

**And the winner is...:**

Navigating recognition dynamics and meaning making among film crew members

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study explores the dynamics of recognition and meaning-making amongst film crew members within the film industry, specifically focusing on how these professionals perceive their recognition and the contributions they make to the success of a movie. Contrary to the popular belief that a successful movie is solely dependent on a well-scripted story and the outstanding performance of visible figures like actors and directors, this study emphasizes the vital roles played by the entire film crew, including roles that are often overlooked by audiences and the industry, such as screenwriters, cinematographers, editors, and sound designers (Baker, 2015, p.97). To achieve a comprehensive understanding, the study employs a qualitative research method, using a semi-structured interview with eight film crew experts from various departments such as cinematographer, sound, and production assistant. This approach aims to capture the nuanced perspective of these professionals about their recognition within the industry. It examines the strategies they employ to gain recognition and how distinct roles and power dynamics contribute to their acknowledgement and recognition (Bogear et al., 2008).

Specifically, it investigates the impact of hierarchical categorization within film crew, differentiating between below-the-line and above-the-line film crew members. The analysis of the findings is looked through the lens of Recognition Theory, Vroom's Expectancy, which provides a comprehensive understanding of the motivational aspects of recognition (Honneth, 1998; Vroom, 1964). These theoretical perspectives educate how recognition influences professional development, satisfaction, and motivation among film crew members, discussing how these structures shape recognition dynamics (Caldwell, 2008). study reveals that recognition is a fundamental aspect of professional development, satisfaction, and motivation for film crew members. They are significantly influencing their professional growth and career. The findings highlight film crew members' diverse roles and responsibilities, emphasizing the importance of teamwork and collective effort for

successful film production. It appears from the research that film crew members highly value both intrinsic rewards and immediate social achievements from peers and higher crew members. Strategies for gaining recognition include continuous professional development, strategies networking, visibility through social media and high-profile projects. These strategies are essential for film crew members to navigate the complex social and professional structures within the film industry.

This research contributes to a broader understanding of the film industry's social and professional structures, highlighting the need for greater acknowledgement and appreciation of diverse roles within film production. By addressing the gap in recognition, this study aims to inspire more inclusive recognition practices and foster a more fair environment where all contributions on set are valued. In conclusion, the dynamic recognition and meaning making amongst film crew members in and outside the set are critical to understanding the intricate fabric of the film industry. Recognition is not just a fundamental aspect of professional satisfaction and motivation; it is also a driving force behind professional development and career progression.

**KEYWORDS:** Film Crew Recognition, Film Industry Dynamics, Film Crew Motivation, Hierarchical Structures in Film Production, Recognition Theory in Film Industry.

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## 1. Introduction

The film industry, with its roots tracing back to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, with the invention of the motion picture, has been one of the major sources of entertainment and cultural influence pushing the boundaries of what is possible to be seen. The development of cinema from a novelty to a major cultural force was shaped by technological innovations and the societal demand for new forms of entertainment (Ross et al., 1992, pp.1-50). Having access to diverse selections of movies has helped not just entertainment but also contributed to a broader discourse on film narratives and character developments, facilitating an exchange of opinions and emotions across audiences (Tisdell, 2008, p. 467). This phenomenon is supported by the increasing diversity and accessibility of films, which allow audiences to engage with different perspectives and experiences (Hsu, 2006, pp. 420-450).

Contrary to widespread belief a successful movie often called a “hit” is solely dependent on a well-scripted story and the cinematic performance of visible figures like the actors, and directors. However, behind the scenes, it is the collaborative effort of the entire film crew members, who work tirelessly to bring these visions to life and underpin the success of cinematic productions. This includes individuals, ranging from screenwriters, and cinematographers, capturing the perfect shot to editors meticulously piecing together scenes, production assistants, sound designers who ensure the audio quality, Makeup artists who transform actors to fit their characters and more (Baker, 2015, p. 97). yet despite their indispensable contributions, film crew members frequently report feeling underappreciated and overlooked by the more visible members of the industry.

Many scholars perceive that these perceptions may be rooted in several factors: Visibility and Credit, Industry culture and work conditions. It was not until the 70s that the film industry, began to formally recognise these vital contributions by including them in the movie credits, highlighting a shift towards more inclusive recognition practices (Hustle, 2021, para. 1-4). Although, their names appear in the end credits, which many viewers overlook. This limited visibility contributes to the sense of limited recognition and appreciation (Mayer, 2011). Reports which as those of the UNI Global Union, highlights the strenuous working conditions film crew members ensure, including long hours and insufficient rest. These conditions worsen

feelings of being undervalued, as physical and, entail demands of their work are not matched by adequate recognition or compensation (UNI Global Union, 2021).

As the film industry continued to evolve technologically, from the introduction of sound in the 1920s to the contemporary use of computer-generated imagery (CGI) so did the demand for high-quality production teams, leading to the discovery of the specialized role of film crews within the film industry (Nashville Film Institute, 2020, para. 4-7). This technological evolution not only enhances the visual and auditory appeal of films but also increases the complexity of production, further underscoring the significance of each crew member's expertise and dedication. The ongoing technological transformation within the industry demands continuous learning and adaptation from the crew, who must stay knowledgeable of the new tools and techniques needed to maintain the quality and competitiveness of film productions (Nashville Film Institute, 2020, para. 4-7). By acknowledging the efforts, dedication, and expertise of everyone behind the scenes, the magic of cinema would not be possible today. While there are instances of recognition within the industry, these are often limited and insufficient. High-profile actors and directors like Leonardo DiCaprio and Christopher Nolan have publicly acknowledged the contribution of their crew members, emphasizing the collective effort required to produce a film. However, such acknowledgements are sporadic and often fail to translate into broader industry practices or academic recognition (Backstage, 2023, p. 1; Variety, 2020, p. 1).

### **Research Question**

While it is not suggested that these film crew members are entirely overlooked within the industry, the research emphasizes that they are not recognised enough. This under-recognition raises critical questions about whether these professionals feel adequately valued for their contributions. Studies such as those by Hesmondhalgh and Baker (2011) highlight the importance of visibility and recognition in fostering job satisfaction and a sense of worth among workers in creative fields. This research argues that enhancing the visibility and acknowledgements of these essential roles could significantly impact their professional identities and overall well-being, contributing to the industry's dynamics and cultural output.

Looking at the film industry considering the filmmakers is an exciting research field. The aspect of filmmaking is essential to this study since the study focuses



explicitly on the recognition of film crew members. Recognition for film crew members is crucial in acknowledging the hard work and talents that go into creating a successful film. So, this study seeks to explore the recognition dynamics and meaning-making among film crew members, focusing on how these professionals perceive their recognition and the strategies they employ to gain recognition in an industry predominantly However, amidst the glamour and acclaim garnered by prominent figures the primary research is: *How do film crew members perceive their recognition as professionals within the film industry?*

To delve deeper into this topic, two sub-questions are developed:

SQ1: *what strategies do film crew members use to gain recognition in an industry focused on directors and actors?*

SQ2: *how do distinct roles and power dynamics among film crew members contribute to their recognition in carrying out their tasks on film projects?*

By addressing these questions, this research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the recognition dynamics within film crews, contributing to both academic knowledge and practical industry practices. These questions aim to uncover the recognition dynamic within the film industry and how it impacts the interpersonal and professional experiences of film crew members. By examining these aspects, this thesis seeks to contribute to a broader understanding of the film industry's social and professional structure, potentially influencing how recognition and contributions are perceived and valued in the creative industries. Advocating for a more inclusive recognition system that values the suggestions.

## 1.1 Scientific & Societal Relevance

In a broader societal context, this research aims to address a crucial gap in film studies and industry practises by highlighting the overlooked contributions of film crew members. By bringing attention to these vital yet overlooked professionals and the role they play, engaging in the discourse not only enriches understanding of film production but inspires more aspiring filmmakers hoping to be seen in the film industry and by audiences. This also cultivates a sense of appreciation for the often-unseen film crew members amongst audiences and stakeholders for the collective efforts behind every movie, instead of giving all the credit to the actor, or producer.

This recognition is instrumental in portraying a complete picture of the efforts that contribute to the success of a film, shifting the focus from high-profile figures such as actors and directors to those working behind the scenes.

Academically the significance of recognising all contributions in creative industries is supported by several studies. For instance, Jones et al. (2016) discuss the invisible labor” within creative sectors, emphasizing that the lack of visibility significantly impacts job satisfaction and career sustainability. Similarly, Caldwell (2008) in his exploration of production cultures, highlights, how the hierarchical acknowledgement within the film industry affects the professional identities and work dynamics of crew members. These studies suggest that a broader achievement can lead to fairer compensation and advancement opportunities which are crucial for fostering innovation and enhancing job satisfaction (Blaur, 2001, p.; Hesmondhalgh and Bake, 2011). The recognition of film crew members goes beyond mere acknowledgements; it affects how these professionals see their roles in society and their contribution to cultural products. Thus, by addressing these gaps, the research contributes to the film industry's growth and cultural depth, ensuring a fairer representation of all professionals involved in filmmaking. This broader recognition is crucial, as it not only impacts career choices and compensation but also enhances overall industry innovation and content diversity (Caves, 2000; Sorenson & Waguespack, 2006, p. 560).

Academically, the study of recognition dynamics within the film industry offers insights into employment practices, contributing to academic discussions about how media is produced, and the roles individuals play in these processes (Connell, 2012). Despite the critical roles of film crew members in film production, there is a noticeable lack of academic research on the recognition and acknowledgement of these essential contributions. This research will be beneficial to scholars in film studies to understand the evolving dynamics of professional creativity behind the scenes. Scientific research until now has focused on the inclusion of movie end credits (Shorr, 2020, para. 4) and the recognition of actors, and directors in the film industry (Camp, 2023, para. 3; Van Brugen, 2021, para 4). This also aligns with broader organizational studies focusing on recognition and its effects on motivation and performance. By finding how recognition operates in the film industry, the research also offers broader

implications for organizational practices in other fields (Kompridis, 2007, pp. 277-289). Although casts and producers are likewise important, there is still a gap in broader recognition, awards, and public perception of other film crew members in the success of a movie, which is a less-discovered subject by academia, and the research gap this research will try to cover (Hustle, 2021 para. 5). Peterson (2014., pp. 89-114) highlights the academic need for further research that can provide insights into the recognition and possible creative acts crew members do to remain seen in the industry.

## 1.2 Chapter outline

This thesis is organised into six main chapters, each addressing various aspects of the research on the recognition dynamics and meaning-making among film crew members. The chapters are structured to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research problem, theoretical underpinnings, method approach, results, discussions and conclusions and further future research. The first chapter the study introduces the study by providing an overview of the film industry and the critical yet often overlooked contributions of the film crew members. It outlines the background of the study, highlighting the importance of recognising the roles of these professionals in the filmmaking process. The problem statement addresses the issue of recognition of film crew members, which is a central theme of this research. The research goal is clearly defined, emphasizing the aim to explore the dynamics of recognition within the film industry. The significance of the study is discussed in terms of its academic and societal relevance. Chapter Two delves into the theoretical framework of the study. It begins by exploring the various roles and responsibilities of film crew members, providing a detailed analysis of the importance of each role in the production process. The organisational structure of the film crew is examined, focusing on the hierarchical categorization of above-the-line and below-the-line roles and the impact of his hierarchy on recognition. The chapter then discusses Recognition Theory, highlighting its relevance to the study and incorporating Vroom's Expectancy Theory to understand the motivational aspects of recognition. Social Categorization Theory is analysed to understand the grouping roles within the film crew and its implications for recognition and power dynamics. Additionally, the recognition of professionals is explored, drawing insights from various fields to

understand the broader implications of recognition on job satisfaction, motivation, and professional identity. Finally, Cultural Capital Theory is applied to explore how social and professional hierarchies influence professional recognition within the film industry.

The third chapter outlines the research method employed in the study. It justifies the use of qualitative research to explore the complex dynamics of recognition among film crew members. The following section outlines the methodological approach, providing comprehensive details on the qualitative research design, data collection methods, thematic data analysis approach, ethical considerations, research quality, and operationalisation. The chapter also details the thematic analysis process for data analysis, including coding and theme development. The result and discussion chapter compresses key themes derived from the theoretical framework and the interview transcript conducted with the chosen film crew experts.

Chapter fourth presents the findings of the study, structured around three major themes: roles responsibility, and recognition. The fifth chapter interprets the findings in the context of the framework. The fifth chapter interprets the findings in the context of the theoretical framework. And discusses the implications of the research for the industry, providing practical recommendations for enhancing recognition practices. Lastly, the research concludes by synthesizing the findings, addressing the research question, and emphasizing the limitations of the study alongside recommendations for future research.

## **1. Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework for this thesis provides a fundamental lens for exploring and analysing the dynamics of recognition among film crew members. This chapter aims to focus on examining and understanding how film crew members perceive and internalize the acknowledgement of their contributions and understanding in-depth how these perceptions influence their aspirations for recognition. By delving into these diverse perceptions that influence their aspirations for recognition, this framework aims to offer a comprehensive understanding of how recognition is constructed, perceived, and operationalized within filmmaking.

Through the main theories and existing literature that surrounds the phenomenon of filmmaking, for this research, three main concepts will be explored and linked with theories. Section 2.1 explores 'The Roles and Responsibilities of Different Crew Members' of the crew members, looking into the roles and responsibilities of different crew members and how their contributions impact the final product. 2.2 Recognition of professionals focuses on insights from studies on professional recognition in different sectors to highlight the broader implications of recognition for job satisfaction, motivation and professional identity. Section 2.3 focuses on 'Film Crew Categorization and Hierarchies Structures analysing film crew categorization and looking at how these crews are categorized and the hierarchies that emerge within their production environment and in the film industry. Section 2.4 discusses the actions, and expectations for recognition of the crew using Victor Vroom's Expectancy Theory, which will be discussed in assessing how the anticipation of recognition influences crew members' motivation and their engagement in the filmmaking process.

These frameworks not only anchor the research but also bridge the realities of film crew members with other organizational theories that govern these dynamics. each theory selected for this framework offers an in-depth perspective on different aspects of crew recognition and expectations. Exploring its relevance to the research question and guiding the methodological approach for data collection and analysis.

## 2.1. The Roles and Responsibilities

The complex process and success of filmmaking are often dependent on the combined efforts of a wide range of professionals, each contributing their distinct talents and skills to create memorable cinematic experiences for the viewers (Baker, 2015, pp.150-172). This set of professionals essential to its creation are known as film crew members. A film crew member is described as a group of individuals employed to work on a film or TV set. These film crews are distinguished from casts that appear in front of the camera (Jimottewill, 2023, para. 2-7). Depending on the type of production, a film crew is divided into different crew departments that make up the film crew, each crew is dedicated to specific roles and responsibilities for the production to go smoothly, also known as “crew positions” (Crawford, 2024, pp. 234-243). In the process, crew members contribute their unique talents and knowledge to every aspect of filmmaking, from the director and cinematographer to the technical execution of the movie (Baker, 2015, pp.150-172). It is vital to know the importance of film crew members in the filmmaking process. And discuss the various roles they play in filmmaking.

### 2.1.1 *Director*

The vision of the director: film scholars suggest that a great movie usually starts with a director who has a vision, and is in charge of creating the overall mood, storyline, tone, and style of the movie (Zickar & Slaughter, 1999, pp. 211-230 & Carpio & Birt, 2022, pp. 189-198). Film scholars like Andrew Sarris (1962, pp. 103-103) believe that directors are the authors of films they make, the director’s role plays a vital role in using his ability to transform a script into entertaining and engaging visuals and emotional experiences for the viewers (Emmons & Doherty, 2021, pp. 1929-1968). For this reason, he uses his ability to guide the crew members in carrying out his vision into reality (StudioBinder, 2019, para. 1-3). An example is how directors like Quentin Tarantino collaborated closely with both actors and technical teams to create a distinctive visual style and narrative pacing, whereby directly influencing all aspects of production from lighting to post-production editing (Carpio & Brit, 2022, pp. 190).

### *2.1.2 Scriptwriter*

One of the crew members the director works closely with is the screenwriter (Baker, 2015). A well-written screenplay serves as the foundation of a successful film. Is one of the many members of the film crew who brings the vision of the directors. Screenwriters interchangeably known as scriptwriters are people who write advanced screenplays for production (Moffatt, 2023, para.1-3). These people's role involves writing a blueprint of a storyline, character development and dialogue. They are creating compelling narratives that captivate viewers' attention and directly impact how directors and actors interpret scenes and storylines. These stories are either original or taken from literary works- like comic books, novels, or short stories into screenplays. The screenwriter eventually provides these scripts as guidance and clues to other pre-production teams to bring them to life (Vakhtin, 2023, para. 1-5). Nevertheless, unpacking this theoretical framework is important because it helps to understand all aspects of filmmaking and the different key players in making a successful movie. Their roles influence decisions on set design, cinematography etc. Diablo Cody's screenplay for "Juno" exemplifies how unique dialogues and character development can dictate the film's tone and directorial choices of the film (Irving & Rea, 2015, pp. 83-97).

### *2.1.3 Camera department*

Cinematographers are also referred to as Director of photography (DP). They are responsible for creating the visual look and feel of the film, they work closely with the director, screenwriter, and Gaffer, to achieve the film style through lighting, framing, camera movement etc. Their work directly impacts the Gaffer's lighting setups and the camera operators' shots, ensuring that each frame aligns with the directorial vision (Team, 2023, para 2-4) in the movie "Blade Runner 2049" roger Deakins's cinematography technique shows how lighting and camera angles can create a mood and unique atmosphere, influencing post-production and color grading and visual effects (Baker & Faulkner, 1991, pp. 279-309).

### *2.1.4 Lighting and Grip department*

#### Gaffer and Key Grip

The Gaffer, depending on the size of the set, is also known as the chief lighting technician, crucial in implementing the lighting plan for the film. The gaffer works directly under the DP (Director of Photography) to design, set up and adjust all the lighting used on set. Their main role is to ensure that the lighting complements the artistic vision of the film, enhancing mood, tone, and overall aesthetics as envisioned by the director and DP. Effective lighting by the gaffer can dramatically affect the film's visual storytelling, influencing the audience's perception of the scenes and the characters on screen (Irving & Rea, 2015, pp. 83-97). The Key Grip is also responsible for the rigging on set, working closely with the gaffer and the cinematographer to support the lighting and camera work physically. Their role is to manage the equipment that holds the camera, like dollies and cranes, modifying the lighting with flags, diffusers, and camera movement, playing a crucial role in scenes requiring complete camera movements or lighting setups (Baker & Faulkner, 1991, pp. 279-309). Looking at their impact on the success of a film, both the gaffer and the key grip are important in establishing the visual tone and atmosphere of the film. Their collaborations ensure that lighting and camera work synergistically to produce the desired aesthetic effects. Films like *Blade Runner 2049*, led by Gaffer Bill O'Leary, or *"Birdman"* for instance relied heavily on mood, and suspense, making it possible to maintain consistent lighting and smooth camera transitions throughout the long takes (Caston, 2012, pp. 96-110).

### *2.1.5 Art Department*

#### Production designer

The production designer creates the visual conception of the film, setting the overall aesthetics of the movie, they are in charge of designing the physical environment, and set of the production, often in collaboration with the director and cinematographer to ensure that the settings of the set reflect the script demands and enhances the story mood. In movies like *"the Grand Budapest Hotel."* The set design of the movies overseen by Adam Stockhausen illustrates how production



design influences costumes, makeup, and even camera techniques to immerse the viewer's expectations in the film world (Caston, 2012. pp. 96-110).

#### *2.1.6 Sound Department*

##### **Production Sound Designer**

The production sound designer contributes to shaping the film's atmosphere and enhancing the narrative. The sound designer creates the auditory content of the film, including sound effects, ambient noise, and dialogue clarity, which allows for an authentic and engaging sound mix, crucial for audience immersion (Carpio & Birt, 2022, pp. 189-198). Their work is very crucial during the pre-production stage, where they decide on the sound equipment and techniques that will suit the film's needs, ensuring that they fix sound challenges that might occur from a location shoot, such as background noise and acoustics, ensuring that the dialogue and ambient sounds are recorded clean and during post-production, as high-quality sound capture reduces the need for the set for costly and time-consuming Automated Dialogue Replacement (ADR). Their key responsibility is shaping the viewer's sensory experiences and often collaborating with the director's vision board, contributing to the overall success and coherence of the final film product. Understanding these roles highlighted the complexity and collaborative nature of filmmaking, whereby the final product is the culmination of diverse creative and technical sound effects.

#### *2.1.7 Makeup artist and Costume designer*

Within this department, the roles of the make-up artist and costume designers are connected to the filming process, their contribution to the success of the movie goes beyond the surface, they help by conveying a deeper theme and character arcs visually. For instance, the evolution of their development can be subtly suggested through changes in makeup and wardrobe, contributing to the film's emotional depth and narrative complexity without the need for explicit dialogue (Caston, 2012, pp. 96-110). This work ensures that the film resonates with the authenticity and support of the director's vision and works closely with the cinematographer to ensure the costume and makeup fit the film, overall aesthetic, and color palette. For example, we can see in the series "The Lord of the Rings" by Peter Jackson King involved prosthetics and makeup that brought fantastical creatures to life, significantly

enhancing the visual impact and believability of the series (Irving & Rea, 2006, pp. 83-97).

### *2.1.8 Stunts and VFX*

Although the stunts and VFX are quite different, the actions are done physically or digitally, they both departments work together and contribute significantly to the narrative of the film. Stunt coordinators, double and VFX are important, especially in genres demanding high action and extensive visual manipulations. Stunts articulate character abilities and evolution, while VFX expands the visual and technical dimensions of the story. For instance, the VFX can visually manifest abstract concepts like magic or advanced technologies that are central to the story's thematic concerns and settings, as seen in films like "Doctor Strange," where mystical elements are conveyed through complete visual effects (Caston, 2012, pp. 96-110). Their works are essential to ensure the safety of the physical performances and believability of the film's visual storytelling, bringing life to complex narratives that captivate audiences through both thrilling physical feats and extraordinary visual creativity (Carpio & Birt, 2022, pp.189-198). For example, the Marvel cinematic universe frequently combines expert stunts with the help of CGI to craft its signature action scenes, which are both visually impressive and crucial for character development and plot advancement (Baker & Faulkner, 1991, pp. 279-309).

## **2.2 Recognition of Professionals**

The recognition of professionals spans various fields, including organizational behaviours, human resources management, social psychology, social work, pharmacy, IT, education, healthcare etc. Different research perspectives offer unique insights into the importance and Impact of Professional recognition, highlighting its role in enhancing job satisfaction, performance, and interpersonal relationships within the workplace, as well as the challenges associated with it. While there is limited literature specifically addressing the recognition of film crew members, insights from other fields can be drawn from studies conducted to illustrate the broader implications of this issue on recognition. By examining research on professional recognition in various sectors, a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by film crew members and the potential impact on their job satisfaction, motivation, and overall well-being can be discovered.

Recent research has shown significant attention to the recognition of professionals across various fields. Recognition is the acknowledgement of an individual's skills, achievements, and contributions within their professional domain. It not only validates experience but also significantly influences motivation, boosts self-esteem and professional identity, and fosters job satisfaction and professional development. This recognition can take various forms, such as certificates, formal awards, professional titles, public acknowledgement, promotions and informal praise. For example, formal recognition includes structured programs like "Employee of the Month" awards or industry-specific accolades like Noble Prizes in scientific fields. Informal recognition includes spontaneous praise from supervisors or peers, which can be equally impactful (Brun & Dugas, 2008, p.721).

Numerous academic studies have explored the multifaceted impact of professional recognition, revealing its importance in enhancing job satisfaction, performance, and interpersonal relationships within the workplace. Professional recognition can be understood through various lenses, including motivation theory, social validation theory, and organizational behaviour. According to Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory, recognition is a key motivator that enhances job satisfaction and performance (Herzberg, 1968, p. 75). Social validation theory posits that recognition serves as external validation, boosting self-esteem and perceived

competence (Hogg & Terry, 2000, p. 25). Organization behaviour studies emphasize the role of recognition in shaping workplace culture and employee engagement (Robbins & Judge, 2019, p. 34).

From an organization behaviour perspective, recognition is often seen as a key driver for employee motivation and performance. In the corporate sector, recognition is integral to economic and environmental strategies. Research indicates that companies with robust recognition programs have higher levels of employee engagement, productivity, and lower turnover rates (Robinson et al., 2005, p.58). researchers like Nelson highlight that recognition significantly impacts job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Employees who feel acknowledged are likelier to be engaged, productive and loyal to their organization. Recognition fosters a positive organisational culture where achievements are celebrated and contributions are valued (Thomas, 2009, p. 81). Recognition of professionals is vital for several reasons: Validation of Expertise: Recognition serves as external validation of professional knowledge and skills, enhancing credibility and authority in their field (Allen & Eby, 2012, p. 25). Motivation and job satisfaction: Recognition professionals are more likely to experience higher job satisfaction and motivation, leading to improved performance (Deci & Ryan, 2000, p. 74). Contribution to the field: Recognized professionals serve as role models and set benchmarks for others. Career advancement: Recognition can open doors to new career opportunities, promotions, and professional growth (Ng, Eby, Sorensen, & Feldman, 2005, p. 112).

Recognition takes various forms across different professional fields. In healthcare, recognition is vital due to the high-stress nature of the job. Healthcare professionals often work long hours under intense pressure. Recognition in this field can range from formal awards given by medical associations to informal acknowledgements by patients and peers. Studies show that recognised healthcare workers show lower burnout rates and higher job satisfaction (Shanafelt et al., 2015, p. 225). In the education sector, teachers and academic advisors significantly benefit from professional recognition through awards, grants, and public acknowledgement at conferences and in publications. Recognizing teachers' efforts can lead to improved teaching practices and higher student outcomes (Dinham & Scott, 2000, p. 90).

Despite the benefits, professional recognition can be challenging to implement effectively. Issues such as favouritism, lack of clear criteria for recognition, and the potential for recognition programs to become demotivating are perceived as unfair and can undermine their effectiveness. Some scholars argue that the lack of standardized criteria for recognition can undermine its value, leading to concerns about bias and favouritism. Overemphasize on formal recognition can detract from intrinsic motivation, causing professionals to focus more on achieving recognition rather than the quality of their work (Deci, Koestner, & Ryan, 1999, p.67).

The lack of recognition can affect professionals and their work environment. Researchers have explored various dimensions of the issue, focusing on its cause, and consequences. Major causes of lack of recognition include organizational culture, managerial practices, and workload stress. In some organizations, recognition is not embedded in the culture, leading professionals to feel undervalued (Nyberg et al., 2018, p. 109). Managers play a critical role in recognizing their team members, but not all managers possess the necessary skills or awareness to provide effective recognition (Ghosh et al., 2013, p.49). in high-pressure environments, the focus on meeting deadlines and achieving targets often leaves little room for acknowledging individual contributions (Shanafelt et al., 2015, p. 230). Interviews and focus groups with professionals reveal that recognition is a critical factor in their overall satisfaction and motivation (Dinham & Scott, 2000, p. 92).

Overall, the body of research underscores the critical importance of recognition for professionals across all fields. It highlights the need for organizations to prioritize and integrate recognition practices into their culture and management strategies to foster a positive and productive environment. By comparing these insights with the film industry, the research aimed to uncover specific challenges and opportunities for recognizing the film crew members.

### **2.3 Film Crew Categorization and Hierarchies Structures**

In the context of film production, the hierarchical categorization of crew roles plays a pivotal role in structuring interactions and recognition within the industry (Garcia, 2018). Stemler and Kaufman (2020, pp. 100-727) suggest that people with high-level skills in specific area as also good at evaluating others' work in that same field. From the authors' points of view, like filmmaking, this implies that understanding the different roles and contributions of individuals in the film industry is important for a comprehensive assessment of their work. For example, consider an incredibly talented film director, like Christopher Nolan. The assumption highlighted by Stemler and Kaufman would suggest that because Nolan has great abilities in film making, he is also likely to be adept at recognizing and assessing the quality of other director's movies. This suggests that in the film industry, evaluating someone's work might require an understanding of the specific roles and contributions each person makes, such as directing, writing, acting, and so on.

The theory of social categorization, as discussed by Krueger and Brewer (2001, chp. 1.2) emphasizes that individuals tend to group themselves and others into different social groups according to their shared roles, traits, and attributes. This structuring helps in making sense of social environments and enhances mutual understanding within the group (Krueger & Brewer, 2001, chp. 1.2). Henri Tajfel's work underpins this theory by suggesting that such categorization serves as a psychological benefit to help individuals understand each other and make sense of their social world and environment (Tajfel, 1969, pp. 173-191; McGarty, 2018). In the film industry, social categorization manifests in a positive psychological way for members of the crew to view themselves and others concerning their expertise and responsibilities uniquely to the film project. Besides the roles of each film crew member and team, which sets them apart from each other, there are theories and ideologies within the film industry that further create a clear division this is because in the film the pivotal roles matter in the hierarchical structure of film crew members (Shorr, 2020, para. 4; Caldwell, 2008, pp.152-178).

### *2.3.1 Hierarchies within the film production*

When studying social categorization in the film industry, hierarchical structures are essential for defining the roles and responsibilities of each crew member. These structures not only shape the chain of command but also influence how recognition and value are distributed across different roles during production. While they help organise large-scale productions, they also create rigged categories that affect interpersonal dynamics and the professional environment (Caldwell, 2008, pp.152-178; Fernandez, 2020, pp. 45-67). Film credit serves as a visible representation of the hierarchical structure on set. The most prominent roles, such as director, producer, and lead actors, are listed first and often in larger fonts or with special emphasize. This placement underscores their high status and significant contributions to the film, signalling their importance to the audience and industry professionals alike. Conversely, roles considered less critical, like production assistants or minor crew members, are listed towards the end, often in small fonts, which can diminish their perceived value and contribution to the project. This practice of ordering credits reinforces the established hierarchy by visually and symbolically elevating certain roles over others, perpetuating the existing power dynamics within the industry. For instance, considering the production of a major film. The director, producer and other leading roles from the top of the hierarchy define and oversee the project's vision. Below them, there are distinct departments like cinematography, sound and costume design, each with its own task. This hierarchy helps in organising the complex process of filmmaking, ensuring everyone knows their responsibilities. However, this hierarchical structure inherently promotes clarity among various departments. It also means that people in lower-ranking positions, like production assistants, may receive less recognition and have less influence compared to those in higher-ranking positions, such as directors or producers (Hadida, 2010, p. ; Ebbers & Wijnberg, 2017).

### *2.3.2 Above-the-line & Below-the-line*

Aligning with (Zickar & Slaughter, 1999) perspective, in film production, identifying this hierarchy of professionalism is relevant in examining the considerable number of people involved in the production and recognizing their contributions,

which is often acknowledged in film credits (Caldwell, 2008, pp.152-190). Beyond the spotlight of the cast, directors, and producers, this credit row reveals other diverse crews grouping them into opening and closing credits. This category is traditionally known as Upper and lower-line film crews also known as above-the-line and below-the-line (Smith, 2017). This originated in the early days of studio simplifying the budgeting process for film production.

Aside from the monetary management aspect of the roles, Caldwell (2008, pp.152-190) discusses a clear division between 'above-the-line' and 'below-the-line' crew members. The terms 'Above the line and below the line' are used to describe crew members who are responsible for guiding a project's creative direction and technical crew roles, categorizing individuals based on their roles, identifying vital parts that each crew performed and inviting the audience to appreciate the communal creativity behind their favourite movie (Caldwell, 2008, pp.152-178). According to studies, 'above-the-line' individuals typically include directors, producers, and lead actors, who are often seen as key creative forces behind a film, while the below-the-line" crew members, such as grips, sound technicians, and editors, although crucial in the practical execution of the production of a film. Despite their critical contributions, these roles often receive less visibility and recognition both within the industry and in public perception (Fernandez, 2020, pp. 45-67; Jones, 2019, pp. 89-104).

Aligning with the perspective of Zicker and Slaughter (1999), it is important to recognize how hierarchical distinctions within the film industry are manifested in public recognition and within the crew as film credits. Additionally, the credits of a film not only list the names of those involved but also subtly reinforce the perceived importance of distinct roles by their order and prominence. For example, the director, producer, and lead actors are usually listed first, emphasizing their higher status and contribution to the project, this practice visually and symbolically reinforces, those who are listed later and often on smaller fronts. this perpetuates the established hierarchy within the industry, emphasizing the unequal distribution of recognition and values among different roles (Tuomi, 2007, pp. 67-92). This division not only categorizes roles but also significantly influences career arcs and professional development opportunities within the industry (Jones, 2019, pp. 89-104; Garcia, 2018). Nevertheless, using these tags on the different crew departments puts



individuals into a specific box, where the 'above-the-line' personals can be seen more having authority and prestige compared to the 'below-the-line' crew members undervaluing the professionalism of the 'below-the-line' and perpetuating an unequal distribution of recognition and awards within the industry- illustrated by (Caldwell, 2008, pp.152-190). Khatib Lina's research on 'other' and 'self' (2006) builds on Tajfel's (1974, pp. 173-191) and Ashforth and Mael's (1989, pp. 20-39) theory on social identity theory helps to understand how the title roles could form distant social groups within the film crew, each with their own identity and cultural norms. This segmentation can lead to ingroup favouritisms and out-group bias, affecting collaboration and workplace harmony (Tajfel, 1974, pp. 173-191; Ashforth & Mael, 1989, pp. 20-39).

### 2.3.3 Hierarchical Structures and the 'Self' vs. 'Other' Dynamic

Looking at this hierarchical structure through the 'other' and 'self' described by Khatib Lina reinforces this ideology of role differentiation and power dynamics. The distinction between 'self' and 'other' categorizes roles and influences power dynamics and recognition within the film crew. This theory helps explain why there is an attempt to justify the hegemony, power dynamics and representation among the crew members. Examining how identification with a group within professional settings affects individual behaviors and intergroup relations is crucial. Khatib's critical perspective (2006, pp. 63-80) on upholding traditional hierarchies in film production is evident, where the 'other' in this case represents the rest of the crew members and the 'self' actively refers to the creative directors and producers. These individuals often do not consider themselves as part of the crew but as the main crew, thus seeing the rest as 'other', aligning with Caldwell's earlier observations (Caldwell, 2008, pp.152-190). For this reason, in terms, of role differentiation and perception, the notion of 'self' as the main crew, often not even referred to as 'crew members,' signifies a distinct separation from the 'other.' This separation is not just a matter of role differentiation but a deeply ingrained perception that governs interactions and decision-making processes on set. It reinforces the hegemony of directorial and production roles, positioning them as leaders whose whole vision and decisions shape the film outcome, often at the expense of minimizing the contributions of 'below-the-line crew members. The skewed representation in the film

industry, where only certain roles are recognized as pivotal, reflects broader societal trends about labor valuation and recognition (Khatib, 2006, pp. 63-80). This phenomenon aligns with Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital, which explains how social and professional hierarchies are maintained through systemic recognition practices that value certain types of cultural knowledge and skills over others (Bourdieu, 1986, pp. 241-258). This framework is vital to understanding how collaborative filmmaking works and the different tasks involved in creating cinematic pieces. The division and organization of the group can create tension, which is essential to address for fostering a fairer environment where all contributions are acknowledged and valued.

## **2.4 Nurturing and Gaining Recognition**

In the dynamic environment of the film industry, nurturing and gaining recognition requires a strategic approach that considers both individual motivations and the collective culture of the production team (Rooney & Belli, 2011, pp. 145-166). The recognition of film crew members plays a crucial role in motivating and maintaining productive work. The integral contributions of below-the-line crew members from cinematographers, and sound engineers to costume designers and gaffers often remain unrecognized by the more visible roles of actors and directors, the public, and sometimes the industry itself, despite their significant contributions to the success of a film project (Jones & Pringle, 2015, p.p. 37-49; Rooney & Belli, 2011, pp. 145-166). Recognition within the film industry, therefore, is not merely a courtesy but a significant motivator that can impact the overall productivity and morals of crew members. This lack of recognition aside from being acknowledged on the credit list at the end of a movie could impact motivation, job satisfaction, and the quality of the films produced. Understanding and addressing the dynamics of recognition in the film industry and how crew members nurture and service their recognition in the industry requires a nuanced approach that considers both psychological and organizational factors. There are various stages of development to achieve independence and respect, individuals develop a strong sense of self and complete identity in social interactions (Honneth, 1996, pp. 97-100).

#### 2.4.1 Nurturing Recognition through Vroom's Expectancy Theory and Recognition Theory

As presented above, with the film industry's glitz and glamour, gaining recognition in the film industry and outside, requires strategic approaches, engaging in various activities to maintain visibility within the industry and in the heart of audiences, is driven by the need for recognition. Understanding the methods and strategies by which these film crew members can nurture, and gain recognition is essential. Vroom's Expectancy Theory (1964, pp. 575-580) and Recognition theory (Honneth, 1996 pp. 97-100), provide valuable frameworks for analyzing these dynamics. Applying both theories in practice and the performance of the crew members within the context of recognition provides a comprehensive approach to understanding and enhancing the motivation of film crew members. Vroom expectancy theory is recognized among others as the most effective theory in identifying varied reasons and motives and efforts done to gain recognition. The theory describes how people choose what motives them based on three factors: (expectancy) the likelihood that they will reach the required level of performance if they put in the necessary effort, (instrumentality) the chance that they will succeed in reaching the goal if they carry out the behavior, and (valence) the degree of satisfaction they hope to experience from reaching the goal, in other words, depending on the set goals of individuals, people might be motivated if they have particular expectations. an individual motive is affected by the value and expectation placed on any effort that will lead to performance and that performance will lead to the desired outcome the reward (Vroom, 1964, pp. 575-580). In the context of the film industry, the theory suggests that if crew members believe their efforts will be recognized and rewarded, their motivation to perform well and commit to the project increases significantly. With the three components- expectancy, crew members are likely to be motivated if they believe that their hard work and skills will lead to satisfactory performance. This belief can be nurtured through clear communication of job expectations and by providing the necessary training and resources that affirm their capabilities. When it comes to instrumentality, this refers to the crew members' belief that if they operate well, a valued outcome will follow, when a transparent

mechanism for recognition and advancement is implemented, ensuring film crew members see a direct correlation between their efforts and their career progression. Valence: the value associated with the recognition or reward. For film crew members this could mean public acknowledgements, credits in the film, awards, bonuses, or even opportunities for bigger film projects.

As presented above, nurturing, and maintaining recognition is crucial in the film industry. For this thesis, the forms of nurturing recognition are analyzed to provide insight and understanding of the strategies employed. Aligning with Vroom's Expectancy Theory (1964, pp. 575-580), within the context of recognition, the recognition theory (Honneth, 1996 pp. 97-100) builds on the actions, choices, skills development, and strategies filmmakers choose to become visible in and outside the industry—believing that they have to engage in various activities to get this recognition because they have an expectation built (Krueger & Brewer, 2001). Research supports the premise that professional recognition significantly impacts motivation and job satisfaction. A study by Deci, Koestner, and Ryan (1999, pp. 580-590), reinforces the idea that recognition enhances intrinsic motivation, in this case, this suggests that when film crew members receive acknowledgement for their work, their intrinsic motivation increases, leading to higher job satisfaction and better performance. This aligns with the principle of recognition theory, which posits that social acknowledgements are crucial for personal and professional development (Honneth, 1996, pp. 97-100). Contrarily, some studies suggest that extrinsic rewards, such as public recognition, may sometimes undermine intrinsic motivation, particularly when such awards are perceived as controlling or manipulative (Kasser & Ryan, 2001). This contradiction presents a nuanced challenge within the framework, where the pursuit of visibility and recognition might risk overshadowing the genuine passion and creative drive that many below-the-line crew members hold.

In nurturing recognition there are common recognition patterns used within the film to enhance one's position or personal career advancement but also contribute to the overall success and innovation of their film projects; the importance of strategic networking and collaboration, skills development, and participation in independent projects that offer practical approaches to overcome the traditional hierarchies that often marginalize the contributions of these essential crew members

(Ebadi & Schiffauerova, 2015). It has also been researched that crew members leverage professional relationships to enhance visibility and career opportunities. It is recorded that individual crew members not only attend film events to network their roles but also work with aspiring directors and producers to land them a new project (Cullari, 2023). They partner with other film crews that are also not recognized and make something extraordinary by submitting their work independently to film festivals for broader audience recognition, promoting both the film and the individuals involved (Chase, 2023). Another strategy employed is Knowing more skills (Flores, 2023). They make sure their skills are well crafted and develop more training skills as professionals. These trainings are either supported by the industry or self-taught (British Film Commission, 2022).

This framework is crucial for understanding what strategies film crew members especially amongst below-the-line crew members engage in to navigate traditional and emerging pathways to get recognition. Examining how these individuals nurture and gain recognition will contribute to a deeper understanding of the dynamics at play in recognition practices across distinct roles in the film industry.

### 3. Methodology

An extensive overview of the research methods used to examine how film crew members perceive their recognition within the professional context of the film industry is provided in this chapter. An outline of the specific procedures followed in the implementation of this research is provided in the methodology section. To do so, the following section is covered: the research design (3.1), sampling (3.2) data collection (3.3) operationalization of concepts (3.4), data analysis (3.5) and analysis of the study's quality (3.6).

#### 3.1 Research Design

This thesis aims to explore the dynamics of recognition and meaning making among film crew members within the film industry, providing an overview on how these film crew professionals perceive their recognition and the critical contributions they make. Due to the topic's complexity, a qualitative method is used to allow the flow of research (Babbie, 2017), which is suited for the proposed research question: *how do film crew members perceive their recognition as professionals within the film industry? This methodology section presented an overview of the concrete steps of how this research is conducted. To do so, the following section discusses the research design (section 3.1), the Data.*

#### 3.2 Sampling Strategy

The research will use purposive sampling to select participants based on their relevance to the topic of this study i.e., using expert interviews as a data collection method requires selecting individuals with specialized knowledge relevant to the research topic. In this study, experts were identified as film crew members with significant experience and insight into the recognition dynamics within the film industry. Glaser and Laudel (2009, p. 117) defined experts as individuals possessing specialized knowledge and skills within a particular field, which they can articulate and apply effectively. These film crew experts within this film industry include the cinematographer, sound technicians, makeup and wardrobes and others etc.

(Babbie, 2017, p 24; Campbell et al., 2020). Taking into account the generally small scale and in-depth nature of interpretive indicative research and the time frame for this study, as well as the time needed for the analysis of the interview, (Cassell & Symon, 2004) The recruitment process involved contacting 7 to 11 English-speaking potential crew members in the film industry, individuals who have worked in various roles within the film industry, including film individuals from film schools, Industry contacts, professionals on Instagram and other online forums etc. these experts were chosen because of their firsthand experiences with the professional recognition that crew members receive within the industry.

In addition, to increase the likelihood of more interviews, participants will be chosen according to the following criteria. They must be considered film crew members or active crew members of any film project, have at least two years of experience or more as a crew member, and be at least eighteen years old for ethical reasons to sign the consent form. During the recruitment stage the purpose of the study will be explained, ensuring confidentiality and anonymity, and allowing participants to withdraw without consequences. In addition to these forms of recruitment, since finding expert participants who meet these criteria might be challenging, a snowball method was also used to reach these respondents and ask them for recommendations for other potential film crew expert members (Parker et al., 2019). Through these referrals, most of the interview experts responded and scheduled an interview. A total number of 10 agreed to be interviewed but only 8 people responded within the recruitment period. While existing literature offers valuable insights into strategies for gaining recognition in the film industry, interviewing with an expert film crew member offers several unique benefits and viewpoints that can significantly enhance our understanding and provide practical advice. They can share real-world experiences. Academic studies often present a generalised view, and expert interviews will offer nuanced, real-world examples and personal experiences that highlight how they perceive their recognition and others in practice. This can reveal specific challenges and creative solutions that are not yet captured in the literature.

Participants	Current country job	Job Title	Role Within Industry	Years of experience	Duration Interview	Place of Interview
1.	India	Art set producer		4	70mins	zoom
2.	Italy	Cinematographer	Camera Operator	8	65mins	zoom
3.	Canada	Story producer		4	80mins	zoom
4.	Australia	Stunt	Stunt coordinator and performer	6	60mins	zoom
5.	Netherlands	Director & Filmmaker	Director	6	70mins	zoom
6.	Netherlands	Production producer	Production Assistant	5	67mins	zoom
7.	Netherlands	Writer Scripted		4	Did not happen	-
8.	Australia	Gaffer		5,7	Did not happen	-
9.	Netherlands	Sound Operator	Sound	4	62mins	zoom
10.	Canada	DOP/Director	Director of photography	2,5	50mins	zoom



### 3.3 Data collection

The research used semi-structured expert interviews as the primary method for data collection to gain in-depth insights from film crew members. Each data was collected from interview transcripts, as this method is effective to understand individuals' perspectives and the reasons behind them. A total of 8 expert interviews were conducted, originally aiming initially for 13 interviews, but due to the unavailability and cancellation of other film crew experts, the number was adjusted. According to Bogner et al., (2009, p. 2) expert interviews provide valuable insider knowledge, allowing the researcher to pose open-ended questions to individuals who have direct experience with the topic in question. The research goal was to understand the dynamics of recognition among film crew members within the film industry. These expert interviews, which took place May 2024, aligned with the research objectives, and lasted for 50 to 60 minutes each, via Zoom for effective recording and transcription analysis of responses. Using this collection method allowed the participants to freely express their perspectives and experiences, yielding valuable insights into the significance they attribute to the specific themes, based on a predetermined list of questions rooted in the theoretical framework. To answer the research question “*how do film crew members perceive their recognition as professionals within the film industry?*”, an exploratory qualitative research approach was chosen because this type of research often includes expert interviews as a data collection method, making it useful for answering research questions starting with how and what questions (Saunders et al., 2015, pp. 168-169). This approach leaves room for flexibility, allowing researchers to deviate when important topics arise, indirectly facilitating deeper findings.

Furthermore, the interview will adhere to Kvale's (2024, pp. 9-11) description of conducting an interview. Where the researcher will focus on the participant's perception of the concept related to the main topic, and after use the respondent's individual experiences on their role within the industry to back up the theory. Nevertheless, an interview guide will be created and used, together with questions covering relevant topics like: “How do you approach skill developments to improve your professional profile?”. The interview guide was created while roughly considering the theoretical framework and the adaptation of the conversation with

the interviewees, due to the inductive nature of this study. According to Gioia Method (2013, pp. 15-30), the interview guide used for the interview should not be followed in a standardized manner throughout the interview but should be continuously developed and adapted by the flow of the conversations. Using a semi-structured interview method fits the research goal and the inductive research design of this study as it is flexible for this design and therefore allows for new knowledge to arise depending on the course of the conversation (Saunders et al., 2019, pp. 204-264). The semi-structured interview included icebreaking questions, main questions tied to the theoretical framework, follow-up questions, and probing questions. To ensure structure and focus an interview guide was developed, encompassing all questions, thus aiding the research process during the interview (See Appendix ?) (Ruslin et al., 2022. P.4).

### 3.4 Operationalization

Being part of a film crew entails being in different crew departments. Therefore, to ensure that the research measures directly address the research problem, it is crucial to clearly define these concepts precisely, and ask questions about the participant's experiences with being crew members, building upon the insights outlined in the theoretical framework. For the semi-structured interview, the interview guide was structured around four sections: 1. Introduction, 2. The Roles and Responsibilities 3. Film Crew Categorization and Hierarchies, 4. Nurturing and Gaining Recognition (see Appendix A). The overview of the interview guide and its questions are available in Appendix B.

Within this operationalization section, each section is tailored to explore and uncover the intricacies of how film crew members perceive and navigate their professional roles, recognition, and categorical hierarchies within the film industry. Linking to the theoretical framework and the research question, understanding these concepts will better understand the complex interplay of recognition dynamics that influences crew members' professional experiences and satisfaction. The first section of the interview was for the introductory purpose, of establishing a rapport between the interviewer and the interviewee through ice-breaking questions to make

the interviewee feel more comfortable for the rest of the interview and most importantly, explain the reason behind the topic. For in-depth insight, on the introductory page, general questions focusing on their background and journey in the film industry were asked. Allowing the interviewee to reflect on their professional identity and understanding of what it takes to be a crew member. This section has a direct connection to the research question whereby understanding how they got to be a film crew, which builds up to the level of their recognition and collaboration within the set. Based on this section, knowing what they do and how far they have come plays a picture in each participant based on the answers, because these seem to be important to know how they identify themselves and their roles based on their experiences with other crew.

The second section is 'The roles and responsibilities' This section focuses on identifying the roles and responsibilities of the different crew members on set. A film crew member is defined as an individual employed to work on a film or TV set, encompassing a variety of roles from technical support to creative input (Garcia, 2018, p. ? ; Baker, 2015, pp.150-172). This concept aims to understand and get to know the individual crew better, categorizing them based on their job description, talking through their different roles as a crew member and diving into their experience level and responsibilities within the film production process, and their perception of their roles impact with other crew members and the final product (Packard et al., 2016, pp. 328-342). This is crucial because according to Jimottewill (2023, para. 2-7), a crew member is described as a group of individuals employed to work on a film or TV set. These crew members are distinguished from each other depending on each role and responsibility. Knowing the various roles, they play in filmmaking and how they consider themselves to be part of a film crew as traditionally known helps to define their identity in the industry. Based on what the participants share the researcher will be able to identify the crew members beyond their titles.

The third section is 'Film Crew Categorization and Hierarchies,' which refers to the hierarchical structure within a film crew which affects the dynamics of recognition and interaction among members. This section of the interview guide existed out of social and internal recognition of upper role members vs lower role members of a film crew members on set and end credits "above the line" and below

the line”. In filmmaking, pivotal roles matter in the hierarchical structure of film crew members. Yet, this hierarchical structure naturally encourages distinct divisions amongst various departments (Porter, 2016, pp. 21-39). Aligning with Zickar & Slaughter's (1999) and Franklin & Marshall's (2014) perspective, identifying this hierarchy in professionalism is relevant in examining the substantial number of people named in film credits for example. Understanding how this distinction has significant implications on how roles are perceived on set, compensated, and valued within the film industry and how hierarchical relationships and role interaction have influenced specific production outcomes (Caldwell, 2008, pp. 150-196). Within this section, an interest in understanding how film crew members categorize themselves and others within the industry is presented. This notion gives insight into how they see hierarchical dynamics amongst crew members and industrial practices. Therefore, to answer the research question, analyzing these interview responses to understand how crew members perceive their position within this hierarchy and the impact of these perceptions on their professional interactions, work process and recognition is presented (Jones, 2012, pp. 960-975).

The feeling of social and internal acknowledgement was an impressive bridge to the fourth section which was focused on ‘Nurturing and Gaining Recognition.’ This section focuses on recognition in the film industry. What does the term recognition mean to them, their experience with recognition on set and outside the industry? Looking at the acknowledgement and appreciation of crew members’ contributions and skills towards the end project? Recognition theory emphasizes that individuals seek validation and self-esteem through recognition for their contributions (Honneth, 1996, pp. 97-100), which in turn influences their motivation, behavior, and job satisfaction (Thompson, 2006, p ? ; Jones & Smith, 2018, pp. 202-215). Through the interviews, to understand the dynamics of recognition within the film crew of each film, the researcher will gather the views of the crew members. Therefore, drawing on Vroom's expectancy theory to identify the motivations and strategies that individual film crew members seek recognition based on their contribution to the film (Vroom, 1964, pp. 575-580). There are different strategies employed by film crew members to gain recognition within the industry to ensure their visibility and acknowledgement within professional communities and these strategies lead to promotions, awareness, acknowledgement, and future endorsements. Doing this

explores the strategies they use to their advantage to increase visibility and recognition. Using this theory will measure how film industry professionals perceive the impact of social recognition on their professional identity and career development and provide deeper insights into the psychological and motivational aspects of recognition in the film industry (Honneth, 1996, pp. 97-100). This can be assessed by asking about experiences of respect, esteem, and social appreciation within their work environment. Also using the Vroom expectancy theory helped to explore the expectancy, instrumentality, and valence associated with different forms of recognition after the motivation levels of film industry professionals (Chen & Choi, 2008, pp. 595-615). This was done by examining: expectancy: Do professionals believe that their effects will be recognized? Instrumentality: do the film crew members believe that such recognition will lead to tangible outcomes like promotions, more prestigious projects, or financial rewards? Valence: How much value do they place on the potential outcomes of recognition? Conduct these interviews that include questions derived from the recognition theory and Vrooms' expectancy theory to explore how recognition influences personal and professional development. This section relates to and answers the research questions and sub-questions, not only examining the specific actions they take to gain recognition but also the informal and external recognition perceived. Through this operationalization, this research will create a comprehensive understanding of the complexity of recognition and meaning-making of film crew professionals. This research will provide valuable insights for both practitioners and scholars. See Figure 1. for visual representation.

### 3.5 Data Analysis

Through a semi-structured interview, the research gathered a substantial amount of data, for this reason, a thematic analysis was used to analyze the interview data obtained. This method is effective in classifying and identifying patterns and themes found in the large amount of data that are relevant to the research question, using both deductive and inductive approaches (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018, p. 808). These themes are deduced from the theoretical framework for instance the film categorization, nurturing recognition and the emergence of other

themes are developed inductively throughout the analysis of the interview (Joffe, 2011, p. 210). The thematic analysis offers flexibility, allowing for multiple insights and conclusions to answer the research question (Braun & Clarke, 2021, pp. 37-47)

Furthermore, Brennen (2021, p.140) and Braun & Clarke (2022, p. 77), emphasize how critical it is for researchers during the analysis process to get familiar with the data collected. This study aims to go over each interview transcription. For safety reasons, all personal data will be stored and eventually uploaded on ATLAS.ti analysis program. Nevertheless, after transcription, the study followed the following steps to conduct thematic analysis steps described by Cormack et al., (2018, pp. 3-4) familiarizing with the data by revisiting the transcript data of the interview, the researcher was able to get a better understanding of the result. Create initial codes- after going over every interview, the researcher coded any significance they thought to have. forming categories by combining and organizing codes and creating themes. After analyzing each of the initial codes, the researcher compared and examined their meaning to group them into categories, the study created broad 10 sub-themes by grouping categories with related ones which led to the final 3 main themes. During this procedure, a coding tree would be created to summarize all related codes, see Appendix C.

### 3.6 Ethical Considerations

Due to the research focus on recognition within the industry amongst film crew members, it was crucial to take the participant's rights and ethics into consideration. This study ensured various measures to ensure participants trust was protected (Brennen, 2017, p. 16). Therefore, a consent form was sent digitally since all interviews happened online. The form will include the study's purpose, potential risks and benefits, participation rights, and contact details (Babbie, 2017, p. 29). Participants may voluntarily sign consent forms as the topic of recognition and activities may be sensitive and require confidentiality. The interview will be voice recorded and will only be used for this research purpose. Once the analysis is complete, the audio will be permanently deleted. For confidentiality, the participants will be recorded and referred to as "interviewees" in the transcript (Brennen, 2017,

p.319; Babbie, 2017, p.65). Ethics was taken into consideration by checking the boxes of the ethics checklist to ensure the integrity of the research (see Chapter 6).

### 3.7 Research Quality

This research focused on ensuring validity and reliability, and reflexivity to ensure quality using certain techniques (Babbie, 2017, p. 149). While Flick (2007, p. 9) suggests researchers employ transparency in every step of methodology. Therefore, a thorough approach was taken for this research, including explanations for every choice made and the development of measurement tools, such as the participant's description, consent forms, interview guide, and coding tree, to increase the reliability of this study.

Regarding the validity of this study, validity reflects the precision of the data in achieving the desired measuring goal (Babbie, 2017, p.153). To increase its overall validity, this study addressed several validity levels. The development of precise interview questions focused on the study topic, the updating of the interview guide, and conducting pilot interviews worked to establish face validity and ensure the test measure its intended objective (Babbie, 2017, p.154). The study also ensured Content validity, by covering the study topic through the theoretical framework across multiple research domains and involving film crew experts enriching the research's relevance to the film industry (Babbie, 2017, p.154). A clear operationalization was used to guarantee construct validity. The interview questions were developed from operationalized concepts that were described in accordance with the theoretical framework (Babbie, 2017, p. 153).

Finally, it is critical to acknowledge in qualitative research the impact of the researcher's personal views on the interpretation and gathering of data. Tracy (2010, p.842) promotes transparency and self-reflection as practices. When gathering and analyzing data, researchers must be honest about the choices they make, as well as their weaknesses and strengths. Brennen (2017, p. 17) how crucial it is for scholars to understand and be aware of the possible effects of their values and beliefs, this is why a reflective method is advocated, in which the researcher is urged to evaluate the findings from a perspective other than theirs. For this study, the researcher was in charge of developing the research question together with analyzing the data they

were conscious of their influence over the study. Throughout the entire study, reflexivity was used, especially while creating the interview guide and analyzing the data from the result. Interviewing an industry expert can serve as a form of validation for the strategies identified in the literature. It helps verify whether these are effects and widely adopted in the field, thereby reinforcing or challenged the findings from academic sources.

## 4.Results

This chapter presents the findings of this study from the thematic analysis of the interview data, aimed at providing a comprehensive understanding of the experiences and perceptions of film crew members regarding their professional expertise, roles, recognition, and hierarchical dynamics within the film industry. The research focused on answering the main research question: *“How do film crew members perceive their recognition as professionals within the film industry?”*. Additionally, it addresses two sub-questions: *“What strategies do film crew members use to gain recognition in an industry focused on directors and actors?”* and *“How do different roles and power dynamics among film crew members contribute to their recognition in carrying out their tasks on film projects?”*. The study involved 8 expert film crew individuals from different film-making departments who have been in the industry for the least 3 years and have worked from different film sets across different countries such as India, Australia, Netherlands, Canada, and Italy. These experts work in the crew categories section of film, documentaries, and TV, which have the same crew categories department. The departmental backgrounds and insights of the available experts offered an interesting context for understanding the recognition dynamics within the film crew.

The result section is structured around three major themes that emerged from the interview data essential to addressing the research questions and sub-questions: *‘Roles and Responsibilities,’ ‘Recognition,’ and ‘Hierarchies and Power Dynamics.’* Each theme is further divided into subthemes that provide detailed insights into specific aspects of each theme. The first theme, *‘The Roles and Responsibilities,’*



explored the various functions, daily tasks, and responsibilities of film crew members. It highlights the importance of teamwork and the impact of their roles on the overall result and success of film projects. This theme helps to contextualize how crew members perceive their contributions and the significance of their roles, providing the foundation for understanding their experiences of recognition. The second theme '*Recognition*,' delved into the feelings of recognition and appreciation among film crew members, examining its impact on their motivation and the strategies film crew members employ to gain recognition. It directly addresses the main question and the first sub-question, linking findings to the theoretical framework such as Recognition Theory and Vrooms Expectancy Theory. This theme revealed the critical role that recognition plays in the professional lives of the film crew members.

The final theme '*Hierarchies and Power Dynamics*,' investigated the influence of hierarchical structures on film sets, focusing on the participants' experiences with hierarchy and its effects on their job satisfaction. It addresses the second sub-question by analyzing how power dynamics shape the distribution of recognition and the professional experiences of film crew members. This theme provides a nuanced understanding of how distinct roles and power dynamics contribute to the recognition and workflow within the film industry. Each theme and subthemes are supported by direct quotes from the interviewee, ensuring that their voices are central to the analysis. The coding scheme and structure are detailed in Appendix D: Coding Tree.

#### 4.1. The Roles and Responsibilities

In the film industry, the successful execution of a film project relies heavily on the roles and responsibilities undertaken by the film crew. Each member, from the director to the production assistant, plays a vital role in ensuring the seamless operation of the production process (Tints & Sobchuk, 2020, pp. 26-42). This theme explores the multifaceted nature of those roles and responsibilities, emphasizing the significance of teamwork, the diverse daily tasks, and the impact each role has on the final project outcome. Through the lens of the interviews conducted, this section provides a detailed analysis of how film crew members perceive their roles, their

contributions, and the recognition they receive within the hierarchical structure of the film industry. By addressing these aspects, this theme directly answers the main research question: “How do film crew members perceive their recognition as professionals within the film industry?” etc. Understanding the journey and roles of film crew members into the film industry and what they consider as part of their identity provides deeper insights into their professional experiences and how they perceive recognition. During the interview, participants shared their journey into the film industry, highlighting a mix of passion and deliberate career choices. Interviewee 1 mentioned “I started as a runner on a small indie film and gradually worked my way up. Each step taught me something new and valuable things.” Many of the experts emphasized the role passion played in their journey. Interviewee 3 says: “I always loved films and knew I wanted to be part of the magic behind the scenes. Starting as an intern allowed me to gain experience and grow.”

#### *4.1.1 Role Definition and Perception*

The journey and identities of crew members provide context to their professional development. Research shows that understanding and acknowledging this background can significantly understand the perception of feeling unrecognised highlighting the difficulties that crew members face in receiving adequate recognition. For instance, the competitiveness and structure of film crew keep evolving, and the way roles are defined and perceived within the film industry as a film crew is crucial for understanding the professional experiences of crew members (Tinits & Sobchuk, 2020, p. 26). Role definition and perception are a powerful driver of role and responsibility identification. Role definition and perception can be assessed by examining whether the identity and position of the experience’s individuals align with how individuals view their contributions and the recognition they receive either on set or at the end of a project. During the interviews, experts identified several components used to help them define and view their roles on set, including identification as a crew members, diverse responsibilities, and perception of being undervalued.

During the interview, the crew's identification was a primary motivator on set. For instance, each expert provided diverse definitions of what it means to be a film crew member and how their roles fit into the definition which helps them to define their daily roles on set within different film projects. Interviewee 3 says that “a crew member is part of the backbone of the film set, working behind the scenes to ensure everything runs smoothly”. As exemplified by Participant 6, “Being a crew member means being part of a team that brings stories to life. It is about dedication, hard work, and being there for each other.” This definition emphasizes the essential support roles that are crucial to the success of a film project, even though these roles might not be in the spotlight. Interviewee 2 described a film crew as “anyone who contributes to the filmmaking process, whether it is through technical support, artist input, or logistical management.” This definition highlights the diverse range of contributions that film crew members make from technical tasks to creating and logistic support.

When it came to the identification with the role of being a crew member, most respondents identified themselves as a film crew member, feeling their roles were connected to the film production process. Interviewee 6 shared, “I see myself as a film crew member. Even though I am ‘just’ a PA, my work is essential to keep things moving”. This statement reflects a sense of pride in her role and recognition of the importance of their role, despite the less recognition from the public. participant 1 reflected on their journey, saying, “Starting as a runner and working my way up, I have always felt like a crucial part of the crew, no matter my official title”. One of the participants reflects on a common sentiment among production assistants, once felt that their tasks and responsibilities are overlooked. This highlights the evolving nature of their roles and their continuous contribution to the film production process, reinforcing their identification as film crew members. lastly, while participants felt the importance of their roles by the identification of their roles and the diverse responsibilities on set, few revealed that many crew members feel their roles are often undervalued and misunderstood by others in the industry. stating, Interviewee 6 “I think because I am a PA, some people underestimate what we do because they see us as ‘Oh, you’re just bringing me a sandwich or a coffee”.

#### *4.1.2 Diverse Responsibilities*

Likewise, to the effectiveness of teamwork, the daily tasks and responsibilities of film crew members vary widely depending on their specific roles. Their tasks as mentioned above are essential for the smooth operation of the film set and successful impact on the final project outcome.

diverse responsibilities was also identified as the most common motivators to identify as a crew member. Participants expressed the versatility required of many crew members, ready and motivated to assist various departments as needed on set to get things done. Interviewee 3 empathised with the multifunctional nature of their role, explaining, “Sometimes you have to help camera, sometimes you have to help art, sometimes you have to help sound. This shows that many crew roles, often go beyond their official job descriptions. The ability to adapt and help various departments underscores the versatility required of crew members on set, yet this flexibility is not always acknowledged or appreciated. Furthermore, while many were easily able to fit into the definition as a crew member, as mentioned by interviewee 2:

“When I started, I did not see myself as a crew member, but now after years of being in the industry, I could identify in distinct roles depending on the film project.”

The combination of all these roles and the responsibility of the different crew highlights the dynamic nature of film production work.

Furthermore, while discussing the diverse roles they engage in on set, cross-departmental assistance amongst crew members on the set process happens often since they all have distinct roles. Therefore, this ensures that these support tasks and responsibilities are crucial for maintaining the daily flow of production. Interview 6 describes her typical day as a production assistant: “Usually, I start by picking up an actor or actress and drive them to set. Make sure everyone has breakfast and coffee” another crew member discussed their responsibilities in more technical terms, describing the versatility and ability to switch between roles and responsibilities heights the dynamic and often unpredictable nature of film production work, requiring flexibility and a wide skill set. As expressed by interviewee 3 “you never know what the day will bring. One moment I am setting up lights, and the next, I am running to get coffee for the director. It is all part of the job”.

These behaviors and skills experienced by crewmembers on daily tasks on sets are aligned with theory as well according to Wrzensiewski and Dutton (2001, pp.179-201 & Kooij et al., 2017, pp. 971-981), with the concept of crafting, where employees modify their tasks to better fit their skills and interests. From these responses, we can see how crew members stay on diverse responsibilities on a daily on set and adapt to the dynamic needs of the production. Allowing the crew members to find greater satisfaction in their work and skills and contribute effectively to the project's success. These detailed accounts of daily tasks show the extent of crew members' contributions, underscoring the need for recognition and hierarchical structure within the distinct roles' contributions. Overall, every role is crucial based on the impact of each individual on the final project outcome, each member's contribution, whether small or big, plays a part in the overall success of the film and understanding this interconnectedness is essential for appreciating the collective effort required in achieving film project goals. Production assistants, while often seen as outlying as expressed by one of the experts are central to the daily operations and overall flow of the production. Interviewee 6 "if you are not working well with your production assistants, then the day isn't going smoothly." Interviewee 3 remarked, "Every role is crucial. From the lighting crew who set the mood to the sound technicians who ensure clarity, each person's work accumulates in the final project". This integration of various techniques and creative elements is what shapes the audiences' experiences and makes sure each role is indispensable. "the film would not look or sound the same without each department doing its part. It is a true team effort". This perspective underscores the importance of recognizing and valuing each contribution, regardless of its position in the hierarchy.

#### *4.1.3 Crew Members: Teamwork Importance*

Having explored the perception of crew members on their roles and responsibilities, the focus now shifts to the collective effort of various departments that cumulates in the creation of a cohesive and polished final product. For this section, the data obtained from the interview delves into the roles of teamwork in

daily tasks, revealing how interdepartmental collaboration and mutual respect enhance the overall quality of the final product. Building on the obvious, Unity and collective effort- a common element of the film production process, places the importance of teamwork. Focusing on the perspective of Hodge (2009, pp. 18-30), effective collaboration and conflict negotiation are essential skills for film crews, and lack of this recognition can lead to decreased job satisfaction and professional growth. Nevertheless, Teamwork is a foundational aspect of how film crew members perceive their roles, which in turn enables their sense of recognition that underpins the successful execution of projects. Irrespective of their roles and contributions on set, participants highlighted the significance of teamwork in their daily work on set. Interviewee 3 articulated this sentiment stating, “For me, teamwork is really important and within the film you have a lot of different departments, but I think is really important that we see each other as one.”

Building on interdepartmental collaboration, In the context of film production, effective teamwork ensures that each department’s efforts are synchronized, leading to a seamless and effective production process. This sense of collaboration aligns with Kozlowski and Illgen, (2006, pp. 77-124), who suggest that teamwork often motivates unity, collective effort and organizational effectiveness, on a broader understanding of teamwork, thus not merely functional but also essential for fostering a supportive work environment and enhancing overall productivity. For instance, most of the experts said having the right team and structure helps them with their self-esteem and motivation on set. Similarly, interviewee 3 added that “when everyone works together and respects each other’s roles, the day runs smoothly, and the end product is always better”. Also, the inclusion and the collaborative nature of roles directly impact how recognition is distributed among crew members, and the synchronization of efforts and skills across various departments is crucial in achieving high-quality outcomes, Additionally, Miller (2003, pp. 121-134) and Tuckman’s (1965, pp. 384-399) of group development such as forming, storming, norming, and performing, helps us understand that there are stages of team formation and the development of effective collaboration and its impact on group performance and tasks. In the context of the film production process, this theory posits one of the experts on how teamwork transcends departmental boundaries, promoting a culture of mutual support and shared responsibility.

Interviewee 3 shared:

“There was a time when the lighting setup was taking longer than expected. The camera team stepped in to help, even though it was not their primary responsibility. That kind of teamwork makes all the difference”.

In conclusion, the exploration of roles and responsibilities within the film crew gives a comprehensive answer to the main research question and sub-questions. Teamwork emerged as a foundational element essential for the smooth execution of tasks and the success of the project. The perception and definition of roles highlighted the challenges crew members face in gaining recognition for their contributions. The diverse daily tasks and responsibilities of crew members underscored the visibility and adaptivity required in the film industry during the production process. Finally, the impact of the individuals on the final project outcomes demonstrated the interdependence of roles and the importance of collaboration within the crew. By understanding these roles and responsibilities, we gain a deeper appreciation for the dynamics of recognition and professional development within the film industry. This analysis not only highlights the critical contributions of each film crew member but also the need for greater acknowledgement and appreciation for their work. The next section will delve into the theme of recognition, exploring how crew members experience and seek recognition in their professional lives in and outside the set.

## **4.2 Recognition**

Having explored the perception of crew members on their roles and responsibilities, this section examines what recognition means to each film crew member. Additionally, this section explored film crew members' views towards recognition, examining its impact and the motivation and strategies they employ to gain recognition. Additionally, this section directly addresses the main research questions and the second research question, linking findings to the theoretical framework of Recognition theory and Vroom's Expectancy theory, which provides insights into the motivational aspects of recognition. Using Vroom's theory to explain how recognition (the reward) can drive crew members and its broader implications

on professional development. This theme explores the critical roles that recognition plays in the professional lives of film crew members on and outside filmmaking processes. As mentioned earlier Vrooms' expectancy theory (1964, pp. 575-580), suggests that motivation is a result of an individual's expectation that a certain level of effort will lead to a particular performance (expectancy) and indirectly lead to desirable rewards (instrumentality), and these outcomes are valuable (valence). From the interview, it is understood that recognition encompasses the acknowledgement of individuals' contributions. Many crew members expressed an ardent desire for their efforts to be recognized by both peers and superiors to maintain a positive work environment. The findings are organized into several subthemes: perception of recognition within and outside the industry, followed by an analysis of the impact of recognition on motivation and job satisfaction, and strategies for gaining recognition.

#### *4.2.1 Perception of Recognition and Appreciation*

The concept of recognition emerged as a crucial factor influencing the professional experiences and job satisfaction of the film crew members. The different crew members revealed a different expression of recognition, highlighting both its motivating power and the challenges of achieving it in an industry often characterized by hierarchical structures and intense competition. From the interview data Recognition is perceived differently among crew members depending on their roles experiences and hierarchical structure within the industry. While some look forward to receiving external recognition, some interviewees revealed that participants deeply valued recognition and considered it essential for their motivation and morale. When asked what they think about recognition, Many expressed a not ardent desire for recognition of their contributions to be acknowledged by outsiders. They believe that recognition is not significantly important to them or that recognition from outside is not a primary concern but rather their peers, superiors, and the border industry. Interviewee 9:

“ for me, it is more about doing a job well done and knowing that I have contributed to the project. The external recognition like credits or awards doesn't matter much as long as the director and team know my value.”



The camera operator cinematographer says:

“I focus on the work itself. Recognition from the industry is nice but it does not drive me. What matters is the respect and acknowledgement from my peers and the immediate team.”

looking from a director's perspective (interviewee 6) on recognition:

“for now, public recognition or awards are not my primary goal. I find satisfaction in creating great visuals and having the respect of the crew I work with. That is more fulfilling than any formal acknowledgement.”.

These perspectives align with the aspects of recognition theory and Vroom's Expectancy Theory, emphasizing that for some crew members, intrinsic rewards and immediate social acknowledgement from peers and supervisors are more significant than formal or public recognition.

The interviewees mentioned different forms of recognition to them and discussed the implications of these on their professional lives. When asked if they agreed that recognition was vital for their professional well-being. These triggers align with positive impact as stated by (Renger et al., 2019, pp. 27-35). Interviewee 1 stated, “When the appreciation is there, I run ten times harder for that person because I think, ‘Oh, you really appreciate what I do?’”. This shows that participants felt more motivated and committed to their work when they received acknowledgement and recognition for their contributions. Few of the film crew expressed their frustration as they reflect a common feeling among crew members that their efforts are often overlooked, leading to frustration and demotivation. For them, a verbal or informal acknowledgement underscores the importance of their recognition. This includes verbal acknowledgement, thank you notes, and personal compliments from colleagues. Interviewee 9 anchored this sentiment, saying, “ It is frustrating when your hard work goes unnoticed. A simple ‘thank you ‘ can go a long way”, and interviewee 1 provided a specific example: “ we had just wrapped up a particularly challenging shoot, and the producer personally came to thank each of us” this statement reflects the fundamental need for ones need for acknowledgement and appreciation which is mostly done by a simple gesture of gratitude. This aligns with recognition theory which says that social validation is crucial for maintaining self-esteem because such recognitions are seen as genuine.

In an industry where many roles are collaborative and interdependent, recognition from peers is important for maintaining a positive work environment and fostering a sense of belonging and worth. Recognition theory emphasizes that recognition is not merely about accolades but also about being seen and valued as an integral part of the production process (Honneth, 1996 pp. 97-100). For instance, interviewee 9 noted, "Knowing that my work will be appreciated and credited motivates me to put in my best effort. It is the awareness that drives us to strive for excellence." This aligns with the expectancy component, where the expectation of recognition boosts the motivation to perform well. Looking at the instrumentality concept, where there is a belief that better performance will lead to desired outcomes, this implies to the film crew members on set that performing well will lead to positive outcomes such as receiving credits, awards, or future job opportunities, interviewee 6 expressed this saying, "when my contributions are recognized by the team, it makes me feel valued and integral to the project. It is not just about the final project, but about being appreciated throughout the process" with value placed on these outcomes. The value that crew members place on recognition significantly impacts their motivation. If the outcomes are highly valued, such as gaining recognition that enhances their career prospects, crew members are more likely to be motivated. For example, interviewee 3 remarked, "Receiving an award or even just being acknowledged in the credit makes all the late nights and hard work worth it. It is a validation of our efforts and talent." This indicates that recognition is a highly valued outcome that crew members strive for, thus enhancing their motivation to perform well.

All of the experts agree that recognition often leads to future job opportunities and personal growth. They emphasized the importance of referrals and personal feedback over formal credits. The sound operator remarked, "A kind word from a director or a recommendation to another project can be more rewarding than a formal credit. It shows that your work is appreciated on a personal level." Another area that was slightly mentioned by the experts is receiving recognition from external entities, some interviewees expressed a desire for greater public awareness of roles played by various crew members in the film production, as noted by the production assistant who felt that the public's understanding of film production is limited and skewed towards visible roles. The stunt personal/ coordinator also states,

“Audiences rarely understand the risks and efforts involved in performing stunts. We put our safety on the line to create thrilling scenes, but the applause usually goes to the actors.”. one of the cinematographers mentioned, “ We work long hours to ensure every shot is perfect, but our names often appear towards the end of the credit, if at all. It can be quite disheartening.”

#### 4.2.2 Strategies to gain recognition.

Literature discovers the significance of recognition in creative industries. According to North et al. (2011, pp. 155-168), continuous professional development and acknowledgement of contributions are key drivers of job satisfaction. This aligns with the findings from the interview where crew members emphasized the importance of ongoing feedback and recognition for their professional growth. For the film crew members, investing time and effort into building professional networks, maintaining a strong social media presence, and continuously developing their skills can be seen as strategic exchange. These investments are made with the expectation of receiving recognition and career opportunities in return, illustrating the reciprocal nature of professional relationships in the film industry among crew members. The strategies employed by the crew members to gain recognition are varied. From the interview, it is noted that continuous professional development, networking, visibility through social media and participating in high-profile projects are some of the key strategies identified by the filmmaker's experts. This section on recognition explores these strategies in detail, analyzing how crew members seek recognition with a film project. By examining the strategies within the context of Vroom's Expectancy Theory and other relevant academic sources, the discussion will provide a comprehensive understanding of the motivations behind these efforts and their impact faced by the film crew members also addressing the sub-question.

##### *4.2.2.1 Professional Development*

Additionally, crew members often strive to work on projects that offer significant exposure, allowing them to show their skills to a larger audience. In a collaborative setting, like film, where successful projects rely on the seamless integration of various roles, recognition from peers and supervisors is crucial for

maintaining motivation and leading to further career development. The participants shared that recognition to them serves as a significant driver for career development. According to North et al. (2011, pp. 35-48), continuous professional development is a career strategy in creative industries. Interviewee 9 highlighted this by stating, "staying on top of new technologies and techniques is essential. It not only improves my work but also shows that I am committed to my profession. This has definitely helped me gain recognition on set projects where technical expertise is highly valued." This aligns with Vroom's Expectancy Theory (1964, pp. 575-580), where increased effort (continuous learning) is believed to lead to better performance (Expectancy), which in turn leads to recognition (instrumentality), and this recognition is highly valued (Valence) (Vroom, 1964, pp. 575-580). Further supporting this view, Fernandez (2020, pp. 45-67) emphasizes that the hierarchical nature of the film industry, and continuous professional development are crucial for lower-tier crew members to advance and gain the recognition often researched for higher-tier roles for directors and producers.

The disparity in recognition can be bridged by consistently improving one's skills and demonstrating expertise, which is acknowledged by industry peers and superiors. Regarding skills development, the interview result shows a strong consensus among film crew members about the necessity of continuous learning and skill development to excel in their roles and gain recognition. Many interviewees emphasized that staying current with industry advancement is vital for both personal growth and professional recognition. According to recognition theory, the crewmembers believe that their effort in studying and developing their skills will lead to improved job performance and in turn will lead to recognition and advancement outcomes they highly value. Interviewee 10 says, "investing in courses and workshops has significantly boosted my career. It not only enhances my skills but also shows my dedication to the craft, which gets recognized by my peers in the film set projects".

Nevertheless, developing a broad skill set allows crew members to adapt to different roles and challenges on set. Interviewee 6 mentioned, "the more skills I acquire, the more versatile I become. This versatility is highly valued on set, and it often leads to more opportunities and recognition". Interviewee 2 also noted, "learning new techniques and mastering advanced equipment has been a game

changer. It makes me more efficient and effective, which is noticed by all the directors and producers”.

#### 4.2.2.2 Networking and collaboration

Besides of gaining recognition through professional development, and skills acquisition, networking and collaboration is other strategies mentioned by crew members to enhance their career prospects. The most common networking involves attending industry events, joining professional organizations, and leveraging social media platforms. For example, Interviewee 2 highlighted the importance of networking by stating, “Networking is key. You need to know the right people and make sure they know you and your work. It is about creating opportunities for yourself. This strategy has worked well for me, leading to new project offers and collaborations” This commitment to lifelong learning not only improves their job performance but also signals their dedication to the craft, making them more likely to be received by their peers on set as it paves the way for job opportunities, and collaborations, directly impacting one's recognition within the industry (Jones, 2019, pp. 89-105).

The film industry is highly network-driven and collaborative, where knowing the right people and being known for one's work can open doors to new opportunities. Interviewee 6 explained, “Being part of a successful project can boost your profile. It is a great way to demonstrate your skills and gain recognition within the industry.” Another thing that was evident in all the interviews was the contribution of recognition to the development of professional identity and self-worth. From their perspective and experiences from working on different projects, investing in strategies to gain recognition is an exchange process where their effort put into networking, skills enhancement, and visibility is expected to yield professional acknowledgement and career benefits. According to interviewee 5, “implementing more inclusive recognition practices, such as acknowledging crew members in team meetings and providing opportunities for peer recognition, can significantly boost morale and motivation.”

Another way of maintaining and gaining recognition mentioned by a few experts is maintaining a visible presence online social tools, which to them, reinforces professional identity and opens new opportunities for recognition and career advancement. Maintaining a strong social media presence allows crew

members to show their work and connect with film professionals. Sharing behind-the-scenes content, project updates, and personal achievements can significantly enhance visibility. Interviewee 1 noticed the power of social media in gaining recognition, stating, "Social media is a powerful tool. It allows me to share my work with a broader audience and get noticed by potential employers. I have received several jobs offers through online presence, proving that this strategy works.". Thus, the use of social media aligns with the need for continuous visibility in a competitive industry and supports the efforts to gain recognition from a wider audience (North et al., 2011, pp. 35-48).

#### 4.3 Hierarchies and Power Dynamics

Hierarchical structures and power dynamics significantly influence recognition and job satisfaction among film crew members (Johns, 2010, pp.1059-1077). Previously we discussed all perceptions of film crew members and how they gain through maintaining recognition in the industry. This third theme will follow the guidance of the 2nd sub-question. This theme closely explores participants' experiences with hierarchy recognition and how it affects their professional work in and outside the film set. With the first subtheme Hierarchy structures on recognition, this section explores the effects of hierarchy structures on film crew members, drawing from empirical data obtained through the expert's interview and integrating insight from theoretical frameworks, including using social categorization theory, and recognition theory analysis to provide a comprehensive understanding of how hierarchical structure shapes the professional experiences and perceptions of film crew members. The experiences with hierarchy on set will explore the deep connection of role interactions and community scope on set. Furthermore, exploring the Impact of hierarchy dynamic on roles and recognition.

##### 4.3.1 Hierarchical Structures on Set

The hierarchical structure in the film industry is designed to facilitate the organization and execution of film projects ensuring that each member's role is clearly defined and that workflows are streamlined. This structure is essential for managing the complex and collaborative nature of film production, where various

departments and specialties work in harmony to achieve a cohesive final project. This structure typically delineates roles clearly, with 'above-the-line' positions often viewed as more prestigious and influential than 'below-the-line' roles. Findings from the interview revealed that hierarchical structures are pervasive and profoundly impact crew members' daily operations and recognition. Participants described the hierarchical nature of film sets, where those in higher positions receive more recognition and respect. They underscore the roles of each department from director to the last crew member, the top-down nature of the decision-making process in film production, and how these affect the distribution of recognition among crew members, reflecting on the power dynamics and the often-competitive atmosphere fostered by hierarchical structures. For instance, Interviewee 9 noted, "Directors are very much higher on that hierarchy because it's their vision". This statement explains the central roles of directors and the top-down nature of decision-making in film production, ensuring that the director's vision is realized, with each crew member playing a specific role in the larger creative process. Interviewee 3 highlighted the rigidity of these hierarchies: "The industry is very competitive, and there is always the pressure of being replaceable, the hierarchy makes it clear who has the final say.". This reflects the power dynamics and the often-competitive atmosphere fostered by hierarchical structure. This delineation of roles can create a high-pressure environment where crew members must continually prove their value to secure their positions and advance their careers.

During the interview, film crew members acknowledged the presence of a clear hierarchical structure within the film industry, distinguishing between roles "above the line" and below the line. Interviewee 6 noted the visible distinction between these roles. She highlighted that on television sets, the hierarchy is less pronounced, fostering a more collaborative environment. However, in film settings, the hierarchy is more rigid, with clear demarcations and often a more formal atmosphere. Interviewee 4 also echoed these sentiments. He pointed out that the distinction is not just in the job titles but also in the interactions and decision-making process: "Directors and producers (above the line) often do not interact directly with those below the line, instead they communicate through assistants and coordinators".

One of the most significant impacts of hierarchical structures is the disparity in recognition between “above-the-line” and “below-the-line” roles. This gap in both formal acknowledgements, such as credits and awards, and informal recognition within the work environment. Interviewee 3 expressed frustration over disparity: “Even though we work hard, most of the recognition goes to the actors and directors. It is rare for the crew to get the same level of appreciation except being mentioned at end credits”. This statement connects to the common experiences among “below the line” crew members, whose contributions are often overlooked despite being critical to the film’s success. When it comes to the impact of hierarchy on their recognition and roles on set, interview 6 described her experiences: on some sets, her hard work as a production assistant is acknowledged and appreciated, leading to a stronger personal bond and increased motivation. On other sets, her efforts are undervalued, reducing her sense of belonging and affecting her morale. This inconsistency in recognition can influence her performance and willingness to go the extra mile. The hierarchical structure significantly influences the decision-making process on set. Interviewee 6 mentioned that production assistants often have little say in decisions, even when their input would be valuable, she recounted instances where her suggestions were ignored by higher-ups, impacting the efficiency and smoothness of her work. Interviewee 2 shared that the heretical decision-making process often overlooks practical challenges faced by the below-the-line crew. He emphasized the need for more inclusive meetings where technical staff can provide input on feasibility and coordination, thereby improving overall efficiency and workflow.



#### 4.3.2 Personal Experiences with Hierarchy On Set: Strategies For Improvement

The perception of hierarchy and its necessity varied among crew members. Some view it as a necessary structure for managing order and clarity, while others see it as overly rigid and potentially detrimental to creativity and communication. The experiences with hierarchy help to explain how recognition is perceived differently across various levels of the film crew. In terms of a necessary structure on set, it is identified that hierarchical structures dictate how recognition is distributed, affecting crew member perceptions of their professional acknowledgement. The hierarchical nature of film production is a common theme in the experiences shared by the film crew members. This hierarchy is typically structured around the above-the-line roles and below-the-line roles. These distinctions create clear power dynamics and influence how work is distributed and recognized on set.

Henri Tajfel's social categorization theory (Tajfel, 1969, pp. 72-86), and Krueger & Brewer's (2001, pp. 35-47) work emphasize that individuals categorize themselves and others based on shared roles and traits. Additionally, Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986, pp. 241-258) suggests how social and professional hierarchies are maintained through systemic recognition practices that value certain types of cultural knowledge and skills over others. Interviewee 3 expressed frustration over the visibility gap between different roles: "Even though we work hard, most of the recognition goes to the actors and directors. It is rare for the crew to get the same level of appreciation." This statement underscores the disparity in recognition, where the contributions of the other crew members are often overshadowed by the more visible roles.

To improve all decision-making and recognition on set, all interviewees suggested fostering a more inclusive environment. Interviewee 6 proposed regular meetings where crew members at all levels could voice their opinions and share insights. This approach could not only improve workflow but also enhance the sense of community and mutual respect amongst crew members regardless of their hierarchy. Interviewee 4 also emphasized the importance of acknowledging the contributions of all crew members, regardless of their hierarchical position. Simple gestures of appreciation from directors and producers can go a long way in boosting

morale and fostering a positive working environment. Interviewee 1 recommended implementing a mentorship system where experienced crew members guide newcomers, helping them navigate hierarchical structures and feel more valued. Interviewee 1 provided a balanced view, acknowledging the importance of hierarchy for clarity and efficiency but emphasizing mutual respect. He observed that “when higher-ups respect the expertise of the below-the-line crew.

#### 4.3.3 Navigating Hierarchical Structures: Benefits Of Hierarchy Dynamic.

Hierarchical structures often led to feelings of underappreciation among lower-level crew members, impacting their job satisfaction. Recognition is critical in enhancing intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction, as Deci, et al (1999, pp. 1789-1805) suggested. Interviewee 3 shared, “Recognition from the people I have been working with is very important to me. It motivates me to perform well and commit to the project.” This indicates that formal or informal recognition plays a significant role in maintaining high levels of motivation and engagement. Conversely, the absence of recognition can have detrimental effects. Interviewee 9 mentioned “Without recognition, it is easy to feel undervalued and demotivated.” This aligns with Vroom’s Expectancy Theory (1964, pp. 576-580), which states that individuals are motivated to perform well when they believe their efforts will lead to desired outcomes, such as recognition and rewards.

Despite these challenges posed by hierarchy, few crew members find ways to navigate and use the hierarchy for career advancements. Interviewee 2 mentioned “understanding the hierarchy helps in knowing who to approach for specific needs and how to get things done efficiently.”

## 5. Conclusion

In this chapter, this research provides conclusions of the overall findings and purpose of this study. The major conclusions of this study are presented in section 5.1 offering the main findings with a comprehensive response to the research questions and sub-questions, detailed in the sub-chapter 'Addressing the Research Question'. Subsequently, 5.2 explores an overview of the findings within the theoretical and social implications. Section 5.3 addresses the thesis limitations of this research highlighting possible improvements. Section 5.4 This sub-chapter provides Recommendations for future research laid by the foundation of this study. The primary purpose of this study is to investigate the dynamics of recognition among film crew members within the film industry. This research aims to understand how these professionals perceive their recognition, identify the strategies they employ to gain recognition in an industry focused on directors and actors, and explore how different roles and power dynamics within film crew members influence the recognition they receive. By examining these aspects, the study seeks to contribute to a broader understanding of social and professional structures within the film industry and inform practices that can enhance the visibility and appreciation of all film crew members.

### 5.1 Main findings – Addressing Research Question:

The belief that a successful film is determined solely by a well-fracted story, and the standout performance of actors and directors is not entirely accurate. In reality, the success of cinematic production is a result of the collaborative effort of the entire film crew. (Baker, 2015, pp. 150-172). These professionals play crucial roles in bringing a director's vision to life, yet their contributions are frequently overshadowed by the more visible members of the industry (FilmConnnection, 2020 par. 3, & Peterson, 2014, p. 89). This phenomenon led to the main research question of this study: *how do film crew members perceive their recognition as professionals within the film industry?*: This research suggests three main domains of analysis: the roles and responsibilities, contributions of film crew members, the organizational structure, Recognition Dynamics, and Expectancy Theory, together with the two sub-

questions, aimed to provide an insightful answer to the research questions regarding recognition dynamics within the film industry and how it impacts the internal and professional experiences of film crew members and meaning-making among film crew members.

To provide an answer to the research question, an overview of the results of the domains will be presented. The roles and responsibilities, contributions of film crew members, and interviewees were able to highlight the significance of their various roles in film production. This aligns with Bakkers (2015, pp.150-172), who emphasizes the importance of each crew member's unique contribution to the filmmaking process. The detailed description of the film crew roles highlighted the extensive contributions each member made to the overall success of the film project. Each role, from lighting techniques to production assistant, is integral to the seamless execution and quality of the final product. This recognition underscores the importance of acknowledging each crew member's efforts, regardless of their hierarchical position within the organizational structure.

Similarly, regarding the organizational structure and hierarchies, Krueger & Brewer's (2001, p. 67) social categorization theory, explains how hierarchical structures in organizational roles and responsibilities support the observation, where the division between 'above the line and below the line crew members, as discussed by Caldwell (2008, pp.28-45), was evident in the interviewee's experts experience. However, the hierarchical nature of the film industry often limits the visibility and acknowledgement of their work. They believe that these significantly impact the distribution of recognition on set. This perception is supported by the findings from the interview conducted which reveal that many crew members feel their roles are often overlooked and misunderstood by others leading to frustration and demotivation. Whereby crew members in less visible positions often employ strategies such as continuous professional development to remain indispensable, building strong professional relationships by networking to secure opportunities and visibilities and leveraging social media to share their work and get direct recognition from audiences as strategies to gain recognition. These efforts align with Vroom's Expectancy theory, where motivation is driven by the expectation that efforts will lead to performance and subsequently recognition.

The dynamic of recognition among crew members within the film industry was explored. The organizational structure itself plays a significant role in how recognition is distributed and perceived. The hierarchical nature of the film industry often results in unequal recognition, with higher-tier positions receiving more recognition and acknowledgement (FilmConnection, 2020). From the expert interviews, the findings reveal that different film members perceive their recognition differently despite their crucial contributions to film production. Internal and external recognition are both critical for motivating crew members and validating their contributions. It became obvious that internal social recognition and rewards from peers and supervisors play a vital motivator for many crew members, aligning with the principles of expectancy theory. This perception varies among different roles within the crew, with those in “below the line” such as production assistants, sound operators, and cinematographers’ positions feeling particularly undervalued.

It is evident that film crew members’ motivation is heavily influenced by their expectations that their efforts will lead to performance and ultimately lead to desired rewards to gain recognition. To them, Recognition from their colleagues is seen as a significant motivator and a vital aspect of job satisfaction and professional identity. These rewards serve as confirmation of their recognition and the value of their work. The following are expectations of rewards shared by these experts, reflecting their desire for acknowledgement and validation of their contributions. If the crew members feel that their hard work will be acknowledged and rewarded, their motivation to excel and contribute increases meaningfully. This form of recognition such as: Showing behind-the-scenes movies to show re performance of creatives behind the scenes and iconic moments, that way people can see how the crew puts in work. Professional recognition through credits in films, industry awards and nominations at festival screenings, positive audience feedback and fan engagement, peer recognition through colleague refers and verbal praise and acknowledgement and lastly career advancement opportunities through promotional roles and higher pay and professional development. All of these are common strategies these experts use to gain recognition and navigate the hierarchical structure effectively.

## 5.2 Scientific Implications

Reflecting on the theoretical framework above, being that there is a gap regarding broader recognition, awards, and public perception of other film crew members in the success of a movie, which is a less-discovered subject by academia (Peterson, 2014, pp. 89-114; Hadida, 2010, pp. 45-80). The study's findings contribute significantly to the broader academic study on understanding professional recognition within creative industries and aligning with several established frameworks, reinforcing their relevance and applicability in understanding recognition dynamics and hierarchical structures within the film industry crew members. By integrating theoretical frameworks such as Social categorization theory, recognition theory, expectancy theory and cultural capital theory, the result brings some different perspectives to the theories. This variance highlights the importance of inclusive recognition practices that extend beyond visible roles to encompass the entire spectrum of film crew members.

Supported by Vroom's Expectancy Theory (1964, pp. 575-580) findings that the efforts of individuals will be recognized and rewarded if they perform well as seen in this analysis, is indeed experienced by the expert film crew members. Throughout the interview, experts were motivated to perform well when they believed their efforts would lead to recognition and value outcomes., which automatically increases their motivation to perform well. This confirms the theory's applicability in the context of the film industry. Throughout the interview, based on the experiences and testimonials of the experts on their definition of recognition aligned with Honneth's (1969. pp. 97-100) view on recognition where they believe this other emphasizes the importance of social acknowledgement for personal and professional development that recognition is not merely about accolades but also about being seen and valued as an integral part of the production process. The data demonstrates that both internal (such as verbal praise and constructive feedback) and external (such as credits and rewards) recognition influences crew members' motivation and job satisfaction, validating Honneth's proposition. it was also discovered that this recognition collectively fosters a specific feeling towards social categorization based on the position and role they play on set (Tajfel, 1969, pp. 173-191). Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital (1986, pp. 241-258) is also reinforced, as the study

highlights how ‘below the line’ roles are often endowed with higher cultural capital, leading to greater recognition and prestige in and outside the set. By alloying theories such as the recognition theory and Vroom’s Expectancy Theory, this research provides a nuanced understanding of the motivational aspects of recognition. It also underscores the need for future studies to explore the long-term impacts of recognition dynamics on job satisfaction performance and career development within the film industry.

### 5.3 Social Implications

As presented in this study, the recognition dynamics within the film industry are essential for understanding the professional experiences and well-being of film crew members. This comprehensive analysis provides several noteworthy contributions to the current literature on film crew dynamics and professional recognition. Moreover, the empirical insights offer a new perspective on the importance of equitable recognition practice in enhancing job satisfaction and fostering a collaborative work environment. The social implications of the findings from this research are significant as they address the need for more equitable recognition practices within the film industry. Recognition of the film crew members not only validates their professional contributions but also enhances their sense of belonging and job satisfaction.

Promoting more inclusive recognition practices that value the contributions of all film crew members regardless of their position within the industry can foster a more collaborative and motivated workforce. This, in turn, can lead to higher-quality film productions, reducing turnover rates and a more equitable working environment. Moreover, increasing public awareness of the diverse roles within the production can shift societal perceptions, valuing the collective effort behind cinematic achievements rather than solely celebrating visible figures. This can inspire aspiring filmmakers and contribute to a more comprehensive appreciation of the industry by the crew members. This study has connected and revealed new insights into the roles and responsibilities of film crew members, the organizational structure within the film industry, and the application of the Expectancy Theory to professional recognition. Understanding these factors, future steps can be taken to improve the recognition

system and address the disparities that exist. Recognizing the contributions of all crew members is critical for promoting a culture of inclusivity and respect within the film industry.

#### 5.4 Limitations

While this study offers important insight into the perception of recognition and hierarchical structures within the film industry amongst film crew members on set, there is a need for further research, necessary to provide additional insights and strengthen the conclusions drawn to answer the research question. A significant limitation of the study is the sample size and diversity of the interviewees. The sample size is relevantly small of 8 film crew experts which only covered a small population of other significant film crew members that contribute to the success of a film, the final interviewee may not fully capture the diversity of experiences of different crew members within the film industry. The number of interviewees was limited, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. A larger and more diverse sample size would have provided a more comprehensive understanding of the recognition dynamics across different segments and roles on a film set.

However, experts from different backgrounds and experiences were chosen to enhance the representation and perspective of the broader population. Nevertheless, due to the limitations of chosen sampling methods, some roles may not have been adequately represented. It is essential to acknowledge that certain specialized roles within the below-the-line categories, such as those in visual effects or post-production, may have unique recognition that was not fully explored. This includes more varied specific roles that could provide a deeper understanding of the nuances in recognition. For the accuracy of the study, the study heavily relied on secondary data and interview responses, which can introduce biases when describing their experiences. Nevertheless, all interviews were done online, restricting the visitation on-set due to the availability of the experts which could have resulted in a more in-depth understanding. Despite these limitations, participants in the semi-structured interview were willing to share their experiences and highlight topics that were personally significant to them.



## 5.5 Recommendations

For future research, an interesting element to include in research is the consideration of film industry organizations and government bodies, implementing policies that ensure equitable recognition. Through observations and understanding the experiences of the experts interview, different elements were highlighted, which are interesting for further research, for example, within the internal and external recognition of film crewmembers, This could include mandatory credits for all crew members, public acknowledgement in industry events, and the creation of awards categories especially for 'below the line roles' These policies would help to bridge the gap between high-visibility and behind-the-scenes roles, promoting a culture of appreciation and respect within the industry. Future research should focus more on addressing the issue of hierarchical recognition, the industry can work forward creating a more supportive and inclusive work environment. This can attract diverse talents, fostering innovation and creativity within the film industry. Recognizing the value of 'below-the-line' roles can encourage more individuals to pursue these careers, knowing that their contributions will be appreciated and acknowledged, especially towards new filmmakers. The study findings can contribute to a broader cultural shift in the film industry, where recognition is not solely based on visibility but on the actual contributions to the filming process. This can lead to a more open industry culture, where roles are valued equally. By promoting a culture that values all contributions, the industry can challenge traditional norms and stereotypes associated with above-the-line and below-the-line roles, encouraging more respect and collaboration among all crew members. For further research, it would be interesting to get more research that tries to understand the experiences of different crew members' roles and their perceptions of recognition given that the film industry continuously evolves, and recognition practices may change over time. A longitudinal study could have been done to examine how recognition dynamics develop and change over extended periods with things experts. By tracking these changes, researchers can provide insights into the long-term impact of recognition on film crew members irrespective of their career or hierarchy as they contribute to the success of a film. Moreover, A mixed method of both interview and other data sources, such as observational study could have provided a more robust understanding of meaning-

making of recognition amongst film crew members as they work on set or in other film practices.

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## Appendixes

### Appendix A- Operationalisation chart

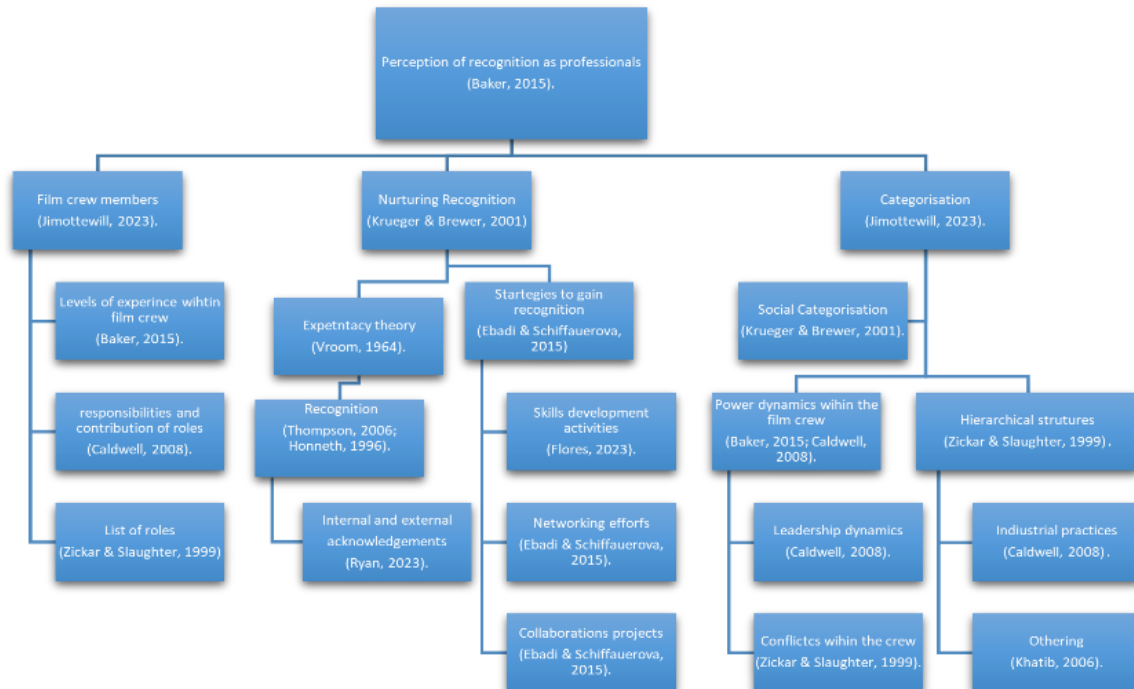


Figure 1 Perception of recognition as film crew professionals.

## **Appendix B - Interview Guide**

### **Welcome greeting**

#### **Icebreaker**

Before we dive into more detailed questions, I would love to hear about your favourite project you have worked on.

#### **Introduction**

Thank you for being present today, My name is Temiloluwa Akinwale, and this research aims to deepen the understanding of how film crew members perceive their roles and the recognition they receive, which I believe is crucial for fostering a more inclusive and appreciative industry environment. The insights gained from this study and your experiences as an expert will be valuable in highlighting the challenges and opportunities within the current industry structures and may contribute to academic publications and practical recommendations for industry practices. I will ask you a few questions, so please feel free to share openly and respectfully; Once again, participation is completely voluntary, and you can discontinue your participation and withdraw your consent at any moment without penalty. Your identity will remain confidential and anonymous.

Before we continue, do you consent to record your responses for the interview?

If yes – proceed.

Alright, Thank you!

Who is Who-

#### **Definition understanding:**

How would you describe the term film crew member”?

Follow up: What characteristics or responsibilities come to your mind when you hear the term?

Do you consider your work and role to fit the definition of a film crew member’ as commonly understood in the industry,

#### **Personal background:**

Can you tell me about your journey into the film industry?

Follow-up: What motivation led you to choose this career path? How long have you been involved in the film industry?

Have your previous roles and experiences contributed to your current position?

Follow-up: How would you describe the distinct roles you have worked in on the film set?

**Self-perception and Professional Role:**

Could you describe a typical day on set for you: what are your main responsibilities?

Probe: like on your current film project etc.

**Role Impact and Insights**

In what way do you feel your role directly impacts the final outcome of a project?

What skills do you consider essential for success in your position? How did you develop these skills?

What are the challenging aspects of your role, and how do you manage them?

How do you keep yourself updated with the industry trends and technology relevant to your profession?

How do you see your role evolving in the future within the industry?

**Film Crew Categorization and Hierarchies**

**Understanding Hierarchical Structures,**

In the film/TV industry, the terms above-the-line, and below-the-line are known, how would you describe these roles in your own experiences?

could you describe the typical hierarchal structure on a film set where you have worked or presently working?

Follow-up: I mean in what ways do you see these distinctions impacting the daily operations and decision-making processes on set?

Prob: can you share any individual experiences where this distinction category impacted your recognition or work collaboration in the industry?

**Experience and perception**

Have you observed any significant difference in how the above-the-line and above-the-below crew members are treated or compensated?

Probe: what challenges did you face due to these categorizations

What are your thoughts on how the film industry could better acknowledge and reward the contributions of below-the-line workers?

Nurturing and Gaining Recognition

### **Perception of Recognition**

#### **Recognition theory related**

What is recognition to you based on your role?

Follow-up: I mean as a crew member or for a final project how is recognition typically expressed in the field etc.?

How important is these forms of recognition to you?

Can you describe a situation where you felt fully recognized by your peers or supervisors?

Follow-up: How did this affect your self-esteem and professional engagement?

Follow up: what about a time when you felt unrecognized?

#### **Vrooms Expectancy Theory Related:**

Expectancy:

do think professionals expect that their efforts will be recognized?

Follow-up: Would you say that is the case for you too?

Instrumentality:

Do you think such recognition of your efforts could lead to a better job opportunity or tangible outcomes like promotions, more prestigious projects, or financial rewards?

How do you feel that recognition within your team impacts your daily motivation?

Valence

how much value do they place on the potential outcomes of recognition?

Follow-up: How important is it for you to feel valued and respected in your professional community?

#### **Nurturing Recognition.**

What strategies do you use to make sure your contributions are noticed by your peers and superiors?

What have you done to gain better recognition within the industry?

#### **Impact of recognition on professional experiences:**

Do you believe that recognition now has changed your motivation satisfaction compared to the motivation that brought you this far in your career?

What advice would you give someone aspiring to enter your field of work in the film industry?

End

Thank you very much for your time. Is there anything you would like to add about your experiences as far as an experienced film crew?

## Appendix C

Participants	Current country	Job Title	Role Within Industry	Years of experiences	Duration Interview	Place of Interview
4.	India	Art set producer	Set Producer	4	70mins	zoom
5.	Italy	Cinematographer	Camera Operator	8	65mins	zoom
6.	Canada	Story producer	Script story producer	4	80mins	zoom
7.	Australia	Stunt	Stunt coordinator and performer	6	60mins	zoom
8.	Netherlands	Director & Filmmaker	Director	6	70mins	zoom
9.	Netherlands	Production producer	Production Assistant	5	67mins	zoom

10.	N etherla nds	Writer Scripted	Script Writer	4	Did not happe n	
11.	A ustralia	Hight and rig operator	Gaffer	5,7	Did not happe n	
12.	Netherl ands	Sound Operator	Sound	4	62mins	zoom
13.	C anada	DOP/Director	Director of photography	3	50mins	zoom

## Appendix D

### Coding Tree

Initial codes	Subtheme	Theme
	Initial roles	Journey into the industry
Importance of teamwork, Unity and collective effort, Practical benefits of teamwork, Mutual Respect, Interdepartmental collaboration	Teamwork Importance	
Undervaluation of roles perception, Diverse responsibilities, Identification as a crew member, Perception of being undervalued	Role Definition and Perception	Roles and Responsibilities
Technical Tasks, Versatility Required, Adapting to dynamic needs, Cross-departmental assistance	Diverse Responsibilities	



Interdependence of roles, Essential contributions, Feeling Invisible, Collective effort, Recognition of teamwork's impact, Contribution to project success	Impact on final project outcomes	
Importance of appreciation, Frustration from lack of recognition, Positive impact of recognition	Perception of recognition and appreciation	Recognition
skill acquisition, networking & collaboration, professional development	Strategies to gain recognition	
Above-the-line, Below-the-line, End credits, Public acknowledgement, Hierarchical credit order, Recognition differences, Visibility issues	Hierarchies structures on the set	
Decision-making, Authority, Influence, Director authority, Producer authority, Decision-making power, Hierarchical influence, Task delegation, strategies for improvement	Personal experiences with hierarchy on set	Hierarchies and power dynamics

## Appendix E

Informed Consent form

### CONSENT REQUEST FOR PARTICIPATING IN RESEARCH

## **DESCRIPTION**

You are invited to participate in research about [topic of the study]. This research aims to understand how these professionals perceive their recognition, identify the strategies they employ to gain recognition in an industry focused on directors and actors, and explore how different roles and power dynamics within film crew members influence the recognition they receive. By examining these aspects, the study seeks to contribute to a broader understanding of social and professional structures within the film industry and inform practices that can enhance the visibility and appreciation of all film crew members. Your acceptance to participate in this study means that you accept to be interviewed.

In general terms, in the case interview, my questions will be related to the experiences and perceptions of film crew members regarding their professional expertise, roles, recognition, and hierarchical dynamics within the film industry. Unless you prefer that no recordings are made, I will make [an audio / a video] recording of the interview / focus group.

I will use the material from the interviews and my observations exclusively for academic work, such as further research, academic meetings, and publications.

## **RISKS AND BENEFITS**

A. As far as I can tell, there are no risks associated with participating in this research. I will not use your name or other identifying information in the study. To participants in the study will only be referred to with pseudonyms, and in terms of general characteristics such as age and gender, etc.].

B. I am aware that the possibility of identifying the people who participate in this study may involve risks for ... [Explain potential risks for the participant's reputation, help, social relations, etc.]. For that reason—unless you prefer to be identified fully (first name, last name, occupation, etc.)—I will not keep any information that may lead to the identification of those involved in the study. I will only pseudonyms to identify participants.

You are always free not to answer any particular question, and/or stop participating at any point. [If participant observation is involved]: Every time I want to accompany you in any activity will ask you for your permission again.

## **TIME INVOLVEMENT**

Your participation in this study will take 1 hour. You may interrupt your participation at any time.

### **PARTICIPANTS' RIGHTS**

If you have decided to accept to participate in this project, please understand your participation is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw your consent or discontinue participation at any time without penalty. You have the right to refuse to answer particular questions. If you prefer, your identity will be made known in all written data resulting from the study. Otherwise, your individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study.

### **CONTACTS AND QUESTIONS**

If you have questions about your rights as a study participant, or are dissatisfied at any time with any aspect of this study, you may contact – anonymously, if you wish— Temiloluwa Akinwole Tomisin, [433477ta@eur.nl](mailto:433477ta@eur.nl). +31651434148. Erasmus University Rotterdam.

### **SIGNING THE CONSENT FORM**

If you sign this consent form, your signature will be the only documentation of your identity. Thus, you DO NOT NEED to sign this form. In order to minimize risks and protect your identity, you may prefer to consent orally. Your oral consent is sufficient.

I give consent to be recorded during this study:

Name

Signature

Date

I prefer my identity to be revealed in all written data resulting from this study

Name

Signature

Date