

Colorful Talent

An evaluation of the experiences of candidates and laureates regarding the Mosaic program and their academic career

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Preface

After almost four years of studying Business Administration, with the master specialization Strategic Human Resources Leadership, at the Radboud University in Nijmegen, I was confronted with the challenge of applying the knowledge and insights gained during my study into a master's thesis. Luckily, I could write my master's thesis about a subject that I have been interested in for a long period of time. My interest in diversity issues started at high school and has never stopped, resulting in writing different papers about diversity issues and following courses related to diversity. I am very grateful that I can finish my studies with a thesis that is related to the subject I like so much. Additionally, what I really liked was the fact that I was able to talk with ethnic minorities myself about their experiences with the Mosaic program and their career. It has made me more aware of the impact ethnic background can have on one's career. That certainly impressed me.

First of all, I would like to thank my supervisor Dr. C. Ossenkop for her guidance, support and feedback while writing my master's thesis. Furthermore, I would like to thank my second examiner Prof. Dr. Y.W.M. Benschop for her constructive and helpful feedback on my research proposal. Besides, I would like to thank some people from NWO. First, S. Sewkaransing-Jadoenath and R. Miedema, since they provided a lot of information about the Mosaic program, NWO and their ideas about a future program. Second, I am very grateful to M. Rijkers, because she e-mailed all the 1300 candidates and laureates of the Mosaic program with the question whether they wanted to participate in this study and created an overview of people who agreed to this. Finally, I would like to thank the respondents of my research for their time, effort and contribution to this study.

I hope you enjoy your reading.

Susan Bosman

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Abstract

Ethnic minorities are still underrepresented in the Dutch academia. In 2004, The Netherlands Organizations for Scientific Research initiated therefore the Mosaic program, of which was the goal to stimulate the inflow and flow of ethnic minorities in academia. At this moment, NWO has received again available funds for achieving the same goal. In order to design an effective future program to stimulate the (in)flow of ethnic minorities in academia, this study seeks to gain insight in the experiences of candidates and laureates regarding the Mosaic program and the way in which the Mosaic program contributes to their academic career and will provide an answer to the question: *“What are the experiences of candidates and laureates regarding the Mosaic program and in which way has the Mosaic program contributed to their academic career?”*

In order to be able to answer the research question, a qualitative study has been conducted. Interviews has been conducted with both candidates and laureates of the Mosaic program. Besides that, documents about the Mosaic program has been consulted.

The results showed that, in general, candidates and laureates experienced the Mosaic program positively, regardless of whether they are still employed in academia or not. Besides that, the Mosaic program contributed positively to the academic career of candidates and laureates, on both personal and career level. However, there are several things that candidates and laureates would like to see differently in a future program. First, they would like to become familiar with academic career opportunities and the Mosaic program earlier during their studies. Second, the definition of target group should be reconsidered, since Mosaic should target on people who experience difficulties and are disadvantaged in life. Third, the selection committees did not have the right knowledge about the specific topics of the proposals and therefore should be compiled in a way that they have more specific knowledge about the topics of proposals. Fourth, the competition was perceived as unfair, because there was a difference in quality of the proposals and candidates and laureates had the feeling that applications related to the medical sciences and Europe were awarded earlier, because they were more socially relevant. A recommendation is to make a distinction in the different disciplines in a future program, where funding is made available per discipline. Fifth, laureates would like to see an alumni network, in which they can share experiences. Last, candidates and laureates missed a kind of flow program, which supports ethnic minorities to stay in academia after obtaining their PhD. However, all these suggestions will not work, if the underlying structure and power processes which cause ethnic inequality remain the same. Therefore, it is important that both NWO and universities also try to change these underlying structures and power processes.

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1. Introduction

Due to the growing pressures of globalization and trends of immigration, the ethnic diversity in Western Europe has rapidly increased during the last decades (Desivilya et al., 2017; Heath, Rothon, & Kilpi, 2008). As a consequence, the composition of the society, and therefore the workforce of organizations, has changed. This requires more interaction between people of different backgrounds, cultures and beliefs (Mazur, 2010). On the one hand, ethnic diversity can be beneficial for organizations (Desivilya et al., 2017; Trejo, 2017; Stirling, 2007). These advantages are for example more creativity and innovation, superior business performance, higher employee satisfaction and loyalty and attracting the best candidates for new jobs (McCuiston, Wooldrich, & Pierce, 2004; Salazar, Feitosa, & Salas, 2017). On the other hand, ethnic diversity can be disadvantageous for organizations, because it can lead to tensions and inequalities between groups and can create stereotypes, prejudices, acts of exclusion, oppression and discrimination (Ramarajan, & Thomas, 2010). As a consequence, a distinction between ethnic groups in the society is created, more specifically a distinction in dominant ethnics and ethnic minorities (Geiger & Jordan, 2014). Ethnic minorities are often disadvantaged in education, educational attainment, access to the labour market and career opportunities in comparison to the dominant ethnics (Heath et al., 2008; Ossenkop, Vinkenburg, Jansen, & Ghorashi, 2015a).

This pattern of inequality is also visible in the Dutch academia. Despite the fact that the amount of ethnic minority students in higher education has increased, the amount of ethnic minority PhD students stays the same (Bussemaker, 2017). Besides that, Crul Kraal, Kamcu, and Pennix (2002) found that ethnic minorities often have a temporary employment contract and work mostly part-time in comparison to dominant ethnics. Furthermore, the highest academic ranks, such as professors, are occupied by the dominant ethnic groups (Crul et al., 2002). According to Moss-Racusin et al. (2014), the overall pace of diversification in academia remains slow.

Due to the low representation of ethnic minorities and the low inflow and flow of ethnic minorities in the Dutch academia, the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO) initiated the so-called Mosaic program. The program started in 2004 and lasted until 2012 and was partly funded by the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW). The primary goal of the program was to give excellent ethnic minority students a higher chance of a scientific career (NWO, 2011). Yearly, the Mosaic program offered twenty ethnic minority master graduates a four-year subsidized PhD position. The people who applied for the Mosaic

program are called candidates. The applicants who actually received the subsidy are called laureates. NWO hoped that these laureates chose for a career in academia after their promotion, so that they could function as a role model for students from ethnic minority groups (Elfering, Uerz, & Winkels, 2008). At this moment, NWO has received again available funds from the Ministry of OCW to stimulate the (in)flow of people from an ethnic minority group to academia. Consequently, NWO wants to conduct a research in which the experiences of candidates and laureates regarding the Mosaic program will be evaluated. They want to obtain information about the way the Mosaic program has contributed to the academic career of candidates and laureates in order to design an effective future program to stimulate the (in)flow of ethnic minorities in academia.

Therefore, the goal of this research is to gain insight in the experiences of candidates and laureates regarding the Mosaic program and the way in which the Mosaic program has contributed to the academic career of candidates and laureates in order to give recommendations to NWO about a future program which is aimed at stimulating the (in)flow of ethnic minorities in academia.

The following research question will be answered in this study:

“What are the experiences of candidates and laureates regarding the Mosaic program and in which way has the Mosaic program contributed to their academic career?”

1.1 Practical relevance

The lack of fair representation of ethnic minorities in the Dutch academia is concerning, because having a diverse academic workforce is valuable (Trejo, 2017). Diversity at universities contributes to the breadth, depth and quality of research and teaching (Trejo, 2017). Other benefits of having a diverse academic workforce are more creativity, innovation and better abilities to learn, because of the different perspectives, experiences and interests of heterogeneous people (Campbell, Mehtani, Dozier, & Rinehart, 2013; Denson & Chang, 2009; Stirling, 2007). Due to the benefits mentioned above, more ethnic diversity could increase the academic excellence of Dutch academia. Increasing the academic excellence is important, since Dutch universities have the ambition to belong to the top research universities in Europe, but preferably in the world (Van Balen, 2010). In order to achieve this ambition, Dutch universities need to attract and retain the best scientists. Besides the fact that the number of ethnic minority students in higher education has increased the last years, the amount of ethnic minority PhD students stays the same, which means a loss of talented students (Bussemaker, 2017). Furthermore, ethnic minorities often choose to exit academia, which is also a loss of talented

scientists (Layton et al., 2016). This is also problematic, since the workforce is greying. In the Netherlands, the percentage of people older than 60 will respectively increase from 24.5 per cent to 33.2 per cent in 2050 (United Nations, 2015). Therefore, universities have to attract talented people in order to fill in positions which become vacant due to retirement of older people.

1.2 Scientific relevance

The existing literature acknowledges that a crucial concern in academia is to attract and retain top talent (Van den Brink, Fruytier, & Thunnissen, 2013). Diversity in academia is essential, since different experiences and perspectives increase the breadth, depth and quality of research and education (Trejo, 2017). However, ethnic minorities are underrepresented in academia at the moment. The problem is that academic careers are usually associated with high levels of uncertainty and competition (Van den Brink et al., 2013). Consequently, many talented students do not choose for academic careers or decide to quit academia early in their career (Ortlieb & Weiss, 2018). The existing literature regarding diversity focuses on two directions: (1) meaning of diversity (2) evaluation of diversity policies and organizational actions (Braedel-Kühner & Müller, 2015). However, the actual experiences regarding diversity of protagonists within organizations are neglected (Desivilya Syna & Raz, 2015; Jones, 2014; Knights & Omanović, 2016). Focus on individual experiences is important, since people evaluate their personal situations differently and these experiences affect career decisions and job outcomes compared to other factors (De Witte & Näswall, 2003). Because this study is focused on the individual experiences of candidates and laureates regarding the Mosaic program and their academic career, it contributes to the literature.

1.3 Outline of the thesis

This paragraph will describe how this paper is structured. The next chapter, the theoretical framework, will discuss theoretical approaches regarding ethnic diversity, careers, career success and inequality in the context of academia. The methodology of this study will be discussed in the third chapter. In chapter four, the results of this study will be discussed and analyzed. Thereafter, the main research question will be answered in chapter five. Moreover, there will be reflected on existing scientific literature, practical recommendations to NWO about a future program with the goal of improving the (in)flow of ethnic minorities in academia will be provided and the limitations and suggestions for further research will be discussed.

2. Theoretical background

In this chapter relevant theoretical approaches regarding the problem of the low representation of ethnic minorities in academia will be discussed. Besides that, the key concepts candidates and laureates, ethnic diversity, careers and career success will be defined, explained and related to the context of academia. Finally, the ethnic inequality within academia will be discussed.

2.1 Candidates and laureates of the Mosaic program

Before explaining the theoretical approaches regarding the low representation of ethnic minorities in academia, it is important to clarify what is meant by a candidate and a laureate in this study. A candidate is someone who has applied to participate in the Mosaic program. A candidate was allowed to apply for the Mosaic program, if he or she met the three following requirements. First, both parents of the applicant are born in one of the target countries or both the applicant and at least one parent are born in those countries. The list with target countries is attached in appendix 1. There are no documents available in which is stated on which definition of ethnic minorities the target countries list is based (R. Miedema, personal communication, March 26, 2019). Additionally, the people who worked at NWO and OCW at the start of the Mosaic program do not work for these organizations anymore. Second, the applicant is graduated or a final year student at a Dutch university and has followed the full university degree in the Netherlands. Third, only applicants who have not yet been appointed to a PhD position at the time of awarding the scholarship can submit an application (NWO, 2004). The candidates that actually received the scholarship are called laureates.

2.2 Ethnic diversity

In order to define the concept of ethnic diversity, both the concepts of ethnicity and diversity will be explained. A group is diverse when people differ on both visible and invisible characteristics, such as gender, ethnicity, race, age and sexual orientation (Kossek, Lobel, & Brown, 2005). This study focuses on one specific characteristic: ethnicity. According to Smith (1986), ethnicity is a characteristic of a group of people who share common ancestry, culture and tradition. Atewologun and Singh (2010) use the term ethnicity for “capturing differences in cultural markers, such as language, values, traditions and natural origin” (p. 334). Members of ethnic groups identify themselves as member of a certain ethnic group and/or are considered by others to be from a particular ethnic group (Smith, 1986). In most studies, ethnicity is treated as a demographic variable. This is problematic, because the actual identification of individuals with an ethnic group can differ across ethnic groups, but also across people within the same

ethnic group (Kenny & Briner, 2007; Ossenkop, Vinkenburg, Jansen, & Ghorashi, 2015b).

In order to define and understand the concept of diversity, the concept of identity should be used (Nkomo & Cox, 1996). This because the fact that identity helps people to understand who they are and why they do what they do (Atewologun & Singh, 2010, p.333). According to Tajfel and Turner (1986) identities are both personally and socially constructed, because identity is about how people identify themselves, but also how other people identify a person.

Diversity is a relational concept, since it is a characteristic of a group of people and not of individuals (Tilly, 1998). In order to say that a group is diverse, it implies the recognition of categorizations of group members (DiTomaso, Post, & Parks-Yancy, 2007). Ethnic diversity can therefore be defined as: “relative (dis)similarities between individuals due to assigned or acclaimed group membership based on assumed similarities in culture, ancestry, traditions and categorizations” (Ossenkop et al., 2015b, p.516). These (dis)similarities between become problematic when they lead to qualitative distinctions between different (groups of) individuals (DiTomaso et al., 2007). It becomes even more problematic when the dissimilarities lead to inequality in opportunities and/or outcomes of members of different groups (Ossenkop et al., 2015a, p.544). Ethnic diversity is often accompanied by ethnic stratification. This means that some ethnic groups are privileged over other ethnic groups, who are marginalized (Geiger & Jordan, 2014). Due to this ethnic stratification, a distinction is made between ethnic majorities and ethnic minorities in the literature. The majority ethnic group often consists of people whose ethnicity is the most numerical represented, and the ethnic minority group consists of people whose ethnicity is less numerical represented (Peeters & Oerlemans, 2009). However, according to DiTomaso et al. (2007) differences in status, power, roles and access to opportunities between different ethnic groups are even important as, and maybe more important than, the numerical representation of certain ethnic groups. Besides that, the norms, values and beliefs of majority ethnic groups are often dominant within an organization. It is important to notice that minorities are not less ‘ethnic’ than majorities (Eriksen, 2002). This because the fact that all the people possess ethnicity (Kenny & Briner, 2007, p.439). Therefore, the preferred terminology in this study is ethnic minorities and dominant ethnics. In this study, the group of ethnic minorities consists of Dutch people with a non-western background, but also includes refugees (R. Miedema, personal communication, March 26, 2019).

2.3 Careers

A career can be defined as “the evolving sequence of a person’s work experiences over time” (Arthur, 2008, p. 166). According to Baruch and Rosenstein (in Baruch, 2004), a career is “a process of development of the employee along a path of experiences and jobs in one or more organizations” (p. 59). This definition acknowledges the idea of a boundaryless career, which means that careers go beyond the boundaries of just one organization (Baruch, 2004). The last years, the main responsibility for career development has shifted from organizations to the employee (De Prins, de Vos, Van Beirendonck, & Segers, 2015). However, organizations also play an important role in planning and managing the careers of individuals (Baruch, 2004).

In the following section, academic careers will be discussed, because they are unique in comparison to other careers (Dowd & Kaplan, 2005). The environment of academia is very global, complex, dynamic and competitive (Ortlieb & Weiss, 2018). Furthermore, the academia is very hierarchical. An academic career is a good example of a boundaryless career, as described above. This because an academic is not dependent of one university, but he or she has to search for different research projects and the best opportunities offered by universities (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996 in: Dany, Louvel, & Valette, 2011). According to Baruch and Hall (2004) moving across universities worldwide is a prerequisite for obtaining a professorship. An academic career can be characterized by many temporary employment contracts, high performance requirements and high competition (Ortlieb & Weiss, 2018). Besides that, the procedures regarding promotion and job replacement are often not transparent and follow ambiguous selection criteria (Ortlieb & Weiss, 2018). This can lead to high uncertainty in an academic career. As a consequence, many people can feel discouraged to choose for or continue with an academic career (Ortlieb & Weiss, 2018).

Furthermore, academic careers can be characterized as an upward mobility system. (Ossenkop et al., 2015a). Mobility refers to moving up to a higher position in the hierarchy (Forrier, Sels, & Stynen, 2009). When someone is moving up to the next hierarchical level, an objective career boundary is crossed (Ossenkop et al., 2015a). According to the League of European Research Universities (LERU) the career path in academia contains the following steps (1) PhD candidate, (2) Post-doctoral researcher (post-doc), (3) Assistant professor, (4) Associate professor, (5) Professor (2018). To obtain a position in university, people have to apply for certain vacancies. These vacancies are often advertised in national newspapers. Formally, there is a system of open competition (Benschop & Brouns, 2003). However, in practice, someone must possess the right academic people in his or her network in order to be considered as a candidate of high quality.

2.4 Career success

Seibert, Crant, and Kraimer (1999) define career success as: “positive psychological or work-related outcomes or achievements that the individual accumulates as a result of work experiences” (p.417). Career success consists of both objective and subjective components. Objective career success can be measured by using indicators such as promotion, compensation and wages and other tangible measurements of achievement. Subjective career success is not easily to measure, because it contains the perception of an individual regarding job satisfaction and the satisfaction with his or her career progression (Callanan, 2003).

Subjective career success can differ among different individuals. This because every single individual has his or her own career aspirations. Therefore, they attach different value to aspects such as income, employment security, work location, status, promotion, access to learning and work life balance (Arthur, Khapova, & Wilderom, 2005). Only a few studies have studied subjective career success in academia (Sutherland, 2017). In her study, Sutherland (2017) found that the most important aspect of subjective career success in academia is life satisfaction, which is about finding a balance between the different aspects of life. Also, contribution the society is considered as important. The last two aspects of subjective career success in academia are freedom, which is about the flexibility of the work, and influencing students, which is about changing student’s lives (Sutherland, 2017). Subjective career success is important in this study, because it is about the experiences of candidates and laureates regarding the Mosaic program and their academic career. As explained above, everyone has his or her own life aspirations and attach value to different aspects of careers and life. Therefore, it was important to find out how satisfied candidates and laureates are with their career, because that could differ from their objective career success.

According to Ng & Burke (2005) objective career success is both influenced by human and social capital. Human capital consists of knowledge, skills and abilities of organizational employees (Lin, Huang, Du, & Lin, 2012). So, human capital is about *what* a human knows (Broadbridge, 2010). Human capital generates value for individuals because it increases individuals’ knowledge, skills, talents and know-how (Roos, Roos, Edvinsson, & Dragonetti, 1997). Individuals are viewed as the owners of their own human capital. Therefore, the human capital theory provides an individual approach to career success (Ballout, 2007). It is individuals’ own choice to decide whether and how much time, effort and money they want to invest in education, training and experience (Lin & Huang, 2005). However, these investments in human capital are critical for an individuals’ career, because it increases productivity and

therefore performance, which subsequently leads to extrinsic rewards, as for example raise in salary and promotion (Davenport, 1999). In other words, organizations reward individuals who possess higher levels of human capital (Lin & Huang, 2005).

Social capital exists in the relationships between people (Coleman, 1988). Social capital can therefore be defined as: “a set of resources embedded in social relationships” (Tsai & Ghoshal, 1998, p. 464). However, Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998) acknowledge that social capital is not only about the actual resources that exist within relationships, but also about the potential resources that can become available within relationships. These existing and potential resources include information, ideas, leads, opportunities, financial capital, power, emotional support, goodwill and cooperation (Baker, 2000, p. 25). So, social capital is about *who* someone knows (Broadbridge, 2010). According to Lin (2001), social capital contains three elements. Firstly, social capital consists of the number of persons in one’s social network. The second element is the (human) capital of the persons in one’s social network. The third element is the willingness of the other persons to share their human capital. The latter reflects the strength of the relationship. It is important to notice that social capital is not the same as networking, since networking can only be considered as social capital, if it becomes a resource for people (Broadbridge, 2010). Social capital has a positive influence on the career success of an individual, because it contributes to career advancement (Seibert, Kraimer, & Liden, 2001).

Specifically, social capital plays a very important role in academic careers. This due to the fact that academics continuously have to acquire career resources, such as funding, influence, merits and time (Angervall, Gustafsson, & Silfver, 2018). Social capital in academic careers can lead to access to new information and resources, career sponsorship, which consequently lead to individual career success in the form of number of publications, research grants, promotions and career satisfaction (Broadbridge, 2010). The accumulation of social capital can therefore be seen as a crucial resource for the creation of an academic career and academic career success (Angervall et al., 2018; Maritz & Prinsloo, 2015; Walker & Yoon, 2017).

As explained above, both human and social capital theory are individual approaches to career success, which means that individuals are responsible for their own career success. However, there are certain structural characteristics can help or hinder individuals in their career advancement, such as organizational practices and organizational cultures (Ballout, 2007; Santos, 2016). This will be explained in the next paragraph.

2.5 Ethnic inequality in academia

Ethnic minorities are often disadvantaged in terms of education, educational attainment, access to the labour market and career opportunities in comparison to the dominant ethnics (Heath et al., 2008; Ossenkop et al., 2015a). According to Brickson (2000), ethnic minorities belong to a group which is traditionally seen as disadvantaged and therefore have less access to power and opportunities. In academia, dominant ethnics are likely to obtain a higher position, a full-time position and a tenure in comparison to ethnic minorities. Therefore, it can be stated that there is inequality between ethnic minorities and dominant ethnics. Acker (2006) defines inequality as: “systematic disparities between participants in power and control over goals, resources, and outcomes; workplace decisions such as how to organize work; opportunities for promotion and interesting work; security in employment and benefits; pay and other monetary rewards; respect; and pleasures in work and work relations” (p. 443).

One important explanation of this inequality in academia is the biases and stereotypes about ethnic minorities that persist throughout academia (Moss-Racusin et al., 2014). These biases and stereotypes lead to prejudice and discrimination in recruitment, selection, career opportunities, wages and training (Kossek & Lobel, 1996). Therefore, these biases and stereotypes undermine ethnic minorities to get full access to their talents. A frequent used bias is that ethnic minorities are seen as having lower intellectual abilities and therefore lower academic competence than dominant ethnics (Okeke, Howard, Kurtz-Costes, & Rowley, 2009). In other words, due to such stereotypes and biases, ethnic minorities are often perceived as having less human capital than dominant ethnics. In comparison with the dominant ethnics, ethnic minorities are perceived to be less able to turn their human capital into career success (Fang, Zikic, & Novicevic, 2009). However, the amount of ethnic minority students has increased the last years (Bussemaker, 2017), which contradicts the stereotype that ethnic minorities are having lower intellectual abilities.

The problem is that these biases and stereotypes are not recognized, because the idea of meritocracy is normalized within academia (Trejo, 2017). In a meritocracy, individuals are recognized and rewarded based on the quality of their contributions to science, and not because of their personal characteristics such as age, gender or ethnicity (Merton, 1973). Academic excellence is usually being expressed in terms of productivity, peer review, citation indexes, internationally refereed publications and membership of editorial boards (Van den Brink & Benschop, 2012, p.508). All these criteria imply that people are responsible for their own merits and therefore their own academic career success. In addition, they imply that ethnicity is

irrelevant in academic career success (Van den Brink & Benschop, 2012). Therefore, if an ethnic minority does (not) achieve career success in academia, it is due to his or her own merit. However, ethnic minorities do not meet the normalized meritocratic nature of academia, which implies that there is inequality between dominant ethnics and ethnic minorities (Trejo, 2017). This due to the fact that standards of merits are constructed by powerful academics (Van den Brink & Benschop, 2012). The group of powerful academics often consists of people from the dominant ethnicity. They have the power and ability to claim what is valuable in an academic career (Clycq, Nouwen, & Vandembroucke, 2014).

Furthermore, there is a difference in (access to) social capital for dominant ethnics and ethnic minorities, which can explain their different career outcomes. Ethnic minorities have less access to resources through social networks than dominant ethnics (Ibarra, 1995). In social networks, ethnicity is the strongest divide (McPherson and Smith-Lovin, 1987). This can be declared due to the concept of homophily. This means that a social network often consists of people who are quite similar to each other (Ibarra, 1995). As a consequence, ethnic minorities are likely to have relationships with ethnic minorities in their social networks. These networks are important, since they provide support, cooperation and role models (Ibarra, 1995). However, for ethnic minorities it is also important to have relationships with dominant ethnics. These relationships are namely necessary in order to function effectively and enable career advancement in a context which is dominated by the dominated ethnics, such as the academia (Thomas, 1993). This because they provide job opportunities, support, influence, status attainment and a higher salary (Van den Brink & Benschop, 2014). However, ethnic minorities are often excluded from those relevant networks due to the concept of homophily (James, 2000). Furthermore, when it comes to promotions, networks play an important role, more than individual merit (Barbosa & Cabral-Cardoso, 2007). This is because some academics who have a key position in academia are involved in the recruitment of new academic candidates. They are called gatekeepers and have to scout appropriate candidates for academic positions via formal and informal networks (Van den Brink & Benschop, 2014). Often, they select candidates in an early stage before the position is officially vacant. As a consequence, gatekeepers determine the new candidates in academia. People from the dominant ethnics often obtain a higher position within academia in comparison to ethnic minorities (Crul et al., 2002). Therefore, a gatekeeper is more likely to be a dominant ethnic rather than an ethnic minority (Ossenkop et al., 2015a). These dominant ethnics often do not grant access to ethnic minorities, which has as a consequence that ethnic minorities have less opportunities to acquire social capital (Lin, 1999).

Despite the barriers they encounter, as described above, some ethnic minorities have managed to obtain a job in academia. Besides requirements as the commitment to time-consuming high-quality research, the ability to learn from and dealing with setbacks, acquiring funding sources and guidance and mentoring in order to make a successful career in academia (Gail Neely, Smith, Graboyes, Paniello, & Paul Gubbers, 2016), development programs and interventions initiated by academic institutions are very important factors influencing academic career success (Zacher, Rudolph, Todorovic, & Ammann, 2019). Mosaic is an example of a diversity intervention, because it stimulated the inflow of ethnic minorities to academia.

In summary, the current structure of academia seems to be characterized by a meritocracy, which means that career success of individuals is based on their own merit. However, ethnic minorities are disadvantaged in academia because of the stereotypes and biases regarding their human capital, the reduced access to relevant social capital and the domination of dominant ethnics in academia. Therefore, it is hard for ethnic minorities to inflow into the academia and make a promotion in academia after obtaining the PhD.

The Mosaic program served as an intervention to stimulate the inflow of ethnic minorities to academia. For this study, the theoretical framework explained the context of academia, in which it is hard to make a career for ethnic minorities. In this study, the career paths of candidates and laureates will be examined, and it will be determined to what extent they are satisfied with their career. Therefore, the subjective career success of candidates and laureates is considered to be more important than the objective career success, because it is hard to make statements about the latter, since everyone attaches different value to certain aspects of work and life.

3. Methodology

In this chapter, the methodology of this study will be discussed. Firstly, the research design, the plan for data collection and data analysis procedure will be discussed. Subsequently, the epistemology and ontology of this study will be discussed. the quality of the study will be considered. In addition, Finally, the research ethics will be addressed.

3.1 Research design

As described in the introduction, the goal of this study is to get a better understanding of the experiences of candidates and laureates regarding the Mosaic program and the way in which it has contributed to their academic career. Qualitative research is suitable for this, since it concerns all forms of research aimed at collecting and interpreting linguistic material in order to make statements about a social phenomenon (Bleijenbergh, 2015). In this study, it is important to find out in detail how candidates and laureates of the Mosaic program perceived the program and their career. Therefore, it is relevant to hold conversations with these candidates and laureates about their experiences.

The goal of a qualitative study can be either theory-oriented or practice-oriented. The aim of theory-oriented research is to contribute to the existing scientific knowledge about a social phenomenon (Bleijenbergh, 2015). Contradictory, the aim of practice-oriented research is to contribute to change or improve a certain situation in practice (Bleijenbergh, 2015). This study attempts to gain insight in the experiences of candidates and laureates regarding the Mosaic program and the way in which the Mosaic program has contributed to the academic career of candidates and laureates in order to give recommendations to NWO about a future program which is aimed at stimulating the (in)flow of ethnic minorities in academia. This means that this study was targeted on a specific situation in practice, namely the experiences regarding the Mosaic program. Therefore, this study concerned a practice-oriented research.

Practice-oriented research can relate to different phases of the intervention cycle (Verschuren & Doorewaard, 2007). The intervention cycle consists of different phases, specifically diagnoses, design, intervention and evaluation. These phases can together solve a problem in a practical situation. The goal of this study was to gain insight in the experiences of candidates and laureates regarding the Mosaic program and the way in which it has contributed to their academic career. This study was therefore an evaluation research. So, the experiences of candidates and laureates regarding the Mosaic program were evaluated, by examining which aspects of the Mosaic program candidates and laureates would like to see again in a future

program and which aspects they would like to see differently. This study is not appropriate for evaluating whether the Mosaic program has achieved the goal NWO wanted to achieve, namely stimulating the (in)flow of ethnic minorities in academia. NWO did not describe on beforehand when the Mosaic program would be considered as successful. Additionally, there was no information available at NWO about the amount of people that finished their PhD and the current position of candidates and laureates. In order to evaluate whether the Mosaic program has achieved the goal of stimulating the (in)flow of ethnic minorities in academia, quantitative research would be more appropriate. That was beyond the scope of this study.

The research approach determines the degree to which a study is theoretically guided (Bleijenbergh, 2015). Deductive research is based on theory since it means that theory will be operationalized in order to make theory measurable in practice (Bleijenbergh, 2015). The researcher sets clear expectations about what he or she thinks that he or she will see in practice, before conducting the research. When doing inductive research, empirical data will function as starting point (Bleijenbergh, 2015). Prior to the observation, as few as possible theoretical expectations are formulated. By continuously comparing different observations, the researcher can discover patterns in the social world. In this study the experiences of candidates and laureates regarding the Mosaic program were the most important, because those experiences served as starting point for answering the main research question. Therefore, this study was an inductive study. Those experiences included the (dis)satisfaction with the processes and procedures of the Mosaic program in order to see which aspects of the program candidates and laureates would like to see again in a future program and which aspects they would like to see in a different way in a future program. Besides that, experiences regarding their career, career (dis)satisfaction and diversity and inclusion in academia are included. This study focused more on subjective career success than on objective career success, because objective career success is hard to measure with qualitative research.

3.2 Plan for data collection

This paragraph will explain which data sources are used to provide information about the Mosaic program and the experiences of candidates and laureates regarding the Mosaic program. In the literature a distinction is made between different data sources, specifically persons, documents, social situations and media (Verschuren & Doorewaard, 2007). In this study, persons and documents are used as data sources. Different forms of data collection methods can be used to gather these data sources.

Firstly, conversations with contact persons of NWO, R. Miedema (Senior Policy

Officer) and S. Sewkaransing-Jadoenath (Junior Policy Officer) are used as data collection method, since these conversations has provided valuable information about the Mosaic program, NWO and the plans of NWO regarding a future program stimulating the (in)flow of ethnic minorities in academia.

Additionally, collecting documents is used as data collection method. In this study, documents regarding the Mosaic program are collected. First of all, documents about the application procedure of the Mosaic program are gathered. Besides that, earlier evaluations of the Mosaic program are collected. In addition, documents which reflect the context of the Mosaic program and the reasons why the program is initiated, are consulted. So, the documents served, in general, as background information about the Mosaic program. These documents served as input for the interview questions since these documents has helped to better understand the Mosaic program and the context of the program.

Third, in order to get in-depth insight in the experiences of candidates and laureates regarding the Mosaic program, semi-structured interviews are conducted. This means that open questions were asked to respondents on the basis of a prepared questionnaire (Boeije, 2014). Because of the prepared questionnaire, it was ensured that no relevant information will be missing at the end of the conversation (Bleijenbergh, 2015). This due to the fact that the researcher could guide the respondent, with the help of the interview questions, to the information that he or she thought that needed to be discussed during the interview. In addition, it offered the possibility to ask questions to the respondent if something was not clear or if a deeper understanding was needed. All the people who have applied for the Mosaic program between 2004 and 2012 received a standard e-mail from the director of NWO in which was asked whether they are willing to participate in a study on the evaluation of the Mosaic program. In total, around 1300 people were approached, of which 193 people were laureates. These people received an e-mail from the director of NWO, because NWO was not allowed to share the contact details of the applicants of the Mosaic program with the researcher. Because of the new European privacy legislation, the GDPR law, the respondents must give permission to use their personal information. So, if a person wanted to participate in the study, he or she should have sent an e-mail to the researcher. In total, 48 people responded positively and wanted to participate in this study. Subsequently, the group of potential respondents was divided into candidates and laureates. This due to the fact that this study is about the experiences of both candidates and laureates of the Mosaic program. The method by which a sample is divided into different subgroups, in this case candidates and laureates, is called *stratified purposeful*

sampling (Flick, 2008). The group of candidates consisted of 11 people and the group of laureates consisted of 37 people. Due to the available time and resources, 15 exploratory, semi-structured interviews were conducted. The sample consisted of 6 candidates and 9 laureates of the Mosaic program. The choice to include more laureates than candidates in the sample is based on the fact that laureates have gone through the entire process of the Mosaic program, so it was expected that they were able to give more feedback about their experiences of the Mosaic program. In addition, more laureates had indicated that they wanted to participate in the interviews, in comparison to candidates. People who are not working and/or living in the Netherlands were excluded from the sample, since NWO was more interested in the candidates and laureates who are still living in the Netherlands, because the program is targeted on the Dutch academia (S. Sewkaransing-Jadoenath, personal communication, April 11, 2019). Furthermore, there was strived for an equal representation of men and women in the sample, so that the results could not be distorted, because of the overrepresentation of one group compared with the other group. This because the fact that when ethnicity intersects with gender, it can result in multiple forms of discrimination (Kirton & Greene, 2016). Besides that, people with different ethnic backgrounds were included in the sample. Additionally, the sample consisted of people who were still working in academia, but also of people who do not work in academia (anymore). The interviews were held in Dutch or English, depending on the preference and proficiency of the respondents. In total, 13 interviews were held in Dutch and 2 interviews in English. Furthermore, the interviews took place in person. Most of the interviews took place in a separate room, so that the conversation could not be disturbed. However, some of the interviews took place in a quiet area of a public space, since it was not always possible to meet at the company where the respondent was working. In one exceptional situation, when it was not possible for the researcher and the respondent to meet each other, the interview took place via Skype. The duration of the interviews was around 60 minutes. After asking for permission and assuring confidentiality, all interviews were recorded for data analysis purposes.

As described before, this research is an inductive research. Therefore, the empiricism was approached as open as possible without many theoretical assumptions. However, existing literature could facilitate the inductive research process since it makes it possible to formulate general terms or concepts to guide the perception (Boeije, 2005; Corbin & Strauss, 2013). These terms or concepts are called sensitizing concepts (Bleijenbergh, 2015). The sensitizing concepts in this research are: career, career success and ethnic diversity, ethnic inequality. These sensitizing concepts served as starting point for the interview questions. The operationalization of the sensitizing concepts is

included in appendix 2. Besides that, documents regarding the Mosaic program were used in order to formulate interview questions about the Mosaic program. The list of documents used is included in appendix 3.

3.3 Data analysis procedure

All the recordings of the interviews were transcribed ad verbatim, or in other words, literally. In order to facilitate the coding process, the program ATLAS.ti was used. As discussed before, this study is an inductive study. The experiences of candidates and laureates regarding the Mosaic program were central in this study and should have been approached as open as possible, without preconceptions and many theoretical assumptions. Therefore, the first step of the coding process was open coding. This means that the transcripts of the interviews were divided into fragments, by giving the fragments a code which reflects the content of that certain fragment closely (Boeije, 2014). In other words, while reading the transcripts of the interviews, codes were created, based on and close to the statements of the respondents. In total, 648 codes were created during the process of open coding. However, during the process of open coding, sometimes multiple codes were used to express the same content. Therefore, the first step after open coding was to create one overarching code for these comparable codes. The second step was axial coding. During this step, the open codes were integrated into more general categories (Bleijenbergh, 2015). The initially 648 codes were reduced to 57 codes, which reflected the core concepts of the empirical data. The third step of coding contained selective coding. In this step, the axial codes, the general categories, were compared and integrated with each other to see how they were related to each other (Boeije, 2014). This was done with the theoretical concepts, as discussed in the theoretical framework, and the corresponding sensitizing concepts in mind. Not all the selective codes will be discussed in the results section. Only the codes that were relevant in order to answer the research question of this study will be elaborated. The codes that are used in this study are attached in appendix 4.

Initially, the most interviews, 13 out of 15, were conducted in Dutch. Therefore, the transcripts and the quotes were in Dutch. Despite the fact that is tried to translate the quotes as precise as possible, there is a possibility that loss of meaning might have occurred. The transcripts and quotes can be obtained by the researcher.

3.4 Epistemology and ontology

In qualitative research it is important to address the epistemology and ontology of this study. These are the fundamental philosophies that are underpinning this study (Symon & Cassell,

2012). Epistemology is about the criteria which determine which knowledge can be considered as scientific knowledge and which not (Symon & Cassell, 2012). There are two stances of epistemology, known as the objectivist epistemological stance and the subjectivist epistemological stance. The objectivist epistemological stance argues that it is possible to observe the world objectively, while the subjectivist stance entails the view that there is no possibility to observe the social world objectively, because it is socially constructed (Symon & Cassall, 2012). This study entails a subjectivist epistemological stance, believing that it is not possible to observe the social world neutral and objectively.

Ontology is about dealing with the essence of phenomena. In other words, it is about the question whether phenomena actually exist independent of our knowing and perceiving or that they exist because of or knowing and perceiving (Symon & Cassell, 2012). A distinction can be made between realist assumptions and subjectivist assumptions regarding ontology. Proponents of realist assumptions believe that there is a real, objective world, independent of people, while proponents of subjectivist assumptions entail the view that reality is socially constructed by people (Symon & Cassell, 2012). This study is based on subjectivist ontology assumptions, believing that reality is socially constructed and there is no objective world that matters.

Due to the fact that this study is based on a subjectivist epistemology and a subjectivist ontology, the underlying philosophy of this study is therefore interpretivism. In this approach, the central idea is that everything is socially constructed, and that people interpret the world around them (Symon & Cassell, 2012). A very important concept in this approach is *verstehen*. That means that it is about “*understanding the actual meanings and interpretations people subjectively ascribe to phenomena in order to describe and explain their behavior through investigating how they experience, sustain, articulate and share with others these socially constructed everyday realities*” (Outhwaite, 1975). In this research, the interpretations and experiences of candidates and laureates regarding the Mosaic program and their career are central.

This study is a discourse analysis, since it is based on an interpretivist approach. Discourse analysis is about the meaning-making process through the study of language and language use (Symon & Cassell, 2017). Discourse analysis differs from content analysis, because the latter is focusing more on the frequency of words that are used. In this study, the experiences of candidates and laureates regarding the Mosaic program and their career are

central, so this study is about understanding their experiences and giving meaning to those experiences. Therefore, this study can be characterized as discourse analysis.

3.5 Quality of research

This paragraph discusses how the quality of this study was guaranteed. Usually, criteria as internal and external validity and reliability are used in order to assess the quality of research. However, in qualitative studies objectivity is not the goal, since they are based on subjectivity and interpretation (Symon & Cassell, 2017). Therefore, the quality of this study is assessed by using the Parallel Quality Criteria of Guba and Lincoln (1989). These criteria include credibility, transferability and dependability.

Credibility is about finding a good fit between ‘constructed realities of respondents and the reconstructions attributed to them’. (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). During the interviews, open questions were asked. This contributes to credibility, because the respondents had the opportunity to express their experiences in their own way (Vennix, 2011). Besides that, all interviews were transcribed ad verbatim, which means that the exact words of the respondent are used in the analysis. This is important, because the empiricism serves as starting point for this study. Furthermore, different data collection methods will be used together, namely conversations with R. Miedema and S. Sewkaransing-Jadoenath, collecting documents and conducting semi-structured interviews, which increases the quality of the results (Van Staa & Evers, 2010). This combination of different data collection methods is also known as data triangulation.

Transferability is about providing as much and detailed information as possible about the research case so that the reader can judge whether the findings can be informed other (similar) contexts (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). In this study, detailed information about the Mosaic program and the sample that is used, is provided. That enables the reader to judge whether the findings are helpful in other contexts.

Dependability is about how ‘methodological changes and shifts in constructions have been captured and made available for evaluation’ (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). This is guaranteed by describing the decisions that are made during this study and why they are made.

A limitation of this study is that the respondents are not chosen randomly, because they had to sign up themselves via e-mail, due to privacy legislations. A risk can be that only the people who have a strong opinion about the Mosaic program wanted to participate in this study,

those opinions can be either very positive or very negative. This because the people who do not have a strong opinion about the Mosaic program have no interest in participating in this study.

3.6 Research ethics

When doing research, it is important to take into account certain ethical rules. Before the start of this study, a confidentiality declaration is signed by the researcher, the supervisor and NWO. In this declaration it is stated that the internal documents of NWO will be only used for this study and will not be distributed to others. In addition, the respondents were treated with respect during the interviews. On beforehand, it was made clear what the goal was of this study and the way in which the findings would be applied. In this case, the findings are applied in order to develop a new program to stimulate the (in)flow of ethnic minorities to academia. Furthermore, the anonymity and confidentiality of the respondents and the answers they give during the interviews, were guaranteed. This means that their names were not used in the transcripts and in further analysis. Besides that, the researcher tried to be as objective as possible. This means that the researcher strived to avoid, or at least minimize as much as possible, her own biases. Additionally, all the articles that were used in this study are referred correctly, which is due to respect for intellectual property (Resnik, 2011). Another important ethical issue is researcher integrity. This means that the researcher acts with sincerity and actually do what is promised. In this study, there was a close collaboration between the researcher and NWO. Therefore, it was important that the researcher informed NWO regarding developments within the study and delivered the results at the promised time. When this study was finished, all the participants were informed about the findings via e-mail. If something was not clear or if they have further questions, they were allowed to send the researcher an e-mail. NWO was also informed about the results via a report and via a presentation.

Besides taken into account certain ethical rules, the researcher should reflect on her own role within this study. Due to the fact that this study is an interpretative study, there is no objective truth. The researcher has to interpret all the documents and interviews on her own. The consequence is that her (un)conscious biases and identity can influence the results of this study. More specifically, the fact that the researcher is a dominant ethnic woman and a Master graduate can affect the results of this study.

4. Results

In this chapter, the results of this study, based on the interviews with candidates and laureates, will be discussed, interpreted and analyzed. This chapter will be structured as followed. First, the career experiences of candidates and laureates will be discussed. Second, the experiences of candidates and laureates before the start of the Mosaic program will be described. Third, the experiences of candidates and laureates during the Mosaic program will be discussed. Last, the role of the Mosaic program in the academic career of candidates and laureates will be described.

4.1 Career experiences of candidates and laureates

In this paragraph the career experiences of candidates and laureates will be discussed.

4.1.1 Academic career success

When talking about their current careers, nine of the respondents were still working in academia, while six respondents do not work (anymore) in academia. Because of confidentiality reasons the current jobs of the people who were not working fully (anymore) in academia will not be mentioned. Of the group of laureates, three people did not have a full job at university. However, they were still doing research or teaching some courses at the university, because they still had scientific ambitions. However, due to time restrictions it is not possible for them to do a lot of research during the year, because they were working fulltime for their current job.

“Yes, just work very hard, earn money and write articles in your leisure time, unfortunately. But of course, you can't develop that very deeply, while there really is, that has to happen (...) And, uhm, uhm, I just can't do it. Yes, in my leisure time.”

The quote above shows that if you have a job outside the university, you have to do research in your leisure time. Because of that, it is hard to develop your research very much in detail. As the previous quotes illustrate, these people were disappointed that they were not able to do a lot of research next to their current job. Since these laureates still have had scientific ambitions, it was asked why they have chosen for a job outside the academia. Two of them did really like doing research, but their primary ambition was the job they were doing at the moment. However, the last laureate really wanted a job at the university.

“I also worked as a teacher for a long time, but always as a freelancer. That is of course striking. (...) And that was the moment that I could apply for a, uhm, job. And that was, uhm, university teacher. (...) I didn't get it. (...) Teacher, while I had fifteen years, uhm, taught, I could, uhm, yes, uhm, I was not selected for the job I actually did. That was very strange.”

As this quote illustrates, the respondent was working for a long period of time as freelance docent at the university. Despite the fact that she was a docent at the university already, she did not get the tenure for university docent. When asking who actually did get the position, it was someone from within the university.

“And, uhm, it's interesting, the one who, uhm, did get that job, he was promoted in the department, so he had that who was selected, uhm, by the committee within the department, yes.”

As the respondent argues, the person who obtained the position, was someone who did her PhD at the department. She argued that it is hard for laureates to obtain a position in university, because they come from outside the university, because Mosaic is a personal grant and not connected to a university.

Of the group of candidates, three people did not have a job at university. Two of them saw the Mosaic program as their only chance to make a scientific career and decided to continue in a job outside the university after their application was not awarded. However, they all have still scientific ambitions, but they acknowledged that it was hard to accomplish those.

“Yes, somewhere it is still in your head ... It is just very often that I get to hear: you should not do a PhD about this. That wish is still there. (...) Uhm, yes, I don't know to what extent, if someone has given up so long, or yes, has not published scientific articles. To what extent can you still find a connection?”

This quote show that it is hard for the candidates to find a job at the university, since they had been working outside the academia for some time. As the respondent argues, if you have not published scientific articles, it is hard to find the connection with the academic world again.

The people who were still working in academia held different functions: PhD (2), postdoc (1), docent (1), assistant professor (4) and professor (1). Three of them made a career in academia without the help of the Mosaic program.

“That ensured that I, uhm, applied for a PhD. An existing one. (...) And there I was hired.”

These respondents applied for an existing PhD position which were vacant at a university and for them, it was the start of an academic career.

When asking how satisfied the respondents were with their current position, most of them argued that they are satisfied with their career. Some people referred to what they have achieved and that they were proud of that:

“I'm, uhm, satisfied. I certainly can't complain. I have a permanent job. I have a Veni. I really can't complain.”

“So, I know the competition is fierce, so that, sometimes, uhm, then, then, when I see that, then I also think that I have done something good that I am sitting here.”

Others were satisfied with their work, because they really enjoyed doing their work:

“I have always been intrinsically motivated. So, I just really enjoy doing it. Uhm, whether I, yes, or I enjoy that it worked out, yes of course. But that's because I like what I do.”

However, other people were less satisfied with their work or would like to see some things differently.

“Unfortunately, I have a temporary contract.”

“The only thing I would like to do just definitive, complete, complete [fulltime] work at a given moment.”

According to the respondents it is hard to obtain a tenure in an academic career. The respondents who had a tenure, indicated that they were all very happy with that accomplishment. Moreover, the respondents argued that it is hard to find a fulltime job at university. At the same time, they indicate that you often work much more hours than is indicated in your contract. That means that if you have a part-time contract, it is not possible to do additional work. Therefore, not everyone was totally satisfied with his or her career. Something else that was mentioned when talking about dissatisfaction about their career was that it is hard to find a balance between work and life in an academic career, according to the female scientists.

“As soon as you miss that balance and work starts to dominate, then I'm just a little less satisfied”.

As more respondents indicated, research never stops. In other words, working in academia is not perceived as a ‘normal’ 9 till 5 job. Therefore, some respondents argued that it was sometimes difficult to find a balance between work and life. They indicated that they were satisfied with their job when it was balanced with their private life. Besides that, some respondents were not satisfied with their career, because they were not able to do research.

Uhm ... Well, now, uhm, I can't spend as much time on research as I would like. I think that's a shame.

Most of the candidates and laureates had the ambition to start an academic career, because they liked to do research. However, not all of them were in a position that they could spend all their time on doing research, because they also had to do other things, like teaching and supervising students, which also took a lot of time. Therefore, the respondents argued that they were disappointed because of that.

In summary, the nine of the fifteen respondents were still working in academia. The people who were not working (anymore) in academia still have scientific ambitions, which are perceived as hard to accomplish. In that respect, they were not satisfied with their career. In general, the people who are working in academia are satisfied with their career. However, sometimes they are not satisfied, because it is hard to obtain fulltime contract and/or tenure in academia, it can be difficult to find balance between work and life and they cannot spend all of their time on research, because of other responsibilities.

4.1.2 Diversity and inclusion in academia

Because most of the respondents were still working in academia and the people who were not working (anymore) in academia still had scientific ambitions, they often mentioned certain influential characteristics of academia, which will be discussed in this paragraph.

4.1.2.1 Diversity

When talking about careers in academia and the composition of the scientific workforce, most respondents argued that the scientific workforce was not diverse, in terms of a reflection of the Dutch society.

“If you look at the population at the universities you see that there are just very few people with a migration background, uhm, yes, teaching. (...) As if, uhm, yes, you live in a society in which certain professional groups, uhm, only belong to a certain group. And in this case, uhm, the white Dutch”

As the quote above illustrates, not many people with a migration background are working at universities. Therefore, the respondents perceived the academia as a sector that belongs to a certain population group, namely white, indigenous Dutch people. So, the academia is seen as a sector which is not ethnic diverse as regarding the people who work there. Some respondents add to that:

“And that means not only white in, uhm, in appearance, but also white in the academic agenda”

“Because most of the knowledge we are teaching now in university are based on the Western developed theories.”

These respondents argued that besides the people who work at university are white, the academic agenda is white. As the second quote illustrates, the consequence of the low representation of ethnic minorities in academia, is that the knowledge within universities is based on Western theories.

However, some respondents argued that the degree of ethnic diversity depends on the context.

“Actually, I think it depends where you are. I think, because, uhm, I have been working in Amsterdam, Utrecht and Nijmegen. There are definitely more Dutch people in Nijmegen, for example”

As this respondent suggested, the amount of ethnic minorities in academia depends on the location where you are in the Netherlands. This because the population in Amsterdam is much more ethnic diverse than for instance Nijmegen. Therefore, the first aspect of the context is the location in the Netherlands. The second aspect of the context consists of the different disciplines of science. This because all the respondents who were working in the medical sciences argued that the ethnic diversity was good in their discipline.

Besides ethnic diversity, the respondents argued that there is less diversity in terms of gender balance.

“And not, uhm, well, women are still, uhm, under-represented. In my team, I am the only woman and we are five, six and I am the only woman.”

Some respondents argued that it is extra hard for women to obtain a high position in academia for women, such as a professorship.

“There are a lot of female PhD students and postdocs but higher up, associate system professors is not always the case.”

“I think, uhm, you as a female, uhm, uhm, researcher just have much fewer chances of having, uhm, to become a full professor, or, uhm, a publication in an A-magazine. And, I think a selection is made there, either unconsciously or consciously.”

These quotes illustrate that the number of women is increasing in lower positions in academia, but in higher positions the distribution between men and women is still not balanced. The respondents argued that women have fewer chances to become professor or publish an article in an A-magazine in comparison to men.

When asking what was, according to the respondents, the importance of diversity in academia, one respondent argued:

“And, uhm, if we want to believe that science has an important social role, then I think it is only necessary that that community can also, uhm, be a reflection of society.”

This quote indicates that the respondents thought that the academia plays an important, social role within the society. Therefore, when the society is diverse, the academia should reflect that diverse society. Besides that, diversity will contribute to the knowledge within academia.

“Because knowledge will grow. If we only have one voice, then the knowledge will just stay there. But if we can include different cultures, different background, different

women, different men, we can contribute to different ideas and have new inspirations to the knowledge. To the applications.”

This respondent argues that diversity in academia will contribute to the knowledge, because people with different backgrounds, different cultures, different gender, they all bring a new perspective to science. In the end, that will improve the knowledge within academia. Moreover, ethnic diversity within academia can lead to new forms of collaborations.

“You can get better, of course, as I said, access to other opportunities in other countries if you know and see people from a certain country. So that is an important, uhm, element.”

As this quote illustrates, an ethnic diverse workforce can possibly lead to access to opportunities in other countries, because the international network within academia will be enlarged.

In summary, the academia, in general, is not very diverse, regarding ethnicity and gender. However, the degree of diversity depends on the location in the Netherlands and the scientific discipline. More diversity in academia would be beneficial in order to fulfill the social role, increase scientific knowledge and enlarge the international network.

4.1.2.2 Inclusion

Some concept that is closely related to diversity, is the concept of inclusion. This because being diverse does not mean that everyone is treated equally. When talking about inclusion, the overall response of respondents is that the academia is not (fully) inclusive.

“When it comes to academic discussions, there is generally a lot of room. Uhm, because that's what we attach to. Uhm, but that, uhm, in terms of content, scientifically content that's just part of your job.”

As this quote indicates, regarding scientific content, the academia can be characterized as inclusive, because in the academia it is all about scientific discussions in order to create more and better knowledge. In that respect, there is openness to new ideas. However, the academia cannot be characterized as inclusive when talking about respecting everyone.

“I think immigrants are still one, uhm, one step behind, in that sense. I don't know if you will be equally appreciated. Just like you are in a discussion in a group, I still think that as someone from an immigrant background you have to prove yourself a little harder to be heard.”

This quote shows that ethnic minorities sometimes feel less appreciated in a group of people and have the feeling that they have to prove themselves.

When asking respondents which factors influencing the fact that the academia is not inclusive to everyone, they gave three main reasons.

“(...) I don’t think they are inclusive because everyone is on their own island anyway, whether you are an immigrant or not.”

As the quote above illustrates, one reason why the academia is not inclusive, according to the respondents, is the fact that it is very individualistic. This because everyone is doing his or own research. Another reason that was been given, is that the academia is hierarchic.

“We are still far too strong a top-down world, so to speak, in which the opinion and position of people who are somewhat higher in the tree have a greater impact on, than, uhm, the position of juniors.”

As these respondents indicate, the academia is hierarchically arranged. In other words, it is top-down organized, with as a consequence that people who have a higher position are seen as more important than people in lower positions. Another reason for the low inclusion is that there is a lot of competition in academia.

“It is hard to receive funding, you compete with so many good people, and the resources are so limited (...) Yes, the tough competition. It, uhm, the pressure that’s on it. Well everyone is sitting..., precisely because you have to perform so much, yes you really have to be very aware of that, if you don't want to suffer from it.”

This quote illustrates that it the competition is hard in academia and that there is a pressure to perform continuously, since there are many talented people in academia and the financial resources are limited. That puts a pressure on the people within academia.

In summary, regarding scientific content the academia can be seen as inclusive. However, when talking about the inclusion of people it is still not inclusive. This because the culture is very individualistic, top-down oriented and competitive.

4.1.3 Importance program targeted on ethnic minorities

Because of the fact that the academic culture is still not diverse and inclusive enough, all the respondents argued that a program like Mosaic is needed in the future in order to stimulate the (in)flow of ethnic minorities in academia.

One reason for that, is to overcome the barriers ethnic minorities across in their lives and careers. When talking about that, they said:

“Yes, and work hard, actually. The fact that always, uhm, yes, has to work twice as hard to be treated equally well or equally badly.”

“You have to, yes, uhm, because again, I, I, I, uhm, I, I never really have the sense of discrimination, that is not, but, uhm, somewhere yes, yes you have to be twice as sure he, you can't afford a mistake. Where the other might be overlooked, but with you extra attention would be paid. Uhm... but that [discrimination] is very subtle.”

As these quotes above illustrate, ethnic minorities had the feeling that they always had to prove themselves, that they have to work twice as hard order to be treated the same way as indigenous Dutch. Furthermore, ethnic minorities felt that they cannot afford a mistake. These respondents argue that was not that they experienced discrimination on a daily basis, but that it was very subtle. Therefore, it is hard to obtain a position at university for ethnic minorities.

“Uhm, so we've had a very long time since Mosaic has been abolished, other subsidies have been abolished and we have seen that it has not worked. So, the whole idea that if you work hard, then you get there. That's just not true.”

This quote illustrates that it has been proven that ethnic minorities did not inflow into academia based on their own strength, because of the subtle biases and forms of discrimination against ethnic minorities. Since it is hard for ethnic minorities to inflow into academia, the Mosaic program was perceived as very valuable.

“Uhm ... What I thought was very good is that you were not alone, it was quite an opportunity for, uhm, people who might have otherwise not had that opportunity.”

According to the candidates and laureates, Mosaic was a program that gave chances to people who otherwise would not have received such a chance to start an academic career. Therefore, the Mosaic program is perceived as very valuable for ethnic minorities in order to overcome the barriers they experienced.

“And, uhm, because, uhm, but maybe could be a special program, it could still create openness again. So that door upstairs in the ivory towers and horses that are there, to open them, let's say.”

This quote shows that a future program with the aim of stimulating the (in)flow of ethnic minorities is needed in order to create openness of the university, so that the whole idea of the university as ivory tower will disappear, and universities become more diverse.

In summary, a program like Mosaic is seen as valuable by the candidates and laureates since it makes it possible to overcome the barriers ethnic minorities experience, such as discrimination, which makes it hard to start an academic career.

4.2 Experiences before the start of the Mosaic program

In the previous paragraph, the experiences of candidates and laureates regarding their academic career were discussed. That paragraph showed that ethnic minorities experience the academia as not diverse and inclusive enough. Because of that, candidates and laureates acknowledged the importance of a program targeted on ethnic minorities, such as Mosaic. Therefore, it is important that there will be reflected on the experiences of candidates and laureates regarding the Mosaic program in order to examine which aspects they would like to see again and which aspects they would like to see differently in a future program with the aim of stimulating the (in)flow of ethnic minorities in academia. In this paragraph the experiences of candidates and laureates before the start of the Mosaic program are central.

4.2.1 Familiarity with academic career/opportunities

When asking about their ambitions during their studies and the question whether they are familiar with the possibility of doing a PhD, two of the respondents replied:

“But I think in my case, uhm, yes, maybe really because of my migration background, the idea of advancing further in academia. That just didn’t live. That was not so clear. Uhm, and precisely, yes, because of this opportunity, it eventually became real...”

“... So never before did I, uhm, deepen in that or what, I did just not know that there, that the chance was there. That was an unknown domain for me. And well, of course you see people getting promoted, you know your teachers are promoted, but I just really had no appreciation, no idea how that, uhm, would work, or how that went.”

These quotes of both respondents show that most of the people with a migration background are not familiar with the possibility of doing a PhD during their studies. Some of the respondents argue this is because they, or their parents, moved to the Netherlands for a better future, which includes, according to them, job security and a good job.

“When I speak from my own experience, I just notice that many, uhm, students with a non-Dutch background... For them job security is especially important, he. So, uhm, maybe their parents came here with the idea: okay we are going to offer a better future, uhm, for our children. Well if then, uhm, it turns out that they want to study for ten years, then that is, yes, that might be going against it”

The quote above shows that the respondent does not associate a PhD with a job and job security. They rather associate doing a PhD with continue studying.

In summary, ethnic minorities are not familiar with the possibility of doing a PhD.

Besides that, a PhD is not associated with a good job and job security, things that are important for ethnic minorities.

Since the fact that an academic career was not usual for ethnic minorities, as described above, not all the candidates and laureates had, initially, the ambition during their studies to do a PhD. However, almost all the candidates and laureates found out that they really enjoyed doing research during their master thesis.

“But I really enjoyed doing research myself. I found that out with my thesis. So, then I thought, yes, I think that’s really something for me. I felt completely at home there.”

“Yes, I thought about it, and then I thought: yes, maybe yes, because, yes, I had written a very good thesis and then you already learn a way of doing things that are interesting for, uhm, a career in academia. So, that’s why I wanted to try it, uhm, then.”

These quotes suggest that candidates and laureates enjoyed writing their master’s thesis and received a good grade for it, which had as a consequence that their interest in a scientific job was developed. Because the master’s thesis was at the end of their study, some candidates and laureates argued that it would have been good if the possibility of doing a PhD was introduced earlier during their study.

In summary, most of the ethnic minorities are not familiar with the possibility of an academic career. They are raised with the idea that they moved to the Netherlands for a better future, which includes a good job and job security. They do not associate an academic career with a good job and job security. Because ethnic minorities are often not familiar with the possibility of an academic career, their interest for doing research was developed only when writing their master thesis.

4.2.2 Familiarity with the Mosaic program

When talking about how the respondents became familiar with the Mosaic program, ten of the fifteen respondents heard of the Mosaic program from their teacher.

“That was actually because of my, uhm, thesis supervisor. He knew about it. And he said we must, we could try this. Uhm, we should do that. So, then we worked on an, uhm, application. So I, I heard it from him, before that, I did not know about the existence of it, uhm, no.”

This quote shows that most of the candidates and laureates heard about the Mosaic program from their supervisor of the master’s thesis. Only one person was looking for grants on the internet and found Mosaic as an option. Four people heard about the Mosaic program through the grapevine. Most of the candidates and laureates did not know about the Mosaic program

themselves. When asking what their recommendations regarding familiarity with the program for a future program would be, two respondents said:

“Maybe a little more familiarity. Because otherwise I would have known about it [the Mosaic program] earlier, I just didn’t know it.”

“Bring more attention to the program. (...) As early as possible and as much as possible. As I said, I knew about it accidentally. And, uhm, I think that through that, uhm, you miss a lot of the students”

As previous quotes illustrate, the candidates and laureates recommended to promote the Mosaic program better in the future. With promoting better was meant that people should become familiar with the Mosaic program as early as possible during their studies. When not everyone is informed about this opportunity, there is a possibility that NWO will miss a group of talented students.

When talking about the reason why the candidates and laureates applied for the Mosaic program the reactions differed from each other. Some candidates and laureates were looking for funding and therefore Mosaic was seen as an interesting chance.

*“Uhm ... * Silence *. Yes, I think, uhm, yes, in my case, I must say honestly: I had already made some contacts, because I have already been in a graduation project. And then you already have some people, uhm, who see your potential. Just didn't have the money. That is then another.”*

This quote illustrates that for some candidates the Mosaic program was an option for funding and that was the reason why people applied for the Mosaic program. For them, it was a means to achieve their goal, which was receiving funding for a PhD position. They already had some people in their network who saw their potential and could offer them a PhD position. The only obstacle was that there was no money available at the university.

Besides that, some candidates and laureates already made previous attempts to get a PhD position, but they failed in doing so.

“Yes, because I had been busy [with applying for a PhD position] for a while and I was always unlucky. (...) Well maybe this is a way, so I actually participated.”

Previous quote illustrates that Mosaic was, for some of the candidates and laureates, a new attempt in order to achieve the goal of obtaining a PhD position, because previous attempts failed.

When asking to what extent candidates and laureates had the feeling that Mosaic was their only chance for obtaining a PhD position, the opinions were divided. Some candidates and laureates did not consider the Mosaic program as the only chance to obtain a PhD position.

“I also know that some of the people I was in the round with, they said, well, you know, I participate in this, because you have to participate in everything, but if I don't succeed, if it's here, if I if I don't get it here, then I know for sure that it will work out in a different way.”

This quote mentioned above shows that some candidates and laureates believed that they were also able to do a PhD without the Mosaic program. However, some people argued that, for them, Mosaic was the only chance to do a PhD.

“So, I saw that as my chance. I thought if I don't even get it where I am privileged, well then it will become completely impossible with even more competition from the native Dutch, uhm, students. That was kind of my idea.”

This quote illustrates that some candidates and laureates perceived the Mosaic program as the only possibility to do a PhD. This because they only had to compete with ethnic minorities, and it felt totally impossible to obtain a PhD position when they also had to compete with the native Dutch people.

Someone else added to that:

“And, uhm, as I said in the beginning, hey, the, um, the Mosaic funding is there, has really been determining in that. If, uhm, if I hadn't received it, I would have had a completely different career.”

This laureate argued that his career would look totally different when his application was not awarded, so he also saw Mosaic as his own chance of obtaining a PhD.

In summary, most of the respondents heard about the Mosaic program via their teacher. Additionally, some of them heard it on the grapevine and one found it himself. Almost all respondents heard not about the Mosaic program themselves. Therefore, they would like to see that there is more promotion as early as possible for a future program. There were several reasons why people applied for the Mosaic program, namely (1) previous applications failed (2) searching for funding (3) they saw it as the only chance for obtaining a PhD position.

4.2.3 Reactions on program targeted on ethnic minorities

When talking with respondents about their (first) thoughts when they heard about the Mosaic program, most of them mentioned the term ‘positive discrimination’.

“Yes, that was positive discrimination, yes, that doesn't feel right to me. I just didn't do that. So, I just told my colleagues about, uhm, someone is coming to interview because I applied for a scholarship, but I didn't say that specifically for ... Yes, it feels less or something. You are not good enough for the regular way and you need that extra push.”

So somewhere that plays with me. But I also have pride, perhaps. I don't want to be favored without being entitled to it or something, without ... I can do it myself, I think.”

“(…) Yes, for people with a migration background, uhm, yes, it is as if I get a job because of my background and not because of my qualities.”

These respondents described that they felt that they were favored because of the Mosaic program. For them, it felt like they got a job, because of their ethnic background and not because of their qualities. That is something that they do not want. They want to be chosen, because they are good and have the desired qualities for an academic position. They had the feeling that they were only chosen because of their ethnic background, or those of their parents. In some of the cases, candidates and laureates felt shamed against other people. That illustrates the quote of the candidate (#11) well. She did not tell her colleagues that she participated in a study about a scholarship for people with a migration background. Actually, she left out the part that it was for people with a migration background, because she was ashamed of it. Some laureates argued that they felt guilty against other people, because they received the Mosaic funding.

“Uhm, yes, again actually one side, on the one hand, guilt. Because as a foreigner you are favored. You actually don't feel that completely fair to everyone. Basically, what you would like is just that anyone can apply and not just because you are of foreign origin... So, on the one hand guilt.”

This quote of a laureate describes the feelings of guilt of some laureates when they received the Mosaic funding. They described the Mosaic program as not fair to everyone, because only people with an ethnic minority background could apply for it. They did not want a privilege, because of their ethnic background. However, not all the candidates and laureates perceived the positive discrimination as not fair.

“And then for the first time you feel that you are once approached from a positive side because you are of foreign origin. Yes. So I have it very, yes, as a positive, uhm, yes, you actually feel a bit more at a time like this that you have never experienced before, but precisely that you have to prove extra because you like foreigners origin, that you don't have to do that once and that you still get a little extra, yes.”

This quote illustrates that some candidates and laureates think a program as Mosaic is very valuable, just because it is targeted on ethnic minorities. As the laureate explained, most of the time, ethnic minorities have the feeling that they have to prove themselves to others, because they have another background. Therefore, ethnic minorities are usually disadvantaged in daily life and Mosaic was a chance by which ethnic minorities were privileged, just because they usually not get such chances.

In summary, most of the respondents use the term ‘positive discrimination’ when talking about the Mosaic program. Some candidates and laureates argued that they not want to be chosen because of their ethnic background, but because they are possessing the right qualities for a certain position. A few laureates mentioned that they felt guilty against other people, because they received the grant and native Dutch people had no chance of receiving this funding. However, other people argued that it was good that Mosaic was targeted on ethnic minorities, because they often did not get a chance and usually did not come there on their own.

4.3 Experiences during the Mosaic program

In this paragraph the experiences of candidates and laureates during the Mosaic program will be explained. This paragraph is divided in one sub-paragraph about the positive experiences and one sub-paragraph about the less positive experiences of candidates and laureates.

4.3.1 Positive experiences

When talking about the good aspects of the Mosaic program, the candidates and laureates mentioned three main aspects. These aspects are: assessment based on quality, the Mosaic trajectory and the atmosphere during workshops.

4.3.1.1 Assessment based on quality

Something that candidates and laureates considered as a good aspect of the Mosaic program is the fact that the basic requirements for participation to the Mosaic program were based on the quality of the ethnic minorities. Or in other words, the applications were assessed based on their CV and motivation.

“Had a good CV. Were very smart. (...) That was very nice because you did not have the idea that you get a subsidy just because you are a foreigner.”

This quote illustrates very well that candidates and laureates appreciated the fact that all the people who applied for the Mosaic program were screened on the basis of their CV. They perceived that as a good aspect of the Mosaic program, since it gave them the feeling that they were not selected because of their ethnic background, but because they have the right qualities. That is something they found important, because they all indicated that they did not like the feeling of positive discrimination, as elaborated in paragraph 4.2.3.

In summary, candidates and laureates valued the fact that their applications were assessed on basis of their CV and motivation, so their qualities.

4.3.1.2 Mosaic trajectory

In general, laureates described the Mosaic trajectory as very informative.

“And, uhm, but, uhm, yes it was so well supervised with workshops indeed, writing an application step by step and going a step further, that is all informative. Although you might not get it in the end. Then you didn't do it for nothing. I thought that was very good. Yes.”

As previous quote illustrates, the laureates learned a lot throughout the process of Mosaic. They all thought it was very valuable to learn stepwise how to write a proposal and how to apply for a research grant. The candidates and laureates learned very much from the workshops and the feedback they received from NWO. This was valuable since the most of them did not have any experience with applying for a grant as the following quote illustrates:

“Because at that time I had not have any experience actually with applying for a grant.”

The respondents argued that they thought that if they did not receive the Mosaic grant, they still learned a lot from it and could take it with them in their future career.

“Suppose, that I did not receive it, precisely because I had been working all the time on, uhm, on the application, on the research proposal, with the input from these meetings that we had, the workshops. Yes, then, that application had become really good, so if it had not been successful at Mosaic, then I would have had a more or less ready-made application, which I could submit elsewhere.”

As the previous quote suggests, because the laureates and candidates learned so much during the Mosaic trajectory, they felt that their proposal was very well-developed and if their proposal was not awarded, they could have handed in the proposal of Mosaic somewhere else.

An important feature of the Mosaic trajectory is the guidance from NWO.

“Uhm... Well, the workshops we had were very inspiring, I thought. Uhm, and yes, that you could talk to, um, researchers, because then we could get feedback on our proposal.”

“I thought it was good. Yes, it was actually, uhm, odd in the sense of I didn't expect so much feedback on the process. I thought the workshops were just fine.”

These respondents said that the guidance of NWO was very good. This due to the fact that the candidates and laureates received much feedback on their proposals and learned a lot during the workshops, which were characterized as inspiring. Besides the workshops and the feedback they received of NWO, they were also satisfied with the Mosaic coordinators.

“She was the coordinator; she was the point of contact. And she was very, very accessible, so if we had questions or anything, that always went well with her.”

According to this laureate, the coordinator of Mosaic was very accessible for everyone. So, when someone needed help or something, you could ask her everything. That has been experienced as very positive about the guidance of Mosaic.

Also, the role of the teacher, or future supervisor, was emphasized as playing a crucial role in the Mosaic trajectory.

“At that moment I really received all the support from my promoter and co-promoter, yes, what I needed. And also, just to, uhm, build up, set up a study, how do you do that? What do you need for that? What kind of tools? What kind of people do you need for that? Uhm, what is involved in a PhD research? How should you record that in the coming years? Because you are actually completely new to something that you have never had to deal with, uhm. And actually, a whole research proposal, for the next four years, yes that requires certain expertise and I could do that, I received that help from my co-supervisor and my supervisor.”

This previous quote illustrates that support from the supervisor is very important in the Mosaic trajectory. Most of the respondents received a lot of support and feedback from their supervisors. The supervisors helped them with giving feedback, but also learned them how to write a proposal and which things are involved in writing an application for a grant. However, not everyone did not receive many help from their supervisor.

“From my own teachers and so I did not get proper guidance. Not good guidance in the sense of how to write a good application and how to deal with disciplinary differences. (...) So, what went wrong with me was actually the guidance. Uhm, I had to figure it all out for myself. And that's just too much. Certainly, if it is very competitive and you have to figure it all out yourself, then it is very difficult.

Someone adds to that:

“So, everything is pretty much dependent on a teacher.”

These quotes illustrate that the teacher is very important in the application process of the Mosaic program. The quote of the first candidate shows that if you could not find the right teacher and did not receive many help with writing your proposal, there is a big chance that the proposal was not awarded. This because, in that case, you had to figure everything out yourself. Writing an application without help was experienced as difficult, because the candidates and laureates did not have any experience with it on beforehand.

In summary, the candidates and laureates of the Mosaic program experienced the Mosaic trajectory as very informative, in which good guidance of NWO and the guidance of a supervisor played an important role.

4.3.1.3 Atmosphere during workshops

When talking about the competition during the workshops, most of the candidates and laureates argued that the competition was very high.

“Uhm... Yes, of course, you feel somewhat competitive just because you all have a fifty percent chance, so you know half... Yes. The one next to you and the one behind you, in front of you and behind you, you have to try to push sort of away to give yourself a greater chance. Uhm, so sure, in the back of your mind you know that.”

This quote shows that the competition was perceived as very high, mainly because only a small group received the grant in the end. Every candidate knew that there was a chance of fifty per cent that their application was honored. That caused more feelings of pressure. Another thing that contributes to the feeling of competition was that there were a lot of talented people who participated in the Mosaic program.

“Yes, then it is clear that there are many smart people with many ideas”

*“Then I got hope again, because I was through the first round, but then I met all those other talents, and those are real talents ...! Whereby my, uhm, * laughs * yes, my, uhm, my motivation went down a bit”*

These quotes show that the other candidates of the Mosaic program were seen as very smart, having good ideas and talented. This increased the feeling of competition.

However, actually the candidates and laureates experienced it as valuable that people were physically brought together.

“Bringing those people together. (...) And also along, uhm, discussions and, uhm, so that, I thought that social aspect was also, uhm, interesting.”

When asking how the people would describe the atmosphere between candidates during the workshops, they argued it was very good and that they not had the feeling of competition.

“I just remember we work together in groups. It is always nice to work in groups. Yeah. But I don't remember any wrong thing.”

“Uhm ... Yes. Uhm, well that's funny. I had, uhm, we were even in, uhm, in the first round there was pretty much togetherness. I do have a kind of yes group of friends at the time, we did a lot together. So, we did not see each other as competitors.”

These quotes illustrate that the collaboration with other candidates was perceived very well. The candidates did not see each other as competitors, so the atmosphere was very good during the workshops. As the second quote shows, in some cases, friendships were created during the workshops. That illustrates well that the atmosphere was good between the candidates.

In summary, the atmosphere between candidates and laureates during the workshops was good, despite the feelings of competition they experienced.

4.3.2 Less positive experiences

When talking about the less positive aspects of the Mosaic program, the candidates and laureates mentioned three main aspects. These aspects are: definition of the target group, diverse selection committee and competition.

4.3.2.1 Definition of the target group

When asking about what respondents' thoughts were about the basic requirements of the Mosaic program, most of them had some difficulties with the definition of the target group of the Mosaic program. Some candidates and laureates would not describe themselves as eligible for the Mosaic program. This can be illustrated by the following quotes:

“At the beginning I found the Mosaic a bit strange. Because I had the idea of yes, but I am just Dutch (...) So, I personally thought it was a bit weird, I had the feeling that I was exploiting a little.”

“There were really only Dutch people. (...) I mean to call these people immigrants, is almost offensive, because those are just people who, they were born here. Coincidentally they have a mother who comes from Poland.”

The quotes above show that these laureates do not consider themselves as people with a migration background, because they were born in the Netherlands. They think that other people need a program like Mosaic, which the following quotes show:

“Because I found that Mosaic applications are much more for people with problems, who do not get there, who need an extra push, I do not need that at all. I've always done everything myself. I have never actually experienced disabilities or barriers. So, I thought that didn't suit me.”

“... But yes, I think I thought somewhere, so well this [rejection of application] is also justice. In the sense of... there are people, whose migration background, uhm, weighs much more heavily in the chance they get than with me. With my European name. Uhm, and my fairly European appearance. Uhm, hey, so I'm fine if it's well spent there.”

Previous quotes illustrate that some candidates and laureates did not have the feeling that they belong to the target group of the Mosaic program. These candidates and laureates characterized the Mosaic program as a program for people who experience difficulties and are disadvantaged in their career because of their migration background. They did not see their migration

background as a barrier in their career, and they did not experience that they did not get chances because of their migration background. This because they are born in the Netherlands and they describe themselves as Dutch and not someone with a migration background. The candidates and laureates argued that they think that the first generation of ethnic minorities need it more than the second generation. Since some laureates who are born in the Netherlands did not have the feeling that they disadvantaged, they felt that they were exploiting and felt it was not ethical, because other people needed it more than them. The same applies to some candidates whose applications were rejected. They perceived it was justice that their application was not awarded, because other people deserve it more. According to the candidates and laureates, the Mosaic program should have targeted on ethnic minorities with a difficult childhood, low (financial) resources and low privileges, because they need it more than people who are born and raised in the Netherlands. This can be illustrated by the following quotes:

“So, if someone with a wealthy family, also with a migration background, they just do not need that. The children of the of the mayor, yes, they already have everything. They do not need that.”

“I was like, uhm, I remember when we had a conversation in the department, or, uhm, for example, princess Amalia, he, could apply. Because she has one parent who is not Dutch. According to the rules, she has a migration background. So, I just thought it was a bit weird, from, are the rules set sharp enough? That the right people, uhm, are helped with this?”

This second quote suggests that princess Amalia, of which one parent is born in Argentina, according to the rules, is eligible for the Mosaic program. However, the respondent wondered whether someone like princess Amalia, who is born and raised in the Netherlands, has (financial) resources and privileges, need a program like Mosaic in order to make a career in academia. The same applies to the children of the mayor, illustrated by the first quote. In summary, according to the respondents, people who are born and raised in the Netherlands and are not disadvantaged should not be eligible for the Mosaic program. Therefore, the target group was perceived as too broad, targeting too many people, who did not all need such a program in order to make a career in academia.

Furthermore, something else that was addressed several times when talking about the target group of the Mosaic program was the fact that candidates and laureates think it is important that the participants of the Mosaic program stay in the Netherlands after obtaining their PhD.

“What I noticed, I also don’t know if that is really an honest statement, but you also noticed that there were a lot, uhm, candidates, uhm, they were not Dutch and did not

*... speak the Dutch language. In was wondering, I wondered, I wonder to what extent that is, let's say... *silence* fair. Look, we want to increase the diversity within the Dutch [emphasized] science (...) Try to look for a group of people that you hope will also stay in the Netherlands and can then serve as a sort of role model within the Netherlands”*

“But you have people who come from abroad for example, uhm, really come for that promotion and then they leave again...”

These quotes show that candidates and laureates consider it as important that participants of the Mosaic program stay in the Netherlands after obtaining their PhD. This because the goal of the Mosaic program was to increase the ethnic diversity in Dutch academia. Additionally, the people who obtained their PhD can serve as role models in the Dutch academia. The candidates and laureates who mentioned these things, think that some people only came here for the Mosaic program and then leave the Netherlands. They think that this was not fair and was not the goal of the Mosaic program.

As mentioned above, many laureates and candidates were having some troubles with the target group of the Mosaic program, since they perceived it as being too broad and not targeting the right people. However, some people argued that the target group is too narrow.

“And again, for me that had nothing to do with, uhm, a migration background. It was just added value for every young researcher, scientist. So yes, I was kind of, uhm, nice that this is done as part of Mosaic, but basically this is something that can add value to everyone.”

“I would only like to feel more open to more, uhm, to a larger audience, instead of just an immigrant background. Yes.”

Previous quotes illustrate that some people would have preferred that the Mosaic program was accessible for every young scientist, because the Mosaic program can be of added value for all young scientists and not only young scientists with a migration background.

According to NWO (2011), someone was eligible to the Mosaic program, if he or she met the following requirements:

- (1) both parents of the applicant were born in one of the target group countries or both the candidate himself and at least one of the parents was born in one of these countries.
- (2) The applicant is a graduate or final-year student at a Dutch university and has completed the full university education in the Netherlands. For this requirement, some exceptions can be done. These exceptions can be found in the document of NWO (NWO, 2011)
- (3) Only graduates who have not yet been appointed to a PhD position at the time of granting the scholarship can submit an application.

In summary, the candidates and laureates of the Mosaic program perceived the Mosaic program as a program for people who experience difficulties and are disadvantaged in their career because of their migration background. Therefore, the people who are born and raised in the Netherlands did not have the feeling that they belong to the target group of Mosaic. Besides that, they argued that it is important that the people stay in the Dutch academia. Some of the candidates and laureates argued that Mosaic would be beneficial for every young scientist.

4.3.2.2 Diverse selection committee

Something else that was mentioned a lot during the interviews, was the composition of the selection committee of NWO. The selection committee of NWO consisted namely of people from different scientific disciplines. That means that the selection committee was not composed of people who all have knowledge about the specific topic of a proposal. The respondents indicated that they missed people in the selection committee with specific knowledge about their topic.

“Yes, that was strange too. I thought that was strange too. There wasn't really one ... Maybe there was only one [scientific field respondent] in the selection committee. You actually have to work on that. Yes, because that is just like a carpenter is going to judge how a plasterer has performed his work.”

This quote illustrates well that respondents thought that the diverse selection committee was not able to judge their applications, because they not had the specific knowledge about their topics. Moreover, some people argued that that was the reason for not receiving the Mosaic grant.

“I was not yet well aware of that. And that has ruined me in the final. That difference. Because there wasn't a philosopher in my committee. All social scientists.”

“... Of course, I thought afterwards: I did not receive it [the first time], because they did not understand it. Yes, how could they understand it, because they were not in my field, not at all.”

Both above mentioned respondents felt that their applications were not awarded (the first time), because the people within the selection committee did not have the right knowledge that is needed to pass a judgement on it. This because they lack knowledge about the specific topic. They are only able to assess the proposal based on general scientific issues.

In contrast, the respondents mentioned that the diverse selection committee provided new insights for their proposal.

“Because I didn’t know what to expect and I knew it was going to be committee will be very broad, so I needed to learn to present myself and my research in layman’s terms. So that was something really new to me. That was actually quite helpful.”

“And I found that very enlightening. To what extent you are in your own world and think that this is very clear, how that is very unclear to someone else or what someone says about it is not at all feasible what you have written there, yes, I found that very enlightening. That also makes you think again. Again, you are so inexperienced in such a moment. Sometimes you just need that handle. And we got that too.”

First, these quotes show that respondents learned a lot of the diverse selection committee, because they had to present their proposal in layman’s terms, due to the fact that the people in the selection committee did not have specific knowledge about their topics. Second, people from the different disciplines provided new insights to their proposals, because they all have a different perspective on science. So, they asked critical questions about the proposals, which had led to a better quality of the proposal.

In summary, on the one hand the consequence of the diverse selection committee was that the people within the selection committee did not have specific knowledge about the topics of the proposals. Therefore, the respondents argued that it was not possible for the for the selection committee to assess the applications. On the other hand, the candidates and laureates learned a lot about the diverse selection committee, because they learned to explain their research in layman’s terms, and it provided new insights.

4.3.2.3 Competition

When talking about the competition, some respondents argue that there was discrepancy in quality of the proposals of applicants for the Mosaic program.

“I am sure that there were many people who already had a proposal that the promoters worked on. And I think that there will still be, uhm, yes, there will of course just be some discrepancies, just quality, uhm, of the proposals. Because if you, as a recent graduate, have to work out a proposal for a PhD research, on your own, yes, that is of course different from if your supervisor already has a proposal.”

“... Some candidates have already, were already doing research. Uhm, yes, that is maybe something, because, uhm, how do you say that? It influences the balance between some candidates.”

These respondents argue that there is discrepancy in quality of the proposals due to two reasons. First of all, most of the respondents were just finished with their master when they applied for

the Mosaic program. They did not have much experience in doing research. However, they had to compete with people who already had some experience in doing research. Second, when you just finished your master, you do not have much experience in writing a proposal. However, some of the candidates handed in an already existing proposal of their supervisor. That was clear because they handed in high-quality proposals. As a consequence, the competition is perceived as not totally fair. Both the above mentioned laureates received little help from their supervisors while writing their proposal.

Furthermore, many respondents argue that social importance and/or relevance of proposals was decisive in the decision-making process which proposal was awarded and which not.

“...Yes, no, I also thought that was unusual. Uhm, yes, then I have to compete with someone who is doing research about cancer. And, uhm, yes, then I think, yes, then that has more priority. So, someone who is doing research about cancer, I cannot compete with that, with my literary, historical study.”

*“... I found it very intimidating to listen to, uhm, pitches from other people who tried to cure, uhm, blindness * laughing*. Which made me think yes, shit I, uhm, have, uhm, a, uhm, research proposal that actually, uhm, yes that is so economic and so abstract actually, why would you give me money and that person not, you know. I mean cure blindness. Wow, you know. So, I found that intimidating...”*

These respondents refer to the medical sciences as ‘intimidating’ ‘more essential’ and ‘impressive’. This because proposals relating to the medical sciences, most of the time, have a clear contribution to the society, because they want to (partly) solve health-related problems. It seems like the construction of excellence of the proposal is based on relevance of the topic. Respondents from other scientific disciplines felt that they had a small chance to get honored. They do not understand how the selection committee could compare the essential topics of the medical sciences with their own studies. They consider their own study as less important and having less priority. So, the respondents feel that the competition is not equal, because some topics are considered as more important for the society than others. However, most of the respondents who mentioned that health-related topics are more essential than other topics, are laureates of the Mosaic program, so their proposal is awarded. This contradicts the feeling that only proposals medical sciences were awarded.

Not only the medical sciences are seen as more socially relevant, but also topics that are more related to Europe.

“...The closer to Europe, the more it can solve real, let’s say, daily problems of the country, the sooner or more likely that you get something. That you get a grant.”

This quote indicates as well that social relevance is considered as the most important factor in deciding whether to award a proposal or not. It seems that topics that are related to Europe are seen as more relevant than topics outside Europe.

However, according in the document ‘Call for Proposal’ of NWO (NWO, 2011), the quality of the candidate and the research proposal were evaluated on the basis of three criteria. First, the performance as student and relevant academic activities, so their resume. Second, their motivation and persuasiveness. Third, a clearly formulated scientific research question evaluated on: scientific innovation, proven effectiveness of approach, contribution to science and society and feasibility. All these three criteria had same weight in the judgement whether to honor a proposal or not. So, the contribution to science and society have a small share in the appreciation.

In summary, most of the candidates and laureates perceived the competition as unfair. First because there was a discrepancy in the quality of the proposals, depending on the input of the supervisor. Second, because they perceived social relevance as the most important aspect determining which aspects was honored and which not. Therefore, the medical sciences seemed to be the most essential. The same applies to topics related to Europe. However, according to the documents of NWO, social relevance played only a small role in the assessment of a proposal.

4.4 Role Mosaic program in career

In the previous paragraph is discussed what are the positive and less positive aspects of the Mosaic program according to the candidates and laureates. In this paragraph will be reflected on the role the Mosaic program had played in the careers of candidates and laureates. This paragraph will be structured the same as the previous paragraph, namely in positive aspects and less positive aspects.

4.4.1 Positive experiences

When asking about which role the Mosaic program has played in their career, the respondents argued that they learned lot from it on career level, but also on personal level.

4.4.1.1 Personal development

When talking about the things people have learned from the Mosaic program on personal level, two respondents replied:

“So, Mosaic helped me a lot with the money, but also to discover myself. Because PhD was for me, the biggest point was that I just learned what I liked and not.”

“Also developing yourself as a person. And that's the beauty of it. That you also learn, not only about content and your research, but also about yourself and how you are as a scientist and as a person. I think that is a very beautiful aspect.”

As previous quotes illustrate, laureates argued that they learned a lot from the Mosaic program on personal level. They discovered who they are, what they like and what they do not like. That is, according to the laureates, a very valuable aspect of the Mosaic project.

In summary, the Mosaic program played a crucial role with regard to the personal development of candidates and laureates, since it helped them to found out who they are.

4.4.1.2 Career development

Besides having a personal value, the Mosaic program was seen as very important on career level.

“Uhm... Yes, look at the fact that, let me be honest, that you have had an NWO grant, that that, uhm, is in your, on your CV, naturally helps enormously. Uhm, I think that that really is something that certainly helped me get into the education. Uhm, and also to be taken seriously. So that certainly had an effect.”

“Basically, it allowed me to do my PhD. It helped me with, uhm, to learn about writing grants and how to write it in such a way so that it can be understood to everyone outside the field. I hope, I don't know, it will help me further on when applying for further funding, I think. I think that's it.”

According to these respondents, Mosaic plays an important role on career level, because of two reasons. First, the fact that they received a personal NWO grant improved their CV enormously. And the fact that their CV was improved, also served as an incentive in their further career. Second, the Mosaic trajectory learned candidates and laureates how to write an understandable research proposal and how to apply for a research grant. Furthermore, some laureates argued that the Mosaic program has accelerated their career.

“Yes, it certainly played a positive role. It has brought a bit of an acceleration.”

“A very important role. Because otherwise I was never, I could never took that step that I could do research and that I could do my PhD. So that has had an essential role. I

think if that didn't exist then I, uhm, lost a lot, uhm, time, I think, looking at how I could end up in such a research world. And I don't know if I've been able to make it that far. Because the fact that I was in such a good flow, I could also move on. If I did not have that flow, if I had not had the grant and I could not have carried out the research, I am struggling more with how could I lay that foundation and perhaps I have lost much time, so that the next step might seem less logical, at that time.”

As these respondents said, the Mosaic program had accelerated their career enormously. They were able to make a career quickly and go further in their career, without interruptions. The respondents felt that if they not received the grant, they might have lost much time.

In summary, the candidates and laureates of the Mosaic program argued that the Mosaic program played an important role in their career, since it was an addition to their CV and they also learned how to apply for future grants. Also, Mosaic caused an acceleration of the academic careers of laureates.

4.4.2 Less positive experiences

4.4.2.1 Follow-up Mosaic

When asking if the laureates were still in contact with each other, the most laureates answered ‘no’. Some laureates thought it might be helpful to organize more meetings for the laureates.

“Well maybe with a group of laureates that a kind of community should be built in a way.”

“I would be very happy if Mosaic arrange like an alumni network. I am going to join.”

These respondents indicate that they thought it was a good idea to create a kind of an alumni network for laureates of the Mosaic program. As the second respondent said: they would like to join such a network. There are several reasons why laureates thought it would be valuable to create an alumni network.

“Because that also ensures that you can share a little experience. From how it is, hey, research hey, four-year research, it goes with a lot of ups and downs and it is, and I have also experienced that it is very nice that you can talk to colleagues about how to deal with setbacks. And how it works out in the end and, and that kind of experience is very useful to be able to share that, yes.”

“Laureates, like me, we share kind of a background and experiences in the Mosaic. So, it would be very interesting to get contacted with each other again.”

These quotes illustrate that such an alumni network with other laureates would be interesting, because laureates share the same experiences, such as their ethnic minority background and

participation in the Mosaic program. In an alumni network laureates could talk about their career, which challenges they are facing in their career and how they can solve such things.

Furthermore, some respondents argued that NWO could expect more from their laureates.

“I would, in fact, involve the people who, the old Mosaic people, like myself and my colleagues who received it, much more in that process. (...) Because of course we are all grateful and all have a very good feeling about the NWO and the Mosaic program. And of course, we are now embedded in our own field of research and, uhm, the scientific environment. At universities, clinics and institutions. Most of us have already achieved a reasonable position. And, uhm, you could involve us a lot more in ... I can also say that I think this is very good and I am also very willing to be a consultant or reviewer or co-developer, or whatever, uhm, help with this kind of, uhm, programs. (...) We are experiential experts, we ourselves, uhm, have been the target group, once. Uhm, and we survived it completely. And now we are also on the other side of the table and we also know what the question is of a, uhm, employer or a supervisor. And that combination, I think, is worth gold.”

“I, uhm, yes, I think you can pretty much ask the candidates who eventually received such a scholarship. In the aftermath of their career, that they can act more actively as a coach, or, or whatever, you know. And it, because, like I said, I've had a lot of this opportunity, you know, in order to do a PhD, to work here and I'm very happy with my work and it's actually, it's all she asks me and it is: have you ever published an article, you know. And I think that's pretty bad, I would, I would, um, I would not mind if they would also ask me of: hey there is a, uhm, meeting, uhm, for students, do you want to act as speak or something, you know? Or do you want to work in small groups on a case study with them, you know.”

Both of these respondents argued that they believe that NWO, and the Mosaic program, could ask a lot more of laureates. This because the Mosaic program is very valuable in one's career, so some laureates really want to give back something to NWO and the society. According to these respondents, laureates could play different roles. Since Mosaic ended seven years ago, a lot of laureates already achieved a reasonable position in their career. As a consequence, they can serve as role model for other ethnic minorities, and they could also play a role in programs such as Mosaic in the form of, for example, advisor, developer or reviewer.

In summary, laureates would like to see an alumni network for laureates of the Mosaic program, in which they could share experiences with each other. That is perceived as valuable,

because laureates share the fact that they are ethnic minorities and participated in the program. Besides that, NWO did not expect much from laureates of the Mosaic program after they received the grant, while laureates believe that they were allowed to do so, because they were very grateful for receiving the Mosaic grant.

4.4.2.2 Flow program

When asking how candidates and laureates experience the flow in academia after obtaining their PhD, two of the respondents said the following:

“Uhm ... but I think a little push is needed afterwards [after the Mosaic program]. To really continue in science, to, after graduating, that you become a professor, that you, that you just have that, uhm, because how many professors with a migration background do we have?”

“It remains difficult to find, uhm, a scientific job for migrants for various reasons. But you can just, uhm, in your career you can just go up to a certain level. After a certain level it is stop, it is not allowed to continue. Or can't. Or it can be very difficult.”

As these quotes suggest, candidates and laureates of the Mosaic program believed that it is hard to make a promotion in academia, especially for people with a migration background. They suggested that ethnic minorities can move up to until a certain level. This was something they experienced in practice, since they actually almost have never seen a professor with a migration background. Because it is hard for ethnic minorities to make a promotion in academic careers, many respondents suggested that it would be helpful if NWO would create a kind of ‘flow program’.

“Because after PhD there should be established another assistance to go further. For the people who still need to continue with research, they don't need to stop there. They can have, uhm, some, let's say, a push, the wind, the necessary wind to go a little bit further. And so, it is not a step into the research, but really step in a career. And a PhD is just a start. There should be a continuity, to follow-up. And that's why I think it is probably not just a program to support the PhD, but also a program to support the, uhm, postdoc, yeah.”

“And besides that, and then I will come back to it, uhm, flow. Flow through. That they will not be released completely after such a dissertation, but that there is still a flow, uhm, with, uhm, uhm, that you will receive another year postdoc for example. To be able to properly publish your research, to further develop it and to be able to anchor yourself,

uhm, in a, in a, uhm, scientific, uhm, department. You miss that. Because you come with your backpack and you also leave with your backpack.

These quotes show that some of the laureates missed a kind of ‘flow program’ with the aim of going further in academia. Doing a PhD was considered as only the start of an academic career. As the second quote illustrates, the disadvantage of a PhD position funded with the Mosaic grant, was that you were not a part of a certain department, which made it hard for some respondents to flow within the academia. Since it is hard to obtain a promotion in academia, the respondents argued that it would be nice if laureates were supported, after obtaining their PhD, in order to further develop their academic career.

In summary, some respondents argued that they missed a flow program after the Mosaic program, which should have helped them with flow within academia to a higher position.

5. Conclusion and discussion

In this chapter an answer is given to the main research question. Besides that, the findings will be related to existing theory. Furthermore, some recommendations are provided for NWO in developing the future program. Finally, the limitations will be discussed and some suggestions for further research are made.

5.1 Conclusion

This research was conducted to answer the following main research question: *“What are the experiences of candidates and laureates regarding the Mosaic program and in which way has the Mosaic program contributed to their academic career?”* In order to answer this research question, a qualitative study was conducted in which the experiences of candidates and laureates regarding the Mosaic program played a central role.

Regarding their general career experiences, nine of the fifteen respondents were still working academia. The people who were not working anymore in academia are not totally satisfied with their career, because they still have scientific ambitions. The people who are working in academia are in general satisfied with their career. However, not having a fulltime contract or tenure, finding it hard to balance work and life, and spending a lot of time to other things than research, contribute to feelings of dissatisfaction. Moreover, the respondents noticed that the academia is not diverse enough in terms of ethnicity and gender. This is disadvantageous for academia, since diversity will increase scientific knowledge, the international network and it enables the academia to fulfill the social role. Also, the academia

is not seen as inclusive in terms of inclusive to other people. The reason for that is that the academic culture is very individualistic, top-down oriented and competitive. Because the academic culture is still not diverse and inclusive enough, the respondents argued that a program like Mosaic is needed in order to stimulate the (in)flow of ethnic minorities in academia. Because such a program is needed, it was important to evaluate their experiences with the Mosaic program in order to see which aspects they would like to see again and which aspects they would like to see differently in a future program.

Before the start of the Mosaic program, most of the ethnic minorities were not familiar with the possibility of an academic career. This due to the fact that they were raised with the idea that they need a good job and job security, some aspects they did not associate an academic career with. Therefore, they found out that they like doing research late during their studies, when writing their master's thesis. Additionally, most respondents heard about the Mosaic program via their teacher. They usually did not know about the existence of the program themselves. Therefore, the candidates and laureates argued that the possibilities of an academic career should be introduced earlier during the studies of ethnic minorities. The same applies to the promotion of the Mosaic program. When the candidates and laureates just heard about the Mosaic program, they strongly experienced feelings of positive discrimination, by which they did not feel comfortable. This because they not want to be targeted on their ethnic background, but because they have the right qualities for a career in academia. At the same time, they illustrated that a program targeted on ethnic minorities was needed in order to overcome the barriers they experienced, because they usually do not inflow in academia on their own.

During the Mosaic program, there were several aspects that the respondent valued. First, they argued that it important that applications were assessed on their qualities, so their CV and motivation. Second, the candidates and laureates experienced the Mosaic trajectory as informative, to which the good guidance of NWO and the guidance of the supervisor contributed a lot. Last, the atmosphere during the workshops was very good, despite the fact that the level of the competition was very high. However, there were also some aspects that the candidates and laureates perceived as less positive. First, the candidates and laureates had some troubles with the definition of the target group of the Mosaic program. This due to the fact that they perceived the Mosaic program as a program for people who are disadvantaged. Because of that, the people who were born and raised in the Netherlands did not have the feeling that they belong to the target group. Second, the selection committee of the Mosaic program consisted of people from diverse scientific disciplines. Candidates and laureates experienced this negatively, because they argued that the selection committee did not have the right

knowledge to assess the research proposals on a right way. Since they learned to explain their research proposal in layman's terms and it provided new insights, the candidates and laureates are not completely negative about the diverse selection committee. Third, the competition was perceived as unfair. Partly, because there was a discrepancy in quality of the research proposals and partly because social relevance was perceived as the aspect that was most influential in the decision whether to honor a proposal or not. In general, topics about the medical sciences and topics related to Europe were experienced as more socially relevant.

When looking back on the role the Mosaic program has played in their career, most of them argued that Mosaic played an important role in their career, on personal and career level. On personal level, because they found out who they are and on career level, because it improved their CV, they learned how to apply for research grants, and for laureates it caused an acceleration of their academic career. At the same time, candidates and laureates argued that they would like to see two things differently of the Mosaic program, which can result in a more crucial role of Mosaic in the academic careers of ethnic minorities. First, they would like to see an alumni network for laureates of the Mosaic program, in which they could share experiences with each other. Second, they think it would be valuable if Mosaic creates a kind of flow program for ethnic minorities, since it is hard to flow within the academia.

In conclusion, the candidates and laureates of the Mosaic program experienced the Mosaic program, in general, in a good way. Furthermore, the Mosaic program did contribute positively to their careers, regardless of whether they are still employed in academia or not.

5.2 Discussion

5.2.1 Theoretical reflection

In this theoretical reflection, the findings from this study will be related to the existing literature.

In the academic literature, it is argued that ethnic minorities have less access to resources through social networks (Ibarra, 1995). It is stated that these networks are important because they can lead to job opportunities, support, influence, status attainment and a higher salary (Van den Brink & Benschop, 2014). However, in this study almost every respondent became familiar with the Mosaic program via their supervisor or a teacher at the university, who believed in their academic skills and their potential for an academic career. In other words, the respondents already found a sponsor. A sponsor is someone who believes in your potential and they help you when opportunities that can help you come across (Streeter, 2014). Because of this, the respondents already had an important person in their network. Besides that, nobody mentioned

that they do not have the right network in order to fulfill their ambitions. Therefore, it can be concluded that in this study it was not the case that ethnic minorities do not have the right people in their network and have less access to resources.

According to the candidates and laureates, the academia is still not diverse and inclusive enough, despite the fact that interventions such as the Mosaic program took place in order to increase the amount of ethnic minorities in academia. This can be linked to theories about diversity interventions. Benschop and Verloo (2011) developed a model in which they highlighted several strategies for change. There are some strategies focused on the individual level, which includes equal opportunities for every individual regardless of the social group they belong to (Benschop & Van den Brink, 2014). Mosaic can be characterized as such an intervention. The problem is that such interventions are only targeted on a small group of people and leave the structure of organizations intact (Benschop & Van den Brink). That is the same as what candidates and laureates experienced, the structure of academia is not still not diverse and inclusive and ethnic minorities still get fewer opportunities. Therefore, structural strategies are also important, which are about the structural barriers in organizations that hinder chance towards ethnic equality and address underlying power processes (Benschop & Van den Brink, 2014).

5.2.2 Practical recommendations

As described in the introduction, NWO has received again available funds for developing a program with the aim of stimulating the (in)flow of ethnic minorities to academia. Based on this study, several practical recommendations can be provided, which NWO should take into account when developing the new program.

Because the academia is still not diverse and inclusive enough, the candidates and respondents argued that it is important that a program like Mosaic will be introduced again. However, it is also important that NWO and universities try to change the underlying structure of universities, which results in ethnic inequality, as discussed in the previous paragraph.

Some aspects of the Mosaic program were perceived as very valuable and informative. First, candidates and laureates thought it was good that they were assessed based on their qualities, their CV and motivation. Moreover, the candidates and laureates were mainly positive about the Mosaic trajectory. This trajectory includes the process of Mosaic in which the proposal is developed. Actually, it contains the workshops arranged at NWO. The guidance of NWO and the guidance of the supervisor were seen as important in that process. Also, the atmosphere during the workshops was very positive, despite the high level of competition. One

recommendation is to include these aspects again in a future program.

However, there are also some things that NWO should reconsider when developing the new program with the aim of stimulating the (in)flow of ethnic minorities in academia. First, both universities and NWO should make sure that ethnic minority students will be informed about academic career opportunities as early as possible during their studies since most ethnic minorities are not familiar with the possibility of an academic career. Usually, in the first lectures of a study it is often shown what the possible jobs are for that particular study. However, a career in academia is almost never mentioned. So, if universities would do that, the idea of an academic career would be normalized. Second, since people who are born and raised in the Netherlands perceived the Mosaic program as a program for people who are disadvantaged would not consider themselves as belonging to the target group, NWO should reconsider the definition of the target group. They should target the program on people who are disadvantaged and experience difficulties in life and career. Third, NWO should be clearer about the selection criteria. This because candidates and laureates argued that social relevance of the proposal determined whether an application was awarded or not. However, NWO stated that social relevance was only a small part of the assessment. Fourth, NWO should carefully compile the selection committee of the Mosaic program, including people with specific knowledge about the topics. This due to the fact that candidates and laureates argued that the diverse selection committee did not have the right knowledge to assess their proposal. One recommendation, based on point three and four, is therefore to make a distinction between scientific disciplines in the Mosaic program. In other words, organize the Mosaic program for every discipline and make funding available for each of the disciplines. Then, only people from the same scientific discipline are competing with each other. In this way the problem that people have the feeling that social relevance plays an important role will disappear. At the same time, it is easier to compile the selection committees, because NWO could focus on more specific themes within a discipline. Five, the laureates of the Mosaic program illustrated that they miss an alumni network for laureates in which they can share experiences with each other. Therefore, a recommendation for NWO is to arrange yearly meetings for laureates in which they can exchange experiences with each other. The sixth and the last recommendation for NWO is to think about a ‘flow program’ for ethnic minorities, since it is still hard for them to advance to a higher position in academia after obtaining their PhD. Therefore, it would be valuable if NWO supports these people so that they can find a position in academia and do not flow out academia.

5.2.3 Limitations and suggestions for further research

There are some limitations to this study. First of all, this study is an interpretative study, based on a sample which included a small number of participants. These might not be representative to other diversity interventions in academia. Moreover, the results are very much influenced by the interpretation from the author. As a consequence, this study can be biased because of that. Therefore, reflexivity is an important concept. As Symon & Cassell (2017) argue: it is important that the researcher is aware of her own' role and beliefs in doing the research and the way that is influenced by the object that is studied, so that the researcher can recognize how she affects the research process and the outcomes. In this study, the fact that the researcher is a dominant ethnic female master student can influence the results of this study. This because the researcher did not share the same ethnic background as the respondents.

Moreover, this study can be influenced by the so-called recall bias. Recall bias is a systematic error in a study that occurs when respondents do not remember previous situations, events or experiences correctly or omit details (Schacter, 1999). The accuracy and volume of memories may be distorted by later events and experiences (Schacter, 1999). This kind of systematic error often occurs in self-reporting studies, just like this study. The Mosaic program took place between 2004 and 2012. In other words, some people applied for the Mosaic program seven years ago, but others fifteen years ago. As a consequence, people, probably, did not remember the whole Mosaic process and their experiences and feelings fully and correctly. Moreover, the success of their current career could also influence their perceptions of the Mosaic program. This due to the fact that interviews provide much knowledge over what happened in the past, but always in the perspective of the present (Bleijenbergh, 2015). Therefore, there is a chance of bias. Nevertheless, the researcher tried to deal with recall bias as much as possible, by combining different data sources (persons and documents), also known as data triangulation. (Van Staa & Evers, 2010). The use of documents can reduce recall bias, since they form a direct reflection of what was decided at a certain moment in time (Bleijenbergh, 2015).

Besides that, there was a possibility that some people gave socially desirable answers. This because NWO is an organization with prestige and most of the laureates are very thankful for the grant they received. In addition, since most respondents were still working in academia, they are dependent on NWO for certain other fundings, like Veni. Therefore, some respondents asked whether this study was done anonymously and the extent to which the researcher was independently. They argued that that would have an impact on what they wanted to say during

the interviews. The chance of socially desired answers was minimized, since the anonymity and confidentiality was guaranteed at the beginning of the interviews.

The last limitation of this study is that it only focused on one characteristic of diversity, namely ethnicity. However, certain other characteristics of diversity appeared to play a role in academic careers, such as gender. Therefore, future research should also take into account multiple aspects of diversity, also known as intersectionality (Desivilya et al., 2017).

Besides that, it was beyond the scope of this research to investigate the degree to which the Mosaic program was successful and achieved the goal of stimulating the (in)flow of ethnic minorities in academia. Therefore, a suggestion for future research is to study how many people finished their PhD and the current position of candidates and laureates, in other words: their objective career success. In order to evaluate this, quantitative research will be more appropriate, since quantitative research is about the interpretation of figures (Bleijenbergh, 2015).

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Target countries Mosaic program

Afghanistan	Ecuador	Kosovo	Oezbekistan
Albanië	Egypte	Kroatië	Oman
Algerije	Eritrea	Kirgizië	Pakistan
Amerikaans Samoa	El Salvador	Laos	Palau
Angola	Estland	Lesotho	Palestijnse Gebieden
Anguilla	Ethiopië	Letland	Panama
Antigua en Barbuda	Falklandeilanden	Libanon	Papua- Nieuwguinea
Argentinië	Fiji	Liberia	Paraguay
Armenië	Filippijnen	Libië	Peru
Aruba	Frans Guyana	Litouwen	Pitcairneilanden
Azerbeidzjan	Frans-Polynesië	Macau	Polen
Bahama's	Gabon	Macedonië	Puerto Rico
Bahrein	Gambia	Madagaskar	Réunion
Bangladesh	Georgië	Malawi	Roemenië
Barbados	Ghana	Maldiven	Rusland
Belize	Grenada	Maleisië	Rwanda
Benin	Guadeloupe	Mali	St Kitts/Nevis
Bermuda	Guam	Marokko	St Helena
Bhutan	Guatemala	Marshalleilan den	St Lucia
Bolivia	Guinee- Equatoriaal	Martinique	St Pierre en Miq.
Bosnië-Herzegovina	Guinee	Mauritanië	St Vincent/Gr
Botswana	Guinee-Bissau	Mauritius	Salomonseilanden
Brazilië	Guyana	Mayotte	Samoa

Brits Indisch Oceaanteritorium	Haïti	Mexico	San Marino
Brunei	Honduras	Micronesië	Sao Tome
Bulgarije	Hongkong	Moldavië	Saoudi-Arabië
Burkina Faso	Hongarije	Mongolië	Senegal
Burundi	India	Montserrat	Servië- Montenegro
Cambodia	Indonesië	Mozambique	Seychellen
Kaaimaneilanden	Irak	Myanmar	Sierra Leone
Centraal Afrikaanse Republiek	Iran	Namibië	Singapore
Chili	Israël	Nauru	Slovenië
China	Ivoorkust	Nederlandse Antillen	Slowakije
Colombia	Jamaica	Nepal	Soedan
Comoren	Jemen	Nicaragua	Somalië
Congo	Jordanië	Nieuw Caledonië	Sri Lanka
Congo (DR)	Kaapverdië	Niger	Suriname
Cookeilanden	Kameroen	Nigeria	Swaziland
Costa Rica	Katar	Niue	Syrië
Cuba	Kazachstan	Noord-Korea	Taiwan
Djibouti	Kenia	Noordelijke Marianen	Tadzjikistan
Dominica	Kiribati	Norfolk	Tanzania
Dominicaanse Republiek	Koeweit	Oekraïne	Thailand
Timor Leste	Tunesië	Vanuatu	Zambia
Togo	Turkmenistan	Venezuela	Zimbabwe
Tokelau	Turkije	Vietnam	Zuid-Afrika

Appendix 2: Sensitizing concepts

In this appendix, the sensitizing concepts will be operationalized. This will be done by providing the theoretical definition of the concept and by providing the operational definitions. The latter are the theoretical definitions specified to the specific context of the study.

Ethnic diversity

Theoretical definition:

“Relative (dis)similarities between individuals due to assigned or acclaimed group membership based on assumed similarities in culture, ancestry, traditions and categorizations” (Ossenkop et al., 2015b, p.516)

Operational definition:

In this study, I understand ethnic diversity as the relative (dis)similarities between individuals due to assigned or acclaimed group membership based on assumed similarities in culture, ancestry, traditions and categorizations.

Career

Theoretical definition:

“A process of development of the employee along a path of experiences and jobs in one or more organizations” (Baruch and Rosenstein; in Baruch, 2004; p. 59).

Operational definition:

In this study, I understand a career as a process of development of a candidate or laureate along a path of experiences and jobs in one or more organizations.

Career success

Theoretical definition:

“Positive psychological or work- related outcomes or achievements that the individual accumulates as a result of work experiences” (Seibert, Crant, and Kraimer, 1999, p.417).

Career success can objective: *“Achievements that can be measured by using indicators such as promotion, compensation and wages and other tangible measurements of achievement”* (Seibert, Crant, and Kraimer, 1999)

Or subjective: *“The perception of an individual regarding job satisfaction and the satisfaction with his or her career progression”* (Callanan, 2003)

Operational definition:

In this study, I understand career success as positive psychological or work-related outcomes or achievements that the candidate or laureate accumulates as a result of work experiences, which can be measured by both tangible and intangible measurements of achievements.

Ethnic inequality

Theoretical definition:

“Systematic disparities between participants in power and control over goals, resources, and outcomes; workplace decisions such as how to organize work; opportunities for promotion and interesting work; security in employment and benefits; pay and other monetary rewards; respect; and pleasures in work and work relations” (Acker, 2006, p. 443).

Operational definition:

In this study, I understand ethnic inequality as systematic disparities between dominants ethnics and ethnic minorities in power and control over goals, resources, and outcomes; workplace decisions such as how to organize work; opportunities for promotion and interesting work; security in employment and benefits; pay and other monetary rewards; respect; and pleasures in work and work relations.

Appendix 3: Documents

The following documents are used:

- NWO: Call for proposals Mozaïek – subsidieronde 2012 (December 2011)
- NWO: Evaluatie programma Mozaïek 2004 – Willem van Donselaar (Oktober 2004)
- NWO: Kleurrijk Talent – Vijf jaar Mozaïek (Maart 2009)
- NWO: Frequently Asked Questions about Mozaïek 2012

Appendix 4: Codes used in this study

