précarité of youth. In: Furlong A (ed.) *Routledge Handbook of Youth and Young Adulthood*. London: Routledge.
- Madsen PK, Molina O, Lozano M, et al. (2013) Labour market transitions of young workers in Nordic and southern European countries: The role of flexicurity. *Transfer: European Review of Labour and Research* 19(3): 325–343.
- Marsh HW and Kleitman S (2005) Consequences of Employment during High School: Character Building, Subversion of Academic Goals, or a Threshold? *American Educational Research Journal* 42(2): 331–369.
- Marx K (1990) *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*. London: Penguin Books.
- Mason J (2002) *Qualitative Researching*. London: Sage.
- Maury O (2020) Between a Promise and a Salary: Student-Migrant-Workers' Experiences of Precarious Labour Markets. *Work, Employment and Society* 34(5): 809–825.
- McCall L (2005) The Complexity of Intersectionality. *Signs* 30(3): 1771–1800.
- McCoy S and Smyth E (2007) So much to do, so little time: part-time employment among secondary students in Ireland. *Work, Employment and Society* 21(2): 227–246.
- McDowell L (2009) *Working Bodies: Interactive Service Employment and Workplace Identities*. Chichester: Blackwell.
- McDowell L (2012) Post Crisis, Post Ford and Post Gender? Youth Identities in an Era of Austerity. *Journal of Youth Studies* 15(5): 573–590.
- McDowell L (2020) Looking for work: youth, masculine disadvantage and precarious employment in post-millennium England. *Journal of Youth Studies* 23(8): 974–988.
- McGuinness S, Bergin A and Whelan A (2019) Youth overeducation in Europe: Is there scope for a common policy approach? In: O'Reilly J, Leschke J, Ortlieb R, et al. (eds) *Youth Labor in Transition. Inequalities, Mobility, and Policies in Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- McKechnie J, Hobbs S, Simpson A, et al. (2010) School Students' Part-Time Work: Understanding What They Do. *Journal of Education and Work* 23(2): 161–175.
- McKechnie J, Howieson C, Hobbs S, et al. (2014) School students' introduction to the world of work. *Education + Training* 56(1): 47–58.

- McRobbie A (2016) *Be Creative: Making a Living in the New Culture Industries*. Cambridge: Policy press.
- Means AJ (2017) Generational Precarity, Education, and the Crisis of Capitalism: Conventional, Neo-Keynesian, and Marxian Perspectives. *Critical Sociology* 43(3): 339–354.
- Mellander E (2017) On the use of register data in educational science research. *Nordic Journal of Studies in Educational Policy* 3(1): 106–118.
- Mezzadra S (2018) *In the Marxian Workshops. Producing Subjects*. London: Rowman & Littlefield International.
- Mezzadra S and Neilson B (2013) *Border as Method, or, the Multiplication of Labor*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Milkman R, González AL and Ikeler P (2012) Wage and hour violations in urban labour markets: a comparison of Los Angeles, New York and Chicago. *Industrial Relations Journal* 43(5): 378–398.
- Monahan KC, Steinberg L and Lee JM (2011) Revisiting the Impact of Part-Time Work on Adolescent Adjustment: Distinguishing Between Selection and Socialization Using Propensity Score Matching. *Child Development* 82(1): 96–112.
- Morgan G, Nelligan P and Wood J (2013) Beyond the vocational fragments: Creative work, precarious labour and the idea of ‘Flexploitation’. *Economic and Labour Relations Review* 24(3): 397–415.
- Morris W (1915) *Collected Works*. London: Longmans, Green and Co.
- Mrozowicki A and Trappmann V (2021) Precarity as a Biographical Problem? Young Workers Living with Precarity in Germany and Poland. *Work, Employment and Society* 35(2): 221–238.
- Mulinari D and Neergaard A (2017) Theorising Racism: Exploring the Swedish racial regime. *Nordic Journal of Migration Research* 7(2): 88–96.
- Mulinari P (2024) Temporal Racism and the Invisibilization of Work: or Why Some Can Eat Ice Cream with their Kids While Others Cannot. *Nordic Journal of Migration Research* 15(1): 1–15.
- Mulinari P and Selberg R (2013) Intersectional directions in working life research - a proposal. *Nordic Journal of Working Life Studies* 3(3): 81–98.
- Müller D (2021) *Lost Opportunities: Work during High School, Establishment Closures and the Impact on Career Prospects*. IFN Working Paper 1381. Stockholm: Institutet för Näringslivsforskning.
- Murgia A and Pulignano V (2021) Neither precarious nor entrepreneur: The subjective experience of hybrid self-employed workers. *Economic and Industrial Democracy* 42(4): 1351–1377.
- Murgia A, Bozzon R, Digennaro P, et al. (2020) Hybrid Areas of Work Between Employment and Self-Employment: Emerging Challenges and Future Research Directions. *Frontiers in Sociology*.

- Nagengast B, Marsh HW, Chiorri C, et al. (2014) Character Building or Subversive Consequences of Employment during High School: Causal Effects Based on Propensity Score Models for Categorical Treatments. *Journal of Educational Psychology* 106(2): 584–603.
- Neilson B and Rossiter N (2008) Precarity as a Political Concept, or, Fordism as Exception. *Theory, Culture & Society* 25(7–8): 51–72.
- Neyt B, Omey E, Verhaest D, et al. (2019) Does Student Work Really Affect Educational Outcomes? A Review of the Literature. *Journal of Economic Surveys* 33(3): 896–921.
- Nielsen ML, Dyreborg J and Lipscomb HJ (2019) Precarious work among young Danish employees - a permanent or transitory condition? *Journal of Youth Studies* 22(1): 7–28.
- Nygård O (2022) Pre-Migration Status, Social Capital, and the Educational Aspirations of Children of Immigrants in Disadvantaged Swedish Schools. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research* 66(4): 580–593.
- Oesch D and Piccitto G (2019) The Polarization Myth: Occupational Upgrading in Germany, Spain, Sweden, and the UK, 1992–2015. *Work and Occupations* 46(4): 441–469.
- Oliver D (2010) Union membership among young graduate workers in Australia: using the experience good model to explain the role of student employment. *Industrial Relations Journal* 41(5): 505–519.
- Olofsson J and Wikström F (2018) *Unga Inför Arbetslivet : Om Utanförskap, Lärande Och Delaktighet*. Lund: Studentlitteratur.
- O'Reilly J, Leschke J, Ortlieb R, et al. (2019) Comparing youth transitions in Europe. In: O'Reilly J, Leschke J, Ortlieb R, et al. (eds) *Youth Labor in Transition. Inequalities, Mobility, and Policies in Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Orth B (2024) Stratified pathways into platform work: Migration trajectories and skills in Berlin's gig economy. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* 56(2): 476–490.
- Patton W and Smith E (2009) Part-Time Work of High School Students and Impact on Educational Outcomes. *Australian Journal of Guidance and Counselling* 19(2): 216–224.
- Peralta Prieto J (2006) *Den sjuka arbetslösheten: svensk arbetsmarknadspolitik och dess praxis 1978-2004*. Doctoral thesis, Uppsala University.
- Perumean-Chaney S, Morgan C, Aban I, et al. (2013) Zero-inflated and overdispersed: What's one to do? *Journal of Statistical Computation and Simulation* 83(9): 1671–1683.
- Philipson Isaac S (2025) Unpacking State Production of Temporal Dispossession: The Intersections of Labour, Asylum and Informalization in Sweden. *Critical Sociology* 51(1): 87–103.
- Piro V, Murgia A and Azaïs C (2023) Hybrid areas of labour. Challenging traditional dichotomies to represent work, workers, and working trajectories. *Rassegna Italiana di Sociologia*: 165–182.

- Plenty S, Andersson A, Hjalmarsson S, et al. (2018) *How are our young adults doing? A report on market activities and living conditions*. Research Report 2018:3. Stockholm: Institute for Future Studies.
- Pohl A and Walther A (2007) Activating the disadvantaged. Variations in addressing youth transitions across Europe. *International Journal of Lifelong Education* 26(5): 533–553.
- Price R and Grant-Smith D (2018) Recognising Young People as ‘Real’ Workers and the Employment Implications of Framing Young Workers as Deficient. In: Werth S and Brownlow C (eds) *Work and Identity: Contemporary Perspectives on Workplace Diversity*. Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- Price R, McDonald P, Bailey J, et al. (2011) A majority experience: young people’s encounters with the labour market. In: Price R, McDonald P, Bailey J, et al. (eds) *Young People and Work*. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Ltd.
- Prytz J and Berglund T (2023) Disruption of the Ghent effect: Disentangling structural and institutional determinants of union membership decline in Sweden, 2005–2010. *Industrial Relations Journal* 54(6): 471–494.
- Pyman A, Teicher J, Cooper B, et al. (2009) Unmet demand for union membership in Australia. *Journal of Industrial Relations* 51(1): 5–24.
- Raby R, Lehmann W, Easterbrook R, et al. (2018) ‘I’ll be more prepared than most people’: Very young Canadian workers talking about their first jobs. *Childhood - A Global Journal of Child Research* 25(2): 237–252.
- Rasmussen S, Nätti J, Larsen TP, et al. (2019) Nonstandard Employment in the Nordics - Toward Precarious Work? *Nordic Journal of Working Life Studies* 9(6): 7–32.
- Rauscher KJ, Wegman DH, Wooding J, et al. (2013) Adolescent Work Quality: A View From Today’s Youth. *Journal of Adolescent Research* 28(5): 557–590.
- Read J (2011) The Production of Subjectivity: From Transindividuality to the Commons. *New Formations: A Journal of Culture/Theory/Politics* 70: 113–131.
- Read J (2024) *The Double Shift: Spinoza and Marx on the Politics of Work*. London New York, NY: Verso Books.
- Rennstam J and Wästerfors D (2018) *Analyze! Crafting Your Data in Qualitative Research*, Lund: Studentlitteratur.
- Ringrose J (2007) Successful Girls? Complicating Post-Feminist, Neoliberal Discourses of Educational Achievement and Gender Equality. *Gender and Education* 19(4): 471–489.
- Roberts S (2011) Beyond ‘NEET’ and ‘Tidy’ Pathways: Considering the ‘Missing Middle’ of Youth Transition Studies. *Journal of Youth Studies* 14(1): 21–39.
- Robinson CJ (2021) *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition*. Penguin.
- Rose N (1999) *Powers of Freedom: Reframing Political Thought*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Rubery J, Grimshaw D, Keizer A, et al. (2018) Challenges and Contradictions in the ‘Normalising’ of Precarious Work. *Work, Employment and Society* 32(3): 509–527.
- Samuelsson T (2008) *Children’s Work in Sweden : A Part of Childhood, a Path to Adulthood*. Linköping: Doctoral thesis, University of Linköping.

- Samuelsson T (2011) Making money, helping out, growing up: working children in Sweden. In: Price R, McDonald P, Bailey J, et al. (eds) *Young People and Work*. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Ltd.
- Scarpetta S, Sonnet A and Manfredi T (2010) *Rising Youth Unemployment During the Crisis: How to Prevent Negative Long- Term Consequences on a Generation?* OECD Social, Employment and Migration Paper 106. Paris: OECD.
- Scharff C (2016) The Psychic Life of Neoliberalism: Mapping the Contours of Entrepreneurial Subjectivity: Theory, Culture and Society. *Theory, Culture and Society* 33(6): 107–122.
- Sheppard LC, Raby R, Lehmann W, et al. (2019) Grill Guys and Drive-Thru Girls: Discourses of Gender in Young People's Part-Time Work. *Journal of Childhood Studies* 44(3): 56–69.
- Shildrick T and MacDonald R (2007) Biographies of Exclusion: Poor Work and Poor Transitions. *International Journal of Lifelong Education* 26(5): 589–604.
- Shildrick T and MacDonald R (2013) Poverty talk: how people experiencing poverty deny their poverty and why they blame 'the poor'. *The Sociological Review* 61(2): 285–303.
- Silva JM (2013) *Coming up Short : Working-Class Adulthood in an Age of Uncertainty*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Simpson A, McKechnie J and Hobbs S (2018) Learning in work: perceptions from working teenagers. *Journal of Education and Work* 31(4): 433–446.
- Singh K, Chang M and Dika S (2007) Effects of Part-Time Work on School Achievement During High School. *The Journal of Educational Research* 101(1): 12–22.
- Skeggs B (1997) *Formations of Class & Gender: Becoming Respectable*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Skyrman V, Allelin M, Kallifatides M, et al. (2023) Financialized accumulation, neoliberal hegemony, and the transformation of the Swedish Welfare Model, 1980–2020. *Capital & Class* 47(4): 565–591.
- Smith E and Patton W (2013) Part-time working by students: is it a policy issue, and for whom? *Journal of Education and Work* 26(1): 48–76.
- Staff J and Mortimer JT (2007) Educational and Work Strategies from Adolescent to Early Adulthood: Consequences for Educational Attainment. *Social Forces* 85(3): 1169–1194.
- Staff J and Mortimer JT (2024) Taking the long view of adolescent work quality. *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 34(4): 1300–1311.
- Staff J, Yetter AM, Cundiff K, et al. (2020) Is Adolescent Employment Still a Risk Factor for High School Dropout? *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 30(2): 406–422.
- Standing G (2011) *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Statistics Sweden (2018a). *Majoriteten av eleverna på gymnasiet arbetar*. <https://www.scb.se/hitta-statistik/artiklar/2018/majoriteten-av-eleverna-pa-gymnasiet-arbetar/> (Accessed: 2025-07-25).

- Statistics Sweden (2018b) *Analysis on nonresponse bias for the Swedish Labour Force Surveys*.
https://www.scb.se/contentassets/47f478c25f054997bfd0bf6f4bb5d392/am0401_2018a01_br_am76br1801.pdf (Accessed: 2025-07-25).
- Statistics Sweden (2021) *Vem jobbar extra under gymnasietiden? Gymnasieelever 2019 och 2020*. A40BR2104 2021:4.
https://www.scb.se/contentassets/aba3c59dc69f4f40b2f664260a988470/uf0549_2019i20_br_a40br2104.pdf (Accessed: 2025-07-25).
- Statistics Sweden (2024) *Bakgrundsfakta 2024:2, Bortfallsmönster Arbetskraftsundersökningarna 2010– 2023*.
https://www.scb.se/contentassets/3482d62444ed4ba1897aba8b4499a5e8/am0401_2023a01_br_am76br2402.pdf (Accessed: 2025-07-25).
- Sukarieh M and Tannock S (2015) *Youth Rising? The Politics of Youth in the Global Economy*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Svensk Handel and Handelsanställdas förbund (2023) *Kollektivavtal för detaljhandeln 2023–2025*. Stockholm: Svensk Handel & Handels.
- Swedish National Agency for Education (2011) *Läroplan, examensmål och gymnasiegemensamma ämnen för gymnasieskola 2011 (Gy11)*. Stockholm: Skolverket.
- Swedish National Agency for Education (2023) *Uppföljning av gymnasieskolan 2023. Rapport 2023:2*. Stockholm: Skolverket.
- Swedish Research Council (2017) *Good Research Practice*. Stockholm: Vetenskapsrådet.
- Swedish Research Council (2024) *God Forskningssed*. Stockholm: Vetenskapsrådet.
- Swedish Work Environment Authority (2023) *Arbetsmiljöverkets föreskrifter och allmänna råd (AFS 2023:2) om planering och organisering av arbetsmiljöarbete – grundläggande skyldigheter för dig med arbetsgivaransvar*. Stockholm: Arbetsmiljöverket.
- Tannock S (2001) *Youth at Work: The Unionized Fast-Food and Grocery Workplace*. Philadelphia: Temple Univ Press.
- Tapia M and Alberti G (2019) Unpacking the Category of Migrant Workers in Trade Union Research : A Multi-Level Approach to Migrant Intersectionalities. *Work, Employment and Society* 33(2): 314–325.
- Tavory I and Timmermans S (2014) *Abductive Analysis: Theorizing Qualitative Research*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Teddlie C and Tashakkori A (2010) Overview of Contemporary Issues in Mixed Methods Research. In: Tashakkori A and Teddlie C (eds) *SAGE Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social & Behavioral Research*. SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Thuresson J (2024) Föräldrar till unga sommarjobbare: ”Det är som om de inte är människor”. *Sydsvenskan* 18 August. <https://www.sydsvenskan.se/2024-08-18/foraldrar-till-unga-sommarjobbare-det-ar-som-om-de-inte-ar-manniskor/> (Accessed: 2025-07-25).

- Trappmann V, Umney C, Seehaus A, et al. (2024) How Do Young Workers Perceive Job Insecurity? Legitimising Frames for Precarious Work in England and Germany. *Work, Employment and Society* 38(4): 998–1020.
- Tyler I (2015) Classificatory struggles: class, culture and inequality in neoliberal times. *The Sociological Review* 63(2): 493–511.
- Vandaele K (2019) How can trade unions in Europe connect with young workers? In: O'Reilly J, Leschke J, Ortlieb R, et al. (eds) *Youth Labor in Transition. Inequalities, Mobility, and Policies in Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Virno P (2004) *A Grammar of the Multitude : For an Analysis of Contemporary Forms of Life*. New York: Semiotext(e).
- Vosko LF (2010) *Managing the Margins : Gender, Citizenship, and the International Regulation of Precarious Employment*. Oxford ; Oxford University Press.
- Wadensjö E (2015) *Policy Performance and Evaluation: Sweden*. STYLE Working Paper 3.3. Brighton: CROME.
- Wadensjö E (2018) Unga på svensk arbetsmarknad – olika mått på ungas etablering. In: Olofsson J and Wikström F (eds) *Unga Inför Arbetslivet: Om Utanförskap, Lärande Och Delaktighet*. Lund: Studentlitteratur.
- Walther A (2006) Regimes of youth transitions: Choice, flexibility and security in young people's experiences across different European contexts. *YOUNG* 14(2): 119–139.
- Wang IJY, Carling K and Näs O (2006) *High school student's summer jobs and their ensuing labour market achievement*. 2006:14. IFAU - Institute for Evaluation of Labour Market and Education Policy.
- Warhurst C and Nickson D (2009) 'Who's got the look?' Emotional, aesthetic and sexualized labour in interactive services. *Gender, Work & Organization* 16(3): 385–404.
- Weber M (2005) *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. Routledge.
- Weeks K (2011) *The Problem with Work : Feminism, Marxism, Antiwork Politics, and Postwork Imaginaries*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Williams C and Connell C (2010) "Looking Good and Sounding Right": Aesthetic Labor and Social Inequality in the Retail Industry. *Work and Occupations* 37(3): 349–377.
- Woodman D (2012) Life out of Synch: How New Patterns of Further Education and the Rise of Precarious Employment Are Reshaping Young People's Relationships. *Sociology* 46(6): 1074–1090.
- Wyn J, Cuervo H, Crofts J, et al. (2017) Gendered transitions from education to work: The mysterious relationship between the fields of education and work. *Journal of Sociology* 53(2): 492–506.
- Yates E (2017) Reproducing low-wage labour: capital accumulation, labour markets and young workers. *Industrial Relations Journal* 48(5/6): 463–481.
- Zuccotti C and O'Reilly J (2019) Do scarring effects vary by ethnicity and gender? In: O'Reilly J, Leschke J, Ortlieb R, et al. (eds) *Youth Labor in Transition. Inequalities, Mobility, and Policies in Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Åström Rudberg E (2023) Doing Business in the Schools of the Welfare State: Competing 'Entrepreneurial Selves' and the Roots of Entrepreneurship Education in 1980s Sweden. *Enterprise & society* 24(4): 1066–1092.
- Åberg R (2015) Svensk arbetsmarknad mot polarisering efter millennieskiftet. *Arbetsmarknad & Arbetsliv* 21(4): 8–25.
- Åberg R (2016) Polariseringens fördelningseffekter. *Ekonomisk Debatt* 44(5): 23–39.

Appendix 1. Information for principals

Hej,

Jag heter Anna Kallos och är doktorand i sociologi vid Lunds universitet. I mitt avhandlingsarbete undersöker jag elevers deltidsarbete parallellt med gymnasiestudier. Trots att en stor andel av alla gymnasieelever arbetar idag, vet vi mycket lite om fenomenet. Vilka är eleverna som arbetar? Av vilka skäl arbetar de? Med vilka jobb? Hur påverkar arbetet deras vardag? Dessa frågor hoppas jag att kunna besvara genom forskningsprojektet. Undersökningar av det här slaget är inte så vanliga i Sverige. Flertalet studier om ungas arbetsliv rör de som redan gått ut gymnasiet, trots att flera börjar arbeta redan under skoltiden. Min förhoppning är därför att den här undersökningen skall ge oss mer kunskap.

Projektet bygger på statistiska analyser av enkätdata och intervjuer med gymnasieelever. Det är med anledning av intervjustudien jag vänder mig till er. Jag önskar att få möjlighet att muntligt informera om studien direkt till elever i klassrummet, i syfte att rekrytera intervjupersoner. Det innebär att jag under ca. 5–10 minuter informerar om studien, besvarar frågor, samt ger mina kontaktuppgifter till intresserade elever. Själva intervjuerna sker utanför skoltid och deltagandet är helt frivilligt. Intervjumaterialet kommer att behandlas konfidentiellt och pseudonymiseras i enlighet med forskningsetiska principer. Projektet har godkänts av Etikprövningsmyndigheten.

Om ni ställer er positiva, diskuterar jag gärna med er vilka dagar och lektioner som passar bäst. Jag kan även presentera studien för lärare och diskutera eventuella frågor, innan ni lämnar ert definitiva svar. Jag kan tyvärr inte ge någon kompensation, varken till skolan eller till de elever jag intervjuar, men jag kan däremot återkoppla till er i framtiden när jag börjat få resultat och redovisa vad jag kommer fram till.

Jag hoppas att jag får besöka er skola och informera om studien! Har ni några övriga frågor, kan ni nå mig på mailadressen eller telefonnumret nedan. Där finns även kontaktuppgifter till min handledare professor Åsa Lundqvist, som är huvudansvarig för studien.

Med vänliga hälsningar,

Anna Kallos

Kontaktuppgifter:

Anna Kallos, doktorand

Sociologiska institutionen, Lunds universitet

Email: -

Telefonnummer: -

Åsa Lundqvist, professor

Sociologiska institutionen, Lunds universitet

Email: -

Telefonnummer: -

Appendix 2. Information for participants

Hej!

Jag heter Anna Kallos och är doktorand i sociologi vid Lunds universitet. Jag genomför ett forskningsprojekt som handlar om gymnasieelevers deltidsarbete parallellt med studier. Studien bygger på både statistik och intervjuer med gymnasieelever. Intervjuerna handlar om elevers erfarenheter av deltidsarbete under skolarbetet: av vilka skäl de väljer att arbeta, vilka typer av arbetslivserfarenheter de har och hur deras vardag ser ut. Undersökningar av det här slaget är inte så vanliga i Sverige. Flertalet studier om ungas arbetsliv rör de som redan gått ut gymnasiet, trots att flera börjar arbeta redan under skoltiden. Min förhoppning är därför att den här undersökningen skall ge oss mer kunskap.

Hur går det till?

Skolan har gett mig sitt samtycke till att utföra undersökningen här. Jag söker därför efter elever att intervjua som har erfarenhet av att jobba extra under terminerna. Intervjuerna innebär att jag samlar in dina tankar om och erfarenheter av deltidsarbete genom ett informellt samtal som spelas in. Jag kommer även att ställa bakgrundsfrågor om bland annat din familj, skolgång och fritid. Deltagandet är helt frivilligt och du kan när som helst välja att avbryta din medverkan. Resultaten av studien kommer att publiceras i form av ett antal vetenskapliga artiklar och en längre bok, så kallad avhandling.

Hur hanteras de inspelade intervjuerna?

De inspelade intervjuerna transkriberas (det vill säga, skrivs ned), men kommer att pseudonymiseras. Det innebär att all information kommer att behandlas på ett sådant sätt att enskilda personer inte kan identifieras. Varken i de transkriberade intervjuerna eller i rapporteringen kommer det att framgå vilken ort, skola, arbetsplats eller vilka elever som medverkat. Intervjuinspelningar och -transkriptioner kommer att behandlas så att obehöriga inte kan ta del av dem.

Vad händer med dina uppgifter?

Ansvarig för dina personuppgifter är Lunds universitet. Enligt EU:s dataskyddsförordning har du rätt att kostnadsfritt få ta del av samtliga uppgifter om

dig som hanteras och vid behov få eventuella fel rättade. Du kan också begära att uppgifter om dig raderas eller att behandlingen av dina personuppgifter begränsas. Om du vill ta del av uppgifterna kan du kontakta mig (Anna Kallos, se kontaktuppgifter nedan). Dataskyddsombud nås på 046–222 00 00 eller via mejl på dataskyddsombud@lu.se. Om du är missnöjd med hur dina personuppgifter behandlas har du rätt att ge in klagomål till Datainspektionen, som är tillsynsmyndighet.

Har du övriga frågor, kan du nå mig på mailadressen eller telefonnumret nedan. Där finns även kontaktuppgifter till min handledare professor Åsa Lundqvist, som är huvudansvarig för studien.

Med vänliga hälsningar,

Anna Kallos

Kontaktuppgifter:

Anna Kallos, doktorand

Sociologiska institutionen, Lunds universitet

Email: -

Telefonnummer: -

Åsa Lundqvist, professor

Sociologiska institutionen, Lunds universitet

Email: -

Telefonnummer: -

Appendix 3. Interview guide

Original version in Swedish

Bakgrund:

- Berätta om dig själv! Boende, syskon, föräldrar (yrke/utbildning)?

Arbete:

- Innan du sökte ditt första jobb: varför ville du börja arbeta?
- Berätta om de olika jobb du haft.
- Arbete idag? Hur länge har du arbetat där? Hur fick du jobbet?
- Berätta om ett typiskt pass på jobbet.
- Relationen till kollegor, chef, kunder?
- Vad är dina känslor kring ditt nuvarande jobb?
- Finns det stunder när ditt jobb är givande? Stunder när det är jobbigt?
- Har du någonsin varit i kontakt med facket?
- När och hur ofta jobbar du?
- Hur schemaläggs du? Hur får du reda på när du ska jobba?
- Lön? Typ av kontrakt?
- Vad är det huvudsakliga skälet till att du arbetar?
- Vilka positiva/negativa effekter ser du av att ha ett arbete under gymnasiet på kort resp. lång sikt?
- Varför tror du att många gymnasieelever väljer att arbeta parallellt med sina studier idag?

Lön:

- Hur mycket pengar får du ut per månad av jobbet?
- Vad använder du pengarna till?

- Får du använda pengarna från studiebidraget?
- Kan du komma ihåg om din familj har haft det svårt ekonomiskt vid något tillfälle?

Skola:

- Vilken gymnasielinje går du?
- Tycker du att skolan är intressant? Trivs du?
- Är det viktigt att få bra betyg?
- Hur lyckas du i skolan?
- Jobbar många av dina klasskamrater?

Fritid:

- Vad gör du på fritiden?
- Pluggar du ofta hemma/gör läxor?
- Vilka typer av hushållssysslor gör du hemma? Hur ofta?

Balans arbete/skola/fritid:

- Hur skulle du beskriva balansen mellan arbete, skola och fritid i ditt liv?
- Har du någonsin känt dig stressad på grund av att du haft för mycket att hinna med? När? Varför?
- Vad tycker din familj om att/hur mycket du arbetar? Vad tycker vänner? Lärare?
- Har du någonsin prioriterat bort skolan för att jobba? Prioriterat bort annat?

Framtid:

- Vad är dina planer efter gymnasiet?
- Vad vill du göra i framtiden? Vad vill du arbeta som?

Övrigt:

- Något jag glömt att fråga om?

English translation

Background:

- Tell me about yourself! (Living situation, parents, siblings, parents' work/education)

Work:

- Before you had your first job: why did you want to start working?
- Tell me about the different jobs you have had.
- Do you have a job today? How long have you worked there? How did you get the job?
- Tell me about a typical day at work.
- Relationship to colleagues, boss, customers.
- What are your feelings about your current job?
- Are there times when your job is rewarding? Times when it is hard?
- Have you ever been in contact with the union?
- When and how often do you work?
- How are you scheduled? How do you find out when you have to work?
- Your salary? Type of job contract?
- What is the main reason that you work today?
- Which are the potential positive effects of having a job during upper secondary school? And negative effects?
- Why do you think that so many upper secondary students work during the school year?

Economy:

- How much money do you get per month from the job?
- What do you use it for?
- Do you receive the student grant yourself?
- Can you remember if your family has had a hard time financially?

School:

- Which educational program do you attend?
- Do you find school interesting? Do you enjoy school?
- Is it important to get good grades?
- How do you succeed in school?

- Do many of your classmates work?

Leisure time:

- What do you do in your spare time?
- Do you often study?
- What sort of chores do you do at home?

School-work-life balance:

- How would you describe your balance between work, school, and life?
- Have you ever felt stressed because you have had too much to do? When and why?
- What does your family think about you working? Friends? Teachers?
- Have you ever prioritized work over school? Or something else?

Future:

- What are your plans after you have finished school? Dreams for the future?
- Something else you would like to add? Something that I have forgotten to ask?

Publikationer från Sociologiska institutionen Lunds universitet

Beställning och aktuella priser på:

bokshop.lu.se

Böckerna levereras mot faktura eller kortbetalning.

Lund Dissertations in Sociology (ISSN 1102-4712)

- 1 Chylicki, Pawel *Att upphöra med brott: vägar ut ur den kriminella karriären* 275 sidor ISBN 9179661823 (1992)
- 2 Eðvarðsson, Ingi Rúnar *Printing in Action: General Printing in Iceland and Sweden* 231 sidor ISBN 9179661858 (1992)
- 3 Sverrisson, Árni *Evolutionary Technical Change and Flexible Mechanization: Entrepreneurship and Industrialization in Kenya and Zimbabwe* 274 sidor ISBN 9179662404, 0862383404 (1993)
- 4 Sederblad, Per *Arbetsorganisation och grupper: studier av svenska industriföretag* 285 sidor ISBN 9179662501 (1993)
- 5 Tjörvason, Sævar *Demokratiskt deltagande och kognitiv socialisation* 196 sidor ISBN 9179662471 (1993)
- 6 Lema, Antoine *Africa Divided: The Creation of "Ethnic Groups"* 200 sidor ISBN 9179662552, 086238348X (1993)
- 7 Ericson, Birgitta & Johansson, Britt-Marie *Bostadsbyggandet i idé och praktik: om kunskaper och föreställningar inom byggsektorn* 387 sidor ISBN 917966282X (1994)
- 8 Rafnsdóttir, Guðbjörg Linda *Kvinnofack eller integrering som strategi mot underordning: diskussion kring kvinnliga fackföreningar på Island* 224 sidor ISBN 9179663125 (1995)
- 9 Knoll, Thomas *Not a Piece of Cake: Ambivalence about Female-Headed Families* 352 sidor ISBN 9179663133, 0862383889 (1995)
- 10 Pekkola, Sari *Magical Flutes: Music Culture and Music Groups in a Changing Bolivia* 254 sidor ISBN 9179663583, 0862384273 (1996)
- 11 Cvetkova, Cveta *Codes of power* 309 sidor ISBN 9179663745, 0862384435 (1996)
- 12 Cuesta, Marta [photography: Alejandro Parellada & Marta Cuesta] *Flowers to the ocean: a study of everyday practices, rituals and identity in Candomblé* 222 sidor ISBN 9179664067, 0862384753 (1997)
- 13 Neergaard, Anders *Grasping the Peripheral State: A Historical Sociology of Nicaraguan State Formation* 401 sidor ISBN 91-89078-00-4 (1997)

- 14 Jannisa, Gudmund *The Crocodile's Tears: East Timor in the Making* 328 sidor ISBN 91-89078-02-0 (1997)
- 15 Naranjo, Eduardo *Den auktoritära staten och ekonomisk utveckling i Chile: Jordbruket under militärregimen 1973–1981* 429 sidor ISBN 91-89078-03-9 (1997)
- 16 Wangel, Arne *Safety Politics and Risk Perceptions in Malaysian Industry* 404 sidor ISBN 91-89078-06-3 (1997)
- 17 Jönhill, Jan Inge *Samhället som system och dess ekologiska omvärld: En studie i Niklas Luhmanns sociologiska systemteori* 521 sidor ISBN 91-89078-09-8 (1997)
- 18 Lindquist, Per *Det klyvbara ämnet: Diskursiva ordningar i svensk kärnkraftspolitik 1972–1980* 445 sidor ISBN 91-89078-11-X (1997)
- 19 Richard, Elvi *I första linjen: Arbetsledares mellanställning, kluvenhet och handlingsstrategier i tre organisationer* 346 sidor ISBN 91-89078-17-9 (1997)
- 20 Einarsdotter-Wahlgren, Mia *Jag är konstnär! En studie av erkännandeprocessen kring konstnärskapet i ett mindre samhälle* 410 sidor ISBN 91-89078-20-9 (1997)
- 21 Nilsson-Lindström, Margareta *Tradition och överskridande: En studie av flickors perspektiv på utbildning* 165 sidor ISBN 98-89078-27-6 (1998)
- 22 Popoola, Margareta *Det sociala spelet om Romano Platso* 294 sidor ISBN 91-89078-33-0 (1998)
- 23 Eriksson, Annika *En gangster kunde kanske älska sin mor... Produktionen av moraliska klischéer i amerikanska polis- och deckarserier* 194 sidor ISBN 91-89078-36-5 (1998)
- 24 Abebe Kebede, Teketel *'Tenants of the State': The Limitations of Revolutionary Agrarian Transformation in Ethiopia, 1974-1991* 364 sidor ISBN 91-89078-38-1 (1998)
- 25 Leppänen, Vesa *Structures of District Nurse – Patient Interaction* 256 sidor ISBN 91-89078-44-6 (1998)
- 26 Idof Ståhl, Zeth *Den goda viljans paradoxer: Reformers teori och praktik speglade i lärares erfarenheter av möten i skolan* 259 sidor ISBN 91-89078-45-4 (1998)
- 27 Gustafsson, Bengt-Åke *Symbolisk organisering: En studie av organisatorisk förändring och meningsproduktion i fyra industriföretag* 343 sidor ISBN 91-89078-48-9 (1998)
- 28 Munk, Martin *Livsbaner gennem et felt: En analyse af eliteidrætsudøveres sociale mobilitet og rekonversioner of kapital i det sociale rum* 412 sidor ISBN 91-89078-72-1 (1999)
- 29 Wahlin, Lottie *Den rationella inbrottstjuven? En studie om rationalitet och rationellt handlande i brott* 172 sidor ISBN 91-89078-85-3 (1999)
- 30 Mathieu, Chris *The Moral Life of the Party: Moral Argumentation and the Creation of meaning in the Europe Policy Debates of the Christian and Left-Socialist Parties in Denmark and Sweden 1960–1996* 404 sidor ISBN 91-89078-96-9 (1999)
- 31 Ahlstrand, Roland *Förändring av deltagandet i produktionen: Exempel från slutmonteringsfabriker i Volvo* 165 sidor ISBN 91-7267-008-8 (2000)
- 32 Klintman, Mikael *Nature and the Social Sciences: Examples from the Electricity and Waste Sectors* 209 sidor ISBN 91-7267-009-6 (2000)
- 33 Hultén, Kerstin *Datorn på köksbordet: En studie av kvinnor som distansarbetar i hemmet* 181 sidor ISBN 91-89078-77-2 (2000)

- 34 Nilsén, Åke *"En empirisk vetenskap om duet": Om Alfred Schutz bidrag till sociologin* 164 sidor ISBN 91-7267-020-7 (2000)
- 35 Karlsson, Magnus *Från Jernverk till Hjärnverk: Ungdomstidens omvandling i Ronneby under tre generationer* 233 sidor ISBN 91-7267-022-3 (2000)
- 36 Stojanovic, Verica *Unga arbetslösas ansikten: Identitet och subjektivitet i det svenska och danska samhället* 237 sidor ISBN 91-7267-042-8 (2001)
- 37 Knopff, Bradley D. *Reservation Preservation: Powwow Dance, Radio, and the Inherent Dilemma of the Preservation Process* 218 sidor ISBN 91-7267-065-7 (2001)
- 38 Cuadra, Sergio *Mapuchefolket – i gränsernas land: En studie av autonomi, identitet, etniska gränser och social mobilisering* 247 sidor ISBN 91-7267-096-7 (2001)
- 39 Ljungberg, Charlotta *Bra mat och dåliga vanor: Om förtroendefulla relationer och oroliga reaktioner på livsmedelsmarknaden* 177 sidor ISBN 91-7267-097-5 (2001)
- 40 Spännar, Christina *Med främmande bagage: Tankar och erfarenheter hos unga människor med ursprung i annan kultur, eller Det postmoderna främlingskapet* 232 sidor ISBN 91-7267-100-9 (2001)
- 41 Larsson, Rolf *Between Crisis and Opportunity: Livelihoods, diversification, and inequality among the Meru of Tanzania* 519 sidor Ill. ISBN 91-7267-101-7 (2001)
- 42 Kamara, Fouday *Economic and Social Crises in Sierra Leone: The Role of Small-scale Entrepreneurs in Petty Trading as a Strategy for Survival 1960-1996* 239 sidor ISBN 91-7267-102-5 (2001)
- 43 Höglund, Birgitta *Ute & Inne: Kritisk dialog mellan personalkollektiv inom psykiatrin* 206 sidor ISBN 91-7267-103-3 (2001)
- 44 Kindblad, Christopher *Gift and Exchange in the Reciprocal Regime of the Miskito on the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua, 20th Century* 279 sidor ISBN 91-7267-113-0 (2001)
- 45 Wesser, Erik *"Har du varit ute och shoppat, Jacob?" En studie av Finansinspektionens utredning av insiderbrott under 1990-talet* 217 sidor ISBN 91-7267-114-9 (2001)
- 46 Stenberg, Henrik *Att bli konstnär: Om identitet, subjektivitet och konstnärskap i det senmoderna samhället* 219 sidor ISBN 91-7267-121-1 (2002)
- 47 Copes, Adriana *Entering Modernity: The Marginalisation of the Poor in the Developing Countries. An Account of Theoretical Perspectives from the 1940's to the 1980's* 184 sidor ISBN 91-7267-124-6 (2002)
- 48 Cassegård, Carl *Shock and Naturalization: An inquiry into the perception of modernity* 249 sidor ISBN 91-7267-126-2 (2002)
- 49 Waldo, Åsa *Staden och resandet: Mötet mellan planering och vardagsliv* 235 sidor ISBN 91-7267-123-8 (2002)
- 50 Stierna, Johan *Lokal översättning av svenskhet och symboliskt kapital: Det svenska rummet i Madrid 1915–1998.* 300 sidor ISBN 91-7267-136-X (2003)
- 51 Arvidson, Malin *Demanding Values: Participation, empowerment and NGOs in Bangladesh* 214 sidor ISBN 91-7267-138-6 (2003)
- 52 Zetino Duarte, Mario *Vi kanske kommer igen, om det låser sig: Kvinnors och mäns möte med familjerådgivning* 246 sidor ISBN 91-7267-141-6 (2003)
- 53 Lindell, Lisbeth *Mellan frisk och sjuk: En studie av psykiatrisk öppenvård* 310 sidor ISBN 91-7267-143-2 (2003)

- 54 Gregersen, Peter *Making the Most of It? Understanding the social and productive dynamics of small farmers in semi-arid Iringa, Tanzania* 263 sidor ISBN 91-7267-147-5 (2003)
- 55 Oddner, Frans *Kafékultur, kommunikation och gränser* 296 sidor ISBN 91-7267-157-2 (2003)
- 56 Elsrud, Torun *Taking Time and Making Journeys: Narratives on Self and the Other among Backpackers* 225 sidor ISBN 91-7267-164-5 (2004)
- 57 Jørgensen, Erika *Hållbar utveckling, samhällsstruktur och kommunal identitet: En jämförelse mellan Västervik och Varberg* 242 sidor ISBN 91-7267-163-3 (2004)
- 58 Hedlund, Marianne *Shaping Justice: Defining the disability benefit category in Swedish social policy* 223 sidor ISBN 91-7267-167-X (2004)
- 59 Hägerström, Jeanette *Vi och dom och alla dom andra andra på Komvux: Etnicitet, genus och klass i samspel* 234 sidor ISBN 91-7267-169-6 (2004)
- 60 Säwe, Filippa *Att tala med, mot och förbi varandra: Samtal mellan föräldrar och skollärdning på en dövskola* 215 sidor ISBN 91-7267-173-4 (2004)
- 61 Alkvist, Lars-Erik *Max Weber och kroppens sociologi* 271 sidor ISBN 91-7267-178-5 (2004)
- 62 Winsvold, Aina *Når arbeidende barn mobiliserer seg: En studie av tre unioner i Karnataka, India* 300 sidor ISBN 91-7267-183-1 (2004)
- 63 Thorsted, Stine *IT-retorik og hverdagsliv: Et studie af fødevarerhandel over Internet* 219 sidor ISBN 91-7267-186-6 (2005)
- 64 Svensson, Ove *Ungdomars spel om pengar: Spelmarknaden, situationen och karriären* 308 sidor ISBN 91-7267-192-0 (2005)
- 65 Lundberg, Anders P. *Om Gemenskap: En sociologisk betraktelse* 248 sidor ISBN 91-7267-193-9 (2005)
- 66 Mallén, Agneta *Trygghet i skärgårdsmiljö: En studie om rädsla för brott i Åland* 218 sidor ISBN 91-7267-195-5 (2005)
- 67 Ryding, Anna *Välviljans variationer: Moraliska gränsdragningar inom brottsofferjourer* 222 sidor ISBN 91-7267-188-2 (2005)
- 68 Burcar, Veronika *Gestaltningar av offererfarenheter: Samtal med unga män som utsatts för brott* 206 sidor ISBN 91-7267-207-2 (2005)
- 69 Ramsay, Anders *Upplysningens självreflexion: Aspekter av Theodor W. Adornos kritiska teori* 146 sidor ISBN 91-7267-208-0 (2005)
- 70 Thelander, Joakim *Mutor i det godas tjänst: Biståndsarbetare i samtal om vardaglig korruption* 194 sidor ISBN 91-7267-211-0 (2005)
- 71 Henecke, Birgitta *Plan & Protest: En sociologisk studie av kontroverser, demokrati och makt i den fysiska planeringen* 272 sidor ISBN 91-7267-213-7 (2006)
- 72 Ingestad, Gunilla *Dokumenterat utanförskap: Om skolbarn som inte når målen* 180 sidor ISBN 91-7267-219-6 (2006)
- 73 Andreasson, Jesper *Idrottens kön: Genus, kropp och sexualitet i lagidrottens vardag* 267 sidor ISBN 91-628-7009-2 (2007)
- 74 Holmström, Ola *Skolpolitik, skolutvecklingsarena och sociala processer: Studie av en gymnasieskola i kris* 249 sidor ISBN 91-7267-229-3 (2007)

- 75 Ring, Magnus *Social Rörelse: Begreppsbildning av ett mångtydigt fenomen* 200 sidor ISBN 91-7267-231-5 (2007)
- 76 Persson, Marcus *Mellan människor och ting. En interaktionistisk analys av samlandet* 241 sidor ISBN 91-7267-238-2 (2007)
- 77 Schmitz, Eva *Systerskap som politisk handling: Kvinnors organisering i Sverige 1968–1982* 362 sidor ISBN 91-7267-244-7 (2007)
- 78 Lundberg, Henrik *Filosofisociologi: Ett sociologiskt perspektiv på filosofiskt tänkande* 225 sidor ISBN 91-7267-245-5 (2007)
- 79 Melén, Daniel *Sjukskrivningssystemet: Sjuka som blir arbetslösa och arbetslösa som blir sjukskrivna* 276 sidor ISBN 91-7267-254-4 (2007)
- 80 Kondrup Jakobsen, Klaus *The Logic of the Exception: A Sociological Investigation into Theological Foundation of Political with specific regard to Kierkegaardian on Carl Schmitt* 465 sidor ISBN 91-7267-265-X (2008)
- 81 Berg, Martin *Självets garderobiär: Självreflexiva genuslekar och queer socialpsykologi* 230 sidor ISBN 91-7267-257-9 (2008)
- 82 Fredholm, Axel *Beyond the Catchwords: Adjustment and Community Response in Participatory Development in Post-Suharto Indonesia* 180 sidor ISBN 91-7267-269-2 (2008)
- 83 Linné, Tobias *Digitala pengar: Nya villkor i det sociala livet* 229 sidor ISBN 91-7267-282-X (2008)
- 84 Nyberg, Maria *Mycket mat, lite måltider: En studie av arbetsplatsen som måltidsarena* 300 sidor ISBN 91-7267-285-4 (2009)
- 85 Eldén, Sara *Konsten att lyckas som par: Populärterapeutiska berättelser, individualisering och kön* 245 sidor ISBN 91-7267-286-2 (2009)
- 86 Bjerstedt, Daniel *Tryggheten inför rätta: Om rätten till förtidspension enligt förvaltningsdomstolarna under tre decennier* 240 sidor ISBN 91-7267-287-0 (2009)
- 87 Kähre, Peter *På AI-teknikens axlar: Om kunskapssociologin och stark artificiell intelligens* 200 sidor ISBN 91-7267-289-7 (2009)
- 88 Loodin, Henrik *Biografier från gränslandet: En sociologisk studie om psykiatrins förändrade kontrollmekanismer* 118 sidor ISBN 91-7267-303-6 (2009)
- 89 Eriksson, Helena *Befolkning, samhälle och förändring: Dynamik i Halmstad under fyra decennier* 212 sidor ISBN 91-7267-313-3 (2010)
- 90 Espersson, Malin *Mer eller mindre byråkratisk: en studie av organisationsförändringar inom Kronofogdemyndigheten* 182 sidor ISBN 91-7267-315-X (2010)
- 91 Yang, Chia-Ling *Othring Processes in Feminist Teaching: A case study of an adult educational institution* 184 sidor ISBN 91-7267-318-4 (2010)
- 92 Isaksson, Anna *Att utmana förändringens gränser: En studie om förändringsarbete, partnerskap och kön med Equal-programmet som exempel* 206 sidor ISBN 91-7267-321-4 (2010)
- 93 Hilding, Lars-Olof *"Är det så här vi är": Om utbildning som normalitet och om produktionen av studenter* 200 sidor ISBN 91-7267-326-5 (2011)
- 94 Berg, Pernille *The Reluctant Change Agent: Change, Chance and Choice among Teachers Educational Change in The City* 196 sidor ISBN 91-7267-331-1 (2011)

- 95 Rahman, Mashiur *Struggling Against Exclusion: Adibasi in Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh* 202 sidor ISBN 91-7267-334-6 (2011)
- 96 Eklund, Lisa *Rethinking Son Preference: Gender, Population Dynamics and Social Change in the People's Republic of China* 218 sidor ISBN 978-91-7473-108-8 (2011)
- 97 Gustavsson, Klas *Det vardagliga och det vetenskapliga: Om sociologins begrepp* 260 sidor ISBN 91-7267-336-2 (2011)
- 98 Sjödin, Daniel *Tryggare kan ingen vara: Migration, religion och integration i en segregerad omgivning* 268 sidor ISBN 91-7267-337-0 (2011)
- 99 Ringström, Jonas *Mellan sanning och konsekvens: En studie av den tredje generationens kognitiva beteendeterapier* 268 sidor ISBN 921-7267-338-9 (2011)
- 100 Norstedt, Maria *Berättelser om stroke och arbetsliv: Att upptäcka styranderelationer* 204 sidor ISBN 978-91-7473-182-8 (2011)
- 101 Anving, Terese *Måltidens paradoxer: Om klass och kön i vardagens familjepraktiker* 228 sidor ISBN 91-7267-339-2 (2012)
- 102 Basic, Goran *Samverkan blir kamp: En sociologisk analys av ett projekt i ungdomsvården* 287 sidor ISBN 91-7267-346-X (2012)
- 103 Zettervall, Charlotta *Reluctant Victims into Challengers: Narratives of a Kurdish Political Generation in Diaspora in Sweden* 315 sidor ISBN 978-91-7473-412-6 (2013)
- 104 Apelmo, Elisabet *Som vem som helst: Kön, funktionalitet och idrottande kroppar* 272 sidor ISBN 978-91-7473-408-9 (2012) Utgivare: Bokförlaget Daidalos, Bergsjödalen 54b, 415 23, Göteborg, www.daidalos.se
- 105 Sandgren, Mikael *Europa som nation: En ny stil i nationalismens genre* 242 sidor ISBN 91-7267-356-7 (2013)
- 106 Sandberg, Johan *Social Policy of Our Time? An Inquiry into Evidence, Assumptions, and Diffusion of Conditional Cash Transfers in Latin America* 182 sidor ISBN 91-7267-365-6 (2014) Kan ej beställas av Media-Tryck. Beställs av författaren.
- 107 Frees Esholdt, Henriette *Når humor, leg og lyst er på spil: Social interaktion på en multietnisk arbejdsplads* 260 sidor ISBN 978-91-7623-215-6 (2015).
- 108 Vaide, Johan, *Contact Space: Shanghai. The Chinese Dream and the Production of a New Society* 215 sidor ISBN 978-91-7623-231-6 (2015)
- 109 Kolankiewicz, Marta *Anti-Muslim Violence and the Possibility of Justice* 226 sidor ISBN 978-91-7623-257-6 (2015)
- 110 Boethius, Susanne *Män, våld och moralarbete: Rapporter från män som sökt behandling för våld i nära relationer* 262 sidor ISBN 978-91-7623-450-1 (2015)
- 111 Görtz, Daniel *Etnifierade polispraktiker: Hur etnicitet görs i polisens vardag* 337 sidor ISBN 978-91-7267-380-9 (2015)
- 112 Stjärnhagen, Ola *Ekonomisk tillväxt i välfärdskapitalismen: En jämförande studie av BNP per capita-tillväxten i rika OECD-länder 1970–2000.* 168 sidor ISBN 978-91-7623-490-7 (2015)
- 113 Hedman, Karl *Managing Medical Emergency Calls* 281 sidor ISBN 978-91-7623-690-1 (2016)

- 114 Solano, Priscilla *Assisting in the Shadows: Humanitarianism, Shelters and Transit Migration Politics* 250 sidor ISBN 978-91-7753-102-9 (2017)
- 115 Ennerberg, Elin *Destination employment? Contradictions and ambiguities in Swedish labour market policy for newly arrived migrants* 232 sidor ISBN 978-91-7753-204-0 (2017)
- 116 Sunnercrantz, Liv *Hegemony and the Intellectual Function Medialised Public Discourse on Privatisation in Sweden 1988–1993*. 338 sidor ISBN 978-91-7753-471-6 (2017)
- 117 Kaya, Gökhan *Aspirations, Capital and Identity: Four studies on the determinants of life chances for young Swedes with an immigrant background* 163 sidor ISBN 978-91-7753-771-7 (2018)
- 118 Hylmö, Anders *Disciplined reasoning: Styles of reasoning and the mainstream-heterodoxy divide in Swedish economics* 360 sidor ISBN 978-91-7753-788-5 (2018)
- 119 Yakhlef, Sophia *United Agents: Community of Practice within Border Policing in the Baltic Sea Area* 220 sidor ISBN: 978-91-7753-806-6 (2018)
- 120 Flower, Lisa *Loyalty Work: Emotional interactions of defence lawyers in Swedish courtrooms* 266 sidor ISBN 978-91-7753-820-2 (2018)
- 121 Jack, Tullia *Negotiating Conventions: cleanliness, sustainability and everyday life* 166 sidor ISBN 978-91-7267-400-4 (2018)
- 122 Hemmaty, Mona *On the Margins: Migrants, Status Mobility and Recent Turns in Swedish Migration Politics* 203 sidor ISBN 978-91-7895-036-2 (2019)
- 123 Kloppenborg Möller, Henrik *Spectral Jade. Materiality, Conceptualisation, and Value in the Myanmar-China Borderland Jadeite Trade* 377 sidor ISBN 978-91-7895-346-2 (2019)
- 124 Franzén, Alexandra *Brottslingar av en mycket speciell sort. Spionskandalen som en maktkamp mellan visselblåsare, grävande journalister och underrättelsetjänster* 237 sidor ISBN 978-91-7895-943-3 (2021)
- 125 Sahlin Lilja, Hanna *The Emergence, Establishment and Expansion of Fear of Crime Research in Sweden* 300 sidor ISBN 978-91-8039-025-5 (2021)
- 126 Klitgaard, Vibeke *Social (u)orden i distriktspsykiatrien - En systemteoretisk analyse af psykiatriske patienters kommunikation og adfærd samt stigmatisering fra omverdenen* 445 sidor, ISBN 978-91-8039-063-7 (2021)
- 127 Ahlstrand, Rasmus *Structures of subcontracting: Work organisation, control, and labour in the Swedish building sector* 272 sidor, ISBN 978-91-8039-108-5 (2022)
- 128 Flaherty, Colm *A politics of community: Identity, Stigma, and Meaning in the Extra-Parliamentary Left* 315 sidor, ISBN 978-91-8039-246-4 (2022)
- 129 Quaglietta Bernal, Oriana *In Her Words: Women's Accounts of Managing Drug-related risk, Pleasure, and Stigma* 338 sidor, ISBN 978-91-8039-391-1 (2022)
- 130 Rasan, Imad *Women in the public sphere in Egypt: 2011–2014* 331 sidor, ISBN 978-91-8039-487-1 (2023)
- 131 Chan, Elton *The Last Urban Frontier: Commodification of Public Space and the Right to the City in Insurgent Hong Kong* 208 sidor, ISBN 978-91-8039-592-2 (2023)
- 132 Crusefalk, Lars *Financial journeys: Reasoning about debt and money among young adults in Sweden* 314 sidor, ISBN 978-91-8039-648-6 (2023)

- 133 Larsson, Marie *The work of contracepting: young people's experiences and practices with contraceptives in Sweden* 341 sidor, ISBN 978-91-8039-854-1 (2023)
- 134 Alenius Wallin, Linn *Bonusbarnbarn och bonusföräldrar: Om omsorgsrelationer mellan generationer i ombildade och valda familjer* 328 sidor, ISBN 978-91-8104-129-3 (2024)
- 135 Karlsson, Daniel *At least I have this freedom: Subjectivity and self-precarization among digital freelancers in the Swedish cultural industries* 300 sidor, ISBN 978-91-8104-173-6 (2024)
- 136 Kazi, Uzma *Swedish-(Par)Desi: Belonging Narratives of Second-Generation Pakistani Muslims in Sweden* 404 sidor, ISBN 978-91-8104-231-3 (2024)
- 137 Edling, Staffan *Political Epistemology: Knowledge and Advocacy in Trade Union Research* 205 sidor, ISBN 978-91-8104-249-8 (2024)
- 138 Morris, Freja *Tenacious Documents. Exploring the Allure of Documentation in Swedish Compulsory Schools* 232 sidor, ISBN 978-91-8104-339-6 (2025)
- 139 Tollu, Aube *Queer intimacies: Rethinking Epistemology of Conducting Research with Jihadist Group Members* 210 sidor, ISBN 978-91-8104-337-2 (2025)
- 140 Saaranen, Alexander *Trust in Time: How the Impressionable Years, Detrimental Events and Collective Experiences Shape Social Trust* 188 sidor, ISBN 978-91-8104-461-4 (2025)
- 141 Kallos, Anna *Not a Real Job? Teenage Labor and Low-Wage Service Work in Sweden* 101 sidor, ISBN 978-91-8104-598-7 (2025)

Licentiate's Dissertations in Sociology (ISSN-1403-6061)

- 1996:1 Forsberg, Pia *Välfärd, arbetsmarknad och korporativa institutioner: En studie av Trygghetsrådet SAF/PTK* 147 sidor ISBN 91-89078-07-1
- 1996:2 Klintman, Mikael *Från "trivialt" till globalt: Att härleda miljöpåverkan från motiv och handlingar i urbana sfärer* 171 sidor ISBN 91-89078-46-2
- 1996:3 Höglund, Birgitta *Att vårda och vakta: Retorik och praktik i en rättspsykiatrisk vårdkontext* 215 sidor ISBN 91-89078-68-3
- 1997:1 Jacobsson, Katarina *Social kontroll i dövvärlden* 148 sidor ISBN 91-89078-18-7
- 1997:2 Arvidsson, Adam *Den sociala konstruktionen av "en vanlig Människa": Tre betraktelser kring reklam och offentlighet* 122 sidor ISBN 91-89078-26-8
- 1998:1 Lundberg, Magnus *Kvinnomisshandel som polisärende: Att definiera och utdefiniera* 136 sidor ISBN 91-89078-40-3
- 1998:2 Stojanovic, Verica *Att leva sitt liv som arbetslös... Svenska och danska ungdomars relationer, ekonomi, bostadssituation och värdesättning av arbete* 148 sidor ISBN 91-89078-54-3
- 1998:3 Wesser, Erik *Arbetsmarknad och socialförsäkring i förändring: En studie av långtidssjukskrivning och förtidspensionering på 90-talet* 150 sidor 91-89078-57-8

- 1999:1 Radmann, Aage *Fotbollslandskapet: Fotboll som socialt fenomen* 167 sidor ISBN 91-89078-81-0
- 1999:2 Waldo, Åsa *Vardagslivets resor i den stora staden* 288 sidor ISBN 91-89078-88-8
- 1999:3 Säwe, Filippa *Om samförstånd och konflikt: Samtal mellan föräldrar och skollärdning på en specialskola* 159 sidor ISBN 91-89078-93-4
- 1999:4 Schmitz, Eva *Arbetarkvinnors mobiliseringar i arbetarrörelsens barndom: En studie av arbetarkvinnors strejkaktiviteter och dess inflytande på den svenska arbetarrörelsen* 138 sidor ISBN 91-89078-99-3
- 2000:1 Copes, Adriana *Time and Space: An Attempt to Transform Relegated Aspects in Central Issues of the Sociological Inquiry* 177 sidor ISBN 91-7267-003-7
- 2000:2 Gottskalksdottir, Bergthora *Arbetet som en port till samhället: Invandrarakademikers integration och identitet* 89 sidor ISBN 91-7267-012-6
- 2000:3 Alkvist, Lars-Erik *Max Weber och rationalitetsformerna* 176 sidor ISBN 91-7267-019-3
- 2001:1 Bergholtz, Zinnia *Att arbeta förebyggande: Tankar kring ett hälsoprojekt* 50 sidor ISBN 91-7267-043-6
- 2005:1 Bing Jackson, Hannah *Det fragmenterede fællesskab: Opfattelser af sociale fællesskabers funktion og deres udvikling i det senmoderne samfund* 162 sidor ISBN 91-7267-190-4
- 2005:2 Lundberg, Henrik *Durkheim och Mannheim som filosofisociologer* 88 sidor ISBN 91-7267-200-5

Lund Monographs in Social Anthropology (ISSN 1101-9948)

- 1 Ekströmer, Melcher *Buskar och fåglar: en socialantropologisk studie av görale, bergsfolket i södra Polen* 228 sidor ISBN 91-79661-47-5 (ak. avh. 1991)
- 2 Bergendorff, Sten *Faingu City: a modern Mekeo clan in Papua New Guinea* 279 sidor ISBN 91-79663-60-5 (ak. avh. 1996)
- 3 Pérez-Arias, Enrique *Mellan det förflutna och framtiden: Den sandinistiska revolutionen i Nicaragua* 322 sidor ISBN 91-89078-01-2 (ak. avh. 1997)
- 4 Karlsson, B. G. *Contested Belonging: An Indigenous People's Struggle for Forest and Identity in Sub-Himalayan Bengal* 318 sidor ISBN 91-89078-04-7 (ak. avh. 1997)
- 5 Lindberg, Christer (red) *Antropologiska porträtt 2*. 342 sidor ISBN 91-89078-05-5 (1997)
- 6 Gooch, Pernille *At the Tail of the Buffalo: Van Gujjar pastoralists between the forest and the world arena* 391 sidor ISBN 91-89078-53-5 (ak. avh. 1998)
- 7 Persson, Johnny *Sagali and the Kula: A regional systems analysis of the Massim* 245 sidor ISBN 91-89078-87-X (ak. avh. 1999)
- 8 Malm, Thomas *Shell Age Economics: Marine Gathering in the Kingdom of Tonga, Polynesia* 430 sidor ISBN 91-89078-97-7 (ak. avh. 1999)
- 9 Johansson Dahre, Ulf *Det förgångna är framtiden: Ursprungsfolk och politiskt självbestämmande i Hawai'i* 228 sidor Ill. ISBN 91-7267-107-6 (ak. avh. 2001)

- 10 Johnsdotter, Sara *Created by God: How Somalis in Swedish Exile Reassess the Practice of Female Circumcision* 301 sidor ISBN 91-7267-127-0 (ak. avh. 2002)
- 11 Andersson, Oscar *Chicagoskolan: Institutionaliseringsen, idétraditionen & vetenskapen* 336 sidor ISBN 91-7267-153-X (ak. avh. 2003)
- 12 Carlbom, Aje *The Imagined versus the Real Other: Multiculturalism and the Representation of Muslims in Sweden* 234 sidor ISBN 91-7267-154-8 (ak. avh. 2003)
- 13 Antoniusson, Eva-Malin *Överdödens antropologi: En kontextuell studie* 232 sidor ISBN 91-7267-161-0 (ak. avh. 2003)
- 14 Parker, Peter *How Personal Networks Shape Business: An Anthropological Study of Social Embeddedness, Knowledge Development and Growth of Firms* 156 sidor ISBN 91-7267-182-3 (ak. avh. 2004)
- 15 Lindberg, Christer (red) *Nya antropologiska porträtt* 355 sidor ISBN 91-7267-182-3 (2005)
- 16 Sliavaite, Kristina *From Pioneers to Target Group: Social change, ethnicity and memory in a Lithuanian power plant community* 206 sidor ISBN 91-7267-202-1 (ak. avh. 2005)
- 17 Göransson, Kristina *Conflicts and Contracts – Chinese Intergenerational Relations in Modern Singapore* 187 sidor ISBN 91-7167-202-1 (ak. avh. 2006)
- 18 Bourgooin, France *The Young, the Wealthy, and the Restless: Trans-national Capitalist Elite Formation in Post-Apartheid Johannesburg* 342 sidor ISBN 91-7267-249-8 (ak. avh. 2007)
- 19 Matsson, Anna *The Power to do Good: Post-Revolution, NGO Society, and the Emergence of NGO-Elites in Contemporary Nicaragua* 208 sidor ISBN 91-7267-251-X (ak. avh. 2007)
- 20 Holm, Hilma *Knowledge as Action – An Anthropological Study of Attac Sweden* 144 sidor ISBN 91-7267-317-6 (ak. avh. 2010)
- 21 Wittrock, Hanna *Säg inte mötesplats! – Teater och integration i ord och handling* 268 sidor ISBN 91-7267-332-X (ak. avh. 2011)
- 22 Hedlund, Anna *Exile Warriors: Violence and Community among Hutu Rebels in the Eastern Congo* 244 sidor ISBN 978-91-7473-983-1 (ak. avh. 2014)
- 23 Capelán Köhler, Annika *Fibre Formations: Wool as an anthropological site* 260 sidor ISBN 978-91-7753-202-6 (ak. avh. 2017)
- 24 Granbom, Lotta *The Second Wave: The Urak Lawoi After the Tsunami in Thailand.* 356 sidor ISBN 978-91-7753-397-9 (ak. avh. 2017)
- 25 Krantz, Anna Sarri *Tredje generationens överlevande – En socialantropologisk studie om minne, antisemitism och identitet i spåret av Förintelsen* 194 sidor ISBN 978-91-7753-852-3 (ak. avh. 2018)
- 26 Abelin, Matthias *A Swedish Dilemma – A Culture and Rule of Law in Swedish Sickness Insurance* 256 sidor ISBN 978-91-7895-018-8 (ak. avh. 2019)
- 27 Berglund, Anna *Ambiguous hopes: an ethnographic study of agricultural modernisation in a Rwandan village* 223 sidor ISBN 978-91-7895-269-4 (ak. avh. 2019)
- 28 Östergren, Petra *Sweden's Ban on Sex-Purchase: Morality politics and the governance of prostitution* 312 sidor ISBN 978-91-8104-159-0 (ak. avh. 2024)

- 1999:1 Parker, Peter *Cognition and Social Organisation: A Framework* 125 sidor ISBN 91-89078-76-4
- 1999:2 Johansson Dahre, Ulf *Politik med andra medel: En antropologisk betraktelse av rättens politiska och ideologiska förhållanden* 137 sidor ISBN 91-7267-006-1

Not a Real Job?

Teenage students often occupy some of the most precarious positions in the service sector. They earn low wages, face limited job security, and are among the least likely to be unionized in the workforce. Despite this, existing research has largely treated their labor as transitional, focusing primarily on its impact on future educational or career outcomes. As a result, little is known about how these youngest workers experience and make sense of their employment, particularly within the Nordic context.

Not a Real Job? presents a detailed empirical account of the teenage labor force in Sweden, examining both its development and the experiences of young people in low-wage, interactive service jobs. Drawing on survey data and in-depth interviews, the study explores themes of exploitation, social differentiation, and the varied ways teenagers attach meaning to their work. In doing so, it positions teenage labor as a significant site for the formation of youth subjectivities and the reproduction of social inequalities.



LUND
UNIVERSITY

Department of Sociology
Faculty of Social Sciences

Lund Dissertations in Sociology 141
ISBN 978-91-8104-598-7
ISSN 1102-4712

