

**“It’s not about the passport” – The perception of Finnish citizens with a foreign
background in the wake of the Refugee Crisis**

Annika Sievert

Master’s Thesis

Intercultural Communication

Department of Communication

March 2017

University of Jyväskylä

JYVÄSKYLÄN YLIOPISTO

Faculty: Humanities and Social Sciences	Department: Department of Language and Communication Studies
Author: Annika Sievert	
Title: "It's not about the passport" – The perception of Finnish citizens with a foreign background in the wake of the Refugee Crisis	
Subject: Intercultural Communication	Level: Master's Thesis
Time: March 2017	Number of pages: 76 + 2 appendix
<p>Abstract</p> <p>This study examines whether the perception of Finnish citizens with a foreign background has changed in the wake of the refugee crisis. To analyse the situation, focus groups with a total of 18 participants with both Finnish citizenship and a foreign background were conducted to establish whether they felt the treatment towards them had changed over the last years. Berry's model of acculturation and the Interactive Acculturation Model by Bourhis et al. were used to analyse the results and explain acculturation strategies and orientations. The study resulted in two key findings: Finnish citizens with a migration background felt that the perception towards them had changed, but this did not impact their acculturation strategies. Furthermore, most participants felt at home in Finland, but also felt like they were not accepted as Finns by the larger society. These findings indicate that while majority members influence acculturation strategies, they are less likely to impact them after some form of long-term adaptation has been achieved.</p>	
<p>Keywords</p> <p>Acculturation, adaptation, refugee crisis, majority member orientations, immigration</p>	
Depository	University of Jyväskylä

Table of Contents

1. Introduction5

2. Relevance6

3. Context7

3.1. Definitions7

3.1.1. Migrants and Immigrants.....7

3.1.2. Citizen.....8

3.1.3. Refugee8

3.1.4. Asylum Seeker8

3.1.5. Obtaining Finnish Citizenship8

3.2. Immigration in Finland.....9

3.2.1. The History of Diversity in Finland9

3.2.2. Finnish Multiculturalism Policies11

3.3. The European Refugee Crisis14

3.3.1. An Overview of the European Refugee Crisis.....14

3.3.2. The Impact of the European Refugee Crisis on Finland17

4. Literature Review18

4.1. Acculturation and Adaptation as two separate concepts18

4.2. Berry’s Model of Acculturation19

4.3. The impact of host society attitudes on acculturation24

4.4. Reverse Integration as an outcome of majority member attitudes and perceived discrimination.....31

4.5. Research Questions32

5. Methodology33

5.1. Method.....	33
5.2. Sampling	35
5.3. Participants.....	35
5.4. Conduction of Focus Groups	38
5.5. Analysis	38
6. Results.....	41
6.1. Initial Perception and Open-Mindedness of Finns	41
6.2. Perception of Acculturation Expectations	43
6.3. Perceived Discrimination.....	46
6.4. Perception of Foreigners in the Wake of the Refugee Crisis.....	48
6.5. The Impact of the Changed Perception on Acculturation Strategies	51
6.6. Discussion.....	55
7. Limitations of the Study.....	59
8. Further Research Opportunities.....	61
9. Conclusion.....	63
10. References	66
Appendix A.....	77
Appendix B	78

“It’s not about the passport” – The perception of Finnish citizens with a foreign background in the wake of the Refugee Crisis

1. Introduction

While migration is certainly not a new phenomenon, the dynamics and frequency of migration have shifted over the last decades due to easier accessibility and new technologies.

Globalisation has brought the world closer together, however, migration is not always seen as a positive development and many countries are still afraid of losing their own culture due to the increasing diversity within their nations. Especially homogenous countries that have historically not had to deal with a great influx of immigration are often concerned about the effects a higher number of foreign citizens in their country will have. These tendencies have increased since 2015, in the wake of the refugee crisis, which has dominated the media for the last two years, and led to a change in the ethnic makeup of many countries.

Finland accepted refugees throughout this period and the opinions on this development are varied throughout the country. Consisting of a relatively small population of 5.5 million people, of which only about 11% consist ethnic groups as of 2015 (Statistics Finland, 2016), Finland has been considered highly homogenous throughout the centuries. This paper intends to investigate whether the attitudes Finns display towards foreign citizens have changed due to the refugee crisis. To gain insight on this issue, focus groups with Finnish citizens that have a migration background will be conducted to establish whether they perceive their treatment has changed over the last years.

To establish the context of this paper, immigration to Finland throughout the centuries and the development of the European refugee crisis, and its impact on Finland, will be discussed. While the refugee crisis is a global phenomenon this review will focus on its impact on Europe, as those effects are relevant for the later conducted study.

Furthermore, Berry's model of acculturation will be reviewed to establish the different acculturation strategies migrants can choose. The influence of majority members on the acculturation process will also be discussed to show the influence of the dominant group on migrants.

The review is followed by the hypotheses of the research prospectus which are then linked to the qualitative method of focus groups, which will be employed to collect the data necessary for the research. The collected data and its findings will then be discussed to establish answers to the proposed research questions. As the study is qualitative in nature results will not be generalizable and will only give an indication of the processes behind acculturation. The paper will conclude by summarizing the findings, assessing the limitations of the study and giving further research directions.

Therefore, this research hopes to contribute some new findings to the study of acculturation and to provide a better understanding of how immigration influx affects smaller countries.

2. Relevance

Globalisation has changed the way people move – it has become a lot more common for people to work, study and live in places other than their home countries. This development has further been influenced by the recent refugee crisis and has led to an increase of migrants in places that have historically been monocultural. While research on acculturation and immigration in the past largely concentrated on countries such as the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand (Berry, 2005), “massive population contacts and transfers” (Berry, 2005, p. 700) are now taking place in other parts of the world as well.

Finland is such a country. While the aforementioned countries are traditionally considered multicultural and have hosted large immigrant populations, Finland has not been an attractive country for immigrants and has remained a largely homogenous mindset up to

this date. Therefore, Finland is the ideal country to study to gain insight into the developments that take place when a nation experiences an influx in immigration.

While acculturation theory acknowledges the impact of majority members on the acculturation strategies of the immigrant (Berry, 1980, 1997, 2006; Bourhis, Moïse, Perreault & Senécal, 1997), little research has been done to establish how a change of attitude in the majority population can change the attitude and acculturation strategy of the immigrant. Hence, this study aims to open the discussion in a largely unexplored field of acculturation research. By including citizens with different foreign backgrounds in the study, observations on whether the treatment of another migrant group affects the opinions of an individual belonging to another group can also be made – another field, that has not largely been researched. Therefore, the present study is relevant in the current situation and contributes to the research on acculturation. Due to the scale and the qualitative nature of the study it is, however, not possible to generalise the data and the study can only give a very subjective idea of how the refugee crisis has impacted Finnish citizens with a migration background.

3. Context

3.1. Definitions

3.1.1. Migrants and Immigrants

According to the Oxford Dictionary (OED online, 2017) migrant is defined as a person who moves from one place to another to find work or to improve their living conditions. This is different from an immigrant who moves to a country in order to permanently stay there. (OED online, 2017). However, the two terms are closely related and often used interchangeably. In the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, the United Nations (1990) defines migrant workers as all those who work, will work or have worked in a country that is not their country of origin.

3.1.2. Citizen

A citizen is a native or naturalised national of a country. Immigrants can become citizens after a certain amount of time by applying for naturalisation (OED online, 2017).

3.1.3. Refugee

A refugee is a person forced to leave their home to find shelter elsewhere, especially in a foreign country (OED online, 2017). Reasons for becoming a refugee include war, political or religious persecution and displacement due to natural disasters (OED online, 2017). Refugees are protected by international law and must be allowed to stay in a foreign country if returning to their home is unsafe and would put their lives at risk (UNHCR, n.d. a).

3.1.4. Asylum Seeker

An asylum seeker is a person seeking refuge, especially due to political persecution, in a foreign country (OED online, 2017). In contrast to refugees, asylum seekers are still awaiting a decision on whether they will be granted refugee status or not (UNHCR, n.d. b). Only when refugee status is granted to asylum seekers they qualify for protection, if they do not become refugees they can be returned to their country of origin.

3.1.5. Obtaining Finnish Citizenship

According to the Finnish Immigration Service (2017a), Finnish citizenship can be based on different criteria: The nationality of one biological or adoptive parent, Finland as a birthplace, marriage of parents, naturalisation or declaration.

The Finnish Immigration Service (2017a) further explains that Finnish nationality is mainly based on jus sanguinis (right of blood), meaning that those with Finnish blood can acquire Finnish citizenship. However, naturalisation is also a possibility. The Finnish Immigration Service (2017a) gives a list of criteria that has to be fulfilled in order to become a citizen: Firstly, the applicant needs to provide prove of his identity and integrity to be able

to apply for citizenship. Furthermore, satisfactory language skills in either Finnish or Swedish are necessary to be eligible for citizenship. Applicants must have lived in Finland for five years without interruption, or for an accumulated seven years in total after the age of 15. The applicant also needs to be able to guarantee that he can financially support his life in Finland (e.g. through payslips, allowances or business income).

The Finnish Immigration Service (2017a) also lists a number of exceptions: Foreign nationals with a Finnish spouse are eligible to apply for citizenship after a continuous four years in Finland, or six accumulative years. Of these years, three years must have been spent living together with the spouse. This exception also applies to refugees, stateless people and those who have acquired sufficient language skills, and possess strong ties with Finland. Nordic citizens can apply for citizenship in Finland after living in the country for two continuous years.

By obtaining citizenship, a person is guaranteed all the rights and has to fulfil all the obligations of Finnish citizens.

3.2. Immigration in Finland

3.2.1. The History of Diversity in Finland

Finland is one of the bilingual countries within Europe, as both Finnish and Swedish are official languages of the state. Furthermore, the Sami people live within the country and have their own language, traditions and way of life. The equal status of two languages within the country and the existence of three culturally different groups (Finns, Finn-Swedes and Sami people) points to a multicultural society, however Finland has historically not been an immigrant nation. While many Finns emigrated, for example to Northern America and Sweden, migration to Finland was very low until the second half of the 20th century (Saukkonen, 2013).

The first immigrants to arrive in Finland were the Rom, who came from Sweden in the mid-17th century. Finland itself was part of the Kingdom of Sweden at the time, and became part of the Grand Duchy of the Russian empire in 1809 (Korkiasaari & Söderling, 1998; Saukkonen, 2013). This explains how Swedish became a national language of the country. Russian, however, never became established as a national language, instead Finnish, the language of most people living in the Grand Duchy, eventually gained the same status as Swedish.

This development was officiated when Finland gained independence in 1917 and became a bilingual country (Saukkonen, 2013). About 6,000 Russians were living in the country when Finland declared independence and more arrived after World War I and the Russian revolution when over 33,000 refugees from Eastern Europe came to Finland (Korkiasaari & Söderling, 1998). However, this number decreased in the 1920's and Finland did only attract few immigrants until the 1970's (Korkiasaari & Söderling, 1998). In 1973 Finland accepted a group of refugees from Chile for the first time, an event that marked the beginning of Finland's refugee policy (Korkiasaari & Söderling, 1998). Over the next decade Finland accepted further refugees from Latin America and Vietnam, and from 1986 onwards the country began to regularly accept refugees (Korkiasaari & Söderling, 1998).

The 1980's generally showed an increase in immigration to Finland, which resulted in a noticeable change in the ethnic make-up and cultural landscape of the country (Saukkonen, 2013). Reasons for the increase in immigration were the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Civil war in Yugoslavia, and refugees coming from Asia and Africa (Korkiasaari & Söderling, 1998). Finland furthermore joined the European Union in 1995 and thus became closer connected to mainland Europe. It also became a part of the Schengen area in 2001, a development that increased mobility between the European member states and brought more people to Finland (European Union, 2017).

As of 2015 the amount of people with foreign background totalled 6.2% of the population (not including Finn-Swedes and Sami) compared to 0.8% in 1990 (Statistics Finland, n.d. a). 339,925 people had a foreign background in 2015 and most of them came from Estonia, the Russian Federation, Sweden, China and Somalia (Statistics Finland, n.d. b). One reason for the sudden influx in immigration was the refugee crisis, which led Finland to take in over 32,000 asylum seekers in 2015. A number that, according to the Ministry of the Interior, is “ten times higher than in previous years” (Ministry of the Interior of Finland, n.d.). While the number of immigrants is still relatively small compared to other countries, the rapid increase over only 25 years has led to changes within Finnish society and affected multiculturalism policies in the country.

3.2.2. Finnish Multiculturalism Policies

The Finnish constitution (Ministry of Justice, 1999) contains an article on the right to one’s language and culture (article 17), which states the following:

The national languages of Finland are Finnish and Swedish. The right of everyone to use his or her own language, either Finnish or Swedish, before courts of law and other authorities, and to receive official documents in that language, shall be guaranteed by an Act. The public authorities shall provide for the cultural and societal needs of the Finnish-speaking and Swedish-speaking populations of the country on an equal basis. The Sami, as an indigenous people, as well as the Roma and other groups, have the right to maintain and develop their own language and culture.

When the article was proposed, it was made clear that the minorities included in the constitution “could be either traditional minorities or new ones produced by migration” (Saukkonen, 2013, p. 273) and that not only language but also “culture in a broader meaning” (Saukkonen, 2013, p. 273) would be protected by the legislation.

The Act on the Integration of Immigrants and the Reception of Asylum Seekers (Ministry of the Interior of Finland, 1999) sets the legal parameters for the reception of immigrants into Finnish society. The act defines integration as “personal development of immigrants, aimed at participation in working life and society while preserving their own language and culture” (p. 1), an understanding that is in accordance with that of Berry’s model of acculturation. The act (1999) further states that integration should be supported by the authorities to successfully integrate immigrants into Finnish society, and proposes an integration plan. Among the amendments later added is an article regarding preparedness for a mass influx (118/2002), which proposes measures in case of a drastic increase in migration as happened with the European Refugee Crisis.

The Strategy on Cultural Policy published by the Ministry of Education and Culture (2009) also highlights the value of immigration to Finland by stating that immigrants “are a new creativity and talent resource, and the positive effects of multiculturalism add to the vitality of Finnish culture” (p. 16). However, the publication also points out the risks of multiculturalism, namely the dangers of isolation and marginalisation and the possible polarisation of society (p. 16). As an aim for 2020 an inclusion of different population groups, equal rights for linguistic minorities and multiculturalism in all areas of cultural policy are named (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2009). It needs to be clarified that culture in the context of the publication often refers to high culture, however, multiculturalism and the status of different cultural groups within Finland are still addressed.

As can be seen through the above examples, policies in Finland show open-mindedness towards multiculturalism and a clear support of diversity within the country. According to Saukkonen (2013) many of the steps discussed in the documents have been implemented in Finland: Integration programmes exist in most municipalities with an immigrant population, financial resources are available for activities related to immigrants’

languages and cultures, and Finnish multiculturalism does not exist solely on paper. However, there are still some discrepancies between the theory of multiculturalism and its state in the country today. This can partly be attributed to the perseverance of nationalism and the perception of Finland as a homogenous country by some citizens. Saukkonen (2013) states that “deep-rooted ideas about the Finnish nation are among the reasons why multiculturalist policies have not been implemented more effectively” (p. 288). Due to its history, Finnish identity was founded on a differentiation from Swedish and Russian language, and also on cultural homogeneity (Saukkonen, 2013), which even today leads to a distinction between “the genuine Finns’ and the rest” (Saukkonen, 2013, p. 289).

This idea is also clearly reflected in one of the Finnish political parties – the True Finns – who list nationalism and patriotism as their values and want to strengthen the Finnish language and identity (Wahlbeck, 2013). The True Finns won 19.1% of the votes in the 2011 election and 17.7% in the 2015 election, making them the second largest party in parliament (Yle, 2015b). Their sudden rise – before 2011 they won only 4% of the votes – can also be seen as reflective of a change in public opinion. The True Finns present an opposition to minority rights and perceive multiculturalism as a threat, an attitude that could change Finnish politics, and reverse some of the legislations on multiculturalism (Wahlbeck, 2013). The True Finns can be seen as a representation of the homogenous identity that still prevails up to today and complicates the inclusion of foreigners in Finland.

In conclusion, a surprising paradox exists in Finland: The existence of a multicultural state, that still shows a tendency towards homogeneity. This paradox may explain why the diverse cultural elements brought to Finland by immigrants have still not truly become part of the society and have not lastingly affected the country (Saukkonen, 2013). While multiculturalism policies exist in Finland, they still need to be implemented more effectively to make the integration of foreigners more successful in the future.

3.3. The European Refugee Crisis

3.3.1. An Overview of the European Refugee Crisis

As mentioned before, the role of migration has increased steadily over the last decades and immigration has become more present in countries, that are not traditionally immigrant nations, such as Finland. The United Nations' Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2015) reported that the number of international migrants "reached 244 million in 2015 for the world as a whole, an increase of 71 million, or 41 per cent, compared to 2000" (p. 1). In 2014 about 8% of international migrants were refugees – this is the highest number since World War II (United Nations, 2016, p. 13).

According to a publication by the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in 2016, the sudden increase of refugees began in 2011 "with the beginning of the 'Arab Spring' and the Syrian conflict" (p. 6), until then numbers had been relatively stable. These conflicts, as well as the conflict in Iraq, sparked the need for many to flee their home countries and to seek shelter abroad. Syrian refugees became the biggest group worldwide, accounting for 4.9 million refugees in 2015 (UNHCR, 2016, p. 16). They were mainly hosted by neighbouring countries, however many of them also fled to Europe, increasing the number of refugees there. While Turkey took in most refugees in Europe, the Russian Federation, Germany, France, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and Italy also took in high amounts (UNHCR, 2016, p. 14). Especially the number of migrants arriving by sea – landing in the Mediterranean, especially Greece – increased significantly and more than quadrupled from 2014 to 2015, reaching over 1 million (UNHCR, 2016, p. 7).

This development is referred to as the Europe Migrant or the Europe Refugee Crisis. The term Europe Migrant crisis is more accurate, as not only refugees arrive on the shores, but also people in search of a better life, that are more likely to qualify as economic migrants (European Commission, 2016).

Most people landed in Europe after leaving the Syrian Arab Republic, Afghanistan and Iraq, the war-torn countries of the Middle East. Their arrival in Europe proved to be a test for the European Union, as many refugees were crossing borders throughout the summer and autumn of 2015 to move to Western or Northern European countries (UNHCR, 2016). To control the arrival of refugees, the European Union made an agreement with Turkey, which restricted the sea crossing and provided legal, alternative routes, reducing the numbers from “a peak of around 7400 per day in October 2015 (...) to 47 per day by the end of May 2016” (European Commission, 2016, p. 2).

However, the European Union did not only try to control the flow of refugees, it also provided humanitarian aid to address the basic needs of the refugees arriving, especially in Greece as a hotspot (European Commission, 2016, p. 2). All in all, 10 billion were budgeted to deal with the refugee crisis in 2015 and 2016 (European Commission, 2016). Funding has also been dedicated to search and rescue operations, the destruction of criminal networks, and reinforcement of the EU’s external borders (European Commission, 2016). The European Union has also devised a resettlement and relocation scheme, which is supposed to help transfer arrivals from hotspots to other European Union member states, while irregular migrants without reason to stay in the European Union are being send back to their country of origin (European Commission, 2016). While measures have been taken to control the situation, a lot of restructuring and planning will have to still be done to accommodate the refugees within Europe.

How overwhelmed Europe is by the sudden influx of refugees can be seen through many countries “imposing greater restrictions on access to their territories” (UNHCR, 2016, p. 34), to stop the flow of refugees across Europe. This shows that reception systems were severely tested in the wake of the crisis and were often not able to accommodate the increased

flow of refugees, instead leading to new laws and legislations in order to stop the influx of refugees in several European countries (UNHCR, 2016, p. 34).

Khiabani (2016) argues that the European Refugee crisis should be put in perspective with the bigger picture, as those arriving in Europe “represent only a small percentage globally” (p. 757) and countries outside of Europe take the largest number of refugees. Sarcinschi (2016) also acknowledges this but also states that “the on-going migration crisis has increased the EU’s visibility in the fields of migration” (p. 17). It has to be noted that while the number of refugees Europe accepts is relatively small compared to the global scale, it is still an increase by more than four times in a very short period of time. Therefore, it is not surprising that the development has led to struggles within countries, the EU, and all of Europe.

The European Migrant Crisis has been discussed in media all over Europe, it has been ground for new legislations, for debate and the general public has, of course, also formed its own opinions on the matter. Sarcinschi (2016) found that many citizens in destination countries are prejudiced when it comes to the arrival of refugees in their country. She found that prejudice often focussed on the type of immigrant and the effect of the refugee crisis on security within Europe. Sarcinschi (2016) states that many people are “correlating the wave of refugees with the increased risk of terrorist attack within the countries of destination” (p. 21), an assumption that cannot statistically be proven, but has shaped the attitudes of many citizens. These assumptions can easily turn from prejudice to discrimination and result in issues as grave as xenophobia, extreme nationalism and ethnocentrism (Sarcinschi, 2016). This is not only a risk to refugees and recently arrived migrants, at worst these attitudes can also affect “European immigrants already integrated on the labour market who chose living in other EU Member States” (Sarcinschi, 2016, p. 21). Therefore, the refugee crisis might not only have impact on the treatment of refugees and asylum seekers, it will most likely also

impact those who settled in Europe many years ago. The relevance of the refugee crisis and the resulting public attitudes will be discussed in a later part of this paper.

3.3.2. The Impact of the European Refugee Crisis on Finland

The European Refugee Crisis has also been a topic of discussion in Finland and Finland's decision to take in more refugees has had an impact on the country. Finland usually receives between 3,000 – 4,000 asylum applications, however, in 2015 the number rose to a record 32,476 applications (Finnish Immigration Service, 2017c). This number may seem relatively small compared to the amount of applications countries like Germany, France, and Sweden received. However, it equals 591 applications per 100,000 members of the local population – making Finland the fifth largest application receiver per capita, while Germany only comes in 6th place when looking at the relation between applications and population (Migrant Crisis: Migration to Europe in Seven Charts, 2016).

The influx in applications presented new challenges to the country and marked a spike in foreigners arriving in Finland. 120 reception centres and 60 units for minors were opened to accommodate refugees and asylum seekers (Finnish Immigration Service, 2016), adding to the already existing centres in the country. However, of the over 30,000 applicants only 27% received a positive decision (Finnish Immigration Service, 2017c).

In 2016 application numbers dropped significantly to 5,657 persons (Finnish Immigration Service, 2017c) and for 2017 less than 10,000 applications are expected (Finnish Immigration Service, 2017b). This drop in asylum seekers and refugees has led to the closure of some centres, even though Finland is still prepared for another influx (Finnish Immigration Service, 2017b).

The sudden increase in asylum seekers and refugees has been challenging for the country and opinions about the development have been clearly divided. The election of the True Finns into parliament (compare 3.2.2) has led to more negative attitudes, which are also reflected in

parts of the media and public opinion. The way Finland deals with the new multitude of foreigners will significantly shape the demographics of Finland in the future, but to accommodate the newcomers a welcoming society is also crucial. The Finnish Broadcasting Company Yleisradio (Yle) published a list of concerns Finns had about asylum seekers – listing fear of crime, increased expenses, illegal immigrants, and leaching off the system as some of the common fears (Yle, 2015a). While multiculturalism policies exist in the country, fear among the public can hence still be found and effective integration programmes are necessary to integrate refugees into the society.

While a lot of attention has been given to how refugees and asylum seekers are welcomed in the country, the impact of the refugee crisis on long-term citizens with a migration background has not been discussed. It is however necessary to see if an increasingly hostile attitude within the country also affects those who came to the country before the crisis, and whether this has an impact on their acculturation strategies. The Review of literature will discuss the meaning of acculturation and adaptation for immigrants and explain the different acculturation strategies an individual can choose. Furthermore, the influence of the host society on these acculturation strategies will also be reviewed and linked to the meaning of cultural policies. This will provide the theoretical background needed to evaluate how the current attitudes influence immigrants that have become Finnish citizens and have built their lives in Finland.

4. Literature Review

4.1. Acculturation and Adaptation as two separate concepts

Before discussing Berry's model of acculturation and the research on acculturation that draws on it, the difference between acculturation and adaptation has to be explained. Berry (2005) emphasises that acculturation is the process of cultural change, while adaptation is the long-term outcome of the acculturation process.

Various modes of adaptation can occur depending on the acculturation strategies of the individual and the receptivity of the host society, resulting in negative or positive adaptation outcomes (Berry, 1997). Adaptation also occurs in different sectors of life and can occur on a psychological, sociocultural, or economic level (Berry, 1997).

While the participants in the study have all achieved some form of long-term adaptation, the main focus will be on acculturation strategies to determine whether a change in majority member attitude disrupts adaptation and leads to a change in acculturation strategy.

While Berry describes adaptation as an outcome of acculturation, he also stated that acculturation is an ongoing process that exists as long as two different cultures are in contact with each other (Berry, 1980). Research has consistently shown that choosing integration or assimilation as an acculturation strategy usually results in the most positive outcomes (Berry, 1997; Berry, Phinney, Sam & Vedder, 2006; Ward & Chang, 1997), thus implying that a shift towards separation or marginalisation can result in more negative adaptation outcomes. This is an important prerequisite for the present study, which will discuss the impact of host society attitudes on acculturation and adaptation. An understanding of the difference between the two concepts is necessary to follow the theories discussed in the literature review.

4.2. Berry's Model of Acculturation

Acculturation is defined as “the dual process of cultural and psychological change that takes place as a result of contact between two or more cultural groups and their individual members” (Berry, 2005, p. 698). The term *acculturation* itself was first used by John Powell in the 1880's, who claimed that “the evolution of the individual man, arises through the three agencies - invention, acculturation, and instruction” (Powell, 1883, p. 207). However, the concept was not properly defined until the 1930's, when the Social Science Research Council of the United States commissioned a committee with the definition of its parameters (Sam,

2015). The first result of this was Redfield, Linton, and Herskovits' (1936) definition of acculturation, which read as follows:

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

The Social Science Research Summer Seminar adapted this definition in 1956 and described acculturation as “culture change that is initiated by the conjunction of two or more autonomous cultural systems” (p. 974), which may lead to “the selective adaptation of value systems, the processes of integration and differentiation, the developmental sequences, and the operation of role determinants and personality factors” (p. 974).

While acculturation has been present in every contact between two different cultural groups over the centuries, these definitions set the base for research into the field. In the beginning, acculturation research focused on the effects of colonialization of indigenous people (Berry, 2005), however, the field has been wildly expanded and now explores many different types of migrant experiences.

In his initial research, Berry (1980) drew on the two definitions discussed earlier to further his own theory of acculturation and its processes: He explained that acculturation consists of different features, which influence each other and explain why there is no one fixed pattern of acculturation. Firstly, acculturation requires the contact of at least two cultural groups of which at least one has to change due to the contact. While change is possible in both groups it is more likely that one dominates, and passes its cultural traits on to the other group (Berry, 1980).

Berry (1980) summarises the process of acculturation as contact, conflict and adaptation. Conflict occurs when resistance exists on some level, which is often the case in cultural encounters, as “groups do not lightly give up valued features of their culture” (Berry,

1980, p. 11). Therefore, conflict is often present throughout the acculturation process and can originate from either group.

Another important factor in Berry's understanding is the occurrence of acculturation on two levels – the individual and the group level (Berry, 1980). Berry (1980) suggested that acculturation on an individual level should be measured through “the individual's exposure to the other culture, the interpersonal and intrapersonal conflicts and crises experienced, and the personal adaptations made” (p.12). Graves (1967) used the term psychological acculturation when studying whether “changes in the world view of minority groups” (p. 337) occur, which led to the study of individual experiences and the recognition of the differences in the acculturation process. Due to the vast differences in acculturation of the individual, a clear distinction between the group and the individual level is paramount, as acculturation happens differently even for individuals from the same country of origin that enter the same acculturative context (Sam, 2015).

Throughout his work, Berry defined four different acculturation strategies for individuals: Integration, assimilation, marginalisation, and separation (e.g. Berry, 1980; Berry, 1997; Berry, 2005; Sam, 2015). Which strategy an individual chooses depends on two factors – whether they feel their cultural identity can be kept and if they seek positive relations with the dominant group (Berry, 1980). In his definition of acculturation Sam (2015) summarised the different strategies as follows: If an individual does not want to maintain their original culture and adopts to other cultural norms, the strategy is assimilation. Separation is chosen by individuals who want to maintain their own culture and do not want to interact with other cultures. Integration is present, when the individual maintains his own culture but at the same time associates with and adapts to the host culture. Lastly, marginalisation describes the lack of maintenance of the original culture while at the same time not associating with the host culture.

Berry (2005) explains that five aspects “define the nature of acculturation process at the cultural level, and establish a starting point for the process of acculturation on the psychological level” (p. 702). These five aspects include the two original cultures, the two ethnocultural groups and the nature of their interactions. Therefore, it is important to notice that the group actively influences the individual’s process of acculturation, even when concentrating on the psychological level.

Historically, different societies also react differently to immigrants. Berry (2005) therefore stated that both the “historical and the attitudinal situation faced by immigrants in the society of settlement” (p. 703) are important when trying to understand acculturation.

While Berry’s model has been predominantly used, and referred to over the last decades, it has also been criticized, especially with the changes migration dynamics have undergone in recent years. Chirkov (2009) analysed 42 articles and found that the models devised by Berry and Bourhis et al. were most often used to analyse acculturation. Chirkov (2009) claimed that throughout studies the acculturation process is mostly treated as a natural phenomenon, that follows universal laws, thus studies “tried to eliminate all the unique and specific cultural and ethnic aspects of each group of immigrants (and each host nation) in order to discover the general laws of acculturation and predict, based on these laws, the success of acculturation” (p. 100). However, such an approach may not always be best suited, as it neglects specific traits of both the home and the host culture. According to Chirkov (2009) acculturation research should be more descriptive and assemble rich ethnography of immigrants before creating models and theories.

She further criticized the bi-dimensional approach presented by Berry, which other researches also see as obsolete. Doucerain, Dere & Ryder (2013), for example, found that a “bidimensional approach to acculturation could only be a beginning [...] to properly engage with the complexity of the contemporary multicultural experience” (p. 686). In their study,

they struggled to define one mainstream cultural group within Canada, as well as a coherent cultural group among the immigrants due to the varied experiences of Canada's majority groups, as well as the often highly multicultural backgrounds of immigrants (Doucerain, Dere, & Ryder, 2013). They therefore argued that the process of cultural recombination needs to be considered in acculturation research together with a focus on the conditions of daily life, and the actual behaviours displayed by immigrants and the host society instead of their self-proclaimed acculturation tendencies (Doucerain et al., 2013).

While Harvey and Moeller (2015) also acknowledged that the acculturation process is anything but simplistic and needs to be explored further, they also mention that recent research (Berry, 2008; Berry & Sam, 2013) takes changes invoked through globalisation into account. In his 2008 paper Berry noted the "dangers of accepting the wide-spread assumption that globalisation means only homogenisation" (p. 336), emphasising that there is no uniform outcome of globalisation and that different realities exist in different countries but also among individuals. Berry and Sam (2013) acknowledged that "there is a need for a broader regional representation of research, since the presence of multiculturalism [...] is highly variable across European states" (p. 156). Still, in both articles acculturation is treated as a bi-dimensional process that is easily divided into the main group and the ethnic group, a case that in many societies, such as Belgium, Switzerland, or Canada, where multiculturalism is deeply embedded in society does not hold true. Even in more homogenous states differences exist across different regions and different sectors of life. This can also be seen in Finland, where Finns and Finn-Swedes make up to distinct population groups.

Therefore, it should be mentioned that while Berry's model of acculturation has been one of the most influential theories in acculturation research, it still leaves space for extension and adaptation to meet the new realities of globalisation. However, over the years, researchers have extended the model, especially by taking the impact of the host society into account and

thus considering the mutuality in the acculturation process. While this is only one step towards a better understanding of acculturation processes and does not solve the problem of bi-dimensionality, the research in this area has been very influential in developing a more complete idea of the factors influencing acculturation processes.

4.3. The impact of host society attitudes on acculturation

It is important to acknowledge that acculturation is an ongoing process as long as there are two different groups involved, even though “some form of longer-term accommodation among the groups in contact” (Berry, 2005, p. 699-700) is usually reached. Therefore, acculturation strategies can change over time, depending on the individual’s mindset and the receptivity of the host culture. While some societies encourage integration, others try to assimilate immigrants through policies and political approaches. The way the host culture receives immigrants can impact their long-term adaptation and explains why not only the immigrants’ attitudes but also the host-cultures receptivity is an important part of acculturation (Berry et al., 2006; Bourhis et al., 1997; Sam & Berry, 2010).

Acculturation has mostly been studied through immigrants, however the role the host society plays in the acculturation process cannot be neglected and plays a vital part in the eventual outcome of immigrants’ acculturation and adaptation. Sam and Berry (2010) stated that “acculturation is a two-way interaction, resulting in actions and reactions to the contact situation” (p. 473), a notion that was also expressed in Berry’s earlier work (Berry, 1980, 1997, 2005, 2006). Therefore, majority members’ attitudes towards immigrants can impact the choice of acculturation strategy of the individual and prohibit them from freely choosing a strategy (Sam & Berry, 2010), even though acculturation strategies initially reflected the assumption that acculturating individuals “choose how they want to engage in intercultural relations” (Sam & Berry, 2010, p. 477).

To investigate the influence of acculturation expectations of the larger society other theories were devised and tested. One of these is the interactive acculturation model (IAM) as defined by Bourhis, Moïse, Perreault, and Senécal in 1997. Bourhis et al. (1997) explain the model as follows:

The Interactive Acculturation Model seeks to integrate within a common theoretical framework the following components of immigrants and host community relations in multicultural settings: (1) acculturation orientations adopted by immigrant groups in the host community; (2) acculturation orientations adopted by the host community towards specific groups of immigrants; (3) interpersonal and intergroup relational outcomes that are the product of combinations of immigrant and host community acculturation orientations. (p. 379)

The model draws on Berry's Acculturation Model, but divides the marginalization dimension into two separate strategies. The resulting strategies used in the IAM to display the acculturation orientations of immigrants are: Integration, assimilation, separation, anomie, and individualism (Bourhis et al., 1997). Anomie refers to those immigrants who experience alienation from both their home culture and the host culture, while individualism refers to those who reject group categories all together and want to be treated as an individual and not as a member of either the home or the host culture (Bourhis et al., 1997).

Another dimension is then added by introducing the acculturation orientations adopted by the host society. As in Berry's work, these orientations are bi-dimensional and depend on whether host society members accept that immigrants keep their cultural heritage and whether they accept their adaptation of their culture (Bourhis et al., 1997). Hence, assimilation, integration, segregation, exclusion, and individualism are the resulting acculturation orientations of host society members (Bourhis et al., 1997). Bourhis et al. (1997) defined the different strategies as follows: Integration means that keeping traits of the culture of origin

and adopting cultural traits of the host society are accepted. Assimilation means that adopting to the host society while giving up one's own culture is expected. Segregation describes the rejection of adoption of the host culture while allowing immigrants to keep their culture and exclusion describes the intolerance towards the maintenance of the home culture and the adoption of the host culture. Lastly, individualism is defined in the same way as it was for the immigrant strategies, meaning that a rejection of group categories altogether is present.

Bourhis et al. (1997) also pointed out that attitudes may vary regarding different immigrant groups and that attitudes may also shift, e.g. with the arrival of more immigrants from the same group of which a recent example would be the refugee crisis. Demographics of immigrants such as gender, age, social class, contact with the host society etc. may also influence the acculturation orientations displayed by the host society (Bourhis et al., 1997). Furthermore, it "is expected that host majority acculturation orientations will have a stronger impact on immigrant acculturation orientations than the converse" (Bourhis et al., 1997, p. 382), though an improved status of an immigrant group can lead to enforcing their own acculturation strategies over the orientations of the host majority.

Discordance and concordance between immigrants and the host society can now be analysed by comparing whether their orientations are similar or different, e.g. if an immigrant pursues integration but the host majority expects them to segregate (Bourhis et al., 1997). If different strategies are employed problematic or conflictual relationships can be the outcome (Bourhis et al., 1997). This constitutes the third part of the model, in which relational outcomes are explained as the result of immigrant and host majority orientations.

It is also important to mention that Bourhis et al. (1997) see state regulations as very influential on the different orientations – if integrationist policies are suggested by the state, these are very likely to make a positive impact on the orientation of both parties, while more negative policies (assimilationist, segregationist, or exclusionist) can lead both sides to

harbour negative feelings towards the other. Uberoi (2008) showed that introducing policies of multiculturalism can shape and change national identity and make it more inclusive for minority members. However, a positive correlation between multicultural policies and majority member attitudes cannot always be proven. Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind and Vedder (2001) found that ethnic identity seemed to depend more on local and personal factors than official policies in a study comparing the ethnic and national identity of immigrants in the United States, the Netherlands, Israel, and Finland. Therefore, policies should be considered when investigating intergroup relations while keeping in mind that they are not solely responsible for inclusiveness of a society.

The Interactive Acculturation Model has been discussed, studied and advanced by many researchers and become an important foundation of acculturation research. Van Oudenhoven, Prins, and Buunk (1998) studied the attitudes of minority and majority members in the Netherlands. They investigated the acculturation strategies of Turks and Moroccans and the acculturation expectations of the Dutch and concluded that migrants preferred integration as a strategy, while majority members preferred assimilation over integration (Van Oudenhoven et al., 1998). Other Studies (e.g. Brylka, Mähönen, & Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2015; Jasinskaja-Lahti, Horenczyk, & Kinunen, 2011) also came to the conclusion that integration is favoured most by immigrants while assimilation is often the preferred acculturation strategy of majority members.

Van Oudenhoven, Ward, and Masgoret (2006) discussed the importance of mutuality in acculturation and state that “the process of acculturation can no longer be viewed solely in terms of the experiences of the immigrant, but must consider the mutual change that occurs when two cultural groups come into contact with one another” (p. 642). They acknowledged that acculturation expectations of the members of the receiving society play a crucial role in acculturation and that majority members “have often adopted an assimilation ideology in

which immigrants are expected to abandon their cultural and linguistic distinctiveness and adopt the core values of the host society” (p. 642). However, they also stressed that it is not only the acculturation strategies but also the interpersonal and intergroup relations that result from these strategies which eventually define the level of adaptation.

Research has shown that contact between the two groups often led to a more positive opinion of each other. This was also reflected in Van Acker and Vanbelesaeere’s study (2011) on the acculturation expectations of Flemish majority members towards Turkish migrants. They found that positive contact experiences led to less negative perception of the minority group, however many Flemish majority members did not approve of the cultural maintenance of the Turkish minority, as in their opinion it outweighed the adaptation displayed. Therefore, intergroup contact can have a positive impact on majority member attitudes, however, it can still be limited by how the acculturation strategies of immigrants are perceived.

A study by Jasinskaja-Lahti, Liebkind, Horenczyk, and Schmitz in 2003 found that acculturation strategies of repatriates from former Soviet Russia and the majority members were concordant in Germany and Israel and discordant only in Finland where assimilation was preferred by nationals. However, the study also took a second choice of acculturation strategy into account, which resulted in discordant views in all three countries. Immigrants whose personal strategies were in conflict with those of the majority members reported more perceived discrimination and acculturative stress than others, indicating the influence of majority members’ attitudes on their acculturation experience (Jasinskaja-Lahti, Liebkind, Horenczyk, & Schmitz, 2003). Further studies with Russian repatriates found that perceived discrimination and unfavourable out-group attitudes negatively influenced the development of a national identity and the attitude towards the Finnish majority group (Brylka et al., 2015; Jasinskaja-Lahti, Liebkind, & Solheim, 2009; Jasinskaja-Lahti, Mähönen, & Liebkind, 2012).

Leong (2008) stated that research into the host communities has increased since 9/11 and led to further research on acculturation as well as to the design of new theories. In a study on the perception of recent immigrants to New Zealand and the opinions about multiculturalism in Europe, Leong (2008) found that the perception of immigrants by majority members can either be motivated by security concerns and threat perceptions, leading to a negative perception, or by the benefits that immigrants can bring to a country, leading to a positive attitude towards immigrants (Leong, 2008).

Kunst, Thomson, Sam, and Berry (2015) claimed that the IAM does “pay virtually no attention to the behavioural involvement and responsibility of the majority population” (p. 1439). They suggested that instead of showing passive tolerance, a move towards “actual majority efforts towards integration” (Kunst et al., 2015, p. 1439) needs to be achieved in order to create a truly multicultural society. This was also researched by Phelps, Eilertsen, Türken and Ommundsen (2011), who developed a scale to measure whether social inclusion can be supported by majority members’ accommodation strategies.

As shown above, majority members’ attitudes and acculturation expectations have become an important part of acculturation research. Today’s research still heavily draws on Berry’s model of acculturation and the Interactive Acculturation Model but new ideas have entered the field, especially from psychological sciences, and the traditional focus on the acculturation strategies of immigrants has broadened and taken the impact of the majority members into account.

However, only little research has been done on how acculturation strategies change when majority members’ attitudes change. As Berry (1980) explained, acculturation is an on-going process, which allows the assumption that a shift in attitude can also lead to a shift in acculturation strategies on both sides.

Furthermore, it is important to be aware that acculturation processes do not happen in the same way universally (compare Chirkov, 2009). Birman, Trickett & Buchanan (2005) criticized that very little research had been done on the way the local community influenced acculturation strategies. They conducted a study on Soviet immigrants in two different states in the United States and found differences in some patterns of acculturation, suggesting that not only the country but also the exact location can influence acculturation (Birman, Trickett & Buchanan, 2005).

Whether a country has experienced immigration for a long period of time, if its language is widely spoken throughout the world or whether it has a history of multicultural policies, can change majority members' attitudes towards adaptation. Canada, for example, is a bilingual country using two of the most widely spoken languages in the world (English and French), which have both commonly been used as lingua franca, and has a long history of immigration while also being the first country to introduce multiculturalist policies (Berry & Sam, 2013). Finland on the other hand, has traditionally experienced more emigration than immigration, and while it is also a bilingual country, Swedish and Finnish are both not widely spoken throughout the world. Hence, the two countries present completely different realities, that are likely to be influential on majority members' attitudes on acculturation, and shape acculturation expectations, often subconsciously.

Jasinskaja-Lahti, Horenczyk & Kinunen (2011) conducted a study comparing the experiences of Russian repatriates in Finland and Israel. They found that while their immigration policies were similar, different historical, social and political conditions had made them "plural societies with different degrees of cultural diversity, as reflected in immigrant population size, degree of cultural fit between immigrants and hosts, immigrants' labour market position, and attitudes of hosts towards the immigrants" (Jasinskaja-Lahti et al.,

2011, p. 1428). Therefore, it is important to assess the acculturation process according to the societal contexts of the host country.

Assuming that acculturation happens according to the same patterns and with the same results universally can limit research and halter the understanding of the acculturation process.

How a change in acculturation expectations influences acculturation strategies and how the context of a country impacts this, will be further examined in the study regarding Finnish migrants and the impact the refugee crisis has had on their acculturation strategies.

4.4. Reverse Integration as an outcome of majority member attitudes and perceived discrimination

While the importance of majority member attitudes has been amply discussed throughout research, this has mainly been done by relating these attitudes to immigrants' well-being and mental-health. While "research shows a clear negative relationship between perceived ethnic discrimination and well-being of immigrants" (Jasinsjaka-Lahti et al., 2006) these studies have not discussed a potential shift in acculturation strategy. This research is important, as it could show whether the host culture can actively change the acculturation strategy of an immigrant over time. Padilla and Perez (2003) stated that "prevailing attitudes, whether positive or negative, have the power of constraining the adoption of the social identity of the host country" (p. 51), which can influence acculturation strategies. However, this does not indicate whether attitudes that polarise overtime still influence immigrants that have already chosen an acculturation strategy.

In early studies on acculturation Padilla (Padilla, 1980; Padilla & Perez, 2003) found that perceived discrimination increased the likelihood of an immigrant identifying with their heritage culture. It is important to notice that this perceived discrimination did not have to be directly directed at the person but a perceived discrimination towards the group already

increased ethnic group loyalty (Padilla & Perez, 2003). Therefore, it can be expected that immigrants that perceive discrimination towards themselves or their ethnic groups, could shift their acculturation theory towards anomie, separation or individualism according to the IAM (Bourhis et al., 1997). Whether an increase in perceived discrimination and an increasing hostility of the host society do result in a change in acculturation strategy will be investigated in the following study.

4.5. Research Questions

Acculturation strategies have mostly been discussed from the immigrant perspective only, without taking the influence of acculturation expectations of the majority members into consideration. The Interactive Acculturation Model was the first to propose a closer look at both parties involved in the acculturation process, a notion later also present in Berry's works (Berry, 1980, 1997, 2005, 2006; Berry & Sam, 2013; Sam & Berry, 2010). This led to increased studies on the influence of perceived discrimination, the effects of acculturation expectations on acculturation strategies and the general health and well-being of immigrants (e.g. Jasinskaja-Lahti et al., 2003; Jasinskaja-Lahti, Liebkind, & Perhoniemi, 2006; Jasinskaja-Lahti et al., 2009). Several studies (Brylka et al., 2015; Jasinskaja-Lahti et al., 2011; Van Oudenhoven et al., 1998) found that integration was the preferred acculturation strategy of immigrants, and that integration and assimilation resulted in the most successful long-term adaptation (Berry, 1997; Berry et al., 2006; Ward & Chang, 1997). The importance of majority member efforts in this respect has also been discussed (Kunst et al., 2015; Phelps et al., 2011; Van Oudenhoven et al., 2006, Phinney et al., 2001), however, research here has been static. Whether a perceived change in the attitude of majority members can lead to a change in the acculturation strategy of immigrants, who have already achieved some form of long-term adaptation has not been studied yet. To open up the dialogue in this area, the

proposed study aims to look at the experiences of Finnish citizens with a foreign background before and during the refugee crisis.

As explained in detail in chapter 3, Finland has not been a country prone to immigration and has only recently experienced an influx of foreigners entering the country. Compared to immigrant nations like the United States, Canada, or Australia, Finland is often considered to be homogenous by its residents and has only recently experienced changes in its ethnic make-up. Therefore, Finland is the ideal country to examine, when trying to measure the effects the refugee crisis has had. The study aims to establish whether the treatment of the citizens interviewed has changed in the wake of the refugee crisis and how this influences the attitudes of those citizens. The study further attempts to establish whether this led to a renegotiation of the chosen acculturation strategy and supported alienation or segregation tendencies in the individuals.

The following research questions were considered throughout the study:

R1: Do Finnish citizens with a migration background perceive a change in the behaviour of

Finns in the wake of the refugee crisis?

R2: Have the participants become alienated from the host culture and reassessed their

acculturation strategies?

The following chapter will explain how this study gathered the necessary data to answer the proposed questions. The findings will then be discussed in the result section to answer the research questions and to evaluate whether the assumptions made can be affirmed.

5. Methodology

5.1. Method

The study used focus groups as a qualitative research method. Focus groups gained popularity as a research method in the 1940's, when they were often used to study persuasive communications and the effects of mass media (Stewart, Shamdasani & Rook, 2007).

However, they also became a popular tool in sociological and social psychological studies, and have proven to be a useful method when looking at group dynamics and studying different opinions (Stewart et al., 2007). As focus groups can serve many research purposes, they have also taken many different forms and shapes since Merton introduced them as “focused interviews” in the 1940’s (Stewart et al., 2007).

Focus groups have two main characteristics. One is the exploration of one particular situation, the criterion of focus. While this criterion is not always considered, e.g. in marketing where different scenarios are often explored at the same time, it is essential when wanting “to generate the social atmospherics that are conducive to the traditional normative criteria of conversational interviewing, in-depth data elicitation, and within-group interaction” (Stewart et al., 2007, p. 9). The second criterion is the group interaction, which allows observations of group dynamics and the influence of the participants on each other (Stewart et al., 2007). The group interaction serves especially well when trying to “explore perceptions, feelings, and thinking about issues, ideas, products, services, or opportunities” (Krueger & Casey, 2015). As this study aims at exploring the perceptions of Finnish citizens with a foreign background, focus groups are an ideal method to be used.

When conducting interviews in a group setting, it is important to consider that individuals influence each other and behave differently than when they are being interviewed alone (Krueger & Casey, 2015; Stewart et al., 2007). While it has been suggested that greater homogeneity within a group leads to increased communication and less conflict, it has also been suggested that diversity “provides greater perspective and innovation” (Stewart et al., 2007, p. 20). For this study the focus groups were designed heterogenous to make a comparison between the experiences of Finnish citizens with different ethnic backgrounds possible.

Furthermore, it needs to be acknowledged that focus groups are loosely constructed, in the sense that participants are mostly perfect strangers and only temporarily put together, thus a common group identity is not established (Stewart et al., 2007). These groupings do have the advantage that participants are more likely to explain their point of view and do not feel conscious about voicing their opinions in front of acquaintances, even though it is most certainly possible to include acquaintances in focus groups (Morgan, 1997). For this study the groupings consisted of strangers to guarantee an unbiased environment for discussion and to encourage an exchange of different experiences.

5.2. Sampling

Convenience sampling is most commonly used to select participants for focus groups (Stewart et al., 2007). This type of sampling was also used in this study, as access to the whole population of Finnish citizens with a migration background could not be achieved. Therefore, sampling was conducted by inviting participants through university newsletters, international Facebook groups and by finding participants through acquaintances. This then led to a further use of snowball sampling, as participants would suggest further candidates and acquaintances of friends would, in turn, ask their acquaintances. As only immigrants that obtained Finnish citizenship were eligible for the study, the sample was also purposive.

Throughout the sampling process attention was paid to gathering a diverse group of participants consisting of different demographics, such as country of origin, occupation, gender and age. To further diversify the results, participants were recruited in four Finnish cities – Helsinki, Jyväskylä, Turku and Tampere. Due to scheduling issues and availability of participants, focus groups were, however, only conducted in Helsinki and Jyväskylä.

5.3. Participants

Five focus groups with 3-4 participants each were conducted, consisting of 16 participants in total. The main criteria for the study were that (1) participants had a foreign background;

(2) participants had obtained Finnish citizenship during their time in Finland; and (3) participants could communicate in English in order to guarantee a common mode of communication.

16 eligible participants were found through the different sampling methods used (compare 5.3). Of the participants seven were male and nine female. Four resided in Helsinki, two in Kerava, one in Espoo and nine in Jyväskylä, while seven had also lived in other cities such as Tampere, Turku, Tornio, Espoo, Salo, Malminkartano, Lappenranta and Kouvola. The youngest participant was 18 years old, while the oldest was 43, with an average age of 32.25 years. On average, participants had lived in Finland for 11.31 years and held citizenship for 3.63 years. The reasons for moving to Finland included study (7), work (3), a Finnish partner (2), family ties in Finland or family relocation (3) and refugee status (1). The participants originally came from 15 different countries with two participants coming from Russia. Of the participants 15 had good knowledge of Finnish, while one did not have any knowledge and acquired citizenship through his mother (parentage principle). The exact demographics of the participants and their distribution in the five focus groups are detailed in Table 1.

Table 1*Information of Participants*

Group #	Country of origin	Age	Sex	Arrival	Citizenship	Reason
1	Nigeria	27	m	2010	2017	study
1	Philippines	32	f	2009	2014	work
1	Vietnam	35	f	2006	2015	study
1	USA	18	m	2016	2016	family
2	Eritrea	26	f	2003	2016	refugee
2	Russia	30	f	2001	2008	family
2	Canada	39	m	2005	2010	study
3	Germany	42	f	1999	2015	study
3	Turkey	29	m	2012	2016	partner
3	Russia	26	f	2001	2017	study
4	Mauritania	35	m	2009	2014	study
4	Albania	41	f	2003	2012	partner
4	Sudan	43	m	2007	2007	study
5	preferred not to say	38	m	2000	2010	work
5	India	26	f	2000	2010	family
5	Greece	29	f	2011	2017	work

5.4. Conduction of Focus Groups

All focus groups were conducted face to face in a neutral and closed environment, most often in private rooms at libraries, so that participants would not be afraid to share their experiences. The focus groups conducted in Jyväskylä consisted of three participants each, while the focus groups in Helsinki had four and three participants. All focus groups were asked the same questions relating to their experiences in Finland, opinions on Finns, changes perceived over the last years and their current attitude towards Finland and Finns, the exact questions of which can be found in the appendix. To break the ice and give participants a chance to get to know each other, they were introduced before the focus group. This was followed by a few introductory questions on their arrival in Finland and their reasons for moving to Finland. The remaining questions were open-ended questions that allowed the participants a free exchange of ideas and an opportunity to discuss their opinions. Throughout the discussion, the moderator only intervened to ask questions, to follow up on sentiments expressed and to reel the participants back in if they were straying too far from the topic. The focus groups lasted an hour and four minutes on average.

The focus groups were recorded with a recording device and participants agreed to this by signing an informed consent form before the study, which can be found in the appendix.

5.5. Analysis

After the conduction of the focus groups, the recordings were transcribed and analysed to reveal the data relevant to answer the research questions. Thematic analysis was used to determine recurring themes and a comparative method was used to compare the results from the different focus groups.

When analysing focus groups, it is important to keep in mind that “discussions of analysis issues in focus groups assert that the group, not the individual, must be the fundamental unit of analysis” (Morgan, 1997, p. 61). Therefore, the analysis cannot only focus on the

experience of the individual but must take the opinions of the group as a whole into account as well. Morgan (1997) states that both the group dynamic as well as the participation of the individual play a key role in the analysis of focus groups. It is important to understand that the individuals influence the group and vice versa and that the same person in a different group might have expressed different opinions. As mentioned before the groups were designed heterogeneously on purpose, to invoke more critical thoughts and gather a plethora of ideas. This also needs to be acknowledged in the analysis of the focus groups.

The group dynamic then also influences the coding process. According to Morgan (1997) there are three possibilities of coding the transcripts: “(a) all mentions of a given code, (b) whether each individual participant mentioned a given code, or (c) whether each group's discussion contained a given code” (p. 61). For the present study, the mentions in each group discussion were mostly considered, however it was also considered how many individual participants mentioned the theme. Barbour (2007) states that “the coding frame should be flexible enough to incorporate themes introduced by focus group participants as well” (p. 118). While the questions asked to the focus groups give an expectation of codes and themes that might surface, it is important to stay “alert to the analytic potential of phrases used or concepts appealed to by focus group participants” (Barbour, 2007, p. 121). Therefore, recurring themes that relate to matters not included in the research questions are also considered throughout the analysis.

As focus groups are based on the discussion between individuals, the data analysis cannot only focus on how often a certain theme surfaced, but also needs to consider how important the topic is to the participants and in what manner it is discussed within the group. Morgan (1997) names three factors that contribute to a main theme: How many groups discuss the topics, how many individuals within the group mention it and in what way it is discussed. Conflicting views and ideas were of special interest when analysing the data and indicators

such as tone of voice, volume, expressions and gestures, which were not visible in the transcript also influenced the analysis. An indication of the importance of a topic is group-to-group-validation, meaning that topics are discussed in different groups with the same amount of energy (Morgan, 1997).

Considering these factors in the data analysis helped to decide which themes were of importance and which topics needed to be discussed in the analysis. The individual transcripts were first read through to highlight themes within the individual focus groups and were later compared with each other. Discrepancies or similarities of opinion within focus groups were highlighted and analysed. Throughout the focus groups the same main themes tended to surface, indicating that different groups shared the same ideas and themes did not solely result from the make-up of the individual group. The collected data was then used to determine whether the refugee crisis had led to a change in treatment of citizens with a foreign background and how citizens with a migration background were affected by this. As the study was qualitative and only 16 individuals were interviewed in the four focus groups, results of the study cannot be generalised.

Furthermore, the results of the study were also connected to the literature on acculturation (compare 4.) and the historical context of immigration in Finland and the refugee crisis (compare 3.). As acculturation research suggests that majority member attitudes influence acculturation strategies (e.g. Berry, 1980; Berry, 2006; Bourhis et al., 1997; Jasinskaja-Lahti et al., 2003; Jasinskaja-Lahti et al., 2009; Jasinskaja-Lahti et al., 2012; Kunst et al., 2015), the questions asked in the focus groups aimed at establishing whether changing attitudes could also impact already existing acculturation strategies. To achieve this, underlying opinions on the relation with Finns, the refugee crisis and experiences in Finland were gathered first, to determine whether a change had occurred and how it related to the participants' initial attitude

and acculturation efforts. The opinions expressed regarding these matters were gathered and grouped into different attitudes and outcomes.

To guarantee the anonymity of the participants, all names were replaced in the transcripts and participants were numbered to identify them in the analysis.

6. Results

6.1. Initial Perception and Open-Mindedness of Finns

During the focus groups participants were asked to recount their initial experiences when arriving in Finland and their first encounters with Finns. They were also asked whether they perceived Finns as open-minded or not. This was done to get a general idea of their perception of Finns and to assess if they felt welcome in Finland.

Those individuals that came to Finland as students, generally reported a smooth transition. They were assisted by tutors, picked up from the airport and received a lot of help during their first weeks in the country. Other participants also described their initial experiences in the country as “warm”, “friendly” and “welcoming”. However, when the discussion went more into detail three different parties, that shaped the initiation process, could be identified: Individual people, the society and the administration.

Individuals were usually seen in a positive light, which was illustrated by phrases such as “People were very friendly to us” (Participant 6), “Really welcoming, open and friendly people” (Participant 8) or “They were very nice actually, welcomed me very nice and guided me all the time” (Participant 13). Similar wording was used throughout all focus groups and the initial perception of Finnish individuals was mostly positive, with only three participants reporting negative experiences.

However, the picture of Finnish society as a whole varied. One subtheme that surfaced repeatedly was the interaction with strangers. Three groups mentioned that they encountered the same questions (*Where are you from? What are you doing here?*) repeatedly, one group

discussed greeting people in the street and not receiving a reply, another discussed that Finnish hospitality often seemed more like a duty than an actual welcoming. One participant summarised her feelings as follows: “I felt in Finland like I was invisible, like people don’t really see you. You are there, you get like eye contact and so on, but they just don’t see you” (Participant 12). These notions surfaced throughout all focus group, contradicting the initial feeling of welcome and illustrating that while Finns were generally perceived as friendly once contact was established, they were perceived as distant when no contact existed.

The last aspect that was mentioned throughout the groups was the administration. Participants described problems they had had when trying to find flats, banking or when trying to get a visa. Experiences in this sector were mixed, while some of the students described the visa process as easy, some of the other participants had made negative experiences. Many participants had been turned away from flats due to foreigner status or experienced other bureaucratic problems throughout their time in Finland. While administration in a foreign country is always a challenge, especially in times when immigrants have not yet learned the language, it is worth mentioning these struggles here, as they also influence their attitude towards Finland.

When asked whether they would describe Finns as open-minded all focus groups distinguished between the situation, the individual person and the background of the foreigner. It was pointed out that differences exist between, for example, dating, working, and student life and that Finns tended to display different attitudes depending on the situation. Often young people or people that had travelled were perceived as more open-minded, however, examples were also given that negated these statements. One participant explained her feelings the following way:

I think it depends so much on their own education, their own family, their own childhood, their own present situation. (...) But I definitely think that you have all

kinds of people in Finland, just like you have all kinds of people everywhere else in the world. I cannot say Finns or like this or they think like this. (Participant 12)

This notion was repeated in another focus group in nearly the same wording and all groups agreed that differences existed throughout the population.

The groups were also asked whether they had made different experiences in different places. While some individuals had favourite places within the country, such as Joensuu, Tampere and Lapland, and one participant felt especially connected to people from Karelia, the experiences between the different focus groups did not show a preference for a certain area. One focus group compared the experiences they had made within the same city, Jyväskylä, and came to the conclusion that even within the city experiences significantly varied depending on the area and the neighbourhood. This furthermore supports that Finnish people cannot be put in one box and are characterised by individual criteria.

While participants had made mainly positive experiences in the beginning of their time in Finland, they also reported cases of closed-mindedness, racism and challenges they had experienced when arriving in Finland. This also resulted from the varying degree of open-mindedness within the Finnish population, which, according to the focus groups, depended entirely on the person an interaction took place with. This again points towards the importance of the local context (Berry, 2008; Berry & Sam, 2013; Chirkov, 2009; Doucerain et al., 2013), emphasising the defining influence of the individual situation and the context.

6.2. Perception of Acculturation Expectations

While participants were not directly asked how they perceived the acculturation expectations of majority members, these were discussed in all focus groups. As explained at length in the review of literature (compare 4.3.), the acculturation expectations expressed by majority members can have an influence on the acculturation process of the immigrant and may disable them from freely choosing their preferred acculturation strategy (compare Sam &

Berry, 2010). The fact that all groups mentioned acculturation expectations independently shows, that these do have a great influence on the adaptation process of immigrants.

All groups perceived the same acculturation expectation: Assimilation. As participants were not necessarily familiar with Berry's model of acculturation (1980) and the Interactive Acculturation Model by Bourhis et al. (1997), they did not always use the term assimilation. However, their description clearly matches with that in the acculturation model. The following quotes illustrate this:

I think Finnish people are looking for people who really want to integrate inside Finnish culture, who want to study language. (Participant 6)

They are I think treating them [the foreigners] okay as long as they are part of society, they adapted well, they know the culture, the language, and they really try to contribute to the society. (Participant 10)

While these descriptions could be seen as integration or assimilation tendencies initially and participant 6 even uses the word "integrate", it became clear throughout the discussions that the perceived acculturation expectation really was assimilation. Participants described that Finns expected them to adapt to their culture, to blend in, to learn the language fluently and to accept the differences in Finnish culture. Participant 7 stated that "the problem with a lot of foreigners that come into the country is that they feel so strongly about their own culture", explaining a clash of cultures and the hardships of combining two different cultures in Finland.

Another interesting sentiment, that appeared throughout all focus groups, was the paradox of being a Finnish citizen but not being a Finn. Participant 5, who came to Finland as a teenager, summarised this sentiment as follows:

And I think when it comes to that they do want you to integrate there's also the problem that they do want you to become a Finn. They're very sort of proud of their

nationality and all of that and they want you to sort of pretty much become a Finn. That's also what I've noticed with all of my Finnish friends, they always like, obviously, I've lived here for like 14 years, I came here when I was almost 12, and you can't help but become Finnish in so many ways. They're always sort of clapping for me when they realise that I enjoy going to sauna, the certain you know very typical Finnish things. So they want you to integrate I think, and they want you to become part of the society, but they still treat you like you're not one of them. No. They will always make sure that you don't feel like you're one of them, that's what I've sort of concluded I think. (...) Because obviously there are those foreigners that can, can integrate and they become part of the society and do well and get jobs and make Finland home, but then when they get treated like their second citizens and you're not part of the society no matter what you do. You're really not a Finn.

This notion was confirmed throughout all focus groups and not one single participant referred to themselves as a Finn. There was a very clear distinction between having Finnish citizenship and being a Finn, as participant 12 clarified: "Like, in the statistics most probably the three of us are Finnish and we are not Finnish. We just have the citizenship". It therefore seems that while majority members' acculturation expectations lean towards assimilation, they do not truly allow foreign citizens to become part of their culture. This again points to the perceived homogeneity of Finland (compare 3.2.2.) and proves Saukkonen's (2013) statement, that foreign cultures have not been able to impact Finnish culture.

When relating these findings to the IAM a paradox seems to surface. Bourhis et al. (1997) allocate acculturation expectations according to two questions: *Does the host society accept the cultural heritage of immigrants?* and *Are immigrants allowed to adopt to the host culture?*. Participants perceived the answer to the first question to be no. However, it seems to be a lot harder to answer the second question. While initially a pressure to conform to the

society is felt and learning the traits of the host culture is encouraged, participants did not feel that it was possible to be truly accepted as an equal within that society. It could therefore be argued, that Finnish majority members also displayed exclusion expectations (compare Berry, 1980, 2005; Bourhis et al., 1997; Sam, 2015) . One participant clearly illustrated this by saying the following: “The fact that a dog is born in a stable doesn’t make it a horse. (...) That perception seems to be really widespread, like yeah, he was born here that doesn’t make him a Finn” (Participant 1).

It can be concluded, that the acculturation process in Finland still seems to be difficult, despite a significant increase in foreigners over the last decades and the multiculturalism policies set by the Finnish government. The unanimous perception of Finnish acculturation expectations further illustrates very clear tendencies within the society and limits the individual’s choice of an acculturation strategy.

6.3. Perceived Discrimination

When considering the acculturation expectations participants had encountered, it is not surprising that most of them also reported instances of discrimination and racism. Again, participants were not specifically asked whether they had been discriminated against, but rather how their experiences with Finns had been throughout the years. In this discussion participants of all groups reported perceived discrimination.

Incidents went from subtle discrimination, such as stares, to more obvious instances of discrimination such as verbal abuse, bullying and fights (reported by 6 participants) which they had either experienced themselves or witnessed, as well as discrimination regarding jobs (reported by 11 participants). One example of physical abuse was the following:

Like I remember when I lived in Tornio I had a Nigerian friend and he went to the grocery store one day and just out of the blue a group of guys just drove next to him and they started beating him up for no reason. (Participant 1)

Another participant relayed a series of incidents that happened in 2004:

And I have friends from England and New Zealand and from France and when we went out drinking they always ended up in a fight, because they have been stealing the Finnish women from the Finnish men. (Participant 12)

These examples show, that discrimination happened for different reasons and to people of different nationalities, however experiences tended to be more severe for men than women, who were more likely to experience stares and other forms of subtle discrimination, as well as discrimination regarding jobs.

While the examples given above include foreigners of different backgrounds, focus groups also attributed discrimination to nationality. Those that looked like “typical” Finns were perceived to have less negative experiences, while those that stood out reported more instances of discrimination. Two male participants were, for example, mistaken for drug dealers, solely because of their skin colour and general appearance. Participant 2 stated that “the Finns are more accepting of, like, white foreigners”, a notion that was repeated in the other focus groups. Participant 8, for example, relayed her own experience:

Well not maybe friends, but some people that I know – they talk about oh those bloody foreigners (...) and then I’m like maybe remember that I’m a foreigner as well, it’s not so nice to hear that. And they are like no, no, but you’re different, you are from Germany.

These incidents spanned over decades, from the 90’s up until today. However, while discrimination was perceived over a large timespan, participants also reported a change in the perception of foreigners over time and of shifting attitudes. The groups also connected this with the situation of refugees in the country, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

Perceived discrimination has been an important focus in acculturation studies and it has often been connected to a distancing from the host culture and the occurrence of severe health and mental issues (e.g. Jasinskaja-Lahti et al., 2006; Padilla, 1980; Padilla & Perez,

2003). Therefore, perceived discrimination does not only impact the attitudes of immigrants towards the host society, but also their individual well-being, which again shows the importance of an increased understanding of acculturation and awareness in society.

6.4. Perception of Foreigners in the Wake of the Refugee Crisis

One of the main proposals of this study was to establish whether citizens with a migration background felt they had been treated differently as a result of the refugee crisis. As noted before the historical context of a country can influence the attitude of its majority group towards immigration (Berry, 2005; Birman et al., 2005; Jasinskaja-Lahti et al., 2011). With Finland not traditionally being an immigrant nation (Saukkonen, 2013), the refugee crisis can be expected to have a greater influence on the majority members than in countries where immigration has been a part of life for centuries. In 2015 Finland received approximately 10 times as many asylum requests as in 2014 (Finnish Immigration Service, 2017c), an unusually high number that led to increased media coverage, notable changes in the make-up of the population, and to more polarisation across the country.

This change was also noted by participants, who remarked on differences in the treatment of foreigners over the last two to three years. Opinions varied on whether this was directly related to the refugee crisis and how it manifested in society but all groups noticed at least some change in the overall climate. Eleven participants reported a visibly negative change in the perception of foreigners, while the other five had not noticed a great difference but also commented on problems that arose in the wake of the refugee crisis. Of the five participants that reported no change, one stated that the situation had stayed negative, three saw it as neutral and one stated that it was slowly becoming more positive.

To determine how participants felt about the refugee crisis themselves, they were asked whether Finland should take more refugees. 13 participants were for accepting refugees in Finland, three were against it. Taking refugees was seen as a human duty throughout the

focus groups and as the responsibility of a country, Finland in particular. However, all focus groups also remarked that refugee flows needed to be controlled. Participant 1, for example, stated that “Finland should accept more refugees for as long as they have the resources to cater for them”. This sentiment was also mentioned in other focus groups and agreed on by most participants. Some participants emphasised that refugees should be screened to avoid bringing criminals into the country or people that would not contribute to society.

Those who did not think Finland should accept more refugees reasoned this in a similar way. In their opinion refugees were not able to contribute to the society and presented too much of a burden. These were some of the reasons participants gave:

My opinion is no refugees because we have a lot of refugees inside country that has nothing to do and they do bad things because they don't have anything to do.

(Participant 6)

I don't hate refugees, but I'm saying they should support their own country, they should do something instead of running. (Participant 9)

All participants agreed that refugees could only be taken if the necessary resources existed and the system was adapted to take care of the refugees. Mostly, Finland was perceived as wealthy enough and in possession of the right amount of space to cater for the newcomers. However, the welfare system would have to be adapted to the increase in refugees and integration programmes would have to work more effectively, to avoid isolation and boredom of the refugees.

As mentioned earlier, most participants did perceive the refugee crisis to have had a negative influence on the behaviour of Finns towards foreigners. The grouping of foreigners into categories was discussed, as some participants were often assumed to be refugees, even though they had entered the country for entirely different reasons. Participant 9, for example, stated such a development: “Because before these refugees came, I was kind of cool, exotic

and handsome. After this refugee crisis, I became refugee as well”. This sentiment was echoed by another participant and two further participants recounted that they had seen people make assumptions based on looks or country of origin only. Participant 11, who had also been mistaken for a refugee before, described the perception of the Finnish population as follows:

(...) Western foreigner, is different from another category of foreigner. So, the attitude in this category, I don't think has changed, it's always kind of neutral, more positive. But the others from like Africa or Asia, if you are for example a student, the attitude is aligned to how you are temporary here. But if you are coming to live here or if you are coming as a refugee, the attitude (...) is always somehow negative and it goes down. Especially over the last two years with the refugee crisis. So, there's these three categories of foreigners.

While not all participant agreed that foreigners were divided into exactly these categories by Finns, it was often stated that the reasons for moving to Finland and the ethnic background mattered greatly in how one was perceived. As mentioned before, participants who looked more like Finns experienced a lot less discrimination than others. A noticeable change from black people to Muslims, as the main target of discrimination was also commented on. Participant 9 stated that the “new black is Muslims” and other participants acknowledged that they received less stares based on their skin nowadays than when they first arrived.

Focus groups disagreed with the categorisation of foreigners and it was pointed out that “nobody can see from outside if you are a refugee, or if you are here because you are married or if you are a Finn and you are just not white-skinned” (Participant 12), a remark that was discussed in other focus groups as well.

Four out of the five groups related the situation in Finland to the whole of Europe and remarked that the refugee crisis had impacted the political climate and the open-mindedness

of people everywhere. One participant stated that “whole Europe became capital of radical racism, so they’re, I think, all like that” (Participant 9) and another explained that “there is this extremism rising in all of Europe, the far right specifically, all over Europe” (Participant 16). The identification of the refugee crisis as a European problem and the acknowledgement that Finland up until today is only playing a minor role in the crisis is important, when looking at the bigger picture and when discussing how this has influenced the individual participants. Many participants see Europe as partially responsible for the crisis, due to its involvement in wars and the supply of weapons to the Middle East:

Because in my opinion the European Union is involved with the refugees also, in the creations of the problems in the country. When we claim that we don’t participate in the warzones there but we actually do, for instance France. (Participant 16)

However, this was mainly attributed to the bigger European States, such as France and Germany.

It can be concluded that the refugee crisis did have an impact on the perception of foreigners. The experiences of the participants mainly indicate a negative shift that has been expressed in the media, the government and the encounters with individual Finns. Whether this development has affected the attitude of the participants towards Finns will be discussed in the following chapter.

6.5. The Impact of the Changed Perception on Acculturation Strategies

A surprising finding of the study was that while a change in the attitude of Finns towards foreigners was perceived by the participants, this did not necessarily impact their feelings about Finns in general. Nine participants stayed that they’re feelings about Finland and Finns had stayed the same, five reported a slightly negative change and two a more positive change in feeling.

When attitudes changed, it was usually because of a change in personal experiences and not because participants perceived unfair treatment of refugees within Finland. Participant 2 stated: “My personal experience has changed like negatively but I don’t know how exactly Finns treat refugees because I haven’t been to a refugee centre”. This was agreed on by most other participants, as only three of them had been to refugee centres and had knowledge of how refugees were treated. Here again experiences varied. Participant 1 described his experience as follows:

I think if anything’s changed it’s actually the fact that I see that my faith in humanity is a lot higher than before. Cause I think I’ve actually seen a lot more people willing to help refugees.

Participant 5 on the other hand described her experience in a more negative way:

It was very hard to watch. So many people there. Just in that one place, isolated from society pretty much and everything. And whatever they’d been through, it’s hard to watch.

While these experiences did impact the participants, they seemed not to be severe enough to change their acculturation tendencies. No participant reported that they were behaving towards Finns differently, then they were before the refugee crisis and even if feelings towards the country had changed, the general behaviour had not. Participant 9 explained that “being racist is just fashion nowadays, like in every country”, indicating that racism had become something normal in the Finnish society and all over the world. The refugee crisis was also seen as a catalysator for more open racism: Participants felt that it had always been there, but it had become more acceptable to openly express it with the refugee crisis.

Participant 8, for example, explained this as follows: “And then suddenly, when the refugee crisis came, it was kind of socially acceptable to say what you have been thinking already for the last few years”. Participants therefore found it hard to say whether the changes they

perceived were really an immediate result of the refugee crisis, or if those feelings had always existed in society and were just more openly expressed nowadays.

Four of the five focus groups discussed the process of adaptation within Finland. As explained before, the main acculturation expectation perceived was assimilation. Participants felt the need to adapt to the host culture, which was achieved by learning the language, learning about Finnish customs and finding one's place within the society. While this, in their opinion, did not make them Finns per se, participants had generally adapted well to the country and achieved long-term adaptation. 13 participants stated that they felt at home in Finland, despite bad experiences they had made or negative attitudes they encountered. Most of them stated that at some stage they got used to the culture, to the differences and also to underlying racism. Participant 13 described his experience as such:

So, I think, I feel anyway, I somehow maybe belong to this culture somehow now, (...) having a lot of connections maybe to Finnish people, and I start understanding the culture and I'm just living and my life is going on.

Negotiating everyday situations, accepting how Finnish society works and adapting to it played a major role for most participants. At some stage throughout their time in Finland, they had learned to cope with daily life, to function within the society and accepted Finland as their new home. This long-term adaptation was mainly positive and participants felt safe, welcome and at ease in the society.

The remaining participants, who did not feel at home in Finland, had a different view on the country. They felt like their status as an outsider could never truly make Finland their home, which indicates that they did not achieve the same kind of positive long-term adaptation as the others. Two of them had come to Finland knowing their stay would be temporary, which might have contributed to choosing an acculturation strategy closer to separation. As they were expecting to leave Finland after a relatively short amount of time

(under five years), obtaining Finnish citizenship for them had more practical than sentimental reasons, for example easier administration and fewer bureaucratic problems in the country.

Thus, it has to be said that acculturation strategies varied between integration, assimilation and separation. While participants stated that they had to assimilate to Finnish culture, most of them also preserved traits from their home culture, such as language and customs, resulting in integration as the main acculturation strategy. Separation tendencies could, as mentioned before, also be identified in some participants, as they had no real interest to fully integrate into the society and to for example learn the language or seek contact with Finns. These participants usually lived in a more international environment, with many of their friends being foreigners as well. However, this was true also of some of the more integrated participants, who oftentimes had international friend circles.

Throughout the focus groups participants did not express a change in acculturation strategy. While participants noted the impact of the refugee crisis and have often made negative experiences with Finns themselves, this did not lead to a reassessment of their chosen acculturation strategy. Instead they seemed to have adapted to the society enough to guarantee stability, even in times of polarisation. They accepted their position in society as a “foreign Finn”, as somebody who would never truly belong, but who had found their space in that society and was able to live comfortably and securely among and with the Finns. It can therefore be argued, that Berry’s (2005) statement that “acculturation is a process that continues for as long as there are culturally different groups in contact” (p. 699), might have to be re-evaluated concerning this study. It seems that long-term adaptation in the cases discussed leads to a fixed acculturation strategy, that is not easily changed by majority member attitudes anymore.

6.6. Discussion

Two research questions were designed as guidelines for the study presented in this paper: *Do Finnish citizens with a migration background perceive a change in the behaviour of Finns in the wake of the refugee crisis?* and *Have the participants become alienated from the host culture and reassessed their acculturation strategies?*. The analysis of the results of the focus groups indicated that most participants perceived a change in the behaviour of Finns, this did, however, not prompt them to reassess their acculturation strategies.

Drawing on Berry's acculturation model and the studies conducted on majority members' influence on acculturation strategies, tendencies towards alienation and re-evaluation of acculturation strategies were expected to surface. However, this does not mean that majority members' attitudes did have no influence at all on the choice of acculturation strategy. Throughout the study, it can clearly be seen that the assimilation orientation of Finns greatly impacted the acculturation strategies of the participants, as indicated in research conducted earlier (Bourhis et al., 1997; Sam & Berry, 2010; Van Oudenhoven et al., 2006). All participants felt the need, even a pressure, to learn about Finnish culture, to learn the language and to behave according to Finnish customs, to successfully operate in the society. Therefore, the main acculturation strategies of the participants were integration and assimilation.

When relating these findings to acculturation research, it can be said that many studies have shown that integration is the preferred acculturation strategy of immigrants, while majority members usually prefer assimilation (e.g. Van Oudenhoven et al, 1998, Van Oudenhoven et al., 2006). This is reflected in the perception of the participants of the study, creating discordance between strategies and expectations. While conflicts can be the result of discordant strategies (Bourhis et al., 1997), participants successfully negotiated these problems over time, resulting in a long-term solution. This suggests that long-term adaptation

might stabilise acculturation processes and lead to less changes in acculturation strategies over time.

An alienation from the host country could not be found among the participants. Even the three individuals, who did not feel at home in Finland, still considered it a good place to live and did not solely harness negative feelings towards the country. Furthermore, those participants who said their feelings towards Finland had changed in a negative way since the refugee crisis, did not alienate themselves from the host society or significantly changed their acculturation strategy.

As explained earlier, one possibility for this development can be long-term adaptation. However, another possibility is also the perceived difference between the refugees and the participants. Only one participant came to Finland as a refugee and had therefore made first hand experiences of what it is like to be a refugee. For many of the other participants, refugees belonged to a different cultural group that was not directly related to them. Even though foreigners are often perceived as one cultural group by majority members, resulting in what has been referred to as outgroup homogeneity effect (Mullen & Hu, 1989), those belonging to the minorities do perceive the difference between their own group and other foreign groups. Therefore, members of minority groups might perceive more racism towards them but attribute this to the refugees instead of the majority members, as being mistaken for a refugee is what ultimately leads to their negative perception. A significant bias towards refugees could, however, not be found throughout this study, as 13 participants were supportive of Finland accepting more refugees. Still, outgroup homogeneity effect can at least partially be attributed to the changed perception of foreigners, as it can “lead members of the host majority to regard immigrants as ‘all the same’ without acknowledging actual differences based on the national origin of immigrants” (Montreuil & Bourhis, 2001, p. 702).

This effect is heightened by the perceived homogeneity of Finland, which leads to a perception of foreigners as outsiders and makes it impossible for them to be considered “real” Finns, no matter how long they have lived in the country or how much they have adapted to the culture. Therefore, the participants perceived that a distance between Finns and Finns with a migration background persisted and could not be resolved through adaptation.

Ultimately, the study revealed two seemingly paradox tendencies: Firstly, even though the perception of foreigners changed, the acculturation process of long-term immigrants did not. Secondly, even though Finns with a foreign background did not feel equal to Finland-born Finns, they still felt at home in the country. These findings clearly illustrate the many compromises that consist the acculturation process. Berry (2005) explained that “some degree of cultural conflict may occur, which in the case of assimilation, is usually resolved by the acculturating person yielding to the behavioural norms of the dominant group” (p. 707-708). By adapting to the norms of Finnish society, individuals overcome conflict and achieve their long-term adaptation. Berry (2005) stated that when the acculturation strategy is integration, conflict can only be avoided through mutual accommodation. While this is reflected in the multicultural policies of the government (compare 3.2.2.), mutual accommodation is often not supported by the majority members of society. Therefore, participants stated that they had mostly assimilated to society with the individual features of their home culture not present in public life. However, while participants did not perceive the larger society to be supportive of integration, they described an openness among individuals. Participants with a Finnish spouse were mostly welcomed by their families and accepted as a family member. Many participants had also made Finnish friends and entered a Finnish network of contacts. Problems mostly occurred in working life and public situations, showing that even successful assimilation could not always guarantee a conflict-free environment. It therefore needs to be acknowledged, that the acculturation expectations were perceived to differ in different parts of

life. While private relationships left more space for integration, assimilation was the prevalent expectation in the public sphere, according to the results of the focus groups.

Regarding the feeling of belonging of participants, the perceived impossibility of ever truly being considered a Finn has to be mentioned. Participant 10 stated that “once you’re a foreigner you’re always a foreigner. You can’t be a Finn, it’s not about the passport”. This notion resonated very strongly throughout all focus groups, and while not directly related to the research questions, has to be discussed as a feeling of not-belonging could result in severe consequences for immigrants. While participants of this study managed to negotiate their position between Finn and foreigner in a mostly positive way, such an exclusion could enable health problems and separation (e.g. Jasinskaja-Lahti et al., 2003; Jasinskaja-Lahti et al., 2009; Montreuil & Bourhis, 2001).

It can be said that the Finnish perspective on immigration presents another paradox: While Finns were perceived to demand assimilation, they did not seem to allow the participants to ever “become” them, to be Finns and not just in possession of Finnish citizenship. This is especially hard for those who come to Finland when they are very young or who are born to foreign parents, as Finland is their home but they still feel like they do not belong. This was observed in the study as well, as the two participants who came to Finland as minors expressed exactly this feeling, while participants with children expressed an uncertainty about their future status in Finland. It is possible that the Finnish attitude is a result of Finland’s history and its image as a homogenous nation. This homogeneity is a myth that has been upheld over decades, as a bilingual country with two main minority groups (the Sami and the Finn-Swedes), as well as other groups such as the Rom and the Tatari minorities, cannot be considered monocultural.

Foreigners can only be fully accepted in the society if this mindset changes, a process that has only slowly started to happen throughout the country. This process is however

opposed by the rising populism and right-wing extremism throughout Finland and all of Europe, which mainly manifested itself in the 2011 and 2015 elections (compare 3.2.2.). While Bourhis et al. (1997) supposed that multiculturalist policies would impact majority members' acculturation orientations, this does not hold true for the case of Finland. This study aligned with the observations of Phinney et al. (2001), who found that tendencies depended more on local and personal factors, than official policies. Many discrepancies can be found between the acculturation strategies of immigrants, acculturation orientations of the majority members and Finnish policy. While this study has found that these discordances did not result in an alienation of the participants, this might change if the perception of foreigners further deteriorates.

In conclusion, drawing on the small sample analysed throughout the study, it can be said that Finnish citizens with a foreign background have largely assimilated to their host country and do feel at home here. This sentiment has not changed in the wake of the refugee crisis, even though the perception of foreigners by Finns has become more negative. Acculturation strategies remained the same and were not largely affected by majority members' attitudes after long-term adaptation was reached.

7. Limitations of the Study

Throughout the study 16 participants were interviewed in five focus groups. This only represents a small amount of the population and the data is therefore not generalizable. To prove whether findings made in this study are representative of the whole population, further research needs to be conducted on a much larger scale.

As an access to the whole population could not be achieved, participants were found through convenience sampling. While the participants filled all the necessary criteria, they were mainly recruited through Facebook groups, making a familiarity with modern technology and social media necessary to be included in the study. Out of the 16 participants,

10 were found through Facebook, while the remainder was found through snowball sampling. This resulted in a possible limitation of age groups, as the oldest participant was 43 years of age, and Facebook is not usually used by elderly people.

Throughout the study no restrictions were made regarding the ethnic background of the participants, as experiences of Finnish citizens with any foreign background were gathered for the research. Individuals came from a total of 15 different countries, accounting for a wide scope of opinions and experiences. More homogenous attitudes and experiences might have been found if participants had come from the same countries, however, the aim was to gain as many different perspectives as possible to portray the varied realities of Finnish citizens with a migration background. As the study includes a representative per country it can run a risk of generalising experiences per culture, therefore future studies should include a larger sample of each nationality to provide more variety in experiences.

Furthermore, focus groups were conducted in two Finnish cities only, Helsinki and Jyväskylä. Research in other cities might yield different results and offer further insight into the acculturation processes of immigrants. While some of the participants had lived in different Finnish cities throughout their time in Finland, this still did not provide enough information to draw conclusions about different regions. Studies (e.g. Birman, Trickett & Buchanan, 2005; Phinney et al., 2001) have shown how important the local context can be regarding acculturation, therefore future studies should gather more data on different regions within Finland.

The study was also restricted to English speaking individuals, which might have resulted in further sampling limitations, as some immigrants, especially of the older generation, might have never learned English. Furthermore, participants may have been more open to express feelings in their mother tongue and a limited knowledge of English may have resulted in problems when expressing opinions.

During the study itself, however, the researcher could gather in-depth data and a plethora of experiences was explored. Participants were open to share their opinions and related positive as well as negative experiences. While focus groups can be intimidating for the participants and thus lead to obstruction of data, this was not the case in the present study. While some participants shared more than others, all of them got their say and were able to state their opinion on the current situation in Finland. At the end of the interview participants were also given the chance to add any further issues they deemed important, which quite often resulted in very useful, additional data. Participants gave good feedback on the focus groups and found the discussions interesting themselves, a sign that the topic in question is relevant and should be explored further.

8. Further Research Opportunities

Globalisation is a phenomenon that is affecting people all over the world. Even though Finland has traditionally not been an immigrant nation, the increase in migration worldwide and the new needs created through it, have begun to change this and will continue to do so. Situations like the refugee crisis can have a great impact on smaller nations such as Finland, in which an influx in foreigners is easily noticed and often unfamiliar to its citizens. Therefore, acculturation research in general and in Finland specifically remains relevant in the future.

Acculturation has been studied in many ways and over many years, however, there are still many opportunities for further studies. While majority member attitudes have increasingly gained importance in the field, their actual impact on acculturation strategies still leaves room for further research. Furthermore, acculturation has generally been studied only during the initial adaptation process. However, if we see acculturation as an ongoing process, changes in acculturation strategy over time can be expected. This study tried to give an impression of those effects and of the impact changes in majority members' attitudes can

have. However, this study was conducted on a small scale and larger samples would be necessary to generalise any of the findings discussed. By conducting similar studies in a quantitative way more conclusions could be drawn and the assumptions made could be proven empirically.

Alternatively, studies on the sense of belonging of citizens with a foreign background could also enrich the field. Throughout the focus groups the paradox between being Finnish and having Finnish citizenship surfaced. This should be further explored to understand how immigrants can be better integrated into the host society and gain equal status within the country.

Furthermore, this phenomenon could also be studied in relation to other countries with similar structures. Unfortunately, acculturation research has often focussed on traditionally multiculturalist countries such as the US, Canada and Australia, whose reality is significantly different from Finland's. Therefore, it is necessary to compare within the European context, where countries such as Germany and the Netherlands deal with similar realities in the wake of the refugee crisis.

Czymara and Schmidt-Catran (2016) conducted a study in Germany that showed that immigrants with less cultural distance, knowledge of German, and high qualifications were more accepted among the general population. Immigrants from Kenya and Lebanon furthermore were discriminated against more than for example immigrants from France (Czymara & Schmidt-Catran, 2016). Kotzian (2010) described a similar problem regarding the sense of belonging, as was discussed throughout this study. In his paper he explained the situation of repatriates in Germany, which are of German nationality but still feel like immigrants and are often treated as such (Kotzian, 2010).

A study by Verkuyten and Martinovic (2015) in the Netherlands found that a “distinction between ethnic and civic citizenship can be made” (p. 42), meaning that a

distinction between a shared descent and a shared national identity. This, again, points to integration difficulties, as an immigrant can attain a national identity, but not a national decent. The study further found that the two concepts are mostly employed separate, meaning that some majority members support an ethnic definition of citizenship, while others support a civic one (Verkuyten & Martinovic, 2015).

Especially the Netherlands could be considered an interesting country to compare with Finland, as they are an equally small country and also speak a language not widely spoken throughout the world. Still, historical, geographical and social differences will have to be considered when conducting an analysis. Momentarily, however, these studies are rare and plenty of possibilities exist to further study the sense of belonging of immigrants and their acceptance as fellow citizens by the larger society.

Immigration is not a passing phenomenon, it has existed for centuries and will continue to do so, therefore, the number of foreigners in countries like Finland will continue to grow. Studies on their acculturation strategies and their reception by the society can help to improve acculturation processes, reach positive long-term adaptation and prevent mental and physical health issues. Immigrants also bring new ideas to a society, can lower the average age and especially in smaller countries contribute new genes. Therefore, the role of immigrants in a society should be continuously studied.

Finland is, as mentioned before, an ideal ground for research on acculturation and can still give many insights into the processes that take place when foreigners move to a new country.

9. Conclusion

The refugee crisis has changed the perception of foreigners all over Europe, Finland included. As a relatively isolated country, mostly known for its cold, dark winters, Finland has not exactly been the mecca of immigration over the past centuries. However, different

processes have slowly started to change this – be it the repatriation of Ingrian Finns, the arrival of international students or the increasing numbers of refugees coming to the country. Finland does have no choice but to accept that its ethnic make-up will change, a transition that will be a lot more beneficial for the country if it welcomes the change instead of denying it.

While Finland has introduced some very progressive multiculturalism policies, these still have not majorly impacted the mindset of many Finns. Assimilation seems to be the preferred acculturation orientation and Finnish citizens with a migration background might feel welcome in the country, but they certainly do not feel Finnish. This is a very interesting observation and one that gives grounds for further research into the acculturation strategies of immigrants in Finland, as well as the acculturation orientations of the majority members. Furthermore, comparisons with other countries that share a similar background to Finland could give a better insight whether this situation is unique for Finland or does occur in other countries as well. Many European countries, such as Germany, France and Italy currently struggle with a rise in nationalism similar to that portrayed by the True Finns, therefore, right-wing tendencies are of relevance all over Europe and make an understanding of acculturation ever more pressing.

This study has shown that Finland is perceived as racist by many immigrants. It is a perception they live with every day and have accepted as part of their reality. Astoundingly, this has not resulted in an alienation from Finnish culture, instead most immigrants have achieved a stable long-term adaptation and not been heavily impacted by the increasingly negative attitudes towards foreigners. Whether this holds true for most Finnish citizens with a foreign background would have to be proven in further studies. An alienation of foreigners would not benefit Finland nor the immigrants themselves, thus it is in the interest of all parties involved to find better solutions in the future and to work towards integration tendencies from both sides.

This study has only been able to gain insight into the experiences of Finnish citizens with a foreign background through a small sample of the population. Nevertheless, many interesting findings were made regarding their feelings about Finland and their acculturation and adaptation processes. While the study was not able to provide quantitative data, the qualitative data analysis introduced a new aspect of acculturation research, which will hopefully be discussed further in the future. This study could contribute to research on acculturation by showing the acculturation strategies (mainly integration and assimilation) of citizens with a migration background, as well as the perceived acculturation expectations of the majority members (assimilation). These tendencies have been found in other studies as well, however a new aspect this study introduced was the seemingly stable adaptation outcome of immigrants. Even though they perceived changes in their treatment, this did not impact their acculturation strategies or their feelings towards Finland. This is an interesting finding, which should be discussed further in the future, as it might be able to give a different perspective on the way acculturation and adaptation are interdependent. Lastly, the study showed that many citizens with a foreign background do not feel like they are truly part of the society, despite having a Finnish passport. Again, this is an interesting finding that contributes to the identity building of immigrants, as well as adaptation outcomes.

In conclusion, it can be said that acculturation is a topic that concerns all countries in our globalised world, no matter how small. Successful acculturation makes immigration sustainable in the long term and guarantees their well-being and mental stability for long-term adaptation. Thus, acculturation strategies should be further researched and discussed, because in the end, it is not about the passport, it is about the people behind them. People that are human and deserve the same treatment, no matter what skin colour they have and what country they are from.

10. References

- Barbour, R. (2007). *Doing focus groups*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Berry, J.W. (1980). Acculturation as varieties of adaptation. In A.M. Padilla. *Acculturation: Theory, models and some new findings* (9-26). Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Berry, J.W. (1997). Immigration, acculturation and adaptation [Lead Article]. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 46 (1), 5-68.
- Berry, J.W. (2005). Acculturation: Living successfully in two cultures [Conference Paper]. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 29, 697-712.
- Berry, J.W. (2006). Mutual attitudes among immigrants and ethnocultural groups in Canada. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 30, 719-734.
- Berry, J.W. (2008). Globalisation and acculturation. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 32, 328-336.
- Berry, J.W., Phinney, J.S., Sam, D.L., & Vedder, P. (2006). Immigrant youth: Acculturation, identity and adaptation. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 55 (3), 303-332.

Berry, J.W., & Sam, D.L. (2013). Accommodating cultural diversity and achieving equity.

An introduction to psychological dimensions of multiculturalism [Editorial]. *European Psychologist, 13*, 151-157.

Birman, D., Trickett, E., & Buchanan, R.M. (2005). A tale of two cities: Replication of a study on the acculturation and adaptation of immigrant adolescents from the former Soviet Union in a different community context. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 35*, 83-101.

Bourhis, R.Y., Moïse, L.C., Perreault, S., & Senécal, S. (1997). Towards an interactive acculturation model: A social psychological approach. *International Journal of Psychology, 32* (6), 369-386.

Brylka, A., Mähönen, T.A., & Jasinskaja-Lahti, I. (2015). National identification and attitudes towards Russian immigrants in Finland: Investigating the role of perceived threats and gains. *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology, 56*, 670-677.

Chirkov, V. (2009). Critical psychology of acculturation: What do we study and how do we study it, when we investigate acculturation?. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 33*, 94-105.

Czymara, C.S., & Schmidt-Catran, A.W. (2016). Wer ist in Deutschland willkommen? Eine Vignettenanalyse zur Akzeptanz von Einwanderern. *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie, 68*, 193-227.

Doucerain, M., Dere, J., & Ryder, A.G. (2013). Travels in hyper-diversity: Multiculturalism and the contextual assessment of acculturation. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 37, 686-699.

European Commission (2016). *The EU and the refugee crisis*. Retrieved from:

<http://publications.europa.eu/webpub/com/factsheets/refugee-crisis/en/>

European Union (2017). *Finland*. Retrieved from:

http://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/countries/member-countries/finland_en#overview

Finnish Immigration Service (2016, February 29). *The year 2015 was an unusual one for the Finnish Immigration Service* [Press Release]. Retrieved from:

http://www.migri.fi/for_the_media/bulletins/press_releases/press_releases/1/0/the_year_2015_was_an_unusual_one_for_the_finnish_immigration_service_66193

Finnish Immigration Service (2017a). Finnish citizenship. Retrieved from:

http://www.migri.fi/finnish_citizenship

Finnish Immigration Service (2017b, January 11). *Finnish Immigration Service expects an increase in residence permit and citizenship applications* [Press Release]. Retrieved from:

http://www.migri.fi/for_the_media/bulletins/press_releases/press_releases/1/0/finnish_immigration_service_expects_an_increase_in_residence_permit_and_citizenship_applications_71706

- Finnish Immigration Service (2017c, January 11). *Finnish Immigration Service's statistics for 2016: record number of decisions* [Press Release]. Retrieved from: http://www.migri.fi/for_the_media/bulletins/press_releases/press_releases/1/0/finnish_immigration_service_s_statistics_for_2016_record_number_of_decisions_71665
- Graves, T.D. (1967). Psychological acculturation in a tri-ethnic community. *Journal of Anthropological Research*, 23 (4), 337-350.
- Harvey, M.G., & Moeller, M. (2015). Acculturation research in context [Editorial]. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 47, 235-238.
- Jasinskaja-Lahti, I., Horenczyk, G., & Kinunen, T. (2011). Time and context in the relationship between acculturation attitudes and adaptation among Russian-speaking immigrants in Finland and Israel. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 37 (9), 1423-1440.
- Jasinskaja-Lahti, I., Liebkind, K., Horenczyk, G., & Schmitz, P. (2003). The interactive nature of acculturation: Perceived discrimination, acculturation attitudes and stress among young ethnic repatriates in Finland, Israel and Germany. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 27, 79-97.
- Jasinskaja-Lahti, I., Liebkind, K., & Perhoniemi, R. (2006). Perceived discrimination and well-being: A victim study of different immigrant groups. *Journal of Community and Applied Psychology*, 16, 267-284.

Jasinskaja-Lahti, I., Liebkind, K., & Solheim, E. (2009). To identify or not to identify?

National disidentification as an alternative reaction to perceived ethnic discrimination.

Applied Psychology: An International Review, 58 (1), 105-128.

Jasinskaja-Lahti, I., Mähönen, T.A., & Liebkind, K. (2012). Identity and attitudinal reactions

to perceptions of inter-group interactions among ethnic migrants: A longitudinal study.

British Journal of Social Psychology, 51, 312-329.

Khiabani, G. (2016). Refugee crisis, imperialism and pitiless wars on the poor. *Media,*

Culture & Society, 38 (5), 755-762.

Korkiasaari, J., & Söderling, I. (1998). Finland: from a country of emigration into a country

of immigration. In I. Söderling (Ed.), *A changing pattern of migration in Finland and*

its surroundings (pp. 7-28). Helsinki: Population Research Institute.

Kotzian, O. (2010). Sonderfall Bundesrepublik Deutschland: Deutscher und doch Migrant –

Aussiedler zwischen Identitätsfindung und gesellschaftlicher Akzeptanz. *Europäisches*

Journal für Minderheitenfragen, 3, 212-228.

Kunst, J.R., Thomson, L., Sam, D.L., & Berry, J.W. (2015). “We are in this together”:

Common group identity predicts majority members’ active acculturation efforts to

integrate immigrants. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 41 (10), 1438-1453.

- Krueger, R.A., & Casey, M.A. (2015). *Focus groups. A practical guide for applied research* (5th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Leong, C. (2008). A multilevel research framework for the analyses of attitudes toward immigrants. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 32, 115-129.
- Migrant Crisis: Migration to Europe explained in seven charts. (2016, March 04). *BBC Online*. Retrieved from: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-34131911>
- Ministry of Education and Culture (2009). *Strategy for cultural policy*. Retrieved from: <http://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/76674/opm45.pdf?sequence=1>
- Ministry of Justice of Finland (1999). *The Finnish constitution*. Retrieved from: <http://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/1999/en19990731.pdf>
- Ministry of the Interior of Finland (1999). *Act on the integration of immigrants and the reception of asylum seekers*. Retrieved from: <http://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/1999/en19990493.pdf>
- Ministry of the Interior of Finland (n.d.). *Finnish migration policy is based on Government objectives, EU legislation and international agreements*. Retrieved from: <http://intermin.fi/en/migration/migration-and-asylum-policy>

Montreuil, A. & Bourhis, R.Y. (2001). Majority acculturation orientations toward “valued” and “devalued” immigrants. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 32 (6), 698-719.

Morgan, D.L. (1997). *Focus groups as qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Mullen, B., & Hu, L. (1989). Perceptions of ingroup and outgroup variability: A meta-analytic integration. *Basic and Applied Psychology*, (10), 233-252.

OED Online (2017). Oxford University Press. Retrieved from: <http://www.oed.com/>

Padilla, A. M. (1980). The role of cultural awareness and ethnic loyalty in acculturation. In A. M. Padilla (Ed.), *Acculturation: Theory, models and some new findings* (47-84). Boulder, CO: Westview.

Padilla, A.M., & Perez, W. (2003). Acculturation, social identity and social cognition: A new perspective. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 25 (1), 35-55.

Phelps, J.M., Eilertsen, D.E., Türken, S., & Ommundsen, R. (2011). Integrating immigrant minorities: Developing a scale to measure majority members' attitudes toward their own proactive efforts. *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*, 52, 404-410.

Phinney, J.S., Horenczyk, G., Liebkind, K., & Vedder, P. (2001). Ethnic-identity, immigration and well-being: An interactional perspective. *Journal of Social Issues*, 57 (3), 493-510.

Powell, J.W. (1883). Human evolution. Annual address of the president. *Transactions of the Anthropological Society of Washington*, 2, 176-208.

Redfield, R., Linton, R., & Herskovits, M.J. (1936). Memorandum for the study of acculturation. *American Anthropologist*, 38 (1), 149-152.

Sam, D.L., & Berry, J.W. (2010). Acculturation: When individuals and groups of different cultural backgrounds meet. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 5 (4), 472-481.

Sam, D.L. (2015). Acculturation. In N.J. Smelser & P.B. Baltes (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences* (2nd ed.) (pp. 68-74). New York: Elsevier.

Sarcinchi, A. (2016). European refugee crisis. Beyond prejudice. *Strategic Impact*, 2, 16-22.

Saukkonen, P. (2013). Multiculturalism and nationalism: The politics of diversity in Finland. In P. Kivisto & Ö. Wahlbeck (Eds.), *Debating multiculturalism in the Nordic welfare states* (pp. 270-294). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Statistics Finland (2016). *Finland in figures. 2016*. Helsinki: Grano Oy.

Statistics Finland (n.d. a). *Immigrants and integration*. Retrieved from:

http://www.stat.fi/tup/maahanmuutto/immigration/index_en.html

Statistics Finland (n.d. b). *Foreign citizens* [Data File]. Retrieved from:

http://www.stat.fi/tup/maahanmuutto/immigrants/immigrants-in-the-population/foreign-citizens/index_en.html

Stewart, D.W., Shamdasani, P.N., & Rook, D.W. (2007). *Focus groups: theory and practice* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

The Social Science Research Council Summer Seminar on Acculturation (1953).

Acculturation: An exploratory formulation. *American Anthropologist*, 56 (6), 973-1000.

Uberoi, V. (2008). Do policies of multiculturalism change national identities?. *The Political Quarterly*, 79 (3), 404-417.

United Nations (1990). *International convention on the protection of the rights of all migrant workers and members of their families*. Retrieved from:

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CMW.aspx>

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2015).

Trends in international migration, 2015 [Fact-Sheet]. *Population Facts*, 4.

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2016).

International migration report 2015: Highlights (ST/ESA/SER.A/375). Retrieved from:

http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/publications/migration-report/docs/MigrationReport2015_Highlights.pdf

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (2016). *Global trends. Forced displacement in 2015*. Retrieved from:

<http://www.unhcr.org/statistics/unhcrstats/576408cd7/unhcr-global-trends-2015.html>

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (n.d. a). *Refugees*. Retrieved from:

<http://www.unhcr.org/refugees.html>

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (n.d. b). *Asylum seekers*. Retrieved from:

<http://www.unhcr.org/asylum-seekers.html>

Van Acker, K., & Vanbeselaere, N. (2011). Bringing together acculturation theory and intergroup contact theory: Predictors of Flemings' expectations of Turks' acculturation behavior. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 35, 334-345.

Van Oudenhoven, J.P., Prins, K.S., & Buunk, B.P. (1998). Attitudes of minority and majority members towards adaptation of immigrants. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 28, 995-1013.

Van Oudenhoven, J.P., Ward, C., & Masgoret, A. (2006). Patterns of relations between immigrants and host societies. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 30, 637-651.

Verkuyten, M., & Martinovic, B. (2015). Behind the ethnic–civic distinction: Public attitudes towards immigrants' political rights in the Netherlands. *Social Science Research*, 53, 34-44.

Wahlbeck, Ö. (2013). Multicultural Finnish society and minority rights. In P. Kivisto & Ö. Wahlbeck (Eds.), *Debating multiculturalism in the Nordic welfare states* (pp. 295-324). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Ward, C., & Chang, W.C. (1997). "Cultural fit": A new perspective on personality and sojourner adjustment. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 21 (4), 525-533.

Yle (2015a, August 31). *True or False? Yle tackles Finland's top ten complaints about asylum seekers*. Retrieved from:
http://yle.fi/uutiset/osasto/news/true_or_false_yle_tackles_finlands_top_ten_complaints_about_asylum_seekers/8266138

Yle (2015b). *Whole country – Results by party*. Retrieved from:
http://vaalit.yle.fi/results/2015/parliamentary_election/?parties ##taulukko

Appendix A

Focus Group Questions

1. When did you move to Finland?
2. What were your reasons for coming to Finland?
3. Where in Finland have you lived?
4. When you first came to Finland how were you welcomed?
5. What were your experiences with Finns when you first came and what are they now? Were they different in different places?
6. Do you feel that the perception of foreigners has changed over the last couple of years?
7. Do you think Finland should accept more refugees? Why? Why not?
8. Would you consider Finns open-minded towards foreigners and foreign cultures?
9. Have your feelings towards Finland changed due to the way refugees are treated?
If so is this development positive or negative?
10. Where do you feel at home?
11. Is there anything else you would like to add to the discussion?

Appendix B

Informed Consent

I have been informed about the study and I agree to participate. I acknowledge that my participation in this study is voluntary and I can withdraw at any time. This focus group will be recorded and your signature indicates your consent to being recorded.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

By signing above, I consent to participate in and being recorded for a focus group conducted for this study.

Please fill out this information sheet, which will be used in order to provide demographic data for the study.

Age:

Sex:

Country of Origin:

Year of Arrival in Finland:

Year of Attaining Citizenship:

Place(s) of Residence:

If you would like to be informed about the results of the study, please provide your email address:

Thank you for your participation,
Annika Sievert
Master's Degree in Intercultural Communication
University of Jyväskylä
annika.a.sievert@student.jyu.fi