UNDERSTANDING STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE THROUGH THE INTERSECTIONALITY THEORY; A THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF GAY REFUGEE’S EXPERIENCES OF OPPRESSION AND MARGINALIZATION IN SWEDEN

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Abstract

Research in Canada and Turkey suggests that LGBTQ asylum seekers are particularly vulnerable among an already marginalized group, the refugee community, where different forms of structural violence manifest itself in particular ways towards gay refugees. Given that few studies exist in the Swedish context, the aim is to gain a preliminary understanding of LGBTQ refugee’s experiences of structural violence in Sweden, legally, socially and economically.

The material is based on interviews of four male gay refugees from different countries all living in Malmö. Using a thematic analysis by categorizing the material into patterns of meaning, two main themes have been identified: structural violence in the asylum system and structural violence in social life. The intersectionality theory will be applied in order to understand how oppression expresses itself in particular ways towards these individuals, because of their intersecting identity as gay and as refugee.

The results indicate that LGBTQ refugees experience structural violence through economic marginalization and the re-telling of traumatic experiences in the asylum process. However, structural violence expressed via social marginalization they cannot be sufficiently understood through the intersectionality theory, urging future studies to further explore and expand the topic and scope of the thesis.

Key words

LGBTQ, Refugee, Structural Violence, Asylum process

Intersectionality Theory, Thematic Analysis
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I also want to thank RFSL Newcomers association for doing a fantastic work in fighting for the rights of LGBTQ refugees in Sweden, providing activities and a community to the one’s needing it the most.

Word list

**LGBTQ**- Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Queer

**Sexual minority/Queer/Gay, Refugees/ Asylum seekers**- In the thesis it is synonymous to LGBTQ refugees, used for the purpose of linguistic variation in order to avoid too much repetition of one single expression.

**Cis-Gender**- Opposite to Transgender, biological born individuals, identifying themselves as the same sex assigned to them at birth.

**RFSL**- Riksförbundet för sexuellt likaberättigande. The Swedish national association for sexual minority rights.

**Migrationsverket**- The Swedish Migration Board.
1.0 Introduction

Sweden has been considered a safe haven for LGBTQ refugees to seek asylum. However, upon their arrival in Sweden many of these individuals’ experience oppression through structural violence as testified by the interviewees:

*So it's kind of ironic, because they (LGBTQ refugees) come to seek protection, running away from discrimination... The same community you are running from; you will face again here in Sweden.*

The ways in which structural violence is experienced by sexual minority refugees remains to a large extent unexplored by academia both in the Swedish context as well as internationally. Even though they seem to be particularly vulnerable and excluded within an already marginalized group, the refugee community, their stories are seldom heard.

This is why then it becomes so urgent to seek out to understand the ways in which these individuals become structurally marginalized due to their intersecting identities, both as refugees and as gay.

Through the use of a thematic analysis and the implementation of the intersectionality theory on the empirical data the thesis will contribute to a potential understanding as to who structural violence faced by sexual minority asylum seekers expresses itself in particular ways, both legally within the asylum system and socially and economically in social life.

By interviewing four gay individuals who have all been granted asylum in Sweden about their experiences of structural violence as LGBTQ refugees. Which will provide possible insight to the oppression experienced by sexual minority asylum seekers on a daily basis, hence producing findings onto which future research can build upon.

Research done on LGBTQ refugees’ situation in Canada by Edward Ou Jin Lee and Shari Brotman suggests specific ways in which these individuals experience structural violence.

The aim then is to explore to what extent themes in relation to different forms of structural violence reappears and emerges throughout the conducted interviews, hence testing and possibly confirming the results from previous research. By doing so, a potential understanding might be gained how the structural violence faced by LGBTQ refugees in Sweden expresses itself as told by the interviewees.
1.1 Background

In order to get an understanding of the structural violence experienced by LGBTQ refugees it is crucial to understand the current refugee situation in Sweden. Therefore, the following section will present briefly the history of the Swedish asylum policy as well as the current refugee situation.

Sweden has since the 1970’s been granting asylum to a large number of refugees, especially in relation to outbreaks of different conflicts, starting with the civil war in Chile in 1973 as well as receiving large numbers of refugees from Iraq, Iran, Lebanon and Eritrea in the middle the 1980s. Because of civil war in Bosnia in the 1990s, Sweden received up to 100 000 people, the biggest amount of refugees thus far. Towards the end of the 1990s the EU and its member states, including Sweden, laid the foundation for a common migration and asylum policy (Migrationsverket 2016-04-15). However, it was not until 2005 that the Swedish refugee law was expanded to include sexual orientation as one of the grounds of persecution upon which asylum claims could be made (RFSL 2013: 3). Many sexual minority refugees have experienced serious forms of violence such as persecution, torture and rape because of their sexual orientation in their home countries. 76-80 countries in the world criminalize homosexuality, often with long imprisonment times (Anti-Gay Laws 2016, Dunton 2012: 360) and there are at least 10 countries where homosexuality and same sex acts are punished by death (Bearak 2016-06-16, Dunton 2012: 360). Even though no exact number is available as to how many asylum cases has been made due to sexual orientation, according to some experts at RFSL, there is around 50 LGBTQ asylum cases each year, a number that will most likely increase even more due to the latest refugee crisis (E Treijs 2016-02-06). As of last year the largest migration cycle so far swept across Europe, as a consequence of the civil war in Syria. Sweden was one of the nations to accommodate the largest amount of asylum seekers in the whole European Union. According to the Swedish Migration boards annual report from 2015 162 000 people where accommodated, six times the normal rate. The majority of those arrived during the last six months of last year, putting extraordinary pressure on municipalities all around Sweden to find housing facilities for all asylum seekers and education services for children (Migrationsverket 2015: 3-4). Apart from the severe situation in terms of accommodation of all the refugees, another problem directed
towards sexual minority asylum seekers within the refugee housings has emerged lately around the country.

During the last year, several media and human rights organizations have reported sexual and violent assaults occurring in refugee houses directed towards non-hetero sexual asylum seekers. The reports suggest that sexual minority asylum seekers in Sweden are often victims to homophobic violence by other refugees precisely because of their sexual orientation. Some of them has been so bad, leading to LGBTQ refugees deciding return to the country of origin which they fled from, due to the violence experienced in Sweden (Ahmad 2016-02-19, Hannah 2015/16:1478, E Treijs 2016-02-06, Westby 2016-04-26).

Although the direct violence experienced by sexual minority asylum seekers is out of scope of the thesis, it contextualizes the current situation for LGBTQ refugees in Sweden, which appears to be particularly vulnerable among other refugees, especially within refugee housings. As the thesis will show queer refugees experience not only direct violence, but also particular forms of structural violence within the Swedish refugee regime, leading in to the presentation of the research problem.

1.2 Research Problem

As indicated by the introduction sexual minority refugees in Sweden today experience multiple forms of oppression and exclusion in implicit and explicit ways in their everyday life, both by other refugees and from the Swedish LGBTQ community. Structural violence experienced by sexual minority asylum seekers differs slightly from the broad refugee population since it expresses itself in particular ways as a consequence of these individuals’ intersectional identity (as Refugee and as Gay), in the asylum process and in social life. The research problem becomes then to understand precisely how experiences of structural violence manifest itself towards these individuals. Queer migration studies, sociology, anthropology and law studies has dealt with issues relating to legal aspects in asylum processes and identity formation solely or citizenship, few studies seem to directly asses and explore in what ways structural violence impact on the lives of sexual minority refugees. Reports from media and human rights agencies indicate that sexual minority refugees are particularly vulnerable and succumbed for a specific type of structural violence. In the Swedish context, the oppression towards LGBTQ refugees has been
studied from a Legal perspective, a top down approach, analyzing legal documents. Virtually no study in Sweden, to the writer’s knowledge, has tried to understand how these types of violence affect LGBTQ refugees from a bottom-up approach, by actual talking to the individuals affected.

1.3 Purpose and aim

The aim of the study is to understand the experiences of structural violence experienced by LGBTQ refugees using the intersectionality theory. Research done by Ou Jin and Brotman (2011, 2013) in the Canadian context and by Sima Shamsari (2014) in the Turkey indicates particular ways in which structural violence within the refugee regime and the asylum process affects and shapes the everyday lives of sexual minority asylum seekers. Through the interviews one can see reoccurring traces of structural and direct violence both legally, socially and economically, similar to the ones identified by previous research.

Using the intersectionality theory will enable an understanding of the oppression and violence faced by LGBTQ refugees in Sweden today. The purpose becomes to see whether similar experiences of exclusion and oppression directed towards gay refugees might be identified and located in the Swedish context. Secondly, the aim is to see whether the intersectionality theory can be applied in order to understand the forms of structural violence experienced by individuals with the particular intersecting identity. The thesis will hopefully give a new insight and an understanding to the obstacles faced by gay refugees in Sweden on a daily basis through the implementation of the intersectionality theory.

1.4 Research Questions

Given the research problem, purpose and aim of the study, which is to understand sexual minority refugee’s experiences of structural violence in Sweden through applying the intersectionality theory, the primary research question of the study is the following:

How can legal, social and economic aspects of structural violence experienced by LGBTQ refugees in Sweden be understood through the intersectionality theory?

Two operationalization questions will be asked in order to answer the research question, each of them aiming at uncovering forms of oppression towards LGBTQ refugees identified by previous literature.
The first operational question aims at understanding how structural violence faced by sexual minorities may express itself legally:

How do LGBTQ refugees experience structural violence within the asylum process?

The question is based on previous literature, which has identified structural violence within LGBTQ asylum cases as a reoccurring phenomenon. It is specifically inspired by the research of Brotman and Jin (2013, 2011) who suggest that the forced “coming out” of the LGBTQ refugee within the Canadian asylum process can be seen as a type of structural violence. The question aims thus to test the findings on the Swedish context, by observing whether similar experiences reoccurs in the interview material. The purpose of the second operational question is to outline economic aspects of structural violence and how it affects the lives of sexual minority refugees:

How do LGBTQ refugee’s experience structural violence economically and socially?

By answering the question will enable a potential understanding on a micro level how structural violence manifest itself socially and economically particularly in relation to the two intersecting identities of the gay refugee.

Answering the two operational questions through extensively quoting the interviews will outline different ways in which structural violence affects sexual minority refugees in Sweden. Through the application of the intersectionality theory in the analysis will enable a potential understanding as to how different forms oppression affects the lives of LGBTQ asylum seekers, both legally, economically and socially in relation to their two intersecting identities.

The answers to these operational questions will hopefully present multiple aspects and levels of oppression that these particular individuals are subjected to because of their intersecting identity, namely their sexuality and their refugee status. By answering the two operational questions and by applying the intersectionality theory will hopefully enable an answer to the research question.
1.5 Relevance to Peace and Conflict Studies

The topic of LGBTQ refugee’s experiences of structural violence is indeed relevant for Peace and Conflict Studies precisely because it is dealing with the concept of *structural violence* by Johan Galtung one of the three pillars within the violence triangle. It is considered as one of the most fundamental theoretical foundations within the discipline. Given the complexity of the concept and many ways in which it can appear, a precise description and definition of the concept will be provided subsequently. Structural violence can express itself through social inequality in terms of uneven distribution of power and marginalization and through political and economic exclusion (Galtung 1969: 175, Reychler 2008: 4). Vorobej adds in his understanding of the concept that whatever causes the structural violence generally cannot be traced to a clearly identified actor (2008: 84). According to Galtung, structural violence should rather be defined as a process, a latent manifestation of violence that can be perceived as a sign of social injustice (1969: 171-172, 1990). The work of Brotman and Ou Jin suggest that it can be manifested concretely through, *poverty, unemployment and pre-curious citizenship* (2013: 7). These forms of systemic oppression, manifested in implicit and explicit ways towards sexual minority refugees is identified and indicated both by previous research.

Another dimension of the violence spectra is direct violence, which can be related to the research topic. During the last year, several incidents of harassment and attacks toward LGBTQ refugees on refugee housings all over the country have been reported in the Swedish media\(^1\). It further stressing the vulnerable situation of this group and the threats they are facing on a daily basis.

According Galtung the goal of Peace and conflict studies is to strive towards positive peace, the absence of any form of violence. In the state of negative peace, the structural violence might prevail through polarization which can lead to conflict (2013:173-178). By studying the structural violence and trying to understand it, future studies and policies can prevent the escalation of structural violence and thereby contribute to and be seen as a form of peacebuilding.

Given the following implementation of the form of structural violence, the implicit social and political structures, that put marginalize and isolates these particular individuals both socially,

politically and economically,

Further on three out of four interviewees come from countries which can be considered as conflict zones, where the nations in questions are experiencing high intensive conflict (Iraq) or low-intensive, latent conflicts (Egypt) or political instability (Jordan) (UCDP 2016, Global Conflict Tracker 2016). As to the fourth one deriving from Jamaica, the country is officially recognized as a country at peace however, studies on LGBTQ people’s situation indicate high levels of internal cultural, structural and direct violence directed towards Non-heterosexual and gender conforming individuals (Murray 1998). These individuals have also been in contact through his networking with other sexual minority refugees from war-torn countries.

The study also relates to other research fields such as queer migration and refugee studies, some of the studies within these fields will be mentioned more thoroughly in the literature review. However, what frames this particular study into the field of Peace and Conflict Studies is the fact that the main focus of the thesis lies in understanding how exactly the structural violence may manifest itself and affect the lives of LGBTQ refugees in Sweden both economically, legally and in the everyday life using the theory of intersectionality. By testing the chosen themes based on the findings of Ou Jin and Brotman relating to structural violence towards sexual minority refugees the study will contribute with empirically with new material adding to the research done on structural violence towards sexual minority refugees. Further on the thesis will provide with a comparative contribution, since the findings will enable a comparison with the research in the Canadian context.

By implementing the theoretical concept of intersectionality will not only provide a unique insight on structural violence towards LGBTQ refugees, explore a yet undocumented part of Peace and Conflict studies. The thesis will provide an important contribution and expand the boundaries of the discipline. Given the following implementation of the form of structural violence, the implicit social and political structures marginalizing and isolating these particular individuals both socially, politically and economically, the research topic can be considered relevant for Peace and Conflict studies.
2.0 Previous research

The aim of the thesis is to understand the structural violence towards LGBTQ refugees in Sweden today through the intersectionality theory. In order to do so the following chapter will present the current thoughts and common themes identified within the research done on sexual minority refugees. The chosen studies belong to several different scientific disciplines such as law, human rights, sociology, and anthropology. The literature review will hopefully contribute to an understanding of the chosen codes based on the identified recurrent themes in the previous research. The following approaches in the literature will be presented; the policy approach, the legal approach, the anthropological approach, structural violence within the legal process, the current work using the intersectionality theory. Through the combination of these studies’ findings from this vast academic scope will enable an identification of a gap within current research presented in section 2.6.

2.1 Policy approach

Research on LGBTQ refugees on a policy level suggest the western\textsuperscript{2} refugee regime to be guided by an inherent neo-liberal and imperialist perception around identity and sexuality. Spijkerboer suggests that within the western refugee regime heterosexuality is perceived as something fixed and constant whereas non-conforming sexualities are by nature contested (2013: 22, 230, Lubheid 2008: 170). Lubheid calls the dominant discourse on LGBTQ refugees, the global gay modernity (2008:169) where homosexuality becomes an integrated part of the western world values (Murray 2014:14). In order to be granted asylum, individuals have to consolidate and perform the notion of a white western\textsuperscript{3} gay man; I. e being open about one’s sexual orientation (Heller 2009: 302, Spijkerboer 2013:222). Sexual minority refugees could then be seen as trapped by the following dichotomist stereotype: “All the gays are legal and all the refugees are straight” (Lubheid 2008:169), which rules the refugee regime shaping the asylum process of LGBTQ refugee. Heller further elaborates the idea in her literature review on studies on queer

\footnotetext{2}{I am aware that using the word “western” might be problematic. Given that the research read uses the expression, I have chosen to be as authentic as possible by not altering the expression “western”.

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migration, suggesting that the dominant discourse ruling LGBTQ asylum cases reaffirms the link between sexuality and behavior: in which all gay men has to be effimate, all lesbians has to be masculine and all (male-to female) transgender has to undergone correctional surgery (Heller 2009: 302). Sexuality in the western context is associated with identity, rather than the sexual act which becomes part of the ruling refugee discourse. The consequences of the set notions of sexuality linked to behavior and identity manifest themselves in specific ways within the asylum process.

2.2 Legal Approach

Studies on policy and discursive practices suggest that the refugee process is guided by fixed perceptions of homosexuality, consolidating and essentializing stereotypical behavior related to sexual orientation. Similar patterns reoccur within research on LGBTQ asylum cases, where a couple of phenomenon have been identified. In the asylum process for instance LGBTQ refugees has to prove their “sexual orientation” in order to be granted asylum. It is observed in the migration court in the UK where male asylum seekers have been demanded to show videos of them performing sexual acts. The private and physical becomes public and a legal matter in the asylum process (Lewis 2014: 957-958). In the daily meetings with the UNHCR staff in refugee’s camps in Turkey, gay refugees have been asked to name different gay clubs and venues in order to assess their credibility of their sexual orientation as suggested by Shamsaris study on Irani queer and Trans refugees (2014: 1001). Gröndal further shows how one asylum seeker was denied asylum in Sweden due to not having seeking out to the LGBTQ community in Sweden by participating in the activities of RFSL or having frequented gay clubs (2012: 22). In contrast Spijkerboer suggest that the demand for proving your sexuality is accurate in asylum cases concerning sexuality, gay and lesbian refugees rather than cases of non-conforming gender expressions, transgender people (2013: 222).

In contrast of proving your sexuality, individuals who do not live up to the ascribed stereotypes tend to get their asylum claims denied, being encouraged to once more “hide in the closet”. Some scholars have suggested that asylum in some cases is denied specifically because the individual in question has not lived openly in their home country.
The stereotyped western ideas of sexuality and becomes a regulator of behavior within the asylum process in which asylum seekers have to act accordingly in order to stay (Gröndal 2012: 66-67, Spijkerboer 2013: 219-221). Lewis calls the phenomenon the “discretion argument” where an individual who does not align oneself with the specific stereotyped behavior, by not being perceived as queer the individual is not in danger of being persecuted or subjected to violence (2014: 961, Spijkerboer 2013: 219-221). The following reasoning by some migration courts suggest that refugees are advised to go back to their country of origin hiding their identity, if they do not align with expected stereotypes.

In the Swedish context, the most prominent research found on sexual minority refugees is the PHD study on sexual minority asylum cases by Aino Gröndal (2012). She suggests that the cultural and social context of the LGBTQ refugee tend to be neglected within asylum processes. As a consequence, courts and migration boards tend to not take vital aspects for concealment of sexual orientation into consideration such as cultural differences, social stigmas, traumatic events, fear of persecution and violence from other refugees (2012: 65, RFSL 2015: 2). The cultural context in return might explain as to why LGBTQ may struggle with coming out, hence proving their sexual orientation in the asylum process.

In contrast to these findings suggesting a general skepticism towards LGBTQ refugee’s credibility in asylum cases is contrasted slightly by David Murrays (2014). His anthropological work following a support group for LGBT refugees in Toronto sheds light on another tendency within sexual minority asylum cases. Through the interviews of sexual minority refugees and social workers during several meetings a theme of “faking” one’s sexual identity emerges with the intention of being granted asylum, where a divide and mistrust between “real” and “fake” asylum seekers occur (2014:21-22). The findings suggest that asylum seekers may take advantage of the homo-nationalism, i.e. seeking asylum faking due to sexual orientation in order to be granted asylum.

A clear paradox seems to appear; while in the asylum process the asylum seeker is expected to act and behave to certain norms according to western standards. In court the asylum seekers are expected to share the most intimate parts of themselves, whereas back in the motherland a concealment is encouraged as if the person in question is not gay enough and might as well live closeted.
Apart from legal aspects of structural violence towards LGBTQ refugees, other studies have identified traces of structural violence towards sexual minority asylum seekers in social life, presented in the next section.

2.4 Anthropological approach

As to the how structural violence may manifest itself socially and economically in the everyday life of the LGBTQ refugee, two researchers have mainly contributed to this understanding. Sima Shamsari’s (2014) ethnographic work on Irani queer and transgender refugees contributes to the understanding of several forms of oppressions face by this particular group. Their experiences of being in transit in satellite cities in Turkey while waiting for permission to continue their journey to a third western country where asylum claims can be made is analyzed and contextualized through deep-interviews. She investigates the tension between life and death, the vacuum in which queer refugees has to live in during the several years before their asylum process can even begin (2014: 999, 1001). The existence in which no jobs, social security or health services such as medications for transgender individuals is provided living through harassment by local people, can be considered from a peace and conflict perspective (as outlined in section 3.1) as ways in which structural violence manifests itself. Murray in his study interviewing LGBTQ refugees in Canada (2014) indicates a similar patterns of economic exclusion during the asylum process, as well as being succumbed to homophobia from fellow refugees as police staff and staff from the migration board (2014:29).
2.6 Studies using the Intersectionality Theory

There is a vast body of work using the intersectionality theory within the field of gender studies. It was introduced by scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989 to understand the particular oppression (as black and as women) faced by Afro-American women in the United States. The theory sets out to understand the complex forms of oppression that individuals face due to their multiple identities (Brotman 2013: 5, Crenshaw 1989: 1244). Most of the studies using the theory focuses on the oppression of women. However, scholars have expanded the scope of the theory by using other points of departures in their intersectional analysis:

Bereswill have incorporated intersectionality into the domain of masculinity studies, hence looking at the particular burdens faced by men of intersecting identities particularly in relation to their sexuality (Lutz 2011: 69-88). The theory has been applied in a Peace and Conflict context in the research by Zarkov in order to investigate how ethnicity, nationality and masculinity intersect in Croatian media coverage of castration of male civilians during the Bosnian civil war (2011:105-120). Further on the intersectionality theory have started to be combined with queer theory (Jaffer 2012) in order to investigate the particular burdens experienced by sexual minority individuals in relation to their intersecting sexual and ethnic identities. The work of Bilge (2009) shows how religion and sexuality interact affecting the identity and self-recognition of gay Muslim individuals in Canada using the intersectionality theory.

Brotman and Ou Jin’s (2011, 2013) research is of particular interest for the study. Using the intersectionality theory, they outline the particular way how structural violence within the Canadian refugee regime shapes the life of LGBTQ refugees. Having to prove their sexual orientation within the asylum process forces queer refugees to “come out” according to western standards and to retell traumatic experiences. The forced outing causes a re-traumatization, which can be seen as a form of structural violence (2011:154, 2013:7). The intersectionality theory has also been used to understand the particular ways in which LGBTQ refugees are being marginalized socially and culturally specifically because of their intersecting identities which will be elaborated in chapter 3.
2.7 Identifying a gap

The majority of the research is concerned with legal (Lewis, Gröndal, Spijkerboer) and discursive aspects (Heller, Lubheid) in relation to LGBTQ refugee’s experiences. In the Swedish context where, as to the writer’s knowledge, very few studies on queer refugees exist over master’s level, notably the PHD study by Aino Gröndal, mentioned in all of the bachelor thesis read⁴, all of them focusing on the asylum process itself rather than talking to the individuals affected by the policies.

This is indeed a strength since the majority of the findings gives common and similar indications of what drives and shapes these processes. It does however create a huge gap of knowledge urging for further research to seek out to understand the structural violence towards LGBTQ refugees in Sweden from a bottom-up perspective, not only from a legal perspective.

Even though research on social and economic aspects of structural violence experienced by LGBTQ refugees remains, very limited, to the writers’ knowledge, there are however some important contributions. Some Canadian scholars (Brotman ou Jin and Murray) have contributed to an initial understanding of structural violence of sexual minority refugees through intersectionality theory. Shamsaris research indicates how structural violence economically and socially affects the lives of queer and trans refugees in Turkey. This is one of the few studies found dealing with both legal, economic and social aspects LGBTQ refugee’s experiences of structural violence. The thesis tries to take inspiration from and build upon on the Swedish context. The thesis is builds upon that particular standpoint, also taking inspiration from Murray research.

As to the choice of material, the majority of the literature dealing with legal aspects of LGBTQ refugees experiences of structural violence by analyzing secondary material such as legal documents and previous research. Few of the studies take a bottom-up approach by actually talking to the individuals affected. The literature seems to analyze the origin of structural violence rather from a top-down approach, tracing it from migration boards and state institutions. Both Murray (2014), Brotman and ou Jin (2013, 2011) and Shamsari (2014) base their empirical

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⁴ The following bachelor thesis about Swedish LGBTQ refugee cases have been read: S Görts, L Thure (2011), D Lundqvist (2014), S Kekkonen, E A Habonimana (2015).
material on semi-structured interviews with LGBTQ refugees. The thesis tries to build on to their findings by using the same method of gathering data, semi structured interviews and the same theory, intersectionality theory. By doing so it’s testing their findings on the Swedish context, since studies investigates both legal, economic and social aspects. Given this background, it urges further studies on the topic, by interviewing and analyzing their own experiences in order to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon. Based on the literature review, the two operational questions (presented in section 1.4) have been formulated in order to understand legal, economic and social aspects of the structural violence towards LGBTQ refugees in Sweden.
3.0 Theory

The following chapter will present the chosen theory, the intersectionality theory which will hopefully allow an understanding of LGBTQ refugees experiences of structural violence in Sweden. The theory will be critically discussed, presenting the application of the theory in the analysis chapter. First a brief presentation and how it has been used previously, followed by a presentation of critical notions and limitations of the theory. As to the conceptualization of the intersectionality theory the thesis will draw onto the particular body of work by of Kimberlé Crenshaw. As indicated by the previous chapter there has been some research done on intersectionality theory in relation to sexual minority refugees particularly by Jin ou and Brotman. Section 3.3 will build onto the work of these two scholars, using the concept of structural intersectionality. The chapter will be concluded presenting the operationalization of the theory, spelling out how it will be used in the thematic analysis.

3.1 Intersectionality theory

Intersectionality theory, which name was introduced by scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989, is a theory that sets out to understand the complex forms of oppression that individuals face due to their multiple identities based on race, gender, class, sexuality, ability or age. (Crenshaw 1989: 1244). The theory suggest several forms of oppression such as race, gender, class, sexuality, ability, age, nationality operating simultaneously, thus creating particular forms of marginalization specific for the particular intersecting identity (Brotman 2013:5, Lykke 2012: 8, Crenshaw 1989:1242) thereby producing and sustaining inequality (Abdulrahim 2012). As Bilge adds in her understanding intersectionality that the structures are based on power relations, regulating the way in which subjects behave and how life experiences are being shaped (2009:3). It has been widely used as an analytic tool to understand how subgroups are being suppressed within already marginalized groups. The theory sets out to uncover and understand the specific structural injustices faced by individuals due to their intersecting identities.

The expression intersectionality aims at explain the crossroad where two or several identities meet, intermingle and the complex set of power relation that emerges from these intersections.
It emerged in the 1970’s and 1980’s within the fields of gender studies by black feminist who felt that there was lacking an analytic tool to understand the multiple oppression faced by Afro-American women (Abdulrahim 2012, Brotman 2013: 5, Crenshaw 1989: 1244, Yuval-Davis 2012: 21). According to these studies, the oppression of women of color differs both from that of the black men and white women, being subordinated within two already suppressed subgroups. Facing domination, within housing and work, due to gender by black men and because of race by white women, women of color becomes then extra vulnerable within both the categories (Crenshaw 1989, Brotman 2013). Under the same premise, the intersectionality theory will be used in the thesis, to understand how LGBTQ refugees are both sub-ordinated among other refugees and within gay community.

Apart from race and gender Crenshaw identified a third aspect operating in the system of oppression shaping the black woman; class. The intersectionality theory was then introduced to the “triple oppression model” to understand how race, gender and class, a model called that operates simultaneously in shaping and regulating the everyday life of women of color (1989, Lutz 2011:3, Yuval-Davis 2012: 21-22). A vast majority of the work using the intersectionality theory is focusing on the situation of women with different intersecting identities. However, during the course of two centuries a substantial amount of literature has started to apply the theory incorporating other registers of the theory such as sexuality, masculinity, ability and age (Lutz 2011).

As shown by the following section the intersectionality theory has been applied within gender studies and expanded its scope into masculinity studies. However, critique has been raised by a number of scholars in relation to the definition and application of the theory. Before presenting the particular ways in which intersectionality theory will be used, critical notions of the application of intersectionality theory will be discussed in order to get an understanding of the ongoing discussion within the theoretical field.
3.2 Critical notions

As indicated by the previous literature the intersectionality theory has been successful in detecting interlocking systems of oppression shaped by multiple social categories. However, some scholars have identified the following critical notions that arises in the implementation of the theory. According to Lutz he fluidity of the different categories because they are: *not static, but fluid and shifting*, which in return problematizes the theoretical application and the ability to quantify and measure oppression (2011: 80), Bereswill problematizes the fluidity which on the one hand provides liberty for the researcher, allowing a broad configuration of several categories and thereby such as race, gender, class, sexuality, age, ability. In return, multiple categories enables a complex contextualization of the intersectional analysis. On the other hand, it becomes practically difficult to determine the reliability: How many intersecting categories to be included in the analysis? 3 as in the case of Kimberlé Crenshaw or maybe up until 15 as in the study by Lutz. The vast quantity of possible criteria’s and configurations to include in the analysis has rendered the intersectionality theory rather vague and abstract since almost anything can be understood as a valid category. Further critique is raised as to who is there to decide what category is relevant or not? The author urge for a further concretization of the implementation of the intersectionality theory (Lutz 2011:81).

Yet Swedish scholar Yuval Davis (2012) identifies the difficulty of precision in terms of operalization of the intersectionality theory, as to how to assess when exactly someone is being oppressed for due to their race, gender or class raises another critical notion. According to her, each try to analyze categories such as gender, race and sexuality individually essentializes these identities, by outlining specific expectations as of how a member of these categories is expected to behave. The homogenization of behavior linked to identity in return suppresses marginalized members of these categories who do not “fulfill” the expected criteria linked to the identity in question (2012: 21). The critique raised is important to bear in mind when operating a rather abstract concept such as intersectionality as of how many categories one should include or exclude in the analysis. Further on there is a risk, like in this analysis where only two categories are included (gay+ refugee) in essentializing behavior with certain identities thus oppressing marginalized individuals within these identities (who do not “fulfill” the expected criteria of oppression) hence rendering the theory counterproductive.
Despite the critique towards the application of intersectionality theory, it has been successful in outlining the common forms particular oppression faced by a majority of LGBTQ refugees due to their sexuality/gender and refugee status. In the following section, the concept of structural intersectionality will be presented and how it will be used in the analysis.

3.3 Structural intersectionality

The first one to acknowledge the concept was the American scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw. Structural intersectionality suggests how a specific group of individuals sharing a common (double or multiple) identity categories become oppressed in particular ways as a consequence of ruling discriminatory structures in society. It may manifest itself through poverty for instance through inadequate healthcare, unemployment, poor housing possibilities and economic marginalization (1989: 1245-1246, Brotman 2013:5). By applying the concept of structural intersectionality has initiated an understanding of how discriminatory structures in place burdens and marginalizes the particular identity category and shapes and impact the everyday life of black women in the U.S (Crenshaw 1989) or the lives of sexual minority refugees as identified by Brotman and Ou Jin (2013, 2011). Further on studies indicate how LGBTQ refugees are, according to their own experiences, subjected to structural marginalization socially and economically during the asylum process. Both Murray (2014) in the case of Canada and Shamsari (2014) in the case of Turkey, outlines how the absence of job opportunities, poor economic support and lack of sufficient healthcare (particularly towards transgender asylum seekers) limits the life quality of the LGBTQ refugee (2014: 999) which can be seen as a form structural intersectionality, given the stated definition. Further on Crenshaw identifies the lack of language skills becomes structural problem within American social services, which particularly exclude Hispanic women of color making them particularly vulnerable (1989: 1248). Murray also mentions language issues as an obstacle for non-English speaking sexual minority refugees within the asylum process in Canada (2014).

The following examples from previous literature suggest how the intersectionality theory can be used to understand the experiences of structural violence faced by LGBTQ refugees, both as gay and refugees, which will be employed in the analysis.
3.4 Operationalization of the theory

Studies using the intersectionality theory suggests that LGBTQ refugees within the asylum process are marginalized due to structural, discriminatory practices that manifest themselves in specific ways because of their dual identity categories. The concept of structural intersectionality becomes then a theoretical instrument allowing an understanding of particular forms of economic, social and legal aspects of structural violence faced by sexual minority asylum seekers.

As to the theoretical framework the analysis will be limited to a so-called “double oppression model”, hence limiting the focus to two intersecting categories; sexuality and refugee-status. In the thematic analysis the interview quotes will be interrogated critically using the intersectionality theory to outline whether specific oppression towards sexual minority refugees can be identified. The study takes on an exploratory nature to see whether similar experiences of structural violence directed towards LGBTQ refugees because of their dual intersecting identities studies can be identified in the interviews as well, as suggested by Brotman and ou Jin (Legally) and Crenshaws (Economically and socially). Thereby their findings of structural intersectionality towards sexual minority refugees will be tested on the Swedish context. By doing so the two chosen operational questions will be answered will hopefully enabling an understanding of LGBTQ refugee’s experiences of structural and direct violence in Sweden. Having presented the theory, the thesis will now precede on to the methodology chapter.
4.0 Methodology

The following chapter will present methodological choices of the thesis: the research design, the choice of material and the sample and how and where it has been gathered and selected. The researcher own position will be presented as well providing a discussion of ethical aspects as well as the reliability and validity in relation to the choice of material. The chapter will be concluded by a presentation of limitations and de-limitations.

4.1 Research Design

The research design has a qualitative approach due to the limited number of participants. It holds the position of social constructivism, based on the assumption that there is no absolute truth, only subjective versions of it, which is suitable since the primary material consist of narratives, i.e. personal, subjective stories and experiences (Creswell 2009: 4, Chambliss 2010: 265). Given the nature of the data collected (LGBTQ refugee’s experiences of structural violence) the chosen method has a qualitative narrative inquiry, designed to analyze individual’s own stories, explaining how people give meaning to their experiences and how these are shaped by its social context. Narratives are also suitable in investigating unequal power relations and telling the story of unrepresented groups (Bamberg 2010: 2, Creswell 2009: 223, Creswell 2007:156). The chosen enquiry has been made given that the aim of the study is to give voice to a marginalized oppressed population in society by trying to understand sexual minority refugees experience of structural violence. This has also influenced the choice of method, the thematic analysis, presented in section 4.11 and onwards.

4.2 Material

As to the collection of data, the most suitable method in a qualitative narrative study is the semi-structured interviews where the interview persons relatively freely can share their experiences, hence enabling a deeper understanding of a certain phenomenon (Chambliss 2010: 222) in this case LGBTQ refugee’s experiences of structural violence in Sweden. Narrative studies based on personal experiences and stories of a certain phenomenon are usually gathered through interviews. In total 4 interviews were conducted in English with a duration of 40-50 minutes.
4.3 Collection of material

As to the structure of the interviews they have been structured around five to six relatively broad and general questions, in order to enable the interviewees to elaborate their thoughts and answers. The whole process has been a very inductive one, meaning that the questions have changed a bit in terms of formulation, however the main theme has consistently remained with some alterations. The interviews have been very conversational, meaning that small-improvised follow up questions occurred in the transcriptions depending of the shifting of the interviews (Ezzy 2010: 164-165). All of them have been transcribed which will be further elaborated in the methods chapter.

4.4 Location of the interviews

As to the location of the interviews, they have been conducted in a neutral setting in order for interviewees to feel secure to share their experiences (Chambliss 2010: 237). The interviews have all taken place at a neutral location in empty rooms with no other people present, the first one at the Malmö Student Union and the other ones at the Malmö University Library Orkanen.

4.5 Sample

In light of the study’s purpose, the sample of the interviewees have been rather purposive and quite narrow, looking at interviewing LGBTQ individuals with experiences of the asylum process. All four interviewees are Cis men from different countries: Jamaica, Iraq, Jordan and Egypt. All of the interviewees live in Malmö and they have been here for at least two years. Three out of four have been granted asylum in Sweden because of their sexual orientation. All of them have university degrees and are well-educated activists with experience of the asylum process, hence being aware of the hardships refugees are facing today. The process of finding potential persons suitable for the study has proven to be very difficult, given the severity of the research topic. A large majority of the sexual minority asylum seekers contacted has declined due to linguistic difficulties or not feeling comfortable speaking about their experience, due to traumatic experiences and being in the midst of the asylum process. This notion stresses the urge for further studies of LGBTQ refugee’s experiences of structural
violence within the Swedish asylum process. Given the relative security of the interviewees, having all been granted asylum in Sweden and being active in LGBTQ questions, suggests that they may be more comfortable speaking about structural violence towards gay refugees, since none of them is risking being denied asylum.

4.6 Sample selection

Through snowball sampling (Chambliss 2014:124), hence being recommended by one interviewee to another, I have managed to find suitable interviewees. The criteria guiding the sample selection has been that the interviewees have to be Gay with direct personal experience of the asylum process. All the interviewees know each other briefly from their activism in Newcomers Malmö, the nationwide network run by RFSL for sexual minority refugees in Sweden. Two of them are currently studying or have recently been students at Malmö University, through them I was recommended to visit the RFSL newcomers network weekly meetings in Malmö, where the other two interviewees were approached. The fourth interview person is currently in the asylum process himself, which legitimizes the sample selection having upright personal experience of structural violence within the Swedish asylum process.

4.7 Reliability and Validity

The reliability and validity in qualitative research is a rather intricate matter since the results cannot be repeated or measured on a larger population. However, if a phenomenon reappears throughout the different interviews, and if a similar phenomenon from other research projects appears, might indicate a certain validity (De Von 2007). The two factors mentioned have been taken into consideration in choosing the codes for the thesis. It is important to note that 100% validity is not possible in processing qualitative interview material since experiences by nature is subjective. Because of the interpretation of the researcher shaping the analytical process of the empirical material, which makes the results impossible to quantify numerically or to be obtained again (Creswell 2013: 253). Further on, some of the stories told, have not been experienced by the asylum seekers themselves, but by other LGBTQ refugees they been in contact through their activism. On the other hand, this might decrease the validity of the research since it might be hard to check and trace back the actual events occurring. Showing extensive quotes from the interviews, provide a space for interpretation for the reader to decide the validity and reliability.
4.8 The researcher's position
What is of upmost in the research process importance is the transparency including the background of the researcher, since it, according to Court, affects every aspect of the research (Abbas 2013:481) enabling the reader to follow and trace the decisions made by the researcher (Creswell 2013: 253). In order to increase the transparency of the research process the background of the researcher will be presented quickly.

I am myself openly gay, white man, born and raised in Sweden and I have never experienced persecution or exclusion due to my sexuality or my origin. As a Swedish citizen, my legal status is not contested, therefore I have not experienced the hardships faced by refugees in the asylum process on an everyday basis. In light of this, the analysis and the interpretations are based solely on observations rather than lived experience.

However, I have for the last six years lived in abroad in international settings several times and there made connections with and encountered people from all over the world. All the interviewees are politically active in LGBTQ issues and all of them are, as myself, students at universities. My personal connections and my engagement in LGBTQ issues though, has been a benefit in the sampling process.

4.9 Ethical Aspects
Given the sensitive nature of the subjects discussed the names and identifiable traits will be blurred to protect respondent’s anonymity (Chambliss 2010: 237). It has been granted by all of the interviewees which has also been a demand from the interviewee’s side. They have also been given me consent as to the recording of the interviews. From an ethical point of view, while interviewing, it is important not to push too hard while dealing with sensitive issues, such as traumatic experiences. Letting the interviewee guide the interview process is of importance, in order to build a form of trust between interviewer and interviewee (Ezzy 2010: 64). That is the reason why the questions have been rather quite open and the whole interviews have been rather conversational and broad questions as possible in order to avoid re-traumatizing of the interviewees. Letting the interview person decide what to say, what to reveal and when to change subject.
4.10 Limitations and de-limitations

There are, as with any qualitative study, several limitations to this thesis, presented as follows:

Geographically, the thesis has been limited to include only people from Malmö. All of the interviewees as based in the city and as mentioned in section 4.3 and 4.4, and they all have been active in sexual minority refugee projects within LGBTQ organizations in Sweden.

The scope of the study is another limitation to the thesis; given that the material only consist of four individual’s stories are not representative for the hundreds or thousands of non-heterosexual refugees in Sweden. Secondly, since the data of the thesis consist on narratives, i.e. interviews, there is a risk of potential bias. Being based on subjective interpretations of lived reality hence making it impossible to generalize findings on a broader scale (Öberg 2011:135).

Despite the small scope of the study, sharing the same intersectional identity, as gay men and refugees, having experienced the asylum process in Sweden, it can be argued that the interviewees are indeed suitable for studying the chosen phenomenon. As mentioned previously the studies on structural violence towards gay refugees remains very limited in the Swedish context, hence making the topic very relevant for future studies providing an initial insight of the situation for this particular minority.

As of the length of the interview one has to bear in mind that the interviewees have only been interviewed once each for a rough hour. Their stories might not be very deep and complex, because of the difficulty finding suitable participants and time to conduct the interviews.

The interviewees consist solely of Homosexual CIS-men, their experiences of structural violence do not necessarily depict the struggles and oppression faced by lesbian or transgender refugees in Sweden. As shown by the research of Lewis (2014) and Shamsari (2014) the realities and experiences of structural violence of bisexual, lesbian or transgender refugees varies considerably, the findings in this study won't be representative for all the sub-categories within the range of LGBTQ refugees.

Another issue is that these individuals have been granted asylum, are well educated and all of them speak English which has enable them to feel safe enough and adequately express their experiences. On the other hand, this privileged position may put into question to what degree
these individuals are indeed representative for the large number of LGBTQ refugees who do not speak English or Swedish, with no university degree who have not been granted asylum.

Early on, the interview process a conscious decision was made to limit the sample to only gay, cis male refugees due to the difficulty to reach out to different types of queer refugees. Through the sampling process and the interviewees, it has been rather difficult to reach out to lesbian and transgender refugees. The meetings of RFSL newcomers for sexual minority refugees, where most of the interviewees were approached, are to a large extent male dominated. From a gender perspective, one might criticize the sample, consisting only of Gay men, reaffirming the power hegemony within the Queer community, in which the voices of homosexual males get heard at the expense of lesbian and transgender There is then space for future research to investigate non-male and non-cis refugees experience of oppression in Sweden.

Theory-wise, the thesis will only be using the intersectionality theory, hence analyzing Gay refugee’s experiences of structural violence, through a double-oppression model (Gay+ Refugee). Additional studies may analyze structural violence towards LGBTQ refugees using other theories, such as queer theory which would seek out question and deconstruct the very identity formation and essentialization of identity, used for instance in intersectionality theory. (Creswell 2009: 91, Jaffer 2012).

Another interesting theoretical standpoint that could be taken in investigating direct violence towards LGBT refugees, by using the concept of power hegemony among competing masculinities, is that om Hegemonic masculinities as developed by Conell (2005) in order to understand how dominant masculinities (Heterosexuality) suppresses submissive ones (homosexuality) (2005: 837). One could also analyze the structural violence within the asylum policy, the forced coming out based on a western notion of homosexuality as fixed and applying a critical race theory (see Murray 2009).

Further on the thesis does not aim at trying to trace back or identify what actor that produces the structural violence not does it try to measure it. Even though the thesis through the interviews aims at showing the presence of structural violence towards LGBTQ refugees and then tries to understand the experiences of oppression through the intersectionality theory.
The thesis does not attempt to take a legal approach in the analysis, i.e. assessment of laws and how to interpret them. It solely focuses on analyzing the experiences of structural violence in the asylum process and in social life of LGBTQ refugees in Sweden, as told by the interviewees.

4.1 Method

The chosen method for the thesis is the thematic analysis which is one of the most common method used in analyzing data (Bryman 2008: 528). The method has mainly been used within psychology in studies focusing on human experiences and feelings, mainly. However, it has been applied in other qualitative discipline usually as a way processing data. According to Braun and Clarke, a thematic analysis is a method for: identifying, reporting and analyzing themes and patterns within data (2006: 79). Boyatzis adds in his description of the method as the process of encoding of qualitative data that requires a specific code (1998: XI).

The thematic analysis has been chosen because it is compatible with the choice of material, the collection of material and the purpose of the thesis. The choice of method will be justified in the following way:

The method is suitable when dealing with qualitative data such as interviews, focus groups and field observations (Guest 2012: 5), which is the case for the thesis, being based on interviews. It is also useful in analyzing narratives, i.e. stories of lived experienced in relation to a particular phenomenon situated at a specific space and time (Bamberg 2010: 3). Given that one phenomenon is in focus, structural violence towards LGBTQ refugees’ structural violence, being limited to Sweden, focusing on specific individuals sharing the common identities of being gay and refugee, the thematic analysis becomes suitable for the purpose of the thesis.

Unlike narrative methods, thematic analysis focuses on understanding a specific phenomenon through the use themes without having to organize stories in chronological order, nor does it require spending a great deal of time with the interviewees (Creswell 2007: 56, Creswell 2009: 223). Given the relatively short time frame for the scope the choice of method is legitimized. I have not chosen grounded theory as method since it is heavily based on theory and is generally deductive where the results should lead to a development of a theory about the findings (Braun 2006: 81). There is also thematic analysis guided by a theory-driven design, which are also generally deductive, focusing on predetermined codes prior to analyzing the material (Braun
2006: 83). The data driven studies however tend to be more inductive (Boyatzi 1998: 4, Braun 2006: 83, 84). The thematic analysis in question is indeed inductive, where codes and themes are identified and created in the material. Because the aim of the thesis is not to test a theory or coming up with one, but rather giving an initial understanding of the structural violence experienced by LGBTQ refugees using the intersectionality theory, the data driven approach seems suitable of the purpose of the thesis. The chapter will now proceed onto the presentation of themes and codes, a central element of the method.

4.12 Themes and codes

The use of themes and codes (also called sub-categories) is specific for a thematic analysis in order to analyze data. The process of putting different meanings together into bigger categories (themes) and sub-categories (codes) is called coding. According to Guest the coding process refers to the development of codes, i.e the process of sorting data into groups and patterns of meaning, then consequently the codes will be grouped into bigger units of meaning, called themes. (2012: 13, 50). A theme could be categorized as a “sentence or phrase what a unit of data means or is about” (2012:26). The purpose of categorizing data into codes and themes is to get a rich and detailed description of a certain phenomenon and by doing so one can gain a better knowledge of a certain issue (Braun 2006: 78). In this case by categorizing quotes about structural violence into different, a deeper understanding of LGBTQ refugees’ experiences of structural violence in Sweden might be gained.

Firstly, inductively I created different codes, identifying phenomenon that reoccurred throughout the interviews or could be traced back to previous research. Then I grouped the identified codes into bigger patterns of meaning, called themes. The themes are constructed to answer one operational questions each and by answer them, will in turn potentially lead to a better understanding LGBTQ refugees’ experiences of structural violence in Sweden, which is the aim of the thesis. The codes and themes identified will be presented in section 4.18. The process of identifying codes and then assemble them into themes, i.e. the coding process, has been driven by different approaches to coding.
4.13 Approaches to coding

The coding can be driven by different approaches, there are two main approaches: a data-driven and a theory-driven one.

The thesis in question has a data-driven approach to coding, which is generally an inductive process where the codes are constructed directly in relation to the data without taking into consideration the chosen theoretical framework and the analytical preconception of the researcher (Boyatzí 1998: 51, Braun 2006: 83-84), opposite to the theory driven approach where the codes are designed specifically for the chosen research questions (ibid).

However, Boyatzi suggests yet another approach of thematic analysis available in the coding process, where themes are being created based on previous research (1998:31). Even though the themes are strongly inspired by findings from previous research, they have been identified within the data, inductively, rather than from a theoretic perspective.

I have, because of the exploratory nature of the study, in the coding process used a hybrid approach to coding (Boyatzi 1998:51-52), hence combing two approaches; the data driven and previous research driven approach in creating the themes. It is then the material and its resemblance to previous research on the topic of structural violence towards LGBTQ refugees that has been driving throughout the coding process in combination with creating the codes inductively through revising the interview material. I will now go through how the thematic analysis has been conducted systematically.

4.14 Transcription

The first step having conducted interviews, which were all recorded, with the consent of the interviewees, as mentioned in section 4.6, was to transcribe the material, resulting in 70 pages of transcription. According to the principles of Braun and Clarke, when the main data of a study consists of verbal data, a first crucial step of the thematic analysis is to transcribe the interviews (2006: 87-88). All of the recorded interviews were firstly listened through, transcribing the parts of the interviews that seemed relevant for the thesis. The transcription was done word for word, taking into the account grammatical errors and pauses (2006: 96).
However, while writing the analysis the transcribed quotes from the interviews have been adjusted and corrected in order to avoid grammar errors enabling the reader to fully understand what is said in the quotes. After the transcription of the interviews, the material was then reviewed.

4.15 Reading through the material

The first step was to revise each of the text the interviews one by one. The interviews have only been analyzed on a manifest level, hence analyzing the directly observable, what is actually said as suppose to the latent level goes beyond the semantics, dealing with the meaning of the spoken words (Boyatzi 1998: 4, Braun 2006: 83, 84). During the second time of revision, the quotes of interest were then underlined in every text with a marker of a different color for each potential category (Lundqvist 2014: 21) which at this stage was limited legal (green), economic (blue) and social (red) aspects of structural violence. The texts were then read through once more to double check whether additional quotes could be included. Having revised the material, the coding process, hence the creation of codes and then subsequently the categorization into themes begun.

4.16 Coding Process

The first aspects while coding the transcripts separately was to compare the participant’s answers to themes identified and developed by previous research. (Boyatzi 1998:31). Given the qualitative nature of the thesis the codes won’t be counted numerically. If a code was to be identified within the material resembling findings from previous research on either LGBTQ refugees or studies using the intersectionality theory, it would be considered as a code.

Secondly in order to enable the categorization of the transcribed material, the quotes of the interviews were categorized into a so called matrix, an instrument widely used within thematic analysis used to categorize and compare qualitative data.

The matrix keeps the researcher close to the raw data, I.e. the quotes, given that the citations of the interviews are visible, which then can be sorted into different categories. The categorization
helps the analyst to focus the analysis on to a particular theme and code identified and relevant for the particular subject of the research. Further on it enables a comparison among interviewees’ answers within specific codes and themes (Guest 2011: 129-131). The matrix used for the thematic analysis, where all the quotes are gathered and categorized, will be presented as an appendix at the end of the thesis.

Through the help of the matrix, the third aspect of the coding process was to compare the transcriptions between each other in order to see similarities within the data according to the principles of axial coding. If a similar story was repeated on several occasions and by several interviewees, it would be considered a code. A fundamental element to a thematic analysis is the comparison between the different sets of data, i.e. the interviews, through the process of axial coding; seeking out to find patterns, making comparisons, creating codes in connection to different transcripts before grouping them together to themes (Bilge 2009: 5, Guest 2011: 161-162). The analysis was conducted according to what Guest calls a “comparative analysis of qualitative data” where data within will be compared and contrasted to each other. In the analysis the themes will then be discussed and compared between each other by showing extensively the quotes from the transcribed interviews (2011:162-164).

Using previous research, a matrix and axial coding/comparative analysis as tools in the coding process, a number of codes and themes were identified within the data, which will be presented in the next section.

4.17 Presentation of codes and themes

The thematic analysis resulted several codes all relatable to previous research and the intersectionality theory as well as through axial coding. Through the data, six codes were identified corresponding to two main themes in relation to the main topic of the thesis; LGBTQ refugees experience of structural violence in Sweden.

Before embarking onto the presentation of the codes and themes, the section will begin with a table, illustrating the relation between the codes and their respective theme and the relation between the themes and the main topic of thesis.
In the analysis, where each code will be presented more precisely, such as whether a code has been created from previous research, theory. As to the codes created through axial coding, the appendix presented at the back of the thesis can be revised to compare the quotes among each other within the same category.

The coding process, as explained in section, 5.1, was an inductive process, where the codes were created and then subsequently put into themes. As illustrated by the table, four main codes were identified and has been named in the following way:

- Language, as an obstacle for the LGBTQ asylum seekers to tell their story properly in the migration boards hearings.
- Lack of trust, directed towards the interpreters in the asylum process.
- Stigma and Traumatization, in having to “come out” during the migration board hearings and the retelling of traumatizing events.
Lack of context, from the Swedish migration board’s side, explaining why the stigma and traumatization among sexual minority refugees in LGBTQ asylum cases might occur. Since all of the codes identified were related to the asylum process, the four codes could be grouped together to one common theme. The theme was called *Structural Violence in the Asylum Process* since it related back to legal aspects of structural violence. The identified theme could in turn be related back to the first operational question:

How do LGBTQ refugee’s experience structural violence within the asylum process?

As to the second theme, two codes were identified in the coding process could be related to structural violence manifesting itself outside the asylum process, i.e. in social life. The two codes were the following:

- Social marginalization- Limbo, which describes the structural violence experienced by LGBTQ refugees due to oppressive and marginalizing practices in place within the Swedish refugee regime.
- Economic marginalization- relating back to the economic structures within the Swedish asylum process which marginalizes sexual minority asylum seekers in particular ways.

These two covered of structural violence covered social and economic aspects of structural violence and could be grouped into one bigger theme, called *Structural Violence in Social life*. This theme could then be related back to the second operational question:

How do LGBTQ refugee’s experience structural violence economically and socially?

The themes and their respective codes, each of the operational question will be answered. Through answering the operational questions which will hopefully enable an answer to them main research question. Which is formulated as follows:

How can legal, social and economic aspects of structural violence experienced by LGBTQ refugees in Sweden be understood through the intersectionality theory?

Answering the operational questions and subsequently the research question, will hopefully lead to a preliminary understanding of LGBTQ refugees’ experiences of structural violence, which is the purpose of the thesis. Having presented the codes and the themes identified, the thesis will now move onto the analysis. The following chapter will present the themes and codes identified.
in a more detailed way. The essence of the codes and themes will be explained, through extensive quoting from the interviews which then will be compared and contrasted to each other and to previous research as well as to the theory.
5.0 Analysis

According to several of the interviewees there are many indications of structural violence shaping the asylum process for LGBTQ refugees in Sweden in particular ways both in the asylum process and in social life. The identified themes and codes will be presented in the following chapter. It will then be concluded by a discussion were the themes and codes will be discussed through an intersectional lens discussing whether the operational and research question has been answered or not.

5.1 Structural Violence- Asylum Process

Instead of claiming refugee status coming from due to sexual orientation, many LGBTQ asylum seekers chooses to seek asylum because of conflict:

Because you know, a lot of the refugees, they have different reasons seeking asylum, based on the 1951 Geneva Convention. A lot of people coming from Syria they probably claim refugee status “on war”.

A reoccurring issue identified throughout the interviews is the fact that the asylum seeker in question needs to” prove” their sexual identity in front of the migration court order to be granted asylum. In the asylum process, the LGBTQ asylum seeker is called to hearing at a migration court, having to prove themselves being gay and them having been persecuted for it. One interviewee recalls the stories from his networking with other asylum seekers, where the refugee need to in detail provide information of how they first” knew” they were gay:

Yeah, the questions they ask, basically boarders of finding out your feelings, you know... And people tend to not understand what they mean by feelings, you know so...

The idea behind it is to get, how you feel, you know, they ask you” When did you find out that you were gay? ” You know” How do you feel, you know, being gay? ” It's hard to answer, I get why it would be hard to answer, because you know, it's kind of broad and out of context... It's broad, because it gives you room to say (...) Say a lot of things...
A lot of people, they don't understand when they ask “How do you feel?” you know, they don't understand... A lot of people they tend to not understand what they mean (the migration lawyers) by saying, they are too broad and nonsensical. The whole idea behind it is to prove why, you know, you need to be protected.

Apart from the way the questions are asked, providing descriptive accounts of them being gay in migration courts hearing tend to be problematic for a lot of asylum seekers. These tendencies of being perceived as straight until proven the opposite have been identified in the asylum processes in Britain and Sweden (As shown by Lewis (2013) and Gröndal (2012) in section 2.3). One of the main difficulties suggested as to why LGBTQ refugees in Sweden often times have issues with defining themselves as gay, is because of cultural stigma from their home countries.

5.2 Stigma and Traumatization

The cultural stigma, brought on by a life time of hiding in the closet, creates a certain paradox in the hearing of migration court. The asylum seeker is put in a position where he needs to convince the jury of actually being gay and persecuted for it. It is explained in the following way by one of the interviewees:

For twenty or thirty years of their life they haven’t had to speak openly about their sexuality and all of a sudden their put in front of these strangers and are expected to speak freely about your sexuality.

The cultural stigma around being gay and having to admit in front of total strangers may have certain effects on the outcome of the appeal, which he adds in the following sentence:

And 90% of the times when cases got rejected is because of that, because they haven't given enough information. And you know a lot of these individuals they come here out of traumatic situations.

The same pattern of cultural stigma and thereby, cultural violence reoccurs in an account by another of my interviewees links how the cultural stigma had a direct effect on one of his friend’s asylum process, leading to asylum being denied:
This is what's happening in the interview, and if you didn't say everything. I've seen a case where he was afraid of saying some things and then the decision was refusal. Because it wasn't clear enough if what you’re saying is right or not. But the person psychologically couldn't say more, he couldn't.

The quote captures the same pattern of forced “coming out”, which has been identified as well in the study of LGBTQ refugees in the Canadian asylum process by Brotman and Ou Jin (2011:154).

The forced retelling of traumatic events as well as having to “come out” as gay, which often times may lead to traumatization. Through an intersectional lens, the forced coming can be seen a particular form of structural violence which takes a specific shape in the asylum process of the gay refugee (2013:7). The same pattern of re-traumatization can be identified in the following quote by yet another of the interviewees:

Some people have been subject to torture, to rape, to other things that they cannot recall. Or that they cannot just like say it again or they are not comfortable saying it in front of other people. And then Migrationsverket is like; if you won't give us the detail then you don't get asylum. The interview and the process is traumatizing. The way it is conducted it is traumatizing. If you ask a person who has been subjected, to torture, jail and rape to resay everything in front of people that he doesn't or she doesn't know and you expect it to be like in full details. How is this possible? How is this even logic? If this is not violence, what is?

In addition to the traumatization, another of the interviewees hearings was particularly negatively shaped due to the presence of interpreters:

Very badly. I hate it. Don't remind me about it. Oh my god. The worst part about it is the interpreter. I don't know how they expect you to talk about your sexuality while you have been living all your life hiding and you are super discrete. And then you need to talk in front of someone, or in front of three people. And all of them speak the same language as you. I think this is the worst part. To in front of them... You have to come out. I think this is the worst.

The following accounts indicate particular form of structural violence, expressed through stigma
and traumatization. Further on, another code identified in the material which indicates a presence of a specific form of structural intersectionality within the sexual minority asylum cases in Sweden in relation to the interpreters present at the migration boards hearing.

5.3 Trust

Having to speak to an Arab speaking interpreter during his asylum case in the migration court was particularly challenging, due to issues of trust towards the translator as recalled by one of the interviewees:

> And sometimes they bring people from the same culture as you. It's very random. Like me, myself I had the same culture as me. I was thinking one million times before I was saying anything. Does she know my family now? If she knows me in some way from before. And I talked to my colleague, he was my supporter before, to the lawyer he told me she cannot give away any information but I told him: "I don't trust anyone" (from that culture)

The quote sheds light of one of the possible reasons as to why LGBTQ asylum seekers, while in migration court, may have difficulties in talking about sharing their private life and feelings in front of an individual with the same origin. Another of interview person mentions a similar experience in his hearing while adding an additional problem complementary to the issue of trust:

> Not allowing people to have the interviews in other languages than Swedish and then bringing interpreters from the same culture that you don't trust and you don't feel comfortable with. And then assume to say everything about my life, every person in detail in my life in front of someone I don't trust. And this is supposed to be okay.

Apart from having to retell their whole life story including traumatic experiences, the interpreters are also perceived as an obstacle in order to properly account for your sexual orientation. Not only is the issue a trust an issue in relation to the in the asylum process. Yet another obstacle emerges throughout the interviews: the issue of language.
5.4 Language

Apart from not being able to trust the interpreter translating your story, one of the interview persons mention langue as particularly important issue in the migration court:

*It doesn't translate the same your language, so you don't understand. So that is the most difficult for a lot of LGBTI asylum seekers.*

The uncertainty of not knowing whether the stories told by the asylum seekers is translated properly in one or if the questions interpreted in a way so that they get comprehensible and relatable for the queer refugee in question has been raised by other researchers within disciplines on LGBTQ asylum cases. As early as 1989 law scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw, the founder of the intersectionality theory, outlined linguistic issues for Colored Latina women in US asylum cases as being one of the main obstacle for them to adequately retell their stories in a reliable way, reducing many their possibilities of being granted asylum (1989: 1248). Precisely because of the language barrier being perceived as a hinder for individuals to account properly for their stories one of the interviewees took measure to avoid these problems in his hearing:

*Like, for example, in my case I asked excessively for an English speaking interpreter. I said to them I will conduct the interview in English I won't conduct it in Arabic, I was like very strict about it. It happened, but that is in my case. But what about others? This was a “kallelse” for a hearing, and it was written in Arabic, so I called them saying” I asked for an English interpreter, I'm not going to conduct the interview if it is in Arabic. And it was in English.*

Apart from the linguistic obstacles that may arise in the asylum process that may prevent individuals to properly account for their life stories. Which in return will affect the outcome of the asylum case in question. There are also other aspects of LGBTQ refugee's asylum process that are specific forms of structural intersectionality takes shape identified in the material.
5.5 Lack of context

In one interview a particular quote was of special interest since it questions the hearings, where there is a clear divide between the legal framework followed by the Swedish migration board and the context of the asylum seeker. He questions the one dimensional manner in which the assessments are made by the migration courts which decide whether an asylum seeker is to be granted refugee status or not:

*What they know (at Migrationsverket) is about laws. They have a database for laws about homosexuality in different countries and they look at these laws. They don't know anything about the context. They don't know, for some people, it is, even though they are gay, and they have gay sex it is hard psychologically to say that I'm gay because it is linked to a lot of violence and a lot of fear. They don't know this; they don't understand this context. In some countries for example, because there are no discriminatory laws so they assume that it's okay to be gay there. Every, it's not about laws. I mean the whole world is not Sweden. If laws are really followed in Sweden, this is not the case in other countries. There's a lot of laws that are written and it doesn't even vale the ink that has been used to write them. It's just words but in reality the context is very homophobic even though there are no discriminatory laws. And I think that Migrationsverket doesn't understand the whole context.*

According to the account, the migration board needs to take the context into account in their assessment of the hearing and no single handedly focus on the legal aspects. Aino Gröndal (2012) Legal Counselor in LGBTQ asylum seekers at RFSL, draws a similar conclusion in her assessment of 70 Swedish asylum cases, where she urges to the migrations courts to look beyond the legal situation to include the cultural situation as well as the security level for LGBTQ individuals. Critique is there raised that LGBTQ individuals are being denied asylum precisely because they are coming from a country where homosexuality is legal, but where the person has been persecuted or faces violence due to his/her sexuality (2012:65). Looking at the context of the asylum seeker might also give a better understanding of the stigma and the trust issues towards interpreters from the same country as mentioned by one the interviewees.
Outside the asylum process, the interviewees experience other forms of oppression and marginalization, which leads us in to the presentation of the second theme.

5.6 Structural Violence- Social life

Two main codes have been identified within the second main theme, which covers experiences of structural violence in social life experienced by LGBTQ refugees in Sweden.

5.7 Social marginalization- Limbo

During the asylum process apart from the legal aspects of the life of LGBTQ refugees in Sweden, explicit forms of structural violence in social life expresses themselves in specific ways for sexual minority refugees. One of the interviewees has through his own experience as well as through his organization been in contact with several sexual minority asylum seekers. While waiting for asylum to be granted, few activities are available:

*Information are not provided. Ohm... Like they tell you: ”just wait” ... And people have to wait for... What? You are not telling them what their waiting for. You are not telling them how long they have to wait. You are not helping them in the waiting process. They can't work. Even if they could legally, they can't find jobs without for example knowing how to speak Swedish. They don't have to learn Swedish while they're at the process. They have to get an approval, then they can learn Swedish. For me, the system is a really strange system.*

This limbo in which refugees are facing on a daily basis where no integration is possible, He continues, cannot be claimed to be unique for LGBTQ refugees, but more of common experience for all refugees. The social limbo while waiting for asylum does however relate back to the structural intersectionality as described by Crenshaw, were discriminatory structures burdens and marginalize particular groups, due to their intersectional identity (As described in section 3.3) which can be expressed through unemployment and poor housing possibilities (Crenshaw 1989: 1245-1246, Brotman 2013:5). As all refugees, sexual minority asylum seekers are being accommodated together with heterosexual asylum seekers where many of them are facing violence because of their sexual orientation:
Put in the same housings as the other asylum seekers who can be homophobic which puts them in vulnerable positions as many of the ones I worked with who come from Iraq, and others who come from other areas in the world stated that they have experienced sexual harassment and verbal abuse.

Another of the interview persons has himself experienced the harsh reality of LGBTQ refugees in the refugee housings:

According to me it's extremely tough...Because unfortunately we don't have choice to go to LGBT camps (Refugee housings for LGBTQ asylum seekers). The first place you have to go for, it's a camp mixed with many, many cultures and most of them Middle Eastern. So, the first two maybe years in a camp it will destroy you completely.

He mentions the patriarchic culture among as inherently homophobic which is carried on by heterosexual refugees while in Sweden creating a LGBTQ hostile environment at the refugee housings. Homophobic attacks on refugee housings throughout the country as reported by Swedish media (See section 1.2). Further on, David Murray (2014) in his research, using an intersectionality theory, has identified similar tendencies where homophobia is experienced by sexual minority asylum seekers from their heterosexual piers while in the asylum process in Canada. (2014: 28-29) Another of the interview persons points out the paradox with the experiences of homophobia by sexual minority refugees in Sweden:

Yeah, but for the most part, there not very kind of friendly situation... uhm... for them to be, because they end up being discriminated by other refugees. So it's kind of ironic, because they come to seek protection, running away from discrimination, but then they become discriminated themselves by somebody else (other refugees).

The paradox, being put in the same refugee’s people with the same origin is confirmed by another interviewee:

It's bad because the same macho culture you're running from; you will face it again. The same community you are running from; you will face again here in Sweden.

Apart from the difficult situation faced by many LBGTQ individuals in refugee housings,
another dimension of the structural violence experienced by queer refugees is mentioned; health care, a necessity for many individuals seeking asylum:

_The psychological health is not part of the health service you get as an asylum seeker. It’s not a privilege. Because as an asylum seeker you only subject to emergency health services. As an asylum seeker you receive only emergency health care. Of course, Trans medication are not seen as emergency. Like health care. If people in a refugee process are not in the need for this help, who is? People have been risking their lives at sea to die or not to die to come to Europe or to Sweden. If they are not traumatized, who is?_

Similar patterns of structural violence expressed through has been identified in interviews of with Irani LGBTQ refugees in Turkey as shown by Sima Shamsari (2014). The lack of health care for asylum seekers aside can also be perceived as a form of structural intersectionality. Oppressing the LGBTQ refugees, which marginalizes, sustaining these in individuals in a state poverty, hence structural intersectionality (Crenshaw 1989: 1245-1246). Another code has been identified in relation to structural violence in the social sexual minority asylum seekers in Sweden; economic marginalization.

### 5.8 Economic Marginalization

The limbo in which LGBTQ asylum seekers while waiting for permission, is not the only form of marginalization they are facing. They are also struck by another form structural violence; that of poverty. Throughout the interviews the notion of economic marginalization reoccurs:

_Asylum seekers in general get very little money from the state during their unknown waiting times. Not knowing the language and not having the right to learn the language before getting an approval makes it impossible to find jobs and be able to work._

The small monthly income as well as the location of many refugee housings often situated outside bigger cities, further contributes to the isolation and vulnerability of the sexual minority refugee. One of the interviews shared the stories he heard from current gay refugees gained through his network:

_You know... Another thing that a lot of people complain about is that they get 1800 kronors to support themselves...For a month. Yeah, and uhm, that, so, that doesn't kind of even, allow room for any kind of extra-curricular activities or any... Like meeting people... They
live outside the city most of the times, in isolated cases, so, you know, for them, they can't travel into the city to meet with people, actually engaging in, to interact.

The isolation and difficulty in integrating in society for sexual minority asylum aside caused by the economic scarcity. The low amount of money makes it hard to become a part of the gay scene and thereby living a life free from persecution. Another interviewee mentions how economic marginalization actually may affect the asylum process, as in the case of one of his friends:

Like once a person who comes from a European country was asked if he was gay and if he could describe the gay scene in Stockholm. And then like how would an asylum seeker who get like 1000 kronors a month describe the gay scene of Stockholm when only entrance for like a gay club is 150, when this person gets 70 kronor allowance per day. It's... The maximum a month is 1200 kronor a month. Which is like 70-75 kronor per day. Which is nothing. And you cannot ask a person to integrate in the gay life when they are not even given the minimum that they can use.

Due to the low amount of money and the high entrance fee on gay club because, it becomes then rather difficult for LGBTQ refugees to describe the gay scene in the migration court. As a consequence of the inability to enter and take part in the Gay scene caused by economic marginalization, it may become hard for a sexual minority to prove them being gay, not being able to integrate in the gay scene (referring back to section 7.1, where sexual minority refugees are demanded to prove their sexual identity in order to be granted asylum). This in return may affect the outcome of the asylum case in question. He continues his argument as follows:

And also economic empowerment is also not taken into account. I mean LGBTQI refugees are asked to integrate and asked to live their lives. But they don't have enough money. They cannot find jobs easily so that can enjoy the gay clubs that entrances are like 150, 160 kronors and it's not well comprehended that it's not only about being LGBT, it's also about being a refugee, being a migrant, being a working class, being poor. It's so many things. LGBTQI refugees are subjects to structural violence, direct or indirect violence.

The quote highlights somewhat the many layers of oppression faced by LGBTQ refugees in Sweden today. Economic marginalization, as identified by Brotman and Ou Jin, is one of many factors that structurally oppresses queer refugees in Canada (2013:5). The same pattern of economic marginalization, that keeps this group marginalized, preventing them from integrating.
in society, can be also identified among sexual minority refugees in Sweden as shown by the quotes. The chapter will move on subsequently to the next section where the results will be presented.

5.9 Discussion

The results of the thematic analysis suggest, even though in a rather subtle way, that LGBTQ refugees experience certain forms of structural intersectionality within the Swedish refugee regime both legally and economically. Through the data similar patterns of structural violence have been identified through an intersectional lens which to a large extent correspond with phenomenon identified in previous research. The material also provides with new interesting findings, some of these with relevance for the operational questions, other ones, although being out of scope, are worth pursuing in future research. The results of the thematic analysis will hereby be presented and discussed in relation to the operational questions and the overall research question.

The first theme of the thematic analysis, which can be related to the first operational question, called structural violence in the asylum process, is formulated in the following way:

How do LGBTQ refugee’s experience structural violence within asylum process?

Through an intersectional lens, specific forms of structural violence within the asylum process can be identified in the material, where gay asylum seekers are forced to come out and re-tell traumatic experiences in order to “Prove” themselves facing persecution in order to be granted asylum. If not, the individual is at risk of getting their asylum claims denied. A possible explanation ground given as to why it might be difficult for sexual minority asylum seekers, to provide (what the migration board expect) “enough proof” of them being gay and in danger because of it, is the phenomenon of cultural stigma. How is an individual supposed to talk freely about their experiences of persecution or sexual preferences in front of total strangers, when he/she has hidden or fled his/her home country precisely because of being LGBTQ? In addition to the cultural stigma within the migrations board's hearing, a previously unidentified (as to the writer’s knowledge) form of structural violence was identified in the material, which expresses itself within the court hearing. In the asylum court, the presence of interpreters from the same culture as the asylum seeker creates an environment of mistrust, which may create discomfort
and preventing the person of fully telling his/her story. The same goes for the identified code of language, which is perceived as an obstacle in the migration hearing. Through the material, a previously unidentified phenomenon emerged: the issue of trust towards interpreters. It might be a consequence of the cultural stigma attached to being gay, and by not being able to talk freely about their experience, may affect the outcome of the asylum process. Taking the following phenomenon such as cultural stigma and traumatization into consideration in relation to the issue of having interpreters from the same country creates space for new research where the migrations board policies and practices in asylum cases can be investigated. As to the second theme identified, called structural violence in social life it can be related to the second operational question:

How do LGBTQ refugee’s experience structural violence economically and socially?

The results in relation to this particular theme are indeed interesting, they are however somewhat inconclusive in relation to the research problem. The lack of employment possibilities and access to health care and education, such as Swedish classes, seem to create a limbo, while waiting for asylum claims to be granted, in which LGBTQ refugees are marginalized. The same pattern of marginalization has been identified in other studies on sexual minority asylum seekers using the intersectionality theory. On the other hand, there is no indication in the material that these patterns of social exclusion differ particularly from the marginalization experienced by other (heterosexual) refugees. Further on, the experiences and stories from other refugees’ housings, in which LGBTQ refugees seem to be particularly vulnerable for hate crimes and homophobia, sheds light on a yet unexplored territories of academia, urging for further investigation by other studies. However, these stories can rather be categorized as direct and cultural violence present among asylum seekers in the refugee housings, than an indication of the presence structural violence in social life. As with the economic marginalization towards LGBTQ refugees can be understood through an intersectional lens as an obstacle of proving them being gay in the asylum process. The material indicates that scarcity of resources may prevent sexual minority asylum seekers from integrating in society at large and the LGBTQ community. In return, this might affect the individual’s asylum process, since it hinders individuals from gaining knowledge of the Gay life, which in return might be required in the migration courts hearing when having to
“prove” one’s sexual orientation. Having presented the main findings identified in the thematic analysis, the thesis will be ended by a conclusion.

6.0 Conclusion

Four individuals, sharing the same intersectional identity of being gay and refugee, were interviewed with the purpose of gaining an initial understanding of LGBTQ refugees experiences of structural violence in Sweden both legally, socially and economically. Using a thematic analysis on the data, a presence of structural violence in the Swedish refugee regime, even though in rather implicit forms, was identified. The analysis suggests the oppression and marginalization towards sexual minority refugees to manifest itself in specific ways within the asylum process and through economic marginalization. Using the intersectionality theory sexual minority seekers seem to face particular forms of marginalization and oppression, such as stigma and traumatization in the asylum process having to re-tell traumatic experiences. This phenomenon identified confirms, at least partly, what Brotman and Ou Jin has “forced coming out” as a form of structural violence experienced by LGBTQ refugees in Canada. Further on, additional codes such as the mistrust towards interpreters within the migration boards hearing expands to some extent the understanding of obstacles that sexual minority refugees are facing in the asylum process. The data suggest that economic marginalization experienced by sexual minority asylum seekers manifest itself in a particular way, which then becomes an obstacle for integration within society at large and in the LGBTQ community particularly. It prevents individuals to “prove” their identity within the migration boards hearing, which in return may affect the outcome of sexual minorities asylum cases.

As to the structural violence in social life, the material provides interesting yet inconclusive results, which cannot be sufficiently understood through the use intersectionality theory. The lack of healthcare and employment waiting for asylum is indeed a sign of structural violence, but one cannot claim this social marginalization to be unique for LGBTQ refugees in relation to the broad refugee population. As mentioned in the sampling process, it has been proving very difficult, due to severity of the topic and linguistic issues, to find interview persons who yet are to be granted asylum, who are in a sense more directly affected by structural and direct violence in Sweden.
Therefore, future studies with a larger scope might gain a better understanding of the structural violence in social life experienced by LGBTQ refugees in the Swedish refugee regime. As mentioned in the study it has been hard approaching individuals who are yet to be granted asylum who have a more direct experience of the structural violence both in the asylum process and social life. As a lot of the asylum seekers have limited knowledge of English and Swedish, it might be an idea to (through the help of an interpreter) to conduct an additional interview in Arabic. This in return creates additional ethical concern in relation to the trust issue identified in the material. In addition, the limited amount of time is probably of importance for the rather vague result, since the interviewer and interviewees need to trust one another in order to feel comfortable, which in return needs time in order to gain that trust. Further on, using other theoretical approaches may provide a better understanding to sexual minority asylum seekers experience of direct violence within refugee housing in Sweden. Another possible expansion for future studies might be to focus on the experiences of lesbian or transgender refugees. Future studies might also interview both gay, lesbian and transgender refugees in order to compare their experiences of structural violence legally, economically and socially.

In conclusion, research on LGBTQ refugees in Sweden in general remains very limited and unexplored, as well as taking the small scope of the study into consideration, the results provide merely a preliminary insight of the oppression faced by sexual minority asylum seekers in Sweden today. The small scope aside, through the use of a thematic analysis and the application of the intersectionality theory, the thesis suggests that sexual minority refugees experience structural violence in particular ways, both legally and economically. The experiences of structural violence in social life towards sexual minority asylum seekers could not be understood properly through the intersectionality theory, providing space for future studies to further explore the situation of LGBTQ refugee in Sweden.
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Appendix- Thematic Analysis Matrix.

The matrix presents the chosen themes (highlighted in black) and the codes related to them. The number of quotes categorized into the different sub-categories are presented below as well as the number of times similar stories categorized into the same themes emerged throughout the interviews. It was used in the coding process in order to create codes and eventually themes.

All of the quotes presented in the matrix was no used in the analysis, such as the last category called direct violence in the refugee housings, however they are out of interest since they describe a yet undocumented part of LGBTQ refugees lived reality in Sweden. The same goes for quote number 1. Quote number 8 has not been used in its entirety, instead some parts of it has been integrated into the analysis.

The quote marked with the number 2 is in the analysis categorized into its own theme, called “Lack of Context”.

When several quotes from the same interviewee was identified from the same interviewee it has been numerated in order separate them for the sake of the reader.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>INTERVIEWEE-JAMAICA</th>
<th>INTERVIEWEE-IRAQ</th>
<th>INTERVIEWEE-JORDAN</th>
<th>INTERVIEWEE-EGYPT</th>
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<tr>
<td>Because you know, a lot of the refugees, they have different reasons seeking asylum, based on the 1951 Geneva convention. A lot of people coming from Syria they probably claim refugee status “on war”.</td>
<td>1. Yeah. And I actually work with a lot of them. We help them with the asylum process. Providing information, walking them through the process, telling them what's next. Because layers are not doing great. You only get one meeting with your layer for two or three hours. That's in the course of maybe, six to twelve months...</td>
<td>2. What they know (at migrationsverket) is about laws. They have a database for laws about homosexuality in different countries and they look at these laws. They don't know anything about the context. They don't know, for some people, it is, even though they are gay, and they have gay sex it is hard psychologically to say that I'm gay because it is linked to a lot of violence and a lot of fear. They don't know this; they don't understand this context. In some countries for example, because there is no discriminatory laws so they assume that it's okay to be gay there. Every, it's not about laws. I mean the whole world is not Sweden. If laws are really followed in Sweden, this is not the case in other countries. There's a lot of laws that are written and it doesn't even vale the ink that has been used to write them. It's just words but in reality the context is very homophobic even though there is no discriminatory laws. And I think that migrationsverket doesn't understand the whole context.</td>
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**Structural Violence-Asylum Process**
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<tr>
<td>Stigma-Proving your sexuality</td>
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<td>3. For twenty or thirty years of their life they haven’t had to speak openly about their sexuality and all of a sudden their put in front of these strangers and are expected to speak freely about your sexuality.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Very badly. I hate it. Don't remind me about it. Oh my god. The worst part about it is the interpreter. I don't know how they expect you to talk about your sexuality while you have been living all your life hiding and you are super discrete. And then you need to talk in front of someone, or in front of three people. And all of them speak the same language as you. I think this is the worst part. To in front of them... You have to come out. I think this is the worst...</td>
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<td>4. A lot of people they tend to not understand what they mean by saying, they are too broad and nonsensical. The whole idea behind it is to prove why, you know, you need to be protected.</td>
<td></td>
<td>And 90% of the times when I cases got rejected is because of that, because they haven't given enough information. And you know a lot of these individuals they come here out of traumatic situations.</td>
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<td>5. And 90% of the times when I cases got rejected is because of that, because they haven't given enough information. And you know a lot of these individuals they come here out of traumatic situations.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Not allowing people to have their interviews in other languages than Swedish and then bringing interpreters from the same culture that they don't trust and they don't feel comfortable with. And then assume to say everything about my life, every person in detail in my life in front of someone I don't trust. And this is supposed to be okay.</td>
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<td>And sometimes they bring people from the same culture as you. It's very random. Like me, myself I had the same culture as me. I was thinking one million times before I was saying anything. Does she know my family now? If she know me in some way from before. And I talked to my colleague, he was my supporter before, to the lawyer He told me she cannot give away any information but I told him: &quot;I don't trust anyone&quot; (from that culture)</td>
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<td>Lack of trust</td>
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Julius Borgqvist. 1990/08-05319. Program coordinator: Kristian Steiner
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<td>It doesn’t translate the same your language, so you don’t understand. So that is the most difficult for a lot of LGBTI asylum seekers.</td>
<td>Like, for example, in my case I asked excessively for an English speaking interpreter. I said to them I will conduct the interview in English I won't conduct it in Arabic, I was like very strict about it. It happened, but that is in my case. But what about others... This was a “kallelse” for a hearing, and it was written in Arabic, so I called them saying 'I asked for an English interpreter I'm not going to conduct the interview if it is in Arabic. And it was in English.</td>
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<td>For a month. Yeah, and uhm, that, so, that doesn't kind of even, allow room for any kind of extra-curricular activities or any... Like meeting people... They live outside the city most of the times, in isolated cases, so, you know, for them, they can't travel into the city to meet with people, actually engaging in, to interact.</td>
<td>The psychological health is not part of the health service you get as an asylum seeker. It’s not a privilege. Because as an asylum seeker you only subject to emergency health services. As an asylum seeker you receive only emergency health care. Of course, trans medication are not seen as emergency. Like health care. If people in a refugee process are not in the need for this help, who is? People have been risking their lives at sea to die or not to die to come to Europe or to Sweden. If they are not traumatized, who is?</td>
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| **Limbo - Social Marginalization**  
And refugees been holding, and newcomers have... That's what they're there for, to provide you with, like things to do. They have SFI classes and stuff so they can learn Swedish while they're waiting in the process... so that's... that... It have been very helpful... That was what I wanted to do with my project as well... to provide activities, thing to them to do, because, while they wait, there's basically nothing for them to do | Information are not provided. Ohm... Like they tell you:"Just wait"… And people have to wait for.. What? You are not telling them what their waiting for. You are not telling them how long they have to wait. You are the helping them in the waiting process. They can't work. Even if they could legally, they can't find jobs without for example knowing how to speak Swedish. They don't have to learn Swedish while they're at the process. They have to get an approval, then they can learn Swedish. For me, the system is a really strange system. And the layers are not really helpful. | And also economic empowerment is also not taken into. I mean LGBTQI refugees are asked to integrate and asked to live their lives.. But they don't have enough money. They cannot find jobs easily so that can enjoy the gay clubs that entrances are like 150, 160 kronors and it's not well comprehended that it's not only about being LGBT, it's also about being a refugee, being a migrant, being a working class, being poor. It's so many things LGBTQI are subjects to structural violence, direct or indirect violence. | Like once a person who comes from a European country was asked if he was gay and if he could described the gay scene in Stockholm. And then like how would a asylum seekers who get like 1000 kronors a month describe the gay scene of Stockholm when only entrance for like a gay club is 150, when this person gets 70 kronor allowance per day. It's... The maximum a month is 1200:- a month. Which is like 70-75 kronor per day. Which is nothing. And you cannot ask a person to integrate in the gay life when the are not even given the minimum that they can use. |
| **Economic Marginalization**  
You know... Another thing that a lot of people complain about is that they get 1800 kronors to support themselves... | In addition to that; asylum seekers in general get very little money from the state during their unknown waiting times. Not knowing the language and not having the right to learn the language before getting an approval makes it impossible to find jobs and be able to work. |  |  |
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<td>Direct Violence at Refugee Housing</td>
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8. According to me it's extremely tough... Because unfortunately we don't have choice to go to LGBT camps. The first place you have to go for, it's a camp mixed with many, many cultures and most of them Middle Eastern. So, the first two maybe years in a camp it will destroy you completely. There is no LGBT camps and mixed camps you jump from cultures to the same culture again... That's why it's really, really bad unfortunately, but after that process you can feel super free... You get your permit. It's bad because the same macho culture you're running from, you will face it again. The same community you are running from, you will face again here in Sweden. And the most, and one mistake, a very, very big mistake, I think is that Migration don't talk at all for refugees. In camp, they don't teach, educate them. The staff and in the camp, they don't teach at all about LGBT rights, what's LGBT in general, what they can do, what they can't do. And like the first lecture you have about. It's small, lecture about 15 minutes, about Sweden, very basic.

Starting from the very long waiting times in which they are not told when and if there will be an answer, and that they are treated mostly the same way as other asylum seekers. Put in the same housings as the other asylum seekers who can be homophobic which puts them in vulnerable positions as many of the ones we worked with who come from Iraq, and others who come from other areas in the world stated that they have experienced sexual harassment and verbal abuse.