

Finland-based Immigrants' Perceptions of the Benefits from Arts in
Cultural Adaptation

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<p>Abstract</p> <p>This study uses the interview results of Finland-based immigrants who actively work with the arts. The goal is to find out their perceptions of the relationship between the arts and their adaptation into Finnish culture. Written interviews from six individuals' responses are studied using discourse analysis and thematic analysis, relating them to theories of social identity and adaptation.</p> <p>The results show many of the immigrants having encountered challenges within the local culture and community. They described worry about their ability to continue active work with arts in the country. Descriptions of past migration experiences largely related to their experiences of traits and identity. Their answers commonly described difficulty with language and socializing with locals. The benefits of arts in adaptation were described as valuable and were perceived helpful in supporting the immigrants through challenges with community-building and socializing.</p> <p>In conclusion, regardless of the perceived challenges of socialisation and culture, the interviewees described having adapted successfully. In their view, this was thanks to their artistic activities, which gave them chances to interact more with locals and become part of the local community easier.</p>	
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<p>Tiivistelmä</p> <p>Tutkimus käsittelee aktiivisesti taiteiden parissa suomessa toimivien maahanmuuttajien kirjallisia haastattelutuloksia. Tutkimuksen tarkoituksena on selvittää heidän mielipiteitään omasta taiteiden ja sopeutumisen välisestä suhteestaan Suomessa asumisensa aikana. Haastatteluihin otti osaa kuusi taiteilijaa, ja vastauksia tutkittiin diskurssianalyysin ja teema-analyysin avulla. Tuloksia verrattiin teorioihin, jotka keskittyvät sosiaaliseen identiteettiin ja sopeutumiseen.</p> <p>Tuloksista selviää, että moni haastatelluista maahanmuuttajista on kohdannut haasteita paikallisessa kulttuurissa ja yhteisössä. Monet haastateltavista kertoivat huolehtineensa mahdollisuksistaan jatkaa aktiivista taiteiden tekoa Suomessa. Aiempia kokemuksia muutosta Suomen ulkopuolisiin maihin kuvailtiin mahdolliseksi johtimeksi heidän nykyisiin identiteetteihinsä ja piirteisiinsä. Haastateltavien vastaukset käsittelivät suurelta osin vaikeutta kielen ja paikallisessa yhteisössä sosialisoinnin kanssa. Taiteiden hyödyt sopeutumisessa tulivat esiin arvokkaina heidän kuvauksissaan. Lisäksi taiteiden kerrottiin auttaneen heitä yhteisön ja sosialisoinnin haasteissa.</p> <p>Lopuksi näyttää, että sosialisoinnin ja kulttuurin koetuista haasteista huolimatta haastateltavat kuvailivat sopeutuneensa onnistuneesti Suomeen. Heidän mukaansa se johtui heidän luovasta työstään, sillä se antoi heille mahdollisuuden olla useammin tekemisissä paikallisten kanssa. Tämän seurauksena heidän oli helpompi tulla osaksi paikallista yhteisöä.</p>	
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1 INTRODUCTION

The term “immigrant artist” is a very controversial term, discussed among artists and researchers alike. Artists who have moved to Finland from abroad often comment about feeling as though it is tying them down. According to these artists, the term is not appropriate in long-term use, because they are trying to work as professionals in the country rather than parts of an outsider group. (Karhunen, 2013).

Immigration between countries is a common phenomenon around the world, as moving across borders has become more visible with every passing year, with improved transportation helping people keep in contact with others across nations at any time. As well as that, conflicts around the world have forced people to flee and move abroad to seek for better life situations and safer environments. Many of these people have come to Europe for shelter from far away. While immigration is not a new phenomenon, its visibility has made it into a large crisis especially in social media, where people are able to freely and publicly write strong opinions on it.

Finland, among other European countries, is commonly chosen for immigration. While it is not the country with the highest proportionate number of immigrants, it is a part of the EU, and therefore many refugees and immigrants enter the country among other EU countries. They work hard to adapt into the local culture and environment to start a life for themselves and their families here. Voluntary immigrants seek out Finland commonly due to its Nordic nature and advanced school system, so it is not uncommon to encounter many immigrants across the country. While the people born and raised in Finland often imagine an immigrant to have a different culture and national experience from themselves, it is only part of the truth. Immigration can happen across one border, or across whole continents. The differences in cultures are not strictly based on national borders.

This study is conducted to examine the processes and influences of building into one's personal identity in order to adapt culturally to a new environment and upholding one's physical and mental well-being. It is examined through the use of various forms of arts and performance. The intention of this research is to find answers by interviewing artists who moved to Finland and continued to work with the arts here. The purpose is to ask for experiences on their own adaptation processes and use their responses to compile a thematic discussion, which draws on the chosen theoretical framework. The specific niche was chosen in hopes of raising awareness of immigrant support projects, hopefully to focus more resources on a variety of choices in creative programs in Finland.

The research aim focuses on finding out the interviewees' perceptions of whether art and performance activities have benefits on the adaptation process and on the well-being of people moving into Finland. The interviews aim to find out the largest difficulties immigrants have in Finland, and how creative projects can help them lessen the stress of adaptation. Most of the interviewees were voluntary immigrants, as it was a challenge to contact involuntary immigrants for interview purposes. The main research question is: How do Finland-based immigrants describe the relationship between their artistic activities and their adaptation in Finland?

The importance of focusing on language and social skills among other functional aspects of the immigration process is evident. Many of the official support functions for immigrants concentrate on these aspects, according to the ministry of economic affairs and employment in Finland (2019). It also means that the more creative options that are supportive of personality and individual traits, may be overlooked in favour of the more community-serving options. Right now, the favoured options help immigrants in becoming 'productive' and 'useful' for the society. In this study I want to put emphasis on how it would benefit immigrants' well-being and health during adaptation, if they were able to focus on creativity in

addition to functionality, while becoming a part of the local community. I argue that people require support in building their own identities and expressing themselves in their new environment, because it may help them achieve a stronger feeling of belonging into the new society.

If they wish so, through making creative works visible to others, artists can show their audience what they associate with their own identity. Alternatively, they can express what they associate with their life before migration. As seen in some of the background material of this study, immigrants do not want to forever be seen by the locals as just “the immigrant artist” (Karhunen, 2013). It is not required that all immigrants be artists by trade, but art can potentially help immigrants learn to express themselves and take care of their well-being. A quote from Cherbo, Stewart and Wyszomirski (2010) sums up a part of this reasoning quite effectively.

“The arts, along with religion (Portes et al., 2006), are the principal cultural forms to which migrants appeal. Indeed, in the variety of roles they play for men and women adapting to a new life, the arts are the Swiss army knife of immigrant culture, suitable for many purposes.” (Cherbo, Stewart, Wyszomirski, 2010)

To follow this quote, while art and other creative forms are suitable for immigrants, they are also invaluable for other people. Creative projects, whether individual or group efforts, may have benefits for life management. The topic has been explored in a review of creative activity studies by Bungay, Munn-Giddings, Boyce and Wilson (2014). For example, art and performance can easily be turned into group interaction. In such a situation, people may interact and bond with each other while taking part in the activity, creating their own communities. Through the activity, they can create a sense of togetherness. I argue that if the Finnish communities and the immigration support providers acknowledge the need for more

creative acts for individuals who still lie in the middle of their adaptation processes, the creative and functional sides of support could work together and create something more effective.

Additionally, it is important that refugees and immigrants can give their messages without the influence of the mainstream Finnish media. The media can even unconsciously alter the audience's perceptions of the information and statistics, through specific news language and biased editing (Best, 2012). People can base their ideas on the information on the headline, which is limited due to a maximum length. There even exists a website dedicated for notes of inaccuracies in the media, www.aim.org.

Personally, I have often come across discussions on how *vent art* helps smooth moments of strong feelings into something easier to grasp and move forward from. Through the practice of giving themselves a creative task of making art, people can keep busy and then feel good having created something they can later come back to. Perhaps they can show the works to others for a positive response. In adaptation, strong, varied emotions and stress are often present, and it is important to have some way of processing them without being overwhelmed by emotion.

2 PRIMARY AIM OF THE STUDY

This study is conducted to argue for benefits of the arts in adaptation. The reason for such a study is in the need of creative support for immigrants in Finland. The primary aim of this study is to find answers for the following research question: how do immigrants in Finland describe the relationship between their artistic activities and adaptation into the local culture? As a secondary aim, this study also seeks to examine how their answers support or contradict the theory, and what creative programs exist in Finland already. The purpose of the secondary aim is to see how the existing programs can be improved upon. There are many studies of art's effects on well-being for the Finnish population in general, but this study focuses on their effect specifically on immigrant adaptation in Finland.

This study focuses on Finland because the topic of arts and culture in projects of well-being and adaptation have grown largely in the past years. Therefore it is a very timely topic in the country. While Finland is not the top country in terms of proportional immigration, it is home to many immigrants, and they deserve to be paid attention to. Making their adaptation easier and giving them more options in activities and community building is by no means a wasted effort.

While adaptation matters to more than just professional artists, they were chosen for interviews mainly because they were easier for an individual student to find and contact. Secondly, they were chosen because they were especially active with the arts and other creative projects during their migration and adaptation process. Their experiences and perceptions are by no means meant to be generalized as the entire immigrant population's representative opinions. Hopefully this study has an effect on the lives of future immigrants and gives insight on the relationship of well-being and active creativity, for the local people of Finland. They may have a hand in forming the future acts of support for their new countrymen and women.

3 DEFINITIONS

3.1 Definition of immigration

Immigration is the action of moving to another country, and immigrants are people of all ages and status standings. They can be, for example, children, students, working adults, disabled people, or elderly people. There are voluntary immigrants, who move searching for work, with their family, or simply after a change of scenery, and build a life in the new country of their own will. There are also involuntary immigrants, whose move has been forced by something, such as conflicts in their home country or lack of safety in their home. Such a person can also be called a an asylum seeker. If they are accepted by the country of arrival, they will receive a residence permit and the status of a refugee. (Finnish immigration service, 2012.)

This study is built on the concept of immigration as an action tied strongly to identity, culture, and potential changes in individual self-image. Immigration does not necessarily change a person completely, but this study is based on the idea that it brings some changes to one's point of view. Based on the official immigration service's information, this study also bases its point of view on the vision that language, healthcare support and work possibilities are key factors in the successful adaptation and well-being of immigrants in Finland (Finnish immigration service, 2012). Therefore, much of the theory and research focuses on language, well-being and work functionality as well.

3.2 Definition of identity

Oyserman, Elmore and Smith (2012) define the identity of a person as something that can come from the past or be formed in the present. They define it as a compilation of traits, social relations, and roles one takes part in. Together these pieces form an identity of one person. The traits can be small preferences in food or fashion choices, or larger, such as race or religion. Identity is built on concepts of the self, through self-image and the perception of others.

Based on the person's self-image, they determine their choices in daily life, forming a visible identity for others to perceive. However, Oyserman, Elmore and Smith (2012) also describe that choices which fit the identity in one situation may not fit in another situation. In a different situation they would make another choice. This makes people's identities and self-images flexible, helping them better adjust to new situations. While according to Oyserman, Elmore and Smith (2012) identity is formed through exploration and commitment, they state that it is also synonymous with self-concept in many sources of identity research. According to them, the identity of a person involves personal values, morals, goals and specific behaviour for the person. They note that many sources see identity as closely related to the in-group traits. However, they seem to hold the view that social identity does not hold so much importance with in-group definitions outside of the group knowledge and status within the group. (Oyserman, Elmore, Smith, 2012.)

4 BACKGROUND OF IMMIGRANT SUPPORT

To argue for a need for more creativity and individuality-based social support in Finland, first it is necessary to know more about the way things are right now. Organizations that focus on boosting people's wellbeing through art in daily life and the workplace already exist, but are they enough? How can the field be improved upon? For coming up with new ideas, one must first learn the current situation and then pull it apart for examination and improvement. The following view into existing programs and projects is a small slice of the Finnish immigrant support.

4.1 Official immigrant support in Finland

In Finland, it is mandatory for the social support system to provide immigrants with help for everyday life and housing, as well as in their finances. They are to help with inclusion, and to prevent the immigrants from being excluded from the communities in the municipalities they live in. In addition to this, they are to take proper action in cases of abuse and violence, and other crises troubling immigrants. Their responsibility especially focuses on the well-being of children and underage adolescents. Additionally, they are required to give support to disabled people, as well as people who need the extra support due to their age, mental health or physical illness. Generally, the system of social services will provide support in a multitude of situations, in family support and counselling, as well as crisis communication and prevention in the community. (Sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, 2019.)

For asylum seekers, there is a system of support as well, which is active throughout their process of applying for asylum here in Finland. It functions in the reception centres, and focuses on language skill acquiring, general support for social well-being, and keeping track of their physical healthcare. Their support is dictated more by the state and healthcare professionals rather than the asylum seekers themselves, so it likely depends on the municipality what exactly they do for supportive activity. After being granted a residence

permit, they gain the same rights for social support as other local inhabitants of the municipality. Benefits from KELA (the financial support organization for citizens of Finland) are only granted to inhabitants who have gained a residence permit already. (Sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, 2019.)

While this is the official side of support, the practical side can look slightly different depending on who you ask, as tends to be the case in anything involving a large mass of people in different groups. Not all the received support comes from the state, and immigrants can also look for support from non-state-organized projects that are active in Finland. These projects can focus on almost anything to support the immigrants, from mental health and work functionality to keeping active in hobbies and socializing. These projects can come from privately organized groups, or for example work unions, which can support the immigrants in fully understanding their agreements and work requirements.

Creatively focused social service-based organizations already exist in Finland. Their focus is often on the side of immigration that concentrates on culture and identity. The organizations use art projects as their way of interaction and working together, as well as building communities between the immigrants. *Taike* (www.taike.fi) for example, is a Finnish arts promotion centre, which works with Finnish people in general, including immigrants. Their projects are largely focused on people's well-being and individual mental health, among other similar topics.

The focus of immigration has been the southern Finland area, especially in the Helsinki and Ahvenanmaa areas (Tilastokeskus, 2017.) With Finland having a loosely spread population, it has a few larger cities and a multitude of smaller towns. The smaller towns may not have the same resources for adding more art-and performance -based projects to focus on. The Finnish social services have their own integration-based service, which states that it works to help the immigrants save their cultural identity, and build an identity here in Finland, but it

does not seem to specialize in any kind of creative works in the ways *Taike* does. (Taiteen Edistämiskeskus, n.d.)

Outside of a state-organized group, *Osiris-teatteri* (www.osiristeatteri.fi) is also an example of bringing immigrants into creative projects to give them benefits of adjusting. There they are also able to tell their stories through theatre. Osiris is based in Helsinki, and led by two Finnish women, who with their cast of Finnish actors cooperate with (mainly) involuntary immigrants. Their works involve acting projects to provide creative support and activity to the immigrants, and to create entertainment for the local audiences together with the immigrants. Their plays closely handle involuntary immigrants' common experiences, and they use multiple languages to bring the messages across as realistically as possible. (Osiris-Teatteri, n.d.)

Ihalainen (2018) states that the state support for adaptation in Finland is not enough. Not when the people in charge of the immigrants' chances at work behave through prejudices. These prejudices can be about immigrants possessing less skill or taking longer to be taught the same tasks, as it would for a person born and raised in Finland. Due to this challenge it is difficult for immigrants to open up and show their skills, and to build their community and identity towards the local culture.

Kemi (2014) agrees with Ihalainen (2018) in the opinion that state-based support is not enough to successfully cover all needs an immigrant has to become a functional member of society. It is not enough to make sure their physical and mental well-being is not compromised in order to find suitable work. She states that the way Finnish social support works is not good enough. It gives the immigrants an order to learn the language and then pushes them towards work with only that, compromising on too many things regarding well-being and adaptation to the culture.

Kemi (2014) disagrees with the point of view where language should be the first step to work-based immigration. She notes that learning the language immediately after arrival, and then finding work is not a straight line from beginning to end. It is curves after curves in the process, always changing and always adapting to the environment, in good and bad. This means that expecting an immigrant to learn the language on a quick on/off basis, and then assuming they are ready and adjusted for the local culture is certainly wrong. Kemi (2014) attempts weighing the importance of language skills against successful adaptation, but in the end it is difficult to say which one is more important in successfully entering a new culture.

4.2 Working for well-being through art

Art has been used as a therapy form for a long time. It was formed into its own mode of psychotherapy in the 1940's by Margaret Naumburg (Malchiodi, 2006). According to Malchiodi, (2006) an art therapist must have a corresponding degree in order to work in the field. Meanwhile on the internet, people have conveyed a popular term *vent art* for a more casual use of arts as a type of therapy form, when people use drawing, painting, writing and such ways of self-expression to process their stress and emotions by themselves. As quoted from Urban Dictionary (n.d.), *Vent art* means:

“Art that someone makes to let out a feeling, usually a negative feeling like anger or sadness. Venting your feelings out on the canvas.” (Urban Dictionary, n.d.)

Liikanen (2011) researched the benefits of cultural and artistic work on people's well-being and built 18 political suggestions for improvements on the field. Her goal was that everyone would have an equal chance and a right to apply creativity in their efforts for mental and physical well-being. The program is called *Taiku (Taiteesta ja kulttuurista hyvinvointia, or Well-being from art and culture -plan of action)*. The suggestions of action varied between topics of finances, public and private work on the field coworking together, as well as spreading

more information to the common people in various levels. The aim of the program was to give people a chance to benefit from art and cultural work in their healthcare, well-being, and in building a community. Added to the program, there is also a branch of work on cultural and artistic well-being for the elderly, which focuses on their activity with arts. The aim was to boost well-being through activeness with an engaging environment.

The general results of this plan of action between 2010-2014 had towns and districts broadening the variation of cultural works in their activities (Sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, 2015). The common people's knowledge of such activities was also improved upon, and cultural and artistic activities had become more popular thanks to Liikanen's (2011) suggestions of action. Of course, this process mostly focused on cities with over 50 000 people, so the smaller towns and more separated city quarters which are very common in Finland, were not the focus of action yet. The larger cities, however, proceeded to build upon the plans by hiring cultural work coordinators and others to keep the work going even after the project's original plan ended in 2014. They also built specific working groups for keeping the artistic and cultural tasks ongoing and functional after the project. (Sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, 2015.)

Tying well-being through art into the topic of identity building, Howie, Kristel, and Prasad (2013) have touched upon the process of holding onto identities in their text. It explains that art therapy is aimed at refugees and asylum seekers. They focus on a case study on involuntary immigration. The case study shows how identity formation and recovery through making art helps refugees let go of the so-called *shield-behaviour*, which stops them from hindering their own adaptation process and independence gain. It stops the process by shielding immigrants' identities and feelings with a cover to lean on during stress, instead of adapting to grow emotionally through the situation and getting through the stress. Immigrants can learn the action through negative experiences during their travels, and through the help provided by art

therapy they are able to look back at their behaviour before these traumatic experiences and begin to regain independence. They have a chance to bond with others through their art, even if it is only with their therapist. This in turn affects the identity building process in their cultural adaptation. Not all refugees use art as a therapeutic device, but it is a choice among many others.

Following Howie, Kristel and Prasad's (2013) practices on art therapy, they focus on making the process personalized, individualistic, and fitting for each person involved with the project. Both the therapist and the person benefiting from therapy are finding a form of action in the meetings that suits them. That way they can cooperate in the project and bring results in the mind, not only physical artistic pieces. (Howie, Kristel, Prasad, 2013.)

As they note, when using art this way one must be aware of the ethical questions. Where and how long can the art be saved, who can see it, and what happens to it once the therapy period is complete and the person leaves the program? For cultural questions, the therapist should keep in mind to keep the conversation and practices open for multicultural approaches. Allowing for cultural diversity in their projects and conversation exchanges is important. As they point out, an art therapist can be unintentionally biased in their outlook, and it helps to remember that an immigrant's experiences can be largely set within their culture and cultural norms. (Howie, Kristel, Prasad, 2013.)

Very common reasons for art therapy are depression, difficulties in handling emotions, addiction, as well as stress, self-esteem and anxiety (Slayton, D'Archer, Kaplan, 2010). These are themes that often cross over to involuntary immigration and are thus a relevant topic to examine within the arts' relation to adaptation and well-being. Arrington and Cherry (2007) explain the effects of art therapy through a case study of a woman, who is overcoming the trauma of her husband's death. While in the beginning, she could remember few things in a complicated mixture that overwhelmed her thoughts, drawing out details one by one helped her remember more and supported her in examining her feelings about the event.

In Arrington and Cherry's (2007) case study, once the woman can remember the story from beginning to middle and end, instead of only fragments, she becomes fully aware that it has passed into the past and is no longer experiencing the event itself. It no longer stays as her entire identity. This requires the support of a professional but is nonetheless related to the relationship of artistic activity and well-being. Arrington and Cherry (2007) explain that trauma creates various difficulties in a person's life, namely emotional and social difficulties. To recover, Arrington and Cherry (2007) say people must learn to recognize their feelings and begin connecting their thoughts and body sensations to those feelings. That is where art can help, if properly applied.

Art as a device for supporting people's well-being is a theme that has many sides. According to Jaatinen (2015), the studies of artists and their health should not consider artist-facilitated projects for well-being, and art therapy by professional therapists the same thing. They have significant differences, even outside the realm of who practices them. While related through visual arts, she argues that considering them under one umbrella term will do more harm than good. Jaatinen (2015) notes that the field of arts and well-being is relatively new in Finland. It truly took form in 2012, and while funding now exists from the state for artists' benefit, only communities and institutions are eligible for it, rather than individual artists. This is troublesome for artists who work individually but have a need for financial support in order to continue their work.

Based on a study by Perry Magniant (2004), which focuses on art as a device for boosting the well-being and health of the older generations of people, making art contributes strongly towards a sense of community and connection, along with general well-being. While her study was conducted within a facility, she states the projects are also functional and effective outside of such setting. This requires the organizers to have the needed funds to keep such a project ongoing.

The Artwork Studio (Perry Magniant, 2004) is a project which was built on the belief that people's lives can be enriched by activities of art. Art could help them engage with each other, reflect on the things they have experienced, and express their opinions and ideas better within the community and activities. The project would help them build on their aspirations in a situation where they have lost many things, such as independence and the freedom of planning for their future. These losses come from being positioned in a facility instead of the person's own home. Through the creative activities provided by the project they could also create stories and build visions from their interests and hobbies. (Perry Magniant, 2004.)

The sense of connection comes from the process of making art, and from making the finished products visible for others to look at and talk about. Perry Magniant (2004) explains that while the activity is open to everyone, it is more difficult for some people to take the step into beginning the activity. The reason being a lack of a background in the arts. Especially men have trouble with creative activities without support, in comparison to women who usually have at least dabbled in creative works in their lives. She argues that well-being through art requires proper individual support and special attention for each person who partakes in it, so that they can properly gain benefits from their work.

Perry Magniant (2004) even refers to Dissanayake (1992) in saying that art making has always been a relevant device in fulfilling the fundamental needs humanity has for expression, connection, and in making meanings for things. Through studies of Dissanayake (1992), Perry Magniant (2004) seems to agree that art is an inherent piece of human behaviour, and necessary for us to be in good health. She refers back to the project of the Artwork Studio, stating that groupwork formatted art activities especially support the people in being active together. In addition, the activities support people in continuing their reminiscence of interests and past stories with others, so that they can uphold a tight community and interact freely even

during times of illness and recovery. She notes that individual support for the people working with these projects is necessary, in order to overcome their difficulties, regardless if they are physical, mental difficulties or difficulties coming from the outside. For these people, the use of aids in their creative activities has proven beneficial in upkeeping their work, and in upkeeping their health and well-being. (Perry Magniant, 2004.)

Based on the reports collected by the social and health ministry of Finland, there have been many benefits in including cultural and artistic work in the activities for people in Finland (Sosiaali- ja Terveysministeriö, 2015). Their health and well-being have improved with the project, and the people who organize the project found improvements in their well-being at the workplace during the project. They have spoken about the need for funding, community work, and resources in order to keep similar projects functioning effectively. However, with the right kinds of resources, benefits are clear and strong. Even when people are not physically making art, bringing art into the workplace and other environments improves people's well-being. For younger people, there were clear improvements in social bravery, self-awareness and presentation skills through the active practice of theatre work. (Sosiaali- ja Terveysministeriö, 2015.)

4.3 Past projects for adaptation and well-being

The relationship of adaptation and the arts has been studied before, and many studies focus on the relationship between arts and well-being during immigration. While not all of them are set in Finland, their findings are relevant to the process of studying immigrants' views and needs on identity and creativity globally. Karhunen (2013) notes in her study for the Art Promotion Centre in Finland, that while the arts' use in the support systems is better now overall in the country, the field was not originally considered for immigrant adaptation. The immigration and refugee arrivals were not assumed to be such a large and continuous phenomenon, but instead it was assumed to be a phase that would pass and settle soon.

Karhunen's (2013) view is shared by Elonen (2016), who notes that while the process of using arts in adaptation support is a recent phenomenon, it has been growing. The use of creative projects in social and health services has grown in the recent years. The projects work on the basis of the focus not being on the physical result of an art piece, but rather on the creative process of making.

According to Karhunen (2013), the ministry of education has put forward multiple projects and suggestions for creative projects to be used more and in new ways for adaptation processes. Though not all of them have seen the light of day, many have been great successes. The teaching and culture ministry grants projects and supplies for immigrant art and culture works, and handles funding for immigrant adaptation projects. They regularly survey and research the situation in Finland, and at the time of Karhunen's (2013) text being published, they had found that Finland puts more funds and effort into immigrant support than into racism-stopping movements and projects. According to the ministry, before 2009 they had no separate group of funding and support for immigrants.

Multiple creative projects have been studied to see how the evolution of creative works used for immigrant support has happened in Finland. They bring out some very important notes on immigrant adaptation and learning. Anttila (2019) writes about a research initiative in Helsinki, by the name of The ArtsEqual, in which one of the focus points in interacting and teaching pupils is that equality does not need to be the end point of education. She questions what happens when it is brought to the beginning, and works as the starting point instead.

The reason for this is that each student of the initiative should be considered capable. They should be given equal chances to work towards their own personal success and dreams, while these talents are all valued equally (Anttila, 2019). She notes that while her project was based on dance, because of the absence of it in the core of teaching in Finland, the materials and place possibilities for teaching were lacking. Therefore, it was a struggle to keep

up a focused, uninterrupted process of dance education for the pupils. These kinds of struggles can be quite common within creative projects, as resources are needed to help the use of arts in social support grow to a more common use in Finland.

Bungay, Munn-Giddings, Boyce and Wilson (2014) wrote a broad critical review on the literature closely related to the value of arts in therapy and clinical settings, for the health and well-being of people. Their review of the research resulted in information on using the arts in improving well-being, examining and approaching the field of study in the first place. They note that while the arts affect the people doing art, it also affects the working staff itself. The projects are very reliant on the organizers and caregivers. Part of the study focuses on staff turnover and how the impact of arts in the workplace lessens movement from the workplace.

Elonen (2016) writes in her report that people of different groups should get creative social support in a form fitted for them, rather than giving the same kind of artistic tasks to everyone regardless of their experiences or preferences. The differences between staff and immigrants can be counted into the fit as well, even though the focus lies on immigrants' adaptation processes.

Most studies within the field of arts study adaptation and well-being using the method of interviews, and use thematic analysis in their data collection and discussion. These interviewees often included both voluntary and involuntary immigrants. Karhunen's (2013) study involved 15 interviews with artists who have moved to Finland. The study was conducted in 2009, and based on the interviews she was able to see how their experiences were in working as an artist in Finland.

According to the interviews, while the immigrants' reason of arrival and experiences of working as an artist were different, all of them experienced difficulties in adjusting to the Finnish culture in the beginning of their adaptation processes. Even if they had a Finnish contact, such as a partner or family, the challenges remained. They felt that becoming

a part of the Finnish artist community was difficult with or without Finnish contacts, even when they had previously worked with art before moving to Finland. It was difficult for them to understand why degrees, jobs and prizes received abroad did not matter when applying to Finnish art associations. For some artists, especially the musical kind, it seems work and joining the local community began more easily, and then began to dwindle down into unemployment. Following unemployment, a disappointed disinterest grew into their adaptation after some time. (Karhunen, 2013.) As quoted from Karhunen's (2013) report, from an interviewee, "Finland is a country where you feel unwelcome".

Erola and Virpi (2017) conducted a thesis study with the ISEA program, which aimed to lessen the amount of inequality in Finland. Their purpose was mainly to examine the experiences of integrating immigrants in Finland. They wanted to develop work on integration among the immigrants. Their results accompany the direction Karhunen (2013) began, showing immigrants having trouble forming social relationships, learning the language, and finding study places in their local areas. Their responses described learning being easiest in informal situations with native Finns, and while volunteering in various activity works in order to adapt and become part of the society. There were still troubles however, namely social exclusion and loneliness. The immigrants generally believed to fit equally in with the local Finns they needed to be better in skill than the locals.

Furthermore, immigration is not only set to a specific age group. Li's (2012) article points out very important difficulties of the older generation's adaptation, in this case focusing on older generations of immigrants in New Zealand, who migrated from China. Quoting Espiritu (2003), Li (2012) notes that immigrants, especially the older generations, often receive a position of an unwanted person or even a burden in the community around them. They are generally seen as more dependent in both the public and academic discussions. She lists negative effects of immigration, mentioning the disruption in social support that people often

take for granted, ties to one's community and culture, as well as symbolism that is tied to the immigrant's personal being.

According to her, similarly as chronic illness can disrupt the ways we structure our lives during normal times, immigration can also affect the structures of daily life in multiple negative ways. Especially in Li's (2012) study she notices this effect being the strongest for older generations of immigrants. Her interviewees used many metaphors, which were, to borrow straight from her text, "feeling imprisoned by language barriers, social blindness, muteness and deafness (Li 2012)". When moving to a country where the dominant language was different from their native language, these feelings were especially common. Aside from language barrier situations, reasons for becoming isolated from the local social circles were within loss of status in the social sense. Their positions as professionals in their home country could easily be bypassed and ignored in their current country, resulting in status-discrepancy. Additionally, a second reason for isolation was a loss of a sense of membership in the community. (Li, 2012.)

However, looking from another study's point of view, Karhunen (2013) notes that not all immigrants she interviewed had negative experiences. Multiple interviewees described having an easy time finding work and community in their areas. Some of them had previous studies or experiences in the Finnish art industry. Regarding identity, Karhunen (2013) writes that most of the artists felt their national identity was Finnish, but they do not feel strange using the term "immigrant". Some however do not feel comfortable with the continuing use of the term "immigrant artist" in place of just "artist". There was some division between mentalities of feeling more Finnish or relating more to their original home country. Some artists still worked actively with immigration projects and organizations, while others had integrated into Finnish art associations.

The reactions they described receiving from the Finnish public have varied. While some state that their foreignness has not been a factor in their lack of work, the public still does not see them as a Finn regardless of what they do to integrate and adjust. As quoted again from another of Karhunen's (2013) interviewees, "Finland is the only country in which I feel like a foreigner." Another interviewee however states they never heard a bad word spoken to them. Clearly, while racism is a problem in Finland, the severity is very reliant on the individual's own experience. There are large differences between people's points of view. One of the artists speaks of the separatism between Finnish and immigrant support forms. He argues that the term "immigrant musician" (also usable in other art forms) should not be used separately from native Finnish musicians and artists, especially when speaking about professionals. It only works to broaden the gap between the people. (Karhunen, 2013.)

According to these studies, art has an effect on the well-being and adaptation of immigrants in Finland and abroad. While all of the studies were not focused on Finland, they are useful for the discussion of this study when used together with the collected data. Bungay et al. (2014) divided the results of their study on clinical effects of art into four areas of topics within the arts' effects to well-being. The topics were the following: improvements in health and well-being, enjoyment and satisfaction, wider healthcare benefits, and tensions and limitations.

In their findings for music's relation to well-being, they found that listening to music during medical procedures helped lower the patients' levels of anxiety and stress significantly, as well as lessen the pain felt during the procedures. When played on the following days during recovery, music helped the patients keep their stress and anxiety in lower levels. They revealed significant positive changes in blood pressure, mental state, and general health in people. They even managed to shorten some people's time spent at the hospital

recovery room, which shows real benefit in bringing arts to the workplace, and other day-to-day environments. (Bungay, et al., 2014.)

While this was one survey, another by the same people was conducted to study how the staff of the hospitals saw the use of music with the patients' recovery processes. Their insights were studied in a separate review. The results showed that while music was beneficial to the patients during their medical processes and recovery, it was valuable to pay attention to the tempo and volume in the use of music. The use of music resulted in less fatigue, among other results found in the first survey review. Additionally, the staff members discovered that using the arts (especially music) in recovery situations was helping the people become more accepting of seeking into rehabilitation or taking other further measures for their health and well-being (Bungay, et al., 2014.)

Jelekäinen (2015) and Pétursdóttir (2014) both agreed with the other studies' results on the positive effects of arts in adaptation and identity building. Jelekäinen's (2015) thesis explores the point of view that while a person's art can be influenced by the environment around them, the art itself can also influence the person's view of the environment in turn. Meanwhile Pétursdóttir (2014) hypothesised that art should have a part within the teaching process of immigrants, because creative and artistic activities strongly contribute to integration and adaptation. The results of their studies showed art's importance to immigrants and showed that art has a significant role in a person's well-being and self-exploration.

Pétursdóttir's (2014) research revealed that through their work with artistic and creative activities, immigrants receive feelings of happiness, personal strength, better social skills as well as passing of physical pain. The feedback she received from the immigrants was positive, describing they enjoyed the creative work, and wished for more similar activities in the integration process. An unresolved but hinted result in Jelekäinen's (2015) study was that art might be used in studying the cultural identities of people.

Anttila (2019) adds a point of view from the schooling system into these results. She adds that there are challenges in the process of creative interaction where the students do not share a language or culture, and thus communication can largely vary in form. Her conclusions involve the creation of temporarily generated spaces where words come second in the order of priority, and creative action can bring out a new kind of dialogue. Li (2012) adds emphasis to highlight the sense of control that can be gained from artmaking. A sense of control can improve the immigrants' well-being and health in the local culture and community, despite their experiences of struggles. She claims that the participants of the projects she studied did not only survive the immigration, but flourished in their lives after gaining agency and control in their lives back through creative works.

Li's (2012) point of view shows immigrants as individuals who can enhance their personal growth and determination regarding the self and identity, as well as generally improve their quality of life. She quotes Espinel's (1996) study of Willem de Kooning as an example of this process: de Kooning struggled from Alzheimer's disease and dementia while working as an artist, but due to his continuous work with painting, he was able to maintain a level of creativity even as these diseases continued affecting his life. He is said to have claimed recovery and some restoration of his self while the art helped him to figuratively keep a leash on his illness and hold onto independence in his life.

5 THEORIES OF ADAPTATION AND IDENTITY

In this section are the base theories for analysing the data of this research, through the theoretical background of identity and community building and intercultural adaptation. The main point of view of cultures and communities in this research is non-essentialist, as immigrants who come from the same country or region can have largely different backgrounds regarding their experiences and cultural habits.

5.1 Social Identity Theory

Social identity theory was chosen for this research because of its relevancy in the struggles and definitions of identity building. It has a variety of research sources and past studies, making it a broad base to use in a new research. It can be criticized, mainly due to its age. But it is a useful point of view into adaptation, as identity ties into adaptation relatively strongly. Without such a point of view, the study would feel hollow, lacking a large part of relevant information about identity. It ties in with adaptation theory by closely relating interesting and valuable details within a person's experiences during immigration.

As Harwood (2016) writes, social identity theory is based on the understanding of how people categorize each other, on learning how these groups exist now, and how they came to be. Prejudices and stereotypes are a large topic within the theory. Because social identity theory has a base within intergroup behaviour research, as Capozza and Brown (2000) state, it is useful within the study of adaptation theory and immigration. Through this theory, it is easier to fill in the more vague points of adaptation theory, where social identity theory can show a point of view into conflicts and communication between groups, based on group preferences and traits. It has given support to intergroup communication studies. In this study, the research question of immigrants' perceptions to the relationship between arts and adaptation can be more easily analysed with a multifaceted theory base from both the SIT theory and adaptation theory.

According to Jelekäinen (2015), people's past experiences may easily affect their art. In reverse, their works in the arts may also affect the person's personal life and viewpoints, consciously or unconsciously. Jelekäinen's (2015) text takes up the point of identity and the importance of having a clear personal identity. While there was no clear-cut result on whether the art of refugees was used to investigate cultural identities, her analysis showed that their meaning and importance lied in self-identity and communication of various personal life experiences with other people.

Social identity theory was outlined into its current form by Tajfel and Turner in the 1970's (later updated in 1986). The theory was created to study group behaviour, especially intergroup prejudices and stereotypes, as well as discrimination. In their view, discrimination and prejudice, while negatively used, happened through normal processes of the brain and thought. However, as seen from Harwood's (2016) insights into the social identity theory, it seems the theory was created as a response to the view that personality is able to explain away discriminatory behaviour (such as, authorizing someone to be more able than others, based on their personality). The claim was additionally that the origin of these situations was in the lack of resources, which social identity theory responds against.

To clarify the meaning of group behaviour, social identity theory does not take every single possibility to put people together as groups (such as based on the colour of one's clothes, etc.) but instead focuses on the most relevant commonalities for each group, such as race, religion and sex, among other things. Social identity theory was created in order to help people understand the ways in which people categorize others. This is so they may understand how their groups came to be and how their processes of prejudice and stereotypes are formed. (Harwood, 2016.)

Empirical studies have been made on studying people's reactions to other groups' members within a controlled environment. The results have showed favouritism for the in-

group members. In cases where the person in the position of a judge is allowed to reward group members freely, out-group members have received lower rewards. This behaviour is confirmed even when the groups favoured are not necessarily meaningful, but for example composed of shirt colours. (Harwood, 2016.)

The phenomenon of disidentification shows that sometimes people show a preference or interest to the out-groups rather than their own. This is especially present in racial studies, where people of one group wish to be part of another, disidentifying from their own in-group and its prevalent traits. (Harwood, 2016.) Harwood (2016) has suggested the effect of people selectively seeking out media and representation of the in-group while selectively avoiding the representation of the out-group.

Social identity theory seems to dominate the intergroup behaviour research, and this insight is backed by researchers Capozza and Brown (2000). The theory is used to study conflicts and communication and has strongly impacted the research of in- (or inter-) and outgroup studies. This is due to the possibility of using social identity theory to show multiple points of view into the conflicts the researchers examine and face in their area of study. It has given a lot of support to the theories studying intergroup communication, behaviour and other factors of group functions and conflicts in groups. (Capozza & Brown, 2000.)

Shepard (2008) however criticizes social identity theory through the respondents' answers in his case study. He offers the view that while social identity theory is a good starting point for studies on social identities, it still fails to properly explain the processes of forming an identity. According to him, its main problems are in recognizing the variations between individuals and their processes of identity forming. It also does not fully explain the changes of identity with time. (Shepard, 2008.)

To return to Harwood's (1999) focus of in- and out-groups, his basis is that people examine themselves to have traits of certain groups, which then become their in-groups. After

this, they insert these traits together, becoming pieces of their identity. After which, the pieces of identity then define their relationships to the world and to other people, as well as defining the ways in which they behave in certain situations (Harwood, 1999). According to Tajfel and Turner (1970), people prefer members of the in-group and push away members of the out-group because they want to feel good about themselves. Thus, the in-group traits are seen as more positive traits than the out-group traits. Discrimination often results from treating the outgroups as “less positive” rather than “negative” outright.

Ongur (2014) argues that the concept of social identity, as borrowed from Tajfel and Turner (1970) is a useful tool and can be used to remedy problems especially in the European points of identity formation. He notes that even without a common culture or history, people can still easily form temporary in-groups in order to construct their social identity suitable for a situation. Once this formation of in-groups has happened, they compare themselves into the out-groups, and this results in in a negative “othering”. (Ongur, 2014.)

But where stands the line between less positive and negative? It is a very grey area and dangerously so, when it comes to conversations of discrimination and stereotyping. What is the difference in treating someone negatively or just less positively? While people may feel their in-group traits are especially relevant to their sense of self, they may not receive such a positive feeling about belonging to the group itself. It is possible they may have a conflict in their identity building. Tajfel and Turner (1970) have listed ways in which people could remedy these conflicts:

The *Individual mobility strategy*, which suggests that people would leave their in-group and join the out-group in order to gain the value of belonging and regain the sense of feeling good about their group. There are listed examples of this in Harwood's (2016) text, where he mentions, among other things, gay people staying in the closet to present themselves

as the heterosexual majority, mixed race people passing as the ethnical majority, and people unlearning their accents or dialects in order to better blend into the masses. (Harwood, 2016.)

However, while such things have been less questioned in past studies, in the current world politics this strategy is very criticisable. The question here is about morality. It is about people being forced to change themselves for other people's comfort to pass as someone of an out-group (which usually would be the majority group). Letting go of one's identity is a challenge. Sometimes it is necessary to stay in the closet, change one's accent, or blend with the ethnical masses, but it likely always requires mental and social sacrifices and ongoing physical and mental stress.

Secondly, there is the *social creativity strategy*, which changes the orientations of focus when comparing the in-groups to out-groups. Usually the comparison is done between a minority group and a majority group, and the result is rarely positive. However, Tajfel and Turner (1970) state that comparing two minority groups could result in a more positive variety of traits, through differences and similarities. As well as that, people can choose and change the trait that is being compared. From comparing financial situations, they can instead compare other traits such as humour, strength of will, for example. However, as is stated by Harwood (2016) already, this kind of strategy fails to challenge the existing status quo and does not result in many meaningful conversations between minorities and majorities. It simply works as a comparison play, with no real results.

The *social competition strategy* on the other hand aims to challenge the ways *social creativity strategy* fails in. It often results in protests, negotiations, and political and social actions in order to improve the state of the in-group's social status (Harwood, 2016).

The use of these strategies varies between groups and their members. Each person has a different need for their identity building processes, and they find support in different strategies. However, mobility seems to be the most common strategy when given as a choice.

(Tajfel & Turner, 1970.) The other strategies become more relevant when the choice of mobility is blocked and placed out of use. However, for competition to be chosen, the people of a group must first realize and acknowledge they are being treated unfairly and wish to improve it in an active way, so that they can act towards a better state of being. If such a change feels impossible, it is unlikely action would be taken. As social identity theory is specifically an intergroup theory, it acknowledges that when a minority group acts, the majority group will not simply sit tight and watch quietly. When action is taken, both in- and out-groups will begin acting and the result can be chaotic at times. (Harwood, 2016.)

As explained by DiMaggio and Fernández-Kelly (2010), artists can use art for working through questions of identity and belonging within a group while explaining it to the larger audience. Similarly, musically focused artists often use identity as a theme in their projects. However, in media and for the larger audiences, reflections of real-life identity questions and such things often belong to the works of the so-called elite. They tend to forget the art forms often pushed aside in terms of people's favour, such as rappers and songwriters. (DiMaggio & Fernández-Kelly, 2010.)

However, they speak about a phenomenon with performers' identities. Even though they may all come from different countries and backgrounds, if their work together has some sort of identity tied to itself (such as their example of mariachi music) they must put aside their differences. The differences in personal, individual identities are hidden, while they show only the things the group's identity belongs to or asks for. They call this a pan-ethnicity. (DiMaggio & Fernández-Kelly, 2010.) According to Okamoto (2008), examples of pan-ethnicities are Latinos and black people, both of which are ethnical descriptors to a multitude of smaller ethnicities. Using these two cases as an example, she notes based on her research that it is possible for these people to choose a pan-ethnic identity in order to reject another identity. Such as in the case of Latinos, the division is between black and white. She states in

her research that people who have experienced racism and prejudice are much more likely to choose a pan-ethnic identity. (Okamoto, 2008.)

Art sustains the identities of immigrants, but as mentioned, there is not just one identity shared by everyone. There are multiple backgrounds just as there are multiple people, and all of them have their own identities to uphold, form and show in order to let art sustain their identities. (DiMaggio & Fernández-Kelly, 2010.) Pan-ethnicity is an important topic, because it explains pieces of the phenomenon of culturally and ethnically mixed people. Therefore, to look at an artist, it must be remembered that they have an identity individual to themselves, outside of the mass definitions of immigrants and artists. And with this kept in mind, the way in which these individuals adapt and adjust into cultures outside of their own, can be investigated.

Self-identification theory, which is also a part of Harwood's (2016) field of study and belongs to social identity theory, is also part of Turner's (1986) research and part of the outlining of his theory with Tajfel. Based on this theory, one of the inter-groups becomes more important to a person than the other groups, while the other groups naturally still hold their own significant amounts of importance. One group may hold the centre of the person's identity traits, such as race, nationality or sexuality. The theory explains traits being seen through the lenses of *perceiver readiness* and *fit*, which work with situational and characteristic variation between and within groups. (Harwood, 2016.)

Shepard (2008) in turn states that identity is a key concept within cultural adaptation. According to him, building an identity in a new place or holding onto the old identity from the old environment are both relevant wishes for immigrants. Especially so, when they mean to stay in the new cultural environment for a longer period of time or permanently. As he

states in his analysis on cultural identity theory, adolescence is an especially important time for building an identity. It is one of the key points in a person's life in terms of identity formation.

Adolescents easily imprint things as part of their public personas and interests, which is seen in the common term of speech in the English language, *teenage phase*. The term is commonly used when adolescents go through times of strongly focused interest to a certain fashion, genre or behaviour, for example. Of course, they are not always short phases of interest, but the term of speech persists, nonetheless. In addition to adolescents, identity is also important for adults. Being able to hold onto something they remember of their old lives, or being able to present parts of their personality is a key concept in the quality of life these people will have in the new culture. The quality of one's life can change drastically when moving to another environment. This is especially relevant in the case of refugees, whose move is quite sudden and forced.

There are many adolescent refugees and asylum seekers on the move, settling into the Finnish regions especially during the most recent refugee crisis during this decade. Finnish statistics of migration show 0-17-year-olds having arrived in the thousands, even though the age group is not the largest of all immigrants in Finland (Ministry of the Interior, 2018). Shepard (2008) also notes that different branches of identity studies have focused on the process of identity forming as well as on the consequences of social identity forming. Both of them give separate interesting points of view into the same topic.

Regarding Shepard's (2008) point in individuality, he says that people who are officially members of multiple nationalities often discuss how they do not fully feel like they are a part of any of the nations' groups. Instead they hold a middle stance or their identity changes based on their environment and the situation, depending on what is easiest for them to identify as, in the moment. An example that agrees with Shepard's (2008) argument is of two children whose parents originate from two different countries, and they all live in a third country

unrelated to the parents' origin while the two children now have a triple citizenship. How will they identify as a person of a single national group or culture when they have multiple choices of legal citizenship? However, this can be criticized through the point of view that most people in the current world are to some extent a mixture of cultures and ethnicities. Such a view can be old-fashioned and out of date.

5.2 Cultural adaptation

Cultural adaptation has been explored in depth by multiple researchers, namely Kim (1988), Berry (1997), and Shepard (2008), the last of whom has already been quoted in the social identity theory portion of this study. The studies are popular in use, but do not come without their own share of criticism. Often, they function only in theory but forget to apply rules to adaptation that exist in the multidimensional communities of the real world.

In Kim's (2017) article, she reminds us that while immigration is a shared event in many people's lives, they may still come from different backgrounds. Therefore, they will have different experiences of the events involved in their migration. Yet she notes that these people share the need for a functioning and stable environment where they can work together with the local culture and its people. She explains that cultural adaptation begins as a psychological process involves the danger of culture shock. Culture shock may be experienced by the immigrant in a case where the culture in the local area is drastically different from their home culture. In time, through both mental and physical effort, the immigrant can gain skill and efficiency in working with the local culture's spoken and unspoken rules, as well as easily communicate within it. This process is called cultural adaptation.

According to Kim's earlier work (1988), adaptation in general can happen in the sense of changes in time and technology, regardless of the place. However, she states that cultural adaptation in specific happens when a person migrates to a new culture and environment. Though in some cases an immigrant may return to their home country later,

in the case of refugees and asylum seekers especially, the move across countries is often a permanent change. Thus, it requires a permanent attitude of adjustment from the immigrant into an unfamiliar environment as well.

However, Kim's (1988) theory on cultural adaptation has a strong flaw in being too expectant on people fitting into specific categories. She holds the assumption that all people fit into boxes relevant to the theory. She forgets that people are individuals in multiple senses, never the same even in fields they relate to each other in. What Kim (2017) notes in her later article is very accurate, however, in the practical lives of immigrants. She reminds us how people who are quickly and without warning torn from their old lives and environments can fall into a sense of loss and severe psychological dislocation. Kim (2017) calls the process of socialisation and adaptation to cultural forces around us enculturation and rounds her theory around this term. With it, she explains adaptation through the process of social enculturation.

Shepard (2008) in turn has explained the process of cultural adaptation as basing the conditions of intercultural contact and its results on the attitudes and behaviours of the people around us. Whereas Berry (1997) notes that adaptation is created through long-term acculturation. He proceeds to focus on acculturation instead, while exploring the forms and practices of cultural adaptation. His concept of acculturation shows that group encounters result in cultural changes, while the psychological side of adaptation and other psychological changes are separate. However, they are still occurring during the experiences of acculturation. Berry (1997) divides adaptation into three aspects: psychological, sociocultural and economic, and questions what the relationship between culture and behaviour truly is.

His questions on the patterns of continuity and the change of people's lives and behaviour in a new society are answered to an extent by cross-cultural psychology. It seems to support the presence of a pattern and agrees at least to some extent with the phenomenon of people changing their behaviour to be appropriate to the new environment and setting. (Berry,

1997.) He notices that in practice, the process of acculturation does not only affect one group (as in, the one arriving to a local culture) but starts a change in all groups that come into contact with the new arrival. Nonetheless, he agrees that more change is happening in one group than in the others.

Multiple groups of people in the society get involved with the process of adaptation. However, certain types of behaviours have often been linked into certain groups (mostly minorities) and have been used to explain differences in, for example, academic successes and social proficiencies. This is because, as Shepard (2008) explains, the behaviours of adaptation (or non-adaptation, as he calls the opposite), are seen to show details of identity, rather than just parts of the adaptation process. Kim (1988) seems to agree on the views of group identity with Tajfel and Turner (1986) from the earlier chapters. While they add an explanation to this phenomenon shown by Shepard (2008), that people who have adapted successfully into the local culture, are able to appropriately and effectively communicate with the environment. In addition, they are able to achieve a certain level of competence in the society. Hence they can be seen as more of a part of the in-group by the native locals.

Kim (1988) shows that the adaptation dynamic moves in a cycle, from stress to adaptation, to growth, and again to new stress sources, which begin the cycle of adaptation anew. The communication system is a vital piece of this process, and language holds the topmost importance. It is a critical tool of the adaptation process. Language skills and knowledge have a central role in everything that involves messages, be it spoken out loud or written down as text. If one means to participate in the local culture and society, they must know the language in order to be able to interact first.

Kim (1988) notes that the level of skill in a local language is not only limited to verbal messaging, but also allows the immigrant to begin thinking the way the local community's people do. This functions especially through language, as the patterns of language

and thought are closely tied. Notably, the language skill also holds out possibilities of status and power for people coming in from outside the community.

While acculturation is commonly known for a type of assimilation, it is not the only kind. Acculturation can also be reactive, creative, and delayed, in which cases it starts a resistance to change in both sides. In other cases, it forms new cultural forms that have been found in neither side beforehand, or even begins changes that only show themselves within a long period of time, respectively (Berry, 1997).

The theory concept of acculturation has, despite its popularity, been criticised strongly because of its change in meaning from the original concept. It has become more synonymous with the practice of assimilation as time has passed (Berry, 1997). Acculturation can be entered voluntarily or involuntarily, without having to seek it out. The reasons of contact can be either coming to a new culture or a new culture being brought into your environment by others. Berry (1997) explains that integration into a culture can only be chosen freely by groups that do not dominate the stage, if the dominant society lets them in openly. The dominant society must allow them to be openly diverse with their cultures. Without this mutual agreement, integration cannot be fully accepted and functional in the society of multiple culturally diverse groups.

Kim (1988) shows her agreement with Berry's (1997) theory on acculturation processes. She notes the relationships' importance in the variety of ways adaptation can be composed into a proper process. However, she notes that these relationships are not enough by themselves for predicting anything specific about the adaptation processes. In addition, according to her the proficiency in communication with the local system enables humans to enhance relationships and express themselves better in the new environment. Proficiency in communication allows for more spontaneous interactions. The way is not simple however and involves transformations of behaviour and thinking. The transformations concern not only

learning new habits and knowledge, but also unlearning and replacing old pieces of knowledge and habits from previous cultures.

Shepard (2008) suggests that while adaptation has multiple factions of focus, gender is a very valuable point of information and a relevant point of difference within the experiences of immigrants, especially within the youth. Moreno and Chuang (2011) add that it can sometimes be problematic to think of men and women's experiences and motivations as largely different in immigration, as the country of origin can be more important. However, they agree that gendered experiences and differences in gender motivations are largely and significantly left behind in the studies, forgotten or simply neglected by researchers. Shepard (2008) states that within immigrant families, there is a certain difference between men and women. Especially with the younger generations, girls are much more likely to be restricted by their parents in their social and communal lives, than boys are. This shows as a different experience of monitoring and freedom between the sexes.

For this study, these theories are useful in examining the interview answers through the point of view of identity, perceptions and adaptation. To answer the research question, how immigrants in Finland describe the relationship between their artistic activities and their adaptation into the local culture, such theories can be used in tandem in order to get a more rounded view of the situation. This study also seeks to examine how their answers support or contradict the theory. Both these aims will be examined through the lens of Social identity theory and adaptation theory, while comparing them with the interview results through discourse and thematic analyses.

6 METHODS AND MATERIALS OF ANALYSIS

The method of this thesis is to interview artists and performers currently located in Finland. The aim is to find out their perceptions of the relationship between the arts and adaptation. This is a qualitative and heuristic study, so the focus is on a small number of people and their perceptions on their adaptation processes during immigration. While the background theory is used to explain the practices of identity building and cultural adaptation, interview answers are used as data and the results of past studies with similar interviews are held as comparison points. Results are found by searching for common topics and themes, and then discussing the collected themes in their answers.

6.1 Interview methods

This research is conducted through written questionnaire-form interviews of immigrants in Finland. The interviewees work with the arts either as their full-time job, or as an active hobby. While choosing the interviewees, the focus was not set on any specific kinds of art. People with all forms of art were welcome. Many of them are artists of multiple fields, so the study is not limited to visual or performative arts. Instead it covers crafts and musical arts as well. The form of the interviews has been written questionnaires, in which the interviewees were asked to answer to various questions in their own words in English or Finnish (all interviewees chose English). They were allowed to describe as few or many details as they felt comfortable with. The interview was conducted this way because the interviewees came from various cities in Finland, and it was difficult to set meetings face-to-face. Therefore, using written questionnaires was the most functional possibility.

Alongside age, country of origin and their reason for immigration, the following themes were given main focus within the written questions: previous migration experiences, ties and familiarity with the local culture before arrival, largest challenges within the culture and challenges in doing creative work while adjusting. There were also sections of self-

evaluation on benefits of creative work, on the effects between culture and style, and on the building of community and public response.

A questionnaire, as referenced from McLeod (2018), is like a written interview, but the difference lies in the practice of social interaction. A questionnaire, unlike the interview, is often conducted in other ways than face-to-face, and usually for groups of people. They are often used for situations where individual interviews would be impractical. The problem in questionnaires is however, that the interviewee may wish to show only their good side in the answers, and edit their responses accordingly, bending the truth. Still, it is possible to find the overall opinion and behaviour of the participants through a mass of answers. The actual result of course depends on whether the questions were open- or closed-ended. It is not uncommon for a questionnaire to use both, but often the focus lies in one of them. (McLeod, 2018.)

Closed-ended questions often end up limiting possible answers to yes/no, agree/disagree, and such. Meanwhile open-ended questions give more allowance to respond with their own words, using their creativity with words to bring their point across. A closed-ended questionnaire is economical to make and distribute, and very useful for quantitative research. It is easy to check for reliability through the answers, as everyone answers the same questions with the same, limited list of answers. However, they lack detail, and are limited in the input of the interviewee. (McLeod, 2018.)

Open-ended questionnaires on the other hand have no pre-set to how the interviewee can answer, and their strength lies in the qualitative results. A person may see through this open-ended response, why the interviewee holds their opinions or attitudes. However, it is time-consuming to collect the data from many people, as all answers are different. It is not as suitable for interviewees who lack the skills to use their words to such extent in detailing their opinions and experiences. (McLeod, 2018.)

The questionnaires in this study were conducted through email, first by sending questionnaire requests to potential artists based in Finland. The contacts were collected through various collective artist sites and organizations, whose information was public to see. After this step, the questions were sent in two languages (Finnish and English) to all those who responded with interest in taking part in the study. They were given a deadline for returning their answers through email. Once the responses were received, the answers were examined and analysed into themes and topics usable for the discussion. Most of the questions were open-ended, so that the artists could write in their own words their experiences of their adaptation processes and work as an artist here in Finland.

I wished to question immigrants who have been in Finland for less than five or, if that was impossible, less than ten years. This was so that they still had their adaptation period in relatively fresh memory but had adjusted enough to tell about the process in hindsight, so to say. In the end, the interviewees' length of stay was between 3-15 years. The interviewees were between the ages of 27-58, from multiple fields of arts: music, theatre, illustration, etc.

A qualitative study requires a qualitative methodology within the data collection and analysis. These methods have been used for a long time and are perhaps the oldest research methods still in use today, according to Shuttleworth and Wilson (2008). The terms qualitative and quantitative mean the kinds of data that is used, whether the focus is on the number of answers, in quantitative studies, or as the other term suggests, the quality of the answers. Qualitative data is focused on the characteristics and features of the data, focusing on more visual phenomena. A researcher using qualitative methods needs to be aware of their biases and be careful in constructing the interviews. If done correctly, qualitative research methods can bring forward the underlying details in relevant topics and show a deeper understanding of the point of view and reasoning the percentages and answers are coming from. It is often chosen as a method when using a smaller sample of people. (Shuttleworth & Wilson, 2008.)

It is often best to go into qualitative analysis without specific expectations on what the answers will give, as mostly anything can be useful in the end, regardless of whether it follows the direction the interviewer expected at first or not. As for sample sizes, qualitative methods can be used with a case study, and do not require many separate interviewees. (Shuttleworth & Wilson, 2008.)

There are however disadvantages for using qualitative methods in interviewing as well. Firstly, the interviewer will have a more difficult time paraphrasing spoken answers into text and finding commonalities and differences in written answers. The questions are often very open-ended and get lengthy at times, without following a specific frame. This requires effort and time from the interviewer. It is additionally more subject to biases and expectations the interviewer may unconsciously put on the answers and the people. They must also be more aware of ethical topics when conducting the interviews. (Shuttleworth & Wilson, 2008.)

6.2 Methods of analysis

The main methods of analysis of this study are thematic analysis and discourse analysis, both commonly used in qualitative research projects. They were chosen because of their suitability for open-ended interview results, and their ability to be used within conflicts between source studies and interview data.

In this study, the immigrants' identities and well-being are the source of discussion. They were analysed through comparing the anonymous responses of Finland-based artists to a written questionnaire, and through a thematic collection of similarities in their answers. The answers were first examined to search for common themes, or themes that otherwise rose as important. Those themes were brought together with the theories and data from past studies on similar topics, conducted by other researchers, so they can be compared. Thematic analysis involves further measures before the analysis begins. There are branches of

coding-based methods, which help the researcher link the themes together. This often involves charts and other visual tools within the process. (Guest, MacQueen & Namey, 2012.)

Saldana (2016) focuses on explaining the coding processes and suggests that it is perhaps easiest and most functional to put the data pieces into families. This makes it easier to relate them to each other, and to compare the groups to one another. The process of coding is highly intuitive, and the grouping of pieces involves not just the meaning of things, but also the more abstract feeling of them.

Thematic analysis includes a lot of interpretation within the codes and data pieces, which means it is hard to gather a fully objective view in the end. This specific approach into thematic analysis uses a link with grounded theory quite closely. It moves from transcripts to potential overview of themes and compares these themes with each other, as well as the source information, before finding structure between them all. After this point, the approaches to research begin to differ from each other more, but share a little bit while holding theoretical models from the study against the data at hand. (Guest, MacQueen & Namey, 2012.)

Together in this research, the interpretations of coding and grouping of adaptation and well-being -related answers have resulted in a discussion of currently used artistic projects and activities and their purposes. Additionally, it has resulted in the reasons to why and how new activities would be needed for a better overall result of adaptation and well-being. Plenty of space has been left for future studies on this topic, and it is encouraged that people bring it forward for more reliable and structured results on a larger scale.

The adjustment period in a new culture is different in the experience of involuntary immigrants and voluntary immigrants. Martin's (2001) study shows that involuntary immigrants risk more chance for psychological issues than voluntary immigrants. Because their migration, unlike the voluntary option, is fuelled by various kinds of conflicts. A relevant method is to look at the ways immigrants in Finland have used art as a device in

adapting to local cultures. They have created their own spaces and names in the environment, and in some cases, used it as a form of art therapy to boost their well-being in the environment.

In other ways, their adaptation can be helped along through artistic activities and projects, which then form community and personal identity. This can be seen from the social and health ministry's final project report (2015) as referenced in earlier chapters. These forms of support can be studied to see into the processes of adaptation and the general effects of social support in different forms. Discourse analysis is often related to linguistic fields. The experiences that have been written down into text-based questionnaire answers can be analysed through discourse analysis, along with thematic analysis.

Discourse, based on Johnstone's (2017) book on discourse analysis, is defined as a mode of communication and, as quoted from her, "meaningful symbolic behaviour". She notes that as communication can extend outside the borders of text, it is important to keep the other fields of communication in mind while analysing. The research data from the artist immigrants, however, is fully in text, so it will simplify the analysis process. This method is used because of its use in terms of the more abstract parts of the questionnaire, where a meaningful relationship between arts and cultures can be interpreted in multiple different ways by both the interviewees and the interviewer. It can derive the answers into a different direction from the technical and theoretical source studies on the topic.

Overall, discourse analysis is used in order to study the responses from a linguistic point of view, where language holds focus. How things are said is one of the most important points to use to shed light on the meanings behind the text. Through analysing those forms of language, we can then follow with a proper analysis of an overall image of the situation at hand and answer the research questions. (Johnstone, 2017.)

6.3 Depth of materials

The materials consisted of six interviews, which, when returned with filled answers came to about 2-3 paged answer sheets per person. The length of the interviewees' stays in Finland varied between 3-4 years, and 9-15 years, dividing the group roughly in half. Answer lengths varied from a single sentence to a single paragraph, rarely longer. Some people's descriptions were quite rough and vague, while others wrote more descriptively. Overall, the interviewees with shorter answers tended to have a more objective way of telling about their experiences, while the longer answers gave more emotionally detailed descriptions. The interviewees were given a choice between answering the Finnish or English sheet of questions, however all six of them chose the English version.

With the argument of adaptation and the arts having a relationship, the interviewees' answers mostly agreed with the background theory, but when it came to the two influencing each other in a more physical sense, such as affecting one's worldview and traits, some of the interviewees disagreed, while some admitted to not having thought about it at all, and only part of the interviewee group agreed completely with the findings of the source materials. In the Findings chapter these interview materials have been examined in order to find common themes between the answers relevant to this study. The themes will be used with the answers of the interviewees in order to receive a broader view of the common perceptions and feelings of some immigrants. Specifically, the ones with experience in the creative activities during adaptation to the Finnish culture and environment. The themes mainly related to culture, audience and identity, alongside adaptation.

7 RESULTS OF THE INTERVIEWS

After examining the collected data from the six individuals in the written questionnaire-form interviews, the resulting answers were put into thematic groups. The groups were based on the similarities between the topics that came up most often or were discussed in a deeper length by fewer people, showing the importance and origin of the experiences or opinions to them. Following the steps of the analysis, I ended up recognizing the following themes from the data: Challenges of adaptation and culture, benefits of arts in adaptation, influences between culture and the arts, public response to creative works and adaptation, and identity and art.

The answers for each interviewee were similar, some more and some less detailed. They helped in shedding light to the point of view of immigrants in Finland, though in this case the answers came from the professional side of artistry and are limited in number. Regardless, they were useful in the general viewpoint of adaptation and its conflicts and supports. Many of the interviewed immigrants came to Finland for reasons unrelated to their work with the arts, and others moved here because of employment within the field. Naturally their opinions and points of view differ to some extent within the themes of questions and answers.

7.1 Common challenges with adaptation and culture

Beginning with the challenges of adaptation and culture, it held a multitude of answers describing difficulties with language, as well as talking about the importance of language skills in Finland. The following answers show how similarly the interviewees answered related questions:

Q: In adjusting to the Finnish culture, what did you find most challenging?

“The language.” (Male, Perú)

“Language, and understanding people feelings specifically face emotions.”

(Male, Iraq)

“The weather was a shock. The language was difficult, but I found most people spoke English at least. I became less sociable.” (Male, UK)

Later when asked about community building: “[...] Much of the newsletters are very long and in Finnish, so it’s hard work to go through them. They don’t seem that social anyway, not in the same way as with HIAA when there are regularly monthly social meet-ups. [...]” (Male, UK)

It seems to be a common perception amongst the interviewees of this study that Finns use as different kind of system for politeness and expression than many other cultures and may come across uninterested and rude. The article *The Silent Finn Revisited* by Sajavaara and Lehtonen (1997) also shows a point of view to this difference of talkativeness and politeness. In that point of view, the difference of Finns being quieter and more closed-off from social situations is not only perceived by foreigners, but also stands as a common stereotype among the Finns themselves.

Many of the interviewees described feeling frustrated over the initial silence of Finns, and the difficulty that came from that in trying to make friends and get to know people in the local areas. Challenges also came in the form of familiarizing oneself with the country itself. Some of the interviewees described their area of living in Finland lacking events they could attend. Partly because of this they reported having a struggle with staying social and growing to be a part of the community.

Q: Was it difficult to begin creative work while adjusting to the local daily life?

“It was difficult as I didn't know anyone. The only way that I was able to slowly insert myself into daily life and get to know other artists was through the Sarjakuvakeskus.” (Male, USA)

“I found myself actively looking for employment here since we didn't have much money saved up and my fiancé was not working either. Once I found a job I tried to make work, but the job took much of my hours. Outside of this I still found it very difficult to access the art world in Helsinki. Even finding out how to get a studio was difficult. I had a studio in London for many years. A year into moving here and my fiancé found out she was pregnant. Suddenly life took on a different meaning very quickly and I had less time for myself and my pursuits. I still find it difficult to make work here and find the time and finding a studio is still difficult. It's also expensive here.” (Male, UK)

“In the beginnings it was so easy everything was ready for you, you get support for housing living and eating people helps around you, nothing changed BUT then you start to understand the life responsibilities and also how to continue living in new environment new life because in the beginning everything is new so excited! you don't think much about future! life in general and obstacles of life and winter depression feeling.” (Male, Iraq)

”Yes. I take you sometime to feel familiar with the place. I have couple of reasons, for instance I wanna draw, but at first I don't even know where the art supply stores are. Then after sometime getting to know the local community, I know the store location, but the price can be too high then you don't feel like doing too much of it anymore. Same difficulties apply for my dance class. I did multiple dance practice when I was in Vietnam, but here, the price of the courses

are too high so I am not doing as much as I would wish to. At first I thought I have to scarify my artistic career here in Finland as there are not as many activities happening as in my home country.” (Female, Vietnam)

As can be seen from these responses, it is difficult for some immigrants to find what they need in order to begin the creative activities they want to do. In addition, it is difficult at times to even find some resources for adaptation in general.

Q: In adjusting to the Finnish culture, what did you find most challenging?

“Initially the silence and the frustration of getting to know people and making friends.” (Male, USA)

Q: Do you feel like you’ve benefited from your art, in your adaptation?

“As I understand this you mean to ask if my background in the arts has helped me adjust to life here? I did know people here from my exchange, but when I moved here I didn’t see many of them. I found it difficult to meet people involved in the art world in Helsinki. In order to stay in Finland I knew I had to find work, so since I had supported myself as a designer in London I did the same here.” (Male, UK)

Q: Do you feel like your work with art has given you chances to build community with other people?

“Yes, extremely. Finland’s art only works due to Art associations as the gallery culture is so ridiculous in comparison to other countries. Finns are happy to build communities around common interests if given the opportunities.” (Male, USA)

As we can see, these questions received significantly lengthier responses. Multiple interviewees were worried about a need to give up on some parts of their artistic

careers in Finland, due to smaller resources and partaking possibilities. Other challenges came in the form of working with artistic projects and engaging the local people into adaptation-supporting creative activities, such as the following:

Q: In adjusting to the Finnish culture, what did you find most challenging?

“The most challenging is to intergrade them my culture of music” (Male, Senegal)

“To make friends with the Finns. You have to most of the time initiate the conversation. Finnish people seemed cold as first but most of them responded to what I said or asked.” (Female, Vietnam)

However, there were some perceptions that showed less worry about the challenges of culture and adaptation, though their phrasing shows more of an acceptance of the challenges, rather than lack of challenges in life.

Q: Was it difficult to begin creative work while adjusting to the local daily life?

“Not really, an artist is always a struggling person.” (Male, Perú)

Seems like the interviewees' perceptions of Finns are different from the perceptions they had for their original country's locals. In some cases, the differences seem to be perceived quite strongly. These differences seem to have challenged the artists in their adaptation to the local community. Overall, language, familiarizing themselves with the local community, and engaging the locals with their work seemed to be the main challenges of these interviewees.

7.2 Benefits of arts in adaptation

The second theme, benefits of arts in adaptation, received a variety of answers where the interviewees' perceptions seemed similar to each other. Most of them agreed with

the arts benefiting them during their adaptation and arrival to Finland. They seemed to agree with the cultural benefits as well.

Q: Do you feel like you've benefited from your art, in your adaptation?

"Yes, it feels now my adjustment of locale life has benefited because with my culture make me to be us a youth workers" (Male, Senegal)

"Yes, to certain extent. My lifestyle is enriched from joining the Open stage event, and join some club activities with people at Hacklab. I was practicing music with my Finnish friends whom without practicing for the gig, I will not meet them as much or at all. And you can make friend easier when you share a common thing together." (Female, Vietnam)

"Yes, there is support for the arts activities." (Male, Perú)

Q: What is your main form of artwork? Is it a job or a hobby?

"I did already photography since 2012 and it added a lot to my career had my first exhibition here and I did many exhibitions with Finnish photographer also and I had the opportunity to express my feelings and send the message to people through art" (Male, Iraq)

Among other things, this theme involved many notes of community building. It became apparent that the interviewees thought that creative activities and working with art have given them more chances to strengthen their circles of contacts in Finland. As we saw in the previous section, despite their mentions of challenges within the Finnish art community, some of them have mentioned to have joined some local arts associations to help them with networking with both their artwork and social life.

They mention enrichment to their lives from various events and club activities. Their answers show points of view that describe the previously mentioned challenges as things possible to overcome. They describe it as something worth doing despite the perceived effort in trying to engage locals into activities and conversations. Some interviewees find benefits in the arts on a more personal level in addition to the group behaviour, describing their experiences on a more emotional level.

Q: Do you feel like your work with art has given you chances to build community with other people?

“Yes it has been giving me lot chances to build other people coz music connect 😊” (Male, Senegal)

“I did made friends from doing some artworks here. I have also my Salsa (a Latino dance style) friends as well. So in short, yes, the art hobbies have given me more chances to have contact with other people that I would have not had if I were not doing some creative works.” (Female, Vietnam)

“Made me to understand the environment and the nature and also my type of art made me closer to people feelings and communicate with them” (Male, Iraq)

“Indeed photography gave and made me a friend of many people here and got work and one of the biggest door or keys for me in to the Finnish community and easier to communicate with people since you have something to offer or talk about” (Male, Iraq)

“Truly it always does.” (Male, Perú)

“I have got to know many artists by joining an association, particularly HIAA. Other associations are more difficult to join. I am also a member of MUU, but I

don't think they have helped me much with networking. Much of the newsletters are very long and in Finnish, so it's hard work to go through them. They don't seem that social anyway, not in the same way as with HIAA when there are regularly monthly social meet-ups. It seems to me that in order to access the art world in Finland, or at least in Helsinki (I get the impression it's more elitist here compared to other cities like Tampere or Turku) one has to be a member of an association. Without this membership it seems near impossible to get to know how things work here. I wish there was more community groups or things going on in my area in [edited out the location to keep anonymity] that I could attend. It would make sense because that is my community, but I don't find people very social and there's not that many things happening to bring people together.” (Male, UK)

There appeared to be opinions that did not align with the others completely, as one of the interviewees was conflicted on his perceptions of the situation.

Q: Do you feel like you've benefited from your art, in your adaptation?

“Yes and No. Mainly my life works here because I'm so different and I stand out in a crowd. Therefore my work, efforts and myself are seen just a little bit more.”
(Male, USA)

Overall, it seems the artists that were interviewed in this case were mostly in agreement of there being many benefits for creative works within the adaptation process. The topic received quite a large amount of agreeing responses out of the interviewee count.

7.3 Influences between culture and the arts

Many earlier studies spoke of the relationships and influences between the arts and culture within and outside of the immigrant experiences. The topic came up in the interviews quite visibly as well. They mentioned the experience of their work with arts

somehow “opening their eyes more” to the world around them and to small things they had previously not paid attention to. Many also mentioned their themes and topics changing visibly within the adaptation process, as well as their appreciation of certain things in life.

Q: Do you feel like the Finnish environment and culture have influenced your art somehow, or vice versa?

“Yes, a bit influent from my art style because I need to take my own art and mix to them art and culture” (Male, Senegal)

“A little bit. I have to think a lot what songs I want to sing for instance. Most of the time I try to adjust it to the local taste.” (Female, Vietnam)

“Somehow yeah opened my eyes more flexible to take photos back home had many issues with photography only in few places I can do my hobby” (Male, Iraq)

Q: Is there some trait in your creative style that comes from your experiences before migration?

“Yes I was hearing lot sound use before but now I don't hearing that sound use after believing my culture need to be knowing in here and also in somehow I feel a bit Finnish man coz I have my Finnish citizenship and my friends called me sometimes [edited out nickname to keep anonymity] 😊”

“When the event seems to be suitable for it, I will sing some Vietnamese songs. Most of the time I won't, but when people particularly ask for it, I will be willing to do this. I want to blend in with the locals, it is enough from my look that I am a foreigner when I am on stage, so I try to be quite blend in with the locals.” (Female, Vietnam)

“Theme and topics changed since I came here now more beauty nature and landscape before it was more like street photography and kind of sad mood dark”
(Male, Iraq)

“Like I said before, I think much of what I do is influenced by my past experiences of living in the UK, especially London. Travelling also influences my work; going to places such as India, Nepal, Japan or travelling Europe. I think I have more of an appreciation for nature now, but I’m not sure if that has changed my work or not. My daily travels on the train and through the city probably influence my work in a similar way they did in London.” *(Male, UK)*

However, unlike the source materials predicted, there were multiple conflicting statements to there being influences between arts and culture. Multiple answers described there being little influence for them, or simply did not see the importance of it at all. This raises the question of awareness in adaptation and outside influences. Is the case of them simply being unaware of their changes, or is there a loophole within the source studies’ theory?

Q: Do you feel like the Finnish environment and culture have influenced your art somehow, or vice versa?

“No, not really.” And when asked about possible traits in their creative style, that would have come from their time before migration: *“Nope.”* *(Male, USA)*

“In some way you relate in your art to the environment. But in this case little.”
(Male, Perú)

“I’m not sure about this. I think my life in London still influences my work more and the travels I made in India and Nepal before moving to Finland. I did notice that the comics scene had quite a big underground here, so I found that

interesting. That could have encouraged me to draw more cartoons and get more into illustration.” (Male, UK)

Many of the interviewees had travelled and migrated elsewhere before their arrival in Finland and noted those in their perceptions of their traits and worldviews through artmaking. A larger amount of the interviewees agreed with the source materials on the topic of influences between arts and culture, while a smaller amount disagreed with the idea. It seemed that some had not thought about the topic much beforehand, as can be seen in the last quote.

7.4 Public response to the creative works and adaptation

Within this topic of influences to and from culture, it seemed like the interviewees sometimes modify their art forms to fit the local audiences, rather than bringing a locally new style into public. Some brought up feelings of wanting to blend in, and feelings of it being enough that they look like foreigners when in public or on the stage. They preferred not to bring even more foreignness into play.

Q: Is there some trait in your creative style that comes from your experiences before migration?

“When the event seems to be suitable for it, I will sing some Vietnamese songs. Most of the time I won’t, but when people particularly ask for it, I will be willing to do this. I want to blend in with the locals, it is enough from my look that I am a foreigner when I am on stage, so I try to be quite blend in with the locals.”
(Female, Vietnam)

“[From the relationship between arts and culture] I have to think a lot what songs I want to sing for instance. Most of the time I try to adjust it to the local taste.”
(Female, Vietnam)

The public response was described as good for most of the interviewees, but some described feeling awkward with the silent appreciation they described Finnish people giving to performances and public presentations. They explained their perceptions by saying they were different to what the artists seemed to be used to. Some of their earlier answers mention the audiences in Finland being smaller, and not partaking in as many public shows and events because of that.

Q: How do you feel about publishing your work to the local audiences? What kind of responses do you usually get?

"It's mostly lukewarm, but generally appreciated." (Male, USA)

"I publish my art from different happening also got interview from radio, newspapers, Facebook etc..." (Male, Senegal)

"For instance, when I sing, most of the Finn seems quite and don't response much. The only one experience I got when I was singing, the audience clapped along and seem to actively resounded to my performance was when I performed for a multicultural event. So there, many audiences were foreigners. I still like to perform to Finnish people, but I have to tell myself that, sometimes in Finland, silence also means appreciation." (Female, Vietnam)

"I did already photography since 2012 and it added a lot to my career had my first exhibition here and I did many exhibitions with Finnish photographer also and I had the opportunity to express my feelings and send the message to people through art." (Male, Iraq)

"I hadn't think about it but I must keep this in consideration." (Male, Perù)

"I haven't had many art shows. I've sold work privately, but not much. The audience here is very small. I was involved in one group show in Suomenlinna which had many tourists passing through, so that was quite successful in terms of people visiting (especially considering it was in the middle of Winter on an island in a frozen sea)." (Male, UK)

Overall, it seems that based on their perceptions, the interviewees have managed to interact and adjust enough to get a foothold into the local art scene and partaken in local activities successfully.

7.5 Identity and art

Within the topic of identity, however, interviewees immediately sounded much more certain in their perceptions. Even outside of questions aimed at the topic, identity came up, and it was clear many of them felt strongly about it. They explained having art as a way of expressing their feelings, sending a message through art, and having it work as a door to the Finnish community in a sense.

Q: Is there something in your creative style that somehow relates to your identity as a person?

"I can be both messy yet precise. I try to just do what I want to do and follow my impulses." (Male, USA)

"Yes, I have from my person identity that I'm always a humble person" (Male, Senegal)

"Most of the time. I don't sing rock as my personality doesn't suit it. I sing songs that are chilled and relaxing." (Female, Vietnam)

“Every advanced photographer has his style and his touch in post-production”

(Male, Iraq)

“Definitely, who can avoid it?” (Male, Perú)

As can be seen from the responses, some participants reported having trouble with the identity of an artist in Finland. They explained these difficulties with perceived differences in Finland, compared to the other environments they were familiar with.

“I think my art crosses easily over into other fields such as design and illustration which I am fine with. In the UK many artists have other work or do other things that influence the art. I have found here that people tend to stick to one thing and stay in that world, so other people seem to have found it hard to accept that I work in different fields. It's like artists here think that you are only an artist if that is the only thing you do. Where I come from many artists just can't survive that way so they have to find another way to support themselves if they can't do that with their art. So, in some ways I have struggled with my identity as an artist here because I feel there is no place for someone who works in different fields.” (Male, UK)

If the Finnish society indeed has a single-focus preference, this viewpoint may come up as a difficulty in picking up multiple fields of social activity as part of the adaptation process. Many of the interviewees had ties to Finland via their partners. Overall, they still described their experiences in a way that shows them struggling with some aspects of the local culture, especially when it comes to issues related to identity. Some of them found help into their adaptation process from their previous experiences with foreign cultures, and their answers show them placing value in those experiences.

8 DISCUSSION

The Finnish social support system is mandated to provide the incoming immigrants with help and advice with finances and other everyday things as well as focus on troubles of mental or physical health. Yet, as Kemi (2014) and Ihalainen (2018) are already shown to agree, it does not cover everything they need in order to thrive in the country after their arrival. The interview answers show multiple kinds of challenges. Differences in culture and community, language difficulties, perceptions in varying styles of socializing and showing politeness and appreciation, as well as familiarizing oneself with the local environment and culture. As we see from the interviews, the immigrants felt lacking in their proficiency on Finnish nonverbal communication skills and habits, as well as on the local culture in general, outside of solely language barriers.

Kemi (2014) describes the process of learning a language as a curved route that takes time and effort, along with support. It is not a simple task to be proceeded through immediately after arrival. Karhunen (2013) indeed continues the argument that language is one of the largest challenges of immigration in Finland, confirming the likelihood that this group of interviewees' perceptions are shared with other immigrants. Kim (1988), in her study of adaptation theory made notes on language being perhaps the most vital piece of overcoming stress in order to adapt. She explained the cycle of stress – adaptation – growth that is necessary for proper adaptation to happen. Kim's (2013) later work emphasises the importance of language skills within any kind of messaging, verbal and nonverbal. In her theory, she states that language skills hold status within the community, and a grasp of the local language improves the immigrant's ability in understanding the locals' general way of thinking and behaving.

Multiple interviewees described these difficulties within language proficiency, due to many Finnish organizations' newsletters and similar information being spread only in

Finnish even they accept immigrant members. They noted these activities as being the only way they were able to insert themselves into the local community and activity. It seems even the things that helped them adapt, were challenging due to language. In order for the country to properly handle the challenges and requirements of social support within the adaptation and cultural differences of immigrants, past studies show that different groups should be given their active support in a form that fits them as individuals. A form of support generalized to a group of people at once is not as effective. Individualised support has larger benefits, even if the supportive activity itself ends up happening in a group setting. (Howie, Kristel, Prasad, 2013.)

The following quotes from the findings section show quite well how the interviewees felt about group activity and its effects on the adaptation process.

“[...] The only way that I was able to slowly insert myself into daily life and get to know other artists was through the Sarjakuvakeskus.” (Male, USA)

“I was practicing music with my Finnish friends whom without practicing for the gig, I will not meet them as much or at all. And you can make friend easier when you share a common thing together.” (Female, Vietnam)

Continuing specifically in Howie, Kristel and Prasad's (2013) research, while both the immigrant and the organizer should be taken into account for the activity to properly have effect, it is not only the physical result of art that makes a difference. Instead, the relevant and effective part is the process of making.

As referenced by Perry Magniant (2004), among other challenges it is often more difficult for certain groups. For example it is more challenging for men to get into artistic activities without outer support, as many of them have never been as close to dabbling in the field in their free time, as many women whose upbringing has often expected them to do many kinds of recreational activities. An activity that would help the immigrant may not be easy for

them to take part in without an outside push and help, because they may be lacking a background in the area. They do not know how or where to begin, or if they would fit in or be proficient enough, even if officially no proficiency is required to begin. (Perry Magniant, 2004.)

Harwood (2016) within his study of social identity theory, speaks of a response to the kind of view that personality would explain behaviour of authority and ability, as well as resources. In his study, it comes from group behaviour, stereotypes and prejudices. These prejudices are strengthened by a low skill in the local language. However, when faced with a lack of common language, people can use a variety of other forms of communication, which can create completely new kinds of ways of interaction, but having a stable place and materials goes a long way for effectiveness in learning. (Anttila, 2019.)

The answers from interviews both in this study and previous studies imply that Finland has a problem with prejudice and racism when it comes to immigrants. As Karhunen (2013) reports from her interviews, an artist calls Finland a country where they feel unwelcome. In this study's interviews, there are mentions of wanting to blend in rather than show difference, describing feelings of discomfort with standing out due to "looking like a foreigner", and giving credit to their "different looks" in being more visible. Karhunen (2013) noticed immigrants felt most at ease (and most productive) in learning the culture through informal interactions and situations with locals, as well as do activity work voluntarily. This was supported by the perceptions of interviewees in this study, as many described their adaptation happening as a result of them taking part in local activities and doing creative work with locals.

According to Anttila (2019), activities within the community could prevent immigrants from feeling stuck with language barriers. Visual cues and smaller pieces of information in the second language can, when used within the activity, help people handle the information better. They can understand more easily what is asked from them, as is seen in the

National Educational Psychological Service guidebook of strategies for children with language difficulties (NEPS, 2015). Quoting Li (2012), it can help them avoid “social blindness, muteness and deafness” while their social positions in their previous community have not transferred to the new community. Without help, they can feel the losses of their community membership and status quite severely, even with the support given from the country. Li (2012) explains that a person who has been displaced from their home can easily fall into the role of an unwanted person or a burden, in their new environment, and furthermore, fall into a culture shock. In this study, the interviewees all came to the country either with a contact person, or after a job, so they did not describe many feelings along this theme.

In Jelekäinen's (2015) study of social identity theory, she brings up the value of a strong personal identity. If a person's identity has a strong basis in their home environment, and they are suddenly displaced away from that environment and social standing, it is easy for them to be lost emotionally. She explains that communication with locals as well as the importance of self-identity are useful in surviving such a change. In social identity theory, categorizing others into groups can be used to explain many behavioural phenomena, mainly in communication styles within and between groups (Harwood, 2016).

Adolescents especially tend to imprint into common interests and habits to make it part of their public personas. This may often be called a phase, even when it becomes a long-term piece of their identity. The phenomenon can happen where some of them will continue to feel like outsiders in the community, even if they seem to have adapted on the outside. This may also happen in the form of a culture shock, which is an unpleasant yet common phenomenon during a move abroad. As Harwood (2016) explains, people may examine themselves to have the traits of an out-group, and thus decide they belong to the out-group, rather than the in-group of the local community. He calls this disidentification and explains that the phenomenon is especially common within racial topics. The interviews did not show many

specific descriptions of this phenomenon, however. The only note of such was the wish to blend in and not stand out as a foreigner in the community.

Relationships and voluntarily chosen integration are key factors in successful adaptation, especially for the non-dominant groups in the society (Berry, 1997). If the agreement to integrate is not mutual between the dominant and non-dominant groups of the environment, according to Berry (1997) the cultural diversity in the society will not be functional. As we can see, there are many kinds of challenges within the immigrants' adaptation and upkeep of a daily life in a new country. This is visible in the interviewees' perceptions, as they describe troubles within familiarizing themselves with the local culture and environment and have described having gained positive influences from interacting with local people during activities and work.

"[...] and also in somehow I feel a bit Finnish man coz I have my Finnish citizenship and my friends called me sometimes [edited out nickname to keep anonymity] 😊" (Male, Senegal)

"Yes, it feels now my adjustment of locale life has benefited because with my culture make me to be us a youth workers" (Male, Senegal)

"Yes, to certain extent. My lifestyle is enriched from joining the Open stage event, and join some club activities with people at Hacklab. I was practicing music with my Finnish friends whom without practicing for the gig, I will not meet them as much or at all. And you can make friend easier when you share a common thing together." (Female, Vietnam)

If all interaction in an immigrant's life is based on handling legal things and getting through an endless list of problems, there is no space for other kinds of meaningful communication and social adaptation. The casual socializing will in turn help the people uphold

their mental well-being and build social circles. This, it seems, is where the arts and similar activities come into play during the adaptation and integration periods. Art can be done privately, or for a public audience, or simply just put up to be shown from a wall. The fact that it in some form exists at the environment we live in, such as paintings or music in the house, or the practice of dancing on one's free time, largely de-stresses the person in question (Bungay, et al., 2014).

According to Bungay, et al. (2014), to de-stress, one can use the practice, or the simple presence of art as a tool to process and express their stressful feelings. The answers of interviews in this study held multiple perceptions of stress and worry about adaptation and integration. Activities and the presence of something which does not require language to be understood, could be a large benefit for future immigrants.

The interview answers provided many signs of agreement with earlier studies, when asked whether they found benefits in personally doing art during their adaptation periods. They found experiences of enrichment in their lives. While some of them felt their difference in looks, habits and cultures as the reason to why they are being noticed more within their work, they still felt like they gained benefits from their work with the arts. However, just because immigrants can add arts into their living spaces, does not mean the challenges with adaptation and identity are solved. People's knowledge of the issues can be broadened. The regions can bring in more variety of cultural works with arts in their activities, so that immigrants, artists or not by trade, can partake and learn about the benefits of those practices.

The improved handling of the previously mentioned *shield-behaviour* is one large point of benefits within the arts activities (Howie, Kristel, Prasad, 2013). Shield-behaviour is built upon negative experiences and makes it harder for the person to be independent and happy with their life, focusing only on the negatives. Past studies show that bonding through activities that bring lots of positive experiences and being able to look at their negative experiences

through a different lens after they have happened is making the process of adaptation easier for immigrants. (Howie, Kristel, Prasad, 2013.)

The process of changing the focus from past or current negative experiences into new positive ones is not easy. It helps when the activity teaches a person to connect their feelings into something physical, and recognize them through that process of making, if the tools of arts are properly used (Arrington, Cherry, 2017). In fact, as the previous studies showed that the arts being present and used in a recovery situation showed more than just mental health improvements (Bungay, et al., 2014). According to these studies, people gained physical benefits during their recovery periods and were afterwards more open for future measures of recovery than when they were previously offered.

The interview focus of this study consists of people who were all under sixty (with one person who did not disclose his age). Sources of studies within the creative activities and healthcare, for example Li (2012), have noted the special importance of such activities namely for older generations. Perry Magniant (2004) especially writes about the sense of community and connection within the older generations of immigrants. With The Artwork Studio project, she has shown us how enrichment through the arts is good for reflecting and expressing one's experiences and opinions in the community around them.

Elderly people often lose agency within their lives during large life changes, often having less freedom of movement and activity, as well as less freedom for planning for their futures. They require many more connections and relatability from other human beings. This connection can preferably come through the process of creating together, rather than the physical end result of their creation. (Li, 2012.) It cannot always be expected that all immigrants are young able-bodied individuals. Therefore, studies on the topic from that point of view are extremely valuable. Humankind is always looking for new ways of expressing itself and

connecting with others. The interviews confirm this experience, even with all the troubles of socialising in a new environment.

Interviewees wrote that in their described experiences Finns, while quiet and reserved, are always open for new connections if given the resources. This finding may be interpreted as providing support to the idea that the Finnish society needs to have more activities for community-building through creative practices with locals. These activities can give space for new kinds of interactions with new people just arriving and learning about the culture and language. Finns, according to the interviewees, tend to close resources and activities to being available only to specific groups. Getting in as a person of a different group is difficult, and often feels as if it isn't worth the time and effort.

Harwood's (2016) writings on the social identity theory can explain this to some extent, using the themes of in- and out-group preferences. People are more likely to reward and interact with their in-group members than out-group members. Thus, it can result that they close some resources to the in-group, as seems to be perceived by the interviewees. For the most part, it seems like the interviewees have been partaking in the individual mobility strategy. They have attempted to fit into the local in-groups rather than, for example, actively speaking out in order to change perceptions of their original groups instead of quietly adapting into the local ones.

"I want to blend in with the locals, it is enough from my look that I am a foreigner when I am on stage, so I try to be quite blend in with the locals." (Female, Vietnam)

"Mainly my life works here because I'm so different and I stand out in a crowd. Therefore my work, efforts and myself are seen just a little bit more." (Male, USA)

Ongur (2014) explains as well that while people are able to create temporary in-groups, those groups can easily result in the phenomenon of “othering” the out-group members.

There are multiple sources that say benefits for adaptation exist within the arts. Within the younger generations for example, the background data of this research showed that getting into creative activities has improved their social bravery and presentation abilities significantly (Sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, 2015). Prior studies have shown that the influences between culture and the arts are significant. Not only in the focus of their benefits, but in how it affects people's worldview as a whole. Namely Jelekäinen's (2015) study shows how art can change a person's perspective of their surroundings. The art itself in turn can be influenced by the culture around the person, creating a slow cycle of change in one's mentality and worldview. This is extremely relevant within the activities of arts that are happening amongst people who have recently moved from one culture to another, and are on the cusp of change, both mentally and physically. Pétursdóttir (2014) suggests similarly in her study that within the space of teaching for immigrants, there should be a part of the space left for the arts. Because the practice of arts can be used for integration and adaptation in a larger sense than it is being used for now. This space of creative interaction could also be used to study identities of people in the cultural sense, as Jelekäinen (2015) suggests.

Intergroup communication plays into the theme of identity strongly, as social identity is relevant within activities of adaptation and creativity. Capozza and Brown (2000) note that the theory is used for studying conflicts. That means it could be used in order to learn more about the social conflicts immigrants face, and how they can be overcome through different methods for adapting successfully. DiMaggio and Fernández-Kelly (2010) on the other hand believe the arts can specifically be used for solving conflicts within adaptation, especially within the themes of identity. They mention that while identity can be shown through the arts, some artforms are ignored for such uses, and lose their meaning of identity for the

audiences. Yet, the artists themselves can still gain benefits from working with these artforms. As one of the interviewees noted, there are some more popular art forms in Finland, while others are less popular, such as comic arts in their experience. Yet they are still perceived as relevant for their adaptation.

The prior expectation based on the background studies was that culture would affect art quite largely, and vice versa. Some of the interview answers however described that the artists' experience of culture had not really had much of an effect on their art forms or how they saw the topics of their creations, or the environment around them. Some of them worked with ethnical arts, such as music from their home regions, and agreed with the theory. In general, within the visual arts few people agreed to feeling like their home cultures (or the local culture after their arrival) had played much of a role in their art styles. There were a few who agreed, however, and in their cases, it was more like a role within their personalities was formed from a culture, and then those personality traits had been focused on in their art style as well.

This expectation largely came from studies of art therapy, where culture played a large part in the recovery process and handling of a person's experiences. Regardless of DiMaggio and Fernández-Kelly (2010) explaining art as a device for influencing identity and culture, and Karhunen's (2013) research of the relationship between arts and identity, it seems the interviewees were not conscious of their influences. Alternatively, there exists a niche within this part of cultural studies, that could be studied further to perhaps discover loopholes in the theories. It is possible that this effect between arts and culture simply goes unnoticed by the interviewees, as they are not familiar with such topics even outside of the academic terms. The change from one cultural trait to another in their work may be in the unconscious mind of the artist, rather than a conscious choice of style. Meanwhile, a response that agreed with the influence describes having doubts and struggles over their identity due to different expectations of focus in Finland, as compared to their home country.

"I think my art crosses easily over into other fields such as design and illustration which I am fine with. In the UK many artists have other work or do other things that influence the art. I have found here that people tend to stick to one thing and stay in that world, so other people seem to have found it hard to accept that I work in different fields. It's like artists here think that you are only an artist if that is the only thing you do. Where I come from many artists just can't survive that way so they have to find another way to support themselves if they can't do that with their art. So, in some ways I have struggled with my identity as an artist here because I feel there is no place for someone who works in different fields." (Male, UK)

A culture shock is possibly the most noticeable effect of cultural change. People can often expect other changes to be as visible to themselves and to others. Permanently moving somewhere requires an attitude of staying change. There are so many conscious changes made to one's behaviour and worldview that it would be ridiculous to expect everything to be done within the conscious mind. Unlearning things from the previous culture is usually a more conscious part of adaptation, but learning new things can happen without notice, if it is a small enough thing to pass by unnoticed. This is confirmed by professor Simons (2003) in his research article. He states that learning can happen with the person being aware of the changes in their knowledge, or without the awareness of learning processes. Jelekäinen (2015) confirms that much of people's past experiences can unconsciously influence their perceptions of the world in the current times, as well as their choices related to identity and the self.

As found by Perry Magniant (2004) within the ArtsEqual project, while working with the arts and creative activities, people can make their work visible to others and communicate that way. They can show others their worldview and identity in whatever amount they wish to, showing associations of their culture through their work and working process.

This helps them connect with other, either similarly minded or simply interested people in the local community. Therefore, it helps them build local contacts to get through daily life and adapt into the local culture more fluently. (Perry Magniant, 2004.) The interviewees seemed to agree with this opinion, mentioning happiness in bringing their culture through to their work, and in showing something of themselves to the audiences, when possible. Though even then, they seemed to hold some hesitance in bringing out too much at once of their own cultural identity.

It was mentioned that immigrants helping each other is a larger source of support than the state-governed support. It is sometimes perceived that local native Finns seem to hold a prejudice against immigrants' skills in the workforce. According to the article by OECD (2017), Finland places quite low on the counter of immigrants integrating into the workforce. This is partly explained as a failure in the Finnish system to accept the foreign education degrees and other skills to have value in the country's work force. (OECD, 2017.) Borrowing from Harwood's (1999) studies, this shows clear preference for the in-group members, and any out-group member is examined with suspicion and doubt. While the native Finns are in a position of judging the out-groups, it is no surprise they would reward their own in-group more freely.

"I did already photography since 2012 and it added a lot to my career had my first exhibition here and I did many exhibitions with Finnish photographer also and I had the opportunity to express my feelings and send the message to people through art." (Male, Iraq)

Many of the interviewees showed similar feelings as this example, where working with the locals helped them enter the local groups and be able to express themselves more freely without the stress of being othered as much.

Karhunen (2013) has noted that Finnish funds and effort for immigrant support go more into the side of daily life and finances, than to movements stopping racism in general. Of course, stopping racist speech and actions should not come at the cost of other support to immigrants. However, it is clear the cutting of racism needs more focus as well. Even the European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance has made a suggestion for the Finnish government about managing racism-related problems in Finland better (Valtioneuvosto, 2019). From the interviews of Karhunen's (2013) study, the quote "Finland is a country where you feel unwelcome" was very relevant to this topic. Not all the immigrants have had negative experiences, and many noted having not heard a single negative comment. Still, while not everyone experiences prejudice and racism, that does not take away the experience and validity from those who do experience it.

Many of the immigrant interviewees in this and Karhunen's (2013) study showed a dislike for the continuous use of the term "immigrant artist" when working with public creative works. This term ties them down regarding their identity in the country and separates them needlessly from most other people in the country. (Karhunen, 2013.) This separation may bring about prejudices and suspicion, alongside a general lack of knowledge of the immigrants' ways of living in the country. The term may be showing them as an unknown "other", as shown in Harwood's (2016) explanation of in- and outgroups. In the interviews it was shown that immigrants may feel as though they must provide something valuable for the country in order to become accepted as equal people. Many felt as though they must be more effective and provide more than the local Finns do, before they are accepted to be of an equal level of skill and social standing.

"Indeed photography gave and made me a friend of many people here and got work and one of the biggest door or keys for me in to the Finnish community and

easier to communicate with people since you have something to offer or talk about” (Male, Iraq)

To uphold the freedom of expressing culture within experiences of adaptation and building new parts to identity, the projects of creativity need to be open for multiculturalism and cultural diversity (Howie, Kristel, Prasad, 2013). Not only a simple mention of “everyone is welcome” but making cultural diversity a piece of the activity. For making the activity succeed in equality, Anttila (2019) shows that equality does not always have to be looming as the end goal, but instead it can be the starting point to a group activity. Therefore it is always present, and inequality isn't tolerated just because it's easier to do so in a prejudiced community. The focus of the activity can instead be on other things, like personal growth and communicating, as the general rules of interactional norms have already been set from the start. When a person enters a new community, they can feel unwanted and like a burden while they work to gain the fitness and fluency of the language and behaviour, and they can become more dependent on the public view of who they are (Li, 2012). It can become an unhealthy cycle of dependence.

Building one's identity can be shown to others through the process of artistic creation. Such practices of creating and showing are extremely relevant within upholding a person's well-being and self-exploration, as Jelekäinen (2015) notes in her study. Li (2012) among other researchers is set on the view that immigrants can individually build on their determination and growth within their personal identities and are able to improve their lives personally. While the community can have prejudices and issues with the immigrant, her example of de Kooning among others shows that with support from something they enjoy doing actively, the immigrant can hold off the negatives to some extent. With such support, they can uphold their well-being individually even in the midst of negativity. The interview results

supported this point of view with their notes, that being able to interact with the locals and get their support in work and activities has in their perceptions benefited their adaptations largely.

The interviewees wrote about traits and identity being influenced by the local culture and the activities they did with arts. An individual's base identity is easier to edit than to build from scratch. With the kinds of discrimination and group mentalities Harwood (2016) speaks of, a pre-existing strong identity can likely withstand the changes and difficulties better. It gives immigrants an easier time adjusting and building on their previous experiences with new ones. Another point of identity strength is the number of other people within the in-group in the local community. If you are the only one from a certain ethnical group, for example, your bravery and strength of self-expression can easily weaken with the lack of connection of traits on that field of identity. (Harwood, 2016.) It is once more relevant to return to the references of interviewees wanting to blend in rather than stand out in the crowd.

It has been studied by multiple people, for example by Shepard (2008) that people show clear preference for the in-group members. How exactly is a person whose in-group is extremely small supposed to find strong support, if not from the out-group? To avoid the scenario of the minority out-groups (immigrants) being pushed away by the majority in-group (locals), activities can help thin the gaps between groups. They can make it easier for groups to interact equally without having to think about who is in the in- or outgroup of the situation (Bungay, Munn-Giddings, Boyce, Wilson, 2014). They can simply interact as individuals, for once, at least partly outside of the local prejudices and expectations of the masses. Forming a temporary in-group with the people partaking in the activity is both useful for identity building, and effective for community strengthening within the larger local community (Ongur, 2014).

While people can modify their identities as time passes, changing it quickly because of an outside pressure is another thing altogether, and much less healthy (Martin, 2001).

Harwood (2016) suggests the individual mobility strategy as a resource for leaving the in-group to join an out-group so that one may feel better about their own traits. However, it mostly concerns minorities changing themselves for the majority, not the other way around. Other strategies include protests and social actions. These actions are taken for improvements in the status of smaller in-groups, where the most common in-group traits often push aside the minority traits completely. Unless people fight to regain some stance for their groups and traits in the community, it is unlikely any change will happen. In these situations, the groups together may create chaos by everyone acting for their own group's benefit. (Harwood, 2016.)

Identity can be fused to a group as well, for example if the activity is themed around one or two ethnical traits. The individual traits and identities of the members cannot get out into view as effectively, as the group has formed a sort of pan-ethnicity around the group. (DiMaggio & Fernández-Kelly, 2010.) For different people, the experience of identity is different. However, according to Li (2012), the most affected by changes in social status and loss of community are adolescent and elderly people. For adolescents, it is especially important to be able to build an identity for their own person, as it is the key time for such activity (Shepard, 2008). While individual in its complete form, their identity can be strongly formed based on the environment and the group around them. It is important that they have good examples of their in-group traits in the community around them. For minority in-groups this can be more difficult to reach. Such things often require outer support to become more commonplace and accepted in the community, so that these adolescents can see positive examples of their traits of identity. (Harwood, 2016.)

Especially within the younger generations, the difference between genders in adaptation can often come from the way boys and girls are treated differently by their parents. In their daily lives at home and their home community, girls are much more likely to be monitored and restricted in their movement, social circles, and general freedom of socializing,

than boys of the same families are. (Shepard, 2008.) There is a significant difference in levels of freedom between the sexes, as is noted by Shepard (2008) among others. He describes that the differences between sexes are often ignored or forgotten to take into account within research on identity and adaptation. Kim (2013), however, makes the counterpoint that social relationships are not enough for making predictions over the adaptation process of immigrants.

Overall, within the topics of identity, adaptation, and culture in relation to the arts, the background sources seemed to quite closely correspond with the interview data. There were conflicting descriptions as well, but for the most part it seemed the artists interviewed were in agreement of the general ideas related to the collected themes.

9 CONCLUSIONS

Overall, it must be remembered that while immigrants can belong to certain in-groups and share traits with others, they all have their own individual identity in the end, and that personal identity works outside of their definition as an immigrant, or in the case of this study's interviewees, as artists (Karhunen, 2013). Identity and group preferences are relevant pieces of adaptation, because they concern so many of the topics within the process of adjusting into a new culture, and in being perceived by the public of the country. Immigrants are perceived with a more critical eye by the locals. Their strengthening of personal identities within the process of adapting to daily life in Finland can be more of a struggle than usual (Kim, 1988).

The research questions of this study were the following: how do immigrants in Finland describe the relationship between their artistic activities and their adaptation into the local culture? The other aims were to examine how their answers support or contradict the theory, as well as what kind of programs exist in Finland already for such uses. How can those programs can be improved upon? Interviewees described their insights on the arts and adaptation in various ways. Most of them described it positively, whereas other topics related to adaptation in Finland were often handled with doubt and worry. The past studies showed that there are various kinds of programs in Finland already, such as *Taike* and *Osiris-teatteri*, which are mostly focused on larger cities and organized by individual people or groups. The state-funded support is in place, but the past studies as well as these interviews gave off the perception of it not being enough for successful adaptation. Improvements could come from giving more resources to smaller projects around the country. Then even immigrants in smaller towns can more easily take part, and benefits can be shared between different kinds of projects.

The themes of interview answers together with the base of past studies and theories showed that immigrants are not always aware of the change in their perception when

it comes to culture and identity. It could either hint at a niche in need of more study, or this awareness is due to unconscious learning. They described feeling like they are benefiting from creative works and had overcome some challenges due to their work with the arts, especially together with local people. There are still many challenges they struggle with, such as language, socializing and differences in the environment, as well as in some cases, identity. As we see from the background materials, these are all large influences to adaptation.

The general view received from this data, was that the immigrants wished rather to blend in and fit in with the locals, while some had strongly brought along their own cultural identity into their works. When asked about the public response to their works, answers varied between themselves working to fit their works into the local style, and the audience reacting to their style of work. In many cases, responses were said to be lukewarm, however the interviewees noted that in their perceptions, Finnish appreciation is quieter. This difference, while not impossible to overcome, had set their social adaptation to move a little slower at first.

This study, while hopefully useful for future planning of adaptation support, is conducted with a very small group of interviewees, and thus cannot be used in order to generalize upon the experiences and needs of all immigrants in Finland and elsewhere. Within the same line of topic, this study also uses as its interviewees mainly professional artists, while studying the creative activities of immigrants in general. That choice can make this study less accurate overall, however there is something to learn even from this group's experiences in terms of the arts' benefits for adaptation. They have worked actively with the arts with their adaptation periods, and thus it has influenced their adaptation on a larger scale, making the effects easier to perceive.

While I feel the theories and background studies fit in with the topic, others may find faults in my logic, and find it better to use other sources of information to be more accurate

and realistic. However, this is only one study on the topic, and there is space for others within the same niche. In the future, this study could be continued with a larger and more varying data of interviewees, perhaps using focus groups in order to help the conversation along. For example, the unconscious learning can be extended upon, and the relationship between identity and adaptation can be further studied for surely interesting results.

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APPENDIX A: Interview questions

The following questions (used in various stages of editing, as the individual interviews took place over time) were sent to the interviewees over email and sent back filled with text answers. No face-to-face interviews took place in this interview format.

1. How old are you? What is your country of origin?
2. What is your main form of artwork? Is it a job or a hobby?
3. How long have you lived in Finland?
4. What was your reason of moving to Finland?
5. Do you have experience of migrating elsewhere?
6. How familiar were you with the local culture before arriving? Did you visit Finland before?
7. Did you move alone, or did you have ties to the country already?
8. In adjusting to the Finnish culture, what did you find most challenging?
9. Do you feel like you've benefited from your art, in your adaptation?
10. Was it difficult to begin creative work while adjusting to the local daily life?
11. Do you feel like the Finnish environment and culture have influenced your art somehow, or vice versa?
12. How do you feel about publishing your work to the local audiences? What kind of responses do you usually get?
13. Is there something in your creative style that somehow relates to your identity as a person?
14. Is there some trait in your creative style that comes from your experiences before migration?
15. Do you feel like your work with art has given you chances to build community with other people?