

GÖTEBORGS UNIVERSITET
PSYKOLOGISKA INSTITUTIONEN

**Experiences of Deviating From the Expected – The Social and
Cultural Context of Identity Development in Adolescence**

Ira Glad and Josefin Henriksson

Examensarbete 30 hp
Psykologprogrammet
Vårterminen 2015

Handledare: Maria Wängqvist

Experiences of Deviating From the Expected – The Social and Cultural Context of Identity Development in Adolescence

Ira Glad and Josefin Henriksson

This study explored Swedish master narratives; shared cultural stories, which influence personal narratives and thus identity development. Two thematic analyses were used to analyse deviation stories, and to identify master narratives. Narratives from 251 adolescents (ages 16-19) were analysed. Seven main themes of deviation stories were found. In the second analysis the deviation stories were interpreted as influenced by seven master narratives. Several deviation themes contributed to each master narrative, indicating that deviation experiences can vary in relation to the same master narrative. Some master narratives appeared to be tied to specific groups, while others seemed to permeate various groups and situations. In addition, some appeared to be specific for the Swedish culture, while others are similar to those found in other cultures.

Who am I? Who have I been and who will I become? These questions occupy many adolescents and they are especially salient when adolescents try to make sense of themselves during their identity development (Erikson, 1968). To answer these questions and integrate them through identity development is not easy and adolescence is often described as an emotional roller-coaster for many individuals (Finkenauer, Engels, Meeus & Oosterwegel, 2002).

As individuals enter adolescence they become more aware of the social and cultural context they live in and thus what family, friends and society expects from them and this influences their identity development (Finkenauer et al., 2002). These expectations on individuals are present in shared stories available in individuals' families, culture and the specific societies they live in (Hammack, 2008). These shared stories have been labelled master narratives (Boje, 1991; Hammack, 2008; McAdams, 2006; McLean, In press). Master narratives have great influence on individuals' personal narratives, that is, their sense of identity, as they hold social and cultural expectations of what the personal narratives should contain and how experiences should be integrated (Thorne, 2004; McLean, In press; Thorne & McLean, 2003). The engagement with master narratives is often an unconscious process (Boje, 1991). However when individuals feel that they deviate and feel that they do not fit into these shared stories in society, the master narratives becomes more visible for them (Boje, 1991; McLean, In Press).

Adolescents who feel that they deviate from the expected may experience a discrepancy between their own sense of identity and others' expectations of who they should be (Negele & Habermas, 2010). The experienced discrepancy during this period could put adolescents in a vulnerable position where their sense of identity is challenged (Finkenauer et al., 2002; Negele & Habermas, 2010). For some it could lead to identity confusion (Erikson, 1968), for others it might also lead to psychological problems like depression or anxiety (Finkenauer et al., 2002).

As identity development is a salient developmental task in adolescence (Eriksson, 1968; Kroger, 2007; Syed & McLean, 2015), and master narratives

represents the cultural and social influence on individuals' personal narratives (Hammack, 2008), to study narratives about deviating from what is expected may reveal the implicit or explicit master narratives that influence adolescents' identity development (McLean, In press). Knowledge concerning how adolescents experience deviations from master narratives enables to find issues that might challenge their personal narrative and thus their identity. In addition to study deviations from master narratives also enables to find how these issues might be connected to the cultural context where their identity development take place. Therefore this study aimed to explore deviation stories among Swedish adolescents and what master narratives could be identified through these deviations. The following sections will present literature on identity development, narrative identity. This will be followed by sections where master narrative as a concept and master narrative deviations will be described.

Identity Development

The complex question of identity development is intriguing and the research field addressing identity development in adolescence is multifaceted with many different perspectives (Kroger, 2007). The perspectives on identity development from developmental psychology and social psychology both offer valuable information. These perspectives gives a picture of how identity may be influenced by inner psychological processes, which is the main focus in developmental psychology, respectively how social processes influence identity development, which is the main focus in social psychology (Johansson, 2008). Both perspectives have been criticized for focusing too heavily on either the inner psychological world (developmental psychology) or the impact from the outer social world (social psychology) (Johansson, 2008; Hammack, 2008). The critics argue that an integration of these perspectives may yield a more thorough and complex understanding of identity development (Hammack, 2008; Johansson, 2008).

Narrative psychologists aim to achieve this integration by focusing more on how individuals' unique social context influences their inner psychological processes in their identity development (e.g., Thorne & McLean, 2003; Bamberg, 2004; Hammack, 2011b; Pasupathi & McLean, 2010). This narrative perspective on identity development studies personal narratives through which individuals organize and integrate personal events into a coherent life story that informs individuals of who they are (McAdams, 1993; 2001). In the following section Erikson's psychosocial theory of identity development will be described since it is seen as the first extensive psychological theory of identity development (Kroger, 2007). This will be followed by a section focusing on theories of narrative identity, as it is a development of Erikson's theory of identity development (Kroger, 2007).

Erikson's psychosocial approach. Erikson defined identity as "... a subjective sense of invigorating sameness and continuity..." (Erikson, 1968, p 19). This feeling of being the same person across time and situations provides individuals with a feeling of being predictable for themselves, but also in the eyes of others (Kroger, 2007). In adolescence, identity development is considered a key developmental task even though the process continues throughout the life course (Erikson, 1968; Kroger, 2007).

Entering adolescence involves cognitive and biological changes due to the onset of puberty, but there are also changes in the demands from family and society. For

example, adolescents are expected to make choices for their future with regard to issues such as education (Eriksson, 1968; Kroger, 2007). Erikson (1968) paid special attention to social processes and how these might come to influence individuals during the life course and he stressed the influence from important others, society, culture and norms on identity development (Erikson 1968; Kroger, 2007). The changes mentioned above and the new demands steer young individuals in a direction to explore different, sometimes contradictory, parts of themselves and to integrate earlier identifications to a whole; a sense of identity (Erikson, 1968). During this period some role confusion in terms of an identity crisis is both expected and necessary (Erikson, 1968; Kroger, 2007). For a healthy identity development individuals have to make identity-defining commitments in order to find a good fit between their own values, interests, goals and wishes and the available roles and niches in society (Erikson, 1968; Kroger, 2007). Erikson's theory of identity development has been interpreted and developed in different research traditions amongst one is the field of narrative identity (Kroger, 2007), which will be presented in the following section.

Narrative identity. If identity is defined as a subjective sense of being the same across time and situations (Erikson, 1968), then narration is the mechanism individuals use to create this feeling of integration and continuity (McLean, In press). To experience a continuity in being the same person is necessary for being able to know the future direction one wants to pursue that is in line with personal beliefs, values, and goals (Erikson, 1968; Kroger, 2007).

Necessary for the skill to narrate is autobiographical memory, which develops in early childhood and in turn is fundamental for the autobiographical reasoning that emerges in adolescence (ages 15-25) (Habermas & Bluck, 2000). Adolescence is a time when individuals start to integrate values, roles, beliefs and behaviours, by evaluating what is important to both themselves, their peers and the larger society (Fivush, Bohanek & Marin, 2010). In adolescence the social context of narrative development widens from narration within the close family to a broader audience such as peers and other adults (Pashupati & McLean, 2010). This widening of the network with whom one talks about one's past experiences, often facilitates new alternative interpretations of the meaning of these past significant events (Thorne & McLean, 2003). In addition it is not until adolescence that individuals may develop a more complex view of themselves and are able integrate contradictions into a coherent sense of identity (Pashupati & McLean, 2010). However, for most adolescents the capacity to integrate contradictions develops later than the ability to see this complexity. Adolescence thus may become a period of inner conflict, stress and anxiety for adolescents in thinking about the self and figuring out who they are (Pashupati & McLean, 2010). Therefore research on identity development in adolescence is important when trying to understand the psychological distress, related to identity development, that adolescents might experience (Pashupati & McLean, 2010). This argument together with adolescents' preoccupation with questions of identity is often the reason for why research on identity development is performed in adolescence (Pashupati & McLean, 2010), as well as it is the base for the aim of the present study.

The process of creating a personal narrative is seen as an interpretative act where individuals interweave and organize memories, significant events and feelings, which together make a coherent story that reflects their identity (Benish-Weisman, 2009). This process provides individuals lives with a sense of purpose, meaning and continuity (McAdams, 1993; 2001; Pasupathi & McLean, 2010). The narrative is also used to

understand others, one's meaning to others and as well, as to understand the world at large (Kroger, 2007). Through a narrative approach it is possible to understand identity development by examining significant events that individuals through narration integrate into a coherent personal narrative (McAdams, 1993; 2001; Thorne & McLean, 2003). There are different types of significant events that researchers in the narrative identity field have investigated to understand what contributes to individuals' personal narrative and thus identity development. Examples of such events are, self-defining memories, turning points, high points and low points. These types of events are considered to have a potential to disrupt what individuals expect and thus events individuals need to struggle more with to integrate in their personal narrative (Thorne & Nam, 2007). Contemporary researchers (e.g., Alpert, Marsden, Szymanowski & Lilgendahl, 2013; Hammack, 2008) have also argued that events of deviating from master narratives may be seen as disruptive events and thus more difficult to integrate into one's self-definition (Alpert et al., 2013; Hammack, 2008; McLean, In press). The present study will therefore investigate master narrative deviation experiences (named deviation stories), theorized as a type of significant events that is one of the features of the personal narrative and thus might be important for the understanding of who one is (Alpert et al., 2013, Hammack, 2008; McLean In press).

Narrative psychology studies the uniqueness of individuals' lives (McLean & Syed, 2015). But how and what individuals narrate in order to make meaning of and integrate significant events into a life story is influenced by their context and culture (Thorne & Nam, 2007; Hammack, 2008; Habermas & Silveira, 2008, Hammack, 2015). When individuals narrate about and interpret significant events in their lives, this narration is more or less influenced by other narratives that are shared with their family, culture or past generations. These shared stories have been labelled master narratives (Fivush, 2010; Hammack, 2008; McLean, In press; Thorne & McLean, 2003). The following sections aim to give the reader an understanding of what master narratives are and how they influence personal narratives. This will be followed by a section that aim to describe master narrative deviations in relation to identity development.

Master Narratives

As mentioned, during adolescence individuals become more and more occupied with the expectations from significant others as well as society (Erikson, 1968; Finkenauer et al., 2002). Due to the cognitive, biological and emotional changes taking place during adolescence, Thorne and McLean (2003) also argued that the struggles with master narratives might be more salient during adolescence.

Master narratives are stories shared by individuals (e.g., family, culture or past generations) within a specific society or context (McLean, In press; Hammack, 2011b), which give individuals a frame to use when they are integrating significant events into their personal narrative (Fivush, 2010; Hammack, 2008). To use the predetermined frames from master narratives thus facilitates the construction of the personal narrative because the master narratives can guide what to include in the personal narrative in terms of what individuals are supposed to be, think, feel or do in specific situations (McLean, In Press; Thorne and McLean, 2003). Master narratives therefore influences individuals' understanding of who they are, and also who they are in relation to their

membership in different groups, as well as their roles and niche in society (Hammack, 2008).

Structure and content of master narratives. Master narratives can be described both in terms of content and structure.. Content of master narratives concern what the story is about, for example shared events, ideas, and themes present in the stories from a collective of people within a specific context (Benish-Weisman, 2009). For example, Hammack (2011b) studied Israeli youths' personal narratives. In these youths' narratives he found that they mentioned common themes of experiences of loss of their country, existential insecurity, as well as the strive to degrade the Palestinian identity. These themes were present in many of the Israeli youths' narratives even though they had no other connection to each other than being Israeli (Hammack, 2011b). Hammack (2011b) argued that the shared thematic content in the Israelis' narratives were an indication of a master narrative connected to the Israeli group identity. For the Israelis their specific master narrative content, was also the most accepted way for these youth, as Israeli group members, to describe themselves in their personal narratives (Hammack, 2011b) In addition the master narrative content also gave them guidance of how to act, think and feel in a context of continuous conflicts (Hammack, 2011b). Master narratives can therefore represent what it means to be part of a specific culture, community or group (McLean, In press; McAdams, 2006; Hammack, 2008; Hammack, 2011b; Hammack, Thompson & Pilecki, 2009) and in addition a shared and predetermined way for individuals to interpret themselves and events in a socially accepted way (Boje, 1991; Bamberg & Andrews, 2004; McLean, In press).

When referring to a specific structure of master narratives the emotional tone of the story and the specific way the story fragments evolve and are organized is addressed (Benish-Weisman, 2009). To exemplify how the structure of master narratives can influence individuals' narratives the study of McAdams (2006) will be used. In his study, McAdams (2006) found a common pattern of how North Americans structured and organized stories of many different types of events. The structure that was reflected in the individuals' narratives was of a redemptive story where experiences of tragic events often turned into something positive (McAdams, 2006). The redemptive story is an example of a master narrative in terms of structure (McLean, In press) that involved descriptions of growing stronger through difficult experiences (McAdams, 2006). This master narrative is an ideal of how North Americans interpret themselves as North Americans but also a way for them to understand and interpret events that has happened to them (McLean, In press). The master narrative of the redemptive story can help North Americans to frame and give meaning to many different experiences or events they encounter (McAdams, 2006

Since master narratives can be tied to specific cultures, communities or groups and stem from historical eras, their content and structure can slowly change due to the continuous changes in cultures and societies (Hammack, 2008; Westrate & McLean, 2010). Specific master narratives can for example be tied to specific eras in time and may therefore be more salient for individuals from different cohorts (Westrate & McLean, 2010). In addition master narratives can also explain what it means to belong to different groups or social categories, such as sexual identities (Westrate & McLean, 2010) and ethnicities (e.g., Way & Rogers, 2015).

In sum, master narratives are shared stories representing the most accepted story frame to use when integrating many different significant events into the personal narrative in a specific society, group or era in time. Master narratives influence individuals' personal narrative in terms of structure, how the significant events are organized, but also in terms of content, what the personal narrative contains, in terms of for example, shared themes (Hammack, 2011b). Master narratives therefore have powerful psychological influence on individuals as they influence what is considered the most accepted actions, thoughts and feelings in specific situations and contexts (Hammack 2011b). Nonetheless, there are also circumstances when individuals feel that they do not fit into these shared and accepted stories (e.g., Bamberg, 1997; Bamberg & Andrews; 2004). This leads to experiences of master narrative deviations, which will be described more in the sections that follow.

Master Narrative Deviations

When individuals feel that they fit into a specific master narrative, their personal narratives adopts the same structure and content as indicated by the master narrative (e.g., the Israeli youths in Hammack's (2011b) study). These individuals live in accordance with what is considered normal and expected within a specific context (McLean, In press) and this makes it easier for them to talk about themselves and their experiences (Fivush, 2010). By living in accordance with the master narrative they therefore do not have to explore or explain their choices to the same extent as individuals who feel that that they do not fit into the master narrative (McLean, In press). Furthermore they do not have to struggle with integrating their personal experiences, in the form of events, into a coherent story, as they can use the master narrative frame to guide this integration (McLean, In press).

In contrast, for those individuals who feel that they deviate from master narratives, the integration of significant events is more challenging and demanding (McLean, In Press; Fivush, 2010). Since these individuals cannot to the same extent use the predetermined frames provided by master narratives (McLean, In press)

Using the example of the Israeli youths once again, Hammack (2011b) noticed that the shared themes of experiences of loss of their country, existential insecurity, as well as degrading of Palestinian identity were not prominent in all Israeli youths' personal narratives. Some of these youths also seemed to struggle more with their personal narratives because they did not agree with some of the shared attitudes stemming from the master narrative connected to their Israeli group identity (Hammack, 2011b). Even though master narratives are powerful frames that guide the integration of events into a personal narrative, most individuals have experienced some sort of deviation from master narratives (Fivush, 2010). However the impact of deviating from master narratives can vary (Schiffrin, 1996; Cohler & Hammack, 2007). For some the impact of deviating is not that profound. Other individuals who feel that they deviate from master narratives might however feel that their own deviation experiences is not accepted to talk about, and thus their stories about these experiences might become silenced by them censoring themselves (Fivush, 2010) To not have an accepted story may result in feelings of alienation, experiences of being different (McLean, In press) or identity confusion (Fivush, 2010).

Since identity development is an important task in adolescence (Erikson, 1968; Kroger, 2007, Pashupati & McLean, 2010), the study of adolescents' deviation experiences might give voice to those stories that adolescents experience as difficult to talk about in the context they live in. In addition the study of deviation stories may also shed light on what deviation stories that are common in adolescence and may be difficult to integrate into the personal narrative and thus affect adolescents' identity development. The study of deviation stories is also a way to make master narrative in a specific cultural and social context more visible, which will be described in the section that follows.

How to study master narratives

To position oneself in accordance with a specific master narrative is usually seen as the accepted and most valued position in a specific social and cultural context (McLean, In press). In addition when individuals position themselves in accordance with a master narrative, it is usually an unconscious process, which make the master narratives difficult to see for these individuals (Boje, 1991; McLean, In press). To deviate on the other hand, or disagree with the master narratives in the given culture is more of a conscious stance than fitting into the master narratives (McLean, In Press). It also makes the master narratives more visible for individuals that experience master narrative deviations (Boje, 1991; Bamberg, 2004; Hammack, 2008). Which position individuals take vis-à-vis a master narrative can therefore either constrain or facilitate the construction of their personal narrative, and thus their identity development (Cohler & Hammack, 2007; Hammack, 2011b).

The study of deviations from master narratives not only contribute with an understanding of what constraints, in terms of deviation experiences, adolescents may encounter during their identity development (Alpert et al., 2013) but also how these issues might be connected to the specific cultural context in which their identity development takes place. Since master narratives are more visible for those individuals who feel that they do not fit into the most accepted story in terms of structure as well as content the master narrative represents (e.g., Boje, 1991), the study of deviation stories enables the visibility of the master narratives that may have caused individuals' feelings of deviating (Alpert et al., 2013). This idea partly guided Alpert et al. (2013) to study middle to late adolescents' (ages 17-22) experiences of master narrative deviations. Through these deviation stories they also presented the master narrative types that seemed to be indicated in these deviations stories (Alpert et al., 2013). This study of master narrative deviation and master narrative types inspired the aim of the present study, with an emphasis on master narratives and their content in the Swedish context.

The Present Study

The studies of master narratives have been conducted in contexts and cultures such as North America (McAdams, 2006) and Israel and Palestine (Hammack, 2011a; 2011b), but have not to our knowledge been studied in the Swedish context at all. Moreover, the majority of studies on master narratives have had an interest in master narratives structure, or in other words how the master narrative influence how

individuals organize different events to make meaning of them in their personal narratives (Syed & McLean, 2015). A part from the studies described above (e.g., McAdams, 2006; Hammack, 2011a; 2011b) master narrative content, in terms of for example shared themes (Benish-Weisman, 2009) is an under-investigated area (Syed & McLean, 2015).

The aim of the present study was therefore, to explore deviation stories among Swedish adolescents (ages 16-19) and what master narratives, with focusing on content, that could be identified through these deviations. Two specific research questions guided the investigations:

1. What deviation stories do Swedish adolescents narrate when asked to write about a situation where they felt they deviated from what they believed was considered normal, expected or accepted?
2. What master narratives can be identified in Swedish adolescents' deviation stories?

Method

The present study is part of a pilot study for the GREEN-project (Gothenburg Research on Ethnicity-related Experiences and Identity Narratives). The main purpose of the pilot study was to examine ethnicity and identity narratives of adolescents and emerging adults. In the present study only data from adolescents was used with an explorative approach to investigate master narrative deviation stories and master narratives, not focusing on ethnicity and ethnicity related narratives. The project is a cross-national collaboration between researchers at the University of Gothenburg and Moin Syed at the University of Minnesota. The pilot project started in the spring of 2014 and the data collection was conducted during the fall of 2014.

Procedure

A questionnaire was constructed together with other graduate students and the researchers involved in the GREEN-project in order to capture the project's area of interest. The questionnaire consisted of different scales and open-ended questions. In the beginning of the questionnaire participants were asked to answer a variety of background questions considering gender, age, ethnicity, educational level and residential area. Thereafter the participants were asked to answer questions about their parents' country of origin, educational level and employment status. The next part of the questionnaire consisted of two narrative prompts. The first narrative prompt was the open-ended question used in the present study and will be described below. The other prompt was either a question where the participants were asked to write a story about becoming aware of their ethnicity or a story of a turning point in their life. The questionnaire ended with scales concerning their psychological adjustment. The questionnaire was constructed both as a questionnaire available online and a paper and pencil questionnaire. After finalizing the questionnaire a mini-pilot was made where acquaintances to the graduate students and researchers who constructed the questionnaire were asked to fill out the questionnaire in order to further examine if any

of the questions were considered unclear. After the final minor edits following the mini-pilot, teachers at universities and gymnasiums in the Gothenburg region and Malmö were contacted. Students of teachers who had responded positively to the project were visited in class and invited to participate in the study. At the Gymnasiums the students were informed about the project's purpose by one of the survey leaders. Students had the opportunity to answer the questionnaires during class and ask questions if they did not understand specific questions in the questionnaire. At the university the survey leaders informed the students about the project during one of their lectures. After the introduction the participants could choose to either answer the questionnaire online during a limited time span of two weeks or chose to answer it during their lecture. The questionnaire took about 40 minutes to complete. The participants were informed about the purpose of the study both orally and in written form. In accordance with ethical principles participants were also informed that their participation was voluntary, anonymous, and that they were allowed to end their participation at any time.

Measures

Background information. Gender was based on self-definition and then divided into the three groups: men, women and other gender. Ethnicity was also based on self-definition where the participants could identify with as many ethnicities they felt they belonged to. Ethnicity was then divided into three groups: Ethnic majority included participants who defined themselves as having a Swedish, Nordic or European ethnicity (where the participants that defined themselves as having a Nordic or European ethnicity did not specify a specific country within these overarching categories). Mixed ethnicity included individuals who defined themselves as ethnic majority as well as a minority, for example, Swedish-Arabian. Ethnic Minority included participants who did not define themselves as Swedish (Nordic or European), but one or more of the ethnic minorities only, for example Arabian, Italian or American.

Master narrative prompt. The present study used a prompt for a written narrative from Alpert et al. (2013) in order to study master narrative deviations and master narratives. The original prompt was not available in Swedish and therefore translated and slightly adjusted to fit the Swedish context. The Swedish prompt, back translated into English, is presented below.

“One can look at one’s life as a story. We all have our own personal story, which consists of our experiences and interpretations of these experiences. Sometimes experiences from our lives diverge from what others expect (eg., society, culture, family, friends) or what is considered appropriate, normal or accepted. Have you ever felt that your story is different from what is considered normal, expected or accepted? Please describe this in the space below and in addition how it made you feel, and the significance it had for you (if any). This can be a single event, something more general about you or your life or anything in between. Please describe the event in detail. ”

In addition to the prompt, open-ended follow-up questions were used which aimed to further develop and deepen the narratives. These questions were also considered a part of the narratives. The Swedish follow-up questions, back translated into English, were “*What did you do to handle, resolve, or otherwise make sense of what you*

have written about? How did you feel when what you have written about occurred? Did what you have written about affect how you view yourself? How?"

Participants

The participants were students attending gymnasiums in Gothenburg and Malmo. The sample of the present study consisted of 251 participants ($M_{age} = 17,11$, $SD = 0.83$) studying programs focused on behavioural science, social science, economics and law. Among the participants there were 185 women ($M_{age} = 17,12$, $SD = 0.85$, 107 belonging to ethnic majority, 46 belonging to mixed ethnicity, 30 belonging to ethnic minority, 2 did not specify their ethnicity, 4 did not specify their age), 64 men ($M_{age} = 17,09$, $SD = 0.79$, 32 belonging to ethnic majority, 22 belonging to mixed ethnicity, 5 belonging to ethnic minority, 5 that did not specify their ethnicity), one person who identified as another gender ($M_{age} = 17$, mixed ethnicity). One participant did not specify gender ($M_{age} = 16$, ethnic majority).

Inclusion criteria. The inclusion criterions in the present study were that the participants should attend one of the gymnasium (ages 16-19) participating in the study and that the participants had answered the first narrative prompt about an event where they felt that they diverged from what is considered normal, expected or accepted. Participants that did not answer the question at all or answered the question in a way that did not correspond with what was being asked, for example: "*I don't know what to write*", "*I love my life*", were not included ($n = 141$, $M_{age} = 17,01$, $SD = 0.84$) (81 women, and 58 men, 2 that did not specify gender).

Ethical considerations. To ensure the participants' anonymity no further information than the ID-code tied to each participant will be provided when specific quotes are presented in the results. The written narratives from the participants were also written in Swedish and why the quotes that are presented in the results are translations from the original Swedish quote to English. We have also chosen not to include some quotes, when illustrating themes created in the thematic analysis, due to the level of sensitivity in some of the participants' narrative.

Data Analysis

Two separate thematic analysis were conducted guided by the two research questions; What deviation stories do Swedish adolescents narrate when asked to write about a situation where they felt they deviated from what they believe is considered normal, expected or accepted and what kind of master narrative can be identified through these deviations stories?

Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was decided to be suitable as it is a flexible method that is not tied to a pre-existing theoretical framework and can be used within various theoretical frameworks. However, some decisions need to be made that are in line with the aim of the study (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The decisions and considerations that were made in the present study will be presented in the following sections.

Decisions made before conducting the thematic analysis. The first decision made was to code all the narrative from the epistemological position of contextualism, The position of contextualism, enables to consider both how individuals make meaning

of their subjective experience, but also how the broader social context influences those meanings (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Since master narrative represents the cultural and social context influencing the individuals' personal narratives, the position of contextualism was therefore found to be suitable. The second decision was to use an inductive approach since no similar studies have been performed earlier in the Swedish context and there was no pre-existing coding manual to use. Therefore no certain themes could be expected to be identified in advance. This meant that we searched for any themes related to deviation stories in the first analysis, respectively searched for any themes related to master narratives in the second analysis. Before the coding was carried out in the first analysis it was decided that themes and subthemes were to be created at a semantic level in order to represent what was explicitly stated in participants' personal narratives. In the second analysis an interpretative latent level of coding was decided to be suitable to be able to identify the implicit master narratives and achieve a higher level of abstraction. The unit of analysis was decided to be coding per participant.

Thematic analysis of deviation stories. In the first step the data was stratified by gender and immigrant background. Ten samples from each group, ten women and ten men with both parents born in Sweden, and ten women and ten men with at least one parent not born in Sweden were randomly selected. The aim of having a rich material with each category of gender and immigrant background represented in the study, guided the decision to make the four different categories equal instead of representative of the composition in society or the data set as whole.

The sample of data was then read and re-read several times, without coding, in order to get familiar with data and to get a sense of the situations and experiences the adolescents reported. After this familiarization process an initial coding was done separately by the two authors. Thereafter the separate codings were compared and discussed in order to create a joint coding system, which later were transformed to ATLAS.ti 7 (a computer software for qualitative data analysis). After the initial coding was done codes together with associated quotes were sorted in possible themes and associated subthemes. The coding was exclusive, meaning that each participant's narrative could only be coded to one theme, in order to establish internal homogeneity and external heterogeneity. In addition it also enabled a count of frequencies of narratives in each theme and a descriptive comparison of which themes had the largest amount of narratives within them. After the initial themes were created, the themes were applied to the sample of data again in order to establish that the theme structure was to be found in the data and that they did represent the data the best way. The procedure led to that some themes and subthemes were revised. When the themes had been established an additional 35 stratified narratives were coded in order to make sure the data was saturated and no new themes emerged. Two new subthemes were created during this process. The structure of the thematic analysis was continuously discussed with the supervisor. The analysis was then used to create a coding manual to be able to code the entire data set, the coding was thereafter done separately by the two authors. Before the coding of the entire data set the coding manual was used to ensure reliability in the thematic analysis by stratifying 40 (32%) narratives that were coded separately by the two authors according to the manual. The overall inter-rater percent agreement between the authors was 92.5% (ranging from 89% to 100% for the different themes), the average kappa value was .91, the kappa values for each theme is showed in *Table 1*.

The coding manual was then used to code the entire data set. Themes and subthemes were entered into SPSS in order to be able to calculate frequencies.

Thematic analysis of master narratives. The same expanded sample of data (75 participants) was used in the second thematic analysis but this time the analysis was guided by the second research question of what master narratives could be identified in the participants' deviation stories; what do the participant deviate from? As mentioned above a latent level of coding was decided, but when the participant explicitly mentioned what they considered normal or expected this was also coded and thematised. Except from the level of abstraction in the analysis and the use of the expanded data sample at once, the coding procedure was the same as in the thematic analysis of master narrative deviations described above. The second coding manual was used to ensure reliability following the same procedure as with the first thematic analysis. The overall inter-rater percent agreement between the authors was 85% (ranging from 68% to 100% for the different themes), with an average kappa value of .82. Kappa values for each theme is showed in *Table 2*. Themes and subthemes were entered in SPSS in order to be able to calculate frequencies and to carry out a descriptive crosstabulation between the two thematic analyses.

Results

The aim of the present study was to explore deviation stories among Swedish adolescents (ages 16-19) and what master narratives that could be identified through these deviations.

The results are presented in two sections: The first section contains results from the first thematic analysis of the participants' deviation stories. The second section contains the results from the second thematic analysis representing the master narratives as indicated by the deviation stories.

Deviation Stories

This section contains the result from the first thematic analysis of the deviation stories and the associated distribution from the whole sample reported in percent. In the first thematic analysis seven themes with associated subthemes were created from the adolescents' deviation stories. See *Table 1* for all themes, subthemes and frequency of participants whose answers were coded to each theme (each participant's narrative were coded exclusively to one of the themes or subthemes).

Table 1.

Frequency and percent of the distribution across deviation story themes along with kappa-values for all themes.

Master narrative deviation themes	Number of participants (N = 251) n (%)	K
Family issues	57 (22.7)	1.00
Difficulties and conflicts within the family	50 (19.9)	1.00
My family just makes me feel different	7 (2.8)	– ^b
Group affiliations	57 (22.7)	0.88
Choosing to follow your own path	31 (12.3)	0.92
Bullying and exclusion	14 (5.6)	0.64
Behaviours and preferences others do not view as age appropriate	12 (4.8)	0,79
I just feel different	38 (15.1)	0.77
To be seen in a prejudiced way	32 (12.7)	1.00
Experiences of ethnic prejudice	27 (10.7)	1.00
To prove others wrong	5 (2.0)	– ^b
I am just normal	29 (11.5)	1.00
Sexual orientation and gender roles	13 (5.2)	1.00
Traumatic and frightening experiences	11(4.4)	– ^b
Could not be coded ^a	15 (5.9)	– ^b

Note: All narratives were coded exclusively to one subtheme. Frequencies and percent in each main theme represents the sum of all frequencies and percent of associated sub themes.

^a251 narratives were analysed, 15 of them could not be coded in accordance with the first coding manual.

^b Kappa- value for this theme could not be calculated due to that it was not present in the sample of narratives that were used to calculate Kappa and interrater-agreement.

Family issues. The theme *Family issues* represent narratives about experiences related to the family, which made the participants feel different from others who, for example, had a family that stayed together or where no conflicts were present. In total 22.7% of the participants were coded to this theme. The theme has two subthemes: *Difficulties and conflicts within the family* and *My family just makes me feel different*

Difficulties and conflicts within the family. The most common stories within the theme *Family issues* concerned experiences of difficulties or conflicts within the family where, feelings of anger, grief and disappointment occurred frequently in the participants' narratives. This type of stories was expressed by 19.9% of the participants. The difficulties and conflicts within the family had been caused by different circumstances or situations, but had in common that they made the participants feel different due to the experience of not having a family like everyone else's. The deviation stories coded to this sub theme involved relational changes such as a loss of an emotional bond to siblings or parents caused by, for example, a divorce, or due to

parents' substance abuse or mental problems. The difficulties and conflicts within families could also be explained by that the participants' had different preferences, values and goals for life compared to their parents' or other family members'. For example, wanting to pursue a higher education, experimenting with their style of clothing, or getting tattoos, which led to a feeling of not being supported by family members due to the mismatch of values within the family. The quote below illustrates that the deviation stories represented by the theme *Difficulties and conflicts within the family* was something that occupied the participants thoughts everyday and thus seemed to have great influence in the participants' lives.

".../ This whole incident made me feel very bad, now even though it is still 6 years ago I still think about it every day. It has affected my life very much because I didn't grow up with a father in the same way as most people in my environment and it has been difficult and tough. Especially because me and my dad had a very strong bond..." ID 295

My family just makes me feel different. Unlike the subtheme *Difficulties and conflicts within the family* the subtheme *My family just makes me feel different* does not cover abrupt changes that had happened within the family. Rather this subtheme represents narratives where the participants described a remaining family constellation or climate that deviated from other families and made them feel different but sometimes also proud. This type of deviation story was expressed by 2.8% of the participants. The narratives covered for example experiences of having a too big or a too small family compared to others or feelings of being different because the participant was adopted.

Group affiliations. The second most common theme of deviation stories concerned Group affiliations, 22.7% of the participants were coded to this theme. The theme *Group affiliations* represents narratives where the participants expressed that they felt different when they interacted or compared themselves with their friends or peers. These experiences were both related to how the participants felt in their peer-group and how they struggled with their membership to specific groups. This theme has three subthemes: *Choosing to follow your own path*, *Bullying and exclusion*, and *Behaviours and preferences others do not view as age-appropriate*.

Choosing to follow your own path. In some narratives (12.3%) the participants described a type of situations where they actively had chosen to do what they preferred regardless of the consequences or reactions from their peers.

The essential part of this theme is that the participants' choices to follow their own path made them feel different. For example having left a former group of friends in order to search for another group affiliation where the group members were considered more open minded or had similar interest and opinions like the participants. Another example is where the participants described that they felt different when they stood up for their own values and opinions in different groups. It did not seem to be the different opinions and values per se that was considered different; it was the action to dare to express them in interaction with other friends. There were also participants who described their choice of investing in a particular interest or sport to a greater extent, or feeling more goal-directed compared to their friends.

Bullying and exclusion. The subtheme *Bullying and exclusion* reflects participants' subjective experiences of being bullied or excluded by their classmates or peers. The type of stories that was coded to this subtheme was expressed by 5.6% of the participants. Some of the participants coded to this theme shared experiences of

exclusion that was not always related to bullying, but about just feeling alone and excluded. There were some participants who described these experiences in rather short statements such as “*I’ve been bullied*” (ID 678), while others developed these statements with accounts of how it had affected them. Some expressed being miserable and hurt, others wrote that they could not tell anyone of what they had been subjected to.

Behaviours and preferences others do not view as age-appropriate. A small group of participants (4.8%) expressed deviation stories about how they felt different when they compared themselves with their peers. For example some felt different because they wanted to share more quality time with their family than with their friends and some participants narrated about their preference for being alone and how that made them feel different. The quote below illustrates this experience of deviation when not wanting so socialize with peers.

“I’ve always been a withdrawn person, I prefer to be alone. This is not entirely accepted because other people want you to be around other people.” ID 542

A few of the participants who were coded to this subtheme described the experiences of engaging in different activities, too early or too late, for example to move away from home or to drink alcohol or not.

I just feel different. This theme covers the narratives where the participants described that they just felt different, 15.1% of the participants were coded to this theme. This themes involved narratives where participants’ explained that they felt different due to different experiences or due to characteristics tied to their self-image. For example: having experienced mental problems (e.g., anxiety or social phobia); to react differently than others do in social situations, or having a different appearance than others. The essential part of this theme considers how these experiences were related to the participants’ own perceptions of who they are or had become. In addition, this feeling was not related to any group identity in particular but to society at large as illustrated in the quote below.

“It is not exactly a particular event, I can just feel sometimes that I have a sense of humour that many others in this society do not have . I can be quite open, have broad imagination and humour, perhaps a little too much sometimes. I simply just feel weird sometimes.” ID 438

To be seen in a prejudiced way. The theme *to be seen in a prejudiced way* covered narratives (12.7%) that involved experiences of feeling different when being met with prejudice related to having a foreign background, which also made the participants constantly aware of their ethnicity. This theme has two subthemes: *Experiences of ethnic prejudice* and *To prove others wrong*.

Experiences of ethnic prejudice. The participants’ narratives covered in this subtheme (10.7%) varied on a continuum; from where the participants just noticed that others had looked at them differently, to expressions of feeling uncomfortable or even being harassed and violated due to their different background. The participants emphasized that they had experienced that others did not see them as individuals; instead they experienced being perceived as “the immigrant” in a generalized way. For example: being labelled as the “immigrant” left the participants with a feeling of not

fitting in, nor in Sweden nor in their country of origin, and therefore being singled out as different. Descriptions of experienced prejudice because of having a different appearance were common deviation stories coded to this theme, where the participants explained this experience due to not looking like the typical Swede and thus feeling looked down upon. Sometimes because of their appearance, like having dark skin and hair, and sometimes because of their different and specific clothing like wearing the veil. Prejudices were also experienced with reference to having different customs and beliefs within the family compared to the Swedish majority. For example having to take more responsibility for siblings or being expected to spend more time with family than friends.

To prove others wrong. In a few narratives (2.0%) the participants narrated that they felt worried about how other people might perceive them or react because of their immigrant background, which in addition resulted in adjusting the way they acted and talked when they interacted with people from the Swedish majority. Unlike the subtheme *Experiences of ethnic prejudice*, the essential part of this subtheme is the participants reaction and wish to refute the prejudice they have been subjected to, for example, to prove others wrong by trying to perform really well in school. The quote below is an example of how one participant adjusted to others because of an immigrant background, wishing to refute other peoples' prejudice.

"I feel that my looks may make it difficult for others to communicate with me sometimes, or that it creates obstacles for me. I don't look like an "average Swede" and it makes me unsure of myself when I'm meeting someone or some people that are fully-Swedish because I do not know how they will react. It feels like many people have a negative view of us Muslims. I try to adjust to the group or the person that I hang out with, in terms of behavior. Partly for them not feeling uncomfortable around me. But also for them not getting a negative view of me because I'm different or so..." ID 260

I am just normal. The theme I am just normal covers the narratives where the participant described that they experience themselves as normal, meaning that their story was the same as everyone else's and they did not feel different. This was expressed by 11.5% of the participants. Many of the participants wrote in a general fashion, with a short statement like *"My life is very normal"* (ID 082), not saying anything about what it is to them to be normal. It seemed to be considered as obvious, or not necessary to describe. Other participants did mention in what way they felt normal or described different norms and expectations they feel like they did live up to. For example to be normal was described as having a life in line with what family and society expected of them. The quote below illustrates the description of what is considered normal.

"I have always been very thorough, courteous and study motivated. I follow the social norms about not getting involved with crime, study well, aim for college and exercise weekly. For the typical social norms I feel very... normal, so to speak. " ID 287

Sexual orientations and gender roles. The participants' narratives coded to the theme *Sexual orientation and gender roles* involved narratives where some of the participants described their experiences of feeling different because of their sexual

orientation as bisexual or homosexual or struggles with how to relate to gender norms. This theme was expressed by 5.2% of all participants. Some of the participants described how they had felt judged by others or their family in a condescending or non-accepting way. There were also some participants who related their experiences of being different to their own struggles of accepting who they are when having a sexual orientation not considered the norm. Some participants mentioned that their struggles with gender roles made them feel different because they engaged in activities, preferences or behaviours not traditionally connected to the typical man or typical woman, for example, having an interest in make-up as man, or engaging in stereotypic masculine sports as a woman as illustrated in the quote below.

“I am a person who never felt a need to follow gender norms we have today, personally I prefer sports that could be seen as “masculine” and violent and I do not dress very feminine. I think this has made me more independent and gives me a view of what the world looks like because I want to distance myself from the expected.” ID 256

Traumatic and frightening experiences. A few narratives (4.4%) were coded to the theme *Traumatic and frightening experiences*. The essential part of this theme is feelings of deviating due to having experienced indirect or direct life-threatening experiences, war, or situations of instability such as the process of seeking asylum. These experiences were associated with feelings such as fear, anxiousness, helplessness, panic, uncertainty or insecurity. Some of these experiences affected the participants' family members in a permanent way, which also changed the families' lifestyle and therefore the participants felt different due to these changes. Another example is the experiences of war, which in turn had evoked anxiousness for family members as well as relatives left behind in the war-affected countries, experiences the participants felt deviated from the expectation that family members should be safe.

Master Narratives

This section contains the results from the second thematic analysis where master narratives expressed explicitly or implicitly in the participants' narratives were coded with an interpretive approach. This thematic analysis of master narratives resulted in seven themes. See *Table 2* for themes and frequency of participants whose answer were coded to each theme (each participant's narrative were coded exclusively to one of the themes) In addition, in order to investigate what deviation stories contributed to each of the seven master narrative themes a descriptive crosstabulation was carried out. The results showed that within each master narrative there were several corresponding themes of deviation stories. In the following each theme will be described more thoroughly and in addition the distribution of corresponding deviation themes within each master narrative is described at the end of each theme.

Table 2.

Frequency and percent of the distribution of narratives across master narrative themes along with kappa-values for all themes.

Master narratives	Number of participants (<i>n</i> = 251) <i>n</i> (%)	<i>K</i>
The typical Swede	75 (30.3)	0.88
The happy family	48 (19.1)	0.75
The expectancy to assimilate	33 (13.1)	0.48
To be safe and sound	28 (11.1)	1.00
The typical youth	28 (11.1)	1.00
The ideal person	15 (5.9)	1,00
Heteronormativity	13 (5.2)	- ^a
Could not be coded	11 (4.38)	- ^a

Note: 251 narratives were analysed, 11 of them could not be coded in accordance with the second coding manual.

^a Kappa- value for this theme could not be calculated due to that it was not present in the sample of narratives that were used to calculate Kappa and interrater-agreement.

The typical Swede. The majority (30.3%) of the participants were coded to the master narrative theme of *The typical Swede*. This master narrative represents a shared cultural story of how to be, to act and look as a Swede in the Swedish context. Many of the narratives coded to this master narrative involved stories where conformity in terms of being “lagom”, to not stand out from others and fit in, often was implied as a description of how to be Swedish and who a Swede is. The Swedish term lagom is somewhat hard to translate but it means something in line with “in moderation”, “just right” or “just the right amount”.

The lagom dimension in this master narrative was present in narratives where the participants described for example that they have chosen to engage in hobbies or activities too much, which made them feel different, as doing things to much is considered to go against the lagom norm, indicated in the master narrative *The typical Swede*. The lagom norm was also related to specific ways of how to behave. For example, Swedes should not express opinions or feelings too much, nor too little. Instead they are supposed to know how much they should and can share in terms of self-disclosure. Carefulness should therefore be practiced when talking about oneself,

not to boast oneself or brag too much or express opinions fiercely. To match *The typical Swede* not only a specific behaviour is expected, but also a certain appearance. From the master narrative of *The typical Swede* that emerged from the deviation stories a certain Swedish look was also described such as having blonde hair, light skin and freckles and in addition to dress just like everyone else. Narratives with short statements such as “*I am normal*” (ID 462) were also coded to this theme because of the implication that there is nothing that makes the participant stand out in anyway, which relates to the valued conformity in this master narrative.

In sum, the master narrative of *The typical Swede* thus implies that it is important to adjust oneself to others in order to achieve conformity; adjusting behaviour, appearance, personality, values and interests in order to not stand out from others and be just like everyone else. The quote below illustrates a typical narrative explicitly stressing the importance to not stand out.

"/ --- / I'm not afraid to stand out and have other opinions that deviate from the norm. One should be in a certain way in society, one should think the same way as everyone else and even dress like them and if you don't you are considered stupid, get strange looks, and people talk behind your back. One becomes the one who tries to get validation and attention instead, which then is considered bad. In the school I went to when I was 14, NO ONE was accepted for who they were as persons. One was supposed to be like everyone else. I tried, I did, but then I got to a point when I stopped caring about this, I suddenly felt completely free” ID 291

Corresponding deviation themes. In total there were 75 narratives coded to the master narrative the typical swede. Out of these 75 narratives the distribution of corresponding deviation themes within *The typical Swede* was spread. The highest percentage was the themes *I am just normal* (30.7%), *Group affiliations* (26.7%), and *I just feel different* (22.7%). To a lesser extent narratives from the following deviation themes also contributed to the master narrative *The typical Swede*: *To be seen in a prejudiced way* (8.0%) and *Family issues* (4.1%). 8.1% of the participants coded to this theme could not be coded to any of the deviation themes.

The happy family. The second largest theme *The happy family* (19.1%) represents a shared story of the ideal family and how this family should be and what it should look like. Many of the deviations stories that contributed to the master narrative of *The happy family* involved family divorce, family conflicts and/or a new family constellation. This indicates a master narrative where the original family should stay together and where parents are faithful to each other. The quote below illustrates a typical narrative indicating that having a nuclear family is what is considered expected.

“When my parents got a divorce and almost all my other friends had parents who lived together. Then one felt different that one lacked a "normal" life with two parents...” ID 489

The master narrative of *The happy family* also implies that there should be no conflicts within the family and no uncomfortable problems should exist. If something does happen the master narrative of *The happy family* indicate that the family should be strong enough to take care of this and prevent incidents that could violate the family balance. This master narrative indicate that as an adolescent one is expected to have a

parent like everyone else and every family member should have a strong connection and emotional bond to each other. The parents should always be there for their children and never abandon them regardless of what happens. In addition a parent should be a person who supports and accept every decision, preference and value. There were for example stories of how having a mentally or physically ill parent(s) made the participants feel different, which adds to the ideal of the happy family, indicated in the master narrative, with no problems or difficulties related to mental or physical conditions.

Corresponding deviation themes. In total there were 45 narratives coded to this master narrative theme. Out of these 45 narratives the distribution of corresponding deviation themes within the master narrative *The happy family* the vast majority corresponded to the theme *Family issues* (91.7%). To a lesser extent narratives from the following deviation themes also contributed to the master narrative *The happy family: I am just normal* (6.3%) and *Group affiliations* (2.1%).

To be safe and sound. The master narrative theme *To be safe and sound* represents a shared story of the expectations that everyone should live under safe and secure conditions and how the individuals themselves are expected to not be physically or mentally ill. 11.1% of the narratives were coded to this theme. The *safe* dimension of this theme reflects that everyone are supposed to have a residence permit and to live in an environment without having had direct or indirect experiences of war or difficult accidents. The expectation to be safe within this master narrative was especially apparent in narratives where the participants described that something traumatic or frightening had happened and how these situations caught the participants of guard. In addition these situations seemed to have disrupted the participants' basic sense of security, for example, when an accident happened that involved the individual him or herself or someone within the close family. This master narrative therefore indicates that Sweden is expected to be a safe place where one cannot be subjected to any hardship. The quote below illustrates how the experience of seeking asylum disrupts the participant's feeling of being safe.

"In Sweden it is not normal to be asylum seeker, especially if it has been a very long time. It is not normal to walk around and be unsure if you should wake up in the same country tomorrow or not." ID 446

The *sound* dimension of this master narrative indicates an expectancy of a life with an absence of mental and physical illness, disabilities, or substance abuse problems. In some narratives the participants expressed this in general statements where they described feeling different in terms of having been through a lot of difficulties or feeling more sad and anxious than others. This theme thus indicates a master narrative of that one is supposed to be happy and not have problems or difficulties to struggle with or feel sad about.

Corresponding deviation themes. In total there were 28 narratives coded to this master narrative theme. Out of these 28 narratives the distribution of corresponding deviation themes within the master narrative *To be safe and sound* was spread where the highest percentage was the themes *I just feel different* (42.9%) and *Traumatic and frightening experiences* (39.9%). To a lesser extent narratives from the following deviation themes also contributed to the master narrative *To be safe and sound: Family issues* (7.1%) and *Group affiliations* (7.1%). There were 3.6% of the participants who

were coded to this master narrative theme that could not be coded to any of the deviation themes.

The typical youth. The theme *The typical youth* represents a master narrative with the shared expectations of the kind of life adolescents are expected to have. The master narrative implies expected activities and preferences adolescents should have as well as expectations of having peer-groups to hang out with. 11.1% of the narratives were coded to this theme.

The narratives coded to this theme exemplify how the participants experienced that there is a specific time and place, however not always clearly specified, when to try out new things. For example: when to smoke, drink alcohol, do drugs, or when to move away from home. The master narrative became visible when participants compared and contrasted their choices in life with how early or how late they had done things with reference to their age and their peer-group. Deviations such as trying alcohol too early, or moving away from home too early indicates that there is a proper time to engage in these activities. Another essential aspect of *The typical youth* is the participants perceptions or expectations that as an adolescence one should be more willing to spend time with friends than with parents. Adolescents are therefore expected to have a group of friends that they can spend time with during the afternoon, weekends and holidays, which is illustrated in the quote below.

"I have always been and still am a person who values my family. I have always enjoyed family time and cozy evenings at home etc. Above all, a few years ago it could have be seen as a bit different because the norm among young people is that they should just like to be with friends all the time and that the family (mom and dad) is seen as boring and embarrassing..." ID 128

Corresponding deviation themes. In total there were 28 narratives coded to this master narrative theme. Out of these 28 narratives the distribution of corresponding master narrative deviation themes within the master narrative type *The typical youth* was spread and largely corresponded to the theme *Group affiliations* (67.9%). To a lesser extent narratives from the following deviation themes also contributed to the master narrative *The typical youth: I just feel different* (14.3%), *Family issues* (10.7%) and *I am just normal* (7.1%).

The expectancy to assimilate. The master narrative theme *The expectancy to assimilate* indicates a shared story of the norm to assimilate to the Swedish context. The master narrative concerns that as an immigrant one is expected to adjust one's different cultural background in order to fit in with the Swedish majority. This was expressed by 13.1% of the participants. This master narrative implies an idea of a division between the "good" immigrant who fits into the Swedish context and the "bad" immigrant who has not assimilated to the majority society. The "good" immigrants try harder to fit in within the Swedish majority with regards to what clothing they wear, by speaking impeccable Swedish and not showing any religious symbols or practice different customs like celebrating Ramadan.

To be a "good" immigrant also lies close to the master narrative of *The typical Swede*, in terms of not standing out and try to fit in. For example: some of the narratives coded to this theme described an expectation to act calmer and less loud when interacting with a group of people with a Swedish ethnicity and that they due to their different background adjusted their behaviour in order to fit in. Even though some of

the narratives coded to this theme also included descriptions of *The typical Swede* the theme of assimilation and how to be an immigrant in Sweden was the essential part.

The expectancy to assimilate master narrative implies a stereotype of “the immigrant” as someone who is inferior, compared to an individual with a Swedish ethnicity, and therefore is expected to assimilate. This was sometimes expressed explicitly as in narratives about the importance of performing well despite having an immigrant background, or implicitly expressed as not wanting to be seen as an immigrant. Based on this, the master narrative *The expectancy to assimilate*, seems to indicate that individuals with a different background are supposed to adjust themselves to the Swedish culture, because it is more difficult and less accepted to be in-between two cultures. The following quote gives an example of a narrative coded to *The Expectancy to assimilate* and how this participant implicitly described the pressure to try and fit into the Swedish culture.

"I often feel that I have to prove to the “Swedish” population that we are fine despite my mixed ethnicity. It affects how I dress (I often try to look very neat) my grades (trying to strive for top grades) and how I behave. It feels like a pressure to try to look flawless, to show that one can perform despite one’s background..." ID 297

Corresponding deviation themes. In total there were 33 narratives coded to this master narrative theme. Out of these 33 narratives the distribution of corresponding deviation themes within the master narrative *The expectancy to assimilate* was spread and largely corresponded to the theme *To be seen in a prejudiced way* (72.7%). Followed by the theme *Group affiliations* (16.2%) and to a lesser extent the themes *Family issues* (6.1%) and *I just feel different* (3.0%).

The ideal person. The theme *The ideal person* implies a master narrative of achieving a healthy lifestyle and of becoming a person with a “perfect” and successful life. Few narratives (5.9%) were coded to this master narrative. Unlike the master narrative *To be safe and sound* this master narrative is a shared story which is more related to the strive of becoming a person who is successful, who takes care of oneself in terms of health and beauty and who follows the rules and laws of society. For example, *The ideal person* includes the importance of pursuing a higher education in order to get a job or career. Characteristics of being proper, neat and polite are indicated as desirable personality features as well as the ideal looks and body type of a man and woman. As a man one is supposed to be, for example, tall and as a woman skinny and fit. These expected characteristics were indicated in the participants’ descriptions of deviating because they have a body type, or a certain body part not, considered normal, which indicates a feeling of not being good-looking enough with reference to the ideal man or woman. In some of the narratives the participants also mentioned that they felt pressured by society, family or friends to live up to this ideal person. The quote below was interpreted as someone who tries to fit into the master narrative of *The ideal person*.

"I juggle 100 balls in the air all the time. I work for [names a specific gym], I am at my second year in gymnasium, I exercise 7 days a week, I want to be the best friend , I want to have the best good looking body and the best grades. It is not often that I have a calm period where I really can relax. I am stressed all the time..." ID 125

Corresponding deviation themes. In total there were 15 narratives coded to this master narrative theme. Out of these 15 narratives the distribution of corresponding master narrative deviation themes within the master narrative type *The ideal person* was spread where the highest percentage consisted of the themes *Group affiliations* (33.3%) *Family issues* (20%) *I just feel different* (20%) and *I am just normal* (6.7%). There were 20% of the participants' narratives that were coded to this theme that could not be coded to any of the deviation themes.

Heteronormativity. A few narratives (5.2%) were coded to the theme Heteronormativity a theme that conveys a master narrative which indicates that heterosexuality and to follow gender roles is considered more accepted in society and sometimes within the family. This master narrative became visible in narratives where participants described their struggles with their sexual orientation as homosexual or bisexual or experiences of deviating because they were interested in or preferred activities or hobbies not traditionally related to their gender. A man should, for example, not like feminine clothes or make-up because this is not interests or preferences a man has in general. The master narrative also indicates that when an individual does not follow stereotypical gender roles, people tend to draw conclusion about their sexual orientation as well.

Corresponding deviation themes In total there were 13 narratives coded to *Heteronormativity* and all of them were corresponded to the master narrative deviation theme *Sexual orientation and gender roles* (100%). The quote below illuminates how the master narrative of *Heteronormativity*, seemed to have caused the experiences of deviating.

"I'm more feminine than what's considered normal in the Swedish model for being a male. Fashion, blogs, make-up and often "girly" clothes catches my attention. Of course, then people think that one is gay. But that's not how it is." ID 476

Discussion

The aim of the present study was to explore deviation stories among Swedish adolescents and what master narratives that could be identified through these deviation stories. Knowledge concerning how adolescents experience that they deviate from master narratives enables not only to find issues that might challenge their personal narrative, and thus identity, but also how these issues might be connected to the cultural context in which their identity development takes place.

The first thematic analysis on deviation stories resulted in seven themes with associated subthemes. These deviation stories were interpreted as influenced by seven different master narratives. The results showed that the master narratives of *The typical Swede*, *The expectancy to assimilate*, *The ideal person* and *To be safe and sound* seem to be more related to Swedish culture and society, as this is indicated in their content in terms of what the corresponding deviation stories referred to. In addition, the fact that they appear to be especially salient in Sweden is also supported by that no similar results have been found in previous studies (e.g., Alpert et al., 2013). In contrast, the finding of the master narratives of *The happy family*, *The typical youth* and *Heteronormativity* are similar to the results in the study on deviation experiences by

Alpert et al. (2013), which indicate that they are not specifically tied to a specific culture, rather they seem to be present and relevant across cultures, and thus might represent more global master narratives, at least in western societies.

Furthermore, *The typical Swede*, *To be safe and sound* and *The ideal person* seem to refer to the Swedish culture and society rather than to specific groups or situations, as indicated in the results of the widespread corresponding deviation stories. In contrast, the master narratives of *The happy family*, *The expectancy to assimilate*, *The typical youth* and *Heteronormativity*, were strongly indicated in specific deviation stories and thus seem to be tied to the immediately close groups individuals feel they belong to. This was interpreted as that these master narratives operate on different levels; macro-context (*The typical Swede*, *To be safe and sound* and *The ideal person*) respectively micro-context (*The happy family*, *The expectancy to assimilate*, *The typical youth* and *Heteronormativity*). That master narratives operate on different levels is also in line with previous research (e.g., Bamberg & Andrews, 2004; Hammack, 2008; McLean, In press).

In the following sections we will discuss differences and similarities between the master narratives found in the present study and also how these seemed to be indicated in the deviations stories. We will also discuss and compare master narratives found in the present study with previous research on master narratives and their relation to identity development.

Culture Specific Master Narratives

As mentioned above *The typical Swede*, *The expectancy to assimilate*, *To be safe and sound* and *The ideal person* are master narratives that appear to be related to the Swedish culture and society. Even though these four master narratives appear to be more connected to the Swedish culture, there are some differences in terms of what they imply.

The typical Swede and *The expectancy to assimilate* seem to be related to each other as they both indicated of how to be and behave as a Swede. *The ideal person* also appear to be related to how to be as a person, but the ideal does not seem to concern how to be Swedish in particular, instead it is a shared story representing expectations of being a really successful person, an ideal of a perfect person in general. *To be safe and sound* also seem to be a master narrative tied to the Swedish context and culture. However, unlike the other master narratives found in the present study, *To be safe and sound* differs with regards to that it appear to be a master narrative of how to experience and see the Swedish context and in addition what to expect from life in terms of experienced difficulties. This is supported by the argument by Thorne and McLean (2003) that master narratives do not only define the expected way to interpret oneself and who to be as an individual, but also how to interpret the world.

Ideals of how one should be in Sweden. Even though not statistically determined *The typical Swede* had the largest amount of deviation narratives coded to this specific master narratives compared to all the other master narratives found in the present study. *The typical Swede* therefore might be a strong master narrative as it permeates many situations. For example, the results showed that *The typical Swede* was indicated in the deviation themes *I am just normal*, *Group affiliations* and *I just feel different*, which were the most common deviation themes that corresponded to this

master narrative, *To be seen in a prejudiced way* and *Family issues* also corresponded but to a lesser extent. Even though the theme *The ideal person* had fewer narratives coded to it, it does, in similarity with *The typical Swede*, permeate many different situations. *The ideal person* on the other hand appears to reflect a shared story representing the exercising, hardworking and good looking individual; features individuals are expected to have in order to count as a healthy and successful person. The multifaceted connections to various deviation stories indicate that individuals can deviate from and position themselves in relation to these master narratives in different ways (Cohler & Hammack, 2007) and thus that *The typical Swede* and *The ideal person* are tied to many different situations and circumstances in the Swedish context. For example, to be lagom and to not stand out (salient features in *The typical Swede*) seems to permeate the context of peer groups, family and society and it affects how individuals act within these groups in order to feel that they fit in and thus have strong psychological influence in terms of how people should behave (e.g., Hammack 2008).

The connection between the master narratives of *The typical Swede* and *The expectancy to assimilate* became visible in the deviation theme *Experiences of ethnic prejudice* which involved stories about having an immigrant background and being met with prejudice in the Swedish context. This deviation theme contributed to a large degree to *The expectancy to assimilate* and the deviation stories, in similarity with the deviation stories coded to *The typical Swede*, often indicated a pressure to not stand out and be lagom. The connection also seem to be reflected in the Swedish majority's expectations on immigrants, as *The expectancy to assimilate* represents a culturally shared story, which indicates that in order to be considered a "good" immigrant one has to at least try to assimilate to *The typical Swede* in terms of looks, language and not wearing religious symbols or religious clothing.

As the master narrative of *The expectancy to assimilate* indicated a shared story of how to act and be as an immigrant or immigrant descendent it is tied to this specific group. In this regard the master narrative of *The expectancy to assimilate* slightly differs compared to the other master narratives discussed under this heading, which were interpreted as operating on a macro-level. But *The expectancy to assimilate* also differs from the other master narratives (*The happy family*, *The typical youth* and *Heteronormativity*) that were interpreted as operating on the micro-level. Because in the corresponding deviation themes it is indicated that the group identity of the immigrant might be forced upon them by the Swedish majority as in being seen as the generalized "immigrant" by others and thus not something they have chosen themselves. A group they might not have anything else in common with than not belonging to the Swedish ethnic majority. This could mean that the immigrant group actually is not a group they would consider an immediate close group to identify with other than sharing experiences of being met with ethnic prejudice due to having an immigrant background.

Facilitation or constraints in identity development. How adolescents engage with the master narratives *The typical Swede*, *The expectancy to assimilate* and *The ideal person* could be important in terms of how their engagement facilitates or complicates their identity development (e.g., Cohler & Hammack, 2007). Those individuals who feel that they do not fit into the cultural master narratives of *The typical Swede*, *The expectancy to assimilate*, or *The ideal person* might struggle more with integrating experienced events and thus their identity development (eg., Hammack, 2011b). The master narrative of *The ideal person* might, for example, give a rather static picture of which path is the right one, and what to include in the personal narrative in

terms of life choices, preferences and how to best live a good life. As adolescence is described as a time filled with opportunities and different life paths to follow (Erikson, 1968; Kroger, 2007), it is then a time for experimentation and exploration in order for individuals to find arenas that represents who they are (Erikson, 1968; Kroger, 2007). For example, to have a perfect and fit body and to strive for a higher education seem to be valued positions. However, adolescents' exploration options might get more restricted and perhaps more confusing if they feel that they deviate from this master narrative. For example, not wanting to pursue a higher education might be a more difficult story to integrate in the personal narrative, because it deviates from the shared stories represented in the master narratives of *The ideal person* where a higher education is favourable. Therefore the deviations might constrain individuals to feel confident and comfortable in their own choices, and thus constrain the identity development (Hammack, 2011b).

To deviate from *The expectancy to assimilate* is another example of risk for constraints in the identity development as the master narrative indicates that there is a message from the Swedish society that assimilation is preferred and expected of minority groups with an immigrant background. To not be able to identify multiculturally may put the individual at risk for poorer psychological well-being as previous research show that people who identify with both the culture of their origin as well as the culture they live in now, experience greater psychological well-being and adjustment compared to those who identify with just one or neither of them (Berry, Phinney, Sam & Vedder, 2006). How adolescents with an immigrant background makes sense of their belonging to both an ethnic minority group as well as to the larger society they live in, is referred to as ethnic identity which is considered an additional dimension to reflect upon and integrate when constructing the identity (Ferrer-Wreder, Trost, Lorente & Mansoor, 2012). The master narrative of *The expectancy to assimilate* could lead to difficulties for the individual to actually be able to identify with both their culture of origin and the Swedish context. For example, some participants' deviation stories conveyed a feeling of being in-between different cultures and of being a stranger who does not belong anywhere. This could be due to the master narrative of how to be and behave as the "good" assimilated immigrant but also how to be *The typical Swede*, which can constrain a multicultural identity. To deviate from these master narratives could in turn lead to difficult and challenging experiences (McLean, In press) when individuals try to integrate these contrarious parts of themselves and different experiences into a coherent and meaningful narrative. (e.g., Fivush et. al., 2010; McAdams, 2001; Pashupati & McLean, 2010). On the other hand, that there is a pressure to assimilate, indicated in *The expectancy to assimilate*, does not mean that individuals choose to do so. Individuals can position themselves against or within master narratives in different ways (McLean, In press; Cohler & Hammack, 2007) and therefore their personal narratives can also develop in different directions, and identity development could be affected and influenced by master narratives in dynamic ways (McLean, In press).

Nevertheless, for those adolescents who fit into the master narratives it might facilitate their identity development as the master narrative answers some of the salient questions in identity of how to be, act and look, and how to become successful. Those individuals who feel that they fit into this shared stories in the Swedish society might not struggle as much when trying to make sense of who they are or when integrating significant events in their personal narrative. To give an example: Some of the

adolescents' narratives were coded to the deviation theme *I am just normal*, a deviation theme which also contributed to the master narrative of *The typical Swede*. However, many of the narratives coded to this deviation theme were actually not stories about deviations but rather stories of just feeling normal, attributed to a feeling of not standing out from others; to be, act and look like *The typical Swede*. The deviation stories covered in the theme *I am just normal* indicate the unconscious process of positioning oneself within a dominating master narrative (McLean, In press; Boje, 1991). The feeling of just fitting in might thus explain why some of the participants expressed themselves in rather short and not so elaborative statement because they are not aware of or struggle with the master narrative *The typical Swede* when integrating experienced events.

However, even though positioning oneself in accordance with the master narratives is considered to facilitate identity development in terms of giving guidance of how to be, act and feel (Hammack, 2008; McLean, In press), the engagement might affect exploration in other ways. For example, could the engagement in the important exploration phase during identity development be less motivating? Or perhaps, could it lead to a foreclosed identity (Kroger, 2007) were the individuals chooses to define themselves too early in terms of who they are and what they believe in? Perhaps deviating from master narratives does not always lead to constraints in terms of identity exploration. Instead, when coping with difficult feelings following deviation, the experiences of deviating might facilitate exploration of what alternatives there are.

A risk for stigmatized deviation stories. As mentioned above there was also a master narrative we labelled *To be safe and sound*. This master narrative has to our knowledge not been found in similar studies like Alpert et al.'s (2013), and it does not appear to be tied to a specific group identity like the master narratives of *The typical youth* and *Heteronormativity*. Rather *To be safe and sound* seem to represent a shared story of how to experience and view the Swedish context; a safe place where each and every individual should be able to tell a story that do not, for example, include difficult experiences, or experiences of being mentally ill. This master narrative was indicated in the deviations stories coded to the deviation themes *I just feel different* as well as *Traumatic and frightening experiences*. For some individuals who experienced deviations from this master narrative, by experiencing the context as unsafe, or experiencing mental or physical illness, it might be more difficult to share these stories. For others it might in addition be experienced as stigmatizing, since deviations from master narrative could lead to silenced deviation stories (Fivush, 2010), as the master narrative indicates that this is not supposed to happen and not an accepted story to tell. In addition it might be more difficult to make sense of and integrate these experiences into the personal narratives, since the master narrative cannot be used to interpret and make meaning of the self or these events (McLean, In press; Fivush 2010). By extension, these difficulties may increase the risk of affecting the identity development negatively with a lack of coherence (Fivush, 2010)

Western Master Narratives Tied to Specific Groups

The master narratives of *The typical youth*, *The happy family* and *Heteronormativity* were strongly indicated in specific deviation stories coded to *Family issues*, *Group affiliations* respectively *Sexual orientation and gender roles*. For

example, in contrast to *The typical Swede* which was present without any strong ties to specific groups or situations, the master narrative of *The Happy family* was more related to expectations on this specific group; what a family should look like. Furthermore the master narrative of *Heteronormativity* was the only one that corresponded with just one deviation theme (*Sexual orientation and gender roles*), which indicates that this master narrative might be more visible in groups who struggle with their sexual orientation and/or gender role. The master narratives of *The typical youth*, *The happy family* and *Heteronormativity* could thus be interpreted as operating on a micro-level since they refer to master narratives tied to immediately close groups individuals feel they belong to (Hammack, 2008; McLean, In press).

The master narrative of *The typical youth* was more related to the cultural and social expectations on the specific group adolescents, that is, a shared cultural story of proper behaviour and activities for adolescents to engage in. This master narrative consists of similarities between the participants' stories of how to be or act as a normal adolescent, as reflected in their narratives of deviating from this expectancy. *The typical youth* in the present study corresponded to deviation themes such as *Group affiliations*, *I just feel different*, *Family issues* and *I am just normal*. However, *The typical youth* largely consisted of narratives from the deviation theme of *Group affiliations*, where the participants compared and contrasted themselves with their peers. The fact that comparing and contrasting with peers are is salient in adolescence was also found in the study by Alpert et al. (2013) where they interpreted deviations such as not drinking alcohol, doing drugs or not being extraverted like everyone else, as influenced by a master narrative considering typical youth activities, interests and behaviours. These examples of deviation stories were very similar to those found in the present study.

As the social arena broadens in adolescence and interaction with peers is more frequent than with parents (Pashupati & McLean, 2010) the master narrative of how to be an adolescent might become available. Furthermore, to fit into the master narrative of *The typical youth* might facilitate some of the distress that comes with the biological, psychological and social changes following the transition from childhood to adolescence (Erikson, 1968) as it could guide adolescents in how to act or feel during this transformative time (McLean, In press). However to deviate from the master narrative; to not have any friends, to experience bullying, or feel that the family makes it difficult to be a normal adolescent (represented in the corresponding themes *I just feel different*, *Family issues* and *Bullying and experience of exclusion*) could lead to more struggles and difficult feelings to handle and thus have important implications for the identity development (McLean, In press; Cohler & Hammack, 2007).

Nevertheless, even though the social arena broadens and influences from peers become more and more salient during adolescence (Pashupati & McLean, 2010) the results from the present study also indicate that the family still remains important during adolescence, as well as having an accepted relationship and gender role, since master narratives of *The happy family* and *Heteronormativity* were indicated in the adolescents' deviation stories. Even though it has become more and more common with non-nuclear families such as single parents, step-parents and same-sex parents (Golombok, 2015) the nuclear family still seem to be a strong ideal in the Swedish context. The master narrative of *The happy family* which also appears to be a global master narrative tied to the micro-level of one's family, indicate that everyone should be able to tell a story about a perfect family that stays together no matter what happens. Another master

narrative that appear to be global as well as operating on a micro-level, is the master narrative *Heteronormativity*, which indicate a shared story that the heterosexual relationship and the typical gender roles of men and women are norms expected to follow. As already mentioned, adolescence is a time for exploration (Erikson, 1968; Kroger, 2007) and a master narrative of *Heteronormativity* might restrict adolescents experimentation with sexuality and gender norms if they feel that it is not an accepted story to tell about themselves, and thus constrain their identity development (Westrate & McLean, 2010). In addition, Erikson (1968) emphasized that adolescents' identity development are very much influenced by important others, such as parents. However, some of the participants' narratives, coded to the deviation themes of *Family issues and Sexual orientation and gender roles* involved stories about their parent (s) not supporting their choices in life or sexual orientation, To have supporting parents might be especially important in adolescence in order to have some stability or guidance during this transformative period (Erikson, 1968; Finkenauer et al., 2002) but those adolescents who do not feel supported might experience more psychological distress during this period (Finkenauer et al., 2002), or that the exploration of different choices, roles and sexuality might feel limited (Erikson, 1968; Kroger, 2007).

Limitations, Strengths and Future Directions

One limitation in the present study was that we did not explore how master narratives or deviation stories could have been related to, for example, gender or ethnicity. Sweden is seen as a diverse country where around 19 % of the population have an immigrant background (Ferrer-Wreder et al., 2012). It would be interesting to further explore if there are any statistically significant differences between groups of ethnic minorities and ethnic majorities in Sweden, in terms of which master narratives are more salient in relation to these two groups. However, since the study of deviation stories and master narratives had not yet been performed in the Swedish context the aim was to focus the analysis on the in depth qualitative analyses of deviation stories and master narratives, to yield a deepened understanding of what deviation stories adolescents struggle with and in addition what master narratives that could be identified in the Swedish context where adolescents' identity development takes place.

A strength in the present study is that since the results showed a spread in the distribution of corresponding master narratives and deviation stories, the findings supports the method to both analyse deviation stories as well as master narratives. Another strength in the present study was that we used written narratives which is favourable in terms of not influencing the participants' narratives too much as when using an interview with more open-ended questions (Thorne & Mclean, 2003). In addition it enables a larger data collection, which increases the possibility of generalizing the results. On the other hand, using written narratives might affect the depth of the analysis. This depth might have been better captured if the participants had been interviewed as this enables to ask follow-up questions. Another disadvantage of using open-ended questions in order to collect narratives in a questionnaire is that it makes it easier for the participants to decline to answer (Thorne & McLean, 2003), which also could explain the amount of participants who did not answer the specific question of interest in the present study. There was also a gender imbalance in the present study where the majority of the participants' narratives came from women (74

%) and a minority came from men (25 %). This might be explained by that women tend to share their stories to a greater extent with others and narrate longer and more elaborative stories than men (Fivush & Buckner, 2003). Therefore the women may have had it easier to come up with significant stories to tell than the men could in the present study.

Even though a larger sample increases the possibility of generalizability, the participants who chose to participate in the present study were recruited from larger cities such as Gothenburg and Malmo and therefore the results of the master narrative deviations and master narratives could be more visible in these specific communities. Considering that master narratives can be specifically tied to a group or community (Hammack, 2011a; 2011b), it would have been interesting to explore if adolescents from smaller cities struggle with similar or different master narratives.

A limitation concerns the coding procedure where the kappa value of the master narrative themes *The expectancy to assimilate* was rather low (.48 with an inter-rater percent agreement of 68%) compared to the other master narratives kappa value (ranging from .78 to 1). This may be due to some of the similarities between *The expectancy to assimilate* and *The Typical Swede* where the participants narratives that were coded to *The expectancy to assimilate* sometimes also included descriptions of *The typical Swede*. In addition the coding procedure might have been affected by our pre-understanding of the Swedish culture. Since we both as authors are Swedish and consider ourselves belonging to the Swedish majority, we might ourselves be positioned within specific master narratives. This pre-understanding and positioning might have affected the coding as well as interpretation of the result, which therefore could influence the degree to which we were able to identify master narratives.

Another limitation of the study is that even though the vast majority of the participants' narratives were included in the analysis, there were still a few narratives (5.9% of master narrative deviations and 4.4% of master narratives) that could not be coded in accordance with the two manuals. This could mean that there are deviations and master narratives that were not covered in this study. Due to the small percentage that could not be coded, the themes that were created can still be considered representative for the sample in the present study.

Deviations stories and master narratives are interesting on their own as they give information of the context where identity development takes place, however it would also be interesting to further explore how central they are when individuals try to integrate specific events into their personal narrative, which also was investigated by Alpert et al. (2013). For example are there differences in the centrality for identity, depending on deviation or master narrative? Since positioning rejecting the master narratives are considered more challenging (McLean, In press; Hammack, 2008) it would also be interesting to statistically compare those individuals who mentioned that they deviated and those who felt normal, and how this might be related to, for example, well being, in order to further the idea that deviating from master narratives is considered to pose more challenges to identity development

Conclusion

The aim of the present study was to explore deviation stories among Swedish adolescents and what master narratives that could be identified through these deviations

stories. The results of the present study showed that there were several master narratives that seem to be more tied to the Swedish culture: *The typical Swede*, *The expectancy to assimilate*, *To be safe and sound* and *The ideal person*. The other master narratives found in the present study seem to represent global western master narratives: *The happy family*, *The typical youth* and *Heteronormativity*. In addition there were often several deviation stories that contributed to each master narrative. *The typical Swede* was the master narrative that seemed to permeate various circumstances and situations. Other master narratives, especially *Heteronormativity* and *The happy family* had a clearer link to a specific deviation story theme, which indicates that some master narratives seems to be more connected to, and salient within, specific situations and within specific groups individuals feel they belong to.

This study is a first step to begin to understand what type of deviation stories as well as master narratives are salient among Swedish adolescents. The results from the present study gives an indication of what master narratives adolescents in Sweden relate to in their identity development and gives an additional understanding of the social and cultural context where their identity development takes place.

References

- Alpert, L., Marsden, E., Szymanowski, K., & Lilgendahl, J. P. (2013, February). *Feeling different: The roles of social and personality factors in shaping self-defining stories of master narrative deviation experiences*. Poster presented at the Annual Meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, Austin, TX.
- Benish-Weisman, M. (2009). Between trauma and redemption: Story form differences in immigrant narratives of successful and Nonsuccessful Immigration. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 40, 953-968. doi: 10.1177/0022022109346956
- Bamberg, G. M. (1997). Positioning between structure and performance. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 7, 335-342.
- Bamberg, G. M., & Andrews M. (Eds.). (2004). *Considering counternarratives: Narrating, resisting, making sense*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Bamberg, G. M. (2004). Form and functions of “slut bashing” in male identity constructions in 15-year-olds. *Human Development*, 47, 331-353. doi: 10.1159/000081036.
- Berry, J. W., Phinney, J. S., Sam, D. L., & Vedder, P. (2006). Immigrant youth: Acculturation, identity, and adaptation. *Applied Psychology*, 55, 303-332. doi: 10.1111/j.1464-0597.2006.000256.x
- Boje, D.M. (1991). The storytelling organization: A study of story performance in an office-supply firm. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 36, 106-126. doi: 130.241.16.16
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3, 77-101. doi: 10.1191/1478088706qp063oa
- Cohler, B.J., & Hammack, P. L. (2007). The psychological world of the gay teenager: social change, narrative, and “normality”. *Journal of Youth Adolescence*, 36, 47-59 doi: 10.1007/s10964-006-9110-1.
- Eriksson, E. H. (1968). *Identity, youth and crisis*. New York: Norton & Company.

- Finkenauer, R., Engels, R. C. M. E., Meeus, W., & Oosterwegel, A. (2002). Self and identity in early adolescence. The pains and gains of knowing who and what you are. In T. M. Brinthaupt & R. P. Lipka (Eds.), *Understanding early adolescent self and identity. Applications and interventions*. (pp. 25-54) Albany: State of University of New York Press.
- Fivush, R. (2010). Speaking silence: The social construction of silence in autobiographical and cultural narratives. *Memory*, *18*, 88-98. doi: 10.1080/09658210903029404
- Fivush, R., & Buckner, J.P. (2003). Creating gender and identity through autobiographical narratives. In R. Fivush & C. Haden (Eds.) *Autobiographical memory and the construction of narrative self: Developmental and cultural perspectives* (pp. 149-169). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Fivush, R., Bohanek, J. G. & Marin, K. (2010). Patterns of family narrative co construction in relation to adolescent identity and well-being. In K., McLean, & M., Pasupathi (Eds.), *Narrative development in adolescence: Creating the storied self* (pp. 45-64). London: Springer. doi: 10.1007/978-0-387-89825-4
- Ferrer-Wreder, L., Trost, K., Lorente, C. C., & Mansoor, S. (2012). Personal and ethnic identity in Swedish adolescents and emerging adults. *New directions for child and adolescent development*, *138*, 61-86. doi: 10.1002/cad.20022
- Golombok, S. (2015). *Modern families. Parents and children in new family forms*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Habermas, T., & Silveira, C. (2008). The development of global coherence in life narratives across adolescence: temporal, causal and thematic aspects. *Developmental Psychology*, *44*, 707-721. doi: 10.1037/0012-1649.44.3.707.
- Habermas, T., & Bluck, S. (2000). The emergence of the life story in adolescence. *Psychological Bulletin*, *126*, 748-769. doi: 10.1037/0033-2909.126.5.748.
- Hammack, P. L. (2008). Narrative and cultural psychology of identity. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, *12*, 222-239. doi: 10.1177/1088868308316892.
- Hammack, P. L. (2011a). Narrative and the politics of meaning. *Narrative Inquiry*, *21*, 311-318. doi: 10.1075/ni.21.2.09ham.
- Hammack, P. L. (2011b). *Narratives and politics of identity: The cultural psychology of Israeli and Palestinian youth*. New York: Oxford University Press, Inc.
- Hammack, P. L., Morgan Thompson, E., & Pilecki, A. (2009). Configurations of identity among minority youth: Context, desire, and narrative. *J Youth Adolescence*, *38*, 867-883. doi:10.1007/s10964-008-9342-3.
- Hammack, P. L. (2015). Theoretical foundations of identity. In K.C, McLean & M. Syed (Eds.), *The oxford handbook of identity development* (pp. 11-32). Oxford: University Press.
- Kroger, J. (2007). *Identity development: Adolescence through adulthood*. (2nd ed.). California: Sage Publications.
- Johansson, T. (2008). Att skapa sin identitet: Ungdom i ett posttraditionellt samhälle. In A. Frisén & P. Hwang (Eds.), *Ungdomar och identitet* (pp. 197-218). Stockholm: Natur & Kultur.
- McAdams, P. D. (1993). *The stories we live by: Personal myths and the making of the self*. New York: William Morrow and Company, INC.
- McAdams, P. D. (2001). The psychology of life stories. *Review of General Psychology*, *5*, 100-122. doi:10.1037/1089-2680.5.2.100.

- McAdams, P. D. (2006). *The redemptive self: Stories Americans live by*. Retrieved from:
<http://www.oxfordscholarship.com.ezproxy.ub.gu.se/view/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195176933.001.0001/acprof-9780195176933-chapter-2>.
- McLean, K. C. (In press). Theoretical approaches to identity development and the power of narrative. In K. C. McLean (Ed.), *The co-authored self: Family stories and the construction of personal identity*.
- McLean, K. C., & Syed, M. (2015). The field of identity development needs an identity: An introduction to the handbook of identity development. In K. C. McLean & M. Syed (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of identity development* (pp. 1-10). Oxford: University Press.
- Negele, A., & Habermas, T. (2010). Self continuity across developmental changes in and of repeated life narratives. In K. C, McLean & M, Pasupathi (Eds.), *Narrative development in adolescence: Creating the storied self* (pp. 1-22). London: Springer.
- Pasupathi, M., & Mclean, K. C. (2010). Introduction. In, K. C., McLean & M., Pasupathi (Eds.), *Narrative development in adolescence: Creating the storied self* (pp. 16-31). London: Springer.
- Schiffrin, D. (1996). Narrative as self-portrait: Sociolinguistic constructions of identity. *Language in Society*, 25, 167-203.
- Syed, M., & McLean, K. C. (2015). The future of identity development research: Reflections, tensions and challenges. In K.C. McLean & M. Syed (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of identity development* (pp. 562-573).
- Thorne, A. (2004). Putting the person into social identity. *Human Development*, 47, 361-265. doi:10.1159/000081038
- Thorne, A., & McLean, K. (2003). Telling traumatic events in adolescence: A study of master narrative positioning. In R. Fivush, R & C. Haden (Eds.), *Connecting culture and memory: The development of an autobiographical self* (pp 169-185). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Thorne, A., & Nam, V. (2007). The life story as community project. *Human development*, 50, 119-123. doi:10.1159/000100941
- Way, N., & Rogers, O. (2015) They say black men won't make it, but I know I'm gonna make it": Ethnic and racial identity development in the context of cultural stereotypes. In K. C. McLean & M. Syed (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of identity development* (pp. 269-285) Oxford: University Press.
- Westrate, N., & McLean, K .C. (2010) The rise and fall of gay: A cultural-historical approach to gay identity development. *Psychology Press*, 16, 225-240. doi:10.1080/09658210903153923