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RE-LEARNING PEACE

Acculturation in young adult refugees' conceptions of violence following migration to Sweden

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Supervisor:	Ernst Thoutenhoofd
Examiner:	Adrianna Nizinska

Abstract

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Aim: The general goal of this study is to assess whether and how refugees' understanding of violence changes, in their own view, following migration, given an acculturation framework that is concerned with the individual psychology of acculturation. Data collection and analysis focuses (a) on the perceived moral warrant of violence, by asking how refugees distinguish between reasonable and unreasonable force; and (b) the extent to which that distinction, in their own view, has shifted following their migration into Sweden.

Theory: In order to explain different ways in which young adult refugees felt they acculturated their conception of violence, and assess how well they thought they adapted their conceptions of violence in the Swedish context, Berry's acculturation theory is adopted as a theoretical perspective throughout this study.

Method: The investigation takes the form of a qualitative study with semi-structured individual interviews. Snow-ball sampling is used to reach the target population, young adult refugees. Five respondents are interviewed, twice each on separate occasions. NVivo are then used to subject the interview transcripts to text content analysis.

Results: The findings from the interviews show that young adult refugees describe "violence" differently across the timeline of their life events, and distinguish violence and non-violence phenomena from that experiential perspective. They make morally evaluative judgments about reasonable and unreasonable force by considering the harshness of violence in light of the goals of violence. The different conception of violence in Sweden is generally welcomed but at same time causes cognitive conflict between their original culture and new culture in terms of both the definition and tolerance of violence. Berry's acculturation theory is able to explain to some extent the refugees' complex acculturation process in terms of network of relationship, power relation and degree of acculturation. Underneath their willing acculturation however, respondents also feel unreasonable pressure to conform to Swedish norms, regardless of good judgement.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Background of Research

Violence has pervaded human history, and touches all of us in some way even now. It brings pain and suffering to children who are abused by caregivers, women and men who are sexually assaulted, and people who live in conflict areas. The target (or victim) of violence can be a child, partner, colleague, or a member of another ethnic group. Especially individuals who are physically or psychologically vulnerable in society are likely targets of violence. Children are particularly vulnerable and are often the victims of violent acts. Children are vulnerable because of their age and immaturity. A lot of effort has been made to eliminate violence against children. In 1989, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) was adopted by the General Assembly to provide protection to children. Currently, The CRC is ratified or acceded by a total number of 196 nations. The Convention holds nations responsible for protecting all children from all forms of violence. Legal protection for children has been developed in line with the Convention all over the world. Nowadays, violence against children has been recognized as a highly problematic phenomenon across the world.

In terms of the legal protection of children against violence, Sweden has been undoubtedly leading the world. In Sweden, violence is socially recognized as deeply negative action. In 1979, as the first country in the world, the use of physical punishment or other degrading treatment of children in all setting was banned by the Swedish Parental Act (in the Swedish Statute Book 1949:381 (latest revision 2018:1288) (Parental Code, chapter 6 §1). Following that ban, public attitudes towards violence against children changed. For instance, while almost all parents in Sweden approved of using physical punishment with children in the 1960s, about 95% of parents answered that all forms of violence against children are inappropriate in 2010 (Jernbro & Janson, 2017). In Sweden, the illegality of violence against children led to widespread reconceptualization of violence, making violence against children explicitly and generally unacceptable.

Although remarkable efforts have been made to protect children from violence elsewhere, innumerable children are exposed to violence in the world. More than 357 million children live in war and conflict zones (Kirolos, Anning, Fylkesnes, & Denselow, 2018) and only 10 % of children worldwide are protected by laws from physical punishment (Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children & Save the Children Sweden, 2017). Especially for children who live in conflict areas, violence extends into all aspects of life. Although negative consequences of violence apply to all children and regardless of where they live, the frequency of violence against children differs from country to country. Even in Sweden, the reality on the experience of violence is far away from the widely recognized ideal: to live free from violence (Andersson, Heimer, & Lucas, 2014). As part of world-wide effort to curb violence, there has been an increasing interest in how people understand and conceptualize violence, including a particular interest in the experiences of those refugees who have been exposed to violence. Sweden accepts refugees who relocated through the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and asylum seekers arriving at the border. The main countries of origin of asylum seekers were Syria (17%), Iraq (13%), Afghanistan (10%) and Somalia (7%) (The Swedish Migration Agency, 2018). The number of seeking asylum in Sweden has exploded over the last ten years, and more than 30 % of the asylum seekers are children (The Swedish Migration Agency, 2018). Some of the refugee children have reached young adult age in Sweden. Following their arrival in Sweden they have been exposed to a new environment and culture, including also the Swedish conception of violence as categorically unacceptable.

First Overview of the Literature

Surprisingly, there has been very few studies on refugees' conception of violence. Some studies that explored violence among refugees indicate varying conceptions of violence. First, several studies suggest that refugees understand violence considering via a cultural perspective that includes value orientation and social standards (Byrskog, Essén, Olsson, & Klingberg-Allvin, 2016; Byrskog, Olsson, Essén, & Allvin, 2015; Lee, Takaku, Ottati, & Ya, 2004; Skårdalsmo Bjørgo & Jensen, 2015; Zannettino, 2012). Like most people, refugees too distinguish 'right' or 'wrong' behaviour—which we may call the perceived 'moral warrant' of violence—by referring to normative cultural beliefs and their own cultural experience.

Second, refugees can sometimes justify violent acts when they are exposed to violence or to a society that accepts the use of violence (Griffin, Scheier, Botvin, Diaz, & Miller, 1999; Howard, Kaljee, & Jackson, 2002). When violence is a 'common' act in a given culture, or when refugees themselves experienced violence, the use of violence can become normalized in the refugees' perception of violence (Skårdalsmo Bjørgo & Jensen, 2015).

On the other hand, refugees' perception of violence can change following their migration into another society that presents as a more peaceful environment to be in (Byrskog et al., 2016; Chang, Rhee, & Berthold, 2008; Fisher, 2013; Renzaho & Vignjevic, 2011; Skårdalsmo Bjørgo & Jensen, 2015; Zannettino, 2012). In the process of resettlement, refugees can start rethinking the use of violence, as a result of entering a society that does not accept the use of violence (Byrskog et al., 2016). Refugees may then likewise begin to reconsider the role of violence and acquire a more restrained attitude towards violence.

Although the findings of these studies provide insight into cultural influences on the perception of violence and changing perceptions of violence, no studies were found that investigated *how* refugees change their conception of violence following migration; for example, by applying new distinctions between reasonable and unreasonable force. Such deeper understanding of changing perceptions of violence among refugees is needed in order to develop better support programs and clearer learning opportunities for them. This study investigates in particular what refugees can tell us about reasonable and unreasonable force—the moral warrant of violence—and whether and how moral distinctions they make alter, following migration to new country.

Aim of the Study

The aim of this study is to assess whether and how refugees' understanding of violence changes, in their own view, following migration, given an acculturation framework that is concerned with the individual psychology of acculturation. Data collection and analysis focus (a) on the perceived moral warrant of violence, by asking how refugees distinguish between reasonable and unreasonable force; and (b) the extent to which that distinction, in their own view, has shifted following their migration into Sweden.

The research questions are:

- i. What behaviours do young adult refugees define as violence?**
- ii. How do they distinguish between reasonable and unreasonable force?**
- iii. To what extent, if at all, in their own view, did their understanding of violence adjust, following migration into Sweden?**
- iv. To what extent do the responses confirm/contradict Berry's theory about the individual psychology of acculturation?**

Research Design

This investigation takes the form of a qualitative study of the conception of the violence among refugees. The research used snow-ball sampling to reach specific population (young adult refugees who have lived in Sweden for a while) that are hard to sample with other kinds of sampling by using refugees' community network. The respondents were found through a Swedish school or introduced by other respondents. The respondents that participated in this study all voluntarily provided their data to the study. All data were compiled to avoid identifying any particular person in any of the research findings. The author explained the details of the study including possible harm by using information sheet and obtained informed consent from all participants.

Through semi-structured individual interviews, young adult refugees' theoretical conception of violence is being explored: what they see as violence, how they reason about the warrant for and against violence (reasonable or unreasonable) and how their conception of violence changed following their migration to Sweden. The interview transcripts were analysed using a text content analysis that aimed at identifying common categories of meaning and meaning relationships.

The main focus of this educational study is the acculturation process, as reflected in changing conceptions of violence among refugees. As with all processes whereby people change in their perspectives or views, acculturation involves *learning*, so that acculturation may therefore really be considered to fall under the wide umbrella of informal education. Lave (1991) argues that learning is situated rather than deliberate. According to Lave, people discover world and learn new knowledge in authentic contexts by socially interacting and collaborating with others.

Throughout the process of acculturation, young adult refugees continuously learn new conception of violence in the authentic context by indeed spending time in Sweden including interacting with others who have different conception of violence from them. Moving to Sweden and facing with different conception of violence can cause "disorienting dilemma" as Mezirow (1991) proposes in "transformative learning". According to him, individuals change their ways of defining their world by critically reflecting on their beliefs and presumption and continuously rebuilding new worldview through their life. Mezirow says there are four ways of learning; "by refining or elaborating our meaning schemes, learning new meaning schemes, transforming meaning schemes, and transforming meaning perspectives" (Mezirow, 1991). When people encounter a more peaceful environment with less acceptance of violence, they can be required to question their own belief or tradition in their home country. By being exposed to new knowledge in a different country, people absorb new knowledge—, learning starts with and is governed by social interaction (Lave, 1991; Vygotsky, 1986). While Mezirow believes transformative learning do not occur frequently and often caused by experiencing a major life transition—"disorienting dilemma", Jarvis (2006) argues learning is the process of personal development and "learning incident from their own lives". Although 'education' is often confused with 'schooling', education happens outside of schools or colleges and takes place throughout people's lives: much of what is termed 'lifelong learning' has an informal character that takes place outside classrooms, in everyday life. As John Dewey (1897) has said, "Education is a social process; education is growth; *education is not a preparation for life but is life itself*" (italics added). The learning process by which any given conception of violence changes and that requires that refugees change their attitude or idea about violence is, on that informal learning theories, education

n.

Significance

The exploratory study presented here provides one of the first investigations into how, refugees' conception of violence and the change on the conception following their migration to Sweden. The findings from this study add to the limited qualitative data existing on how people understand violence and change their conception of violence in more peaceful way. The findings can make an important contribution to not only understand the conception of violence but also address the issues related to violence by developing educational programs about violence to prevent the use of violence.

Definition of Key Terms

Some terms were defined to clarify the meaning of the terms during the study. The definition of 'violence' is proposed in the literature review (see Chapter 2).

Asylum Seekers

A foreign national who has taken to Sweden and requested protection, but who has not yet received his application, is finally examined by The Swedish Migration Agency and/or the migration court (Migrationsverket, 2015).

Refugee

A person is considered as refugee when an alien

- located outside the country in which the alien is a citizen of, because he or she feels a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, nationality, religious or political opinion or because of sex, sexual orientation or other affiliation to a particular social group, and
- cannot, or because of their fear not to avail oneself of the protection of that country (Alien Act, 4 ch, 1 §).

Young adult

A person who is between the age of 18 and 39 according to Erikson (1997)'s concept of the stages of human development. A young adult is one who is in the process of establishing an identity that leads to long-term stable relationships (Erikson, 1997).

Structure of the Dissertation

This qualitative study was focused on the conception of violence among refugees particularly whether and how refugees' understanding of violence changes, in their own view, following migration, given an acculturation framework that is concerned with the individual psychology of acculturation. Chapter 1 presents the background for this study, first overview or previous literature on the topic, aim of the study, research design, significance of the study, definition of key terms and structure of the dissertation. A review of the related literature is presented in Chapter 2. Chapter 2 discusses definitions of violence, insights into behaviours recognized as violence by refugees and changing conceptions of violence. Chapter 3 provides a description of the theoretical framework of the study, including acculturation theory and its significance. Chapter 4 consists of a description of the methods and procedures used: qualitative research methodology, semi-structured individual interview as a method, recruitment, data collection, analysis, limitation, trustworthiness and ethical considerations. Chapter 5 presents the findings from the data collected through interviews. A discussion of the findings from this study, a

conclusion drawn from the study, and implications for practice and further research are presented in Chapter 6.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter describes what is known in the scholarly literature about violence and refugees according to earlier studies conducted on the topical combination of understanding violence and refugees. First, the definition of violence used in this study is clarified, as different kinds of definition of violence circulate among scholars. Second, I describe in some detail what previous studies suggest in relation to two questions: (a) what behaviours do refugees define as violence, also in the sense of how they distinguish between reasonable and unreasonable force? and (b) how do refugees change their conception of violence following migration? The published English literature on the topic is reviewed. Although it would definitely have been of interest to also examine the Swedish academic literature, this was for now beyond the language capacity of the researcher.

Definition of Violence

Even among scholars, there is no ultimate definition of violence, and no one can successfully describe what *exactly* 'violence' is (de Haan, 2008). There is a variety of definitions of violence, from narrowly restrictive definitions to broadly extensive and inclusive ones. Perhaps one of the most common examples of a restrictive definition of violence is the one used in a World Health Organisation (WHO) world report on violence and health, where violence is defined as "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation" (Etienne G. Krug, 2002). This definition describes violence as the use of physical force or power, but also psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation which include neglect, threaten and acts of omission. In addition, the definition conceptualizes 'violence' in relation to intentional force or power against another person or group of people. In other words, behaviour without intention is separated from violence. While this kind of narrowly restrictive definitions contributes to clarifying the force that is more typically banned by law, it leaves out some cases that are difficult to decide, cases that some would argue are violent but that may fall short of the definition: for example because the injury, harm or deprivation is in dispute; or the injury, harm or deprivation cannot be irrefutably and causally attributed to suffering from violence alone.

On the other hand, extended definitions which include wider range of phenomena as violence routinely face the problem of weakness in the use of scholarly studies, due to the risk of over-inclusion, which then makes the concept less clear and meaningful. These extended definitions are based on the modern idea that all individuals should be free from any kind of uncomfortable experience (Spierenburg, 2008). However, people inevitably come across unhappiness in their life, such as the loss of a family member, or breaking up with a partner. It is almost impossible to live without any kind of risk or misfortune, let alone some kind of injury, deprivation or harm. If we include too many social ills and evils in the definition of violence, then even the partner whom we broke up with can potentially be regarded a perpetrator who committed violence. With respect to examples such as this, Bäck (2004) claims that the conception of 'violence' is widely inconsistent, and might be better clarified by disambiguating three associated terms: 'forcefulness', 'aggression' and 'violence'. For instance, a mother pulling a child by the arm to stop her child from running into an oncoming car, while a 'forceful' act, would not be recognized by many people as an act as 'violence', almost no matter how hard and painful the arm being pulled. After all, the mother was trying to save the child. She was thereby acting in the best interest of the child, and so the act entails no negative or deviant intention on her part, even

though some temporary harm or injury may have been done. On the other hand, the act in itself (pulling a child's arm) may in all other respects be taken as violence, simply because it is 'forceful', may bring pain and cause injury. According to Bäck, 'forcefulness' denotes "the effects upon the recipients of force", regardless of the intention. The act of 'pulling an arm' by the mother is forceful in terms of affecting and changing the child's motion. In contrast, the term 'aggression' involves both of an agent's intention and injury. Bäck defines 'aggression' as 'a forceful action, done intentionally by an agent, of a type of action that tends, or intends, to reduce both the freedom or the genetic fitness of those affected by that action'. In my example, the mother (agent) intentionally engaged in an act by forcefully pulling her child's arm to *avoid* far more serious injury, rather than reducing the child's fitness or freedom. Thus, under Bäck's definition, the mother's act is forceful and probably aggressive, in that it intends to reduce freedom. However, here we do need to concede that such may be done in order to prevent greater harm (that is, running into a passing car). So further judgment of some kind is needed, and this is where violence comes in. A mother forcefully and aggressively pulling a child away from an approaching car can under Bäck's definition constitute an act of violence under two quite different senses, since determining aggressive force to be violence crucially involves a *moral judgment* that needs to be settled; whereas in the case of aggression the intent to harm is the only consideration that applies.

According to Bäck, the conception of 'violence' has a component of aggression (the intent to harm in some way) but also a further moral judgment component. He proposes two different conceptions relation to this moral component; (1) "a basic one, having a component of moral responsibility", and (2) "a pejorative one, having that component as well as carrying the negative connotation of being wrong". Considering that the mother was trying to save the child from being hit by a car, we are likely to judge that the act is violence in the sense of (1), but not morally wrong violence in the sense of (2). In criminology, the first conception of violence which is morally right one can be seen as 'reasonable force'. Reasonable force refers to the amount of force needed to protect oneself, others or one's property (Law, 2018). Self-defence is thereby one common example of reasonable force. Therefore, the act of the mother can be justified as 'reasonable force' in the sense applied by legal systems. This particular justification, or moral warrant, grants the use of reasonable force in order to protect; to prevent far greater injury or harm.

The definition of reasonable and unreasonable force differs from country to country, although negative consequences of violence apply to everyone regardless of where they live. For instance, spanking a child to discipline her/him (corporal punishment) is accepted and regarded as reasonable force in some countries, but it is legally unacceptable in more than 50 countries, including Sweden (Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children & Save the Children Sweden, 2017). Hence, what particular justification or warrant is deemed permissible in cases of aggressive force being used, depends on countries and their cultures: there are geographically and culturally different determinations of what is violence, in the sense of reasonable or unreasonable use of force.

Throughout history, the concepts and acceptance of violence have evolved, leading to some countries prohibiting all corporal punishment outright. In 1979, Sweden prohibited the use of physical punishment or other degrading treatment of children in all settings, as the first country in the world (Swedish Statute Book 1949:381 (latest revision 2018:1288) (Parental Code, chapter 6 §1). In other words, the physical punishment, or so-called 'spanking', of children was accepted all over the world until only about 40 years ago. Support for corporal punishment has collapsed in Sweden following the prohibition of corporal punishment by law (Ellonen, Jernbro, Janson,

Tindberg, & Lucas, 2015; Janson, 2010). The Swedish case shows how dramatically people's conception of corporal punishment can change over time.

Wherever corporal punishment changes from legitimate parental discipline to deviant behaviour, the general conception of violence—or more precisely, what is reasonable force and what is unreasonable (or excessive) force—has also necessarily changed. We are likely to change or reconstruct our conception of violence according to what we have seen, learned, and experienced over time: we take our cues from the cultural climate that surrounds us. Refugees, in particular those who escaped the violence of war or political or social repression in search of a peaceful environment, are particularly likely to be or have been in the process of changing their conception of violence. Refugee children are especially eager and quick to accept a new culture and just get on with living. They adjust to new surroundings and another kind of society easily, when compared to adults (Weine et al., 2004). Refugees of all ages were likely to experience severe violence (Almqvist & Brandell-Forsberg, 1997; Betancourt et al., 2017; Ehntholt & Yule, 2006) and may for that very reason migrate to another more peaceful country, where there is less public tolerance for and experience of violence and where a generally different conception of violence is likely to predominate (Byrskog et al., 2016; Eileen Pittaway, 2018). One might argue therefore that a region or culture in which a different conception of violence holds sway is precisely what many refugees are looking for when they decide to migrate.

In summary of the definitional work, there is an always open determining attribute to a nuanced definition of violence that requires moral judgment; violence is an aggressive use of force that is either morally acceptable (reasonable) or not morally acceptable (unreasonable). People can simplify the nature of violence by classifying all forms of violence as unreasonable force, and they may thereby either unintentionally or intentionally fail to consider cases of reasonable force. However, in the practical sense of legal systems, there are inevitably some acts of violence that can be considered reasonable force; while those acts that are considered as reasonable force differ across countries and between individuals and their moral judgments. Definitions of violence can therefore be described by their demarcation of the various *types of aggressive force and their consequences*, but also by whether and how they have operationalised *moral judgment*, namely the (legal) distinction between reasonable and unreasonable force. In addition, the distinction between reasonable and unreasonable use of force is in particular likely to change over time and across place.

Given these two aspects to the definition of violence, this study attends not only to refugees' distinction between what is and is not violence, but also and in particular to what moral judgments they apply while discussing reasonable and unreasonable uses of aggressive force. The term 'reasonable force' is therefore used in this study in order to identify variation and ambiguity in the conception of 'reasonableness' between people. As a final proviso however, it is worth noting that Durrant, Fallon, Lefebvre, and Allan (2017) insist that the definition of 'reasonable force' in criminology does not quite match the progressive realization of children's rights, or the realities of children's lives. In this study, the focus is precisely on how young adult refugees *themselves* conceive of reasonable and unreasonable force, rather than on further specifying an 'ideal' definition of violence.

What Behaviours Do Refugees Define as Violence?

Data from several studies suggest that the conception of violence can be different in cultures and also individually. Few studies aimed at investigating refugees' conception of violence and in those studies, little attention has been paid to the fact that people tend to distinguish between

reasonable and unreasonable force in their reasoning about violence (Bäck, 2004). However, some studies related to violence and refugees do offer some insight to the topic.

Intercultural Diversity

It has previously been observed that people perceive and interpret 'violence' differently across cultures (Byrskog et al., 2016; Byrskog et al., 2015; Lee et al., 2004; Skårdalsmo Bjørge & Jensen, 2015; Zannettino, 2012). An act which is perceived as violence in a culture can be perceived as non-violent act in other cultures. For example, Swedish midwives who encounter with refugee women from Somalia claim that they recognize difficulties to talk about violence with the refugees due to the different definition of violence (Byrskog et al., 2016; Byrskog et al., 2015). The refugee women did not identify their experience as violence including non-consensual sexual force from their husband. The author suggests that the acceptance of man's sexual force to woman is based on the religious belief which men have more authority than women and having sex is 'man's right', rather than mutual agreement. In addition to religious belief, the midwives proposed the perception of violence is formed by social environment such as "norm system, own experience, and by ongoing public debates" (Byrskog et al., 2015). Another study examined how people interpret 'terrorism act' also suggests people perceive and interpret violence act differently according to their cultural difference (Lee et al., 2004). This study proposed an important perspective on intercultural difference in definition of violence; a moral perspective. According to the suggestion by Lee et al, everyone shares a desire to be right, but what is 'right' or 'wrong' is different among people. If the act is morally 'right', it might be recognised as non-violent act, or it might be justified even it has recognized as 'violence'. The morally decision on an act of violence is influenced by different type of view of causality. East Asian view of causality is holistic which has root in the ancient philosophies including Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism. On the other hand, the Western view of causality is analytic which has its origin in the philosophy of Aristotle. Difference in standards of justice or view of causality can lead difference in perception of violence among cultures. One notable example of accepted violence in some cultures is corporal punishment. A study by Segal (2000) explored Vietnamese refugees' experience of violence and show difference in the acceptance of violence against children between the United States and Vietnam. Although corporal punishment is often considered as an unacceptable act in the United States, there seem to be greater acceptability of corporal punishment in Vietnam. Similar result has been shown in a study by Renzaho and Vignjevic (2011) on African refugees. African refugee parents tend to use authoritarian approach to parenting which approve strict and punitive approach including use of violence against children in the purpose of educating the children. In Lee's phrase, corporal punishment tends to be justified and accepted as a morally 'right' act since it is a mean of discipline from their perspective. What is 'right', 'normal' and 'acceptable' behaviour can be defined at the social level. On the other words, what behaviour is interpreted as 'violence' can differ among different social culture, and studies suggest refugees tend to accept and justify violence compared to the people from the host country.

Fluidity of Individual Conception

There has been recognized tendency in the perception of violence according the cultures. At the same time, some studies show that individuals can have different conception of violence even within a same culture. For instance, Rees and Pease (2007) explored the perception and experience of domestic violence in refugee men and women from Iraq, Ethiopia, Sudan, Serbia, Bosnia and Croatia. The study shows gender difference on the attitude toward violence. Women tend to recognise acts including controlling behaviour and financial abuse as 'violence' within the

marriage relationship with husband, whereas men tend to recognize these kind of act as 'family conflict' rather than 'violence'. However, this study has captured only domestic violence and failed to address wider conception of violence. On the other hand, a study by Beverly M. Black et al. (2009) show only few significant difference between men and women. They investigated the conception of several types of violence including community violence, school violence, family violence and dating/intimate partner violence among young African-American and Iraqi Refugee. According to the study, there was a significant gender difference on only sexual partner violence. Other types of violence did not show gender difference, but there was variation among refugees regardless their gender. In the study, refugees were asked to identify 16 behaviours as 'violent' or 'not violent', and they defined between 7 to 16 of the behaviours as violence. Some people only recognize 7 behaviour as violence out of 16, whereas some people identified all behaviour as violence. It is unclear how different is the variation in each culture (African-American and Iraqi) in the study, however this result can indicate that people perceive behaviour differently even from the same culture. However, this study does not show if refugee recognize the violence in negative term or not. People can identify the act as violence, but still can justify (described more in the following paragraphs). Which act can be defined as violence is subjective matter and can be different among people.

How Do Refugees Change Their Conception of Violence?

Existing research recognises that refugees face with many difficulties and get confused between their original culture and new culture when refugees come and resettle in the host country (Berry, 2017; Betancourt et al., 2017; Fisher, 2013; Renzaho & Vignjevic, 2011; Timshel, Montgomery, & Dalgaard, 2017). The different perception of violence in the host country is one of the obstacles for refugees to acculturate in the new environment successfully (Eileen Pittaway, 2018; Segal, 2000; Zannettino, 2012). Compared to the people in the host country, refugees tend to have wide acceptance to violence (Eileen Pittaway, 2018; Howard et al., 2002; James, 2010; Rees & Pease, 2007; Zannettino, 2012). However, there is a growing body of literature that recognises that the perception of violence is changeable (Byrskog et al., 2016; Eileen Pittaway, 2018; Griffin et al., 1999; Lee et al., 2004). In the process of resettlement, They confuse between their original belief and social standards in new country, and they can lose their identity or feel marginalization due to the difference (Eileen Pittaway, 2018). Several studies suggest that people can be more positive and normalize the use of violence if they surrounded by culture which accept violence widely (Griffin et al., 1999; Howard et al., 2002; Skårdalsmo Bjørgo & Jensen, 2015; Vaughn, Salas-Wright, Qian, & Wang, 2015). On the other hand, studies also suggest people can have more negative attitude and criticize violence if they surrounded by more peaceful environment which do not accept use of violence (Eileen Pittaway, 2018; Rees & Pease, 2007; Renzaho & Vignjevic, 2011; Segal, 2000). By facing with a different perception of violence in an environment, refugees can change their conception and get positive or negative attitude towards violence.

Normalization

Especially in their original country, refugees can experience high level of exposure to violence which lead to normalize the act of violence. According to the study by Skårdalsmo Bjørgo and Jensen (2015), approximately half of refugees had an experience of physical violence by teacher or parents in their home country. The refugees perceive the physical violence as 'common' or 'normal' way of discipline in their country and they tend to justify the use of violence. Instead of criticizing the violence by teachers or parents, they seem to blame themselves and expressed some type of ambivalence toward the perpetrator. The attitude which normalize the act of

violence is not reported in only their original country but also in the host country. The young African-Americans reported the exposure to violence such as use of guns in the United States and they express that violence is 'normal' activity in neighborhood (Griffin et al., 1999; Howard et al., 2002). Since they experience or witness violence act in their daily lives, violence act can be normalized. However, it does not mean they do not recognize violence act as violence act. They were asked "what is the first thing you think of when you hear the word 'violence'?" and the answer was drugs, guns, shooting and fighting which they were exposed to (Howard et al., 2002). They recognize the act as violence act, but they perceive it as something 'normal' or 'acceptable' in the society. This result suggests that regardless whether they live in host country or original country, or high-income country or low-income country, they can have positive attitude towards violence and approve of violence act by being exposed to violence or surrounded by environment which accept violence. However, the study by Beverly M. Black et al. (2009) argue there is no correlation between exposure to violence and acceptance of violence, and greater exposure to violence does not impact the perception of violence. In the study, refugees recognized more behaviors as violence than native-born African Americans. However, considering the refugees had settled in the United States from 5 to 10 years, the perception might have been changed in these years and refugees can have negative attitude towards violence. Beverly M. Black's analysis does not take account of the possibility of acculturation and change of perception over time.

Critique

As refugees can accept the use of violence by being exposed to society which accept violence generally, several studies suggests that they can have negative attitude towards violence by living in more peaceful environment (Byrskog et al., 2016; Chang et al., 2008; Fisher, 2013; Renzaho & Vignjevic, 2011; Skårdalsmo Bjørgo & Jensen, 2015; Zannettino, 2012). In the process of resettlement in the new country which disapprove the use of violence, refugees can change their perception of violence and criticize the host culture's cultural conception of violence and perhaps even the host culture's legal definition of violence. In the beginning, refugees tend to get confused about new social norms and hesitate to accept domestic law in the new country which clearly prohibit violence. Especially refugee men may feel they lose their traditional identity as a man and their prior authority over women or children (Fisher, 2013; Zannettino, 2012). They may sooner or later be faced with having to rethink violence against children and women in the process of resettlement (Byrskog et al., 2016). Young adult refugees who experienced violence by parents and teachers in their home country themselves, are also need to rethink the boundaries of violence in the new country. They may for example experience more peaceful teaching practice, without violence from parents or teachers, and start to reflect on their past experience of violence in their home country (Skårdalsmo Bjørgo & Jensen, 2015). Refugee parents may also need to adjust their view of parenting practice, particularly the use of violence against children, after arriving in a country (such as Sweden) where all violence against children, including also spanking used as part of parental discipline, is prohibited by law (Chang et al., 2008). In Australia, there is a parenting program provided to refugee parents to support successful resettlement. In the program, parents learn the prohibition of violence against children and alternative parenting practice to corporal punishment (Renzaho & Vignjevic, 2011). According to the study, the refugee parents eventually significantly changed their attitude towards the use of corporal punishment and started to try to avoid using violence. Another study conducted in the United States also showed the refugee parents' change of attitude towards the use of violence (Segal, 2000). Most parents are aware that physical punishment is prohibited by the domestic law in the

host country, and try to moderate the degree of corporal punishment or change to nonaggressive disciplining.

Rees and Pease (2007) also noted that domestic law that prohibits violence against women deters refugee men from using violence against their wives. Being aware of domestic law that prohibits violence seems therefore to have significant influence on refugees' practical considerations of violence. A study conducted by Eileen Pittaway (2018) logically concludes that refugees' lack of knowledge of domestic law can be an obstacle to changing their perception in positive ways. In her study, refugees who were not aware of domestic law describe human rights as an "optional secular value system" (as the researcher puts it) with no connection to law. Even though they live in a more peaceful environment, if refugees are not aware of the legal prohibition of violence, they might persist in following traditional beliefs that pursue and justify the use of violence. In addition, the pressures of, and confusion in, the process of resettlement can also prevent refugees from changing their perceptions of violence. A study that investigated violent criminal cases by male refugees suggests that refugees can feel significant pressure in the process of migration, such as social isolation, lack of treatment, and poor living conditions, which in turn can lead to violence (Sollund, 2001). Refugee men in particular are likely to try to keep their prior gender-given power by continuing to be violent towards their wives or children, and so try to restrict their autonomy, even though they are aware of the prohibition of violence in the host society (James, 2010).

In all, several studies suggest that refugees can change their attitude towards violence and start criticizing the use of violence in the new country where the use of violence is prohibited violence use clearly. However, Muftić and Bouffard (2008)'s study offers contradictory findings about changing perceptions of violence given a more peaceful environment. The study compared the attitudes of violence among Bosnian women residing in the United States, with those of Bosnian women residing in Bosnia. Although only one act of violence (beating women) was in focus as example, no statistically significant differences were found between the two groups of women. The authors therefore suggest that refugees might stick to their traditional culture in the new country; they may even become more conservative and loyal to their cultural origins than women who remained in Bosnia. However, a majority of studies do support the possibility of changing conceptions and attitudes towards violence through exposure to a more peaceful environment.

Conclusion

The aim of this review was to examine the definition of violence among scholars and what previous studies suggest in relation to the young adult refugees' conception of violence with investigating two questions: (a) what behaviours refugees define as violence, also in the sense of how they distinguish between reasonable and unreasonable force? and (b) how they change their conception of violence following their migration into Sweden?

Although no scholar successfully could describe what exactly 'violence' is, it has been recognized that the diversity on definition of violence can be described by clarifying the demarcation between violence and non-violence in the concept of violence, but also reasonable and unreasonable force. In addition, it was also revealed that there have been very little studies on refugees' conception of violence. Although few studies suggest some insight on the conception of violence, no studies have been found which aimed to investigate how they distinguish between reasonable and unreasonable force, and how they change the conception following migration to new country. Results from several studies suggest that culture including value orientation, social standards and norms strongly influence the perception of violence at individual level (Byrskog et

al., 2016; Byrskog et al., 2015; Lee et al., 2004; Skårdalsmo Bjørge & Jensen, 2015; Zannettino, 2012).

Refugees perceive and identify an act as 'right' or 'wrong' behaviour by referring to cultural belief or their own experience (Lee et al., 2004). Refugees tend to justify the violence by being exposed to violence in a society that accepts that use of violence (Griffin et al., 1999; Howard et al., 2002). Since violence can be a 'common' act in a culture, or since refugees themselves also experienced violence, the use of violence can be normalized in the refugees' perception of violence (Skårdalsmo Bjørge & Jensen, 2015). On the other hand, refugees can change their perception of violence following their migration into a more peaceful environment (Byrskog et al., 2016; Chang et al., 2008; Fisher, 2013; Renzaho & Vignjevic, 2011; Skårdalsmo Bjørge & Jensen, 2015; Zannettino, 2012). In the resettlement process, refugees become aware of the prohibition of violence by law and can start rethinking the use of violence (Byrskog et al., 2016). They tend to start criticizing the use of violence and develop a more negative attitude towards violence. However, some studies indicate that the pressure or confusion in the process of resettlement can cause refugees to commit violent acts even in the more peaceful environment where violence is explicitly prohibited.

Although the findings of these studies provide insight into the cultural influences on perceptions of violence and possibilities for changing the perception of violence in more peaceful environments, the literature fails to answer how refugees distinguish between reasonable and unreasonable force and comprehensively understand how they change their perceptions after arriving in a new country. To understand the nature of changing perceptions of violence among refugees and provide better support programmes or environments for them, work needs to be done to further investigate the distinction between perceived reasonable and unreasonable force by refugees and how they change those perceptions following migration to a new country.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework

Berry's acculturation theory is adopted as a theoretical perspective throughout this study to explain and understand the social phenomena, the concept of violence among refugees. This chapter first describes the general background of acculturation theory, including its main concepts, and then clarifies the shift in perspective, from sociological to psychological acculturation, that was introduced by Berry. It shows how this particular theory is nevertheless relevant and useful to this present study.

Acculturation Theory Background

The origin of acculturation theory date back to the early 20th Century, when Blanshard, Thomas, and Znaniecki (1918) propose a theory of acculturation in the fields of anthropology and sociology. They proposed three types of acculturation process that can occur, corresponding to three personality types, to describe the different degree of cultural group adaptation to a new country, while at the same time retaining their original culture. The first type is called 'Bohemian'. Bohemian, according to Blanshard, Thomas and Znaniecky denotes the acculturation process of those who adopt the host country and abandon their original culture. The second type is 'Philistine', denoting the process of those who could not adapt to the culture in the host county, and instead retained their original culture. The third type is the 'Creative' type, denoting the cultural process of those who could both adapt the host culture at the same time as keeping their culture from origin. Their study illustrated the acculturation of these three different groups of individuals, while also taking into account different level of acculturation. Therefore, acculturation is originally conceptualized as a unidimensional procedure either retaining original culture or accepting new culture.

Fundamental Concepts of Acculturation Theory

Subsequently, two social science statements aimed at defining the concept of acculturation begin to proliferate. The first statement dates back to a memorandum about acculturation studies that was drawn up for the journal *American Anthropologist* in 1936 by Redfield, Linton, and Herskovits (1936). In this memorandum, acculturation is defined from an anthropological perspective, as a process of cultural change that occurs when two different cultures come into contact (whether dominant or nondominant):

“Acculturation comprehends those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both” (pp. 149–152)

Note that this statement regards acculturation as a phenomenon that is present at the level of contact between cultures, rather than between individuals, and that therefore operates at a fairly high level of abstraction. Following this understanding of acculturation, people who are not dominant in the society are expected to acquire the receiving culture and discard their original culture. This tendency can be seen in the case of migrants as some people criticize migrants for not acquire the new practices, beliefs and values in the receiving society.

The second statement, by a group of authors reporting on the outcomes of a social science seminar on acculturation held in 1954 (H. G. Barnett et al., 1954) focuses more on the sociological aspects that pertain within and between groups of people. The authors propose a slightly more encompassing sociological definition, by indicating the possibility of a diverse range of social as well as cultural adjustments being indicative of acculturation:

“Acculturative change may be the consequence of direct cultural transmission; it may be derived from non-cultural causes, such as ecological or demographic modification induced by an impinging culture; it may be delayed, as with internal adjustments following upon the acceptance of alien traits or patterns; or it may be a reactive adaptation of traditional modes of life.” (p. 974)

Individual Acculturation – “intercultural adaptation” by Berry

It logically follows from both definitions that acculturation can be seen at both group and individual levels; that is, as a combination of sociocultural and psychological adaptation (Matsumoto, 2001). Therefore, in addition to the two originating social science perspectives on acculturation at a social cultural phenomenon, Berry (2017) has recently added a new form of individual acculturation that he then terms ‘intercultural adaptation’. Intercultural adaptation, according to Berry, describes how well individuals establish relationships and interact with others in a new society at a psychological level. The psychology that is in focus in intercultural adaptation is in particular alert to an individual’s self-esteem and well-being, while sociocultural adaptation then refers to how well individuals adapt themselves in social and cultural practice to the new society.

The acculturation framework proposed by Berry (2017) therefore focuses on understanding acculturation as complex process that plays out, first of all, for individuals, during interactions between both cultural groups and individuals in the groups. Influenced by their own cultural group, individuals are led to adapt and change themselves on both cultural and psychological levels to dual group situations. Although the process can apply to various intercultural contexts, acculturation in Berry’s framework more typically applies to individuals who live in a different country from their home countries: such as immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. Second, the network of relationships between the groups and individuals influence how individuals process the acculturation. According to Berry, there are three main aspects to consider in the relationships; the intention of moving (and whether it is voluntary or not), the style of living (and whether it is sedentary or migrant) and the period of living elsewhere (whether it is permanent or temporary). For instance, international students typically voluntarily migrate to a society in a new county, and reside there temporarily. These aspects are significant attributes of how they acculturate into a culture, when compared with refugees who have been forced to leave their country, or economic or lifestyle migrants who have chosen to leave their country. The different aspects of migration give each a different perspective on the new society they enter. Third, the power relation, relative to the strength and cohesion of the cultural group in question. If a group wields a significant degree of power politically, economically or demographically, then individuals from that group can acculturate easily and regardless of—and even, at the cost of—the host culture.

Fourth, there are different stages of acculturation considering attitudes and behaviours (Berry, 1997). It is easy to prefer and would like to do (change in attitude), but it tends to be difficult to actually be able to do (change in behaviour). Changes in attitude, how they think about it or prefer to do, often increase the chance of having change in behaviour as well but it is not guaranteed. Psychological acculturation can manifest at a superficial level such as a change of clothes, eating habits, or acquisition of language; but more salient are deeper levels such as cultural identities, values or personal beliefs. Especially when it is related to a deeper level, people can suffer from anxiety, apprehension or confusion which refer to acculturative stress within the process of acculturating, (Jankowski, Meca, Lui, & Zamboanga, 2018).

In conclusion, acculturation theory describes the process of social cultural change and individual psychological change following interaction with different cultures, and Berry's acculturation theory provides a definite framework to understand the process of acculturation. In the proposed study, Berry's framework is used to explain different ways of acculturating regarding the conception of violence and how well young adult refugees adapted to the conception of violence in the Swedish context.

Chapter 4: Methods

Qualitative Research Methodology

A qualitative methodology is used in this study. Young adult refugees' experiences, as told in their own words, are regarded as containing information with respect to acculturation to different conceptions of violence; so that refugees' talking in quite some detail about violence can therefore serve as data in determining the nature and amount of acculturation that has taken place in that regard. The nature of this study leads to a qualitative strategy that is described as inductive, constructionist, and interpretivist (Bryman, 2012). Qualitative research tends to be criticized for its subjectivity, the difficulty of replicating and generalizing from case study data, and for its lack of transparency. On the other hand, detailed attention to the rich description contained in qualitative studies enables us to obtain a wealth of data on particularities and the serendipitous nature of reality, including context-sensitive information that is especially important 'when things go badly wrong' (as is typical for the stories that refugees have to tell) and that cannot be gained as well via quantitative approaches that tend instead to use standardised instruments that either erase or hinder full expression of the (extremely) particular in the stories that individuals have to tell after turmoil or misadventure.

Qualitative Research Method

Whereas methodology refers to a very broad terrain of paradigms and research processes, the aim of research methods is to fix on particular, relevant kinds of techniques and associated sets of procedures utilized in the process of data collecting (Cohen, 2008). From a traditional perspective, methods involve specific techniques, such as prepared questions, analysing measurements, particular descriptions of real-world phenomena, and clear constraints of the process of conducting studies. However, the term 'method' can also be used more extensively in the case of interpretative measurements, such as different types of interview, role-playing and observation. Clarifying the standards and procedures that were used in the course of research allow fellow researchers to repeat and test the result of the study. In this study, semi-structured individual interview is used as a research method. To the letter, *inter~view* provide insights into the world of the subject's life from their perspectives in their own terms (Cohen, 2008; Kvale, 1996). There are different forms of the interview such as structured interview, standardized interview, and intensive interview (Bryman, 2012). The main forms of interview utilized in qualitative research are unstructured interview and semi-structured interview. In the unstructured interview, interviewer usually only has topics or themes to be explored and flexibility is quite high. Whereas, semi-structured interview has framework followed by a list of questions in the topic but the questions typically more general compared to structured interview in quantitative research. During the interview, the interviewee can ask further questions depends on the answer from the interviewee. Semi-structure interview allows the study to have some guidance to follow as well as an opportunity for identifying new ways of understanding the topic.

Recruitment

Volunteers for the study were recruited through a Swedish language school, in which the author herself has participated. Refugees whom the researcher has met personally were asked if they know other young adult refugees in their family or friends that may in their turn be interviewed—a strategy known as snow-ball sampling. Contact with potential recruits to the study were made

by presenting an explanatory statement about the nature and purpose of the study, along with an informed consent form that needs to be agreed to and undersigned by the respondent. The participants are young adult refugees aged between 24–28 who arrived in Sweden from different countries outside. Young adult refugees were chosen as respondents since they are not far away from children's age which very vulnerable to violence and tend to have distinct memory of their childhood. At the same time, considering the sensitivity of this study, they are able to decide their participant with understanding the possible risks from this study and able to give a consent by themselves. Europe not longer than 4 years ago, and who left a country they felt was in grave turmoil.

Data Collection

The data is collected by interviewing young adult refugees. Interview questions consist of three parts (see Appendix 3). The first part is general questions including their name, age and home country. The second part is present conception of violence. Perceived description of violence including distinguish between reasonable and unreasonable force is investigated. Two examples of violence from court cases are presented to the respondents to prompt answering questions. The summary of cases was formed by the author (see Appendix 4). The last part is the change on the conception of violence in Sweden.

Interviews is conducted individually at a time and place chosen by the interviewee in English. Their English level was enough to understand each other. And also the author had personal relationship with most of the respondents before the interview in English, therefore it was comfortable and natural to talk in English. Pilot interview was conducted with one of the respondents who have most close relationship with interviewer to test the appropriateness of the questions and improve the interview. To obtain deeper understanding, follow-up interviews are conducted one week later of the initial interview. Therefore, semi-structured interviews are conducted ten times (five respondents). Six out of ten interviews are held at respondent's house and others are held in a public library. All interviews are recorded using an unobtrusive smartphone as recording device. The participants get a list of questions before the interviews. Additional questions formed by the author during interviews can be asked. Recorded data from the interview are transcribed verbatim. All participants are provided the transcript and opportunity to modify.

Data Analysis

The data obtained from qualitative interview tend to be vast and unstructured. Therefore, unlike quantitative studies, qualitative data are difficult to analyse systematically and the quality of data analysis tend to depends on the skills of researchers (Schreier, 2012). To organise the data in the procedure of analysis, it is crucial to have systematic control and a clear analyse procedure (Cohen, 2008). In addition, collected data should be analysed in parallel with or after immediately of data collection procedure to make sense of what respondents means and also to consider other expressions than the meaning of the letter itself such as emphasize of specific words.

Another important consideration to mention is the modification process. As mentioned before, all participants were given opportunities to read and modify the transcripts. Because the interviews were held in English and neither any of the respondents nor the interviewer are native English speakers, sufficient time was taken for good mutual understanding during the interviews and for reviewing the transcripts, until all respondents were fully satisfied with the record of what they had said.

In this study, content analysis was adopted in a process of analysis to make the process relatively systematic. Data analysis was carried out according to the following process; defining the units of analysis, deciding the codes, constructing the categories, making links between the categories and summarize them (Cohen, 2008).

NVivo was used in the process of analysing data. Nvivo is a qualitative data analysis (QDA) software by QSR International. Transcripts of interview were written in Microsoft Word and then exported into NVivo for analysis. Nvivo organizes and manages a wide variety of qualitative data such as text, voice, and video and supports qualitative research through coding and analysis process. NVivo provides various analytical functions to interpret data, and supports the acquisition of evidence-based insights and hypotheses. The coding process is the most important and crucial to success data analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Patterns of thinking and reasoning about violence including attributes of Berry's theory about the individual psychology of acculturation were generated through the process of coding and analysis. The codes were formulated according to respondents' telling in the interview, rather than starting with some general categories according to hypotheses. Following that, the texts were coded in progressively more extensive detail. The codes stored in *nodes* should represent the text simply and precisely. If there were texts which unrelated to the topic of conceptions of violence or any of the research questions, they were coded as 'un-coded' and excluded. Eventually themes emerged in the process of coding as distinctive patterns in the NVivo counts of the codes used. After themes were found, all fragments were coded again, in order to check if any mistakes or ambiguities remained.

Limitations

Interpreting the study's findings has as always to be done with some caution, because of limitations on the study design. A first limitation are the parameters of generalizability. Because of the time and availability, the sample size is too small to generalize to a population (such as, all immigrants arriving in Sweden from the Middle-East in recent years).

Secondly, the method introduced some cultural, personal and sampling bias, since snow-ball sampling was adopted and the data were analysed by one single coder using a ground-up content analysis (Cohen, 2008). Third, there is a limitation introduced by constraints on language fluency. Neither the respondents nor the researcher herself are native Swedish or English speakers. It was decided to conduct the interviews in English: given the delicate topic, including an interpreter (another stranger) in the conversation was thought to introduce a barrier rather than facilitation. The preference was for more personal and 'up-close' (unmediated) two-way conversations. However, since the author could not communicate with respondents in their native language, English was used instead. Compared to interviewing by an interviewer from the same country (i.e., the same culture and language), there is ever a possibility to lose meaning, to mistranslate, and to mis-interpret what was meant. A final limitation refers to variability in time. Individual conception invariably changes over time (H. G. Barnett, Leonard Broom, Bernard J. Siegel, Evon 2. Vogt, & James B. Watson, 1954). The study has captured respondents' conceptions of violence only at the particular time the interviews were done; it may even be the case that the very act of interviewing has caused respondents—at the time or subsequently—to re-think their conception of violence, and so on.

Trustworthiness

It is vital to establish trustworthiness in the research. Trustworthiness consist of the following components; credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Cohen, 2008). Credibility is the degree of how finding worth to trust. A set of interviews can contribute a level of credibility. Transferability is how the findings are applicable to other contexts and dependability is how the findings are consistent and can be repeated. The qualitative interviewing method is often criticized due to the parameters of generalizability. Detailed and explicit description of finding and peer checking can contribute to ensuring the transferability and dependability. Confirmability refers to the quality of neutrality in the findings. To enhance confirmability, every step in the procedures for analysing the data has been documented.

Ethical Considerations

The interviews were conducted following participants' informed consent and voluntary participation. The participants were made aware of their right to withdraw anytime they wished, without any further condition attached. Participants' private information was treated in confidence and is presented anonymously, entirely in accordance with the Swedish ethics guidelines (Swedish Research Council, 2017). The high sensitivity of this topic involved special ethical consideration of the consequences of the interviews (Cohen, 2008; Kvale, 1996). The interviews provided respondents with an occasion to reflect on all they had experienced on arriving in Sweden and prior to that. Especially, when respondents were asked how their conception of violence has changed, the question risked raising a traumatic experience. The questions were therefore carefully formed around factors that changed their conception of violence, while actively avoiding asking after concrete experiences or how these felt.

Chapter 5: Findings

This chapter presents the findings of the study. Since a detailed picture of the participants' insights matters for analysis, extensive citations from the interviews are included. The findings from the interview are written in present tense, in order to clearly distinguish between the past experiences that respondents reported (and which are put in the past tense) and the telling about those experiences and other matters itself, during the interviews (which are reported in the present tense). In what follows, the interviewees are introduced and described first. Then the data codes (an analytical representation of what they talked about) are introduced, followed by the themes to which the codes could be linked.

The Respondents

The first two respondents were found through shared attendance at a Swedish school, while the others were introduced to the researcher by those first two respondents. The author had already met three of the respondents before the interviews were conducted and in all three cases a friendship had developed that predated the interviews. The respondents were willing to participate in this study and did not hesitate to spend time on being interviewed. In this opening section I introduce my respondents, including demographic information and their connection with myself, in order to give a sense of them not only as refugees who moved to Sweden, but also as people—and as personal friends—who have their family, their cherished dreams, a caring personality, and a life that is now strongly rooted in a new society, even though this last has not been easy for them.

Adel. Adel (24) came from Syria one year and five months ago. He is one of my classmates in the Swedish school, where we are all learning Swedish. He is calm in the classroom but he likes conversation. Since our ages are quite close, we naturally introduced and started talking. He invited me over to his place for the interview and welcomed me with traditional sweets from his county. Adel took quite his time to answer some questions, clearly trying to think carefully about them.

Ali. Ali (28) came from Iran three years and five months ago. He was introduced to me by one of my friends in the Swedish school. Even though he is quite busy with his job here in Sweden, he happily gave me opportunity to interview him. He has a pleasant smile and is good at making a comfortable space for interviewing and talking. He speaks confidently and answers questions quickly, apparently without much doubt.

Ahmad. Ahmad (28) came from Syria three years and five months ago. He too was introduced to me by one of my friends in the Swedish school. He studies at a university in Sweden and has great ambitions for his future. During the interview he is relaxed, sitting comfortably on a chair, and speaks carefully and calmly in response to the questions I ask him.

Jeje. Jeje (26) came from Syria about one year and eight months ago. She was at a Christmas party that I attended with her husband and they drove me home. She is pregnant and happily agreed to the interview. She is very beautiful, and is also an intelligent woman. She is very easy to talk with because she does not have any airs, so coming across quite natural and being herself.

Jolen. Jolen (24) came from Syria one year and eight months ago. She is one of my friends in the Swedish school. I still remember when we met and talked the first time, because she is full of positive energy in her small body. She invited me to interview her at her place. She is a trustworthy person with a strong personal sense of justice. During the interview she talked energetically and with great confidence.

Data codes

Patterns of thinking and reasoning about violence in the interviews with Adel, Ali, Ahmad, Jeje and Jolen—including attributes of Berry’s theory about the individual psychology of acculturation—were generated through an extensive, iterative process of data coding and analysis, which was conducted in NVivo in the following steps.

The first step was reading each transcript repeatedly. The author read the respondents’ transcripts several times, in order to become familiar with the nature, contents and structure of the tellings, and so engender a first general conceptual foundation for identifying key themes in the data (Bazeley, 2013). Checking the transcript with respondents also helped this process along. While reading the transcripts, researcher interpretations and thoughts about the texts and their meanings were progressively added to NVivo, as notes and annotations that commented on specific words or phrases found in the text.

The second step was coding. Codes are abstract representation of a phenomenon in the text (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The coding started with coding in detail according to what respondents said in the interview, rather than starting with some general categories according to hypotheses; the texts were then code in progressively more extensive detail. The codes that were introduced were named to represent the text simply and precisely, and stored in *nodes*. Because some parts of the transcripts proved unrelated to the topic of conceptions of violence or any of the research questions, they were excluded by explicitly coding them as ‘un-coded’. That way it was ensure that all text was fully coded, with no parts overlooked or left out. During the coding process, some codes seemed to overlap substantially, which in a number of cases helped to identify different codes being used to cover one and the same phenomenon. Running through all such instances thus led to an iterative process of code reduction and code disambiguation, making the coding more consistent throughout. The themes that are reported—which are “generalized statements about whole classes of phenomena” (Becker, 1998)—emerged as the interactive process of coding and recoding started to flag up distinctive patterns in the NVivo counts of the codes used.

The four schemes that had emerged when it was decided to end the coding process consisted of 11 sub codes (two codes for theme one; two for theme two; three for theme three and three for theme four), with 149 coded fragments in total. 121 text fragments in all were excluded from the analysis because they were unrelated to the topic (conceptions of violence). Once this pattern had been found, all fragments were coded again, in order to check if any mistakes or ambiguities remained, and whether the codes were used consistently. The coding scheme of four themes and their 17 sub codes with description are shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Themes, sub codes and descriptions

Theme	Sub code	Description
The description of violence		Definition, examples and features of violence from their perspective
	Ambiguity	Ambiguous description of violence and non-violence phenomena
	Diversity depends on period	Different understanding of violence depends on the period; before the war, during the war and in Sweden
Reasonable and unreasonable force		Distinguish between reasonable and unreasonable force considering morally evaluative judgments about force and how
	Harshness	Judgement according to the harshness of violence
	Intention	Another judgement element, intention of people who conduct violence
Adjustment		Adjustment of their concept of violence following migration into Sweden
	Positive attitude	Being aware of the different conception and try to change themselves positively according to their experience in Sweden
	Confusion	Confusions they had during the adjustment or change of conception of violence
	Culture	Maintenance of their culture from home country
Applicability of acculturation theory		The extent to which Berry's acculturation theory is able to explain their change of the conception
	Relationship	Positive relationship with group and individuals in terms of violence
	Power	Power relation with Swedish society including law
	Degree of acculturation	Deep level of acculturation lead to conflict between attitude (beliefs from previous life) and behaviour (required by society)

The coded themes

Four themes were prevalent in the data. The first theme is the description of particular instances of violence by refugees that had such a lasting impact on them that they have become definitional, in their thinking, of violence as such. The theme therefore concerns how they describe “violence” within the timeline of their life events, and how they distinguish violence and non-violence phenomena from that experiential perspective. The second theme is reasonable and unreasonable force. This theme reflects how respondents make morally evaluative judgments about force and how they judge the harshness of violence in light of the goals of violence. The third theme is adjustment of their conception of violence in Sweden—it is the most explicitly acculturation-based theme. This theme covers the extent to which their understanding of violence adjusts following migration into Sweden, and if it does, how they adjust their understanding to tally with their personal views and beliefs. The last theme is the applicability of Berry's acculturation theory. It covers the extent to which Berry's acculturation theory is able to explain their change of the conception of violence in Sweden as an instance of acculturation, as an adjustment that has to be made in order to function and be accepted in a different culture. The four themes will be reported in turn.

Descriptions of Experienced Violence as Providing the Definition of Violence

All respondents express difficulties to describe what violence is. Sometimes they are questioning themselves exactly what they are thinking and require time before answering the questions. In

addition, they often recall and refer to their previous experience, in an effort to explain their thought. They do not describe all force as violence. They all recognise that they distinguish between more and less violent force more or less ambiguously and depending on the situation. Their descriptions of violence often take different forms, depending on the period in life they refer to: variously, their life before the war, their life during the war, and their life in Sweden.

Ambiguity Between Violence and Non-violence

In response to the question that asked for respondents' definition of violence, Adel and Ahmad spontaneously refer to death or chaos, clearly in reference to what they saw in their home countries.

For me, violence is killing and death.

[Adel]

It is to create chaos. [...] I think that because of the situation of Syria.

[Ahmad]

Two other respondents, Jolen and Jeje, mention unfair power relationships, between people who perpetrate violence and people who are the victims of those acts.

I think it's an act of power. It's unfair. It's like someone robbing you with a knife. It's unfair that you got hit. You didn't do anything violence to me is when someone used power on you. It's unfair.

[Jolen]

When you try to control somebody's freedom.

[Jeje]

Ali initially states that all actions that cause discomfort to people are violent actions; he even mentions that behavior actions can cause discomfort. Yet whether forceful or transgressive actions (actions that cause discomfort) are to be considered violent actions, he feels depends on the situation in which they occur.

I think an action makes you feel bad. [...] I don't know if my definition of violence is right or not, but if you feel bad, it is violence.

(In response to stabbing)

no, I don't think it's violence. first, you don't want to kill him, you want to stop him. [...] it's not violence. it depends on the situation.

[Ali]

Not only Ali, but Jeje and Ahmed too find it difficult to distinguish between violence and non-violence action, and often exemplify some act as support or accident, but not as violence.

I don't know where to start from violence. because when it start, [...] I don't know if it's violence but I think it's irresponsible [...].

Interviewer: do you think it's violence or not violence?

I can't say it [...].

[Jeje]

(In response to hitting and shouting by respondent's father)

It's kind of support. [...] because they punish and they are worry about their children and they want them little better more than them. And like me if I had if I have children in the future I want them better more than me.

[Ahmad]

(In response to stabbing)

So if he touch the knife and tried to kill him but like something happens... like accidentally, it is not violence. Absolutely. I don't think so.

[Ali]

Finally, escalation is presented as one of the general features of violence. Respondents perceive violence as phenomena that can grow in severity over time. Adel refers to an experience his brother had with a teacher. The teacher first berated his brother verbally, but then turned to physical punishment that progressively got more severe, from pulling his hair to harming his hand with a pen.

Teacher put the pen between his fingers and try to cut his hand like that. That's why my brother stopped being bad because he was too much scared. [...] In the first, the teacher say "don't do that". And if he is doing again. They try to hit on his hand. Then "don't do that" and he do that again. And he try to catch him from his hair. And "don't do that". but he does again. Then the teacher did the pen one. That was the last thing. He had pain for three days.

[Adel]

It is clear that all respondents perceive violence as a negative term. They generally describe violence as objectionable, often referring to events they saw or experienced especially in their home country. However, they also recognize that they see contextual justification in some acts of force. They therefore permit the category of force that Bäck (2004) termed 'non-violence force', and that in this study is termed reasonable force (that is, potentially harmful force used with morally acceptable justification) instead.

Descriptions of Violence Depend on Life Periods

All respondents describe violence differently according to the period. Before coming to Sweden, they perceive violence in different way before the war and after the war started. It is repeatedly stated that their conception is changed by experience or being exposed to severe violence during the war, compared to before the war. The different descriptions of *physical* violence that respondents talk about within their accounts can thus generally be distinguished as pertaining to a time of life before war (or violence becoming widespread), during such time, and after that time. However, their descriptions of *psychological* violence and *sexual* violence seem stable and to hold across different life-course events.

Previous Life Before the War

Before the war started, respondents perceived violence as a phenomenon that exists in daily life and that did not need them to think much about violence consciously. All respondents cite examples of things they experienced while at school or at home, from their teacher or parents.

The most common example of violence cited from before the war is 'beating', or 'spanking', as here explained by Ali and Jeje.

I don't know maybe ...violence is bad thing. [...] but I mean... it was not big problem. Not so important. We were just laughing. I remember when I was fighting with another kid, the principal came and bit me with stick. [...] it was like honor. [...] I wanted to be cool. I showed the hand and like "look, I am cool". It was just like that.

[Ali]

The teacher did use that once (wooden stick) for everybody in the class, because we were so noisy.

[Jeje]

While some respondents indicate in this way that being hit by a teacher can raise one's status within the peer group, it is notable that Adel sees a link between violence and generating respectful relationships.

It's kind of respect. But now when the governments say don't use the hitting stick, [...] they (students) will never get scared of teacher and because they will never respect him. [...] They never respect the teacher because they're not hitting. [...] (In Syria) If I saw teacher on the street, I choose the other way. Not the same way for the teacher because I was like.... because it's kind of respect and kind of scaring.

[Adel]

He explains how violence contributes to generating respect towards teachers among students. By using violence, teachers can assert their authority over students, and so engender respect (or being scared). However, given that it is nowadays mostly forbidden to hit student by using a stick, the respondent concludes that teachers have lost their authority over students and that consequently students no longer respect their teachers.

During the War

While respondents consider most violence as banal or commonplace before the war starts, they describe violence very differently when it takes place as part of war. One obvious difference is the sheer brutality of the violence involved, and another the chaos that arises in its wake. Here is how Ahmad explains it:

because old term was beating... Maybe the beating man and wife or his children or his family. But now we are in the 21st centuries. There are more to go I think. Now it's chaos, to create chaos.

[Ahmad]

Whereas respondents give "beating" or "hitting" as example of violence before the war, they instead talk of "death", "killing", "injure", "shooting", "terrorists", and "chaos" as examples of violence at the time of war. Their experiences during the war has made them discover far more severe levels of violence that previously they were not familiar with. Ahmad again:

It was so good before the war. But everything has changed after the war. Because we saw many things. [...] It's not like just hit to us. There is war, and army and guns. Many things involved. [...] it's just about in Syria, I discovered that violence is not just hit women. It's about the war, guns and how people died without reason. It's violence. [...] I saw the worst.

[Ahmad]

Two respondents, Jeje and Jolen, state the loss of human dignity as particular to the sorts of violence they experienced in their home country at war.

violence when people they don't have this humanity feelings. They just forget about being human no matter who he is.

[Jeje]

But you feel like something inside of you just died. your sympathy just died.

[Jolen]

Children and women are perceived by Ali and Jeje as typical victims of violence, because of their vulnerability.

because innocent people are children. Who don't have power. Everyone can put pressure to them. [...] women have weaker power. Lower opportunities. They can push you more.

[Ali]

when I think about violence, I think about kids. How can have been with kids. So many kids has been killed in Syria. [...] because children are like kids. They can't defend themselves.

[Jeje]

Another perceived feature of violence, given its very different manifestation under different periods of life, therefore becomes a certain (lack of) *distance* they see between themselves and violence. They perceive violence as a phenomenon that is close—or came too close—to them. They felt the physical presence or nearby-ness of violence in daily life, when it was not something only to watch or hear on media, especially during the war. Violence was something actually experienced also by both Adel and Ahmad, and it brought along with it strong negative feelings, in relation to themselves, and in relation to their family or friends.

when I was in Syria... (violence was) Much close.

[Adel]

because I was also going through them and I saw the man went out from his car. So I cannot..... when the army came, all the people lay.... I cannot... so I still remember this moment.

[Ahmad]

It is clear that their understanding of violence has changed due to experiences from the war. The respondents were exposed to severe violence and/or they felt violence closeby. They express strong negative feelings towards violence during the war, feelings that are entirely unlike their justifications of violence before the war.

New Life in a Host Country

When the respondents came to Sweden, they found many differences in violence compared to their previous society. Various statements by Adel, Ahmad and Ali refer to the low prevalence and low severity of violence in Sweden.

I live in Sweden for two years. I didn't see any violence in my experience. I didn't see anything. [Adel]

In terms of violence, there are differences also because there are not violence at all (in Sweden). [...] I didn't face with violence. [Ahmad]

You do not think about violence anymore (in Sweden). [Ali]

At the same time, four out of five respondents comment that there is still violence, also in Sweden. They express that the kinds of violence are primarily different from the places they left behind. One of example is child protection by social service. According to Ahmad, there is no such governmental system in his home country. Organised child protection however strikes him as an entirely new kind of violence, one that involves seizing children from their family, rather than offering them protection.

They took their children. [...] I don't know exactly. Maybe the children said something or...like my family don't give me money or.. [...] Make it force to take the children from the family. I think it is kind of violence. [Ahmad]

Another example of violence that respondents report as a new kind of violence they encountered in Sweden concerns the system for deciding on residence permits. Ali retells the immigration fate of a friend, concluding that losing one's residence permit and having to leave Sweden under duress in fact constitutes a kind of violence perpetrated by the state.

Because they had three years of their life and they learned the society the culture. they tried to adapt themselves to the society. Maybe they found work here. But now you understand you have to go. You destroy all their thoughts or all their future. [...] So this can be an example of violence. [Ali]

The respondents are aware of that violence is not accepted in Sweden and is socially regarded in negative terms. They note that people in Sweden do however perpetrate violence under cover of kind words or hypocritical words. Ali describes this hidden violence as having “masks”.

People I think tried to not be aggressive. They want to show themselves peaceful but sometimes they have masks. We don't know what there is inside of them. Violence have another definition here compared to my country [...] You do not think about violence anymore. [...] but the only thing that can make difference is discrimination between different genders or languages. [Ali]

They also compare violence here with their previous experiences of it, especially during times of war. Their past experiences in their home country have made their “perspective of violence grow larger”, meaning also that they may in some ways have desensitized to some forms of violence. Both Jolen and Ahmad talk about this:

when two people fight over at parking space maybe I don't count that as violence. [...] I feel it's a simple fight, like just life.

—Interviewer; Why do you think fighting is not violence now? [...]

Maybe that my perspective of violence grew larger and larger in me. Now back home I call it compared to the larger perspective. It's small now. [...] if a Swedish people saw two people like arguing or fighting or almost like shouting or swearing at each other, they would be like "No don't do that" "we'll call the police", but for me like I'll be like. It's a simple fight. It's an everyday fight. It's okay. It's not a big deal. [...] compared to the violence in Syria. It's of course it's really sad what happens in Sweden. But it's like small compared to Syria.

[Jolen]

It's just little bit of accident or it's small. [...] it's small problem for me, but it's big (for Swedish people).

[Ahmad]

No. Not at all. I still see it. Well maybe when two people fight over at parking space maybe I don't count that as violence. I can't think a simple fight. Lots of people started fighting. I will be like sad and hope that people stop fighting. I don't wanna fight with anybody. So I feel it's a simple fight, like just life.

[Jolen]

By moving to Sweden, respondents encountered different conceptions of violence and a very different cultural atmosphere towards violence; but they also found new kinds of violence. It is notable that they are aware that their conception of violence is 'larger', more encompassing— or more precisely, involving a wider acceptance of some types of violence—on account of the war they experienced. They know very well that their comparatively high exposure to violence during the war has changed their perception of violence, and they perceive violence differently now in Sweden compared to their previous life at home, before the war turned them into refugees. They are aware of having desensitized to violence because of their exposure to far more severe violence, so that they now perceive various acts of apparent violence in Sweden as “minor” social collision.

Reasonable and Unreasonable Force

As described above, all respondents reported making various, conscious types of judgments between violent behaviour being reasonable or unreasonable. They sometimes used terms such as “positive” or “acceptable” to describe reasonable force. They also clearly make morally evaluative judgments about reasonable and unreasonable force, by considering the harshness of violence in light of the goals of violence.

Harshness

The respondents tend to perceive severe force as unreasonable force. Adel refers to his experience from a school. The government prohibited the use of sticks to punish students. He judges such a prohibition positively: not because the use of physical punishment should be ruled out per sé, but in light of there having been teachers who used more severe force than they needed to: the force used was excessive, compared to the force that would have been needed.

It's absolute good for the government to stopping the school because there are some teachers and they will never understand that children in the classroom. And they use too much violence.

[Adel]

Their judgement of the harshness of violence directly relates to the consequences that may be expected from the force that is used. When force causes severe pain, Adel for example considers the force unreasonable:

Because when you have the head one, you will cry and you will never the feeling away and still one hour or two hours. but on your hand, then the teacher hit one or two times, it will be gone after five minutes.

[Adel]

On the other hand, some respondents consider light force as reasonable force. In response to an example of a forceful action (a teacher grabbing a student's arm in order to take him outside the classroom), Ahmad states that grabbing someone's arm, being a far lighter kind of force than beating someone, is reasonable ('positive') force.

but it's positive violence. [...] but not beating him. Just take his arm and take him outside of the classroom.

[Ahmad]

Jolen—perhaps notably the only female respondent—however disagrees with accepting even light force. She sees children as vulnerable and therefore she does not perceive grabbing a student's arm as reasonable force.

If a 10 year old kid said "it's hurting me", he or she really grabbed him violently. and that's not acceptable for a 10 year old to feel the pain even if he's noisy.

[Jolen]

Overall, whether the respondents see reasonable and unreasonable force depends on the harshness of violence in combination with expected results. Severe violence is more likely to be judged unreasonable because the results are unlikely to prove positive and so merely inflict pain. As can be expected, there is variation in the judgments respondents make.

Intention

The variation in judgment can be explained by different criteria that may be used to make moral judgements. Not only the harshness of the violence itself, but also the (more or less positive) intention of the person using violence significantly matter to the moral judgement of whether force being used is reasonable or unreasonable. Some respondents judge some physical force as reasonable, given positive intentions and/or positive outcomes to be expected, and given educational purpose.

Educational purpose

Further comments may be made with respect to educational purpose specifically. The respondents justify the use of force for educational purposes, such as using force to teach children what are right or wrong things to do. Force used by teachers at school is often mentioned by respondents in examples of reasonable force. Adel said:

But when the teachers be angry you will change the way for talking. Maybe high voice or maybe sometimes use bad words. It is violence exactly. But you need to use it because if he never use it, he never organize classroom. [...] They are not hitting you to let you harm. It only for let you good.

[Adel]

Ahmad talks about one day when his father hit him, after taking home poor test results from school. He perceives the force as reasonable, because his father's intention was positive: to push him into studying more, so that he would receive a good education.

Because it's to push me to continue and study more. I see it now as a result. Because now I have the good education, I mean high education. I see in the results so I think it's positive. I thank him. [...] It's the kind of education.

[Ahmad]

Ali also discusses his childhood and his father. He is the only respondent who categorically denies the very possibility of reasonable force. He insists there is no violence that can be justified or considered necessary. He does however hang on to the term "punishment" as non-violence / acceptable force. (for the distinction, see Fig.1 & 2).

Because violence will give us a bad feeling or something. But sometimes bad feeling is right. I mean that's a punishment. You did something wrong. Your parents punish you. But violence gives you unreasonable bad feeling. there is no reason to feel bad.

[Ali]

Ali opposes the use of force when it merely makes one feel bad—more precisely, when a corrective intention (a positive outcome) is not readily accessible, even when such good intention may be induced afterwards. He forgives his father's punishments out of love for him:

But yeah I don't forget but I forgive for my father. [...] but that doesn't mean what he did was right. It was wrong, but I forgive him because I love him.

[Ali]

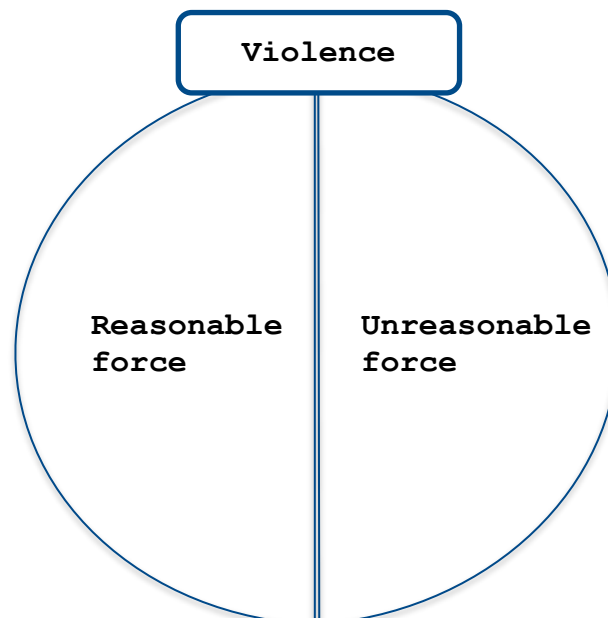


Figure 1. Description of violence with reasonable and unreasonable force

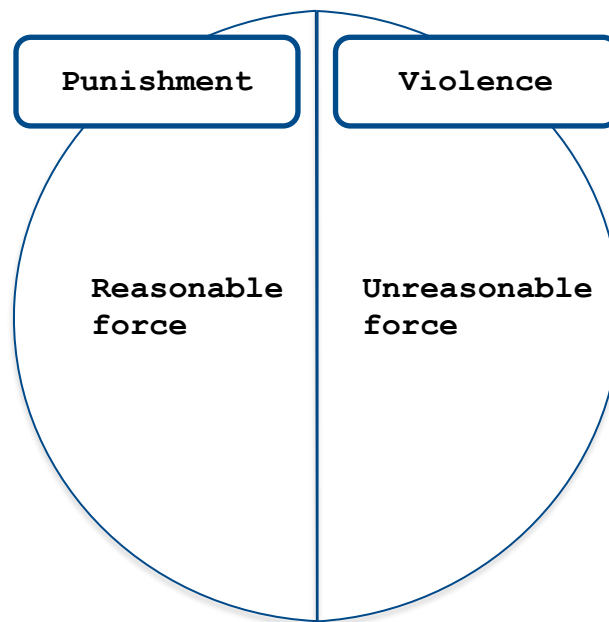


Figure 2. Description of violence and punishment with reasonable and unreasonable force by Ali

In short, all but one respondent regard some ‘instructive force’ used by teachers or parents as reasonable force given its positive intention. Although they justify the force, most of the respondents do conceive reasonable force as acts of violence. Ali insists that reasonable force can be punishment, and that punishment does not equate with violence. It should be noted that respondents often mention “respect” and “love” when talking of their parents and teachers. Their parents and teachers are clearly a special category of people, who provide instruction and love—in short, who nurture. They therefore tend to conceive of violence as reasonable force mostly within the narrow confines of nurture and acting in children’s best interests.

Protecting

By far the most common reasonable force that the respondents talk about force used is in self-defence. The respondents quite spontaneously start talk about force being justified when protecting themselves or others.

You need to use with the violence because you want to stay life.

[Adel]

it's need positive violence to protect yourself.

[Ahmad]

*I think that's going to be that's like justified violence because that's going to be trying to protect his family.
[...] Reasonable when your intention to be protecting somebody or yourself.*

[Jeje]

Some respondents focus on the amount of force that is reasonable to protect themselves or others. Their concern is that no greater amount of force should be used than needed to protect oneself and others. In response to the interviewer citing an example of violence, Ali says:

Of course it is violence. But 20 year-old did violence and another one tried to save himself. he also did but the lower percentage than the men who did violence. This person is responsibility, the 20 years old

[Ali]

Depends on the harshness of violence and the goals of violence, respondents make morally evaluative judgments about reasonable and unreasonable force. They tend to justify violence when violence causes only light effect and have positive intention as a part of education or self-defence.

Adjustment of Conception of Violence in Sweden

As respondents moved to Sweden, they discover different acceptance and prevalence of violence in Sweden. The interviews suggest that they all actively try to adjust their conception of violence to Swedish context, but at the same time, they report facing confusion during the time of adjustment. They see conflict between their original culture and the new host culture in terms of both the definition and the acceptance of violence. What is violence, and more precisely, what is reasonable force in a Swedish context, sometimes comes across as objectionable or unconvincing to a lesser or greater extent from their particular perspective.

Attitude

In terms of violence, they are of course grateful that they were able to leave their country and instead be welcomed in Sweden. They all see Sweden as a peaceful and safe country. Most of the respondents found what they were looking for in Sweden, also in terms of the far lower prevalence of violence.

I feel good. I'm so much happier because I don't feel walking and I will lost myself (being hit, etc).

[Adel]

It is more like generally better. People and social situation. But generally it's better because I didn't see any violence in front of me

[Ahmad]

I just like the people you feel like they are super peaceful and super calm. [...] in Sweden, because like it's so quiet and so peaceful.

[Jeje]

They appreciate their new life in Sweden and see it as a second, very welcome opportunity. Both Jeje and Ali describe Sweden as their home and in terms of (re)birth.

If I was not sure about Sweden, I wouldn't think about having a baby here. Now I feel like yeah this is going to be my home.

[Jeje]

I think it's a big blessing. That's great. I think that's one of the fortunately in my life was being in Sweden. [...] I will describe these changes as a new life. I'm born again.

[Ali]

As they discover differences from their traditional culture, they start to actively change themselves. Changing themselves and accepting their new environment and culture are reported by Ali and Ahmad as a key factor in adjusting well to life in Sweden.

I come to this book because our traditions of culture is completely different with this culture that we are now. And I have two choices to say no to this new culture or say yes to this world and I said Yes I come to this world. I became like completely I tried to keep all things for my my past and throw away bad things.

[Ali]

there is big difference between Syrian culture and Swedish culture. But we live here so we should follow the rules here.

[Ahmad]

I started to study about other countries nationalities. So I tried to not change the society because I am new comer here. So I started to change myself. Not really strongly but I tried.

[Ali]

In general terms, immigration into Sweden is perceived positively by most of the respondents. They of course welcome the overall peacefulness of Sweden, including its low prevalence of and tolerance for violence. Although they spot sometimes major differences from their home culture, they push themselves into accepting the new ideas and habits they encounter in Sweden.

Confusion

While getting used to conceptions of violence predominating in Sweden, respondents often find confusion or conflict between their original beliefs and new ideas from Sweden. Adel talks about the experience of one of his friends, who worked at a Swedish school. This friend was suspended from work, on suspicion of using violence against children. Adel says that the friend patted a student on the shoulder saying, “don’t do that”, because the student was showing his bottom repeatedly. According to Adel, the teacher did nothing wrong and had not at all been violent, acting correctly and correctively towards a child who was repeatedly misbehaving.

The child didn't do any good. The teacher didn't do violence. absolutely not. If the teacher do “Don't do that (with patting one shoulder with his hand)”, it is not violence.

[Adel]

Adel loves children and has himself experience of working as a teacher, before migrating to Sweden. He was therefore considering to be a teacher in Sweden, but this story has given him quite a shock. He has now started to worry about working as a teacher in Sweden.

I'm scared to be a teacher here in Sweden. because you know sometimes you need to use the violence but in a good way. the child maybe we're seen as a bad kid say to a teacher like bra bra bra. government will never believe teacher, they will believe the child. That's why I think it's hard thing.

[Adel]

Adel is therefore highly aware of different conceptions of violence that apply within a context of disagreement about good child pedagogy, and is not at all sure that Sweden has things right. He also talks about something he saw in a supermarket in Sweden, to show how different Syria and Sweden are.

You don't have an idea how for example how the child is listening to his dad or his mom. Because sometimes when I was in a supermarket, I saw a woman with her child. the child tried to hit his mom and she doesn't say anything. She just tried to catch him. But I got upset if I had my mom maybe another woman come to me and hit me because we know it's my mom.... But here so much different.

[Adel]

He was surprised by seeing a child hit a mother and how she reacts to the child's behavior. Swedish parenting style and children's (bad) behavior towards their parents apparently often being tolerated without much corrective response are different from how Adel sees his original culture. He says that he does not know how to parent children without violence, but does himself come up with alternative ways of parenting.

I will never give you for example the money for one week. Or ice cream and you will start to think about "wow ice cream for one week". Absolute not. I will do what you want.

[Adel]

Jeje also expresses her worries about parenting. She reflects on her mother's parenting style and criticizes it as "torture". She is wondering how she can raise children in Sweden in her own way, not like her mother.

my mom used to stop talking to us to stop talking. I feel like this is like harder than if she hit me or something like this. it is like...torture. yeah. it's really hurt me like "she's not talking to me." [...] I don't know. I don't know how I'm going to.

[Jeje]

What are considered the right and wrong things to do can depend on culture. Differences in violence that were generated through their upbringing in another place, time and context and their present life in Sweden bring confusion, in these respondents' accounts, most clearly in relation to parenting.

Applicability of Berry's acculturation Theory

As will be discussed in the remainder of this chapter, Berry's acculturation theory does explain to some extent the complex acculturation process that the interviewees underwent, or continue to undergo. This fit seems to apply to all of the three main parts of the theory: network of relationship, power relation and degree of acculturation.

It should be however be noted at outset that acculturation also involves resistance of a kind less well covered by the theory: 'acculturation' is not a smooth ride without bumps, nor is it likely to reach a perfect end state. As all respondents are very well aware, underneath the acculturation process lies a kind of deeper threat: in order to be successful and safe in Sweden, respondents *have no choice but* to conform to Swedish norms, in spite of facing, in their own minds, sometimes

considerable or even insurmountable disagreement or confusion with respect to some cherished beliefs or habits—for example about child rearing—that they may consider worthy, valuable or even superior, and which they may have to abandon, regardless.

Network of Relationship

The process of acculturation can greatly differ, depending on the network of relationships between groups and individuals. According to Berry (2017), the reasons for moving and the period of living in one and another place are likely to prove the foremost factors explaining acculturation differences.

In relation to their reasons for moving and the role of violence in those, the hopes of respondents are of course positively related to what they can expect to find in Sweden. All respondents had to move to Sweden because they felt danger in their country, as war brought severe threats of violence to their family, friends or themselves. For all respondents, including Adel, Ali and Jolen, the primary reason for migrating to Sweden was escaping from violence, and protecting themselves.

You don't... you don't feel yourself is safe (in Syria). That's why I feel here.

[Adel]

I got politic problem in my country. [...] it will not be able to live there. So some of them leave there. The government catch them and put them in a jail. Sometimes execute people so people choose to leave the country.

[Ali]

But when the war started you hear like 500 people died or like 50 people died or 100 people died and we lost friends.

[Jolen]

However, they also do note that they did lead perfectly peaceful lives in their country before the war. Their way of reacting to violence has changed because of war. Before the war, they reacted to violence as sensitively as Swedish people might, and also perceived social problems much the same as is common in Sweden.

it was so good before the war. But everything has changed after the war. Because we saw many things.

[Ahmad]

before (the war), it was a big deal those type of stuff was a big deal in Syria too. [...] I think there's a school girls who drowned and because we talked about it a lot. [...] Like everybody in the country knew about it.

[Jolen]

Because they lived peaceful lives before war started and sought escape from violence, they welcome Swedish peaceful society with its low prevalence of and tolerance for violence. On the other hand, Adel, who expresses his confusion with Swedish conceptions of violence, is hesitant about living in Sweden into the future. He finds substantial and jarring disagreement and confusion between his personal beliefs and Swedish culture.

I don't know how are they doing with them. You don't have an idea how for example how the child is listening to his dad or his mom. [...] here so much different. I want to have my family but I am scaring off my child. [...] That's why I don't want a family here.

[Adel]

Although the respondents migrated involuntarily (being forced to seek refuge from war), all but Adel welcome their new Swedish context as a positive spur to build new lives. Their previous life before the war is described as peaceful period with light kinds of violence and low prevalence of violence in the society. The Swedish context is perceived as similar to that pre-war life, to some extent: in so many words, the absence of war unites their former life with their new life in Sweden and levels differences. However, a case can also be made for *negative* interaction between successful adjustment and length of time spent in acculturation, given the difficulties that Adel is experiencing in adjusting himself to Sweden, wondering whether Sweden may not be the place for him.

Power relation

Political power, in the form for example of a legal framework, significantly contributes to the process of acculturation (Berry (2017)). Unlike respondents' home countries, violence is legally ruled out in pretty much all forms in Sweden—except what public force is required to enforce law and order—including corporal punishment and abuse. All respondents are aware of the prohibition of violence by law in Sweden and, as described previously, they try to change themselves to adjust to Swedish law (see Attitude).

I mean just discover the differences between Syria and Sweden. This is bad violence and this is force.

[Ahmad]

because like here if like they respect the law and they respect like what's should be done what shouldn't be done legally. [...] When I moved to Sweden and I know that's like this is a horrible thing to do. So I think it's like it's really big thing to think about.

[Jeje]

On respondent states that consequence to their action or behavior is clear because of the developed legal framework.

In Syria, you know maybe you were walking, you have too much trouble, maybe it's open or maybe it's close. but in Sweden, too much better you know everything and you had the law and you have to follow the law.

[Adel]

Two respondents describe the difference between Sweden and their home country by using “line”. They state that the acceptance of violence in Sweden is much lower than in their home country.

There is like stuff over the line and Syria is way over the line.

Interviewer; What do you mean by line?

What is allowed and what is not allowed.

[Jeje]

in my country, if I do violence, it is violence but people think like it's not much. I told you the line is high. Here in Sweden, it would be big things.

[Adel]

The strong Swedish legal framework seems to contribute to building up their trust in Swedish society. Jeje talks of reporting a neighbourly row to police in Sweden. The police treated her report with a level of strict confidentiality that improved Jeje's trust of Swedish society in general.

I think you can trust them more because like you know when we when I told you about we called the police and stuff. They the police that the people who lived upstairs. They ask the police who called you but they didn't say.

[Jeje]

She states that her action could have caused her trouble in her home country, since the police there might well have leaked her identity.

if I was maybe in Syria and I called the police for these people maybe something they're going to do us some troubles.

[Jeje]

Both Jeje and Ali say they could not trust their government, and they had to give up trying to change or improve the situation in their country.

No one's going to do anything except like the people who can help each other not the government.

[Jeje]

In my country, you know, we accept that. Okay. There is no way. So just accepts that. here, there is discrimination but they want to take it away.

[Ali]

They therefore recognise that the strong Swedish legal system and subscription to it by Swedish people themselves 'draws a clear line' across what is legal and illegal, unlike in their home country. The widespread respect they see in their new country for a strong legal system thus makes them able to be more trusting of Swedish society as a whole.

Degree of Acculturation

Integration

As Berry (2017) described, respondents' behavior and their attitude towards violent behavior were reconstructed by interacting with those in their new host society. Respondents become aware of differences and similarities by talking to other people and observing people going about their daily lives. As Adel puts it:

I didn't see the violence in my eyes here. but uh I saw some people for example and I heard some stories. That's why I started to know the different between Sweden and Syria.

[Adel]

Ali changed his ideas about homosexuality after moving to Sweden. In his home country, he had a discriminating attitude toward gay people. However, meeting new people in Sweden with very different ideas led to him questioning himself, and he started to perceive gay people in a different way. Ali says that you have to love them for the people they are:

I was thinking like very bad. But it changed. They are people. You have to love them. they are individuals. the have a personality, family, everything. so I could that I could see them but before I was like no no, they are bad. But no, they are actually good people as us. [...] I needed to talk with friends about it to understand the better.

[Ali]

Integrating with other (kinds of) people in a new society is clearly a key factor to acculturating successfully. Integration provides opportunities for them to link the low prevalence of violence also to the discrimination of some people, and so bring new judgment and new levels of opening up to others.

Positive Intercultural Relationship or Conformity

Acculturation theory recognises two levels of psychological acculturation; a superficial level, such as changing clothes, and a deeper level, such as changing identity. When it comes to this deeper level of acculturation, people can often experience considerable anxiety or confusion (Jankowski et al., 2018). Berry notes that the focus of intercultural acculturation is “the achievement of positive intercultural relationships” and “the acceptance of a multicultural ideology” (Berry, 2017). However, my respondents report facing confusion because of the very different culture they are in causing strong feelings of disagreement. In the end of the interview, two respondents mention about the culture difference and claim respects or understanding towards their culture.

But you should to know the difference between this culture and this culture. There is a big difference between cultures in terms of violence. like... education.

[Abmad]

I think the violence sometimes is coming with the tradition. [...] every country has a special tradition. Not same with other country. And sometimes the violence need to do some violence. for example you ask me too much about the school something like that. And it's normal. because the children, they didn't respect teacher.

[Adel]

Far from ‘achieving’ intercultural relationships or ‘accepting’ a multicultural ideology, they are left with no choice but to abandon matters that they may feel personally attached to, or strongly about. They simply need to change their opinion regardless their personal beliefs and convictions, if they are to avoid putting their residence in Sweden at risk. There is little sign of harmony there, and far greater sign of a hard struggle to submit to ideas, habits and beliefs they may deem inferior and even as a betrayal of their own (rich, and values-laden) cultural background.

there are big difference between Syrian culture and Swedish culture. But we live here so we should follow the rules here. [...] here no I didn't find any respect with the brothers within the family. And it's so much different. When I'm talking about my tradition, you might be laughing.

[Adel]

I changed by myself because I came from that environment and I had these discriminating attitudes. So when I came I started to change as a person.

[Ali]

They came to Sweden as individuals and are bound to become treated as members of minority groups with low social status. Consequently, they feel grave social pressure to change themselves. As Adel heard his friend's suspension from the school, they are highly aware of the likely consequences of disobeying Swedish social imperatives especially in relation to their beliefs about using reasonable force, given that force is forbidden by law.

I'm scaring. Because maybe I will do something tradition from my country for my child, and they would say "it's violence" but for me no. it's not violence because if I left him what he want to do, It will be problem in the future.

[Adel]

They feel little respect is given by Swedish people to the cultural assets and values they bring with them, and which they personally hold in high esteem. In this sense, the process of acculturation can feel identity-undermining, and too full of conflict to be described as "positive" or bringing "acceptance". Being aware of the different acceptance and prevalence of violence in Sweden and not wishing to risk their future, the respondents I interviewed therefore do try hard to conform to the standards of Swedish society, rather than maintain their original culture—there is however little room here for the 'multi'culturalism and 'inter'cultural relationships noted in acculturation theory; the process seems instead pretty much one-way.

Chapter 6: Discussion

In this chapter, findings from this study are discussed by answering to the research questions as well as referring to prior studies which described in the literature review. Conclusions were drawn to summarize the research purpose, procedures, and findings and also describe the limitations of the study and recommendations for future studies.

Question 1; What Behaviours Do Young Adult Refugees Define as Violence?

The first question in this study sought to determine their perceived definition of violence. As mentioned in the literature review, there is a variety of definitions of violence from narrowly restrictive definitions to broadly extensive ones. With respect to the first research question, it was found that, in a general sense, young adult refugees tend to have extensive definitions of violence. It was also recognized the diversity on the conception of violence among refugees rather than intercultural diversity cultural as previous studies show. The findings also support the significant influence of environment to conception of violence as shown in the previous studies.

The current study found that young adult refugees perceive violence as a negative term and have a generally inclusive definition of violence. In the beginning of the interview, they tend to define all kinds of forces cause discomfort as violence. This result may be explained by that people think they should be free from discomfort, as Spierenburg (2008) states. When they describe what is violence from their perspective, they refer to their previous experience, such as being witness to killing, and strongly express disagreement with the use of violence.

Another notable finding is the considerable variation in the definition of violence reported. It is however consistent with data obtained in previous studies, which also notes the fluidity of individual conception. As shown in the studies by Beverly M. Black et al. (2009) and Rees and Pease (2007), people can perceive the same behaviour differently, even when from the same culture. Four out of five respondents came from same country and are close in age, but they express different definition of violence. In addition, their acceptance of violence varied with their individual beliefs. Although some of them express a positive attitude towards and agree with the use of violence by parents and teachers, others express a negative attitude toward these kinds of violence, even though the majority came from the same country. In contrast to earlier findings which shows refugees' wide acceptance of violence (Eileen Pittaway, 2018; Howard et al., 2002; James, 2010; Rees & Pease, 2007; Zannettino, 2012), acceptance varies considerably among the respondents of this study.

Their definition of violence also changes depending on the period they talk about; before the war, during the war and in Sweden. Consistent with the literature, this study found that their perceptions of violence are influenced by their social environment: by "norm system, own experience, and by ongoing public debates" (Byrskog et al., 2015). Before the war, they were exposed to light kinds of violence such as hitting, mainly from their teachers and parents. Out of their respect towards older people, they do not define such force as violence. They describe these light kinds of violence as "just small" or "nothing" action. In addition, they seem to blame themselves and express some type of forgiveness toward the perpetrator instead of criticizing the violence by them. This accords with findings reported by Skårdalsmo Bjørge and Jensen (2015). On the other hand, after the war started, suddenly the kinds of violence they were exposed to became much more severe, such as killing. It was very interesting that one respondent describes

the change of conception as “perspective of violence grow larger”. They were *desensitized* to violence, by their exposure to severe kinds of violence.

When they came to Sweden, where explicitly and generally people do not accept violence, their desensitized perspective can bring them to see violence as a “small” accident. These results match those observed in earlier studies by (Griffin et al., 1999; Howard et al., 2002; Skårdalsmo Bjørgo & Jensen, 2015; Vaughn et al., 2015). On the other words, the finding is contrary to a previous study that has suggested that there is no correlation between exposure to violence and acceptance of violence (Beverly M. Black et al. (2009). In line with the environment which they are exposed to, more precisely depending on the prevalence of violence in that environment, their conceptions of violence changed over time.

Question 2; How Do They Distinguish Between Reasonable and Unreasonable Force?

The second question was designed to determine their distinguish between reasonable and unreasonable force. Although some studies related to violence and refugees do offer some insight to the question, very little attention has been paid to the distinguish in the previous studies. Unsurprisingly, most of the respondents express that there are reasonable forces which can be justified under some circumstances. There are the variation and ambiguity in the definition of violence and they perceive force as reasonable depends on the harshness and intention of the action.

As Law (2018) states, distinguish between reasonable and unreasonable force refers to the amount of force in combination with expected results. Light amount of force is more likely to be recognized as reasonable force, while heavy amount of force tends to be recognized as unreasonable because the results are unlikely to prove positive and inflict serious pain. Not only the harshness of the force itself, the necessity amount of force also relates to their distinguish. When people conduct force more severe than they needed to, the force is perceived as unreasonable even the amount of force itself is light compared to other kinds of violence.

As the definition of violence by WHO (Etienne G. Krug, 2002), the intention of violence in light of the moral judgement was one of the important factor to distinguish reasonable and unreasonable. They sometimes define force as reasonable force when the person conducts the act without intention to harming or causing discomfort in some way. Consistent with the literature by Bäck (2004) who suggested that “violence” relates to moral judgement in addition to the intentional act “aggression”, they distinguish reasonable or unreasonable force considering what is right and wrong things to do from their perspective. For example, “respecting older people” is one of very important component of their original culture as they repeatedly state “respect culture” during the interviews. Disrespecting older people would be very disapproved behaviour in their original culture. According to their culture, it is right to respect older people and wrong to disrespect them. Therefore, when teachers or parents use some kinds of violence due to their fault, they tends to be justified and accepted as a morally ‘right’ act since it is a mean of discipline from their perspective. As Lee et al. (2004) say, what is ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ is different among people and cultures. In keeping with their individual moral judgements and background cultures, the respondents all define reasonable and unreasonable force differently.

Question 3; To What Extent, In Their Own View, Did Their Understanding of Violence Adjust, Following Migration into Sweden?

The third question in this research asked how their understanding of violence adjusted following migration into Sweden.

One of the changes on their understanding of violence was social attitude towards handling violence and domestic laws that prohibits violence have significant influence on their adjustment as consistent with findings by Rees and Pease (2007) and Eileen Pittaway (2018). While they live in Sweden where has built up networks and systems to deal with violence as the whole society, they discovered that violence is something should be tacked at social level. For example, there is not social services that work for the protection of people who suffer from violence in their county. On the other hand, if people suspect domestic abuse in Sweden, they can call police instead of talking to the suspected person directly as Jeje actually experienced in Sweden. The developed system in the society seems to relates to their trust to society. In the untrustworthy government, it is difficult to call the police and expect them to deal with the problem. Because people have constant trust to society, they can report the suspected abuse without worrying about leaking their identity and facing with problems with neighborhood.

Consistent with the finding from the study by Byrskog et al. (2016), migrating to Sweden provided them opportunities to rethink about violence and make judgement according to what they learned from their previous life and also from the new life in Sweden. As positively accepting peaceful life in Sweden with low prevalence of violence, they get more negative attitude and criticize violence. This finding corroborates the ideas of several studies such as by Renzaho and Vignjevic (2011), Segal (2000) and Eileen Pittaway (2018) who suggested that people start to have negative attitude and criticize violence by if they surrounded by more peaceful environment which do not accept use of violence. Although they justify some violence from their parents or teachers and express forgiveness towards them, they also state that they do not want to do same way of discipline with using violence to their children. As they discover more peaceful conception of violence in Sweden, they rethink about violence and seek what they precisely think about violence considering to what they learned from Swedish society.

The process of rethinking violence was performed as facing with some confusion between their previous beliefs and new ideas which constructed by living in Sweden. This result is consistent with data obtained in several studies (Berry, 2017; Betancourt et al., 2017; Fisher, 2013; Renzaho & Vignjevic, 2011; Timshel et al., 2017). Considering short period of migration (1.5~3.5 years), they seem to being the middle of adjustment at the time of interview. To some extent, they adjust to Swedish social norms at the same having difficulties and confusing. They express confusions especially relates to upbringing because the violence from their parents and teachers were positively perceived and often justified by respondents. People typically learn the way of upbringing by seeing and experiencing by themselves from their family. The learning process doesn't often happen in the school, take place mostly at home. Because they did not spend their childhood in Sweden, they absence the opportunity to learn Swedish way of upbringing. Because of the lack of learning opportunity for parenting without violence, they express worries how they can educate their child without violence. As Adel saw the mother and her child at supermarket in Sweden (the mother did not hit child even the child hit her) and surprised by that no one hit the child, they learn how people can raise children without children by seeing these situations during

living in Sweden. Their adjustment to Swedish social norm including parenting style took place by *learning* new knowledge in Sweden as Dewey (1897) has said "Education is a social process; education is growth; *education is not a preparation for life but is life itself*" (italics added).

Question 4; To What Extent Do They Confirm/Contradict Berry's Theory about the Individual Psychology of Acculturation?

The last question set out with the aim of assessing the applicability of Berry's acculturation theory. Berry's theory provided helpful insight to understand young adult refugees' complex acculturation process including network of relationship, power relation and degree of acculturation. However, in contrast to the Berry's theory, their acculturation involved conformity rather than ideological positive intercultural relationship.

Their process of acculturation was influenced by the network of relationships between groups and individuals. This finding is in line with Berry's theory. Before the war, they lived peaceful lives and react to violence sensitively as Swedish might. However, the war brought them to discover more severe threats of violence and they needed to leave their home country to escape from the violence. Therefore, they welcome Swedish peaceful society with its low prevalence of and tolerance for violence which lead to positive attitude for living in Sweden for long time and perceive Sweden as second home. As Berry suggests, their acculturation process was influenced by the reason for moving in the light of period of living.

Power relation in the form for example of a prohibition of violence by domestic laws contribute to the process of acculturation. This finding is consistent with Berry (2017)'s theory. All the respondents are aware of the prohibition by law and the possible penalty for breaking the law. To stay in Sweden safely, they try to change themselves and adjust to Swedish society. They can expect proper law enforcement in Sweden as one of respondent states that there is always consequence of action in Sweden. Unlike the society including the government in their home county, they perceive Swedish society as trustable in general. In addition, the prohibition of violence by law contribute to make them being aware of the unacceptability of violence in whole society.

Degree of acculturation was influenced by interacting with those in their new host society. By seeing people's behavior on the street and talking with them, young adult refugees became aware of differences between their original norms and Swedish norms. The discovery of new ideas in the new society lead to rethink about their behavior and eventually change themselves. Integrating with other people in a new society is clearly a key factor to acculturating successfully.

However, unsurprisingly, it was not easy to accept something new to them or contrary to their original believes. When they came to Sweden, they discovered how different from their original social norms and required to rethink and change their beliefs in some extent. Swedish conception of violence brings them confusion and forcing them to conform rather than prompting their own moral judgement. They were aware of that they are minority in the Swedish society and need to conform to Swedish norms by changing themselves. As the use of violence are prohibited by legal framework, it can be safe to just follow the rules even they do not agree with it instead of thinking what is actually right things to do. Berry notes that the focus of intercultural acculturation is "the achievement of positive intercultural relationships" and "the acceptance of a

multicultural ideology” (Berry, 2017). However, rather than achieving’ intercultural relationships or ‘accepting’ a multicultural ideology, they had no choice to follow Swedish norms by abandoning matters that they may feel personally attached to, or strongly beliefs about.

Conclusion

The present study was designed to assess whether and how refugees’ understanding of violence changes, in their own view, following migration, given an acculturation framework that is concerned with the individual psychology of acculturation. The focus of data collection and analysis was on the perceived moral warrant of violence, by asking how refugees distinguish between reasonable and unreasonable force; and (b) the extent to which that distinction, in their own view, has shifted following their migration into Sweden.

This study has identified ambiguity in the definition of violence among young refugees, since the respondents do not describe all force as violence and perceive violence differently depending on their life period—before the war, during the war and in Sweden—due to the different prevalence and acceptance of violence in the period.

They distinguish reasonable and unreasonable force more and less violent force and depending on the intention of violence. They tend to justify the light amount of force and some ‘instructive force’ used by teachers or parents due to the educational purpose in addition to self-defence.

Justifying some force as reasonable, especially force used for educational purpose, the respondents in this study are faced with confusion about the Swedish conception of violence as categorically unacceptable. Young adult refugees, in particular those who were exposed to violence by parents and teachers in their home country, are in process of changing their conception of violence by learning new knowledge of more peaceful norms in the host country. As they acquire new ideas in interaction with others in the new society and being aware of difference including the legal system with clear prohibition of violence, they rethink violence and reconstruct their conception of violence. Although Berry’s acculturation theory contributes to explaining the complex acculturation process that they undergo to some extent, there seems however to be little room, in practice, for the ‘multi’culturalism and ‘inter’cultural relationships noted in acculturation theory. The young adults are simply left no choice but to change their opinions or beliefs and to follow the Swedish norm, if they are to avoid putting their residence in Sweden at risk. This acting on lack of choice seems a far cry from ‘achieving’ intercultural relationships or ‘accepting’ a multicultural ideology.

The present study contributes in several ways to our understanding of young adult refugees’ conception of violence considering how they understand violence and how they change their understanding following migrate to more peaceful society. Since there has been far too little attention to the distinction between reasonable and unreasonable force, the findings shed new light on a more precise understanding of changing conceptions of violence among refugees. Deeper insight into the distinction reveal moral judgements refugees try to make of whether force being used is reasonable or unreasonable, involving both moral criteria and life experiences. In addition, this study has provided some insight into the amount of cognitive work that society in a host country imposes on refugees in terms of a different conception of violence. Not only the refugees who have been re-learning conceptions of violence in a more peaceful environment, ‘we’ too are provided opportunity to re-think “peace” in terms of violence. We can, surely, always

refuel hope of not losing our peaceful society by carefully listening to refugees' experiences and thoughts.

The major limitation of this study are the parameters of generalizability. The small sample size did not allow to generalize the findings. It is unfortunate that the literature review did not include studies written in Swedish. There is a limitation introduced by constraints on language fluency. The interviews were conducted in English, since both the respondents and the researcher herself could only communicate together in English. Considering the sensitivity of this study's topic, it is likely that respondents found it difficult to express their thoughts. In addition, there are sampling and personal bias. Because personal contacts and snow-ball sampling were used to reach the target population, the author could only reach out to a small group of people.

According to the findings from this study, the confusions they faced with in the process of acculturation were especially found in the violence at schools and home. A further study could usefully focus on the long-term effects of force used in education on people's conception of violence. In addition, this study investigated refugees who are precisely in the middle of adjustment and they undergo unsolved confusion in Sweden. More information on how they cope with their confusions in the future would help us to establish a greater degree of accuracy on this matter.

The findings of this study have a number of important implications for future practice. As they are required by domestic laws to change their behavior about violence regardless their agreement, a reasonable approach would be providing refugees with explicit opportunities to acquaint themselves with different norms in the new society, such as alternative parenting practices without violence. At the same time as spreading information to prompt refugees' understanding of Swedish cultural norms, greater efforts are needed to ensure and prompt refugees' social interactions with varied others, rather than have them stay within a group of people from the same county.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 - Information Sheet

Yuko Mori

University of Gothenburg

International Master's Programme in Educational Research

- **INTRODUCTION**

I am Yuko Mori, studying at the University of Gothenburg. I am doing research on the young refugee's understanding of violence. You receive this information because I invite you to be part of this research. You do not have to decide today whether or not you will participate in the research. Before you decide, you can talk to anyone you feel comfortable with about the research; first, take time to read the information, and feel free to discuss it with someone you know. If you do decide to take part, then register your consent by signing this document. This information sheet may contain words that you do not understand. Please ask me to stop as we go through the information together, and I will take time to explain. If you have further questions later, you can ask me.

- **TITLE**

The title of my research project is, "RE-LEARNING PEACE
Acculturation in young adult refugees' conceptions of violence following migration to Sweden".

- **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of the study is to find out whether refugees' ideas about violence change when they move to a more peaceful environment. So, I would like to hear from you whether your thinking about violence has changed since arriving in Sweden. I will invite you to tell me what the word violence means and does not mean to you. I will also ask you if you can think of examples of reasonable and unreasonable use of violence; and I will want you to tell me whether your thoughts about violence have changed after moving to Sweden.

- **PARTICIPANT SELECTION**

I invite you to take part in this study because your experience as a refugee can contribute much to what we know about changing perceptions of violence and how people adapt to more peaceful surroundings.

- **VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION**

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. You can choose whether or not to be in this study. If you join this study, you may withdraw at any time without any consequences. You may also refuse to answer any questions you do not want to answer.

- **PROCEDURES**

If you join this study, you will be asked to participate in two interviews with Yuko Mori. Your participation will be entirely anonymous: you will not be identified by your real name in the study, and instead you will be given a pseudonym. If you wish, you can choose a pseudonym yourself during the interview.

During the interview, I will sit down with you in a comfortable place at the Centre. If you prefer, the interview can also take place in your home or in a friend's home. The entire interview will be tape-recorded. Before the interviews, you will get a list of questions, but you may be asked additional questions during the interviews. Following the interview, the recorded conversation will be transcribed by myself or the interpreter, and I will send you a copy. You are welcome to make changes or add comments to the transcript. The interview transcript itself will be kept confidential, and will only be studied by myself as researcher. A year after the study is completed, the transcripts will be deleted. In the research reporting, I am likely to quote selectively from the interview transcripts, but only the pseudonyms will be used. The research report will be publicly available via the University library. If you like, I can send you a copy of the final report.

- **DURATION**

I will visit you two times for interviewing you, at two weeks interval. Each interview will take about 1-1.5 hours of your time.

- **POTENTIAL BENEFITS**

This study will not bring you direct benefits outside of the opportunity to share your views and opinions, but your participation is likely to help researchers better understand young adult refugees.

- **POTENTIAL RISKS**

This study, including the interview questions, will seek to carefully avoid any physical or emotional discomfort. However, you may share sensitive and confidential information during the interview and you may feel uncomfortable talking about some of the topics. You do not have to answer any question or take part in the interview if you don't wish to do so. You do not have to give us any reason for not responding to any question, or for refusing to take part in the interview.

Please note: If you have experienced severe or traumatic violence, and/or suffer from violence in your life at present; and especially if you are presently receiving counselling or psychiatric services of any sort, I strongly recommend that you do not join this study.

- **CONFIDENTIALITY**

All efforts will be made to ensure confidentiality. We will not be sharing information about you to anyone outside of the research team. The information that we collect from this research project will be kept private. Your name will not be part of the data collection: your interview will be anonymized and your responses will be given a pseudonym. Only I as researcher will know your name and will not share that information with anyone. All transcripts and tapes will be destroyed one year following the study's completion.

- **PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL**

You can choose whether or not to be in this study. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may stop participating in the interview at any time without consequences. You may also refuse to answer any questions you do not want to answer. I will give you an opportunity at the end of the interview to review what you have told me, and you can modify or remove parts of the transcript if you do no longer agree with what you said or if I did not understand you correctly.

- **SHARING THE RESULTS**

The knowledge that collects in this study will be shared with you before it is made available to the public via a final report (a Master's thesis) that will be stored in the university library. Each participant will receive a summary of the results. The study will be available from the university library as public download, so that others may learn from the research.

- **IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS**

If you have any questions or concerns about this research, please contact the student or supervisor.

Student: Yuko Mori, yukoooooc@gmail.com

Supervisor: Dr. Ernst Thoutenhoofd, ernst.thoutenhoofd@gu.se

Appendix 2 - Certificate of Consent

I have read the foregoing information, or it has been read to me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it and any questions I have been asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study.

Signature of Subject

Printed Name of Subject

Date

I would / would not, like to receive a copy of the final research report.

Appendix 3 - Interview Questions

Warm-up questions

1. What would you like to be called, in my study?
2. How old are you?
3. Where are you from?
4. When did you come to Sweden?
5. Why did you come to Sweden?
6. What do you think of being in Sweden, just now?
7. Do you think Sweden is peaceful?

Interview Part I - present conception

What is violence?

First, I will ask you some general questions about violence.

1. What comes to your mind when you hear the word 'violence'?
 - a. Why do you imagine/think '-----'?
 - b. ---If respondents makes no distinction, then test with examples
2. Can you give me examples of violence?
 - a. Why do you think '-----' is violence?
3. Can you describe to me what violence is?
 - a. Why do you describe violence as '-----'?
4. Do you think '-----' is violence? (several examples of violence; Swedish context)
 - a. Why do you think '-----' is violence?

How does he/she think about violence?

Now, I will ask you some more detailed questions.

5. Do you think violence is always a bad thing, or sometimes a necessary thing?
 - a. Why do you think so?
6. Do you think there is reasonable (can be justify/ fair ... but not especially good) violence?
 - a. Can you give me some example?
 - b. Why is it reasonable?
7. Do you think there is unreasonable violence?
 - a. Can you give me some example?
 - b. Why is it unreasonable?
8. What is the difference between reasonable and unreasonable violence?
 - a. Why do you think so?
9. Do you think '-----' is reasonable violence? or unreasonable violence?
 - a. Why do you think so?

Interview Part II - change

1. If you think '-----' years ago before coming to Sweden, did you think differently about violence back then?
 - a. Why do you think so?
 - b. When did you most change how you think about violence?
 - c. Which of your ideas about violence have changed?
 - d. Is there a particular reason or experience behind the change?
 - e. How do you feel about your changed ideas about violence?
 - f. Is it good change, or bad change?
 - i. Can you explain why it is good or bad?

Experience in Sweden

1. Have you encountered violence here in Sweden?
 - a. Can you tell me about it?
 - b. How did you react to it?
2. Is there anything else you want to tell me?
3. Would you like me to come see you again, if I have further questions?

Appendix 4 – Example of violence (two criminal cases in Sweden)

Example One – A force by teacher to a student in a classroom

(Bellman, 2016,07,01)

It's about teacher and student. A teacher usually teaches in grade six but had this day jumped in and held a class from a lower grade that was known to be "messy". The students in the class had an agreement with their regular teacher that they are allowed to go to the bathroom 30 minutes into a lesson. The teacher who now held the class, however, argued that there was no need any toilet break and a discussion ensued when one boy said he had to go to the bathroom. Another 10-year-old boy referred loudly to the arrangement and refused to be quiet in spite of getting told. The teacher said to the student that he was not allowed to be in the classroom anymore. But he had to leave from there, which he ignored and instead he continued to protest. The teacher took his arm and make him out from the classroom. That the boy got hurt is because he himself put up resistance and knocked over furniture, rather than the teacher causing him pain.

Example Two – Self-defence by 25 years old man

(Berggren, 2017,04,26)

At the event, a 20-year-old man died as a result of the injuries he suffered when a 25-year-old man went to counterattack with a knife after a drug deal went wrong. 25-year-old was first attacked with a knife by 20-year-old with several stabs as he sat inside the car. A few of the stabs hit the body. The knife fight continued outside in the parking lot, 25-year-old man was fighting for his life, that's why he counterattacked.